

# SOCIAL POLICIES

SAKARI HÄNNINEN (ed.)

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Sakari Hänninen (ed.)

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Publications of Social and Political Sciences and Philosophy 19

University of Jyväskylä

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## FOREWORD

Why do some texts have introductions while others do not? Why are edited works always supplemented with introductions? Is uncertainty or anxiety of some kind at play in this? In their role as gatekeepers, editors are sometimes tormented by questions like these.

Introductions are textual interventions between writing and reading. As interventions, they necessarily co(n)textualize and condense messages. Introductions face not only intra- but also inter- and transtextual challenges. We typically expect to find introductions interlinked with the discourse networks (1900/2000) to enable them to act at a distance.

Introductions displace the texts that they comment. As displacements, introductions temporarily take the place of the edited texts. Introductions are not replacements. The “logic” of introductions follows the commentary principle in limiting the discursive chance element. Introductions translate claims and transvalue dispositions to act. Introductions are dangerous supplements. An introducer is seduced to act as if s/he possessed if not the right, at least the best possible answers to the questions raised in the texts.

In place of an introduction to this collection “Displacement of Social Policies”, I want to take up the point made by Michel Foucault (and by so doing displace “myself”) about avoiding “the monotonous and empty concept of ‘change’” and conceiving “the simultaneous play of specific remanences”, “the play of specific transformations”, “the complex play of successive displacements” that take p(l)ace in the history of events. Perhaps “chance” should be substituted for “change” as a key concept in the analysis of events.

The principal event under consideration here can be called by many names: privatization of social risk management, restructuring of the welfare state, individualization of welfarist governmentality, unfolding of advanced liberal government, erosion of social citizenship. Here this event has been named “displacement of social policies as a form of solidarist rationality of rule”. The point of speaking about displacement is obvious: the ongoing transformation is not just a change from old to new, a change of course, a stage of development, a decline of a project design, an origin of a new beginning, or an end of an institution, but a permanent molecular devolution-revolution, which can best be described with the “D” vocabulary. The “D” terms “displacement, deterritorialization, detachment, disjunction, derangement, de-(con)struction, dissemination, dissipation, dilation, disruption, dispersion, decentring, dislodgement, digression, dissolution, disclosure, etc.” make it easier to map the complex becoming which is being effectuated by multiple, diverse, contingent, fractured, and suspended relations of forces. In this problem space of dispersion, the governmental transformation is read not as a uniform, one-way, smooth, stepwise movement, but as a polymorphous or rhizomorphous process conducted pointwise by a strategic play of heterogeneous forces. Such a process can be always read from multiple points of view and in relation to numerous focal points.

Displacement of social policies was the theme of a symposium held in Jyväskylä in January 1997, organized by the research project “Transformation of social problems” funded by the Academy of Finland. This collection of articles brings together some of the contributions to that symposium. They make up an compilation in which parallel analyses from different perspectives on different aspects of this governmental transformation interface and intersect each other, providing us with comparative insights. The disposition of the book tries to respect the polyphony of these texts.

*Sakari Hänninen*

Giovanna Procacci

## POOR CITIZENS: SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP AND THE CRISIS OF WELFARE STATES

The history of citizenship is coterminous with the political history of modern western societies. Emerging progressively against medieval orders, citizenship has expressed a transition from a social structure based on integration in family groups toward a social structure centered on individuals as subjects of rights. Thus the concept of citizen ended up incorporating the main characters of the political transformation affecting the state and its relations to society. From the original concern about membership – who has the right to be acknowledged as a member of a society and what the constitutional forms of such a right are – the notion of citizenship has therefore undergone the same modifications as the very content of the social pact.

The strength of T.H. Marshall's classic account of the development of citizenship – from civil to political and to social – comes indeed from this dynamics he shows to be at work through it, a dynamics stronger than the rigidity of a strictly legal pattern of citizenship. Citizenship is a process more than a right; this is why only historical analysis can lead to a theory of citizenship (Turner, 1990). It is true that the sociological literature has often reduced this dynamics to evolutionary simplifications of some kind, making citizenship a synonym of modernization, democratization, and so on. But the juridical language of rights alone cannot explain the dynamics through which rights and the social pact itself change. Ferrajoli (1993) rightly deplores the lack of communication between legal and sociological analyses of

citizenship, but at the same time he himself seems to overlook the fact that the modification of rights is a social, not merely a legal process. To the vagueness of the sociological literature on modernization and democratization, legal theorists tend to oppose a rigid definition of citizenship in its original sense of membership in a political community (La Torre, 1995), as though such a community – and consequently membership in it – had not undergone significant changes.

In order to avoid both evolutionary generalizations and disciplinary oversimplifications, we should rather look at citizenship in terms of governance – the *art de gouverner* that Foucault described through the analysis of biopolitics (Foucault, 1979). Citizenship can be described as a strategy of governing processes of social change that affect political relations – as a strategy of creating citizens socially (Burchell, 1995). This requires one to analyze what conditions made it possible, what set of questions such a strategy was to address, what effects it was expected to produce. Burchell emphasizes that thinking of citizenship as a *social creation* may help to avoid oppositions dominating the citizenship debate – those between active and passive, public and private, bourgeois and citizen, community and market – none of which would account for the key feature of citizenship “as a product of self and social discipline” (ibidem:549). Citizenship is an effect of that crucial character of government practices in our societies, of governing through a combination of *omnes et singulatim* (Foucault 1981). It thus becomes clear that citizenship is *always political*; its political nature is not confined to a particular step, when political rights are at stake; nor does it exclusively reside in its juridical codification. Instead, citizenship is political because it responds to a strategy of creating citizens through a set of practices and knowledge that governmentality mobilizes. Thus, citizenship and citizens’ rights do not limit themselves to expressing membership ties; they move along with changing conditions, expectations, and the criteria required for performing the role of citizen.

I focus here on the strategy of *social citizenship*, which Marshall has conceptualized from his historical case: the British origins of the welfare state and its foundations in contemporary social rights. In his evolutionary scheme, however, social citizenship appears to be of the same nature as political citizenship, yet neither political nor state-related. And indeed, it has often been regarded as the product of social actors, social movements, the equivalent of the sphere of civil society, and the like. In fact, citizenship strategies in THE 19th century France help to understand that social citizenship differs from civil and political citizenship, while being deeply political and state-related.

Even more so, it has changed the whole relation to the state – via the administrative apparatus – as well as the whole definition of a good citizen.

Within a literature on citizenship largely dominated by the British case through the seminal work of Marshall, the French case is usually referred to because of its strong link to the building of a nation-state, therefore regarded as manifesting political citizenship (Brubaker, 1992). Rosanvallon (1995a) also emphasizes abstract equality as the specific content of citizenship in the French model. I agree with Turner (1990:208), who stresses that France has known a very highly articulated concept of citizenship, especially of active citizenship built on the extra-judicial notion of “useful work” – useful to the Nation. Here is a criterion for citizenship with no other reference than the individual and the nation; it thus becomes the basis for a morality rooted in social processes, in contrast to individual egoism. Such a morality founded on society eventually justified the rising of social policies and social rights, aimed to reduce inequality.

Social citizenship is nowadays more and more under attack, which is in line with attacks against social rights, social policies and social services. And yet it would be difficult to deny that social citizenship plays an important part in our experience of citizens. Similar attacks seize on its claimed non-political nature: on one hand, this maintains a sort of illusion that social citizenship could be eroded without breaking the social pact; on the other hand, reasons for such an erosion are allegedly only economic, not political, rooted in the financial crisis of western countries.

At least part of the problem comes from the fact that the debate on social policies has been dominated by the analysis of the American welfare model and its crisis (Leibfried, 1990; Abrahamson, 1991). This is particularly problematic from the vantage point of social citizenship, given the strong reluctance in the United States to embrace universalistic principles of social citizenship (Fraser & Gordon, 1994) and the accompanying “partial welfare state” characterized by the exclusion of large groups from social rights (Schmitter-Heisler, 1991). The debate on citizenship, in turn, seems more willing to acknowledge the existence of problems stemming from cultural differences and identities than issues of inequality addressed by social citizenship. The emphasis on ‘multiculturalism’, under a pressure from conjunctural policy-making demands, limits citizenship issues to civil and political rights, reviving an interpretation of citizenship as an exclusively political relation to the nation-state. The social dimension of citizenship seems out of date, even though its relative unconcern with national ties could prove useful in strategies for integrating minority groups.

The dominance of the cultural theme, therefore, plays against equality concerns in the citizenship debate; but other strategies are also at work, undermining social citizenship and social rights. These include individualization, marketization of services, flexibility of work, contractualization, humanitarianism – all promoted as “new” solutions. What do they pursue by attacking social citizenship? Are their strategical objectives comparable with those of social citizenship? In other words, are they really new answers to problems of the same kind? Answers to such questions require that one recovers a sense of the specific character and mode of functioning of social citizenship. To do so, I will juxtapose the Marshall model with the insights offered by the French case, at both levels that Marshall argues to be indispensable to a definition of social citizenship – the theoretical level of social rights and the institutional level of the welfare state. I will then turn to current strategies of erosion, discussing a twofold process individualizing anew the interpretation of poverty and of the social risk. As a result, poverty is isolated from social problems of inequality and becomes a form of *social exclusion*, while social rights and social institutions are generally weakened. From this point of view, current attacks against welfare appear aimed to exorcize that socialization which had led to the social question under the influence of the citizenship issue. At stake in this process that M. Rébérioux (1994) has called *décitoyenneté* is something we thought had been solved once and for all: are the poor citizens? And the doubt goes either way: aren't citizens becoming poorer because of an erosion of social citizenship? The frailty of citizenship of the poor today is symmetrical to the fragmentation of social citizenship for everybody – no wonder, after all, since “the history of citizenship entitlements is a history of freedom and not a history of compassion” (Ignatieff, 1989).

## Toward a definition of social citizenship

### *A. Social citizenship and social rights*

The history of the political treatment of poverty in the 19th century France took place within the framework of a political transformation expressed by citizenship; it therefore offers an illuminating example of the mutual impact of citizenship and poverty issues (Procacci, 1993). Citizenship did provide an egalitarian basis for rights, while pointing to the need to eliminate any

obstacle to the achievement of personal independence, a prerequisite to being a good citizen. Poverty was then no longer regarded as an individual problem, but as a *social question*, a matter of social concern requiring political intervention. In this light, however, poverty constantly challenged the constitutionalization of citizenship, importing into it substantive demands for equality. The normal character of poverty within liberalism contrasted with the political difficulty of dealing with problems of inequality in a social order built on equality. As a result of such tensions, a new field of policies, institutions and scientific disciplines – *the social* – was promoted. This field offered a framework within which poverty could be treated separately from its economic implications (the labor question) and from conflicts about individual rights. Its task has been to provide a rationale for governing problems of inequality in a society of equals.

Social policies arose from an analysis of the inefficiency of individualism – charitable, economic and juridical – as well as from a process of subjectivation of society. They responded to a need for stabilizing economy and political power by de-politicizing conflicts related to inequality. Overcoming the opposition between rights and duties in a framework of social obligations, inequality was interpreted as a problem of socialization. It needed to be regulated by an institutional device of socialization of risk and responsibility. The social laws at the end of the century achieved this goal, providing the underpinnings for an administrative state and eventually laying down the basis of the modern institutional set of social services in contemporary France (Ewald, 1986). Individuals were inscribed in a framework of collective duties that assigned a social, non-judicial content to their citizenship; but modern democracies were also deeply transformed by such changes. By acknowledging that a gap between individualistic and solidarity principles was active in transforming modern liberal societies, social policies greatly modified the individual's relations to the state as well as the relationship between state and economy, denouncing the insufficiency of liberal principles and enhancing democratic practices.

In particular, social policies pointed to the insufficiency of contract as the key to the construction of modern citizenship. Contract is characterized as an agreement between individuals rendered free and equal by their status as citizens; but civil rights regulating contracts are not only insufficient against inequality; they are also affected by inequality in so far as it may create obstacles to the realization of the autonomy of the subject. They are indispensable to the functioning of a market society, but unable to secure it from the dysfunctioning caused by inequality. Civil contract provides the egalitarian

foundations supporting the structure of social inequality. An equal juridical capacity cannot eliminate the need to act on the social structure in such a way as to effectively guarantee individual autonomy against the limits raised by the social environment. Here lay the conditions for the dynamics of the Marshall model: citizenship is only partially linked with civil rights, which only represent the contractual basis on which the social dimension of citizenship is taking shape.

Marshall intends to support the British social-democratic turn toward the welfare state by attributing to social rights the same theoretical legitimacy as he does to civil and political rights (Barbalet, 1994). However, the idea that in order to be a citizen of a *polis* and to fully participate in public life one needs to be in a certain socioeconomic position has been largely shared in thinking about citizenship. The French history of citizenship shows that it is less a consequence of welfare than a condition for it. There are various reasons for this: ranging from the valorisation of individual independence to concerns with inequality as a source of instability, to the awareness that desperate need interferes with deliberation, to the search for solidarity as a cohesive link among members of a society. What is less often agreed upon is that all this forms a specific citizenship regime based on social rights. The very idea that social rights such as the right to education, to medical assistance, to a fair compensation and so on have anything to do with citizenship is contested because it would be correlative of a legal conception of citizenship.

There is a need to further explore the nature of social rights. In Marshall's evolutionary account, different forms of citizenship are presented on a continuum; social citizenship, then, appears as the transformation of political citizenship – as though the same concept of citizenship were applied to social matters instead of political matters. Nor would the reference to the community offer a specific basis for social citizenship: citizenship itself, no matter how qualified, is characterized by an orientation toward public space, a space not claimed by private ownership (Crouch, 1996; Somers, 1996).

What, according to Marshall, are the characteristics of social rights? He regarded the 1834 Poor Law reform as an alternative to the recognition of the rights of citizens, because the reform prohibited the interference with the functioning of free market (e.g. by means of intervening in the wage system). Thus, the residual relief to the poor, too, was given only on the condition that the poor give up their rights as citizens (which entailed internment in the workhouse). Charity as well as workhouses were practices opposite to citizenship; instead, an intervention in poverty based on a principle of rights implies an *interference with the market*: social rights acknowledge that the

market value of an individual is not the measure of his or her right to welfare.

Marshall also characterizes social rights, with respect to personal rights, as being *public duties*; although a person is eventually enjoying the right, the aim really pursued by means of it is the improvement of society. His classic example is education: compulsory education is a genuine social right, because the public duty of education aims not only at the benefit of the individual, but at the benefit of the whole society. “Political democracy and scientific manufacture needed an educated electorate and educated workers” (Marshall, 1963:82). The French case helps to better understand the specific nature of social rights, originated by such a combination of public duties interfering with the market. This development is rooted in a more general process of subjectivation of society. *Social* means that society, not social actors, is the basis of legitimation. A political process affecting the relation to the state is originated neither at the state level, nor at the level of individuals, but at the societal level. It is what P. Costa (1996) calls a “sociocentric paradigm” in his discussion of the historical models of citizenship. This requires that society is established as a subject of demands, needs, and interests that are not identifiable with the ones coming from the state or the individuals; that society is acknowledged as a space where specific, necessary and involuntary processes take place.

Such a subjectivation of society was a long process taking shape through anti-contractualistic, anti-individualistic tensions in the institutional organization of a liberal society. Society was established as an autonomous field of knowledge and practices, *vis-à-vis* economic and juridical ones, as the result of a deep criticism of the possibility to deduce the parameters for the organization of the common good from the contractualistic premises of liberal order. It is not just the market that cannot really work without some kind of protection; society as a whole needs protection. Inequality problems are specifically apt to show this impasse, because of the difficulty to govern them in a society based on principles of equality. Because here lays a tension crucial to liberal democracies. In Marshall’s formulation, social citizenship is a strategic answer to the conflict between a democratic orientation toward the equality of rights and capitalistic valorization of inequality: what is at stake is the need to find a politically viable way toward legitimized inequality.

Historically, the formalization of the status of citizen has always been challenged by attempts to reduce inequality, namely by the treatment of poverty as a social question. The difficulty, then, is not external to the field of civil and political citizenship, which would work well for their part; it is inside

citizenship itself – that is, inside the relation of individuals to the state – that the difficulties are nested. Citizenship as a unifying concept is not only contradicted by the exclusion of the non-citizens, but has never worked otherwise than through distinctions, internal borders separating different categories of citizens, starting with the first distinction between active and passive citizenship proposed by Sieyès during the French Revolution; Sewell (1992: 112) lists four levels of citizenship in the Constitution of 1791 he had deeply inspired. The functional character of useful work justifying exclusion can only work on certain conditions: that excluded people accept their exclusion and that they are *entirely* excluded – and thereby unable to exercise any influence on decisions establishing their exclusion. Once the social structure of inequality begins to be challenged, political citizenship, too, falls into a crisis. When in 1848 Parisians demanded “rights as citizens and rights as workers”, they seemed to regard the political status of citizenship different from the social status of laborers – and they claimed that both are equally essential to their membership in the Republic. Actually, this dissociation was evident not only in the claims of workers, but also in the political response to them: they got rights as citizens (universal manhood suffrage) so that they could be denied rights as workers – they were given the right to vote instead of the individual right to work or to assistance. It would be naïve to suppose that this did not in turn affect citizenship. The very extension of political rights modified the framework, and more and more claims challenged the neutrality of the liberal order, demanding some policy of rights in order to reduce inequality.

From the Physiocrats’ tradition of “natural social right” (*droit social naturel*) onwards, the need for some synthesis between the liberal conception of individual rights and the anti-contractualistic idea that society is necessary and involuntary had always been a stake. Universal individual rights interpret equality and liberty, but are unable to organize the social unit since they cannot afford to regulate disintegrating levels of inequality. In a word, they fail to realize security. As a reaction, the search for security (to secure the realization of people’s autonomy as well as the survival of society) has inspired a continuous attempt to re-establish a reciprocity between rights and duties, as a way of limiting the scope of rights in the interest of society. *Qualitas personae* has never been enough to establish the social organization.

Social rights address strategically this problem of striking a balance between rights and duties reconciling morals and politics, while transforming charity into an obligation of pure justice. They have therefore a very specific logic: they are located outside responsibility law, they are not judicial. In-

stead, they open a parallel law based on solidarity and risk (Ewald). They transform a claim for a negative guarantee into a claim for a positive guarantee, for a service. Their nature is thus incomparable with subjective universal rights: they do not ask for more freedom from state power; they are not incompatible with state intervention in ensuring services. There is thus no progression from civil and political to social rights: there is more than just a discontinuity, there is a real rupture within rights. And, in fact, in France the political resistance of liberals against the acknowledgement of duties, of positive guarantees and the like has been relentless, from the Declaration of Rights during the Revolution until the parliamentary debate on social laws toward the end of the century.

For legal theory, social rights are problematic because of the low level of procedural definition, and therefore of uniformity, they present, and the high level of economic expenses they usually require. This puts social rights under a critical light: they are too dependent on economic and political resources in order to keep up requirements of certitude and non-contingency. Some critics of Marshall's approach claim that social rights, being of a different nature than civil and political rights, are just *no rights*, as Zolo (1994) puts it: they might point towards necessary social services, but they cannot transform any sort of entitlement to such services into real rights – i.e. universal rights. So, critics claim that talking about citizenship and social rights would be illegitimate, since they do not have the same normative strength as civil and political rights. They have not reached the state of universal rights, to which the notion of citizenship would refer; for this reason, the very notion of social citizenship would be nothing but confusing. Other critics tend to deny their “social” nature and rather view them as belonging to the person. Ferrajoli (1994) defines social rights as expectation rights, opposing them to autonomy rights insofar as they present a substantial legitimation and call for a substantial democracy. They are not attributed to the citizen, but to the person. The citizen only enjoys political rights, expressing membership in the national community.

As a matter of fact, the peculiar character of social rights has not prevented them from influencing citizenship strategies; nor does their distinction from civil and political rights make it impossible to govern through some strategical compositions. Ferrajoli distinguishes civil rights concerning the person from political rights concerning the citizen, according to the legal definition of citizenship. Yet, from a sociological point of view, citizenship strategies prove to be a combination of rights, in spite of their distinctions. We can therefore account for a link between the two sorts of rights, which

takes the form of a contract. Not only in the sense that the practice of political rights is itself conceived as a contractual relation; but also because the political contract is based on the same principles as the civil contract, namely liberty, equality and security. Civil and political rights might well be distinct in legal terms, but they nevertheless interact in governmental strategies: thus, political rights are reserved only for citizens able to fulfil the conditions for civil contract. Instead of claiming that they are not rights, a strategic approach to social rights shows that their different nature, based on a specific historical development, might have modified or broadened the scope of rights beyond the limits of liberal legal conception. And today's problems of citizenship are indeed very hard to understand unless we adopt such a broader perspective.

Thus, social rights are not just another category of rights added to civil and political rights, but introduce a rupture in the field of rights. They have not only a compensatory, but also a legitimating function; they shift the claim for distributive justice from the state toward administrative agencies. During the Third Republic in France, when social laws establishing social rights came along, they built upon a principle of insurance which had the aim of socializing risk. As F. Ewald has shown, this implies a generalization and a normalization of risk, which takes the form of a social relation. Individuals are entitled to social provisions not as individuals, but as members of a collective body, aggregated by profession, age, etc. The absolute character of universal rights is here replaced by the relative character of circumstances influencing people's social life, such as accidents, old age, and sickness.

Strategies of social rights reinforce the intermediate institutions and weaken the state in a very Durkheimian manner. They show that the complexity of the relation to the state can neither be expressed by the voluntaristic logic of the political contract nor by an exclusively political notion of citizenship referring to it. We simply need not reduce the contribution of social theory to the indication of purely procedural ways of solving tension between contrasting principles at work in democracy, as sometimes seems to be the case (Habermas, 1994). Such procedures tend only too often to replace substantive reasoning and historical judgement in contemporary thinking about democracy. Social rights have been much more than a procedural solution to the political tension between individual self-realization and its social conditions; they have substantively opened a full new political space, becoming an element of a continuous process of collective struggle.

Social citizenship has represented a sort of third way between pure liberalism (thinness of the *laissez-faire*) and socialist statism (thickness of state

intervention). From this intermediate position, it has challenged liberalism, which was thus historically forced to cope with it. To treat citizenship only as a continuum with its contractualistic origins, as is nowadays often the case, and to ignore changes that have occurred within citizenship itself can only be an attempt to eliminate such a challenge from the political construction of our societies.

### *B. Social citizenship and welfare*

Welfare policies are based on the idea that assuring a minimum of well-being is not only necessary, but requires interfering with the functioning of a free market, by redistributing wealth under the form of public services. Welfare services therefore constitute an indispensable institutional component of social citizenship. Rights to education, health and social protection are opposed to early practices and embodied in institutions based on the principle of expanded responsibility and shared risk.

Selectivity connects services to resources, inspiring means tested access to them, provoking hostility and stigmatization of the recipients as inferiors. By contrast, citizenship-based welfare services mean that living standards are guaranteed to all members of the social community: they are universal, they evade stigmatization, supplication, and exposition to official discretion (Parker, 1975), and they build a system of expectations drawn on standards of values independent from the market. This has meant enhancing the quality of the services provided, since they do not concern only the poor, and opening to legislation the definition of standards, thus giving to citizens the opportunity of influencing choices and decisions. By eroding the pervasiveness of market criteria for regulating social solidarity, the development of welfare systems has deeply transformed contemporary democracies. It has transformed the role of the state, the relations between state and economy, and the nature of social conflict.

Thus, citizenship has expanded. It no longer consists only in national belonging and political participation, but tends to coincide with all aspects of what it means to be member of a given society. The right to welfare has become an essential part of citizenship as such, just like property and voting rights, which are integral to our sense of belonging (King & Waldron, 1988). Even more: as M. Freedland (1996) has argued, social citizenship is determined to a significant extent by the nature and the character of public services provision.

Marshall's normative reason for associating welfare with social citizenship means less redistribution of income than *equalization* of status among citizens. Social rights give equal access to common services; therefore, they tend to reduce inequality to a legitimized level by strengthening practices where people experience status equality. There are other possible grounds for it, as has already been mentioned: ensuring stability, creating solidarity, etc. The important point is that all reasons ought to be different from the ones offered by the market and charity, since welfare systems were originally established to compensate for their insufficiency.

We have seen that liberty and civil equality were not enough to make security unproblematic among the three conditions for the realization of the individual's autonomy. That security also means a minimum economic security has always been clear, since poverty has appeared to be an obstacle to the realization of an autonomous free subject of a market society. Civil and political citizenship could only face the problem by denying citizenship to those who had no independent socioeconomic positions (von Gunsteren, 1978:29), that is, by exclusion. As soon as exclusion is challenged and political citizenship expands, a search for new relations and new definitions of citizenship begins. If one does not exclude anyone but treats all people as citizens, the conditions for independence required by the status of citizenship become a public concern.

From this vantage point, citizenship has offered to welfare policies a more efficient framework than the market, allowing the realization of non-marketable services aimed to generalize acceptable living standards. Citizenship restores reciprocity outside market rules, where it is regulated by an exchange between money and services, and outside family relations, where it is regulated by mutual aid. And, of course, outside charity as well, where there is no reciprocity at all. This demands that society has acknowledged that some standards of living are required, "irrespective of individual bargaining power" (Parker, 1975:145). To formulate these standards in terms of rights transforms the dependencies that they try to solve into conditions for autonomy.

Despite all this, debate about the crisis of welfare states is nowadays dominated by the logic of economic rationality: within a resurgent market and monetarist approach, the privatization of social services and the "user pays" philosophy seem sufficient grounds for the rejection of welfare systems based on social citizenship rights. Yet many authors point out that attacks on welfare – no matter how vocal – have so far had little success, and this can serve as a plea for the maintenance of the structural position that welfare has reached in our political systems and citizenship regimes. However, the basic

logic of these attacks is rarely challenged and is becoming a kind of popular truth. The political reasoning is reversed: standards and universal rules are inefficient because of their abstraction. This approach to the general crisis of social regulations refuses to acknowledge that there is a need to find new ways of organizing social solidarity. Yet there is no evidence that non-universal services would enjoy more consent than universal ones.

Although it would be difficult to deny that welfare is in trouble everywhere, part of the problem is the dominance of the American model of welfare in the current debate over its crisis. In fact, the Americans' refusal to admit that there is structural poverty (Gilbert 1983) has always limited the political impact of the social question. Built on "the stigma of receiving unearned benefits", American welfare never went beyond a "residual" conception, as Titmuss (1987) put it, of public intervention in assistance issues as an only temporary replacement of such "natural" solutions as markets and the family. Even when the Great Depression revealed the need of a public intervention to replace voluntary company programs, contributory welfare programs were reminiscent of private welfare. They explicitly rejected any goal of income redistribution (Quadagno, 1984) and eventually established a firm distinction between social security paid by workers and welfare given to the poor (Skocpol, 1988). The "undeserving poor", a moral category expressing the degrading nature of relief within the American poverty discourse, was never eradicated by universal programs of social security (Katz, 1989). In fact, American welfare has mostly dealt with social *dependency* rather than inequality.

As such, the American welfare model has been quite different from the combination of full employment policies, social security and assistance measures that Beveridge regarded as essential to a welfare state. This difference has only grown since World War II (Fano, 1988); Korpi's distinction between a marginal and an institutionalized pattern of welfare systems is still useful in evaluating it (Korpi, 1983). The present tendency to claim that there is no contradiction between liberalism and welfare (Welch, 1989), encouraged by the success of Rawls, adds to the confusion. Nevertheless, welfare systems did not follow on a linear path from that "utilitarian sympathy" which was the liberal key to social justice. On the contrary, they required an autonomous system of values. As A. Sen puts it, social welfare is not a function of individual achievement (Sen, 1986). Moreover, "self-sufficiency welfare" represents just a misdiagnosis of the crisis of welfare (Goodin, 1988).

As Fraser and Gordon (1994) remark, social citizenship has practically no place in the contemporary debate about welfare in the US. The reason is that

in American culture social provisions remain largely outside the aura of dignity surrounding citizenship; recipients of welfare are usually regarded with disrespect, and welfare has been generally viewed as a threat to citizenship, rather than as part of its realization. They suggest that this is due to an overwhelming emphasis on civil citizenship, and within it, on the unlimited predominance of the contractual model, increasingly assimilating all forms of reciprocity, except for familial ones. Such a hegemony of contract also means that everything that cannot be assimilated by it is described as its exact opposite – i.e. as unreciprocated charity. The US conception of welfare rests on this binary logic opposing contract to charity, which is at work in the distinction between contributory insurance programs and non-contributory public assistance, masking the fact that public assistance, too, is based on contributions – the difference being the way they are collected. According to the authors, the current trends trying to assimilate welfare into contract, in the form of agreed obligations for the recipient to work or participate in training activities, are sustained by the mythology of civil citizenship.

Perhaps the myth also involves regarding the content of civil citizenship as exclusively “natural”. In fact, the very basis on which citizenship regulates inclusion and exclusion has been, alongside with the national tie, “useful work” – as the French case shows. This is also the reason why the poor have constituted a problem; they could not be integrated through their active contribution. Contract itself, as a central pattern of civil citizenship, refers explicitly to the restructuring of work relations under a free market model (Castel 1995); it demands not only habits and virtues, as Veit Bader (1996) says, but also, and above all, work – a peculiar virtue, to say the least. As regards the investigation of the relations between citizenship and welfare, this helps one to see that social citizenship is not an undue extension of an exclusively juridical concept to socioeconomic matters. Citizenship itself is a more complex concept, having a juridical definition shaped on a social form of labor relations, and therefore a socioeconomic application and relevance.

Social citizenship, then, expresses all that could not go under the contractual form of citizenship: non-contractual compensations indispensable to the functioning of a market-oriented citizenship. In this way, it means that the relation to the state in our societies is by no means only a juridical and contractual relation, but a much more complex one. The normative ideal of citizenship cannot be to only reduce it to a contract. There are people for whom this normative ideal might just be too difficult to match; therefore, this argument can only lead to a bipolarization of people between those who are able to take advantage of the deconstruction of our systems of social

protection, and those who cannot profit from it and will only experience being in a more vulnerable position (Castel 1995).

The conjunction of welfare with citizenship has been the motor of a transformation of welfare, leading from a traditional paternalistic paradigm where the government defines welfare needs, to a social rights paradigm where a new consumer-based community voice may emerge to determine needs (Culpitt, 1992). Social citizenship enhances public action and presents citizenship as a way of acting rather than as a way of being. This is also why it can be dissociated by nationality; it is related to public activity rather than to a moral quality. Welfare services often need to be better organized – what they do not need is to lose the crucial role of citizenship at the center of modern political debates on socioeconomic arrangements aiming to enhance participation.

## Social citizenship under attack

### *A. Individualization of poverty*

The present crisis of the welfare state puts into question not only the extension, but also the maintenance of the institutional setting of social citizenship. The political argument has been reversed, and fundamental doubts seem to surround the current practices of social rights: rather than favoring the realization of citizenship by eliminating the burdens of poverty, they keep the individual in a condition of subordination, by simply participating in a system of social protection.

The current analysis of poverty, particularly under the influence of the US debate, contributes in a substantial way to such a skepticism toward the institutional provisions of social citizenship. From a cultural-biological emphasis in conservative analyses to an insistence on ethnically delimited inner-city ghettos in a more progressive perspective, we promote the conjunction of different conceptual strategies. Rooting the origins of poverty in the character or the biology of the poor, reviving an indistinct category such as “poverty”, identifying all poverty problems with the extreme form of growing marginalization – all are ways of individualizing the problems of poverty and denying their social nature. In this way, current analysis of poverty ends up putting into question something that we had taken for granted during the realization of welfare institutions: namely, that the poor are citizens just like

everyone else, and have therefore the right to certain living standards considered essential to the relation of citizenship.

In the present sociological debate on poverty, we promote the revivification of an economic grid of analysis. The dominance of an economic instead of a social interpretation of poverty undermines the idea that poverty can be related to universal standards of economic, social and cultural well-being to which everyone is entitled. Poverty is most often treated as an absolute phenomenon of a statistical nature, based on a *poverty line* defined in terms of the cost of the food basket, which eventually brings the analysis back to economic data, usually income distribution. The problem is, as A. Sen (1992) forcefully shows, that the loss of income does not capture the main problems of being left without a job. Measurement of poverty on the basis of income or consumption data cannot account for the social implications of poverty: the exclusion from material welfare and the social degradation connected with the idea of a common nature between poverty and delinquency. At best, economists can argue about income deficiency and suggest income transfers, but they cannot propose long-term antipoverty policies. They can only provide more or less adequate, but always contingent responses to the problem of poverty, which is no longer viewed as a political problem.

The big role played by economics has left space for recasting the social analysis of poverty in a subjective frame, sustaining interpretations of the origins of poverty in terms of a *culture of poverty*, which, according to conservative American analysts, should explain social inequality better than any structural hypothesis about labor. Moral, ethnic or cultural consideration of the “characteristics of the poor” means concentrating the analysis not on work, but on the work motivation of poor people. In this way, poverty is separated from labor problems, especially unemployment. While one can object that there are no straightforward means to persuade the poor or to influence their characteristics, it is important to understand that emphasizing the individual responsibility of the poor is not a wrong response; it is just a response that excludes social policy and therefore increases the ‘risk of poverty’ within our affluent societies.

But the progressives’ reaction against both, the increase of poverty and the reduction of it to cultural problems, has more recently led to similar impasses. It has emphasized concepts like *underclass*, which are today dominant in the poverty debate, where the structural components of poverty, connected with de-industrialization, are emphasized. Born as a purely economic concept indicating the persistence of poverty in spite of postwar

economic growth, it has acquired new meanings: mainly through its mediatization, a behavioural and racial dimension were added to the temporal dimension originally characterizing it, identifying it with blacks and to a lesser extent Hispanics in inner-city ghettos – particularly with certain kinds of behavior connected with sexuality, family, school, job and the like. The social sciences have tried to reduce it to a structural phenomenon, focusing on the analysis of “black male joblessness” (Wilson, 1987), and adding to the concept a further spatial dimension, the concentration and social isolation of ghettos. The emphasis on such spatial factors in explaining the persistence of poverty has oriented the empirical definition of underclass towards *behavior*; in the end, underclass tells us much less about the suffering associated with being poor in an advanced society than it tells us about sexuality, family models, rejection of work, dropping out of school, and propensity to crime, violence and drug abuse. Little by little, the analysis shifts from the causes of poverty to the behavior of the poor as the problem, reproducing once again the ambiguity of any cultural definition of poverty.

Recently, Wilson himself has acknowledged that “concerns about civil and political aspects of citizenship in the US have overshadowed concerns about the social aspects of citizenship (...) because of a strong belief system that denies the social origins and social significance of poverty and welfare” (Wilson, 1990:49), and that Americans tend to be more concerned about the social obligations of the poor than about their social rights as American citizens. Welfare programmes in the US have been targeted mainly at the working and middle classes, and have had virtually no effect on the poverty rates among the non-elderly. After having practically ignored this in his influential book on the underclass, Wilson eventually seems to take into account the fact that the underdeveloped welfare state and the weak institutional structure of social citizenship rights in the US might have been a cause of the economic deprivation and social isolation of the urban poor. As a consequence, he advocates the development of race-neutral programmes enhancing the social rights of all groups, programmes that would alleviate the problems of poor minorities more effectively than race-specific measures do. But this seems to be likely to lead to the elimination of reserved quotas rather than to any other effect. Class confinement does not seem to be contested: welfare services reserved for the poor would still be separated from services for the middle class, Medicaid will continue to pay doctors much less than other insurances, social citizenship rights will continue to be out of reach of poor people.

Wilson’s crucial contribution to reinventing such a pseudo-scientific concept as underclass has reinforced an analytical tendency to stress the lim-

its of citizenship ties, and to define what kind of behavior is incompatible with them and excludes the poor from the realm of citizenship. Given the impact that the US debate on poverty has had in Europe in these years of rethinking the European welfare state experience, a similar analytical strategy has taken root on this side of the Atlantic. The notion of social exclusion (*exclusion sociale*) largely dominates poverty research, particularly under the impulsion of European communitarian institutions. Despite some differences, this notion shows most of the strategical features of underclass (Procacci, 1996). Talking about social exclusion might demand re-inclusion into citizenship – and indeed many progressive analysts would pretend that this is so. But at the same time, treating the poor as excluded brings the analysis outside the sphere of the “city”. This means that poverty is analysed as a marginal condition, characteristic of drop-outs, and becomes the state of living if one falls outside society, rather than a predicament which can occur within society – the condition of marginalized people, rather than a process of creating and maintaining inequality, a process rooted in social structure.

But social exclusion is also sociologically significant. As a matter of fact, it is not as a class that the *exclus* are torn away from society. They are indeed a group apart, but the notion of social exclusion is a purely negative one: they have no positivity whatsoever, they represent only a breaking down of the social fabric (*fracture sociale*), they have no common interests, they are not the *nouveaux prolétaires* (Rosanvallon, 1995b). There is no collective identity to describe, only individual trajectories; classification becomes less important, and statistics less telling. So the debate becomes a subjective one as in the States, centered on individual paths and, reciprocally, on personalized treatment, as against the impersonal character of general provisions. By doing so, it conceals the fact that poverty is not only a process, but also a social relation (McAll, 1995). It describes a social disgregation, the breaking point of social relations. Intervention against exclusion must foster social integration (professional, family, community) in a holistic conception of society with all the problems of normative models of performing integration. Individual trajectories of marginalization must be matched by individual trajectories of reintegration. Social exclusion describes a dual society (ins–outs), and in so doing it confirms the break of social relations. It pretends to eject out of society the problems producing poverty. Vulnerability, precariousness of work, diminishing resources, weakening of social protections – all processes that intensify the polarization of society well before the threshold into extreme poverty is crossed.

The kind of policies that social exclusion has implemented are mainly characterized by turning social problems into *urban problems*, where they take

on a specific feature of urban structure, that is, the replacement of inequality by segregation (Touraine 1991). Therefore, the unique meaning of citizenship at work in such policies is *local integration*. From this vantage point citizenship, or the lack of it, becomes a question of sociability, at most a question of “active animation”, a culture, an identity, a set of behaviors whose frame is the urban location where the exclusion takes place (Donzelot, 1992). Going back to localized treatment of social problems might be a way of reorganizing the social exchange in a more individualistic way, activating reciprocity on a territorial basis, against abstraction of universal rights (Castel 1995:470). Yet localism also implies a twofold illusion: that contract can be enough for social integration, despite long historical evidence to the contrary, and that decentralization can be a remedy against all evil. Localism does not respond to the resentment of being no longer treated as a citizen; it only reinforces the sense of exclusion by pretending that problems of the poor are no longer a collective issue, a public concern.

Amartya Sen’s (1993) theory of poverty, which concentrates on *capabilities* and *functioning*, is often interpreted as shifting from income-based analyses of poverty to consumption-based analyses. In fact, it does claim much more than just such a shift to a different set of data. In an analysis inevitably relative in terms of income, he introduces anew the idea that there is an absolute component of poverty, in terms of what kind of life one can achieve, that capabilities and functioning express. Poverty is absolute in so far as we have chosen a system of values which are important in existence, whatever the relative conditions are. As for poverty and citizenship issues, Sen (1992) argues that the most crucial thing is to consider participation a value in itself, and the capability to participate an integral part of well-being and one that cannot be given up. He shares with Marshall the conviction that poverty, if not inequality, has to be eliminated. But participation is exactly what the association of poverty and citizenship issues had been focusing on; in a situation where poverty is more and more the cumulative result of several levels of marginalization growing on themselves, only an active defence of social citizenship can inspire policies aimed to reinforce participation.

### *B. Individualization of risk*

Social citizenship is contested above and beyond the debate on poverty issues. Actually, if the citizenship status of the poor appears to be questionable again, the erosion of social citizenship institutions affects social rights in a much more general way. In the critique of the welfare state, citizenship

has been regarded as expressing the normative ideal of individual freedom, and therefore being intolerant of social rights and social services, of their administrative organization, of the very idea of universal standards. Indeed, the crisis involving our social institutions is not just financial, but a more general crisis of social regulations (Gauchet 1993). The share between universal principles and particularities is no longer assured, and needs to be reformulated. Citizenship bears the meaning of the relationship to the collective body, to a public space; it is, then, deeply involved in such a crisis – which might explain its overstated presence in socio-scientific debates. The question is how we interpret such a crisis and what kind of solutions are we trying to imagine for it.

According to Rosanvallon, the failure of welfare systems comes from the very search for universal, general criteria of social regulation. “Redefinition of welfare state today demands a cognitive revolution (...) we must give up Quételet’s average man and Durkheim’s sociological fact giving back to data their individual values” (1995b:210). Among the first effects of such individualization, crucial to the welfare state, is the failure of the principle of social insurance, which has until now regulated health and social security. Social insurance has been a mechanism for organizing social solidarity among people and among generations; the political process of socialization of risk and responsibility leading to it (Ewald 1986) is nowadays, according to Rosanvallon, decomposing, given the erosion of wage labor on which it had been focused.

The result would be that social problems are today no more conceived of as a risk, but have become a-cyclical constant components of social life. This provokes a general decrease in uncertainty, which had been, as the Rawlsian veil of ignorance, *the* condition for socializing risk. The only aspect decoded in “social” terms is cost; we share expenses, more than we look for shared services. Accordingly, the crisis of welfare systems would come from an individualization of risk, by now exploded in an unlimited number of individual trajectories. This could, in turn, lead to a civic-based organization of welfare, referring to ad hoc conjunctural rules instead of universal rules of justice, as to an insurance-based welfare. There is no theoretical solution, only practical solutions; differences become legitimate, risk hits a victim only individually, and the agreement on justice rules which have become utterly conventional has to be found each time in the civic community. As a matter of fact, this also exhausts the political plane: politics consists in this constant search for instant rules of redistributing solidarity for which there is no general principle. This is the basis that Rosanvallon proposes for an “active wel-

fare state". To this new political culture, social progress does not coincide any longer with the reduction of socioeconomic inequalities; rather, the development of procedures (*droit procédural*) centered on the principle of "fairness of treatment" can only provide, through some kind of judicial "case-by-case" agreement, individualized responses to individual trajectories.

We land not far from claims leading to a politics of recognition and strategies pursued by those social policies referring to quotas, reverse discrimination, and the like. Interestingly enough, no such policies have been implemented to solve poverty problems; they only refer to groups identified by gender, cultural or ethnical differences with respect of mainstream dominant groups. They raise a question not in terms of exclusion versus inclusion, but of discrimination in the name of a non-economic, non-social element. Is there no discrimination against the poor?

It seems that discrimination can only be acknowledged when it does not question in a fundamental way the structure of inequality, but rather points to the structure of opportunities; and of course, opportunities are not the first concern in dealing with the poor. The rationale for such policies seems to be a fundamental distinction between inequality – as poverty, and difference – as discrimination of minority groups. It coincides with the distinction that Nancy Fraser (1995) presents between claims attacking inequality structure and claims referring to identity issues, attacking inequality and therefore asking for more equality and claims referring to identity issues. The latter two rather imply a demand for the acknowledgement of a specific group identity. Interestingly, she assumes that this contradiction cannot be eliminated, insofar as everyone in modern society has several identities. It becomes inevitable, then, to search for new political alternatives.

Contradictory tensions are at work, and always have been, in citizenship as a historical construction and a social fact. They cannot be solved by just eliminating one part of them – namely, social provisions; nor can they be exorcized in order to maximize private freedom and personal responsibility, since there is no more evidence today than ever that they can be achieved without citizenship entitlements. The tensions demand for new answers, both theoretical and political, able to account for the need for new forms of universal principles.

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Jouko Karjalainen

## SOCIAL MINIMUM AS A NORM<sup>1</sup>

*From case-specific relief to  
individually motivating living allowance*

### The norm and normalisation

This article deals with the production of the *norm* of minimum social assistance<sup>2</sup> and the classifications pertaining to it. I am going to present the essential changes in the definition of the social minimum norm that have taken place in the social administration of Helsinki during the last six decades.

The definition of the norm and behaviour control are linked together. Equilibrium is sought through definition. The norm of a minimum income is the most concise presentation possible of a collection of norms that includes both the norms for a living wage and social welfare. It also sums up the norms of minimum consumption by the poor deemed acceptable at any given time. There are mutual tensions between these definitions and the principles pertaining to them. Naturally, definitions are always relative, contractual, and often random too.

The norm of minimum social assistance has several aspects that together form a certain concise normative totality. The norm is thus a kind of summary of a particular social balance. It is not merely a question of a carefully defined sum of money. Like other norms, it allows for some deviation from the target, or average sum. The norm is not “a mechanically applied sum... but each situation must upon request be taken into consideration *in casu*” (cl. 5.3. 1936).

The norm of a minimum income is a summary or a kind of equation where the variables are dependent on each other. As a norm, the social minimum is a special guideline and a visible manifestation of normative order. By setting up norms, communities and societies define some actions and actors as deviant. For example, the system of criminal justice comprises a great number of such written norms. On the one hand, a minimum income can be seen as the fate of those who are incapable of acquiring their livelihood through other means. On the other hand, the right to receive benefits is constantly being debated. Acquiring one's livelihood through one's own work has in this instance always been the 'primary norm'.

An *ethos* can be described as an institutionally produced state of mind that also shapes moral intentions. The process of defining a norm is a form of social classification. An ethos can be regarded as both a governmental guideline and a tendency to control the production of rules, institutional practises and knowledge interests. A certain kind of ethos challenges us to produce knowledge of ourselves and other people in order to make us behave in predictable ways.

My goal is to interpret events in the circumstances in which they took place. The aim is to identify the 'truthful discourses' (Dean 1992, 216) that have guided the 'claims' utilised by the system of practices that I am studying. Concretely, this means studying the circular letters and manuals written by the managing director of the social administration of Helsinki. These are the best sources available on what was regarded as true and doable at the time in the field of poor relief. I will attempt to bring to light the fact that this system of practices (by poor relief officials), which is based on special expertise, has produced several 'truthful' ways of expression. The circular letters and manuals can therefore be regarded as documents through which the intertwining of 'the regimes of truth' and 'the regimes of practices' becomes visible (Dean 1992, 216-220).

Questioning such continuities and breaks that are taken as given and held as truths is possible only by analysing the minutiae – the kaleidoscopic patchwork of rationalities and practices – without a 'great frame story'. Thus, I do not think that I can reach the origin of the norm or its linear frame story; at best, I can see the most evident changes in it. I strive to reconstruct, through *situating*, the breaks in the definition of the norm in such contexts where the individual changes can be recognised as accurately as possible. The precise moment of change is, of course, impossible to trace, because the nature of a situation is such that it is constantly evolving and turning into a new one. From the chain of events that consists of these situations, or snapshots, I

will try, with the help of the instructions of the social administration of Helsinki, to trace the phases in definition of the norm for a minimum income from the 1930s to the late 1990s.

An excellent guideline for this study is Einar Böök's estimate of the central issue of social politics, which he presented during the Poor Relief Conference of 1913: "So poor is this nation, so close to the subsistence level its people, that all our social policy is in essence poor relief, in the broadest sense of the term" (Böök 1913). Special attention should be paid to the phrase "in the broadest sense of the term". I understand that Böök was well aware of the significance of both mutual relief funds (i.e. unemployment benefit societies, sick funds, cooperatives and savings and loan associations) and the budding social legislation, such as work laws. He saw, however, that 'social policy' as a national and local activity was realized then – as it was to be long afterwards – through poor relief. Naturally, his view was influenced by the hardships that had met the development of social legislation in Finland. As late as 1936 he was forced to state: "Public poor relief is... still the backbone of all social work" (Böök 1936). A kind of starting point for my review, the 7th of July 1931, can be found in the archives of the Poor Relief Bureau in Helsinki. I say 'a kind of starting point', because the first circular letter sent by the managing director dealt with women's work permits, a system that had already been in place for decades.

The circular letters and manuals, sent out by the managing director of the Poor Relief Bureau of Helsinki (later the Social Welfare Office and currently the Social Services Department) between 1931 and 1997, can be regarded – at least partly – as documentation of that which 'seemd to happen inevitably'. The circular letters can be divided into four categories: a) letters that summarize the *general principles* of social work b) letters that contain *ad hoc directives*, c) *normalizing directives* and d) *communications*. The first category includes comprehensive 'pro memorias' and 'general instructions', which were issued every few years and complemented by *normalizing directives*. The instructions were usually quickly drafted interpretations of everyday practices or new situations arising from changes in legislation. The normalizing directives were meant to create as clear and uniform rules as possible for the field of social work.

The communications<sup>3</sup> contained mainly announcements, such as the official hours of service, training courses and travel accounts, but also letters of instruction from the Ministry of Social Affairs or the Social Insurance Institution. Most of these can be regarded as practical manuals from which the employees checked how things were to be done in practice. In everyday work these manuals were probably even more frequently used than any of the

general instructions laid down by the management of the office. Moreover, in this body of research material the manuals are the most reliable proof of what has really taken place. After all, general instructions are often brushed aside as mere declarations or are ignored altogether. Nevertheless, they do, of course, reflect the prevailing ethical viewpoints of the time as well as the varying emphases of the dominant ethos.

The minimum norm produces normalizing practices and discourses targeted at the needy, as well as uniformity in the field of social work. This naturally has to do with the conducting of conduct. In this way the minimum norm participates in the creation of both subjects and their conduct. Three points will be focused upon in the following: 1) the rationality underlying the creation of the norm, 2) the techniques employed in the creation of the norm and 3) the ethos guiding the functioning of the norm. In this article the emphasis is on calculations, specifications, corrections, and adjustments – in short, in the realm of details. The emphasis is thus on the ‘little acts’ that provide the framework in which the techniques and rationalities of the norm, i.e. the systems of practice and truth, intertwine. In this sense, the formation of the ethos must also be traced in everyday practices and incidents.

The norm could, of course, also be unravelled by taking the ethos as a starting point for analysing governmental practices. If things were presented in this order, there would be the danger of some ‘bigger-than-life plans’ becoming the premises that guide the investigation. My approach seems to have produced the opposite result: the issues and details of everyday practices disclose the changes, breaks and continuities. Moreover, I contend that the changes in the ethos can be seen most clearly if one breaks up and contextualizes the changes that have taken place in the techniques of producing the minimum norm.

## From food allowance to the dismantling of the extended norm

During the depression of the 1930s, there were not yet written norms for the poor relief granted under the poor relief scheme in Helsinki. It is, however, certain that there were many established practices in the sections and relief offices functioning under the Poor Relief Board. At least, this was the case as far as the employees were concerned, and probably in individual offices as well. One means by which the need for home allowance was judged was the price list of the central kitchen, which listed staples that could be

received on presentation of food coupons – worth ten marks each – even though most of the relief was given in cash. This can be deduced from the fact that the only written instructions involving precise amounts of money or staples dealt with these ‘food parcels’ and the price of milk per litre.

With the food coupons people could get staples, and rent, firewood, and even clothing were also subsidized. (cl. 14.3. 1932) As the depression hit, the evident need for help of the unemployed singles was also met: they had the opportunity to dine twice a day at the canteen of the central kitchen after acquiring a bond from the Poor Relief Office. In order to get that, one needed to visit the Employment Office, founded by the city council in 1931, once a week and get a stamp on a card which entitled one to the meals. These ‘free meals’ were severely criticized by poor relief authorities. For example, Bruno Sarlin, the managing director, viewed them as “inconducive to sound relief for the poor”. The possible increase in the misuse of relief was also seen as a problem: some families were known to have collected the cash and enjoyed the free meals too (cl. 1.12.1931).

The Poor Relief Board made a decision in the spring of 1936 on “the normative amount of food relief in standard cases” (see Table 1). It was stated in the records that “tariffless poor relief”, which described the way poor relief had been practised until that time, was in fact “multi rate poor relief”. The norm was based on the prices of two daily meals at the canteen of the central kitchen. The relief given to spouses and children was proportioned to the relief given to single adults. A circular letter dealing with these issues stressed that these were normative sums of money, not “mechanically applied rates”. Each case was to be evaluated individually, and the sums could vary accordingly (cl. 5.3.1936).

*Table 1.*

single person with an opportunity to eat at home		FIM 150/mo
single person with no opportunity to eat at home		FIM 165 /mo
Married couple, no children		FIM 250 /mo
Married couple, with 1 child	(+ FIM 90)	FIM 340/mo
- “ - 2 children	(+ FIM 80)	FIM 420/mo
- “ - 3 children	(+ FIM 70)	FIM 490/mo
- “ - 4 children	(+ FIM 60)	FIM 550/mo
- “ - 5 children	(+ FIM 50)	FIM 600/mo
- “ - 6 children		FIM 650/mo
- “ - 7 children		FIM 700/mo

The norms were raised for the first time less than a year later by some five percent “to cover the rise in the food index” (cl. 23.2.1937). They were thus bound to the food index, but no particular reasons for this were given in the instructions. In addition to this and the prices of meals at the central kitchen, the third ‘index’ linked with the actual content of the norm was still the food coupon, worth 10 marks. The selection of staples that could be received on presentation of the coupons had widened from four items (in 1934) to 15 items. At the time it was also deemed possible to promote cleanliness; soap and detergent had been added to the list.

During wartime the demands for precision in calculations increased. In response to numerous inquiries, Eero Haapasalo, the foreman of the Registry, suggested that the needy be divided into groups by age “primarily on the basis of the need for calories” and that food relief be provided accordingly (see Table 2.). This suggestion differed from the guidelines of the Ministry of Supply, for example. Haapasalo had discussed the issue with – among others – Mr. Simola, Professor of dietetics at the University of Helsinki, and he had also familiarized himself with the calculations of a Danish Professor Egen, among others.

*Table 2.*

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age	need for calories per day according to Prof. Simola	the average; “might suffice”
0–3	900–1100	1000
4–6	1200–1500	1350
7–10	1600–2000	1800
11–14	2100–2600	2350
15–	2600–3000 (the unemployed: 2400, according to prof. Egen)	2500

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In addition, for each age group Haapasalo presented a detailed list of the required quantities of the staples that were being rationed (cl. 1941, 5-8).

In January 1945, the Ministry of Social Affairs urged all Social Welfare Boards to check the adequacy of home allowance as soon as possible (22/11945 N:o Hao 3/1945). Bruno Sarlin, the managing director, stated in his circular letter dated 31st of January 1945 that such an adjustment does not seem to be necessary in Helsinki because “the amount of home allowance had been increased in proportion to the rise in the cost of living”. Despite this, it was decided to subject the nutrition norms to thorough scrutiny by the end of the year. The adjustment was occasioned by the demands from some members of the Social Welfare Board, who had received numerous complaints from the recipients of relief.

Haapasalo conducted several precise calculations again. The age groups remained the same, although they continued to differ from those based on the wartime regulations of the Ministry of Supply. Therefore, he had to create 13 new subgroups. The calculations indicated that the norm had lagged considerably behind the rise in prices, although the nutrition norm had been revised three times during the first few months of the year. After Haapasalo’s inquiry, the norm was revised again, starting from the 18th of October 1945, “to remove the worst irregularities”. The norm, which was raised by 150 percent at once, was also compared with the livelihood acquired by a general worker with his wages, both in the country in general and in Helsinki in particular (p.m. 27.11.1945).

After two years, comprehensive accounts were drawn up again to back up the relief norm. The definitions of calories and nutrients that had formed the basis for calculations, and that dated mainly from the wartime, were complemented with supplementary aid for expectant mothers and “those who were in poor health or inflicted with tuberculosis, diabetes or gastric ulcer”. Those who ate outdoors (i.e. the homeless) started to receive monthly payments instead of daily ones. This practice was maintained as a standard for decisions in the sixth Social Welfare Office (that of the homeless), today known as the Special Welfare Office, until the 1990s. An important supplement was added to the norm when, in addition to the nutrition norm, the poor started to receive cash allowances according to a separate table (cl. 17.4.1947).

Basic support based on families’ individual needs was introduced on the 1st of May 1967. The goal was to “simplify the home allowance system and make it as fair as possible”. Another goal was to find the technically easiest way to define the norm in any given situation. This issue caused a great deal

of discordance in the Social Welfare Board. At the same time the paying out of some forms of supplementary aid was discontinued; thus, the norm was actually raised by only a few percent (e.g. assistance for adults rose by four marks) per month. A similar model was used in Gothenburg, Sweden. The structure of the norm was simplified by counting the money given for food and spending money as a bulk sum. Only two age groups were defined for children, and the separate age groups for those over sixty were abolished (cl. 18.4.1967).

Basic support for a single adult living in Helsinki at that time was 115 marks per month. For instance, in 1966 in Janakkala the food allowance for an adult was 80 marks and in Säynätsalo 90 marks per month (The Advisory Commission of Social Assistance 1967, Appendix 3). Coupled with the spending money that was given to people, the norms of these two municipalities were well comparable to those of Helsinki. However, in Finland as a whole the fluctuations of the norm were considerable. In 1972 the nutrition norm for a single adult was between 60 and 160 marks, and with regard to spending money the variations were even greater. Furthermore, the norm was not even used yet in all municipalities (Jaakkola & Sihvo 1972, 7).

In 1984 social assistance, as a part of the Social Assistance Act, changed into living allowance. The change of the name had hardly any impact on the 'living allowance policy' pursued in Helsinki. Changes occurred only at the beginning of 1989, when some social welfare offices experimented with the use of the *extended basic amount*. This norm specified that single adults should be paid 80 percent (earlier 55 percent) of the basic minimum national pension. According to the decision of the Council of State (vnp 28.12.1988), the extended basic amount was to be in use in all municipalities by the beginning of 1994. In addition to the money for food and general expenses, the extended norm included money to be given out at will for such uses as the so-called information expenditure (TV licence, telephone bills and newspaper subscriptions), buying clothes, minor health care expenses, and a monthly season ticket for local transportation.

The latest change, which is still taking shape, occurred around the years 1993 and 1994. The basic amount due to children under 17 was revised, and family allowances began to be considered income. In addition to this, a new basic amount was introduced for people who were over 18 years of age and living at home (vnp 1993). In Helsinki it was deemed necessary to define the norm differently under certain "exceptional situations", in cases where "the diminishing of the basic amount weakens unreasonably the living standards of some recipients" (SO 8.3.1994).

At the beginning of 1996 the basic amount was redefined. Only “those who really live alone as well as single parents” were entitled to the highest norm, the single adult norm. A special sign of this change was that it became possible to reduce the basic amount by 20 percent if the applicant had turned down a job or an educational opportunity offered to him or her (Vnp 1995) (see Table 3.).

*Table 3. The amount of the basic living allowance in 1997*

recipient	FIM/month	FIM/day
living alone or single parent	2021	67,37
– reduced norm (by 20 %) due to turning down a job	1617	53,90
others, 17 years of age or older (couples, married or cohabiting, both spouses )	1718	57,27
– reduced norm (by 20 %) due to turning down a job	1374	45,80
17 years of age or older, living with parent(s)	1475	49,17
-reduced norm (by 20 %) due to turning down a job	1180	39,33
child, 10 to 16 years of age	1415	47,17
child, under 10 years of age	1334	44,47

At the end of October 1997, a new separate bill on living allowance was being drafted in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. According to the law, it would be possible to reduce the extended basic amount of the norm by 40 percent if “a person repeatedly turns down a job or an educational opportunity”. In practice this, together with the deductible of seven percent of the living costs, would mean that the minimum social assistance would correspond to the amount of money reserved for food.

## The norm-production techniques of the social bureaucracy

Until the late 1980s all decisions regarding individual allowances were made in boards that operated under the Social Services Committee, the number of

boards varying from three to eight. Before the year 1936, at the time of the 'multi rate norm', the practices adopted by the officers who made house calls, as well as by their superiors, remained 'opaque' to the clients and the management alike. Switching to a common, written norm was an important change with regard to the uniformity, predictability, and simplification of social work.

Binding the allowances to a minimum that was reasonable from the viewpoint of poor relief, i.e. to the prices of meals in the central kitchen, was a practical measure. It meant a more advanced technique of creating norms for the work of social workers. The aim was to engage in such practices in handing out allowances that could be more easily controlled. This goal was to be reached through the standardization of the duties of social workers. The change doubtlessly crumbled practices that had relied on the use of discretion on a solely case-specific basis. The strong emphasis on case-specific discretion expressed the fear that the change would herald the birth of a kind of 'automatic distribution mechanism'. The same fear was echoed in the remark made by the managing director in conjunction with the first raise in the norm. According to him, the higher norm was to be paid to the recipient only if he or she made a separate claim for it (cl. 22.9.1937).

During the depression, an Employment Office that operated under the Poor Relief Committee was set up. Its task was to keep a registry of the unemployed and pay unemployment allowances granted by the City Council. The regular stamping of the allowance card was necessary for the single unemployed, because it entitled them to a meal card. The free meals were the only form of public assistance available to them. In 1932 an office for voluntary aid was set up, with the task of supervising that aid was distributed fairly (Kunnalliskertomus 1932, 114 ).

The norms were raised for the first time in less than a year later by about five percent to meet the rise in the food index (cl. 23.2.1937). Thus, the norm was bound to the food index and partly also to the cost-of-living index. In addition to this and the prices of meals at the central kitchen, the third 'index' linked to the actual content of the norm was still the food coupon, worth 10 marks. The officials making house calls were, for example, expected to include in their suggestion the information about how large a proportion of the allowance was to be given as food coupons. In 1939, giving 10 to 20 percent of the allowances as food coupons was set as a goal (cl. 17.4.1939). This norm seems to have become stricter in a little over a year's time, because earlier the goal had been 5–10 percent (cl. 29.4.1937).

The work of the Welfare Offices was standardized, and their efficiency increased despite the depression – or perhaps because of it. Among the important changes were the practice of entering the allowances on cards known as ‘Viscards’ (cl. 5.11.1931), entering the status of irremovability in the unemployment register (cl. 27.9.1932), introducing a standard form for check-ups (cl. 30.8.1933) and a special ‘act<sup>4</sup> register’ called ‘acme’ (cl. 29.1.1934). All in all, the promotion of Bruno Sarlin, a former government poor relief inspector, to managing director brought with it many organisational reforms; the predictability of poor relief increased in accordance with bureaucratic ideals (cf. Satka 1995, 113-116).

The basic amounts of normative allowances were, due to the rises that had been directly bound to the cost-of-living index, some 20 percent higher in March 1941 than they had been five years earlier. During wartime the norm still mainly followed the changes in the food index, though on a slightly different calculatory basis from that stated above. After the war the food allowances of poor relief were scrutinized in relation to the staples that were being rationed. This turn of events was significant because then, for the first time, poor relief was mirrored against other calculations that dealt with the food economy of other citizens. Poor relief in a way broke away from the vicious circle of self-evaluation. Connected with this was also the comparison of the poor relief with the “lowest standard of living of those who make their own living” (cl. 30.11.1945). The ‘general worker’s wage index’ was also entered in the first Unemployment Allowances Act, passed during the same year.

In 1947 the concept of ‘privileged income’ was ratified, which meant that certain pensions and wages were disregarded when deciding on an individual’s entitlement to an allowance. What forms of income were to be disregarded was decided with the help of a separate table. This was done to encourage people to earn their own living, to help “the people living on allowances to see that making an effort pays off” (cl. 17.4.1947). It is evident that social workers had followed that practice long before it was made official. In those days poor relief had been the only source of income for people who were outside the labour market.

The norm was raised in the postwar years – mainly due to inflation – several times a year. It was in a constant state of flux. With the introduction of spending money and a supplementary food allowance, the norm was naturally changed, but it continued to carry with it principles adopted during the war and the period of rationing. For twenty years the norm relied strongly on the *means test*.

The efficiency of social work was also increased by a reform of the entire organisation of the Social Services Department. One such measure was the revision of social welfare regulations in 1952. With the passing of the Social Assistance Act (1936) and the National Pensions Act (1937), individual offices and sections were established. Governmental social security developed in such a way that as late as the 1960s new laws were put into effect by municipal social administrations. In Helsinki it became standard practice that new tasks resulted in the establishment of a new office to handle those tasks. Later on new sections were established for family allowance, home establishment loan, and so forth. The latest section that the above principle brought about, the housing allowance office, was closed as recently as 1993, when the Social Insurance Institution took charge of housing allowance as a whole.

In the development of institutional practices, other significant changes include a new set of forms, introduced in 1946, as well as 'social assistance budgets', drafted since 1956. Various calculations were used to find out the exact difference between income and expenses. When the social assistance budget indicated that there was a surplus, an allowance was not to be granted. The budget, however, had to be "drafted with utmost care before this rule can be followed to the letter" (cl. 6.3.1956). Here, too, it is clear that social workers had already for years been making various calculations based on the income and expenses of applicants. With specific directives the managing director of the Social Welfare Office thus officialized and standardized the existing practice. This way of making calculations is still used today in an almost unchanged form in the computerized client database.

Another important ongoing goal has been to rationalize, standardize and increase the controllability of the work of social welfare inspectors. This goal was linked, for example, with the introduction of the new welfare report form in 1956. Very specific instructions were given as to how to fill in the form. The use of the form was standardized as far as possible. "The text will begin at the start of the line and usually in lower case, except in the case of a proper name or an independent sentence" (op.cit., p. 23). The idea was to get the forms as uniformly filled in as possible, so that the chief secretaries and assistant managers preparing the decisions could at a glance pick up the essential details for the making of decisions in their sections. The special duty of the managing directors was to see to it that "all the essential information was written down uniformly" when the forms were filled in. Through the careful filling in of all the 24 entries in the welfare report form one could get a multifaceted picture of each applicant. Entry number 22, 'Way of Life', was given more attention than the other entries. Here one was to enter pos-

sible arrests for drunk driving, welfare measures regarding alcoholics and vagrants, misdemeanours, and so on (cl. 21.12.1956).

The number of abbreviations belonging to the language of bureaucracy increased when the new form was introduced. At the same time the bureaucratic language connected with the granting of social assistance drifted further away from the natural language of the subjects of intervention. From the viewpoint of the officials working at the Central Registry, the standardisation of the tens of thousands of documents and the rationalisation of their work were necessary procedures. The social welfare inspectors, too, gradually learned to use the abbreviations. Furthermore, through the use of their own control slang the workers constructed their own expertise and their expert practices. From time to time it was necessary to specify the use of abbreviations. For example, in the 1970s there was an 'abbreviation team' that produced, as a result of months of work, a considerable number of new abbreviations.

The next thorough revision of documents was carried out between 1985 and 1987. The goal was to produce a set of forms that would allow a more flexible way of recording cases. On the same form it was, in principle, possible to record all the decisions made in the field of social assistance. Instead of detailing the cases one after another on a form and making draft decisions, new carbon paper forms were adopted: each of them related to one specific decision only, and one copy of the form could be given to the client. One of the copies was given to the official who was responsible for the payment of the allowances, and yet another copy ended up in the act file. The 'serial story' of social work (that was how the consecutive accounts on the act form were perceived) began to disappear.

The new computerized customer database was introduced in Helsinki in 1988. It seems to have strengthened the existing tendency of sectorization within the field of social work, as each sector had its own subsystems. Furthermore, the entering of data in the database has become highly standardized, even when compared to the earlier developments. The abbreviations connected with client service, i.e. the codes of the Social Services Department, have been given totally new uses, and their importance, which was already on the decline, has increased enormously. The abbreviations made it possible to considerably speed up the entering of routine information on the forms, while the resulting printed decision, which was to be given to the clients, could remain clearly worded.

The introduction of the new data processing systems made a decisive difference to the surveillance of the compiling of statistics and other social

work. The systems have allowed real-time or even employee-specific follow-up reports. This dimension of control was beyond the dreams of the earlier generations of administrators. What is more, it has become possible to hand over a significant part of the information collection work connected with surveillance to social workers and assistants. This development has been almost the opposite of what it was thought to be as late as the latter part of the 1980s – at least if one analyzes the discussion about social welfare that went on at the time. The ideas of ‘holistic social welfare’ and “client service that is free from administrative rationalities” have been buried under work that is becoming ever more bureaucratic. The depression and the number of clients, which has more than doubled, have speeded up this development.

The living allowance that complied with the Social Welfare Act (1982) was not very different in either structure or level from the norm that had been used in Helsinki until then and which was compliant to the Social Assistance Act. The impacts of the change of the basis on which the eligibility for allowances was determined, and of the fact that the Cabinet became responsible for defining the standards, were not significant in Helsinki until the late 1980s when the so-called extended norm was adopted. That is why my phases above do not include a ‘nationalization phase’ any more than the ‘phase’ when the Social Assistance Act of 1956 was enacted. In some municipalities the change was more visible than in others: the norm may have risen quite considerably, or the minimum norm was adopted where ‘normlessness’ had prevailed.

The introduction of the extended norm in the whole of Finland at the beginning of 1994 was, naturally, a significant phase. However, in the municipalities where the norm was already in use, as in Helsinki, this point in time did not bring anything particularly new to the practice of granting allowances. It was first and foremost a question of rationalizing the norm, a process that also accommodated the discussion about encouraging clients’ own initiative.

However, from the viewpoint of drafting instructions for social work, the adoption of the ‘government norm’ has had several consequences. In the 1980s the National Board of Social Welfare drafted instructions and orders regarding the living allowance. After this institution was discontinued, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has issued ‘manuals’ dealing with the granting of the living allowance. In the social administration of Helsinki the number of instructions pertaining to the whole department has been reduced, the emphasis being on specifying the instructions issued by the central administration. Thus, it is possible that the smaller number of instruc-

tions has increased the need for the individual social welfare centres to provide their own training and instruction. An example of this is the Special Welfare Office, mentioned earlier, where there is a detailed training folder, known as 'Viola's Green' (named after the head social worker compiling the folder).

When comparing the manuals for the implementation of the living allowance (STM 1994 and STM 1997) that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Finnish abbreviation STM) put out in March 1994 as well as three years later, one finds important differences. These can be regarded as visible signs of the new orders that started to show in the norm at the beginning of 1994. There was a shift from a rather 'generous' practice with a lot of trust in the client towards more rigorous calculations. Although the manuals do not include "rules and regulations that are binding to the municipalities" (STM 1997, iii), they have had an important effect on work practices. Important classifying practices in the following of the norms are connected with the ways in which the guidelines for dealing with 'new' problems are set. Such practices include new subnumbers for the living allowances to which students, conscripts, convicts and overly indebted people are eligible. These examples show how problems often make it to the manuals years after they are first identified. The special problems related to the question of maintenance liability are evident, for example, in the statement that in the cases of people who are over 18 years old and still living in their parents' home, the "actual need for living allowance should be investigated, even though this may be difficult" (STM 1997, 2B7).

Significant differences between the interpretations of the 'living allowance manuals' from the years 1994 and 1997 include the stronger emphasis on the other, or primary, forms of social benefits, and above all the changed definition of maintenance liability. This has, of course, been a core question in poor relief for centuries. It is speculated in the 1994 manual that although the social assistance act "does not include a clear statement about people's duty to support themselves, this principle is seen to be included in '30 of the act, where there is a reference to gainful employment and entrepreneurship'" (STM 1994, 3). On the other hand, in the 1997 manual it is clearly stated that social welfare legislation requires that "each person is responsible for their own livelihood, granted that they have a real opportunity to do so in their life situation. One can earn one's living, for example, by going to work for someone else, either independently or via the employment office" (STM 1997, 7). It is evident that those who drafted the manual had changed the interpretation due to the sanction that has been applied from the beginning of 1996 to

those who turn down jobs. There is no mention of this in the manual, however.

## Changes in the ethos

The changes described above can be summarized in a table which outlines the development of the norm.

*Table 4.*

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phase	the operationalization of the norm	the ethos of the norm
–1936 a floating, multi rate norm	meals at the canteen for the poor, 'food parcels' worth FIM 10	case-specific enquiries, nutritional minimum
1936–1941 classification	normative food allowance, meals at the canteen for the poor, food index	nutritional minimum incentives, controlling misuse
1941–1945 the calory norm	calory calculations, consumption units, food index, normative cost-of-living index	specified nutritional minimum, physiology, war economy and supply of food for people
1945–1947 calculated nutrition norm	cost-of-living index, specified food index, politically and administratively defined consumption index, general workers' wage index	specification of the link with markets, calculated means-testing, state unemployment allowance
1947–1967 means-tested norm 'with trimmings'	consumer reports, social welfare budgets, formal means-testing, general workers' wage index	physiological needs, the link with markets strengthens, social insurance benefits

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1967–1988 the norm produced by formal means-testing, the emergence of the governmental norm	a norm relating to individual families, the new phase of social bureaucracy	normalisation, the erosion of the link with markets, 'state-controlled life'
1989–1994 rationalisation	rationalizing the norm, extended basic amount, computerized control system	the link with markets breaks, 'the Nordic welfare state'
1994– classification	development towards a floating norm, norm for those who turn down jobs	markets, social efficiency, incentives

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When the economic depression of the 1930s subsided, the municipal officials expected the number of those needing help to return to the level on which it had been prior to the depression. It did not, and this caused clear frustration in the poor relief offices too. As unemployment diminished, both the rise in the level of allowances and the large number of 'poor relief beneficiaries' began to be seen as serious problems. After all, the nutrition norm of the home allowance had not been created to tackle with the backlog of the great numbers of claimants during the depression (see Arnkil 1991, 39). Most clearly the change was introduced to curb the number of "those who had become dependent on poor relief" now that the economic hardships seemed to be almost over. It was believed that this change would encourage the unemployed to look for work more actively than before. The goal was to bind the allowances to a reasonable minimum – the meal prices at the central kitchen.

On the other hand, the definition of the minimum norm was an important tool in the surveillance of social workers' input and in disciplining their work. Standardizing the work methods of social workers by introducing new forms, for example, was one of the central interests of the new managing director of the poor relief office, Bruno Sarlin. The organisational reform of the office in 1935 did not reduce the costs of poor relief, whereas the creation of norms seemed to have that kind of an effect, even by cautious estimates. Of course, the principal reason for the diminishing numbers of those needing help in the late 1930s was increased employment.

During wartime the level of poor relief was linked to the careful calculation of physiological minimum needs. The need to optimize the relation between an individual's need and the wealth (and efficiency) of society forced the invention of new ways to calculate that relation. The wartime, especially, was the clearest example of how events ascribed to historical ideas or decisions can most often be reduced to a necessity to act in a certain way – or to an inability to act otherwise. The idea of a common effort mobilised the entire nation, and the children's nutrition norm was approximately in line with the caloric intake of the rest of the population – at least in figures and on average. The adult norm, by contrast, was below the minimum consumption guaranteed to the rest of the population (and even that had meant a tightening of belts). Other people could, more easily than the poor, enjoy the offerings on the black market. At that time the adults who were granted poor relief consisted of the elderly, the handicapped and the bedridden; others were required to find work.

In the post-war years it became necessary to raise the norm every few months due to inflation. Despite this, those who received allowances complained that the norm was too strict, that it simply was not enough to survive on. From this one can conclude that at that time, at least, social workers kept to the sums that the norm dictated; at any rate, they did not exceed the norm. In the autumn of 1945 the calculation method, which was bound to the food index and was believed to be accurate, failed. One reason for this was a change in the food economy, brought about by the long-term rationing. This change was not taken into account due to a structural distortion of the norm. The use of an index-based calculation method had outgrown its usefulness. A new method of definition was searched with the general aim of “putting the poor law into practice”. The aim was not to allow the standard of living of people dependent on welfare to become higher than the lowest standard of living of those who earned their own living. The living standard of a general worker's family was chosen as the basis of comparison, and this criterion has been used extensively since then.

The change from the norm of the war economy to that of the restoration economy did not occur overnight. The recipients of poor relief were ‘prisoners’ of the food index (which had even been based partly on the wrong foodstuffs) much longer than the rest of the population. At that time the fairness of social workers' interpretations was especially important for these people. The single men returning from the lost war and the old widows who had received relief were not on the top of the agenda. The ethos of shared responsibility did not encompass them. As recently as the late 1940s the

central concern of legislators was to stabilize the situation of families with dependent children.

There was a solid link between the norm and the standard of living which was considered to be normal for households of limited means. In poor relief the new method of defining the food allowance was consolidated in the late 1940s. The revision of the norm, which was carried out in April 1947, was a decision with far-reaching consequences, though careful calculations of calories and foodstuffs continued to be the calculatory basis of the norm. A new approach was the comparison of the norm with consumer surveys. Allowances specified to meet the increased nutritional needs of special groups as well as spending money (now granted for the first time) both were parts of the definition of the norm until the late 1980s. In addition to this, parts of the pensions or wages of those who received benefits began to be officially considered 'privileged income'. This practice became a standard for decades. It can therefore be estimated that, besides the introduction of basic support to meet families' varying needs (in 1967), no equally significant changes connected with the norm of the minimum income occurred in four decades.

The standardization of social workers' duties was realized mainly at the level of everyday routines. In the 1940s and early 1950s, the forms and instructions that were used in social work dated from the time before the war. The 'officialization' of privileged income in 1947, the directives that were issued for the calculation of the social assistance budget, and the introduction of the new welfare report form in 1956 were all significant changes. And with the modification of the norm to take families' individual needs into consideration, most of the standardizing and normalising practices can be said to have already existed at that time. Society had moved from sharp social distinctions and the ethos of a self-regulating subject to the shared responsibility principle of the reconstruction period, although that principle, in relation to minimum social assistance, concerned mainly just the elderly, the handicapped, the bedridden, and children.

Granting social assistance to those who were fit to work continued to be rather strictly regulated. However, the development of the other branches of social security that started in the 1960s suggests that the social security net was considerably more extensive than before. The revision of the Social Assistance Act in 1970 can be seen as a confirmation of this. The maintenance liability was changed by abolishing children's duty to support their parents. The change did not carry much weight in practice, at least not in Helsinki. The possibility of forced collection, which was granted by the old law, had hardly been used for two decades.

The transition into the use of the so-called extended basic amount of the living allowance, which began in the Social Services Department of Helsinki in 1989, was the next step in the rationalisation of social work. This step can also be interpreted as a good example of the belief that people can be in control of their lives with the help of the welfare state. The tendency was to strengthen people's opportunities of being in charge of their own spending. The introduction of the computerized client database necessitated the trimming of the procedures. In this view the revision of the forms three years earlier was the product of old-fashioned, 'holistic' social work.

The latest change in the standardization process, which occurred around 1994, can be seen as a reversal of the entire process of defining the norm technically. So far attempts to create a 'floating norm' technique have been tentative and, to some extent, even contradictory. The technical solution has so far been articulated rather vaguely as 'flexibility and encouragement', and the key will be information management. Advanced data processing systems offer a real-time feel, for example through connections to other databases. This is the basis on which technology will certainly be utilised. This may, however, mean tampering with citizens' privacy protection and may also require that the eligibility for living allowance is defined more vaguely than at present. The spreading of computerized bureaucratic work further into the field of social work seems to be held back at least by the expensiveness of the development of data processing systems. Furthermore, the people who know these systems are generally very far removed from everyday social work, with the result that there is a gap between practical knowledge and technical expertise.

On the basis of this analysis, the shaping of the minimum norm appears to be an erratic process that is anything but committed to 'great ideas'. When difficulties have emerged, they have been reacted to in the best possible way – sooner or later. The logic of the workings of this system of practices can be illustrated by the idea that Mary Douglas borrowed from Lévi-Strauss' resourceful *bricoleur*, who "joins a broken clock to a pipe rack or a broken table to an umbrella stand" (Douglas 1987, 66).

For all these decades, social workers have been resourceful solvers of everyday problems; people who make seemingly incompatible parts stick together. In Helsinki the 'Gyro Gearloose' of the 1940s and 1950s was undoubtedly Mr Haapasalo, who can be said to have come up with more ways of producing modern norms than any legislator. He was first and foremost the articulator of both the problems that the field of social work had encountered and the practices that it had established. This connection has since

been lost, resulting in divided and partly fragmented institutions. This may be one of the core questions regarding the problems that are connected with the definition of the norm of living allowance today.

The different types of ethos connected with the norm of minimum assistance seem to differ from the routinized presentations to which the development of the welfare state is bound at a narrative level. There is a reason to give up the view that it would somehow be possible, by means of social policy, to mold, *ex post facto*, a moral mindset or an 'individual ethos' for each phase of development. The governing of the poor may always have been on the sidetrack compared with other social policies, and this is the case even today. The powerful principle of social efficiency has produced, in contrast to other social policies, the idea of social minimum – an idea that has gradually become a reality *sui generis*, an entity with its own laws of development and distinct ways of interpreting the social world.

I do not interpret the development of the minimum norm or any other kind of social benefit as part of the fulfilment of the welfare state 'project'. Stories of the welfare state project, and the practice of adding new chapters and interpretations to that 'great story', are quite often available as points of view, or even as methods, for sociopolitical history writing. Within such an interpretive framework breaks and changes that are incompatible with the 'project' (constructed 'after the fact') are easily written off as mere delays in its realization.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> My thanks to Sakari Hänninen for clarifying the thematics of this article.

<sup>2</sup> I will not distinguish between minimum social assistance and a minimum income here; I will use both terms interchangeably.

<sup>3</sup> The practice of sending communications in the form of circular letters was given up in the 1960s. The development of printing and duplication methods made possible a more widespread distribution of the communications.

<sup>4</sup> This concept is still used to refer to the basic interaction in social welfare work (it marks the meeting between a social worker and a client).

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Nikolas Rose

## THE CRISIS OF 'THE SOCIAL': BEYOND THE SOCIAL QUESTION

### Introduction: Something is happening

‘On the social’. In the UK this phrase is used to refer to those who are financially supported, in whole or in part, by benefits paid by the state: unemployment benefits, disability benefits, emergency payments, housing benefits and so forth. Social insurance, social security, the social services, social welfare, social work... the terms are familiar, banal. But what is this enigmatic word ‘social’. This is what I want to explore here.<sup>1</sup> From this perspective, I want to examine some aspects of a widely discussed phenomenon: the ‘crisis of the welfare state’. This ‘crisis’ can be understood in many different ways. But at least one aspect, I suggest, is a mutation, in the types of thought and action shaped by this little term ‘social’.

To be ‘on the social’ today in the UK is to be problematised in new ways. Those who are in this position no longer seem to be viewed as fellow citizens in need of social support to cope with temporary difficulties brought about by the ups and downs of a life-cycle, or by unexpected ill-health or accident. They are spoken about as if they were somehow distinct, different: the inhabitants of a dangerous or a demeaned territory, the source of fiscal, economic and moral problems, to be feared and condemned or pitied and reformed. Fiscally, they appear to represent a drain on taxes, recipients of public funds who make no return, sometimes even to be fraudsters working in the ‘black economy’ or members of organised gangs setting out to de-

fraud the nation, elsewhere, individuals denied the opportunity to contribute through work. Economically, in addition to their tax cost, they appear to represent a sector without either the skills or the will to enhance competitiveness, whether this be a result of their own failings or a consequence of social policies and other factors beyond their control. Morally, they are demeaned not merely because of their despair or depravity, but because of their apparent dependence – financial, psychological, moral – upon a system of state hand-outs.

Different terms are used to describe those in this position: a culture of dependency, an underclass, the marginalised, the excluded. Each term is attached to a different politics. But each treats those ‘on the social’ as inhabiting a distinct mode of life, one which is purely negative: negative for those who inhabit it and for others. Despite their very real differences, there is also a family resemblance to the solutions proffered. Politicians of the right proclaim their intention to ‘shut down the something-for-nothing society’ (Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, Conservative Party Conference, Blackpool, September 1996). Those of the centre speak in more benign terms of a hand-up not a hand-out, a system which will move people from welfare to work and so forth. But the explicit or implicit presupposition of the message is the same: the aim is not to be ‘on the social’ but to be off it.

For the inventors of the British Welfare State, like William Beveridge, the term ‘social’ in social insurance meant something valuable. Individuals stood together, shoulder to shoulder, pooled their individual risks to collectively ward off insecurity for each and for all, protecting against both national threat and personal disaster (Beveridge, 1942: 13). In the name of this ‘social’, in the UK after the 1939-45 war, the system of state benefits was reconfigured. The ramshackle array of benefits for different types of need, with their diverse organisations, means tests, criteria, procedures and so forth were connected up into a single regime of social insurance, funded by taxation and compulsory contributions and organised by the State as a right and an obligation of citizenship. The name of John Maynard Keynes was applied to a political strategy in which the economic and the social could be harnessed together, and jointly governed in ways that would lead to their mutual optimisation. The ‘social wage’ was invented, which stood alongside the individual wage gained as a result of the sale of labour through the employment contract: it was an entitlement of every citizen when in need, a *quid pro quo* for their contributions through tax and national insurance. Other changes operated according to the same social principle. The diverse practices and apparatuses of social work, child care and so forth were linked up into a

coherent regime of social work and social services. This was not in itself a strategy whose problem field was that of social inequality or whose explicit or implicit objective was framed in terms of social equality, but it could be linked to these problematics of social justice and was capable of mobilisation in relation to them from the parties of the left.

Whilst criticisms of social government could already be discerned with the beginnings of neo-liberal thought in the 1930s, and with the writings of Hayek in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, for perhaps fifty years, the social imperative for government remained relatively uncontested. I have argued elsewhere that this imperative is mutating and a novel 'post-welfare' problem space is forming (Rose, 1966c). This mutation is bound up with a re-shaping of the very territory of government. In place of 'the social' as an ideal, a strategic objective, an imagined territory, we have seen the rising cultural, political, ethical salience of a different zone: the locality, the neighbourhood, the sector, or, most powerfully, 'the community'. The community may be a topographically delineated space, but it may also be a virtual space: the gay community, the ethnic minority community and so forth. In any event, I have suggested, community emerges as the ideal territory for the administration of individual and collective existence, the plane or surface upon which micro-moral relations amongst persons are conceptualised and administered. This is not merely a matter of the prominence of the language of community in political discourse, in the programmatic statements of political philosophers and advocates of the different versions of communitarianism. Communitarianism is not new, and community is one of the traditional themes of modern constitutional thought (along with liberalism and nationalism) (Tully, 1995). Nor is it merely a matter of the prevalence of the language of community in social policy – community safety, community mental health, community development and so forth – for the language of community has long been a part of social policy. But what is novel is the way in which collective existence is made intelligible and calculable in terms of community, and the way in which the vocabulary of community places collective existence under a certain description, making it amenable to intervention and administration in particular ways. Thus a whole series of issues are problematised – made amenable to authoritative action *in terms of* features of communities and their strengths, cultures, pathologies. Strategies and programmes address such problems by seeking to *act upon* the dynamics of communities, enhancing the bonds that link individuals to their community, rebuilding shattered communities and so forth. Community constitutes the imagined territory upon which a whole range of political and

professional strategies act – such as community mental health, community policing, community safety – as well as market strategies such as those involved in the selling of insurance and security. Hence one sees the emergence of political programmes, both at the micro-level and at the macro-level, for *government through community*: (e.g. Etzioni, 1993; Grey, 1996). In such programmes ‘society’ still exists but not in a ‘social’ form: society is to be regenerated, and social justice to be maximised, through the building of responsible communities, prepared to invest in themselves (Commission on Social Justice, 1994). And in the name of community, a whole variety of groups and forces make their demands, wage their campaigns, stand up for their rights and enact their resistances.

What is involved here is a kind of ‘de-totalisation’ of society. The continuous (if not homogeneous) ‘thought-space’ of the social is fragmented, as indexed in the rise of concerns in terms of ‘multiculturalism’, and political controversies over the implications of ‘pluralism’ – of ethnicity, religion, of sexuality, of ability and disability - together with conflicts over the competing and mutually exclusive ‘rights’ and ‘values’ of different communities. Subjects of government are not merely understood as the isolated atomic and autonomous subjects of choice and freedom, nor in terms of the presence or absence of the natural bonds of kinship and family values. They are also understood as individuals with ‘identities’ which not only identify them, but do so through their allegiance to a particular set of community values, beliefs and commitments. Communities of identity may be defined by locality (neighbourhood), by ethnicity (the Asian community), by lifestyle (as in the segmentation of lifestyle operated by advertisers, manufacturers and the media), by sexuality (the gay community) or by political or moral allegiance (ecologists, vegetarians). The individual in his or her community is thus not only construed as a responsible individual, but also as one who has emotional bonds of affinity to a circumscribed ‘network’ of other individuals – unified by family ties, by locality, by moral commitment to environmental protection or animal welfare. Individual conduct, understood from this perspective, no longer appears to be ‘socially determined’. Rather, conduct is to be understood in terms of the choices of individuals, each of whom is not merely pursuing their own self-interest, but whose actions and choices are shaped by values which themselves arise from ties of identification with a particular family and moral community.

The current debates in the English-speaking world about political responses to moral pluralism takes place on this territory. Does the plurality of ethics in different moral communities pose a relativistic threat to certain necessary

agreements about moral absolutes, or does it herald the birth of a new era of enhanced ethical seriousness based upon allegiances which are individually sought and chosen within a cosmopolitan moral universe? The very notion of a nation of citizens with a single locus of identification, a single set of cultural and moral values, a certain ‘national character’ becomes problematic: can a unitary constitution embrace a plurality of citizenship? In the face of supra-national associations and trans-national ecological movements, rival nationalisms fighting across a single geographical terrain, federalism, the politics of ethnic, cultural and linguistic minorities, and multi-culturalism, it is no longer easy for political thought to territorialise itself in an apparently ‘natural’ geo-political space in which the nation is coextensive with and delimited by a unified polity of social citizens (cf. Tully, 1995). In the face of such ‘strange multiplicities’ to adopt Tully’s term, in a variety of national contexts, and from a variety of political positions, ‘anti-political motifs’ are on the rise within political discourse (Hindess, 1994a). These motifs not only stress the corruption and ineffectiveness of the political classes but, more fundamentally, are based upon a sense of the limits of any politics that sees itself as omni-competent and articulates itself in terms of overarching political programmes. For such ‘anti-political’ politics, ‘community’ can be regarded as the space in which powers and responsibilities previously allocated to politicians might be re-located. Emergent political rationalities – civic republicanism, associationalism, communitarian liberalism – seek ways of governing, not through the politically directed, nationally territorialised, bureaucratically staffed and programmatically rationalised projects of a centrally concentrated State, but through instrumentalising the self-governing properties of the subjects of government themselves in a whole variety of locales and localities – enterprises, associations, neighbourhoods, interest groups, and, of course, communities. As the current leader of the British Labour Party put it, “the search is on to reinvent community for a modern age, true to core values of fairness, co-operation and responsibility”.<sup>2</sup>

## The birth of the social

It was in the nineteenth century that the modern sense of ‘social’ started to take shape, at least in the English situation. A plethora of philanthropists and reformers in the first half of the nineteenth century invented such things as pauper schools, reformatory prisons, lunatic asylums to public baths and washhouses – a whole variety of ‘moral technologies’ designed to shape the

character and conscience of those who were to be moral subjects and hence to mould their conduct. Others campaigned for legislation which would have moral effects, such as the reform of the Poor Laws and the imposition of restrictions on child labour (Rose, 1992; 1996b; see also Riley, 1988, Joyce, 1995 and 1996). The moral domain was a zone of critiques and contestations: what was to be regulated, how and by whom. Further, the subjects of moral reform were not merely passive in these disputes: intervention was sometimes demanded, sometimes resisted by those who were to be its beneficiaries: the working poor to be improved, married women to be accorded property rights as a counterbalance to the power of their husbands, families seeking moral instruction for their children and so forth. And intervention upon this moral domain was itself always interrupted by 'liberal' concerns about the principle of individual liberty and the inviolability of the moral person, liberalism, as we know, being characterised by a constant suspicion about the powers, scope and effectiveness of government.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, this moral territory was inscribed into thought. I mean this literally: it was written down in evidence, counted, tabulated, graphed, drawn. Poverty and pauperism, illness, crime, suicide and so forth were the subject of a whole labour of documentation.<sup>3</sup> Statistics, censuses, surveys and a new genre of explorations of the lives of the poor attempted to render moral events knowable and calculable. Theorists of the moral order sought to delineate regularities in conduct that would enable it to be understood in the same way as the natural world, and argued that the moral domain, like nature itself, was governed by its own intrinsic laws. The moral order, once a field zone where diverse opinions competed and contested, justified by reference to extrinsic ethical or theological principles, came to be accorded a specific 'positivity'. That is to say, it mutated into a reality with its own regularities, laws and characteristics. It was these characteristics that gradually came to be termed 'social'. One begins to see the emergence of a new 'social' language: 'social' novels, the 'social evil', the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science. A new breed of experts of the social was born – the doctors, the charity workers, the investigators of the 'dark continent of the poor' – who spoke 'in the name of the social'. This social gaze focused, in particular, upon the conditions of life of the labouring poor and paupers, with a particular eye for issues of domestic squalor, immorality, child mortality, household budgeting and the conditions and actions of the working class woman (Riley, 1988: 49). Gradually 'social' comes to be accorded something like the sense it was to have for the next hundred years. It was a plane or dimension of a national territory, which

formed, shaped and even determined the characteristics and character of the individual. And it was the problem space within which one must pose a range of questions and struggles about matters of life, of conduct, of powers and authority, questions and struggles that lay outside the formal scope of the political apparatus but were to become intensely 'political'.

The social was not to remain merely an empirical amalgam of these diverse problems, investigations of the lives, labours, crimes, diseases, madness and domestic habits of the poor, a space of polemics, pamphlets and philanthropies. It was to be formalised, to become the domain that sociology, from Comte through Spencer to Durkheim, defined as a reality *sui generis*: hence one that could be known by a social science. Through writings of those like Herbert Spencer and his fellow social Darwinists, the social question became a conceptual question. By the end of the century, Durkheim, in the opening pages of his *Rules of Sociological Method*, was deploring the fact that 'the designation "social" is used with little precision. It is currently employed for practically all phenomena generally diffused within society, however small their significance. But in reality there is in every society a certain group of phenomena which may be differentiated from those studied by the other natural sciences.... They constitute, thus, a new variety of phenomena; and it is to them that the term "social" ought to be applied' (Durkheim, 1964:1-3). The unruly complex of the social was to be organised and disciplined in the form of 'society'. Sociologists and other 'social scientists' would begin to stake their claim as experts of the social, uniquely able to speak and act in its name. They would be engineers of society itself.

Of course, the invention of the social had a direct political status. Just recently in the UK, provoked by some remarks by the leader of the Labour Party, we have witnessed a rather ignorant debate over whether this Party is a 'Socialist' party, a 'Social-ist' party, a 'Social Democratic Party, or perhaps, not a 'social' party at all, but a 'liberal' party. It was in the mid-nineteenth century that political parties started identifying themselves through the term 'social'. This is not the place for a history of socialism. We know that the word was first used in France and Britain in the 1820s and was adopted by workers movements on both sides of the Channel in the 1830s. By the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the social question and the political question existed in an uneasy relation. Fears throughout Europe were not only of political revolution but also of social revolution. In Germany at the time of the Revolution of 1848: 'Prince Metternich acknowledged despairingly that the crisis was no longer about politics (*Politik*) but the social question.' In Berlin, the radical republican Rudolf Virchow concurred: 'This revo-

lution is not simply political: it is at heart social in character' (Melton, 1995: 199). Alongside the designation 'socialist' – indeed often opposing it – the term social became the indicator of a certain kind of politics: one that could be directed against the claims of the state on the one hand and demands for the freedom of the market and the autonomy of the individual on the other. The social question referred to all that had to do with this 'social order': a sphere of the collective activities and arrangements of the lives of individuals, families and groups within a nation. By 1877, the German Social Democratic Party could poll nearly half a million votes and win thirteen seats in the Reichstag; in 1881 the Social Democratic Federation was formed in England (although it did not add the 'Social' to its title until 1884: cf. Pelling, 1965).

By the early decades of the twentieth century, politicians in different national contexts in Europe and North America had been forced to accept that government of at least some aspects of this social domain should be added to the responsibilities of the political apparatus and its officials. Political parties increasingly rejected the claims of political economy to prescribe and delimit the legitimate means to be used for the government of economic life. Simultaneously, it appeared that law alone was no longer the sufficient legitimate political means for achieving order and security; indeed law itself must answer to the demands of social government. The political rationalities that played so great a part in our own century – socialism, social democracy, social liberalism – differed on many things, but they had one thing in common: the belief that the question of how to govern must be posed from 'the social point of view' (cf. Procacci, 1989; for France, see Donzelot, 1984; for England see Collini, 1979 and Clarke, 1978).

In England, Herbert Spencer and others still proselytised for an anti-social and anti-statist politics (Spencer, 1884). But most other political forces, whatever their disagreements, agreed that politics would have to become social if political order was to be maintained. In France, Durkheim was intimately involved in the French politics of solidarism. In England the political struggles were not fought in terms of social right; rather, they were structured by the opposition between individualists and collectivists which focused upon the role of the state (Clark, 1978; Collini, 1979). Social politics was debated in terms of the rights and obligations of the state to extend itself into zones outside those marked out by the rule of law. Factory legislation, educational compulsion, regulation of highways and foodstuffs and so forth had already become matters of dispute over the late nineteenth century. In the face of rising political unrest and evidence of the malign effects of irregular employment, poor living conditions and squalor, socialists and

social liberals were now demanding more extensive social intervention to mitigate what were now seen as the inevitable social consequences of capitalist economic arrangements. There were, of course, many different 'socials', overlapping, competing, blurring into one another, organised in ethical and aesthetic, as well as political terms. But in each case the term social implied a kind of anti-individualism: the need to conceive of human beings as citizens of a wider collectivity who did not merely confront one another as buyers and sellers on a competitive market. Hence at least some aspects of the economy required to be politically governed in the name of the social, in order to dispel a whole range of conflicts – between the rights of property and those of the property-less, between liberals and communists, between revolutionists and reformists – and to ensure social order, social tranquillity, perhaps even social justice.

The Welfare State would come to designate the principle that, at least in certain key aspects, the state would not itself be the stake in social conflicts, but would stand outside them as the guarantor of social progress (Donzelot, 1991). As Procacci puts it (1996: 21): the idea of 'social rights' shifts the claim for distributive justice from the conflicts over the state itself towards questions concerning the functioning of its administrative agencies. Through these agencies, the state would fulfil its responsibilities by acting to reduce the risks to individuals and families that were entailed in the irrationality of economic cycles and shifts of fortune, would mitigate the worst effects of unbridled economic activity by intervening directly into the terms and conditions of employment, and would act so as to enhance the opportunities for the social promotion of individuals through their own action. Philanthropists, feminists and social theorists would deploy the social in the name of the rights of women and the protection of domesticity. Mass schooling would be the mechanism sought to promote social citizenship and compulsory education would be construed not merely in terms of a pedagogy of habits of conduct and thought, but as the means to produce social civility and social peace. Concerns about poverty and inequality would be shifted from the political to the social sphere, tamed by the language of statistics and the pragmatic activities of reformers. Upon this imagined territory of the social, upon the presupposition of its existence, its relations with the economy and the machinery of production, its necessity, its value, its inescapability, welfare states, in their different forms and with their different specific histories, took shape.

## Beyond the social state

As Robert Castel points out, the idea of the social state was grounded in the presupposition that the gradual betterment of the conditions of all forces and blocs within society – employers, labourers, managers, professionals – could be achieved (Castel, 1995: 387). Political strategies could be devised that would ameliorate the hardship of the worst off and maintain the principle of productive labour whilst cushioning its harshness within the workplace and lessening the fear of unemployment by supporting those outside the labour market. One could thus contain the dangers posed by the worst off and reinforce the security and individual freedoms of the better off. Simultaneously, this would provide the legitimacy for a range of projects to sequester and reform those who refused this social contract or were unable to give assent to it – the mad, the criminals, the delinquent, the workshy, socially inadequate. It thus seemed possible to bind all strata and classes into an agreement for social progress of which it was, to a greater or less extent (this would be the political territory fought over for some fifty years) the guarantor. This image of social progress through gradual amelioration of hardship and improvement of conditions of life won out over the image of social revolution on the one hand and the image of unfettered competition on the other. The social state would have the role of shaping and co-ordinating the strategies which would oblige all partners, no longer antagonists, to work towards and facilitate social progress.

These programmes of social government entailed the linking up the constitutional, legal, fiscal, organisational capacities of state with apparatuses for regulation of conduct in whole range of domains. The social became more than an idea, a concept or a moral obligation. It was assembled together in complex networks of rule, the assemblages of education, reform, security and so forth. In each assemblage, expert authority would flourish and new forms of mundane, practical social knowledge would form of the habits, conducts, capacities, dreams and desires of citizens, and of their errors, deviations, inconstancies and pathologies, of the ways in which these might be calibrated, classified, ordered, shaped and moulded by doctors, social workers, probation officers, welfare workers, and all the other minor doctors of conduct. Within these assemblages, with their own logics, criteria of judgement, professional codes and values, notions of autonomy and specialism, enclosures of expert power were formed which were largely insulated from political control, from market logics and from the pressures exerted by their subjects (Rose and Miller, 1992).

It is this social governmentalisation of the state which now seems to be mutating, as it is challenged by forces from all sides of the political spectrum. At its most general, three aspects characterise this mutation. First, the extension of mechanisms that seek to ‘govern at a distance’: technologies which do not aim to govern particular zones or problems through formal prescription, regulation and guidance of conduct, but through enhancing and shaping the self-steering capacities and obligations of individuals, organisations and collectivities (Rose and Miller, 1992; Rose, 1993a and 1993c). Second, the valorisation of the market, as an ideal mechanism for the automatic co-ordination of the decisions of a multitude of individual actors in the best interest of all, and the attempt to create simulacra of markets governed by economic or para-economic criteria of judgement in arenas where they were previously absent. Third, a new individualisation of the citizen, a re-activation, at the rhetorical level at least, of values of self-reliance, autonomy and independence as the underpinning of self-respect, self-esteem, self-worth and self-advancement, and indeed as the *sine qua non* of a sense of collective moral obligation and duty.

Of course, the image of a total state which is often conjured up in the recent programmatics of reform is a fantasy, and much regulation within the social state had operated ‘at a distance’. The classic examples are those described by Jacques Donzelot in his metaphor of ‘floatation’: both ‘Keynesian’ regulation of the private enterprise and private economic activity, and ‘Freudian’ regulation of the domestic and emotional economy operated by the enwrapment of independent entities in an environment of norms, and binding them loosely to these norms in various ways (Donzelot, 1979). But the combination of distantiating, markets and individualisation in contemporary welfare reforms in Europe and North America has very distinctive features. The UK experience – which has been something of a test-bed for these new strategies of government – shows some of these clearly. It is not so much that these are entirely new, certainly not at the conceptual level, for many of the kinds of analysis involved have a long pedigree. But what is new is a revised set of problematisations within which these concepts are deployed, the new forms of connection that are established and the new technical devices to which they are linked.

### *From state apparatus to quasi-markets*

The boundaries of the political are being redrawn. Functions previously carried out within administrative apparatuses formally linked to the state are

shifted elsewhere. One sees the proliferation of quasi-autonomous ‘agencies’: the child support agency to chase errant fathers for contributions to their children’s upkeep, the pensions agency, even a ‘prison service agency’ to take on a function which Althusserian Marxists had considered essential to the Repressive State Apparatus. The bureaucratic methods of regulating the provision of welfare functions are restructured in the form of quasi-markets: for example in the social services in the UK, the so called purchaser-provider split separates the responsibility for the identification of need and the working out of a care plan, which is to be undertaken by a social worker, from the provision of the required care. This is to be purchased in a quasi-market within which different ‘providers’ compete: state funded operations, not-for-profit organisations, and private profit making enterprises. A new territory is taking shape, no longer ‘social’ in form, characterised by a pluralisation of types and of providers of welfare services, and traversed by range of new conflicts: between commercial and professional criteria, between the demands of profit and those of equity, between political accountability, efficiency and enterprise. On this revised territory, a post-social politics of welfare is being conducted.

### *From discretion to the contract*

A new set of contractual devices is displacing the relations of discretionary authority that characterised the devices of social rule. In the quasi-markets, these relations between political authorities and providing authorities are governed by contracts specifying standards, outputs and so forth. Within each apparatus, the relation of professionals to their clients is increasingly ‘consumerised’ and governed by contract: parents (or children, the issue is contested) are consumers of education, patients are consumers of health care, residents of old people’s homes are in a contractual relation with those who provide care, and even those occupying demeaned categories (discharged prisoners shifted to half-way houses, drug users in rehabilitation centres) have their expectations, rights and responsibilities contractualised. Of course, these contracts are of many different types. Few are like the contracts between buyer and seller in the market. But, in their different ways, they shift the power relations inscribed in relations of expertise. This is especially so when they are accompanied by new methods of regulation and control such as audit and evaluation. Some contractualisation enhances the possibilities of political control over activities previously insulated by claims to professional autonomy and the necessity of trust – as, for example, when contracts

specify the delivery of a certain quantum of medical care or a certain volume of completed cases. Some contractual forms provide new opportunities for users and clients of professionals who are able to contest 'patrimonial powers' by insisting on specified services and agreed standards, and having new sanctions if they are not provided (Yeatman, 1995). Some, like the contracts used for clients in psychiatric wards and other residential establishments, shift responsibilities to users for their own condition and for the personal comportment and behaviour necessary to receive care, and thus bind them into professional powers and expert norms in new ways. In these different ways, the heterogeneous politics of the contract becomes central, both to contests between political strategies concerning the 'reform of welfare', and to strategies of user demand and user resistance to professional powers.

### *From welfare to commerce and philanthropy*

On this new plural territory, private and for-profit organisations are invited to provide services that were previously regarded as quintessentially public and social. Private corporations can wring profits out of the provision of care for the elderly, of housing facilities for discharged prisoners and psychiatric patients, of hospitals and clinics, even of apparatuses of enclosure and normalisation such as prisons, reformatories, and psychiatric institutions. Of course, in the nineteenth century and earlier, there was trade in lunacy, the marketing of privately owned asylums for moral treatment and for the cure of inebriety and much else. Throughout the twentieth century, even in the UK but to a greater extent in many other countries, the wealthy and not-so-wealthy could and would buy their own care. But now the most unlikely areas are pervaded, not merely by the market, the profit motive and the logics of choice but also by all the rhetoric of the new consumerist culture. For example, one English private psychiatric hospital for the management of acute psychiatric illness advertises itself through a glossy brochure full of pictures of elegant grounds and well dressed people dining and exercising, and is accompanied by a price list showing the charges for everything from a session of cognitive therapy to a course of electroshock.

In the same process, philanthropic, charitable and 'not for profit' organisations are encouraged, fostered or incited to increase their role and responsibilities. An ethic of 'doing good works' no longer merely fills the cracks in social provision – it begins to displace that provision. This complex and plural organizational field simultaneously reduces equity and increases the possibilities of experimentation and innovation: the new politics of welfare

is, at least in part, about different strategies for governing this plurality: through the market, through laws and regulations, through standards and charters or service levels and conditions, through professional norms, through community bodies, but seldom through a return to the social.

### *From professional ethics to a new managerialism*

In each of these areas one sees the deployment of a new public management which does not manage by intervening directly on organisational processes or rely upon professional or bureaucratic expertise, but acts indirectly through focusing upon results: through the setting of targets, the promulgation of standards, the monitoring of outputs, the regulation of budgets and the use of audits (Power, 1994). For example, the agencies mentioned above set targets – numbers of errant fathers to catch each week, numbers of fraudulent claims to detect and so forth – and their payment by government depends upon their meeting these targets. This autonomises and responsabilises these quasi-political organisations and individuals, but also in key ways enhances the possibilities for political centres of calculation to exercise control over them. Audits, budgets and outcome evaluation are thus versatile, mobile, and highly transferable, mechanisms for exercising ‘government at a distance’. However, each transforms the entities being governed by casting new nets of visibility in terms of numbers, targets, incomes and expenditures, across these sites and activities, linking them in new ways to centres of calculation. One sees a new politics of the professions, a new ‘technicised’ politics of comparative outcomes, value-for-money, which renders professional action governable – an objective of both left and right politics over the past three decades, – but does so at the price of displacing the relations of trust and service upon which so many of the operational aspects of medicine and welfare depend.

### *From social insurance to private prudence*

Risks that were once socialised are being re-individualised: a privatisation of risk management. Previously socialised provisions for individual and familial security – insurance against illness, old age, accident, unemployment and so forth – are increasingly being privatised. It is increasingly left to each individual to choose whether or not to take responsibility for securing against future misfortunes in the interests of themselves and their families – a choice which requires many different types of resources if it is to be exercised. This

is what Pat O'Malley has termed 'the new prudentialism' (O'Malley, 1992, 1995, 1996). Like the responsible worker in the late nineteenth century, each individual must be prudent, and must secure their own future by their own calculations and investments, or bear the consequences. This prudentialism also enters other areas, for example that of career development and employment. Only now, the prudent individual is surrounded by a whole battery of experts and advisers, who simultaneously proliferate perceptions of risky zones and activities, and immerse each individual in a habitat of images of risks averted and security assured through the purchase of this or that scheme or device. The prudent individual is simultaneously rendered anxious and seduced into the purchase of this or that scheme of insurance through the techniques of advertising and marketing: a consumerisation of private risk. In this process, the function left to the state and its professional workers becomes that of securing an increasingly anxious public against risks to their own lifestyles posed by the monstrous breed of high-risk (non) citizens: discharged psychiatric patients, aggressive beggars, paedophiles, rapists, drug-dealers and child-molesters. Risk, in a whole variety of senses and meanings, becomes a key term in the new politics of welfare: of targeting, managing, securing against risk.

Overarching these changes, perhaps one can identify a shift in the dominant space of political possibilities. Not, of course, that there is a single political strategy or rationality, but rather that, if diverse programmes and policies present themselves as solutions, they do so in relation to a novel problem space. No longer is a welfare politics shaped by the image of steady and incremental social progress guaranteed by a social state. Instead, it appears as if society is confronted with the problem of the permanent management of private insecurity and public order, a perpetual process of which the state can no longer be sole guarantor. It no longer seems credible to demand that the state should maximise social solidarity through its own permanently staffed bureaucratic apparatuses, with their cadres, their experts, their files, offices, procedures, tribunals and the like. The government of insecurity is to be carried out by a multitude of quasi-contractual, quasi-voluntary collectivities and responsabilised and informed individuals. A revised governmental role emerges for the legal complex in regulating this plural territory. And one also sees here a new role for the expert, perhaps captured in the shift from social science to management science – no longer to speak in the name of society, the expert is to assist in the management of pluralism: an adviser on risk, a consultant to welfare agencies and enterprises, a purveyor of audits and evaluations in a new market economy of expertise.

## The 'social state' *versus* the entrepreneurial nation

The social state was of course linked to a certain way of understanding and governing economic life, at both the 'micro' and the macro' level. It was grounded in the belief that, through calculated strategies of government, politicians could act upon their own 'national economy' in order to jointly optimise the economic and the social, mitigating the worst effects of capitalism – unemployment, poor working conditions, job insecurity and the like – upon the individual and thus earning their political consent to the legitimacy of the state, without destroying the freedom of action of the private enterprise. However, within those strategies of government that I have termed 'advanced liberal' one finds the emergence of new ways of conceptualising and acting upon the relations between the government of economic life and the self-government of the individual. Economic life is problematised in new ways, in terms of 'globalization', the dispersal of the apparent unity of 'the national economy' on the one hand to supra-national, international networks of finance, investment, employment and trade, and, on the other, to infra-national, local and regional economic relations. New global institutions of economic governance such as the World Bank, the OECD and the European Union are seen as constraining or even supplanting the possibilities of national economic governance. The mobility of finance capitalism is perceived as weakening the possibility of political action shaping, let alone resisting, the pressures of markets.

In this context, a new set of axioms emerge for the government of economic life. The economy is no longer to be governed in the name of the social, nor is the economy to be the justification for the government of a whole range of other sectors in a social form. The social and the economic are now seen as antagonistic, and the former is to be fragmented in order to transform the moral and psychological obligations of economic citizenship in the direction of active self-advancement. Simultaneously, government of a whole range of previously social apparatuses is to be re-structured according to a particular image of the economic – the market. Economic government is to be de-socialised in the name of maximising the entrepreneurial comportment of the individual. No longer is there a conflict between the self interest of the economic subject and the patriotic duty of the citizen (cf. Procacci, 1991): it now appears that one can best fulfil one's obligations to one's nation by most effectively pursuing the enhancement of the economic well-being of oneself and one's family.

## *A de-socialisation of labour*

For about 100 years, the labour contract and wage were central mechanisms for linking labour of individual into productive apparatus. Full-time, lifelong employment was the regulative ideal, although it was far from the universal form of work. This ideal, with its way of dividing employment and unemployment, of full-time work and the full-time wage, is currently under question. It is not simply that, across Europe, employment has become a precarious activity for many and lack of employment a long-term reality for many more (cf. Castel, 1995). Nor is it only that an increasing number of people are employed part-time, and there has been a return to casualisation, short term contracts, zero-hours contracts and much more. Perhaps more significant is the fact that this way of organising economic activity is now given a positive value in economic strategies from a whole variety of political perspectives. Flexibilisation is the name for this arrangement of labour when it becomes an explicit political strategy of economic government. It has a 'macro-economic' moment, consisting of contests over how much it is possible to minimise or dismantle everything that can be construed as 'rigidities' in the labour market. And it has a 'micro-economic' moment, in terms of struggles over the appropriate tactics to increase the flexibility of relations between the individual and the workplace.

The disciplinary space of the factory, and the discipline of the wage and the labour relation were key junction points between the economic, the social and the subjective. Within this nexus, the labour of individual subjects was linked into economic flows, conduct was regularised, access was provided to all kinds of social benefits as a *quid pro quo* for regularity of employment. Labour, through the wage contract, regularised, individualised and disciplined the labourer. And labour linked the 'family machine' into the 'productive machine' by means of the male family wage and all that went with it. Hence a whole series of strategies were adopted, over the last fifty years of the nineteenth century and into the first half of the twentieth, to instil the norm of the working day and the working week, to effect de-casualisation of work, to draw a clear line between employment, with all the values and benefits that commanded, and unemployment. Unemployment was to become the site of a whole new range of policies at the junction of the economic and the social domains (on the history of the idea of unemployment, see Harris, 1972). These would seek to maintain the financial situation of those genuinely seeking work and to re-attach them to the productive machine through the labour exchange. And simultaneously, these devices would act as

classificatory machines, identifying those who were able to work but not willing to work, and opening them up for reformation or punishment. Regulations on the contract, on hours of employment, on conditions of work, on dismissal, on accidents at work and so forth made the labour relation a primary site of social governance: regulation operated through this ‘assemblage’ of labour, in the name of a joint optimisation of the economic and the social. And, of course, wage discipline makes labour social in another sense, providing the conditions for struggles and resistances of all sorts.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the critics of casual labour in mines, docks and factories pointed to its negative social consequences: demoralisation, the disabling effect of irregularity in work for the worker and his or her family and so forth: the very image of work as regular, continuous and durable was forged in the process. It may be the case that precarious employment is now on the rise. But, as significant is that the *image* of work against which these forms of employment were once judged is itself being questioned or abandoned. One great objective of techniques for the regulation of labour from the start of this century was to establish a clear division – spatial, moral, economic – between employment and unemployment. This division has not only become blurred at the level of reality, it has also become permeable at the level of images and strategies. This division of work and life, as materialised in the factory and other collective workplaces in the nineteenth century and generalised throughout economic life, is under threat in advanced industrial societies. The segmentation of time and space introduced by industrial capitalism with the disciplines of the clock and the factory, is giving way to a more dispersed, but more intensive, inscription of the obligation to work into the soul of the citizen, not a reduction of the principle or ethic of work but, in many ways, its intensification. At the ‘positive’ pole of this shift, one has dreams of the integration of life and work made possible by new technologies of communication. At the ‘negative’ pole, which is undoubtedly more significant, the working relationship has become saturated with insecurity. Whilst the workplace once functioned as a secure site for inclusion, in the form of the life-long career, the permanent job and so forth, the space of work can no longer be regarded as an automatic mechanism for the promotion of security. Rather, work itself has become a vulnerable zone, one in which continued employment must ceaselessly be earned, the employment of each individual constantly assessed in the light of evaluations, appraisals, achievement of targets and so forth – under the constant threat of ‘downsizing’, efficiency gains, and the like. Further, we have simultaneously seen the establishment of a more-or-less per-

manently casualised workforce. Full-time, permanent work was always, perhaps, a norm and ideal rather than the most common form of labour, in any event restricted, by and large, to adult males. But one has seen the rise of increasing numbers of persons half in and half out of work, the growth of a 'black economy', the proliferation of part-time work, fixed term contracts and the like. Perpetual insecurity becomes the normal form of labour.

For one hundred years, the labour relation was valorised as much for its social as for its economic benefits. But as the twentieth century draws to a close, politicians and experts of most political persuasions appear to agree that lifelong 'social' labour cannot be reactivated as the primary mechanism for the social integration of individuals and families, and hence also that the social promise of lifelong support for those outside the labour market cannot be sustained. The political and economic problem, then, is understood in terms of the need to devise strategies that will retain the apparent economic benefits of flexibilisation whilst minimising their costs to individuals, families and communities and yet simultaneously freeing the state from its social obligation to support all those outside the labour market in perpetuity. These economic parameters shape the space within which residual 'social' policy will have to operate.

### *From disciplinary pedagogy to perpetual training*

Education is no longer confined, in space and in time, to 'schooling', with its disciplinary individualisation and normalisation that seeks to install, once and for all, the capacities and competencies for social citizenship. Rather, a new set of educational obligations emerge that are not confined in space and time in the same ways. The new citizen is required to engage in a ceaseless work of training and re-training, skilling and re-skilling, enhancement of credentials and preparation for a life of incessant job seeking: life is to become a continuous economic capitalisation of the self.

This is particularly evident in the new ways that are emerging for the government of unemployment. This is now generally understood as a phenomenon to be governed – both at the macro-economic level and at the level of the individual who is without work – through acting on the conduct of the unemployed person, obliging him or her to improve 'employability' by acquiring skills, both substantive skills and skills in acquiring work, and obliging the individual to engage in a constant and active search for employment. The general problem of unemployment is re-conceived in terms of the respective competitiveness of different labour forces. And competitiveness is

understood, at least in part, in terms of the psychological, dispositional and aspirational capacities of those that make the labour force. Thus each individual is solicited as a potential ally of economic success. Personal employment and macro-economic health is to be ensured by encouraging each individual to 'capitalise' themselves, to invest in the management, presentation, promotion and enhancement of their own economic capital as a capacity of their selves and as a lifelong project

These understandings are not merely abstract or programmatic, they are embodied in the so-called 'active' unemployment policies emerging in Europe, Australia and the United States. These stress 'active job search', maintaining 'job readiness' and avoiding the 'risk of dependence'; experts happily promote a whole range of little pedagogic techniques, training schemes, skills packs and so forth to seek to implant these aspirations in the unemployed self (Dean, 1995). In the UK, the focus of argument around unemployment has recently come to be directed towards a question of 'skills' which is also linked to conception of employment policy in terms of an 'active labour market'. Activity is an obligation of the labouring individual and an objective of policy. The most recent manifestation of this is the Jobseekers Allowance, which, it is suggested "improves the operation of the labour market by helping people in their search for work, while ensuring that they understand and fulfil the conditions for receipt of benefit ... All unemployed people will sign an individually-tailored Agreement as a basic condition for receipt of benefit. This will help the jobseeker and the Employment Service to identify together the appropriate steps to get the jobseeker back to work and will provide the basis for further guidance and reviews of the jobseekers efforts... the test of 'actively seeking work'... will be broadened so as to encourage unemployed people to explore other ways of making their job search more effective (for example, preparing CVs)" (Department of Trade and Industry, 1995).

These emphases do not merely come from the political parties of the right. From the social democratic left too, work is now seen as the principle mode of inclusion and absence from the labour market the most potent source of exclusion. In Britain, the Commission on Social Justice established by the Labour Party argued that 'paid work remains the best pathway out of poverty, as well as the only way in which most people can hope to achieve a decent standard of living (1994: 151). The Commission of the European Community asserts that 'income maintenance can no longer be the only objective of social policy... social policies now have to take on the more ambitious objective of helping people to find a place in society. The main route, but not the only one, is paid work' (CEC, 1993: 21, quoted in Walters, 1995). Thus a recent pam-

phlet issued by a British movement against the Job Seekers Allowance, which calls itself ‘the Job Shirkers Alliance’, is headed with the infamous words on the entrance to the concentration camp at Auschwitz ‘*Arbeit Macht Frei*’.

Training here becomes the major technology of re-attachment of the unemployed individual to the inclusory lines of control immanent in the activity of paid labour, and the labour market becomes the principle machine for inclusion. Labour becomes a switch point of the economic and the psychological: unemployment must become as much like work as possible if it too is to connect the excluded individual with the modalities of control which have come to be termed freedom and choice. Indeed it would not be too much to claim that, in the countries of the European Union, ‘social’ policy has come to be understood as policy around work: the regulation of working hours and working conditions, the rights and responsibilities of workers and employers, the creation of work and the promotion of policies of inclusion through work. Assistance, in the form of unemployment benefit, was perhaps the central ‘right’ of welfare states; now it is no longer a right of citizenship but an allowance which must be earned by the performance of certain duties, and labour alone is to be the means by which the poor can acquire the status of citizen – a status which is itself now increasingly a matter of consumption rights.

## The anti-social politics of welfare

The changes I have outlined above are clearly contested and heterogeneous: they are certainly not the outcome of any single programme or strategy, and have often arisen, first of all, as practical rationalities directed to resolving particular difficulties in specific zones and practices. Nonetheless, I think that it is possible to argue that they do operate according to the same ‘diagram’ of control.

The term ‘diagram’ comes from Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze proposed that we now live in ‘societies of control’, where conduct is continually monitored and reshaped by logics immanent within all networks of practice. Foucault’s anatomy of disciplinary power in *Discipline and Punish* was, as Foucault himself recognised, written at the dusk of the age of discipline and not at its dawn (Foucault, 1979). Normalisation, Deleuze suggested, was no longer a matter of the operation of specialist institutionally based disciplinary procedures: the continuous modulation of conduct was now immanent to all the places in which deviation could occur, inscribed into the texture of the practices into which human beings are assembled. Whilst in disciplinary societies

it was a matter of procession from one disciplinary institution to another – school, barracks, factory all seeking to mould conduct, control society is one of constant and never ending modulation, today one is always in continuous training, life-long learning, continuous assessment, continual incitement to buy, to improve oneself, constant monitoring of health and continuous treatment of all to reduce risk: a dispersed network of open circuits where we are not dealing with ‘individuals’ but with ‘dividuals’ (Deleuze, 1995: 169-182).

Deleuze’s characterisation is instructive and helps us to grasp something of the mode of functioning of these new, post-social, forms of control in which regulation is dispersed, no longer collectivised upon a social plane territorialised across a nation, but multiple, frequently invisible, embedded in the relations between each individual and the practices of their everyday existence, organised at the level of the family, the community or the group. The characteristic technologies of control neither operate by moralisation and discipline, nor through socialisation and solidarity. Rather, they are open circuits, with a multiplicity of points at which choices must be made. The individual is continually enlisted into these circuits through relations of identification and differentiation manifested in the minutiae of existence and action, thought ‘mimesis and alterity’, through the shaping of desires and identifications by ‘folding’ relations of imitation and differentiation into the soul. Each circuit is based on the presupposition that subjects must be committed to give their lives meaning and direction through the choices that they make about careers, sexual relations, lifestyles, morality. The subjects of such regimes are surrounded by experts on choice and images that seek to shape choice; they are obliged to take responsibility for the course of their life as if it were the outcome of such choices.

But the establishment of these open circuits of control has been linked to a rather different transformation, which divides off a variety of residual sectors of the population for particular attention. These new dividing practices differentiate the affiliated from those who are unable to engage in the games of self-maximisation and lifestyle identification, who are unable to capitalise their own existence through the shaping of a career path as a means of self-promotion, unable to take responsibility for the calculation and management of their own risk. The active, autonomous prudent subject capable of self-management through responsible choice is counter-posed to the passive subject unwilling or incapable of managing their self by reason of personal pathology, wilfulness, or the habits engendered by parental irresponsibility or the dependency creating activities of welfare professionals themselves.

As civility is understood as affiliation by consumption, and control effected by continuous modulation and ceaseless engagement with the cybernetics of regulation, dividing practices are reconfigured to problematise certain 'abjected' persons, sectors and locales for specific reformatory attention. Notions of 'the underclass', 'the marginalised', 'the excluded' refer to persons identified in terms of the absence of activity, the lack of autonomy, resulting from pathology, incapacity, ignorance or wilfulness. New divisions are drawn between those with whom continuous modulation is possible (citizens) and those who escape these lines of capture. The new 'problem group' are those who are unable to engage in the games of self-maximisation and lifestyle identification, unable to capitalise their own existence through the shaping of a career path as a means of self-promotion, unable to take responsibility for the calculation and management of their own risk.

We need to be cautious before proclaiming the novelty of this configuration. These themes are, in some ways, very reminiscent of ways of thinking that have certainly been around since the mid-nineteenth century and the very beginning of the exploration and documentation of the empire of poverty. At that time too there appeared to be a sector of society, which could be distinguished from the respectable labouring poor, a sector which embodied irreligion, intemperance, immodesty, immorality, vice of all sorts with precarious means of existence, disreputable and dishonest habits, isolated from the improving gaze of civility (Procacci, 1991). Perhaps contemporary concerns with the excluded, the marginalised and the underclass are merely a reactivation of these familiar themes: the pauper, the degenerate, the unemployable, the feeble minded, the submerged ten percent, the social problem group and so forth. Nonetheless a number of aspects can be identified that seem to me to be significant and which, in the way in which they are combined in policy and practice, amount to a new politics of conduct.

*Exclusion and inclusion:  
the individualisation of problematic persons*

The language of policy, as we have seen, increasingly poses a distinction between a majority who can and do ensure their own well-being and security through their own active self-promotion and responsibility for themselves and their families, and those who are outside this nexus of activity: the underclass, the marginalised, the truly disadvantaged, the excluded. In this process of 'residualisation' the issue of poverty is no longer linked to that of 'social inequality', and references to 'social justice' are no longer formulated

in terms of social rights. Welfare coded a project of inclusion, of citizenship as a universal right, of social security as a political priority, of a politics of inclusion. Something like a concern with the deleterious consequences of exclusion appears to unite the various scandals of the institutions that erupted throughout the fifties and sixties – the civil liberties movement that protested the confinement of thousands for decades in asylums in the United States, the diagnoses of ‘institutionalisation’ by psychiatrists and sociologists alike, the scandals of institutional care for the elderly and the mentally handicapped, the denunciation of the policies of out of mind, out of sight. This was a kind of spatial vision of exclusion. Such an image also underlay much of the concern with deprivation, as a problem of certain delimited geographical zones in the inner cities - as in the US War on Poverty of the 1960s and the UK concern with the ‘cycle of deprivation’ also seen as concentrated in certain ‘urban priority areas’. Whilst eugenic arguments, still prevalent into the 1950s, posed the problem of the failure of a society of civility to eradicate its social problem group in terms of the interaction of heredity, constitution, habits and conditions, the explanatory framework developed in the sixties posed the question in fully social terms. Hence the prominence of the problematic of reproduction, as in the notion of a ‘cycle of deprivation’. The deprived, here were those who could not improve their lot by virtue of their lack of material *and* cultural resources, notably the capacities of parents to transmit not merely financial resources but more significantly intellectual and emotional resources to their offspring, condemning them to repeat their own deprivation down through the generations. Only when one had provided the conditions for equality of opportunity for all citizens could one truly exercise moral judgement over those who forfeited their rights as social citizens, and even then, the social was called in as an explanation of their individual failure, their broken lives and homes, their criminality, their anti-social conduct.

In the 1980s, a new problematization began to take shape, perhaps first embodied in the emergence of the concept of the underclass in the United States: a problematization that was not so much social as moral. The underclass was a sector formed of long-term welfare recipients, hostile street criminals, hustlers in an alternative underground economy, and traumatised alcoholics, vagrants, and de-institutionalised psychiatric patients dominating the wastelands in the decaying industrial heartland of the cities of North America. In the UK, theorists and politicians of the right painted a less lurid picture, but the recipients of welfare were still portrayed in moral terms: those lured into welfare dependency by the regimes of social security themselves, those un-

able to accept their moral responsibilities as citizens for reasons of psychological or other personal incapacity, those who might be enterprising, but wilfully refused to operate within the values of civility and responsible self-management such as New Age Travellers or drug abusers (Timmins, 1996, Part 5).

Of course these essentially moral characterisations, in terms of dependency, danger or depravity, were contested by social liberals and those on the left. Yet over the last decade, within British and European rationalities of social democracy, a new style of thought has taken shape, in which the old problems of inequality and social justice are analysed in a distinctive and recurring fashion. It is suggested that secular economic changes, exacerbated by policies which have sought to reduce welfare expenditure in the name of competitive tax regimes and the like, have led to the rise of a 'two-thirds, one-third' society, producing a widening gap between the 'included' majority who are seeing their standard of living rising and impoverished minorities who are 'excluded' (Levitas, 1996). In the analyses of social liberals and social market theorists in Europe, in contemporary analyses of deprivation and of poverty, the analytics of abjection have become re-framed in this language of exclusion. This has become central to the analytic framework of the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, UK charitable foundations such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and indeed the criticisms and policies of the British Labour Party. In such analyses, exclusion is identified as an inescapable consequence of 'market individualism'. Social problems are recast as 'the problem of the excluded'. The unemployed are now understood as those 'excluded from regular work'. Poverty is understood as "exclusion from the resources and benefits necessary to participate as a full citizen in the life of the community". And the opposition of exclusion and inclusion frames the organisation of policy (European Commission, 1994: 49; cf. Hutton, 1995; Commission for Social Justice, 1994; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1995, Blair, 1996)

Despite their great differences in notions of economic causation and personal responsibility, these different rationalities operate with a surprisingly consonant picture of the abjected persons and groups that are their object. On the one hand, they are dispersed. They are no longer seen as part of a single group with common social characteristics, to be managed by a unified 'social service' and 'generic social workers' who can recognise the common roots of all social problems. The marginalised, the excluded, the underclass are fragmented and divided, comprising all those who are unable or unwilling to manage themselves and capitalise their own existence. They have no

unity amongst themselves, under these descriptions their problems are individualised. Like Marx's peasants, who he considers to be individualised like potatoes in a sack, incapable of forming themselves into a single class on the basis of a consciousness of their shared expropriation, they cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their particular difficulties thus need to be addressed through a variety of specialists each of whom is an expert in a particular problem – training schemes for those excluded through unemployment, specialist agencies working with those with disabilities, rehabilitation of addicts undertaken by specialist drug workers, education in social skills by workers with the single homeless, specialised hostels for battered women, for alcoholics etc.

It appears as if, outside the communities of inclusion, exists an array of micro-sectors, micro-cultures of non-citizens, failed citizens, anti-citizens, comprised of those who are unable or unwilling to enterprise their lives or manage their own risk, incapable of exercising responsible self-government, either attached to no moral community or to a community of anti-morality. It is in relation to these marginal and pathological persons that one sees the emergence of a new politics of conduct, which re-unifies these abjected subjects ethically and spatially. Ethically, in that they are accorded a new active relation to their status in terms of their strategies and capacities for the management of themselves: they have either refused the bonds of civility and self responsibility, or they aspire to them but have not been given the skills, capacities and means. And spatially in that the unified space of the social is re-configured, and the abjected are re-located, in both imagination and strategy, in 'marginalised' spaces: in the decaying council estate, in the chaotic lone parent family, in the shop doorways of inner city streets.

As I have already suggested, a new territory is emerging, after the welfare state, for the management of these micro-sectors, traced out by a plethora of quasi-autonomous agencies working within the 'savage spaces', in the 'anti-communities' on the margins, or with those abjected by virtue of their lack of competence or capacity for responsible ethical self-management. 'Voluntary' endeavours (often run by users, survivors or philanthropists but funded by various grant regimes) – drug projects, disability organisations, self help groups, concept houses and so forth (opposition forces transformed into service providers). Private and for profit organisations – old peoples homes, hostels and so forth – make their money from private insurance or from the collection of the state benefits to their individual inmates. The huge and murky industry of 'training', where a multitude of private or quasi-private training agencies compete in a market for public contracts and public

funds in the quest for profit. Within this new territory of exclusion, the social logics of welfare bureaucracies are replaced by new logics of competition, market segmentation and service management: the management of misery and misfortune can become, once more, a potentially profitable activity. It remains to be seen whether new forms of collective subjectivity can be forged here which are capable of resisting the normalising logics of inclusion through labour and consumption, of forging new and plural forms of citizenship that can recognise and tolerate difference, allow and even encourage dependence, oppose the ubiquitous obligations of choice and autonomy in the name of some older logics of care and virtues of obligation.

### *From dependency to activity*

Within this new politics of conduct one sees a psychologisation of problematic persons: their problems are formulated not in terms of low income, poverty or inequality but in terms of psychological pathology. Hence the psychological cast of the technologies that are being introduced for governing 'the excluded'. The imperative of activity is central. In the UK, as we have seen, the unemployed person is now termed a 'job seeker'. Somewhat similarly, the homeless person is now termed a 'rough sleeper'. The homeless person may be homeless for a number of reasons, but key among them is the lack of a home or the money to rent or buy one. The rough sleeper, on the other hand, sleeps rough for a range of individual reasons – personal inadequacy, lack of knowledge of alternatives, hand-outs from passers by, wilful refusal of accommodation, drunkenness, drugs, mental illness. Hence the Rough Sleeper must first be taken off the streets, which may be done by kindness, by bribery or by force, to a hostel or other temporary living space. Here they can be re-educated in the skills of finding accommodation, equipped with the personal skills which seem to lie at the heart of their choice – for choice it must be when there are in fact an excess of hostel places over street sleepers – to sleep rough. The imperative of activity, and the presupposition of an ethic of choice, is central not only to the rationale of policy but also to the reformatory technology to which it is linked.

This is just one example of a whole array of technologies of reformation which seem to operate in terms of the opposition of dependence and passivity with autonomy and activity. Barbara Cruikshank in the United States and Karen Baistow in the UK have drawn attention to the significance of the language of empowerment for professionals operating within such technologies (Cruikshank, 1994; Baistow, 1995). For empowerment – or the lack

of empowerment – codes the subjective substrate of exclusion as lack of self-esteem, self-worth and the skills of self management necessary to steer oneself as an active individual in the empire of choice. The relations that humans have with themselves are to be the target of professional reconstruction, often backed with the power of law. And the beauty of empowerment is that it appears to resist the logics of patronising dependency that infused earlier welfare modes of expertise – for the subject is to do the work on themselves not in the name of making them conform to a particular pattern of substantive norms of conduct, but to make them free.

These new behavioural and cognitive techniques for personal reformation derive, of course, from psychology. It has, perhaps, been insufficiently recognised that, in the 1970s, psychology became a new clinical assemblage, freeing itself from medicine and psychiatry. This was, at least in part, because it added to the repertoires of tests and diagnostics, some highly transferable skills for acting upon the conduct of others, not in an indirect way through the psychotherapies, but in a manner that could claim to address specifiable problems, set itself specifiable targets, and produce measurable shifts in conduct in short time spans. Behaviourism here shifts from an association with a negative and repressive technology for elimination of undesirable perversions, to become, in part, an emancipatory technology for re-establishing the self's control over itself (Baistow, 1995). Cognitive therapy, Rational-Emotive therapy and a range of similar techniques become the order of the day, with their themes of learned helplessness, self-esteem, self-control not as inhibition on expression of inner world, but as control over the impressions and actions which steer one through the outer world, internal locus of control. Control versus dependency becomes a powerful new binary for the judgement of conduct by others, and by oneself. Autonomy now figures as personal power and the capacity to accept responsibility – not to blame others but to recognise your own collusion in that which prevents you from being yourself, and in doing so, overcome it and achieve responsible autonomy and personal power. High self-esteem is linked to the power to plan one's life as an orderly enterprise and take responsibility for its course and outcome (Cruikshank, 1995).

These themes are not new; many have a long heritage. But what is significant, I think, is the emergence of a new way of problematising subjectivity, in terms of 'pathologies of the will'. It is in terms of the will that problems from lack of work to dependence on alcohol are now being understood (c.f. Sedgwick, 1992; Valverde, 1996). And this way of understanding pathology is linked to the invention of these highly transferable technologies for acting

on others and self in loci from the marriage guidance session to the prison: reform is re-imagined as a rational reconstruction of the normal will.

## Conclusion: Beyond social politics

The phenomenon often referred to as the ‘crisis of the welfare state’ thus involves a number of inter-linked features, with different histories and answering to distinct demands: dispersion of control throughout the practices of everyday life, new problematisations and dividing practices, new relations between the central political apparatus and the local level of action, new forms of involvement of citizens and new democratic possibilities, new notions of pathology and new technologies of the self. However, in this heterogeneous process, perhaps it is possible to identify the emergence of a new post-social diagram of governmentality. The kind of analysis I have attempted here raises many questions, but in conclusion perhaps I can address two: a methodological question and a political question

I have addressed the ‘crisis of the welfare state’ from the perspective of government. Such analyses seek to describe the conditions under which certain things may be said and done truthfully (archaeology). They utilise history to reveal the contingency of our present systems of values and beliefs, our present conceptions of who we are, what we must do, what our limits are (genealogy). And they are concerned with the ways in which such regimes of truth and practice depend upon and underpin certain regimes of ethics, understood as the conduct of conduct (subjectification). They are concerned, that is to say, with the conditions of plausibility and intelligibility of certain ways of seeking to act upon the conduct of others, or oneself in order to achieve certain ends. They try to describe the ways in which this thought is linked into, realised, translated into particular technical forms, complex assemblages of persons, techniques, buildings, knowledges, forms of judgement which may be artfully composed or bolted together from available materials contingently in order to produce effects. Technology here refers to such ensembles of arts and skills, entailing the linking of thoughts, affects, forces, artefacts and techniques which do not simply manufacture or manipulate, but which more fundamentally order being, frame it, produce it, make it thinkable as a certain mode of existence which must be addressed in a particular way.

As Foucault puts it, such studies are attempts at a historical ontology of ourselves. To this extent, the question of subjectification is central: the ways

in which, at different historical moments, those persons, groups, entities, populations whose conduct is to be governed have been understood and conceptualised. It is a question, that is to say, of the problems and problematizations through which 'being' has been shaped in a thinkable and manageable form, the sites and locales where these problems formed, the techniques and devices invented, the modes of authority and subjectivity engendered, and the telos of these various tactics and strategies. Analyses from this perspective thus differ from sociologies of governance, for example, to which they bear a superficial resemblance. They are not studies of the actual organization and operation of systems of rule but investigations of a particular 'stratum' of knowing and acting, the emergence of particular regimes of truth concerning the conduct of conduct, styles of speaking the truth, persons authorised to speak truths, the assemblage of practices, technologies and techniques for enacting the truth.

What of politics? These investigations do not themselves seek to make judgements, but rather to 'sow the seeds of judgement', to make judgement possible (Osborne, 1996). They are critical, but they are not critiques. But they open onto politics. In seeking to diagnose the problems, the often tacit or unspoken problematisations within which political strategies purport to be solutions, they enable us to think more critically about the very terms in which such strategies are constructed and in which policy debates around them are conducted. They open onto the plurality and the contested nature of our present – if the past is more contingent than it often seems in retrospect, and the present is more fragile than it appears, then the future is not written. And where there are different possible futures, politics is crucial. And the political question posed by these changes is a simple one, although the answers are complex. Should we mourn the passing of the social, and seek to re-invent it? Or should we look for an order of collectivity beyond the social, a securing of security beyond the governmental, a maximising of freedom beyond the ethics of social responsibility, a minimisation of inequality that does not operate by the enwrapping of all fields of existence within a bureaucratic logic and the patrimonial authority of expertise.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Different versions of this paper were prepared for a Symposium on The Displacement of Social Policies, in Jyväskylä, Finland, January 1997, and for workshops on Governmentality at the Stockholm Institute of Education, Stockholm, 25.9.96, and the University of Salzburg on 7.12.96. The paper is a development of: 'The death of the social?: re-figuring the territory of government', *Economy & Society*, 1996, 25, 3, 327-356.
- <sup>2</sup> In an article in *The Guardian* newspaper of 29.1.96, timed to coincide with a speech to mark the tenth anniversary of the report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Special Commission on Urban Priority Areas, *Faith in the City*.
- <sup>3</sup> There is a mass of material on these issues, which are discussed further in Osborne and Rose, forthcoming. On all this material, see Hacking, 1991.

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Risto Eräsaari

## THE DISPLACEMENT OF EXPERTISE

*The Reflexionselite Meet with Life Politics*

### The advisory position, the intrinsic possibility, the generous perspective

In this paper I especially want to look how expertise – perhaps against its own will – has been forced to become part of the contemporary reflexivity dispute and the new gambit that permits expert authority to be affirmed as controversial, disorderly and displaceable. So far expertise has revelled in “knowledge society”, enjoying the trust in expert systems based on the conviction that expert knowledge *is* expert knowledge, maintaining their formulas based on highly simplified coding of information, and counting on the expectation that it is *not* necessary to do anything otherwise. The “credibility” of experts has, however, insidiously eroded. This is not because experts would have lost their competence. On the contrary, they may even have gained more of it. This is because the conditions of expert authority, expert advice and mediating expert action have changed both structurally and epistemologically. Experts no longer claim that social problems are their prerogative. People no more give their existential problems away. They seem to escape both cultural uniformity and all-embracing cultural diversity, and to follow highly specialized and internally diverse codes and meanings as well as exhibit new structures in life political variation.

How will the “reflexionselite” meet the temporalized conditions where the reflexivity signals not the termination of a dynamic structure but the dispersal of the hope associated with it (Niethammer 1994, 1-2)? How do they manage to make their contributions travel to different sorts of constructions and networks? How do they manage to reinterpret and reorganize the conventional demand for correct criteria (Schwandt 1996, 70)? How do they meet with life-political problematizations of “lay discourses” (Wynne 1992)? How will they come along with challenges and conditions where all this seems to be happening at the expense of a greatly diminishing possibility for “distal”? knowledge, “high” definition or “solid” criteriology?

Before trying to get any further in elaborating the background motives, I assume that some central conditions of the proliferation of modern expertise – especially the emergence of experts’ *advisory position*, the question of experts’ *intrinsic possibility* and the question of the generosity of expertise and resulting *generous perspectives* – ought to be discussed.

*The position of the experts* is closely related to experiencing and being experienced, whereas that of the technocrat refers to skilfulness and competence, and that of the specialist to specialization and differentiation. With the proliferation of positional expertness (experts, counselors, advocates, advisers, consultants, surveyors, mediators, representatives, officials, guardians, gatekeepers, implementors, journalists, spokespersons) one realizes that there is no need to worry about a well-established definition or meaning of “expertise”. There are many layers of expertise, and instead of information metabolism one should try to trace their dramaturgy, and their general features in otherwise unconnected events through contextually relative terms. Perhaps it is enough to say here that expertise began to be widely used in industrial society, which placed increasing emphasis on specialization, differentiation, qualification, competence and profession. It is very much on this basis that modern expertise has continued to grow in the detraditionalized “knowledge society”. At the same time, however, expertness itself – the possessive authority in relation to the other, the ranked professional position, the established credibility – has undergone a metamorphosis or lost its aura. As a consequence, it has become obscure and unclear how we should see the circulation of purely network-oriented authority, the vast matrix of recommendations and the different knowledge results, without becoming forced to reduce them to just modelling, decisionist criteriology, or evaluation technology travelling smoothly from one sector to another. Perhaps detraditionalization has had the effect of distorting the position of the expert (the researcher, the journalist) with its confusing array of images about what ex-

actly is expertness about expertise, about “knowledge” and “knowing”, about imagining and symbolizing.

As far as the *intrinsic possibility* of expertness is concerned, much less can perhaps be said. There is a great variety of possibilities from a bookish sort of consulting for what is already known (where the expert *ipso facto* cannot learn anything new) to sophistry (where expertise is oriented to performances), and from expert-based formulaic truths to the expectation that things will go on, while the belief that they have a meaning is fading away. We come from an industrial past of conflicting certitudes, be they related to science, ethics, or steering systems, to a present characterized by considerable questioning, including questioning about the intrinsic possibility of expertness and certainties. Perhaps we dare, in terms of expertness, to say the following about the pursuit of value-neutral inquiry: the beginning of this century saw the emergence within the social and human sciences of the objectivity dispute (which was “solved” through hermeneutics), followed in the middle of this century by the positivist dispute (which was “solved” through social diagnoses, social critique and overpoweringly loud evaluation thinking) and at the end of the century by the reflexivity dispute (which is yet to be “solved”).

Many have pointed out that expertness now has to move on to new constructions: the question is neither about “dead” facts nor about “dumb” spatiality but about “vocal” temporality – the ways and forms in which alternatives and opportunities are grasped. But where does this leave us, and who *are* we? Are we left with sophistry, where the expert speech act is, at best, a performance because it aims to accomplish something with words? Or are we stuck with garrulous communication, demagogy or precarious verbal manoeuvres – after all, temporal thinking is now possible only by roundabout methods such as retreating to pre-theoretical layers (body, language, life-world, etc.), metaphorization, and bringing forward the relevant scope or margin (contingency)? With the expectation of a new radical constructivism that would radicalize the distinction between knowledge (observation) and reality (evaluation), and locate the actual operations of experts within the conceptual figure of a “human being”, who appears as the singularized carrier of knowledge and guarantor of unity?

Perhaps we are witnessing the end of a type of expertise and expertness that is no longer appropriate to our time. Not only is there the challenge of facing and confronting actual contextuality but also that of facing the double demand of confronting reflexion problems and, at the same time, holding the expert mirror to society. On this account, the “displacement” of expertise need not be experienced as impotence but as a sense of possible

reality, as a sense of tracing a possibility of intervening in the debate between “high definition” and “high dilution”, as a way of turning the illusion of the expertise against expertise itself. It is, then, not possible to solve reflexivity problems purely by means of scientific introspection or increased sensitivity. Construction without critically confronting the conditions of the act of constructing amounts to plain criteriology or working the oracle. Thus, one of the decisive moments will, in one way or another, take the form of the centrality of distal knowledge or second-order concepts. Expertise will most likely continue to appear to be increasingly based on constructivism, but constructivism will neither lay foundations, arguments or certainties for “sciences” nor become conceived as a theory of constituting knowledge. Thus the authority, credibility and correctness of interpretations also tend to become constructions.

The third marginal condition, the offering of remediation and recommendations, the *generous perspectivity* of expertise, is a consequence of the preceding ones (cf. Rose 1994). Perhaps this is what is most often meant by (the proliferation of) modern expertise: that certain knowledgeable persons (lawyers, doctors, philosophers, psychologists) or prominent discussants (communitarians, postmodernists, therapists, virtualists) have lent their concepts and vocabularies of diagnosis, problematization, explanation, procedures of judgment and techniques of remediation for free to others (decision makers, conference organizers, social workers, teachers, managers, parents, individuals, consumers). This orientation is not entirely based on position. It does not necessarily reveal how concerns took place or how they are made amenable to management by operative experts. It never sufficiently opens up the compromises, demagogies or negotiable elements in terms of intrinsic possibilities. Moreover, a lot of space is left to performance criteria: instead of expert promises (“We can make you overcome your difficulties” or “We will get you out of trouble”), the main preoccupations will be with questions like: Who are *we*? What do we want to reaffirm (industrial modernity, perhaps)? Where do we want to reach back (to the premodern, perhaps)? From what do we exude a sense of *jouissance*, of celebration? Do we want to face threats and dangers without succumbing either to hollow optimism or to shrugging off the apocalypse (the postmodern)? And, above all: Can we manage?

It is through alliances, networks, intellectual discussion and to a certain extent “expert market segments” or “expert media” (and not through exclusion and territorialization, intensive specialization and qualification) that the expert perspective and different options of expertise proliferate in our expe-

riences at a level of life politics (see Ravetz 1996). This kind of expertise is now everywhere. Since we know that something will certainly happen, but we cannot know what, when or how, the best we can do is to speculate on the most prominent diagnoses, leading contradictions, or “fault lines”. We have seen several examples of such fault lines. One type is the genuine “future shock” (Toffler), “risk society” (Beck), or “end of history” (Fukuyama). Another one is the reflective “remedy lines”: communication, deliberation, dialogue, empowerment, negotiation. The way these are interpreted (Stop-gap!; The “Beyond-man” comes into his own at last!; Get to the roundtable!; Ecstasy!; The only choice is between morality and no morality! Back to the basics! etc.) is critical about the accent of the generous perspective.

Many people have pointed to the asymmetry in our culture between power accorded to experts and the increasing choices and options in the actual life politics of people. It is one thing to realize that such an asymmetry seems to exist and another thing to find out how it ought to be interpreted. In a strange way, the shifts in viewpoint in the fields of expert position, expert possibility and expert perspectivity seem to be moving toward rather than away from the traditional or even classical standpoints of knowledge practices, utilization of results and findings, and the politics of expert advice (see Report... 1996, 69). Perhaps this means that the question is not so much about the power bloc, tyranny or superiority of experts as it is about the substance and intelligibility of expertness, influencing all aspects of expertise – its position, possibility and perspectivity. It is a dispute about the legitimacy or the autonomy of the post-traditional era.

Expertise has become questioned, but not only because of the appearance of inexpertise, incorrectness, loss of credibility, loss of trust in trust, limitations in gatekeeping or criteriology – i.e. not only from the perspective of expertise as functional specialisation and qualification, but from that of the very intelligibility of expertise in terms of actual problematizations. That is also why the question is perhaps not about a “crisis”. The word “crisis” is only meaningful if one believes that things could be different. This is what in many cases allows the social and cultural movements, but not the holders of traditional expert positions, to speak about alternatives.

Perhaps the above-discussed asymmetry could rather be stated in the following way: the modern expert, trying to order human affairs to minimize misery and threats and to help us achieve security, health and even happiness, seems to be very good and extremely competent, but constitutively or symbolically speaking perhaps not capable of offering anything else than “blind assurances” and “empty worlds” through constructivist thinking. Of-

ten this is followed by constructing towards “transgressing”, “inventing”, “imagining”, “queering” boundaries, thus perhaps signalling that we all are part of and included in some sort of popular Hegelian progressive dynamics. As far as this circulation of expertise is concerned, there is no possibility, for example, of stopping, standing still, being suspended, behaving indifferently, and locating alternatives. How does expert discourse reach the possibility of a reign of symbolic exchange in which there is continuity, a cycle, a path? Probably by constructing such definitions of society, life forms and life styles that break out of the already consolidated and established vocabulary. This, namely, is the mechanism through which the expert may again start to wonder to whom the question should be addressed, to find ways of problematizing who constitute the people, and to finally become convinced that there is a need to ask expert questions in the first place.

Following recent discussion around expertise, one cannot avoid the feeling that the layman, along with “laymentality”, *has* gradually become a contemporary hero, one who is capable of extensive informal reflection on social relationships with scientific experts and on the epistemological status of their own local knowledge in relation to “outside” knowledge (see Wynne 1992). The laypeople (and even their “counter-expertise”) are seen as capable of “reflexive” discourse that is even seen as something that should become a model for scientific institutions in the public domain. The model is obviously not applicable in all expert systems. At the same time, however, it is a sign of a critical intervention in the general philosophy of expert systems where our trust in expert systems is not based on a qualified and competent assessment of the quality of the available expert knowledge but on the assurance that it *is* expert knowledge.

## What we know (state of things) vs. how we know (state of knowing)

The most interesting questions deal neither with universal “formulas” nor with termless and poleless “registers”, but more and more with the ways in which we could distinguish different forms of changes within different strata or layers of theoretical (and pre-theoretical) assumptions, interpretations of experiences, problems, values, networks and technologies that, so to speak, set the terms for the observation and assessment of reality. A related question is how we could trace internal changes and internal mobility in the “order of things”, and how we could reveal the nature of changes within frames

and forms appearing to define the conditions of actual necessities and possibilities. This is also a key to recognizing the specific discussion about lack of knowledge and its implications: the way we know and the state of our knowing, or simply lack of knowledge, does not tell us how things are. Instead of trying to understand the “state of things” or become sensitive to new voices and articulations, the question of knowledge is almost always limited to ways of finding access to “ways of knowing” and the “state of knowing”. On this account, the modern expanded models of expertise have perhaps lost none of their original dubiousness because of the commitment to ideas such as decisionism and the technically possible implementation of expert advice.

The contemporary discussion around reflexive modernization (Beck & Giddens & Lash 1995) and evaluative empowerment (see Karisto 1996) suggests a move towards co-existence and diversity, and especially towards contextual problematization and resonance capacity instead of attempts to reassure decisionistic specialization or regulative effectiveness. This brings a new element into play. That element has been identified as “self-knowledge” or as a “preventive orientation”, and the question is about responsible action, the good citizen, empowering evaluation or integration, trust (as the means of coping with unmanageable complexity), wisdom (as the means of grasping the nonoptionality of end games), etc. As a consequence, expertise is given the option of appearing as a generator of “connectism” as well as an action frame within which governability is based on individualized techniques of greater self-expression and temporal possibilities. The semantics that has taken the place of categories of “essential features and natures” is based on a structural emancipation from contingencies (Luhmann 1996, 67). Under these conditions individuals are encouraged to identify themselves with their own preferences, to assert them as rights to themselves. What, in other words, is expected of them is not to follow (adapt or adjust themselves to) some generalized model or normality, but to articulate and understand their life styles and to declare their identities and make them available through active communication.

The shift from the notion of regulation capacity to that of resonance capacity refers to an increase in differentiation and in the establishment of requisite capacity. The problem of resonance capacity – since it refers to diversity and contextuality – does not reside simply in one dimension where relevances and irrelevances, good effects and bad effects, too little of expert advice and too much of it, ordering and innovating, etc. could be decisionistically or instrumentally balanced against each other. Instead, two bounda-

ries have to be distinguished: the external and the internal boundary of expertise.

By means of external boundaries, expert systems screen off (or shield themselves against) internal resonance and communication. They construct a distance against the enormous complexity of problematic issues often defined and registered by the state, by “specialized” sectors and “immune” institutions, and by “involved” audiences (groups and movements). On this level of expertise there are no clear inputs or outputs, no distinct groups, no divergent mobility. Expertise is a conglomerate. It is shaped by conscious processes, but only by those connected with “outside meanings”. It is this kind of expert systems or steering mechanisms that are gradually losing both their applicability and their credibility and that – as was discussed earlier – have to find new ways of explicating and implementing expert authority and expert advice.

There are entirely different circumstances and perspectives at the internal boundaries of expert systems. Things appear as interdependent with each other. A variety of aggregate phenomena (random audiences, cultural movements, life political expectations and discourses) find ways of influencing experts and interacting with expert mechanisms. Expert systems and expert realms are differentiated according to their own principles and expectations, but they are also part of a complex system of communication. There is no reversibility but turbulence (uncertainty and indeterminacy), and it may travel from one field to another. But it is also unclear whether these should be seen as explosion of harm and should be “neutralized” through expert processes for sectoral policymaking purposes, or whether they simply are part and parcel of the new dynamism of life political orientation in which events seem to have very different meanings for different people.

It’s a long way from the world of the Enlightenment and reason, from the conventional world of expertise and rationality: we seem to be in the fractal, in the molecular, in the plural. Should we, then, recognize the current state of affairs as indeterminacy or turbulence that does not become symbolic at all, or can we expect critical confrontations that will open up the polemic and dynamic dimension?

It seems that the traditional emphasis on making quick choices where one must answer in the affirmative or take a favourable attitude to one phenomenon and reject others is being replaced by a new emphasis on tolerating difference, one in which the components of the phenomenon or problematic issue *leave their “proper” places and spread out in both time and substance, i.e. become temporal*. Stabilizing change within this new order has, then, to take

place through “contingency consciousness” of the action and life horizon (instead of weighing two independent possibilities, or making the rational choice). It has to imply the possibility that the outcome could also be something else. This “something else” cannot be fastened, fixed, encumbered or rooted to anything about which we could say “so it is”. Thus we can return to the idea, mentioned earlier, that these outcomes cannot be conceived as externally possible or externally neutralized (objectified) states of affairs (facts) or states of futures (norms), but perhaps ought to be conceived as “passages” or “channels” through which one navigates one’s life projects or life policies. What is confronted here is a juxtaposed cluster of changing elements that seem to resist reduction to a common denominator or homogeneity, an essential imputable core or a generative first principle, and where straightforward modes of stopping, eliminating or “blackboxing” seem unthinkable.

The form or style of expertise that confronts “navigating action” could perhaps be called “migratory” or “empowering” expertise. It needs to look into inside factors and into internal mobility in the order of things. In trying to stabilize change, it has to take normality or normalization as a polemic and dynamic concept rather than as a stable and solid one. Threats, dangers, disasters, etc. are not viewed as a mere explosion of harm but may also contain strong elements of a release of repressed existential anxiety (see Horlick-Jones 1995). Advisory positions are not just expected to offer unique and powerful kinds of specialized and detailed findings, but are also expected to contain the understanding of how these findings can be related to different social and political concerns that affect citizens (see Rip 1985). They also have to go beyond the scientific “truths” (that themselves are not as “hard” as is sometimes believed) as well as beyond making recommendations under ideal operational conditions. They have to stop acting as “merchants of certainty” and become involved in the complexities and uncertainties of the world.

It is well known that “contextual” models or world views represent orientations that open into “something else”. Take, for example, the much debated notion of security. If you think along the conventional notion of security, you will always find yourself in a reality where security beliefs are released and insecurity beliefs marginalized (through controlled interventions or rational taming of chances). Once you look at security in a concrete context, polemic and dynamic insecurity and uncertainty (or whatever new names with which these sort of experiences are expressed) is a much more likely outcome because there you actually meet with the interventions in

threats and dangers; moreover, to the extent that security beliefs as such often become empty entities (artefacts or normative facades). The same kind of effect is gained when, for example, an atomistic explanation model (contextual characteristics or local experiences of some sort have to be taken into account and constructed as an orientation), or risk management is contextualized (risks have to be taken not only as additive but also as synergetic and reflexive phenomena). The general outcome that is achieved by this sort of discussion is that fixed forms (of techno-economic rationality) turn into mobile and oscillating forms (of another problematic).

Are there any tentative conclusions to be drawn from the discussion so far? It has been very common to stick to stratification theories that hierarchically divide or classify society into three or more parts with the aim of especially demonstrating and becoming convinced about the normalcy of having winning and losing groupings in contemporary society. The groupings can, however, also be seen in a horizontal setting where the question is not about structural orderings as such but about life-political outcomes and navigations that seem to place new demands on traditional conglomerates, for example, around generational contexts, welfare cultures or ways of life. This may sound voluntaristic and idealistic: how on earth can we speak about one's own control and planning of one's life? Once concretized as requiring a subject, an object and an intention, we would rather speak about the *limits* of life-political steering and draw this to the centre of discussion. Thus, the effects of life politics would become the main point. But these effects cannot be steered. If they were subjected to steering, they would disappear.

Perhaps, if life politics is understood as a *polemic concept* (cf. Canguilhem 1974, 163) and seen as challenging conventional ideas and assumptions about "normalcy", "hierarchical structures", "certitude", "security", "legitimacy", "politics", "power structures", the "mapping" of life coordinates, and even the symbolic orderings of the welfare state, it can be developed into a diagnostically valuable tool for tracing post-traditional life orders. At the moment there seems to be a strong belief that it is life politics that has the best chances of carrying us into the twenty-first century. Following this polemic purpose, the society-level horizontal *problematiques* could then be divided according to the interpretations and expectations (orientations and perspectives) of the following highly specialized, internally diverse and not paradox-free constellations. They are neither pure responses to threats and harms nor pure celebrations of life purposes. Still, they represent examples of life politics created by the surface complexity of expectations and experiences rather than by the deepening of the soul and spirit. The form of their representa-

tions is not “pastoral” (based on representative schemes) but “polemical”. They represent polemically the contemporary broadening of the sphere of individualization (singularization), increasing difference and differentiation, relative emptying of regulatory principles of their transcendent substance and the mechanisms of dissolving the unity of life styles and opinions. Let me once more point out that the question is about polemic demonstration of self-knowledge and self-regulation in relation to levels of imagined valuation and normalcy, i.e. of expectations and hopes, readiness and resistance to doing otherwise, taming and tolerating of changes and chances.

Thus there are, for example, cleavages and groups living within *industrial modernity* and its conflicts, perhaps anticipating the release of certainty and a well-established order characteristic of the uniform standards of industrial society. These people would in an affirmative way understand the accent of “complex expertise” or “expertise of complexity”, and perhaps try to maintain or even strengthen the following kind of expectation horizon: stopping the spread of harm and danger, exercising neutralizing control, tolerating powerful sectoral expert positions, believing in solid, continuous and uniform culture (the “moral immunity” of institutions, see Enzensberger 1998), and perhaps not having that much understanding or tolerance for differences, changes of political culture, tendencies of individualization, and the actualization of autonomy. The neoindustrial ethos of information society may even appear to reaffirm this problematic through strict time-space, newly found standards of schooling and education, compensatory regulation of cultural diversity and symbolic manifestations of familiarity, nationalism and the nation-state.

At the same time we could locate cleavages and groups living within or fallen into *premodern problematic* and becoming dependent on ascriptive qualities as well as social conflicts rooted in special social locations and destitute regions. In this case different kinds of deep suspicions (or ambivalent feelings) about the prevailing expert position, possibility and perspective are likely: they should rather be sensitized to the specific ascriptive qualities (age, gender, language, subculture, etc.) and transcendental characteristics of active non-formal life settings (communality, duties, honour, etc.). Sometimes this might remind us of the old days when there was not so much fuss and a lot more “reality”: there were no superimposed structures throughout society, and there was a large variety of cultural forms, living commonality, coexistence of formal and nonformal, as well as formulaic and non-formulaic steering mechanisms.

Thirdly, we could see well-educated urban groups and segments living in *postmodern problematics* and not longing for preordered guarantees of certainty

or solidity. These people would be ready to discuss new directions in expert position and expert authority and perhaps not so willing to refer to strengthening of communal ties: the expectations would go in the direction of “second”, “migratory” or “detraditionalized” forms of expert advice that need neither “neutralized” nor “naturalized” implementation mechanisms but are seen as “self-confronted” mechanisms of expertise. This would, then, mean liberating the individuals from the relic of traditional society, or new ways of conceptualizing the realms of the individual (the subject) in relation to traditional patterns of social diagnosis (interpretation). Even if this directly implies the displacement of conventional expertise, many people will also perceive the resulting demystification and detraditionalization as a threat to the history and tradition of their society.

## The quest for regulative ideas

We are not saying farewell to “foundational” expertise or to the “analytical” framework which, for example, represent the underlying tacit processes of identity negotiation. We are saying farewell to expertise as a “packet thing”. We are no longer living in an age of down-handed expert guidance. We have gotten over it or gone beyond it. Saying this, we don’t need to speculate about the “erosion” or “implosion” of expert authority (we e.g. never came to say that the position of the priest as the theoretical expert of traditional West European society has “eroded”). We have gone beyond expertise as a totality and entered a renegotiable, not paradox-free “discourse expertise”. This means, for example, that there are hardly any autonomous or indisputable criteria for distinguishing legitimate from not so legitimate socioscientific knowledge. This also seems to mean that “credibility” and “trust” are not beliefs or attitudes which people supposedly choose to espouse or reject, but means of provisional or conditional identification based on underlying assumptions. Finally, one could speak about new connectionism, about the discovery of specific rules which can be analyzed in terms of the ways in which statements should be linked to each other.

The intelligibility of expertise cannot be opened by tracing and documenting different “language games” within this context. It would rather be the task of the philosophy of science to explicate, for example, the rules concerning the open context of “discovery”, that is, to be open to historical contingency and situationality as well as to rules concerning the immanent

context of “justification“, which is autonomous, independent or indisputable *vis-à-vis* limitations of these kind. The intelligibility of expertise is rather a substantial matter, a question, for example, about clarifying the relationship between expert statements and statements concerned with the constitution of the social bond, between competence required on the part of the sender of the expert message and perhaps another kind of competence on the part of the receiver, between performed expertise and knowledge about the existing state of expert knowledge, or between the verbalization and signalization of expert knowledge. Whether or not expertise becomes critically reflexive in relation to these “open contexts” will have an effect on both its image and position. So far the symbolic credibility of the expert has “forbidden” the acknowledgement of the contingency of current beliefs or set limitations for accepting genuine plurality (not to speak about relativization). Perhaps experts, for reasons of this sort, are the least able to appreciate the context-bound nature of their work (Wynne 1987, 342), i.e. knowledge contents recognized in spheres like “local infrastructure”, “decentralization of knowledge processes”, “construction and use of artefacts”, “transformations of meaning structures”, and “invitation of anti-expertise”.

Today it is possible that neither experts nor policy makers have expectations of “total information”. Perhaps a more “realist” appreciation of scientific knowledge and thus at least some sort of displacement of expertise is already present. Thus they perhaps do not ask – after hearing the news about the relativization and contextualization of scientific knowledge – if it can provide anything at all relevant to policy questions. What they might need to ask soon is what kind of problematics or problem conditions exist in these contexts, and especially what kind of self-contextualizations there are that travel through the diffusion of change or innovation, in other words, what the new selection and identification mechanisms are in different problem areas. This is not simply a question of the representation of scientific knowledge, democratization of expert advice, or empowerment of citizens in information society. There are certain competences within these contexts, competences that the scientific experts want to meet, but at the same time competences that are there without longing for the authority or the “ethos” of the external expert. What, then, might serve as clues about the reciprocal mechanisms of observation, inference and communication? Some already mentioned regulative concepts and ideas will be discussed next, and finally an effort will be made to explicate the boundaries and regulative mechanisms of life-political placements and contexts.

*Neutralized and open contexts.* There are knowledge operations (politics) that seek to neutralize contexts (especially those of economics, law, science, technology, etc.): their ability to bring about security is based on their own functions (finalization) and on their own mechanisms of bringing about trust (see Giegel 1993, 107). There are also knowledge operations (politics) that leave the context open and non-finalized (especially those of education, social work, psychotherapy, etc.): to draw strict boundaries between internal and external regulation and communication (typical of neutralizing operations) would lead to unproductive and unfruitful contradictions (see Giegel 1993, 108). This is because it is thought that *the very function of these knowledge strategies is to “empower” people and make human beings capable of shaping the environment and outside development.* It is the task of pedagogy and social work to change (normalize) the world. Obviously, these strategies create a lot of insecurity and uncertainty through their commitment to a non-neutralized and non-objectified link to contingent surroundings. But they have no other means of “survival” than to become part of problematical communication and complexity where, once more, the context can be neither eliminated nor controlled, and where the harms and difficulties cannot be normalized or neutralized. The surrounding thus becomes understood as a potential catastrophe. At the same time operations in open contexts, as well as operations which leave contexts open, gain sensitivity and semantical potential in relation to the critique of dangers and threats.

Within operative systems these possibilities can be utilized only in a restricted way – there have to be “independent” social movements or citizen action that can grasp and make use of this potential as well as transform it into a protest against society. If these do not exist or are too dependent or weak, there is always the professional ethos or ideology as a guarantor of continuity or at least cycles. Professional expertise does not normally leave much room for an open context: it seeks to “possess” the problems and expects people to “give away” their problems (for neutralization). It would use a weak contextual argument for showing that expert knowledge is dependent upon the social context it approaches, and perhaps save a strong contextual argument for the purpose of pointing at the cognitive and epistemological dependence or professional aspirations.

“Contextuality” has the same kind of weaknesses as the idea of networking: it has no limits, there is always something, everyone has it, but it escapes “meanings”. Can we make a move from the concept of frame setting (the cultural context) to a more flexible and richer concept “context of situation”, and even a further step from hierarchical characterizations of the “con-

text of situation” towards the mediating mechanism of horizontal problematics within these contexts? The last-mentioned are not limited to the effects of linguistically (or perceptually) mediated contexts or of things changing, not even to those of some veritable network of interrelated structures. Because contexts are constantly moulded and changed it is perhaps not wise to characterize them hierarchically at all but orientate oneself towards temporal structures. Perhaps we could even say that thinking and acting have no meaning without “polemic contexts”. But this is also an argument towards the infinity of contexts (every context is within a wider context).

It might then be better to make a special case here by saying that the question is not about general (empty and dull) contextuality but about *specific temporal and thematic contextuality that is, or appears to be, part of the regulative consciousness (or Zeitdiagnostik) of disciplinary culture or an enclave of it*. This is to say that the validity of the context concept is more on the side of diagnostic (affecting both the strategy of discovery and the strategy of justification or understanding) as well as on the side of finding a perspective for the concept of context, than on the side of actually developing or elaborating on a “context theory”.

*The concept of contingency.* The contingency of the present (i) is the obvious starting point, a topic that centers around the notions of event and life style. The handiest way of channeling and directing the discussion on the nature of contingency actually takes place through the Aristotelian notion of contingency and chance and (ii) the notion of the contingency of modernity (iii) where the question is about the contingency of the overall action horizon. I will discuss these three points only.

Ad (i): attending to events (rather than structures) can help to lay bare the contingency of taken-for-granted evidence. In other words, their evidence is inevitable (necessary) only after various processes have taken place. Even though the existence of, for example, social policy reforms became inevitable in some sense at a certain point in history, their existence is still contingent not only in so far as they owe their existence to a coincidence of various singular factors, but also in so far as their emergence was unnecessary prior to that historical point. It is, then, not correct to say that contingency takes us to nil. Contingency is the space where neither inevitability nor impossibility rules. When introducing contingency, one implies that non-inevitable and not-impossible factors are not properly attended to by offering, for example, figures of an economic mechanism, an anthropological structure, a demographic process, or an institutional change.

Ad (ii): here one might be tempted to make a distinction between (a) events that are “strongly” necessary, i.e. necessary all along, and (b) events that are “weakly” necessary, i.e. necessary after certain other events have taken place. One might also be tempted to make a distinction between (a) chances that seem to appear as “possibilities”, i.e. representing the omnipresence of a *Spielraum* of contingency, and (b) chances that not only appear as possibilities in thinking but suppose objective possibility (feasibility/realization *ex post* vs. feasibility/realization *ex ante*, i.e. strong vs. weak chances). Chances are something that are, so to speak, always open. This is why they do not amount to “capacity” and “ability”. Chance seems to refer to an open horizon of reflections. This is not covered by the notions of “occasion” and “opportunity” that refer to aims and means in terms of actions (see Palonen 1996, 15-16).

Ad (iii): Within the contingency of modernity cultural meaning escape inevitability and necessity, in other words, can be characterized as “not-inevitable” (not-predetermined, not-inescapable, not-unavoidable, etc.) and “not-impossible” (not-infeasible, not-insurmountable, etc.). It introduces a feeling and a realm of chance and possibility into the experience of modernity (cf. Marshall Berman). It is necessary to stress that the experience of modernity *qua* contingency is culturally specific. Georg Simmel reflects on this when he discusses the ways in which modern life is being ripped up by the roots (*Entwurzelung*). Max Weber refers to the same idea with the term *Sinnverlust*. Walter Benjamin’s thinking perhaps completely twines around the contingency of modernity. In cases like these the substantial aspect of contingency might be named *first contingency* (Noro 1995, 230). The second contingency is an aspect of time-space, its temporality. Temporality can be linked with a variety of distinctions, heightened temporal awareness or sensitivity to time, and “thickening” experiences and feelings.

In the contingency of modernity the question is not about weighing and choosing between different opportunities (possibilities; independent chains of events, vistas) but about non-inevitability and non-impossibility within the whole action *horizon*, its perspectives and spheres. It is a passage, a channel, something through which one navigates. The contingency of experience (language, the individual, institutions, etc.) refers to the possibility that it could also be something else, that it does not become fastened, fixed, encumbered or rooted to anything about which we can say “so it is”. This (negative) characterization tells us a lot about uncertainty: uncertainty is contingent existence, interiorization of contingency, a time of transmigration, critical confrontation, etc. In this sense our life-world (life politics, horizon-

tal life forms, etc.) is contingent. The subject may be unsure about the coordinates and orientations of action, but nonetheless has to become a valiant “reproduction unit” who fearlessly confronts the tendency of intensification and individualization of critical questions.

*The concept of complexity.* It is often extremely difficult to make a distinction between theorists of the *analytical growth* of complexity and theorists emphasizing the hazards and *harmfulness* of the growth of complexity. The same difficulty remains, if not increases, in attempts to find ways of reducing complexity. It is a common claim that we should try to reduce complexity e.g. by increasing the firmness, rootedness and credibility of expectations, i.e. by gaining trust. If one tries to do this by adding neutralizing and objectifying elements (ethical elements, law elements, economic elements, etc.) to the problem in order to increase the steering capacity or the controllability of the problem, one in fact often ends up increasing complexity (Luhmann 1990). The other name given to this kind of complexity is *hybridization* (Latour 1993, Gibbons et al. 1994). As has been suggested by Niklas Luhmann, one can in fact *reduce complexity through increasing complexity*. However, the focus has then to be on social communication and interaction systems, on increasing and expanding the contingency of everyday social life. No wonder that the increase in preventive action, life politics, individual responsibility, and empowering emancipation are grasped as “exits” from overwhelming complexity.

The experts’ definition of complexity is: changes and ruptures in the social environment are more diverse and instantaneous than the steering capacity of the system. The system, in other words, becomes unable to respond or even react to the turbulent changes. To prevent this situation from becoming completely ungovernable and overwhelming, the experts need new concepts for finding ways in which to overcome unexplained and paralysing complexity. The expert displaces himself from the steering position and becomes interested in pre-institutional or even pre-existing matters like preventive action, anticipation and prediction. He might also do this through a more sophisticated approach, using selective action as well as rationalization and restructuration of actions and frames.

*The concept of differentiation.* There is no one-dimensional logic of differentiation that would give shape and a frame to processes of knowledge formation. On the contrary, we have to distinguish between contradictory and overlapping forms and mentalities of differentiation. One is *dedifferentiation*

that presents itself as ruptures and turbulence in differentiated development, thereby also as the provisionality and restructuring of new standards that cannot be made understandable through conventional concepts but need new sensitivity and insight in relation to dedifferentiated life forms themselves. This is why not only confrontation with the odds is prevalent. Something that can be called ambivalence- or contingency-consciousness is also needed. Another form is *radical differentiation*, which means consolidation and expansion of differences and differentiated spheres in social life. This is why the old *Vervwissenschaftlichung der gesellschaftlichen Problemverarbeitung*, the mere ethos of scientism, decisionism and the doctrine of growing impact of scientific knowledge ceases to be the most relevant energizer of social relations. Increasing contextualization, the centrality of different subpolitical forms, new forms of expertise, and new links between scientific knowledge and expert advice are not only heroic projects but also unavoidable and necessary ways of tracing new knowledge channels. Because of the uncertainty and floating nature of these measures, a growing tacit demand of trust has arisen in many fields (see e.g. Lagerspetz 1996, Misztal 1996, Luhmann 1988, Gambetta 1988). The third is *differentiation that intensifies profound differences* and creates fragmentation of societal coordinates and episodization of the corresponding social life forms. This seems to be the most complicated and least known tendency, which no expressions or conceptions – erosion or singularization, uncertainty or ignorance, chaos or ungovernability – adequately describe. This brings up new knowledge channels where one has to be ready to accept the growth of *indifference* between different social spheres (and where the indifference itself becomes a basis for strategies of life politics to govern and regulate one's own life). One has to be ready to accept *fictive space* as a basis and starting point of action; and one has to adopt *discursive* and localized ways of deciding on ethical standards and political positions.

*The concept of indeterminacy.* Uncertainties should be understood as being part of indeterminacy which covers scientific knowledge itself (see Shrader-Frechette 1994). Risks, on the other hand, are controllable uncertainties – if you like, small-scale indeterminacies. In this sense risk strategy is a contextual strategy of reducing overwhelming complexity around uncertainty, and thus perhaps also of diminishing the scientific burden of proof in dealing with problems of governing and regulation. Its practice, however, it is extremely tenuous: we cannot know definitely what is an adequate level of investment in social change to prevent harm. The required attention to “up-

stream contextual” understanding and decisions means finding criteria not in the conventional context of immediate problem situations but in a new context that is expected to allow new preventive competences. Risk introduces contingency into the Faustian world, but too powerful risk calculation or risk prevention begins to mean the opposite: there is no space left for movement and action. Risk is a metaphor for a societal constellation that has become extremely complex. An authentic risk based on adequate knowledge basis is a paradox: when an authentic risk situation is achieved, it ceases to be a risk situation. As Mary Douglas (1990, 3) writes, risk is a useful forensic resource in a world where “risk refers only to negative outcomes” and where the word has been “preempted to mean bad risks”.

We can talk about *risk* when we – through, for example, risk calculation, insurance principle, disaster prevention, prophylactic aftercare, reconstruction of risk boundaries and levels, scales of tolerance and pedagogies of risk consciousness – start to observe and assess the odds. If you feel there is a crisis of risk management, you are advised to try harder and keep abreast of modern development. If you don’t dare (cf. “riscare” and “risque”), you don’t gain or achieve anything. We can talk about *uncertainty* when we don’t know the odds even if we know the main parameters. There are several sophisticated methods in industrial society for estimating uncertainties and their effects on outcomes. These sophisticated means may increase possibilities, may construct chances, may increase expectations in terms of means and aims and thus serve the program of increasing credibility and trust. This is because they increase the tolerance of uncertainty. But what may reduce uncertainty will at the same time increase ignorance.

We can talk about *ignorance* when we don’t know *that* we don’t know. This is a much more difficult problem than the two earlier-mentioned ones. This is because ignorance is not so much a characteristic of knowledge itself (ignorance is not caused e.g. by imprecision) as it is of the linkages between knowledge and commitments (fundamental interests, disciplinary principles, etc.) based upon it. Ignorance increases with increased commitments based on given knowledge. Thus the contextualization (non-exogenising) of scientific knowledge, or the weakening or loosening of the commitments of scientific logic, could be viewed as a step in coming to know what we don’t know, i.e. in reducing ignorance. One should, however, be careful not to make contextualization a self-emancipation strategy of science. It can only affect some segments, and there are always “unshakeable” built-in-ignorances and sovereign models (inner theory structures) that no contextualization is able to touch. We can talk about *indeterminacy* when important questions about

causal chains and network of scientific knowledge are open. Lack of recognition of this distorts public debate and understanding of a communicative relationship between expert knowledge and public value choices. What perhaps is most decisive about the concept of indeterminacy is that it introduces the idea that contingent factors or contingent social behaviour must also be explicitly included in analytical and prescriptive frameworks. This corresponds to the distinctions drawn in risk research between “intrinsic” and “situational” threats: actual risks are a combination of the inherent properties of phenomena and of *the ways people actually treat them*. Indeterminacy, in other words, is the name for the open-endedness of expert processes.

The big question of reflexivity is how modern society deals with self-generated, manufactured uncertainties, and especially how it deals with dangers that have escaped or neutralized the control requirements of industrial society. Thus the earlier discussed critical checkpoints may be made to appear as “flashpoints” that force us to think that the problems are not strictly problems of the surrounding world, but rather problems indicating the crisis of reflexivity itself. These “flashpoints” may also reveal that a certain calculability or controllability is universalizable within some specific problematics but non-universalizable within some other problematics. Thus, the idea of “flashpoint” itself becomes contextualized: there may be “world flashpoints” (globalization from above) as well as “local flashpoints” (globalization from below), and there may be “outside meanings” referring to grand changes, setting limits and frameworks within which “inside meanings” are created.

## Displacements

The idea of “expert elite” has its contemporary origin in theories and diagnoses of risk society, where security is becoming the primary good that economic organizations aim to produce and where complexities of information-based industry make confident calculations of dangers impossible, since solid evidence of long-term consequences and unintended side-effects is, by definition, unobtainable. This contradiction is said to have pushed the late twentieth century into a terminal crisis (Alexander 1996, 134). The “solution” to increasingly difficult and complex societal life is to move toward more reflexivity – a tendency already manifest in three different domains (see Beck & Giddens & Lash 1994): *science* itself must be “democratized”, so that calculations of risk are taken out of the hands of an elite detached from

the concrete experiences of everyday life; the increasingly differentiated and self-directed social spheres of contemporary life should be reconnected through the creation of intermediate policy-making bodies modelled on the *round table*; as social movements concentrating on protection and security arise, a new kind of *subpolitics* is developing that increasingly shifts decision-making away from the formal democratic institutions of parliaments and executive bodies. If the question is about contextualized expertise (science), contractualism (round-table) and life politics (subpolitics), expertise should be increasingly combined with reflexivity. Will, then, the expert elite become a reflexionselite?

There are several reasons for the contemporary growth and new dominance of the reflexionselite: the increased complexity of all social relations in modern society, requiring new means of reducing complexity based on, for example, liberation of everyday communication and motivational considerations; the transformation of higher education which is not “concrete” and which no longer joins moral and scientific (expert) discourse and therefore produces a “normative vacuum”; the elimination of the separation of the private and the public (work and politics) spheres of social life, etc. Positions typically occupied by members of the new reflexionselite involve the genesis and distribution of information of particular significance to modern society (see Stehr 1996). The question is whether they create a special “language”, “accent” or “generous view” that often cannot get anchored in everyday speech, and whether new forms of expertise try to create other contexts of discourse for explication (illustration, legitimation) of concepts and expert advice.

Radically differentiated life-political contexts seem to attract reflexive “socio-journalist” expert observations for the following kinds of diverse reasons: to grasp overwhelmingly complex themes and ideas like ethics of being, existential expertise, realizability of opportunities, etc.; to escape general lack or invalidity of concepts and metaphors; to be able to interpret the actual meaning of contextuality or locality; to recognize genuine social orientations and motivations; to understand contemporaneity; to see the relevant structural and institutional connections (or mental constructs of them) for individual navigation and life politics; to communicate and interpret differences without falling into the trap of false reduction or relativization; to contextualize different protests, to communicate “invisibility”, to identify genuine problems and differentiate them from quasi problems; to trace unique (contextual) normativity in terms of experiences, local knowledge, epistemological obstacles, etc.; to interpret the interlocking mechanisms of in-

creasing inequality and individualization; to avoid “neutralizing” and “freezing” determination of autonomy and personal life; to find “correct” interpretations and try to specify their own structures. The new gambit is there to face problems without succumbing to hollow expert-progressivist optimism. That the list could be continued almost infinitely is both a sign of nonreversibility, i.e. turbulence and indeterminacy, and a sign of the fact that these processes are far from empty, i.e. that something substantial is at stake here.

It is obvious that the meaning of terms such as “reflexivity” or “connexity” is being stretched. They should not, however, be offered as a solution. They are merely descriptions of the contemporary state of complexity, connectedness, interdependency and indeterminacy. They make up a symbol of the new gambit to explore how we should change our ways so as to critically respond to this condition, and what kind of political adjustments are needed. In fact, two broad channels – through which these metamorphoses and displacements of expert processes can be analyzed – have already been mentioned. One is a reflective confrontation with instruments, steering mechanisms, observation and assessment processes – with the aim of reinterpreting semantic frameworks for the entire society. The other is, or says, that there is no return to bliss, emphasizes the contingency of the whole action horizon and the ambivalent shifts from essence to possibility, from binding conditions of actions to options of actions, and from publicly instituted value profiles to privately held singularized preferences. These are different modes of displacement. The former trusts in reflexive reconstructions and renegotiation. It thinks we can trust in trust if deeper levels (of knowing and understanding) are brought to the fore. According to the latter, trust is misplaced and “thick trust” may not necessarily be desirable at all. The former is thinkable in reneutralized and reobjectified contexts (reflexive expert institutions). The latter’s relevance is perhaps more in the service of the diagnosis of our time. These two can be brought together by saying that displacements increase the variety of utilizable resources and facilitate coaching instant change, at the same time reducing our enjoyment of the results of changes and limiting the range of the recognition of our success. What this means is that it has become easier to restructure and redesign, but more difficult to rethink and reevaluate (see Eräsaari 1997).

We seem to confront “minor” and “major”, and “inside” and “outside” paradoxes. The well known examples are circumstantial factors (passions, constraints, etc.) and unpredictable properties emerging from the interaction of inside meanings of self-knowledge and outside meanings (power, social conditions) where they operate. From the conventional viewpoint of ra-

tional choice, this would make up the irrationality problem *vis-à-vis* predicted inefficiency or counter-productivity in bringing about order or relative stability. Reflexivity thinking, on the other hand, aims to dig itself into these contexts and tries to open them up as realms of contextual relativization (reconstructed semantical frameworks, intensified uses of language, conceptual relativism, internal realism, etc.). It is, in fact, digging itself into something that has already for a long time been conceived as a possibility and as a resource. But we have not really seen efforts to open up thematic contexts where certain themes, value constellations, paradoxes of commonality, the polemic nature of concepts and the problematization of certainty are specified. As was discussed earlier, we can identify different problematics: the problematics of industrial modernity (reassertion of advisory positions, finding new channels of getting back neutrality and objectivity, etc.), premodern problematics (working within institutional, moral or geographic positions that are becoming increasingly separated from supraindividual cultural formations, thus making different declensions, different syncretic meanings and selective positions more accessible), and postmodern problematics (not reaching back to premodernity and not surrendering to postmodernity but living, if you like, in a constant whirlpool).

The actual construction of such a polemically contextualized and differentiated picture of how experts meet with life political problematics is perhaps not possible at all, or can only be illustrated through imaginative case studies. The danger in drawing such a picture is that it would easily look like virgin territory or an illusionary idea where both information (whether stored in expertise, computers, books or media) and life practices come to be seen as free or in some sort of a preconstitutional stage. As we know, this condition will not last, but there is always the next inventor, programmer, author, journalist, or expert whose incentive would result in a split between expertise optimists and pessimists, familiarity and shock, etc. that would sooner or later ensure that expertise is able to adapt to new, legally circumscribed technologies. Then we are back at the failure of the expert model to take account of our cultural milieu as well as back at the polarity between the expert “collage” and the life political “village”.

A decisive part in such a construction would necessarily concern the understanding of *problematizations*. The previous chapter on regulative ideas tried to show five controversial domains: i) thematic contexts – this is not just a question of unique events but also of strictures upon them, making room for a more general account of the concerns, concepts, vocabularies and frames of late twentieth century social expertise, ii) the uncertainty and contingency

of the process of expert innovation – expertise is not fixed or lawlike, which makes it important to know the processes that go into its making, and to study expert advice (not expert technology), expert projects (not expertise-in-use), expert orientation (not the results of expertise; see Latour 1996); thus contingency primarily means the action space of expertise and should not be immediately criticized for reluctance to see any continuities at all; it may even appear as a carrier of the virtue of discernment, unfettered expectations and isonomous value culture, not to be confused with betrayal, arbitrariness or nihilism; iii) the problems and paradoxes of complexity – the burden of proof as well as the burden of expert advice may grow enormous and counter-productive, and as a remedy for that, commonality, communicative interaction, discourse orientation, or even reconciliatory mechanisms such as trust and wisdom are reconsidered; iv) paradoxes of differentiation and de-differentiation – this brings out the polemic and dynamic nature of any concepts meant for steering purposes; the polemics and dynamics will lose their navigation and orientation validity and competence if they become subordinated to another center or system, i.e. they will lose their discerning capacity in relation to the recognition and attachment of differences and diversity; v) problems of indeterminacy and uncertainty – this indicates an important shift from “how we know” (i.e. from conditions of circumstantial and unpredictable outcomes that disturb the rationality of rational choices) to “what we know” (i.e. uncertainty and indeterminacy attributed to the state or order of things).

Another important element in such a reconstruction could be derived from the *effect of the stretching of the meaning of “meaning” in relation to the advisory, intrinsic and generosity logic of expertise*. What is at stake here is the imaginative particularities of “culture” (cf. themes, action space, commonality, differences and certainties as discussed above) in relation to the wider societal and historical conditions by which life politics is both prompted and constrained, i.e. the historical availability of the use and the meaning of expertise. As we have here both the element of availability and the element of making use of it, the corresponding meanings might be termed “outside meaning” and “inside meaning” (following Roger Just’s terminology). “Inside meaning” relates to the life-political embeddedness of significance in practices of daily life or life politics. Especially when understood as cultural life and use of language, it unfolds in relation to grand changes and ruptures. These changes will, however, set limits and frames within which life politics and inside meanings are created. The term “outside meaning” refers to these.

The distinction between inside and outside meanings may become important for the three logics of expertise for the following reasons. *First*, the current preoccupation with “interpretation” or “correct interpretation” of what things are supposed to “mean” to people seems to obscure the fact that events (pieces of advice, discerned chances, generous perspectives) have very different meanings for different people. This is where the differentiated problematics make their return: within the industrial logic representative patterns or phrases are constantly made to reappear (cf. responsive communitarians); within premodern problematics life politics does not come to be linked with that sort of transcendentalism but with ascriptive and local properties; and within postindustrial problematics openness in relation to differences and diversity is evident, and individualized life styles begin to represent the general.

*Second*, the same preoccupation with interpreters turned social experts has involved a retreat from any, particularly historical, attempt to explain why things happen the way they do. Thus, the availability of chances, contingency and uncertainty become necessary for avoiding the imputation of a homogeneity of values, cultures and life politics to the members of society, members who are nevertheless all in some way affected by the same structural changes. It also becomes important to make a necessary distinction from those – like the contemporary welfare state expert repertoires – still interested in specific rather than “morphological” causes and consequences. There still remains the question of how these inside and outside meanings work, what boundaries are constructed, and how they are affected by polemic orientations and life political autonomy. Answering this question would need another essay. After these considerations, the polemic notion of life politics – and thus indirectly also the phrases, promises and tensions of expert perspectives – can at least be given a bit richer formulation.

If all the postmodern can offer is play and unconcern, then (*industrial modernity's*) images of linearity and technical-economic rationality held some attractions. A return to rationalism may not be emotionally satisfying, but as a way of obtaining knowledge and determining horizons it is viewed as our best hope. The crises and conflicts are still resolvable within a modernist frame – its entire potential has not yet been tested. The hope of freedom, justice and happiness should be kept alive. Even if there is questioning about the foundationalist approaches to science and expertise, doubts that new technologies really make a qualitative difference, and skepticism about attaining objectivity, there is also a new return to the industrial problematic, trust and company culture. The tensions and conflicts – for example, be-

tween collective contractualism and individual projects, traditional bourgeois responsibility and the pluralist surface, the controllability and singularization of threats, the credibility of expertise and diminishing trust in professions and experts – seem to be resolvable through intensified communication and networking. Neutralizing the control over the processes that form the target of expert intervention is the key to keeping the promises and expectations of professional expert positions and to the expansion of the public sphere, civil movements and civil sectors. It also makes up an antidote to being caught in paradoxes of performative contradiction (industrialists cannot but search for universal principles to lay bare the features of natural and social reality, even if they are at the same time sawing off the branch they are sitting on). In spite of the fact that problems appear as “artificial” constructions and remedies as “compensatory” control and prevention, there is a feeling that a cure to the complex malaise of modernity can be obtained. This is related to the idea that the cognitive and moral focus of life is not consumer conduct (or pleasurable duties) but society (or civil duties). The crucial issue on the eve of the third millennium is to refill and replace expert position and to think that the possibilities and perspectives constructed by experts are aimed at restoring the broken foundation of our way of life.

The problematics and conflict lines of *premodern problematics* express actualization of ascriptive properties as well as dependence on specific regions and localization, and can perhaps be characterized as a mentality encouraging the seizing upon of habits and commonality as well as seeing the general opinion as transparent immediacy. The choice seems to be between no morality and morality. Modernity is a mistake. Aristotle is the antidote. There is no third alternative. There exists something that is right and natural. This can be grasped by looking above human beings. The main thing is to inculcate the desirable goals (polity based on virtue, global ecumenicalism). This should be scattered over or networked into places and spaces which mobilized individuals transit. It is perhaps this kind of “thickness” or activism that becomes intertwined with the understanding of knowledge, expertise and anti-expertise. Rational expertise is too artificial, echoing the industrial criteriology of efficiency and competence. The ethos of expertise should be prudence. In a prudent position one can make judgments without some ultimate criterion. This is helped by the imperative of self-discipline, even if outside meanings – the voice of the Other, or the Other as a generalized polity – are needed to give it shape and direction or even theoretical justification, and to prevent it from turning into charlatanism. Humanity has to envision its own ground hope, its own history, its own speciality and its own

normality. The question is here about naturalizing the control of expert processes: rather than grounding knowledge conceptions and critique in “science” or even “tradition”, an element of hope (as confidence, not optimism) may serve as an alternative to foundationalism. This also means that faith (and the community of the faithful) is the key to the future. Ancient wisdom is retrieved as the means of constructive critique that relativizes both rational industrial and random postmodern life forms. Still, may there appear resonance with the postmodern ethical turn?

People living in *late modern problematics* are the educated urban groups for whom there do not appear to be limits that have no exteriority, but always a threshold, a door, or a chance that constitutes a point of contact with spaces through which they are in transit – it is a kind of anthropological paradox that individuals are “threshold beings” with no thresholds. These people don’t gain freedom from traditional authorities in industrial modernity, but rather from industrial society in a broad variety of different, mutually contradictory orders and perspectives supported by the expansion of education, labour mobility and individualized life politics. The challenge shifts the focus back on the ideals, values and symbols of economic life to such an extent that taste and style – now regarded as centrally significant – often cannot be understood as anything else than part of the triumph of the markets, while the “markets” at the same time are rushing to accommodate themselves to the communal political goals of the moment – diversity, sensibility, and environmentalism. This circular reasoning leaves out the very question of the dissolution of stable boundaries, fixed structures and shared consensus, i.e. that meaning dissolves and that this is one of the mechanisms that invite cultivation of lifestyles and tastes under the support of the media and new life politics. What is also forgotten is that the consequences of this are complex, leading to a variety of new problematics and new indifference between inside and outside meanings. Often it leads to unsatisfactory results in life politics and also to the inability to make the necessary decisions on a well-founded and responsible basis. It is clearly within post-traditional or late modern problematics where the “legislative” expert role that handed down judgements and pieces of advice from above now faces the prospect of becoming displaced by and restricted to reflexive interpretation between groups playing different life politics. “Second expertise” mix surface and depth, security and certainty, irrationality and contingency, prudence and pastiche, confidence and chaos, loosening or moving the boundaries (the inside meanings and the outside meanings) between them. Continuities are no longer plausible. What was supposed to be rationality turned out to be

pretence. Statements like “Postmodernism swims in the fragmentary, loves successive images, makes disorientation a virtue, and sees enthusiasm and emancipation as promises” are neither theoretical conclusions nor accurate illustrations. The polemics of post-traditional problematics has not yet been opened. I believe that this will turn out to be a much more mundane task than the contemporary “lucid” and “rectifying” assessment of it seems to suggest. The worst that can happen to the modern expert trying to regain objectivity and credibility is not that he makes mistakes, misunderstands or draws completely wrong conclusions. This belongs to expertise that has gone beyond strongly neutralizing or naturalizing means and tries to accommodate itself to critical self-confrontation. Rather, the worst that can happen is a creeping feeling, self-understanding or expectation that the modern expert is only telling representative anecdotes.

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## DISPLACING SOCIAL POLICY THROUGH CRIME CONTROL

### Introduction

A range of commentators from a variety of theoretical and political perspectives and schools have recently argued that what they perceive as a crisis of governance in advanced societies has led to a redistribution of the tasks of government between organisations in the state, voluntary (not for profit) and commercial sectors. This has often operated through a heightened concern with crime prevention and control and a re-coding of sections of the agendas and mechanisms of central and local state government within its terms. I will, in the first section of the chapter, summarise a range of common, overlapping and complementary themes within this corpus of knowledge, before going on to tease out, beneath the descriptive surface, three distinguishable interpretive themes about the changing nature of the state, civil society and liberalism: the decline of the state; the reconstituted state and reconstituted liberalism. I argue that, in the attempt to make sense of changing forms of rule in liberal society, particularly at local level, it is important to recognise the strength of the first two models in emphasising the importance of sovereign technologies, within complex interdependent strategies and technologies of rule. The coding of issues of government through crime control is associated with the perceived challenges of attempting to establish or re-establish government in areas and over population groups which are seen as troublesome and the principal casualties of increasing so-

cial and economic inequalities. However, despite the development of authoritarian tendencies in governmental practices, it is still most useful to characterise these changes in terms of the struggles to reconstitute liberal modes of rule during a period of rapid social change.

## Reinventing government

In the last twenty years in the advanced democratic capitalist societies, there have been major attempts to reconstruct the cast list of agents of governance and rethink the nature and techniques of government. These are seen as migrating beyond the boundaries of the public spheres of the state and municipal institutions, blurring the boundaries between what, at an earlier stage, would have been conceptualised as the state and civil society. With the rise of neo-liberal critiques of Keynesian social and economic policies, institutions and practices, new political rationalities, visions, programmes, assemblages of persons and agencies and strategies and technologies of rule have emerged. These embody and pose classic liberal questions about the proper responsibilities and limits of state and municipal powers. There has been a reformulation of what used to be regarded as the proper concerns of states with 'social' questions, premised on the notion that it is intrinsically worthwhile to promote social solidarity. Increasingly, social policies must be justified according to a utilitarian logic, as contributions to economic goals. Problems and policy solutions are pursued mainly in terms of how they may help or hinder the operation of free markets, among the minimum conditions for the facilitation of which is a secure framework of law, order and security. Hence, the new paradigms of rationality are constructed by reference to the practices of commercial markets, and also draw on a variety of (left and right wing) libertarian critiques of bureaucratic and professional power, which stress the need to combat dependency, 'empower' ordinary people from the 'bottom up' and unleash their repressed creativity as players in the markets (Cruikshank, 1994; Stenson, 1996).

Hence, it is argued, expensive, hierarchical state and municipal bureaucracies with their unionised labour forces, ossified and self serving routines, should give way to smaller, leaner and entrepreneurial agencies, devolving responsibilities to, and working in *partnership* with, agencies in the voluntary/not for profit sector, commercial firms and organisations of active citizens

at local levels, even though the new networks of governance operate remotely from lines of traditional democratic accountability (Rhodes, 1990). This has created the space for a new class of social entrepreneurs, acting as brokers or relays between partners within and between agencies and equipped with new managerialist knowledge and skills, in which networking and problem solving figure highly (Clarke and Newman, 1997). Increasingly, the message is that the task of the central and local state agencies is to 'steer' rather than 'row' the ship of governance (Osbourne and Gaebler, 1993; Burrows and Loader, 1994; Shearing, 1996). In Britain, reflecting and reinforcing shifting debates conducted through talk and textual media, the dominant theme of partnership is crystallised in key texts across the terrain of social policy, but with a growing emphasis in political and media discourses on the seemingly intractable issues of crime and justice. 'Partnership' solutions are seen as central within this field of policy (Stenson, 1996; Hughes, 1996). However, while in many policy fields, these developments could be viewed as symptomatic of the fostering of new forms of freedom and creative entrepreneurship, in this sphere, they are often seen as parts of a larger pattern of control which is increasingly repressive, targets the poor and disadvantaged and amounts to putting a sticking plaster over a surface lesion, rather than dealing with its deeper causes within the social body.

It is argued that while these developments vary in their impact between nation states, they are elements in the international growth of policing, criminal justice and commercial security, the toughening of sentencing practices, the expansion of prison populations and an attendant leech like draining of tax based funding from education and welfare budgets (Currie, 1997). Seen most vividly in the destabilised former soviet countries, they are aspects of what Nils Christie (1994) has labelled the international 'crime control industry'. This has grown in inverse proportion to the decline and displacement of traditional, (male employing) labour intensive manufacturing industry, the growth of economic inequality and the emergence of expanding residualised populations, with limited opportunities and rights of citizenship – in the language of European Union social policy – the 'excluded' (Levitas, 1996). These disparate groups, increasingly differentiated by ethnicity, are economically, socially, geographically and politically marginalised from the lives of the majority, who retain a reasonably secure niche within the labour market and can, hence, participate within what is assumed to be the normal mainstream of consumer society (Wilson, 1987).

## Containing the excluded

Arguably, these changes have had particular impact on relatively disadvantaged young men, who find it increasingly difficult to manage what are still considered to be the mainstream transitions from school into training, work, marriage and family responsibilities and the other forms of what authorities and moral entrepreneurs conceive to be socially acceptable knowledge and skills of citizenship: the patterns of behaviour, subjectivity and lifestyle, necessary to participate in a liberal order. Moreover they usually constitute the largest category of known perpetrators of the more routine offences, forming the bulk of those processed through criminal justice systems (Williamson, 1993; Stenson and Factor, 1995; Coles, 1995; European Forum for Urban Security, 1994; European Commission, 1996). Concern over youthful deviance by poor and working class young men has long provenance and the taming and domestication of masculinity – indirectly through women – was a key goal of early welfare interventions (Donzelot, 1979). Yet, in earlier generations, the valorisation of physical prowess and macho aggression among these groups could be seen as functionally useful in preparing young men for a lifetime of hard physical labour and, probably, fighting for one's nation. Yet with the demise of conscript armies and the replacement of 'brawn' with 'brain' based jobs, traditional male characteristics are reconceptualised by welfare professionals equipped with new modes of expertise. Through the prism of feminist and psychologically based knowledge forms, they are seen as dinosaur like pathologies to be remedied through intensive attempts to construct more compliant, sensitive, perhaps feminised, forms of masculine subjectivity, so far with uncertain results (Newburn and Stanko, 1994).

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that, in addition to rising levels of youth crime, there has been a pattern of insurrections and riots in several liberal democracies, for example, in Britain in 1981, 1985 and 1991, in bleak housing projects in France during the same period and in Los Angeles in 1991 with the riots erupting after the trigger of the beating of Rodney King. In these conditions, one of the most effective ways to legitimate raising and deploying public funds for interventions to ameliorate social problems is to label them under the heading of strategic crime prevention or control (the more immediate attempts to reduce crime through policing and criminal justice practices); even if this re-coding does little to make up for the loss of secure and predictable funding for what were once mainstream state/municipal services through more traditional and orthodox routes (Stenson, 1993b; 1996; Garland, 1996).

Against this backcloth, a cynic may be tempted to advise listless and bored young men in areas where old industries and the major retailers have fled, transport is poor, gangs fight over territory, schools are crumbling and demoralised, youth service budgets slashed, school truancy, illegal drug use and trading, burglary, car thefts and assaults are pervasive and job and training opportunities scant, that the best way they can attract attention from the media and politicians, and public funding for youth services, training schemes and economic regeneration, is to foment public disorder, engage in violent gang warfare, or in spectacular, headline grabbing car crimes (Stenson and Factor, 1994; 1995). Growing concerns about youth crime create the backcloth for frequent eruptions of moral entrepreneurship and panic. These conditions then create new *problem spaces* in which new legislative and policy solutions and new ways of formulating questions about social problems become thinkable and politically feasible (McRobbie, 1994). Increasingly, given the restricted mobility of the poor and disadvantaged, emphasis is placed on *local*, neighbourhood based, regenerative interventions.

## Intervening at the local level

The new programmes, strategies and technologies of local regeneration and crime control draw on familiar themes, first developed by the Chicago Area Project in the 1920's and 30's and refined in many cities over the generations. However, note that the new feature here is the connection between these local policy strategies and the progressive withdrawal, at the macro level, by state agencies from assuming *long term* responsibility for the welfare of the generality of citizens, particularly through the use of demand management policies in the efforts to maintain full (male) employment. This shift in the wider context places a heavy burden of expectations on what local agencies and initiatives may achieve. Hence, the principal modern exemplars for British urban regeneration and crime prevention models were developed in the USA during the administrations of Ronald Reagan and George Bush. This period of neo-liberal political economic experimentation signalled a retreat (consolidated under Clinton's Democrat presidency) from the traditional assumptions, established during Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930's, about the responsibilities of the State to maintain full employment and safety nets for the poor and heralded an attempt to open up the protected US economy to the global market place. This coincided with the development of pump priming regeneration initiatives, many federally funded and sponsored by the

National Institute of Justice. These were accompanied by apparently liberal/progressive strategies of problem solving community policing, and targeted towards a token number of those areas and populations in the deindustrialising cities, which were the casualties of the new political economy. Hence, the goals were simultaneously to 'weed' crime and serious criminals from an area in decline, while 'seeding' optimistic regenerative initiatives for the future, in the hope that developments will be 'sustainable' in the longer term, through local citizen and business initiatives (Davis, 1993; Hope, 1995).

In Britain, conservative governmental innovations between 1979 and 1997 were accompanied by reductions in central state grants to (predominantly non Tory) elected local authorities, reduction of their statutory powers and their capacity to raise local taxes. Direct local control over key services like education, social housing, youth services, the police and social services were steadily eroded and replaced by new 'quangos', organisations directed by compliant ministerial appointees, dispensing funding to partnerships of statutory, commercial and voluntary agencies (Jenkins, 1996; Loveday, 1994). A series of state funded urban regeneration initiatives were developed. These included, for example, City Challenge, Housing Action Trusts, Safer Cities. By 1994, Safer Cities, whose agenda included, for example, improvements in home, high street and neighbourhood security through architectural redesign and the installation of security cameras, courses in personal safety and diversionary activities for the young perceived to be at risk, had initiated more than 3300 crime prevention and community safety measures, with Home Office funding totalling £20.4 million (Bright, 1991; Home Office, 1993; Tilley, 1993; Hughes, 1996).

More recently, in response to criticisms about fragmentation of initiatives, a joint state ministries' fund, The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), was set up and administered by the regional offices of central government, dispensing £1.4 billion on a competitive bidding basis in 1994-5, its first year of operation. SRB allocation criteria emphasise that projects should recognise the interdependence of crime prevention and reduction with environmental improvements, training initiatives, programmes for youth and economic stimulation in a virtuous and *holistic* reform programme, whose goal is to provide short term 'pump priming' investment, rather than the provision – under the auspices of a solidaristic 'social' model – of long term, routine, directly tax funded services dispensed by salaried professionals. The goal of community building policy rhetoric includes a moral agenda: to boost the confidence and political and entrepreneurial skills of those perceived as poor, dependant and disadvantaged, so that they may take charge of their own lives and neighbourhoods in ways acceptable to authorities (Department of the Environment 1994). The

new governmental discourses emphasise the need to loosen the boundaries and barriers between agency responsibilities in the development of entrepreneurial partnerships between statutory, voluntary and commercial organisations. In the crime prevention sphere, two tax funded quangos, Crime Concern and NACRO (The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders), have played a key coordinating role, disseminating standards of perceived good practice nationally. In turn, the intellectuals in these organisations and Home Office officials are locked into complex networks with their counterparts in other countries, in exchanging information about how to conceptualise problems and policy solutions, and how best to evaluate interventions. Under the auspices of the European Union and the United Nations, the traffic of personnel and ideas is particularly strong between Europe, North America and Australasia (Graham and Bennett, 1995).

In Britain, this has also been accompanied by attempts by partnership networks, centring around links between police and municipalities, to create community safety policies which try to link the more immediate situational measures to prevent crime, including environmental redesign, with more strategic policies to deal with the supposed root causes of criminality through, for example, parental support, youth leisure and training initiatives (Bright, 1991; Gilling, 1993; Loveday, 1994; Hughes, 1996). In this respect, social scientists have played a crucial role – together with urban managers, police and criminal justice and welfare professionals – in reflecting upon, monitoring, evaluating and driving policies forward. Their discourses play a dual function. On the one hand they constitute attempts to create disinterested, academically driven conceptualisations and analyses within the academy, elite journalistic circuits and policy think tanks. On the other hand, where they are adopted wholly or in part by policy makers and politicians, they can function as *governmental savoirs*, contributing to the knowledge forms which are part of the apparatus of government (Pasquino, 1991; Stenson 1993b). The social scientist is, hence, often helping to constitute the realities which he or she describes and explains (Stenson, 1996; Watt and Stenson, 1996; Hughes, 1996).

## Models of interpretation

The descriptive account I have offered so far, I suggest, would be endorsed by a wide range of commentators. However, there remains considerable variation in the theoretical interpretations and overall narrative and value frames within which these developments acquire context and meaning. A body of

theory and research has emerged which attempts to reflect on both the neo-liberal critiques and also on the new social realities which have emerged, in part, in their wake. I wish to distinguish and discuss, for heuristic purposes and with particular reference to issues of crime prevention and control, three broad models within this corpus of knowledge: '*the state in decline*', '*the reconstituted state*'; and '*reconstituted liberalism*'. While in some respects, these models overlap and interpenetrate each other, they differ in their key concepts, underlying assumptions about the nature of social reality and their principal objects of enquiry. The new forms of knowledge which code governance through crime prevention and control and the academic commentaries which surround them, are organised around the investigation of an eclectic range of conceptual objects and concerns, including: the restructuring of the capitalist or patriarchal state, public order, crime, crime prevention and even the nature of governance itself (Crawford, 1994; Lacey and Zedner, 1995).

However, the first two models share a conception of the state in the sense proposed by Thomas Hobbes and Max Weber – as the major institutional embodiment of the *polis* – the public sphere. It is seen as a unitary public agency, which attempts to govern within a given geographical territory in the name of collective interests or goals (Hay, 1996). While the state as polis in the advanced liberal democracies may have, since the mid 19th century, acquired a variety of economic, social, political and cultural functions, nevertheless, in this model, at root, its key function remains to secure control over geographical territory against threats from within and from outside, through surveillance and the monopolisation of the use of force, plus the juridical authority which legitimates executive powers. If the main object of the second of the three models is the state, the principal object of the first is the state's progressive dissolution into civil society, which is defined as the assemblage of those institutions and practices outside the state. However, within the terms of the third model, reconstituted liberalism, the principal object is none of these, it is liberalism itself in the variety of its forms, both as a body of political and moral philosophy and also as a cluster of technologies and practices of rule.

## The state in decline

In a variety of ways, this perspective sees the old Hobbesian conception of the sovereign state as in decline, leading to a growth in significance of the institutions of 'civil society' (Offe, 1996). These operate outside the formally

designated boundaries of the state and constitute a move away from hierarchical and spatially bounded modes of social organisation, towards more 'bottom up', laterally organised and less spatially or temporally bounded 'networks' of economic, political and cultural relationships. These are made possible especially by ease of travel, better communications and particularly by digital information technologies. At the forefront of these developments, providing models for innovations in the public sector, are the new commercial corporations, shorn of tiers of management and cumbersome 'top down', enclosed systems of decision making and communication and characterised by more porous boundaries between internal divisions and other firms and agencies. Departments give way to task, or project centred groupings with fluctuating memberships, encouraged to foster lateral thinking and creative entrepreneurship across the boundaries of organisations and nation states (Castells, 1996). This perspective, which has migrated beyond the academy into wider journalistic and political discourses, represents a new form of pluralism, within which two tendencies can be discerned. These include a pessimistic tendency, which emphasises the constraints on governmental action and a failure to meet basic public expectations about a state's core duty and capacity to provide security and realise political programmes, and an optimistic tendency, emphasising the new possibilities opened up by social changes. I describe these as tendencies which can surface in the same texts, rather than radically distinct genres.

### *Pessimistic tendency*

It is claimed that the growing power of international business, against the backcloth of global economic integration and the formation of new international political-economic blocs like the European Union, have sharply reduced the sovereign governmental powers and aspirations of nation states. Powers have migrated downwards towards a growing emphasis on regional and other local forms of autonomy and laterally and upwards to supra-national power networks like the EU and international corporations (Offe, 1996). These changes are viewed as reinforced by the electoral unpopularity of national political parties which are associated with high levels of taxation and spending, hence diminishing the fiscal capacity for the state – even under social democratic administrations – to maintain state services which aim to promote social cohesion. These shifts are strengthened by a widespread decline in the legitimacy of perceivedly self serving politicians, the ethic of public service, traditional political parties and governments and an apparent

growth in, and cynicism about, deep rooted corruption among politicians and public officials in, for example, Britain, the USA, France, Italy and Belgium. Moreover, even in countries like Germany, which had relied extensively on national and regional state modes of organisation, underpinned by strong sovereign juridical authority, the paralysing internal complexity and fragmentation of state agencies make it difficult now to conceive, in the tradition of architects of the post war welfare state like Willi Brandt, of the state as a coherent system and instrument of political control, which can be deployed by elected representatives to realise their aims.

The tendencies are now alleged to be centrifugal, towards a dispersion of responsibilities for the management of social problems to non state institutions which are acquiring quasi-sovereign functions (Offe, 1996). Seen from the perspective of threatened state and local government bureaucracies, these developments could have frightening entropic effects, in that the decline of the effectiveness of the state could lead to chaos or a Hobbesian war of all against all. A variant of this view argues that the nation state is unable to meet its core responsibility to provide citizens with physical security from criminal attack. In turn this has led to 'responsibilisation' policies. These attempt to dampen public expectations about the capacity of the state police and criminal justice systems to control crime, and they shift attention from the pursuit of the criminal towards the prevention of crime. This approach necessitates devolving responsibility for crime prevention to the individual and the institutions of civil society, with state ministries and agencies attempting – with limited success – to maintain indirect control of developments at ground level 'at a distance'. These initiatives operate through, for example, the role of evaluative research and the dissemination of ideas about good practice in, for example, protecting property from burglary, diverting young people from use of illegal drugs and from car crime (Stenson 1996; Tonry and Farrington, 1995; Garland 1996). However, the success of these initiatives is uncertain and they are suspected of exacerbating, in combination with media panics, fear of crime and a defensive view of all those seen as 'other'. They may even contribute to the further decline of the public sphere; viewed as the bedrock of democratic society, it is founded on the securing of shared spaces in which people feel safe from attack and harassment and feel confident to participate in collective social and economic life (Taylor, 1997).

## *Optimistic tendency*

The optimistic tendency accepts much of the neo-liberal critique of the limited capacity of the formality bound, 'top down' centrally planned bureaucratic state – whether in Stalinist or old social democratic guises – to govern effectively and so celebrates its decline, for opening up creative opportunities for individual and community self government: government unbuttoned, without a tie and on first name terms. This revival of the 'bottom up' libertarian ethos of the 1960's is rooted in the fast expanding constituencies of the voluntary sector in every sphere of policy, championed by the British think tank Demos, whose new thinking has already had a considerable impact on the governmental discourse of Britain's 'New Labour' party and government (Mulgan, 1997). In the sphere of community safety and crime prevention, this has given rise to organisational forms which provide openings for a new class of social entrepreneurs, escapees from traditional bureaucracies. These include, for example, the (largely tax funded) 'company charity' organisations, formed in the wombs of older bureaucracies, to facilitate partnerships to promote community safety, mediation between neighbours in conflict and so on. Their managing committees – much preoccupied with networking and bidding for funding – include senior officials from police, probation, municipal, commercial firms and other agencies and employees, seconded from more traditional bureaucracies. Their mission statements are in harmony with the holistic, partnership rationale of the SRB and the regional state government offices, which distribute funding for social entrepreneurship, and they are charged with managing what are perceived to be problem neighbourhoods and populations and, where possible, local 'community' representatives, suitably educated and 'empowered' with the essential skills to interact with the new power brokers and gatekeepers for resources (Stenson, 1996; Hughes, 1996).

Notwithstanding variations in history, culture and juridical traditions (Lacey and Zedner, 1995), similar developments are visible in other European countries. Following a UN sponsored international conference on urban insecurity and crime in Paris in 1991, the Paris based European Forum for Urban Insecurity was set up and has held a series of workshops in cities across Europe. This is a fast developing network of practitioners in the crime prevention/community safety field, academics and local city Mayors and councillors. In a series of publications defined for the purposes of training and public education, they have developed a new discourse which aims to bridge academic, professional and lay concerns and which emphasises the experi-

ences of victimisation and local professional practices. It is forged through a biting critique of the authoritarian remoteness and imperialism of the formal state bureaucracies of policing, welfare and criminal justice, challenging their monopoly over the right to define and manage social problems,

The bureaucrats designate targets: poverty, drugs, immigration, unemployment, housing, etc, or target groups: young people, immigrants, single parent families, secondary school pupils, drug addicts etc. But these targets are only as coherent as the apparatus that designates them. This coherence is a way of looking at the world and establishing a series of statistics and a budgetary nomenclature and make everything else seem so futile, so fragile, so unimportant. Our old bureaucracies count and count again. But what picture do they present, who sees it, and what is done about it? All they do frighten themselves, frighten us all (European Forum for Urban Security, 1994:5)

The central concept of the European Forum is *urban security*, which has affinities with British conceptions of community safety (Hughes, 1996). It is seen as intrinsically hybrid: a right, a commodity and a public good. There is usually a breach between state agencies' conceptions of security and peoples' subjective needs. This breach is the problem space in which security must be rebuilt, through *local* co-production and dialogue, diagnosis, proposals and assessment, but which simultaneously recognises the Europe wide commonalities in the causes and nature of social problems and the challenges in managing them. State and EU conceptions of risk and threat have focussed on organised crime, illegal immigration, money laundering, drug smuggling or crimes which attack the profits of the major corporations. The new discourse, however, spotlights the routine, mass, petty crimes against the person and personal property, often invisible to the criminal justice systems, which corrode confidence in public spaces and also in the neglected domestic spaces: crimes against women, children, the elderly and ethnic minorities (European Forum for urban Security, 1994; 1996).

## The reconstituted state

### *Pessimism*

Within the terms of the second model, writers are more confident about the capacity of the state to realise its goals. Again, this can take conflictual pessimistic and consensual, Keynesian, optimistic forms. The pessimistic, con-

flict versions are rooted in marxist and neo-marxist traditions. They highlight the causal significance of political-economic processes: the drive for capital accumulation; the progressive subordination of particular local economies to the logic of an integrated and globalised capital market and the leading corporations; and the consequent growth of social and economic inequality and conflict. This is so particularly in the English speaking democracies of Britain, the USA, Australia and New Zealand, where neo-liberal critiques of the role of the state, of 'big government' and high tax and spend policies have had greatest impact, and where there has been a strong emphasis on attracting investment to maintain low wage, relatively low skill economic sectors (Taylor, 1990).

This is seen as achieved through attacking the power of labour, privatisation, downsizing of workforces, deregulation, promoting labour 'flexibility', part time working and the creation, therefore, of insecurity of employment, low wages and the growth of illegal economies (Hutton, 1996). These allegedly crimogenic conditions have, it is argued, required a reliance on the police and criminal justice to regulate the effects of neo-liberal market reforms (Brake and Hale, 1991; Muncie et al, 1995), the rapid reconstruction of state powers and institutions at national, local and (nascently) international levels, in order to secure hopefully unchallengeable frameworks for the production and circulation of commodities. The apparent redistribution of powers and responsibilities to locally based agencies and community groups masks a strengthening of centralised fiscal and administrative powers (Clarke and Newman, 1997).

These developments, initiated at national and local levels by secretive and often informal 'partnership' groups of decision makers and resource gatekeepers – scarcely accountable to democratic scrutiny – in the public, commercial and voluntary sectors include: social and professional networks of civil servants, corporate chiefs, senior police officers, urban managers, health, welfare and justice professionals and representatives of security firms. In some countries, like the UK, it is argued that a steering role has been retained by government ministers and expert senior civil servants in the central ministries (Bowling, 1993). These developments, while manifest in many of the advanced societies in varying combinations, are likely to be particularly visible in cities with large poor and unemployed populations like Liverpool and Los Angeles (Coleman and Sim, 1996; Davis 1993).

Hence, it is argued that while the rationales and rhetoric for these alliances highlight, for the public good, the centrality of crime prevention and reduction within strategies of urban regeneration, the principal beneficiaries

are seen as the affluent classes who have benefited from neo-liberal reforms and, more specifically, the tightly knit alliances of the new modes of local governance. These groups are increasingly socially and spatially segregated from disparate groupings of the threatening and disorderly poor. In an echo of Disraeli's England, the poor and the homeless are now censured and pathologised as residual, unproductive and burdensome for the elites and the majority who are still able to retain a niche within the labour market (Sumner, 1994; Levitas, 1996). Their presence and other perceived indicators of decline like broken windows, homeless beggars, litter and graffiti, in major sites of consumption, upsets the preferred aesthetic sensibilities of the agents of Capital, who wish to see a tidy, decorative cityscape in order to provide the essential cultural capital and preconditions for attracting a talented urban service class, inward investment and the unleashing of market forces (Ferrel, 1996). Central players in the new governing alliances include the major retailing chains who are viewed as having a strong interest in promoting the values of consumerism and excluding perceivedly impecunious and disruptive groups from high streets, shopping malls and city centres. For these players, urban regeneration, crime control and community safety prioritise the construction of safe spaces, under blanket surveillance, for capital investment and the spectacle of conspicuous consumption, rather than, for example, the protection of women from male violence, minorities from racial attack or the consumer from profiteering and the tainting of food and water supplies by producers contemptuous of regulatory safeguards (Coleman and Sim, 1996).

It is important to note that while the dominant theme of this interpretive model hinges around notion of class domination, while retaining the same logics of explanation, sub themes have emerged which recognise the coexistence of forms of domination by gender and by class: that the police and criminal justice agencies which support capitalism also support a dominant gender and racial order, helping to reproduce the subordination of women and sexual, racial and ethnic minorities. With respect to the latter, this subordination is seen as achieved through repressive policing and criminal justice and also by the discriminatory treatment of black people by immigration and customs officials, restricting mobility and involvement in the labour market (Hay 1996; Scraton and Chadwick, 1991; Cook and Hudson, 1993; European Commission, 1996).

In this setting, criminal justice, and particularly juvenile justice, shifts from the disciplining or rehabilitation of individuals, increasingly towards the application of new managerial discourses and practices in the assessment of

risks posed by those from perceivedly high risk social categories and the cost effective modes of containing them (Pratt, 1989). State agencies have prepared to manage the risks associated with the frustrations and resistance of the disaffected. Among the new weapons and resources acquired by the state are included: new punitive legislation; new technologies of disciplinary surveillance, like the increasingly sophisticated techniques of CCTV (close circuit television surveillance) in urban centres and on national borders, the use of helicopters, armoured vehicles, and the development of new strategies and techniques of public order maintenance and riot control (Jefferson, 1990; Scraton and Chadwick, 1991; Coleman and Sim 1996; Davis, 1993).

### *Building a European police state?*

While the principal focus within this model remains the nation state, there is a growing recognition of the uncertain struggles to, for certain purposes, aggregate aspects of state sovereignty, in pursuit of security. With scant open democratic scrutiny, there has been a rapid development of international police coordination, the coordination of similar legislation (for example limiting rights to asylum) and cautious merging of jurisdictions, especially in the European Union, for the purposes of controlling illegal immigration, cross border drug trading, fraud and other crimes (Sheptycki, 1995). As with the Schengen agreement on the policing of national borders, most of the developments are initiated within the Council Of Ministers, the Trevi Group and the European Commission, remote from democratic scrutiny. From this perspective, in addition to fears about non white immigration, a growing consciousness of the perceived threats to western Europe of political instability and organised crime in the post soviet countries (Rawlinson, 1997), can provide the context and rationale for strengthening the apparatus of what may be the embryo of a fortress Europe superstate. Such a project, requires the construction of populations outside and within as threateningly 'Other' to the mainstream, employed white populations. And within the apparatus of control, harsh treatment of the expanding prison populations demonstrates the tensions between the maintenance of sovereign control through the warehousing of marginalised populations and the liberal goals of rehabilitation, even in countries which had in other respects developed sophisticated welfare states (Ruggiero et al 1995; Stern, 1997).

The new tightening of the apparatus of sovereign government may even be viewed, within this model, as a reprise of the ambitions of the absolutist police states in Europe between the 17th and 19th centuries (Pasquino, 1991;

Gordon, 1991). It is tempting to see the new internationally mobile cadres of crime control experts – academics, civil servants and police and customs officers – as the harbingers of a new police science (polizeiwissenschaft) and international police state. However, this dystopian narrative has its limitations. Despite authoritarian tendencies at work in modern European societies, we need to recognise the continued significance of the varieties of liberalism which still characterise western European societies. While the scale of governmental reconstruction is profound and extensive, it would still seem to be most usefully depicted as an attempt to reconstruct liberalism, rather than the traditional modes of despotism, through critiques of which modern liberalism was founded (Gordon 1991).

### *Optimism*

However, there is a second, optimistic version of the model which emphasises the reconstitution of the state, but one which still has considerable scope for discretionary action, despite the growing pressures of the globalised economy. Within this vision, under the appropriate social democratic management, the state retains considerable capacity to unite people and promote the public interest. Keynesian political economists who wish to rethink and update the governmental knowledge of social democracy – a revived *social* sphere, have argued that there have been significant variations in state responses to the growth of the global economy, which give grounds for faith in the feasibility of retaining (or in the case of the Anglophone countries), rebuilding and giving flesh to notions of the public interest. In much of northern continental Europe, the period of economic restructuring in the 1970's and 1980's was cushioned by the retention of corporatist links between the state, industry and organised labour, the retention of generous welfare safety nets and state aided investment in education and training, in order to maintain a high skill, high cost labour force and high 'value added' modes of production of goods and services. Under these supposedly less criminogenic conditions, there has been somewhat less reliance on the police and criminal justice systems to regulate the effects of economic restructuring.

Nevertheless, state fiscal prudence in the struggle to meet the criteria for European monetary union, the attendant growth of youth unemployment, crime and the development of targeted urban regeneration programmes in mainland Europe in the mid 1990's, may increase the pressures to adopt more coercive modes of control to contain the disaffected, thus reducing

the difference between Anglo-Saxon and continental models of control (van Swaaningen, 1996). However, let us go beyond the intellectual terrain which is still defined by a strong bifurcation of the state and civil society and move to our third model, which focuses more specifically on shifts in the nature of liberalism, its principal object of analysis.

## Reconstituted liberalism

### *Liberalism as critique and rule*

Academic debates about liberalism have been dominated by normative philosophical issues, for example: the meaning of the neutrality of the state; issues of distributive justice, including the relative priority given to equality and liberty; how to resolve the tensions between individualism and collective or communitarian interests and between a recognition of plural values and the need to establish consensual ground rules and values; and how to include a proper recognition of the role of the passions and coercion in social life (Mouffe, 1993). By contrast, the concerns of the governmentality school, our third theoretical model, are not narrowly philosophical in the normative and generalising senses. According to this perspective, it is important not to confuse liberalism simply with *ideas*, with moral and political philosophies of the middle ground, the obverse of absolutism. Rather, it involves ideas made governmentally technical and practical and operates on two levels. At the *first* level, liberalism is conceptualised as an ethos and body of critical tools. The mentalities or rationalities of liberalism, before and after it takes on a governmental form, embody styles of thinking which are self scrutinising, vigilant and involve attempts to define and set limits to the powers of central authorities (Gordon, 1991: 15; Dean, 1997). I suggest that the governmentality literature itself is, like neo-liberalism, part of the logic of liberal critique; it is a product and instrument of liberal political rationalities and a motor for immanent critique and, perhaps, resistance.

On the *second* level, with the triumph of liberal movements and the establishment (to varying degrees in the 19th and 20th centuries) of liberal democracies, liberalism was transformed into a body of reflections about and techniques of rule. It includes a range of connections between political rationalities, programmes, strategies and technologies of rule (Gordon, 1991; Rose, 1993; Barry et al 1996). In its governmental form, liberalism has disaggregating, centrifugal tendencies. In weakening centralising, despotic

ambitions, liberal rationalities mobilise political resources in denoting and constituting a range of relatively autonomous and self regulating spheres outside the 'political' sphere of the state. These include, for example, a designated economic field of market relations, codes of generally applicable law, the family and self governing professions. Hence, drawing on the later work of Foucault, the governmentality school is, despite internal tensions, somewhat agnostic about the reality of, and distinction between, civil society and the state in their traditional senses. The state is not viewed as a unitary complex of institutions, which perform predictable, dominating functions. Rather, it is a shorthand term which applies to technologies of rule, and should not foreclose investigation of the way in which rule operates in a multiplicity of sites, way beyond those normally classified as the province of the state (Foucault, 1991; Rose and Miller, 1992; Shearing 1996).

### *Governmentality and the social as centripetal*

However, the fragmentary tendencies of liberalism generated new problem spaces and the key question of the emerging 19th century social science was, in the wake of the dislocations associated with *laissez faire* markets: how is social order possible if the state is not to control every corner of life? Governmentality can be seen as a centripetal, unifying tendency, the sum of the attempts, since the early 19th century, to create the conditions of possibility of a field of self regulated, differentiated spheres of life and to create light but effective, indirect controls, 'at a distance', which foster self regulation in forms which harmonise with collective goals. It refers to the range of ways, from censuses and public health programmes, to social work with individuals and families, in which the population is made thinkable and measurable for the purposes of government, at both collective and individual levels of intervention (Barry et al, 1996).

In the broad terrain of governmentality, by the late 19th century new 'social' forms of government emerged (Procacci, 1997). These were manifest, for example, in the Gladstonian reappraisal of *laissez faire* reliance on markets in Britain and in the rise of the solidarity movement in France, within which Durkheimian sociology played a key role (Donzelot, 1991). These explicitly fostered a solidaristic, inclusive citizenship by employing unifying collectivist and nationalistic rhetorics and the new actuarial technologies for taming chance (Stenson, 1993a). I suggest that 'social' technologies operate at five levels. *Firstly*, they involve the provision through philanthropic, state and juridical endeavour, of drains, water supplies, schools and other infra-

structure, upon which markets and populations rely. *Secondly*, they involve the mobilisation of public sentiment and the fostering of self directing, disciplined forms of subjectivity or habitus, which are deemed to underpin a liberal order (Elias, 1982). *Thirdly*, they involve the management through the use of actuarial technologies, of collective and individual risks related, for example, to poverty, crime control, ill health and unemployment. *Fourthly*, they involve attempts to extend the rights and social and subjective capacities of individuals and families, who are deemed to lack the competencies to participate in a liberal order. *Fifthly*, at the heart of the early development of the social was the construction, through rational policing and criminal justice systems, parks, boulevards, sports grounds, provision of social housing and public transport systems, of safe public spaces, within which people could gather in a mutually policed way. This enabled social forms of citizenship to be affirmed and celebrated (Johnston, 1992; O'Malley, 1992; Stenson 1993b).

Foucault famously argued (1991), that in modern liberal societies, strategies of governmentality (and, we might add, the sphere of the social within it) coexisted interdependently with sovereign (coercive and juridical) and hierarchical, disciplinary technologies of rule, with sovereignty viewed as a residue of the style of monarchical governance and discipline a residue of the Prussian style administrative/absolutist states. It is a weakness of the governmentality literature that these early programmatic formulations have not been rigorously developed. Moreover, to list the technologies of governmentality as separable from discipline and sovereignty is to make a category mistake; they are not equivalent entities. It is more useful to see governmentality as a broad framework of governance, within which discipline and the sovereign control of territory operate simultaneously, are transformed, updated, realigned and supplemented by new techniques. Hence, these concepts shift from being time anchored descriptions of methods of rule dominant in particular historical periods – a diachronic, or sequential reading - to acquiring the status of heuristic analytic devices which are best understood and used synchronically, to analyse simultaneous, interdependent social relations (Stenson, 1996). Analyses of crime and crime control which use Foucaultian ideas can focus on a particular technology of rule. For example, one of the most influential uses of Foucault in the criminological field interpreted the shift towards community based, non custodial attempts to prevent crime, divert offenders from criminal justice and punish in the community, in terms of a narrative which described the spread of disciplinary controls from the prison into every corner of civil society, creating a punitive

city, or society seen as a prison writ large. These disciplinary controls were presented as the antithesis of liberal freedoms, indeed as the repression of the primordial freedoms of the individual (Cohen, 1985).

### *From social to communal?*

Recently, a range of writers have argued that moves towards local partnership, community oriented initiatives of crime prevention can be understood within a narrative depicting a decline in, or even the death of, the 'social', the ascendancy of which is usually seen as the period of the Keynesian Welfare state between the 1940's and 1970's, before the fiscal crises, and decline in legitimacy of states and the rise of neo-liberal critiques (O'Malley, 1992; Rose, 1996; O'Malley and Palmer, 1996; Pavlich, 1996; Stenson and Factor, 1995; Garland, 1996; 1997). This is viewed as manifested particularly in the growing importance of community as an object and vehicle of political intervention. It is also seen as manifested in the progressive move from inclusive conceptions of citizenship and solidarity embodied in Keynesian social and economic policies, which involved the widest collective sharing of risks, towards a more 'prudential' approach to risk management, fostering smaller, exclusive communities of risk sharers, in the orbit of crime prevention as in other spheres (O'Malley 1992).

This is what lies at the heart of the devolution of responsibility from the state and other broad communities of risk sharers, to more localised 'communities', who may be empowered to take responsibility for protecting themselves. Under responsabilisation strategies, relatively affluent sections of the population are encouraged to be more responsible for their own protection through commercial security, neighbourhood watch, gated alleyways, and crime prevention and business watch partnerships, which defensively and offensively target increasingly spatially segregated 'troublesome' populations and neighbourhoods (Davis, 1993; Bottoms and Wiles 1996). Using the same logic, major insurance companies minimise their costs by 'cherry picking' those representing low risks in privileged groupings and excluding or re-categorising those seen as representing high risks. This expands the numbers of those excluded from the protections and comforts of insurance and credit ratings, now essential prerequisites for full participation in a consumption oriented citizenship.

These developments, it is claimed, operate at the cost of undermining confidence in maintaining safe public spheres, protected by publicly financed guardians (Johnston, 1992; Garland 1996; Stenson, 1993; 1996; Stenson and

Factor, 1996; Taylor, 1997). This logic also underpins the operation of the 'new penology', in which the veneer of individualised justice gives way to its subordination to new actuarial and managerialist technologies of risk management, in order to target and manage (rather than cure or ameliorate) perceivedly high risk troublesome neighbourhoods and social collectivities (Feely and Simon, 1992; 1994). It has recently been argued that these changes are associated with a shift in the UK away from the century old penal welfare strategy, which aimed to deal with the deeper structural and personal causes of crime and had promoted a resocialization of the offender (Garland 1996).

However, within this broad narrative, differences of emphasis are discernible. For example, those who focus on managerialist strategies for governing marginal populations emphasise how new risk management technologies of government shift attention away from the disciplinary education of individuals, viewing them only as assemblages of risk ratings (Feely and Simon, 1992). By contrast, for other writers, the world created by neo-liberalism prioritises a new moral agenda which fosters modes of self government acceptable to conservative opinion, within which there is still a major emphasis on attempting to refashion the perceivedly deficient subjectivity of those deemed to be criminal and troublesome. This is increasingly phrased in terms of a civilized empowerment and the need to boost the deficient 'self esteem' of the criminal and those dependent on illegal drugs and alcohol (Cruikshank, 1996: 239).

### *Sovereignty*

Moreover, as I have argued elsewhere (1996), there has been a relative neglect, by writers in this school, of issues of sovereignty. This is in sharp contrast to the concerns of the other two models we have been considering, within which sovereign technologies are viewed through the prism of theories of the state. We need to go beyond a nominalist concern with unpacking the histories and discourses (narrowly conceived) of rule, towards more contemporary analyses of the operation and effects of complex assemblages of technologies of rule, particularly at local level. To do this we need to go beyond the (initially helpful) grand narratives of change, like the death of the social, in order to see how 'social' technologies operate with others in complex ways, in a variety of national, regional and local settings (Zedner, 1995; Lacey and Zedner, 1995). For, as I have argued elsewhere (Stenson 1996; Stenson and Factor, 1995), the social sphere was not as strongly developed in Britain as in some other European countries. There has been a richer

tradition in Britain, ironically threatened by recent managerial innovations, of local independence, the use of discretionary powers and 'community' based policing and crime prevention (Johnston 1992). The death/decline of the social narrative also, perhaps, over emphasises the role of welfare practices, for example in the practices rather than lofty official rhetorics of criminal justice, in which there was always a strong reliance on harsh sovereign technologies of control in prisons and elsewhere (Scruton et al, 1987).

It is important to ground analyses by retaining the link between rule and geography. We should not lose sight of the struggle, particularly by police agencies, for sovereign control over geographical territory. This is particularly so where there are fierce contests locally for dominance over territory for criminal and other purposes. This remains an enduring and central problem of governance and remains a strong point in both of the other models we have considered; it should be given greater prominence within governmentality research. Nevertheless, a geographical focus is not equivalent to a purely local parish pump view of government. We should not underestimate the power of the increasing international traffic of social science and policy ideas, noted in our discussion of the first model, in helping to coalesce a new *governmental savoir* of the local and the communal, weaving together new and traditional themes and helping to transfer between nations similar ways of conceptualising social problems and appropriate solutions. In addition to a focus on local, problem solving partnership based crime prevention and policing initiatives, there is a growing emphasis on developing technologies of local social ecology in analysing the patterning of crimes and crime opportunities, providing local policy makers and residents with more finely grained data to create, monitor and evaluate crime reduction and urban redevelopment measures and also a growing concern with the relation between crime and deprived, 'excluded' populations and neighbourhoods, a concern now officially inscribed in EU social policy (Bottoms and Wiles, 1996; Graham and Bennett, 1995; Levitas, 1996).

## Conclusion: Policing a new sovereignty?

We are witnessing and contributing to nothing less than a fundamental rethinking of the nature of liberal government itself in an age of accelerating, profound social, economic and political changes. And it is not altogether fanciful to draw some parallels with police science theorists of the 17th and 18th centuries. The main difference is that liberalism was a reaction against

police states, even if it retained and incorporated some of their programmes and technologies. We should note that the central concern of earlier versions of 'police science' as a governmental *savoir* was ultimately the securing of sovereign power – secured by sovereign law and the means of force – over geographical territory against internal and external threat. The struggle to bring government to perceivedly ungoverned areas and populations remains a central connecting thread within liberal government, particularly given the sharp growth in material inequalities since the 1970's at every spatial level. But if this is so, here lies one of two central contradictions which stay at the heart of the reconstituting modes of liberalism. Firstly, the apparent decline of the nation state and the redistribution of some sovereign powers to other authorities, for example at a European level, can create a crisis of jurisdiction and legitimation. In the EU context, the absence, as yet of a stable transcendent European state fails to fill the vacuum left by the erosion of the sovereign powers and symbolic authority of nation states. Nevertheless, the struggles between communal groups at local levels over territorial dominance and by statutory agencies to maintain sovereign control over territory continue. We are witnessing a fracturing of levels of sovereignty from the local to the national and the international levels. Though that will probably proceed at different speeds in different areas.

The second key contradiction of the governmental shift towards local and communal modes of government is a tension over the transcendent nature of sovereign power. The mandate of statutory agencies to intervene locally is secured by notions of sovereign law, which must be legitimated in terms of supra-local, transcendent social collectivities. Only thus can the police and urban managers acquire the legitimacy to act as brokers between communal groups in conflict, whose norms may be at variance with each other and with wider legal norms. Yet to the extent that the police and other statutory agencies become involved with local communal groups in partnership schemes, they risk compromising the illusion of transcendence and impartiality which underpins sovereignty (Stenson and Factor, 1994). The attempt to enforce what may be seen as discriminatory powers in defence of sectional interests may create a proliferation of alternative strategies of governance by minorities through criminal, political, religious and other modes of organisation and escalating spirals of resistance against sovereignty itself. In fact the problem of sovereignty is likely to remain enduringly central for liberalism, rather than an archaic leftover from the past. It seems that the price paid for the entrepreneurial and individualistic consumerist freedoms of the majority is a growing reliance on sovereign powers used to contain the

recalcitrant and disaffected minorities (Valverde, 1996), whether or not we embrace a full theory of the state, it may be necessary to incorporate some of the key strengths of our second model, the reconstituted state in helping us to grasp the changing character of liberal rule.

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Barbara Cruikshank

## MORAL DISENTITLEMENT: PERSONAL AUTONOMY AND POLITICAL REPRODUCTION

Neoconservatives are, above all, cynics; they believe that virtue is a higher good than freedom, and that virtue is a matter of self-control rather than self-government. Moreover, they are unabashedly elitist in their belief that the people are incapable of self-rule. Harkening back to the glory days of Jim Crow, Victorian moral certainty, and the work ethic, neocons postulate that the self-reproduction of the social order of civility ground to a halt because the countercultural movements of the 1960s, as well as the social policies of the Great Society (racial integration, anti-poverty, equal opportunity, and affirmative action), successfully “revolutionized,” “deconstructed,” and “de-naturalized” the social order.<sup>1</sup> According to neocons, the countercultural movement succeeded in overturning the bourgeois virtues of hard work and self-sufficiency. By calling the legitimacy of the hierarchical, disciplinary and “traditional” social relationships into question, the counterculture defined what is now the dominant culture. The newly dominant “permissive” culture against which neo-con define themselves and their battleground is characterized by a plurality of values (multiculturalism) and the predominant political ethos of personal freedom.

Neoconservatives fear the worst: it is too late to “re-naturalize” or reform the liberal arts of government, too late to take the politics back out of “mediating institutions” (the family, sexuality, universities, gender, the military, and the media).<sup>2</sup> These were institutions that kept government at a distance

and the spaces of civil society free.<sup>3</sup> Without the successful reproduction of the social order, liberalism is no longer a viable form of government. Politics by other means are necessary. The current rift between the “theocons” and the neocons notwithstanding, neocons have threatened violence before; they declared war, the culture war. To restore civil society back to a state of natural liberty and self-reproduction, neoconservatives argue that it is necessary to inculcate civic virtue in the citizenry, if necessary, by force.

In what follows, I first trace the suggestions of violence that can be found in the *Contract with America*, demonstrating that Machiavelli’s *Discourses* serve as the model for the plan to “renew American civilization.” It may seem odd that neoconservatives, the students of Leo Strauss, who were taught that Machiavelli is nothing short of “a teacher of evil,” model their strategy upon such a dangerous thinker. However, as Strauss made clear, if intellectual elites are to take their rightful place as rulers, they may well resort to the tactics of Philosopher Kings. To solidify elite rule the rabble must be put in their place,, and for that only Machiavelli, in the right hands, can direct the America republic back to a state of virtue.

Second, by examining the recent works of Gertrude Himmelfarb, a fierce neoconservative cultural warrior, I show that despite the liberalism inherent in the *Contract With America*, neocons plan to restore the American republic, not American democracy. Here I draw out the measures which distinguish American neocons from neo-liberal movements in Europe. The displacement of social policy in the U.S. is taking a sharp turn to the right, as it is elsewhere. However, neoconservatives are leading a full-scale assault upon the possibility of reforming the liberal arts of government at the present juncture. As Himmelfarb argues in, *On Looking into the Abyss: Untimely Thoughts on Culture and Society*, illiberal measures are necessary to turn the vision of the American people away from the “abyss” of postmodernism, away from visions of absolute liberty, to the republican roots of American civilization.<sup>4</sup> The measures advocated by neocons to resurrect American civilization are, in this sense, truly Machiavellian.

Third, to distinguish neoconservatives from their self-proclaimed Victorian (hence liberal) roots, I compare Himmelfarb’s writings to those of the Victorian reformer, Helen Bosanquet. Finally, I explore the possibility that the neoconservatives are right and that the cultural crisis in America has already brought us to the end of liberalism. By embracing the Machiavellian and Foucaultian axiom that everything is dangerous, I suggest that the present dangers pose a magnificent opportunity for the counterculture to win the culture war.

## I. The contract with America

In the Republican Party Contract with America, personal responsibility is severed from its twin, social responsibility, appearing as a species of moral responsibility. The Republican strategy is to “renew American civilization” by returning to the founding principles of the American Revolution and by resurrecting the moral courage and original intentions of the founding fathers. It is ostensibly a strategy derived from Machiavelli’s *Discourses* on republican government. Like Machiavelli, Newt Gingrich understands revolution in the antiquated sense as a kind of turning back or revolving, rather than as an abrupt break with the past and a new beginning. The timing of renewal is crucial to its success and Machiavelli recommended that every ten years or so the citizenry be bound by law to “render an account of their conduct.”<sup>5</sup> Otherwise, a single man must act to produce the same effect.

The same timetable was advocated by Thomas Jefferson, who is the founder of choice for Newt Gingrich, who wrote, “that what Jefferson understood was that you had to have limited but effective government precisely in order to liberate people to engage in civic responsibility, and that the larger the government grew, the more you would crowd out civic responsibility.”<sup>6</sup> Any renewal then, implies that in the spirit of the American Revolution, citizens must take responsibility for governing themselves away from the government. Gingrich is posed with two problems, which as Barry Hindess<sup>7</sup> points out, are not particular to any type of government, liberal, socialist, or we might add, republican. First, how do the people act on their civic responsibility *before* they are liberated from the fetters of government? The American people are characterized in the Contract as dependent on welfare and drugs, fearful of the violence taking over their streets and neighborhoods, a people who disrespect the law and escape justice by hiring fancy lawyers, people who sue each other in the courts rather than handle their own problems, people who are quick to divorce from an unhappy marriage rather than honor their vows, or avoid the obligations of marriage altogether, irresponsibly begetting illegitimate children. How can a people so thoroughly corrupt take responsibility for their own lives? I call this *the autonomy problem*.

## II. The liberal autonomy problem

As we understand from Foucault, the autonomy problem is solved in liberal governments by instrumentalizing autonomous citizens, so that power works

through voluntary action rather than against it. Autonomy does not threaten liberal regimes, but is a condition of liberal governance.<sup>8</sup> Citizens must be able and willing to act voluntarily without state coercion. As Barry Hindess argues, the assumption of a calculable and instrumentalized population is made even by neo-liberals whose policies to re-invent liberal government entail the reduction and privatization of federal governmental responsibilities to promote the responsibility of individuals whose autonomy is exercised in market driven self-help programs.

On the surface, The Contract appears to be based upon this liberal assumption, that the American people are indeed calculable, that their autonomous action will be driven by predictable and regular motivations; that is, the calculability of both individuals and society depends upon the on-going production of a regulated autonomy. Calculable individuals are accountable for their conduct; the Personal Responsibility Act in the Contract is an attempt to incite the people to act on their own behalf, to unite themselves and their actions, to bind the people to a legislative account of their conduct, to render themselves relatively predictable, and therefore governable. Yet as we shall see, The Contract relies upon the law to renew the republic, a strategy that does not inspire most civic republicans.

Gingrich, in a language remarkably similar to that employed by the Great Society, proposes a government that works *with* the poor rather than *for* the poor and *against* the poor. The dismantling of the welfare state “should be done in cooperation with the poor. The people who have the most to gain from eliminating the culture of poverty and replacing it with a culture of productivity are people currently trapped in a nightmare...” (189-90). But, again, the American people described in the Contract are already corrupt and so incapable or unwilling to cooperate. Only hinted at in the Contract is the fact that neoconservatives no longer presuppose, as do neo-liberals, that the people are calculable. It is not possible to work with the people-as-they-are; so Gingrich states his solution to the dilemma thus:

We simply need to reach out and erase the slate and start over, and we need to start with the premise that every American is endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and that extends to the poorest child in Washington, D.C., and the poorest child in West Virginia, the poorest child in American Indian reservations. And we have been failing all of them because we lacked the courage to be mentally tough enough to get the job done, but I think it's very deep and represents a very bold change (190).

Assuming that Gingrich is not so bold, how might the slate be erased? The Founders of the American Republic erased the slate by a policy of extermination. Gingrich's plan to renew American civilization works without genocide, in part, by exiling the corrupt to post-disciplinary prisons and orphanages.<sup>9</sup> The plan is not the usual disciplinary approach to liberal reform whereby the autonomy problem is solved by subjecting citizens to normalizing strategies (or, getting people to account for their conduct, so to speak, to make their conduct conductible), disciplinary measures in institutions such as schools, families, and prisons.<sup>10</sup> As the Contract states, the schools are graduating illiterates, families are in disrepair, and the prisons are coddling repeat offenders. Strategies for promoting autonomy cannot work with institutions that fail to reproduce a citizenry willing and capable of fulfilling their responsibilities. If they cannot be wiped away, and if it is not possible to reproduce a civically responsible population out of a corrupt stock, what is to be done with that population? How is it possible to start over with the present population?

### III. The republican reproduction problem

So the twin of the autonomy problem is *the political reproduction problem*, or more simply, the reproduction problem. Facing the Republican Party dominated House of Representatives is this: how is it possible to limit the government of a civilization painted in the Contract as out of touch with the American people, staffed by elected representatives who are above the law, beholden to special interests and a moneyed elite rather than to the people, whose bureaucratic regulation strangles out entrepreneurial activity and civic responsibility, whose schools graduate illiterates and whose families reproduce social pathology rather than republican virtue? The American institutions of government are, in short, in desperate need of renewing their power and reputation.

Machiavelli poses the solutions to the autonomy problem and the reproduction problem as mutually dependent: "For as good habits of the people require good laws to support them, so laws, to be observed, need good habits on the part of the people" (168). One cannot flourish without the other. So the liberty of a republic rests upon the regular renewal of the relationship between citizens and their government to prevent any imbalance fatal to liberty. Machiavelli goes on to describe the extreme limits of any govern-

mental renewal which hinges upon the reproduction of a self-governing citizenry from a stock of corrupt citizens: “Besides, the constitution and laws established in a republic at its very origin, when men were still pure, no longer suit when men have become corrupt and bad. And although laws may be changed according to circumstances and events, yet it is seldom or never that the constitution itself is changed...” (168). While the laws may be reformed to put off the collapse of a constitutional government whose people have become corrupt, they cannot thereby withstand further corruption. So, in Machiavelli’s terms the Contract with America will not work unless the impossible happens, that a bad man who is willing to use his power for the good usurps the constitution and establishes authoritarian rule. Ross Perot and Pat Buchanan aside, until the constitution is changed, a corrupt people will become further corrupt.

Assuming that Gingrich is neither bad or nor good enough to impose his character on the government and on the people, these two problems must be handled otherwise. The Contract with America is superficially a classically liberal solution to the reproduction problem, but it is one that hinges upon a good faith contract between the American people and the Republican House, one that by Gingrich’s own estimation of the circumstances may not succeed (see pp. 194-5). The Republican Party “takeover,” in Gingrich’s account, brings “the people” into the House of Congress and makes them one. That is, *before* the terms of the Contract are fulfilled, the reproduction problem is solved by making the people and the House one, averting the need for a violent coup revoking the constitution and the establishment of an authoritarian government. Nevertheless, rather than depend upon citizens to recognize and take their part in the ritual function of the Contract, Gingrich (the proud historian) staged a reversal of events: the American people voted in a Republican Party majority, demonstrating their commitment and ability to fulfill the terms in the Contract which require them to take the reins of government. In Machiavelli’s terms, Gingrich’s noble lie about the common origins of freshman Republicans in Congress and the working class is not a likely source for republican renewal, but a strategy more probably fatal to the republic.

Gingrich takes Machiavelli too literally when he wrote that, “I maintain that those who blame the quarrels of the Senate and the people of Rome condemn that which was the very origin liberty... all the laws that are favorable to liberty result from the opposition of these parties to each other, as may easily be seen from the events that occurred in Rome” (119). The condition of liberty in Machiavelli’s terms is predicated on the *antagonism* between the ruling elite and the people, not their alliance. To make the people and the House of Congress

one, Gingrich relies upon a reading of the republican canon which equates the American Senate with the Roman Senate, and the House of Congress with the Roman Tribunes. Gingrich's plan relies upon an alliance of the working class and the nobles in the House of Congress to restore the trust of the American people in their government, rather than trusting in the antagonism now brewing in civil society against big government and high taxes. As any good republican knows, it is a strategy fatal to the liberty of the people. In defiance of the republican prescription for renewal, Gingrich may not intend to restore liberty. Perhaps the goal is not a republican revolution after all, but a modern revolution that will clean the slate.

The new House, Gingrich insists, is one with the people. However, there is no place in the classical republican scheme for an elite governing body that is also one with the people. The role of the Tribunes was to serve as "a powerful barrier between the Senate and the people, which curbed the insolence of the former" (118). "[B]esides giving to the people a share in the public administration, these Tribunes were established as the most assured guardians of Roman liberty" (121). Yet, in the Contract, Gingrich actually consigns the republican role of the Tribunes to the liberal arena of civil society and voluntary associations, the liberal anecdote to big government, and thereby reiterates a liberal desire to governmentalize civil society, to govern at a distance. So, in the final analysis, the fate of the American republic rests on restoring the autonomy and coherence of civil society. In the logic of the Contract With America, any social policy measures taken to restore civil society will exacerbate the malign growth of the counterculture, big government, and the decline of civil society; the people must be made to act on their own behalf without governmental intervention. Again, the reproduction problem cannot be solved by the Contract and the slate must somehow be wiped clean.

#### IV. The neoconservatives' culture war

While Gingrich calls for the devolution of power "back" to civil society to divert citizen reliance upon big government, neoconservatives have declared civil society a battlefield. Neoconservatives, Gingrich included, are generally more prepared for the Contract to fail, I believe, than not. The reproduction problem is not solved, but merely averted. Very much like the Roman Tribunes, civil society has too much autonomy, especially in the sense that people are free to adopt "lifestyle" choices that undermine social stability, including

gay and lesbian relationships, membership in the “culture of poverty,” the underclass and identitarian groups. The culture war has its roots in Samuel Huntington’s declaration of the “crisis of democracy” in 1975.<sup>11</sup> At least since then, neoconservatives have been most concerned with restoring civil society to a “state of natural liberty” in order to limit the progressively “ungovernable” democratic state, over-run by social movements during the 1960s. By politicizing power relationships outside the state in the family, the university, schools, and communities, by protesting that the “system of natural liberty” was in fact a patriarchal, disciplinary, and racist system, social movements made it impossible to solve the reproduction problem in a typically liberal way.<sup>12</sup> Any further attempts to normalize or discipline the population are met with strong resistance. The autonomous action of citizens, then, no longer serves as an instrument of state power, but is an open affront to power.

In response to these circumstances, government can no longer be practiced as an art, but must force compulsory heterosexuality (the Defense of Marriage Act, 1996), mandate marriage (“Bridefare” in the state of Wisconsin and the enforcement of fornication laws in Idaho<sup>13</sup>), force minimum wage labor and fight illegal immigration (in the state of Virginia, INS (Immigration and Naturalization Services) buses taking illegal workers from a factory to deportation centers were passed by Health and Human Services buses taking welfare recipients into the factory), and punish rather than reform criminal offenders (the sentencing formula, “three strikes, you’re out,” and in one small example of a widespread trend, local prison wardens in Arizona ration water in a desert prison camp). These are but a few examples of draconian, local, and coercive actions taken by neoconservative state governors and county officials.

Neoconservatives are now thinking in classical republican terms rather than liberal and contractual terms. Whereas the Contract places its faith in Gingrich’s noble lie and in the working and middle classes who vote Republican, neoconservatives generally believe that the classical republican role of the people in defending the liberty of the republic cannot be trusted to the working people of America; they are planning only for truer heirs of the American Revolution.<sup>14</sup>

Even so, critics of the Contract could accurately interject here that the five principles of the Contract with America are pretty much the same principles that guided Great Society reforms: individual liberty; economic opportunity; limited government; personal responsibility; security at home and abroad. The Contract is still a classically liberal technique for re-uniting the American peo-

ple and their government.<sup>15</sup> Or, more to my own way of thinking, perhaps the neo-liberal assumption of a calculable population is still a safe one and political compromise within the Republican Party will displace its right-wing. Along these lines we might assert with Barry Hindess (1996) that the neo-liberal formula for resolving the twin problems noted above is likely to avert any need for truly Machiavellian measures to renew the American republic.

Only hinted at in the Contract, the strategies of the American neo-conservatives are quite distinct from those of the neo-liberals. Neo-liberal measures taken to re-invent and limit liberal government won't help according to the neoconservatives, because, as Machiavelli pointed out, the sources of corruption, both the autonomy problem and the reproduction problem, are mutually reinforcing. Neoconservatives favor illiberal measures to restore American liberty precisely because they agree with the diagnosis written into the Contract that the sources of corruption are stronger than the will to renewal.

The source of our corruption identified in the Contract is not the New Deal era rise of the administrative welfare state, but the cultural legacy of the Great Society. Included in the Contract is this charge:

The Great Society has had the unintended consequence of snaring millions of Americans into the welfare trap. Government programs designed to give a helping hand to the neediest of Americans have instead bred illegitimacy, crime, illiteracy, and more poverty (65).

The Great Society, often dubbed “the counterculture,” corrupted “the deeper underlying cultural meanings of being American” (191). The paragon of virtue in American culture is the working man, a breadwinner and patriarch whose integrity was undermined by the Great Society. “This is a muscular society,” Gingrich writes,

and we've been kidding ourselves about it. The New Hampshire slogan is 'Live free or die.' It is not 'Live free or whine.' And so we have to think through what are the deeper underlying cultural meanings of being an American and how do we reassert them (191).

So the problem is to figure out how to restore the cultural meaning of the laboring man in an economy short on laboring jobs and long on service jobs, short on patriarchs and long on dead-beat dads and impoverished single-moms.

## V. Assaulting the new class

Gertrude Himmelfarb, a more formidable historian than Gingrich, writes in *The De-Moralization of Society*:

The moral divide has become a class divide...In its denigration of 'bourgeois values' and the 'Puritan ethic,' the new class has legitimated, as it were, the values of the underclass and illegitimated those of the working class, who are still committed to bourgeois values and the Puritan ethic.<sup>16</sup>

The target of the neoconservative assault is the "new class" combining irresponsible elites and the underclass. Himmelfarb describes the bastard origins of this

strange alliance between what [Myron Magnet] calls the "Haves" and the "Have-Nots." The first was a social revolution intended to liberate the poor from the political, economic, and racial oppression that kept them in bondage. The second was a cultural revolution liberating them (as the Haves themselves were being liberated) from the moral restraints of bourgeois values (244).

If there was a moment for turning back the *social* revolution with neo-liberal policies recalling the gains of the social movements in the 1960s, that moment is now past. The impact of the *cultural* revolution on American civilization was to undermine the capacity of the legislature to handle the reproduction problem created by the Great Society.

The "crisis of democracy" no longer has a political or legal solution. The American people have been deceived by the "new class" and the corruption of the American people by the cultural revolution has led the majority toward a vision of absolute liberty, making countercultural values the foremost threat to political and social reproduction. Machiavelli wrote that when the people of Rome were divided, "the oldest and most esteemed citizens" declared themselves willing to die for unity as an example to the people (think of Oliver North along with Martin Luther King). If that strategy doesn't work to sway the people, ruin is inevitable because they will continue to believe that they are on the side of the right and the good.

Here we have to note two things: first, that the people often, deceived by an illusive good, desire their own ruin, and, unless they are made sensible of the evil of the one and the benefit of the other course by someone in whom they have confidence, they will expose the republic to infinite peril and damage. And if it

happens that the people have no confidence in any one, as sometimes will be the case when they have been deceived before by events and men, then it will inevitably lead to the ruin of the state (247).

In this dire circumstance, Machiavelli advises that the people be excluded from any grand projects to restore unity. If their desire cannot be changed, they must be excluded, or they will certainly destroy the best citizens on whom the fate of the republic depends.

The neoconservative culture war is a war of last resort to mobilize, in Himmelfarb's phrase, a "counter-counter-cultural" revolutionary response. In essence, neoconservatives understand themselves to be the only capable body left to make Americans sensible to the evils of the "illusiv good" desired by the counter-culture. No mere devolution of power can correct the fact, as Himmelfarb understands it, that the traditional American bourgeois values of moral certitude are generally held in contempt by a class of conspirators inspired by none other than Frederick Nietzsche. By corrupting our moral vocabulary, Nietzsche is responsible for degrading the truth adhering to our vocabulary of republican and Victorian virtues by speaking of "values" in place of "virtues." It is worth quoting Himmelfarb at length to understand how the nefarious Nietzsche robbed the power from the forceless force of bourgeois culture and virtue underpinning political stability.<sup>17</sup> Nietzsche, "the inspirer of the revolution,"

began to speak of 'values' in its present sense – not as a verb, meaning to value or esteem something; nor as a singular noun, meaning the measure of a thing; but in the plural, connoting the moral beliefs and attitudes of a society. Moreover, he used the word consciously, repeatedly, indeed insistently, to signify what he took to be the most profound event in human history. His 'transvaluation of values' was to be the final, ultimate revolution, a revolution against both the classical virtues and the Judaic-Christian ones. The "death of God" would mean the death of morality and the death of truth – above all, the truth of any morality. There would be no good and evil, no virtue and vice. There would be only "values." And having degraded virtues into values, Nietzsche proceeded to de-value and trans-value them, to create a new set of values for his "new man" (10).

(Rather than defend Nietzsche from this onslaught in the habit of political theory I was trained to practice, I will leave him dangling here only to leave him dangling again later on.) Against the threat posed by this new man in the figure of the "new class," Himmelfarb recognizes the need to exclude the people; she is ready to betray the working class arm of the New Right and, for example, to forgo the further mobilization of the powerful force of anti-

semitism at work in the working class fundamentalist revival, a revival upon which the success of the Contract hinges. She gambles in favor of uniting a class of Judaic-Christian elites. She devotes an entire chapter to recruit the Jewish elite into the moral army, titled “The Jew as Victorian.”

Cynical as this may sound, if we are to believe Himmelfarb and her kin, Irving and William Kristol (grandmaster of Dan Quayle’s attack on the TV sitcom character Murphy Brown, an assault lauded on pages 245-6 of Himmelfarb’s manifesto), the declaration of a culture war carries a serious threat of violence. And such a war signals the willingness of neoconservatives to surrender the moral highground that the working class fundamentalists uprightly demand their elected leaders occupy. Politics is a dirty and morally ambiguous endeavor as Machiavelli knew, and the time is now to abandon the liberal reason of governmentality along with the legitimacy afforded by working class support for the war taking place over the heart and soul of civil society.

As culture warrior James Kurth argued in *The National Interest*, the Golden Era of American nationhood ran from 1890 to 1960, dates coinciding with the Jim Crow era policy of ‘separate but (un)equal.’<sup>18</sup> The slogan stands as well for the era’s gender policy, despite the granting of political equality to women and freed slaves. According to neoconservatives such as Kurth, multiculturalism advanced in the 1960s to destroy the natural unity (i.e. segregation) of American culture, calling our common origin into question. Without a common origin, with no recourse to the first principles of the republican founding, there can be no renewal of American civilization. Thus the population is no longer calculable, a cultural requirement for the neo-liberal policies of privatization and “governing at a distance.” In neo-conservative rhetoric, without cultural unity and shared values, the republic is ungovernable. In this situation, as Machiavelli counseled and the civic republican revivalists insist, any renewal of individual freedom and unity in a corrupt and factionalized republic demands the willingness of moral men to surrender the moral highground and enter into the morally ambiguous broil of power politics.

Republican manhood is at stake. Nationhood is at stake. The family is at stake. Personal security and property are at stake. But *really*, is American civilization over? Is the culture war, a Machiavellian strategy that takes us well beyond the Contract with America, actually necessary to renew the America that republicans remember? Against the thesis that power is still safely in the hands of the neo-liberals, I want to consider the possibility that a war *is* required. Not to renew anything, but to make sure that it is over, what if we

believe the neoconservatives that the forces of multiculturalism, sexual and social revolution have in fact disarmed the liberal formulas for solving the twin problems of autonomy and reproduction. I don't want to argue that they are right so much as that it is important to *believe* that they are right. As both Foucault and Machiavelli resolutely insisted, everything is dangerous. The familiarity of neo-liberal policy in the Contract with America should not make us feel safe. Familiarity is the costume of deception.

First, surely we need more good reasons to believe that the culture war is more than an overblown rhetorical strategy, that neoconservatives are a new species of political animal underneath their Victorian and civic republican costumes. I compare Himmelfarb to another Victorian, Helen Bosanquet, below, to make my case. Yet, we counter-culturalists also need more evidence that we have a fighting chance, enough power to actually win the culture war. I find this evidence in the writings of neoconservatives below. So I turn again to Himmelfarb, to show why we might want to believe that we have already reached the end.<sup>19</sup>

## VI. The political promise of demoralization

To make the case as clearly as possible for why the counter-culture should believe the neoconservatives are up to something new and that the reproduction problem and the autonomy problem cannot be solved by more liberalism, I compare Himmelfarb's book, *The Demoralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values*, to an essay written by a notable Victorian, Helen Bosanquet's, "The Standard of Life" (1901).<sup>20</sup> By Himmelfarb's own account, Bosanquet is "generally regarded as one of the sternest and most dogmatic of Victorians" (163). Himmelfarb draws a statistical comparison of the "state of the people" in the Victorian period unfavorable to the "demoralized society" we inhabit today.<sup>21</sup> During the Victorian era, Himmelfarb argues, values were "fixed and certain," not particular or relative (13). The Victorians had the advantage of basing policy and judgement upon moral standards that were naturalized and unexamined due to their general acceptance.

Unlike the "new class" alliance with the underclass and sexual liberationists today, the decadent and anti-bourgeois elite that characterize *fin de siecle* intellectual culture were too aesthetic and misogynist to unite with the working class or the female sexual liberationists (see Himmelfarb's chapter seven). By comparison, the "new class" is another matter because elites are mirroring,

feeding off of and nourishing the corruption of the underclass in mass media; favorite examples are drawn from the mass media consumed and produced by the “new class”: sitcoms featuring a perfectly respectable woman choosing to give birth to an illegitimate child, making their own “illegitimate” choices legitimate; Music Television (MTV) promoting misogynist and violent “underclass” values in Rap and Hip Hop videos.

Himmelfarb argues that not only were Victorians more willing to apply fixed standards of morality to social policy, this also makes them more democratic than we are today.

In attributing to everyone the same virtues – potentially at least, if not in actuality – they assumed a common human nature and thus a moral (although not a political or an economic) equality... They were common virtues within the reach of common people. They were, so to speak, democratic virtues (50).

While they were more democratic, Himmelfarb argues, the Victorians were not shy about imposing moral standards by force, if need be, to produce a virtuous citizenry. She quotes Edmund Burke, “the great mentor of the Victorians,” who recognized that men were

qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites...Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without (51).<sup>22</sup>

In Himmelfarb’s account, then, Victorian morality served to create the social conditions for liberty, unity, and non-coercive liberal governance. Victorian morality was fixed, democratic, traditional, naturalized and unexamined. It is confusing, then, that the same qualities which Himmelfarb ascribes to Victorian moral standards are treated by Helen Bosanquet as the sources which perpetuate poverty and inequality to the peril of liberty. I will argue that the Victorians cannot serve as the standard bearers for a traditional morality as they were relentless in their pursuit of moral *progress*, not the preservation of the “traditional” bourgeois values.

On the surface, Bosanquet’s Standard of Life appears just the model Himmelfarb needs for her “moral calculus;” a perfectly Victorian model for public policy aimed at overturning modern values with Victorian virtues; a singular, fixed moral standard by which we might judge behavior. However, Bosanquet seeks to undermine bourgeois standards, not legislate them. Himmelfarb rightly characterizes Victorian notions of the individual and

self-interest, including Bosanquet's, as the "instruments" of the general interest.

For the Victorians, the individual, or "self," was the ally rather than the adversary of society...Self-interest stood not in opposition to the general interest but, as Adam Smith had it, as the instrument of the general interest (256)).

Bosanquet's Standard of Life works in just this way to instrumentalize the interests and actions of individuals and is consistent with Foucault's conception of bio-power, which depends upon the operationalization of an illusive norm that is nowhere actually defined. Because it is an illusive good, the Standard of Life does unite the diverse interests of individuals to the uniform interest of society as a whole.<sup>23</sup> It is at once, in Foucault's framing, individualizing and totalizing.

However, in Bosanquet's understanding, self-interest only worked as a moral instrument of the social interest if it was understood as the pursuit, rather than the restraint, of desire; the condition of liberty as Smith, not as Burke, understood it. Indeed, it is because the bourgeois philanthropists sought to restrain the autonomous and "immoral" desires of the working class that they unintentionally perpetuated the condition of poverty and immorality, according to Bosanquet. Compare the following from Bosanquet to the quote from Burke above:

We cannot force interests or occupations or benefits of any kind upon men from without, however desirable we may think them; they must grow out of their own strivings and desires, their own planning and progress. The best we can do for each other is to remove unnecessary obstacles, and the worst – to weaken any of the motives which urge us to strive (41).<sup>24</sup>

From without, only the most "indirect" (25) forms of governance could avoid making things worse.<sup>25</sup> The problem for Bosanquet was that behavior *was* judged according to tradition rather than by the progressive Standard of Life. "...out of the differences of standard and of function [of occupation] have arisen certain class prejudices which are the source of more injustice and stand more in the way of economic inequalities (16). This was the bourgeois prejudice which assumed, first, that because the function of certain occupations was different, a difference in the natures of the classes followed from their different functions. The prejudice that there was more than one class and therefore more than one culture led traditionalists to assert the permanent antagonism between the classes. Bosanquet confronted bour-

geois prejudice: “We may of course allow that the working classes have disadvantages to contend against... but we must in common justice recognize this power of determining their own standard of life and of working toward it in their own way” (17). Second, the prejudicial belief in the moral superiority of their own Standard of Life characterized philanthropic policy applied to the working classes, and denied them the very possibility of contributing to the general good. Applying one’s own Standard of Life as a measuring stick of one’s own behavior is an essential feature of “the art of living,” the pursuit of which ensured social progress. However, confusing one’s own Standard with the good itself, created unnecessary and unprogressive class antagonism.

Rather than a fixed moral standard, the Standard of Life was “incapable of exact definition; in other words, its significance is inexhaustible, for it has not yet become stereotyped into one narrow usage” (1). The problem was not the infinite variety and inexhaustibility of desires, but the fact that tradition and custom thwarted their pursuit (13). Bosanquet did not simply divide the world of social behavior into virtues and vices, moral and immoral, as Himmelfarb claims that Victorians did without reservation, but into the classes which desire or don’t desire, period. While the working class may pursue the “lower” desires, their lives and the life of society will be improved by their unchecked pursuit nonetheless.

The problem came in the “Residuum,” a kind of small underclass who could not be helped because they simply had no desires beyond mere subsistence, no Standard of Life to reach for. “The Residuum” is certainly a moral designation (47), similar to Himmelfarb’s use of “the underclass;” but its cure is thoroughly relativist by Himmelfarb’s standards.

After all is said and done, organization is only one among many means of self-help; it is impossible to organize dead matter from the outside, and the true Residuum is economically dead. It may be possible to galvanize it into a temporary appearance of life, to raise up a social monster that will be the terror of the community; but the best that can really be hoped for is that it should gradually wear itself away...<sup>26</sup>

There was simply nothing to be done about it. The Standard of Life relied upon the fact that human beings forever wanted more and better pleasures, and in the Residuum Bosanquet found an incapacity for self-control and a failure of desire so that no liberal intervention could make an economic man out of a member of the Residuum, a class incapable of helping itself. By desiring nothing beyond subsistence, the Residuum was excluded from

Bosanquet's account of British society as well as from the category of human nature.

If for the present we leave out of sight the lowest class of all, the Residuum (which *is* the Residuum just because it is made up of men and women who have lost their standard), then we shall find that in certain fundamental respects the Standard is the same of all Englishmen today (6).<sup>27</sup>

Differences in the Standard of Life were progressive because man, unlike animals and the Residuum, is "by nature progressive and incapable of permanent satisfaction" (19). What unites Englishmen is the diversity of their desires. Only those who fail to desire and those who attempt to impose their own standard on others have no stake in social progress.

But if no interests are there, if the means to carry out his plans are wanting, if his ambitions are thwarted and held in check by custom and tradition, he will never break through the lower circle of desires and satisfactions, which we share with the brutes, and progress will be impossible. In this progressiveness of the human being we find one reason for those differences in the Standard of Life which we are trying to understand. (13).

Bosanquet's "Residuum" was defined as outside of society as a whole. It was not that their values were relativist, but that they had no desires, which made them dangerous to society. However, Bosanquet was comforted by the fact that the Residuum was on the decline in numbers and in their condition, so there was little cause for alarm. By comparison, Himmelfarb similarly defines the underclass as outside of society, but now they pose a serious threat, not because they fail to desire, but because they desire the wrong things. Whereas the Residuum failed to desire autonomy, the underclass fail to become republican citizen-workers because their desires are legitimated by the "new class," unrestrained by their condition, their desires too many and too diverse. The threat to the progress of society was posed by Bosanquet as the imposition of traditional values, whereas for Himmelfarb, the threat arises from the failure to impose traditional values upon a population of multiculturalists proclaiming the legitimacy of diverse cultural standards against the dominance of bourgeois standards.

Thus, Himmelfarb weeds out the relentlessly progressive features of Victorian morality to support her claim that they created a better "condition of the people" because they were thoroughly traditionalist and carried bourgeois virtues in their bones rather than subjecting them to examination.

Himmelfarb's Victorianism is at odds with Bosanquet's claim that "what really practical reformers are working for is not to bring about greater uniformity, but to get rid of certain definite disadvantages" (15). Where Bosanquet seeks diversity, Himmelfarb seeks uniformity. They differ not only as to the ends of reform, but also its means. To change the condition of dependency, Bosanquet encourages a diversity of desires, while Himmelfarb seeks to impose restraints upon desire. Himmelfarb's claim to Victorianism comes at the cost of ignoring their progressivism, but also the potential for the cultural relativists to claim this Victorian as their own ancestor.

While they do share many assumptions, most importantly, the conviction that social pathology – poverty, inequality, disunity – is a function of moral pathology (character), the Victorianism of Bosanquet is at odds with Himmelfarb's Victorianism which is naturally coupled with Judaic-Christian and Puritan traditional values. They agree that individual personalities cause pathology, not the ravages of capitalism or social problems. However, they characterize the problems created by those who confuse moral causes with economic ones in starkly different terms. Like the case Himmelfarb builds against the godless Great Society, late nineteenth century Christians thought they did right by the poor to redistribute wealth and in so doing, they inadvertently created more poverty, political and personal dependence, and undermined the autonomous culture of the poor. However, in Bosanquet's understanding, the causal force of moral character was ignored in the practices of Christian charity, when those seeking to do good gave alms to impoverished and fallen individuals in order to fulfill their Christian duty. The Charity Organization Society to which she belonged along with Octavia Hill, sought to rationalize charity and in so doing is generally regarded to be the precursor of professional social work. Their method was to recruit volunteers, mostly bourgeois women, to befriend the poor and to serve as mediators (early case workers) between the poor and those whose desire or profession was to administer the poor. Christian values stood in the way of the social scientific practices of the Charity Organization Society.

They also agree that both the individual and society as a whole are demoralized by redistributive forms of governance. The poor do not need more alms or higher wages; they need instead to see their personal responsibility for their own condition. Each develops a version of the argument that when discipline fails, when people cannot be made to be good – angry people, lazy people, drunks, addicts, dependent, promiscuous, as selfish as they are self-less – it is best to give up on them and divide them from society. While Bosanquet had only to exclude a tiny minority because they were help-less, in Himmelfarb's

America, the “culture of poverty” has become the “reigning culture” (247).

The way Bosanquet understands welfare is more akin to the Contract with America and even more to Charles Murray’s plan to completely dismantle the welfare state than to Himmelfarb’s plan for the re-moralization of society. Like the Contract with America, Bosanquet argues that, “[a]ll that is needed is that the working-man and woman should be thoroughly aroused to the possibilities awaiting them in this direction” (38). That is, to arouse the working class to fulfill their personal responsibilities by seeing their interest in being independent. Society’s interest is united with personal responsibility only when a person acts on their self-interest.

For neoconservatives to rebuild the “natural state of liberty,” strong governmental action is required to enforce personal responsibility, marriage, legitimacy and sexual abstinence, prohibit abortion, and to condemn homosexuality, child pornography, and dead beat dads. Himmelfarb argues that it is not enough to remove the obstacles of governmental intrusion to free the individual to act on his or her own sense of personal responsibility. Less governmental intervention will not remedy the fact that the social and moral conditions for the exercise of individual responsibility and freedom can no longer be assumed. Himmelfarb understands along with Burke that sometimes people must be forced to be free because they are infinitely corruptible, not infinitely progressive. However, without first erasing the slate and starting from scratch, it will not be possible to unleash individuals from moral and governmental restraint from without to return civil society to a natural state of order and restraint from within. The Contract takes care of the underclass by removing them to prisons and keeping them there longer for more trivial offenses, carrying out the death penalty more quickly and more often, forcing teen moms to marry and experimenting relentlessly upon single mothers at the state level, their offspring snatched up into the waiting arms of tax-incentive seeking married heterosexual couples, among other proposals. Yet left on the prowl are the counter-cultural “new class” who have worked their way into respectable positions in universities, media, and government. Neoconservatives are aiming at the moral disentanglement of Nietzschean intellectuals, cultural activists, and sex radicals.

It is impossible for Himmelfarb to divide the “new class” from society without recourse to the very kind of moral dogmatism Bosanquet rejected. In her view, our policy vocabulary is already too godless, too “neutral,” and even morally minded policy-makers “shy away from the word ‘immoral,’ lest they be accused of racism, sexism, elitism, or simply a lack of compassion” (240). Our “dominant” moral vocabulary pursues the “illusiv good”

Machiavelli so feared in the eyes of the people. The counter-cultural visions of a pluralist, non-racist and non-sexist society of equals is an illusive good in much the same way that the Standard of Life was “inexhaustible,” “incapable of exact definition,” expansive and progressive (2). Such an illusive good, as Himmelfarb and Machiavelli argued, cannot merely be discounted by upright elites, it must be combatted by any means necessary.

## VII. The moral disentanglement of man

If the neoconservatives *are* right and the crisis has already reached constitutional proportions, then here is an opportunity that should not be missed to reach not only the end of American civilization, the end of history, the end of liberalism, but the end of Man and republican manhood.<sup>28</sup> Here is a good reason to join the “strange alliance” of the counterculture and refuse to become autonomous republican men again. Here is a chance, as Donna Haraway might put it, for learning “how not to be Man.”<sup>29</sup> A new declaration of independence might read, not all men are created equal, but all men are created. The founding principles of a counter-cultural civilization could be that we can create ourselves and should regularly recreate ourselves, by returning to the first principle, that we are created. We could come to see ourselves reflected not in the social good, not in God’s eternal image, but in the profane, fleshy, mechanical, sensual, material, carnal, terrestrial and mortal images of our creation. Here is the political possibility to constitute ourselves rather than bind civilization to another constitution. This is the promise of democracy without liberalism, without republicanism, without socialism. Democracy is the promise of citizenship without manly virtues, autonomy, or even, possibly, the state, and the chance to ground the principle of liberty in a democratic constitution whereby the demos constitute themselves.

Right now, according to the neoconservatives, racist policies of segregation and compulsory heterosexuality are unacceptable to the majority of Americans. It is the traditionalists, homophobics, sexists, and racists who are morally disentitled by the “dominant ethos” of the present. The counterculture protects American citizens from the violence and ignorance of the gay bashers, white supremacists, and creationists among us with the twin strategies of cultural relativism and legal rights. For example: “Civil rights legislation prohibiting racial discrimination has succeeded in proscribing racist conduct not only legally but morally as well” (248). “What is striking

about the 1960s ‘sexual revolution,’ as it has properly been called, is how revolutionary it was, in sensibility as well as reality” (236). Himmelfarb argues that the counterculture revolution was a success, and so the neo-conservatives must take over the power of the state to legitimate their own virtue. But first, somehow, they must take the reins of the state out of the hands of the “new class.” Their enemy is not a weak and marginalized sex radical, multi-cultural educator, underclass gangster, or impoverished single-parent, but a powerful force that has ALREADY undone the liberal state, which calls for an illiberal response. Could it be that the lines of rhetoric and reaction have finally crossed rather than intersected to become, again, the liberal state?

According to the governmentality thesis (which is usually my own thesis), the reproduction of liberalism is very nearly automatic. The liberal state feeds itself on a variegated diet of rhetoric and reaction;<sup>30</sup> it is equally nourished at the troughs of progress and downsizing. Starved or gorged, fat or trim, the political reproduction of the liberal state is not longer assured.

What is the nature of this powerful force that has constituted a multicultural and permissive society without violence? Without violence, the counterculture overthrew the authority of god, family, and nation. How did this bloodless revolution come about? A familiar argument of neo-cons is that the deconstruction of, say, the family or heterosexuality, reveals that these are social institutions, constructed not upon the grounds of nature, but in an arbitrary and unnecessary way. So, the neo-cons charge, deconstruction actually destroys that which it deconstructs. I didn’t really understand the power potential of deconstruction<sup>31</sup> until I read an opinion piece by William Bennett, founder of Empower America, “Homosexual marriage is not a very good idea.”

Up to that moment, I believed that demands for the “rights” of same-sex couples to marry were written in the name of gays and lesbians who said, “we can be normal too,” we can be stable, monogamous, and raise our children to be good citizens. I thought that gay and lesbian marriages were not a very good idea too, until I read Bennett:

Recognizing the legal union of gay and lesbian couples would represent a profound change in the meaning and definition of marriage. It would be the most radical step ever taken in the deconstruction of society’s most important institution...On what principled grounds could the advocates of same-sex marriage oppose the marriage of two consenting brothers? How could they explain why we ought to deny a marriage license to a bi-sexual who wants to marry two

people? After all, doing so would be a denial of that person's sexuality...That we have to debate this issue at all tells us that the arch has slipped. Getting it firmly back in place is, as the lawyers say, a "compelling state interest."<sup>32</sup>

I am inspired by these arguments. Not because I agree with Bennett, but because of the enormous power that agreeing with him confers to the counterculture. I did agree at first with Bennett that same-sex marriage was not a good idea tactically in the liberal state we are in. But what if we are not in that liberal state? Rather than the repressive hypothesis in action,<sup>33</sup> what if same-sex marriage is actually the negation of marriage? What if the barest acknowledgement that heterosexuality is not natural spells the complete "deconstruction" or simply the destruction of compulsory heterosexuality?

Rather than challenge the wilful misuse of "deconstruction" by neo-conservatives, their appropriation of the moral vocabulary of the countercultural, such as "empowerment," "legitimacy," and "community," what if we give them over? Yes, to deconstruct the "naturalness" of biological reproduction does not merely demonstrate that the suffering caused by compulsory heterosexuality is unnecessary, a wrong that could well be set right by unleashing sexuality and reproduction from the disciplinary arms of the juridico-discursive regime of heterosexuality; it has already done so. Deconstruction is the Midas touch of the counterculture.

If all this is true, that the counterculture already does occupy the moral highground, then we never need unite to win the culture war. We need never subject our desires to the demands of solidarity. The conflicting, conflicted, and diverse desires of the counterculture are, as Bosanquet thought, the motors of progressive change, but they need not be turned into the instruments of power, as she believed they must be. In re-creating ourselves we are not necessarily doomed to become republican men yet again.

The rhetorical strength the counterculture can derive from neoconservative representations of deconstruction, the sexual revolution, welfare rights and civil rights, is the discursive power to change the world. If we never talk big or think big, we will never act big when the situation becomes violent. Because the neoconservatives are no longer playing by the rules, we must be willing to abandon our adherence to the good faith practices of the liberal contract, abandon the safety of the moral highground and stop acting like men.<sup>34</sup>

Neoconservatives face a formidable, shadowy, unpredictable, and equally illiberal enemy; disciplined in the permissive culture of the 60s, the many faces of the multicultural enemy defy a single strategy, they are not united or

led by any rational purpose with which to negotiate, led by no one whose tactics could be outsmarted, predicted and outmaneuvered. There is Donna Haraway's cyborg, Samuel Delany's mad man, Ice-T's cop-killer, Leo Bersani's homo-ness, Pat Califia's macho sluts, John Reechy's sexual outlaw, Kate Bornstein's gender outlaw, welfare queens, queers, to name only a few.<sup>35</sup> There is an inarticulate demand being made by the neoconservative's enemy and no voice emerges from its ranks to declare its true purpose.<sup>36</sup> Himmelfarb imagines that she hears this voice coming from Nietzsche. She is deceived into thinking that the counterculture did not learn from Nietzsche more than to merely avoid the dialectical trick of turning their masters on their heads; the counterculture learned too much from Nietzsche to want to become new men, let alone new women. Let us deconstruct the power of the neo-conservatives to turn the dialectic back upon us; it is quite possible that liberalism cannot reproduce itself, it is now necessary to recognize the sterility of civic republicanism.

## Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Judith Halberstam for teaching me to see the powers of representation. Many conversations have helped me to sort out the differences between neo-liberals and neoconservatives, with Carla Bates, Tom Dumm, and Jackie Urla in particular. My greatest debt is to the courage of Beth Jones' convictions; her intellectual veracity and political bravura led me by the nose to imagine a moment when the rules no longer apply.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note Irving Kristol's account of the counterculture's genesis as a creature born to embody the alienation-effect of secular rationalism and humanism. The counterculture did not spring out from the conflicts of the 1960s. "The fact is that the counterculture was not 'caused,' it was born. What happened was internal to our culture and society, not external to it" (*Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea* (The Free Press, 1995): p. 136.
- <sup>2</sup> Peter L. Berger and Richard J. Neuhaus, *To Empower People: The Role of Mediating Structures in Public Policy* (American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1977).
- <sup>3</sup> On "governing at a distance," see Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, Political Power Beyond the State: Problematics of Government," *British Journal of Sociology* 43:2

(1992) 172-205. Also, to compare neo-liberal to the neoconservative policies I discuss here, see *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism, and Rationalities of Government*, eds., Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose (University of Chicago Press, 1996).

- <sup>4</sup> Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1994. Himmelfarb writes, “Those who have experienced the tyranny of totalitarianism can appreciate how very different that is from the ‘social tyranny’ of liberal democracy. They can also appreciate the dangers of the absolute principle of liberty that gives little positive, legal, institutional support for those private and public virtues –”republican virtues” or “civic virtues”– required of a liberal democracy” (p. 105).
- <sup>5</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince and the Discourses*, trans. of *Discourses*, C.E. Detmold (Random House, Modern Library College Editions, [1513] 1950): 399. Subsequent quotations from the same text are noted parenthetically. By “giving an account of their conduct,” Machiavelli meant something very similar to the objectives of the Million Man March, to get people to see their responsibilities and confirm or commit to them collectively. It is a ritual for reuniting the people who acknowledge their waywardness and disunity in order to recreate the unity of the past.
- <sup>6</sup> “Remarks by Rep. Newt Gingrich (November 11, 1994),” appendix to the volume, *Contract With America: The Bold Plan by Rep. Newt Gingrich, Rep. Dick Armey, and the House Republicans to Change the Nation*, eds., Ed Gillespie and Bob Schellhas (Random House, 1994): 192. All subsequent citations to the Contract With America and to Gingrich’s appendix appear parenthetically.
- <sup>7</sup> See Barry Hindess, “Liberalism, Socialism, and Democracy: Variations on a Governmental Theme,” in *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, eds., Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, Nikolas Rose (University College London Press, 1996).
- <sup>8</sup> See especially, “Governmentality,” in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, eds., Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (University of Chicago Press, 1991); and, “The Subject and Power,” in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (University of Chicago Press, 1982). For a detailed account of liberal governmentality, see Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (Routledge, 1990).
- <sup>9</sup> On post-disciplinary modes of punishment, see Thomas L. Dumm, “Rodney King, or The New Enclosures,” in his book, *United States* (Cornell University Press, 1994).
- <sup>10</sup> On liberal technologies of citizenship and discipline, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Vintage Books, [1975] 1979). Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (Routledge: 1990); *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, eds., Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (University of Chicago Press, 1991); and *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism, and Rationalities of Government*, eds., Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose (University College London Press, 1996); among others.

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Huntington, "The United States," in *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*, Michael Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, and Joji Watanuki (New York University Press, 1975).

<sup>12</sup> Again, it is worth citing Samuel Huntington's account of the "democratic distemper" created by the politicization of social institutions in the 1960s. The "democratic surge" can be traced not to opposition to the Vietnam War so much as the fact that black American opposition to the war seeped into white Americans who soon made up a majority of Americans opposing the war.

Indeed, a closer look at the relationship between attitudes towards the Vietnam war and confidence in government suggests that the connection between the two may not be very significant. Opposition to U.S. involvement in Vietnam, for instance, became widespread among blacks in the mid-1966, while among white opponents of the war did not outnumber supporters until 1968 (108, op.cit).

Huntington, like Himmelfarb, notes that the values held by blacks came also to be held by the majority of whites, now in the case of illegitimacy and single-parent families, then in the case of black demand for full political participation and social equality. While this note requires further development and fuller citations, that will have to wait for another occasion.

<sup>13</sup> On fornication law enforcement in Idaho, see James Brooke, Idaho County Finds Ways to Chastise Pregnant Teen-Agers: They Go to Court," *New York Times* (Monday, October 28, 1996): A10. In Idaho, teenage mothers of "illegitimate" children are prosecuted for violating a 1921 anti-fornication law. In Wisconsin, Governor Tommy Thompson devised a scheme to enforce marriage by refusing to give teen mothers AFDC unless they married.

<sup>14</sup> In *The Ethos of Pluralization*, (University of Minnesota Press, 1995), William Connolly explains that American fundamentalism incites American working class manhood, not political elites. While I agree that the working class mobilization behind, say, Pat Buchanan, Operation Rescue and new prison construction, is evidence for his argument, I believe that the working classes will be sacrificed by neoconservative elites right along with the queers, the criminals, "the blacks," and the moral offenders, if indeed it comes to that. My gloomy prognosis is not necessarily accurate, but worth delivering, as I argue below.

<sup>15</sup> For useful accounts of neo-liberalism, see especially the essays by Graham Burchell and Nikolas Rose in *Foucault and Political Reason* (1996).

<sup>16</sup> Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Demoralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values* (Vintage Books, 1994): 244. Subsequent citations to this text are parenthetical, a practice Himmelfarb understands as the source of several evils, among them, a "demoralizing effect on the author," in "Where Have All the Footnotes Gone?" from a collection of essays, *On Looking into the Abyss, Untimely thoughts on Culture and Society* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1994): 125.

<sup>17</sup> Himmelfarb's interpretation of Nietzsche is of the kind made familiar to post-war intellectuals by Leo Strauss, who with Himmelfarb, places no faith in the natural progressiveness of all individuals and still less in society as a whole. The doctrine

of Strauss was that the masses are asses, infinitely manipulable, not infinitely calculable. The wrong side is pulling the strings.

- <sup>18</sup> James Kurth, "The Post-Modern State," *The National Interest* (Summer 1992): 26-36. Many thanks to Tom Dumm for bringing Kurth's essay to my attention. See Connolly's account of Kurth's fundamentalist political formula, in chapter four of *The Ethos of Pluralization*, op. cit.
- <sup>19</sup> There are a wealth of sources for looking into the abyss in addition to Himmelfarb's collection of essays cited above. See for example: Jacques Derrida, "The Ends of Man," in *Margins of Philosophy* (University of Chicago Press, 1982); Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (The Free Press, 1992); Theodore J. Lowi, *The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States*, second edition (W.W. Norton & Company, 1979); Jean Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of Silent Majorities or, The End of the Social*, trans., Paul Foss, John Johnston, and Paul Patton (Semiotext(e), 1983).
- <sup>20</sup> Helen Bosanquet, *The Standard of Life and Other Reprinted Essays* (MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1906).
- <sup>21</sup> I am uncertain, but believe Himmelfarb refers not to "the condition of the people," but the "condition of England" debates beginning in the first half of the 19th century. See Mary Poovey, *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830-1864* (University of Chicago Press, 1995): esp. chapter seven.
- <sup>22</sup> Himmelfarb adds a note to the quotation from Burke which reads as follows: "Today, among the disciples of Nietzsche and Foucault, it is precisely this self-induced morality, the internalized conscience, that is regarded as most coercive and tyrannical. This point of view would have been incomprehensible to virtually all Victorians." Note also that Bosanquet argues that women's wages are lower than men's because they are conditioned to accept lower wages, and for no other good reason. Himmelfarb generally reads Foucault as a theorist of "social control." cf. Foucault's essay, "The Subject and Power," included in Herbert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (University of Chicago Press, 1982).
- <sup>23</sup> Bosanquet uses that standard of measurement as an analogy. In Trafalgar Square, behind the lions is a stone wall embedded with metal in lengths named as foot, yard, inch, and furlong. "... without it there would be nothing to prevent any person from having his own idea as to what sort of length a yard should be...But, as I have said, this standard is seldom if ever referred to, and most people do not know that it is there. It is a matter of such fundamental importance, and one which enters so deeply into our lives, that every one either carries about with him his own pocket-measure...while not one in a thousand thinks of questioning the accuracy of his measure" (3).
- <sup>24</sup> Note that William Bennett says roughly the same thing for his part in the assault upon the Supreme Court. Citing from the *Casey* decision, he quotes Justices Souter, Kennedy, and O'Connor: 'At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human

life.' Bennett adds, "If this relativism becomes the coin of the judicial realm, we are in for very bad times indeed-judicially, politically, morally...The danger is anarchy..." ("The End of Democracy? A Discussion Continued," *First Things*, January, 1997: p. 19.)

- <sup>25</sup> On "indirect" government as the form of liberal governmentality, see two essays by Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, "Governing Economic Life," *Economy and Society* 19:1 (1990): 1-31; and "Political Power Beyond the State: Problematics of Government," *British Journal of Sociology* 43:2 (1992): 172-205.
- <sup>26</sup> Helen Bosanquet, "The Industrial Residuum," in *The Standard of Life and Other Reprinted Essays* (Macmillan and Company, [1893] 1906): 195.
- <sup>27</sup> For an explanation of how the British are homogenized and differentiated at the same time, how they are at once aggregated and disaggregated, see Mary Poovey, *The Making of a Social Body*, op.cit.
- <sup>28</sup> With more time and space, I would like to extend this argument to "the end of the social" by evaluating the degree to which Baudrillard is right and to which Foucault's hope is realized. Foucault wrote, in "Revolutionary Action: Until Now," "The whole of society' is precisely that which should not be considered except as something to be destroyed. And then, we can only hope that it will never exist again" (233). Printed in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*, ed., Donald F. Bouchard (Cornell University Press, 1977).
- <sup>29</sup> Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (Routledge, 1991): 173.
- <sup>30</sup> Albert O. Hirschman, *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy* (Harvard University Press, 1991).
- <sup>31</sup> Note also Himmelfarb's account of deconstruction, as well as "history-from-below," throughout *On Looking into the Abyss*, op.cit.
- <sup>32</sup> *The Boston Globe*, (June 10, 1996): 15.
- <sup>33</sup> See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, vol. one* (Vintage Books, 1980 [1976]); where he challenges the idea that truth and sexual liberation are intrinsically opposed to power. Same-sex marriage and the liberation of homosexuality, by this reading, would carry no intrinsic threat to compulsory heterosexuality.
- <sup>34</sup> Readers will recall Stanley Fish's response in the *New York Times* to the scientist who played the fool to prove that cultural studies is a sham in *Social Text*. Fish chose to occupy the highground I am suggesting we abandon.
- <sup>35</sup> Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," In *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, op.cit.; Samuel Delany, *The Mad Man* (Masquerade Books, 1994); Leo Bersani, *Homos* (Harvard University Press, 1995); Pat Califia, *Macho Sluts* (Alyson, 1988); John Reechy, *Sexual Outlaw* (Grove Press, 1977); Kate Bornstein, *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the rest of Us* (Routledge, 1994).
- <sup>36</sup> A novel by Zoe Fairbairns, *Benefits* (Virago Press, 1979), illustrates this point well.

Leena Eräsaari

## FETUS ON SCREEN<sup>1</sup>

### The First Gaze Inside the Womb

When I was pregnant with my third child Olli in 1986, I got my first chance to peak inside the womb and see the child I was carrying on a computer screen. I was not able to tell what I saw on the screen, but the midwife pointed me the head and the heart of the baby. Finally the picture was frozen and I could see the baby's profile in an overall picture. I was able to distinguish his outlines and some bones. I cannot recall feeling especially bound to the thing I saw on the screen, but I must admit that it was exciting to see the fetus, and the experience clearly made me more aware of the existence of the child. Seeing did not only help believing, but it also made me more attached to the future baby.

When I went to the ultrasound screening, my pregnancy was not too advanced, so the fetus was still rather small. It was difficult to tell the actual size of the fetus from the enlarged picture on the screen. After coming home I described the miraculous experience I had had to the rest of the family. We probably leafed some manuals trying to figure out the size of the baby, for my older children named the future child as 'spawn'. The baby was called by this petname until the end of the pregnancy and even sometime after he was born. At some point we even considered giving it to him as his official name. However, in the end reason won over feeling.

In 1987 ultrasound screening was not routinely performed on all pregnant mothers in Finland. I got to go to the ultrasound screening, because the

exact age of the fetus needed to be known in case I would later have to go for amniocentesis. Now, in 1998, most pregnant women get to see their future child at least once or twice on the screen in the course of the pregnancy. Parents are often given a copy of the ultrasound pictures printed on thermal paper, which they can try to preserve for the future generations. Nowadays the father of the child is allowed to be present during the ultrasound screening, but less than ten years ago they were not welcome.

## On gene-manipulation of reproduction

In her study, Hilary Rose (1994) has drawn a parallel between gene-manipulation technology used to improve the qualities of vegetables and plants, and research presently done on human genes. Rose refers to the technologies that have enabled us to alter the qualities of vegetables and plants so that they do not spoil so easily, endure longer transport times, are about the same size and quality, and are not so sensitive to pests; all in all, technologies that have helped to make the products more suitable for the market. Rose says that although it is not yet possible to control the human genepool, it may well be possible in the near future. Although we have not yet witnessed the birth of the “new and improved” people, technologies involved in human reproduction have been developing so rapidly over the past few decades that even the slowest of us may get little suspicious. Some representatives of the medical profession have given reassuring speeches in an attempt to convince the public that human genes are untouchable. However, other professionals of the field have declared that it is only a matter of years when the scientists will possess a complete knowledge of the human genepool. One could also view prenatal testing as one form of gene-manipulation.

In the 1970s and 1980s English-speaking feminists discussed and wrote about the politics of reproduction extensively. The official view of that period crystallised in the phrase “women’s right to choose”. Women demanded right to choose between contraception, pregnancy, and abortion. Presently the idea of “women’s right to choose” covers a wide range of desires depending on individual needs. Women who suffer from childlessness may want right to get treated for infertility, whereas for some women right to legal abortion, or just right to birth control, is on the top of the list of priorities.

Within the field of feminist studies the question of reproduction has been slowly moving into the focus of study since the late 1980s. Now, in the 1990s,

the discussion has finally reached Finland. One of the central problems from the feminist point of view is that because of extremely rapid development of reproduction technology, women scholars who have focused their attention on social sciences, have lost the track. As a consequence, women do not know what is happening in the field of reproduction. It is paradoxical that for this article, which is after all based on my own experiences, I was compelled to study biological, technical and medical vocabulary and practices quite extensively. Not only the medical technology, but also institutional settings have been under constant change. Institutional change is everyday routine (Nils Brunsson 1993). Sirpa Wrede (1996) analyses changes concerning maternity centers and prenatal care.

One central reason why gene-technology has advanced so rapidly, is that the field has been heavily injected with risk capital. Plenty of finances have been invested in pharmaceutical industry, plants that design and make medical equipment, and private and semi-private laboratories. (Rose 1994, 188-191). As a consequence, state sponsored and maintained public health care system has included these privately developed laboratory techniques as part of basic health care, including maternity and child care.

Now, as we are approaching the turn of the century, we must consider our conceptions of human reproduction anew. There are three crucially important questions that need to be addressed. Firstly, and from a global perspective most importantly, there is the question of contraception – right to legal abortion is closely linked to this field. Secondly, there is the question concerning the treatment of childlessness. The third question concerns fetal research, – fetal diagnosis, and prenatal screening.

If we approach the issue of reproduction from a global perspective, it becomes evident that in different parts of the world emphasis is on different aspects of reproduction. The division between the north and the south, or between developed and developing countries, exists also in the field of reproduction. In the south focus is on contraception, whereas in the north treatment of infertility occupies a more central position. However, it is important to keep in mind that a large part of the procedures, the purpose of which is production of children, are focused on the female body. Mother's body is always in the centre of procedures, whether we are talking about contraception or infertility treatments. Most of the currently used methods of contraception are designed to control women's bodies. Moreover, women also carry the social responsibility; it is mostly on woman's responsibility to make sure that condoms are used, although it is men who primarily use them.

Although we sometimes talk about test-tube babies, the body of the mother, the womb in particular, is still the only environment that enables fetus to grow. Despite the term 'test-tube baby', babies do not yet grow in test-tubes—the main function of the test-tube is to provide a place for insemination. So, the test-tube might be the home of the embryo, but the home of the child is the womb. In comparison to infertility treatments, contraception is relatively inexpensive. Treatment of infertility involves a number of people including medical doctors, chemists, and biologists. In addition, laboratories and other supplies are needed. And one should not forget the future mother either; infertility treatments require plenty of work from the part of the woman as a study by Sanna Suomalainen (1997) shows.

In many countries publicly funded infertility treatments are offered solely to heterosexual couples. Often marriage is also required, although, in some cases, it is enough that partners sign the documents concerning treatments together. Hilary Rose has observed that linking infertility treatments with heterosexual relationships implies that what is at stake here is not only women's right to have children. The prevailing policy supports the ideals of familialism and heterosexual relationships. Several feminist researchers have gone even further claiming that we are finally witnessing the realization of the age-old patriarchal dream. The womb and giving birth are finally in control of men (e.g Turunen 1996, Stanworth 1987, Balsamo 1996, 95-97. In her book Balsamo refers to the views presented by FINNRAGE/'Feminist International Network of Resistance to Reproductive and Genetic Engineering').

When gay and lesbian marriages were discussed in Finland in the spring of 1996, the issue of reproduction surfaced frequently. It seemed as if one of the central motivations for opposing lesbian marriages was the fear that it would give lesbians access to artificial reproduction. (see Kaskisaari 1997)

## Expectations

I initially became interested in prenatal testing on the basis of my own experiences. I have got plenty of experience of the Finnish maternity and child care centre organisations thanks to my three children and two grand-children. I have discussed the issue with friends, colleagues and acquaintances. I even recall having discussed it a few times with my mother. So, at least three generations of mothers and children are familiar with the institution. Only one mother among my friends and relatives has raised her child without the help of maternity and child care centres.

My three children Jenny, Matti and Olli were born in 1970, 1975 and 1987 respectively. Jenny's twins were born in 1995. Each time I went through all the possible tests and health checks offered at the maternity and child care clinic, and each time everything was different –the advice given that is. What had remained the same was the assurance of the health care personnel that they were telling the absolute truth about pregnancy and labour.

When I was pregnant with my third child, I was already near the risk-age, which was thirty-eight at that time. Now, ten years later, the risk-age has fallen down to thirty-five. Being close to risk-age meant that I got tested extensively. Looking from a techno-medical point of view, maternity care (in other words, monitoring of the fetus) had made a giant leap forward during those ten years that had passed since my last pregnancy.

I was pregnant with my first child in 1970. Back then maternity care centres concentrated on giving mothers advice and information on proper nutrition and labour. The fetus was monitored by listening to its heartbeats from the outside. My weight was monitored, and in order to prevent excessive swelling I was told to avoid salt and carbonated drinks. However, cutting down of the consumption of salty foods and mineral water did not prevent me from gaining weight. By the end of the pregnancy I was so fat that I did not feel like going out of the house. Fortunately, I lost most of the extra weight at the maternity ward, I also lost my craving for peanuts.

I mentioned my craving for peanuts, because in her book *‘The Second Sex’* (1988, 516-532) Simone de Beauvoir claimed that pregnant women behave irrationally and think more with their hormones than their heads. According to de Beauvoir, pregnant women help to maintain the cultural hierarchy, in which women are viewed to be closer to the nature than men. As an example of the foolishness of pregnant women, de Beauvoir mentioned their cravings for particular foods. I cannot recall having had any similar cravings during my two other pregnancies and I wonder whether that was more because of better nutrition or because mothers are not encouraged to have weaknesses such as food cravings any longer. I wonder if mothers-to-be are allowed to have any weaknesses these days. However, I remember discussing food cravings with a nurse at the maternity care centre during my first pregnancy.

I can readily think of at least two reasons why pregnant women do not admit to having weaknesses any more. It might be that after years of struggle for equality between the sexes, it is preferred to emphasise pregnant women's similarity in comparison to other women, perhaps even men. Such phrases as “pregnancy is not an illness”, or “a pregnant woman can go about her life as usual” tell of the attempt to normalise pregnancy and draw attention away

from the unique characteristics of the condition, such as increased need for sleep, hormonal changes, and mood swings. Kirsi Lallukka writes about the normalising effects of maternity care centres today:

“As soon as I started to read baby books and women’s magazine articles about pregnancy, I noticed that the central ideology of pregnancy in the mid-1990s seemed to be that of “liberation”: pregnancy is not an illness, pregnant woman can go about her life as usual (as long as you do not drink or smoke and eat healthily), a pregnant woman is beautiful and erotic (they can even pose for men’s magazines), women can finally choose how they want to give birth etc.”

Though I have nothing against this ideology of liberation, on the contrary, it just feels somehow fake. It seems to me that every single time something is promised, it is drawn back in the next sentence. A good example is the advice pregnant women are given concerning physical exercise during pregnancy. It is stressed over and over again that pregnant women should/must continue to exercise as before pregnancy. If possible, one should take up more exercise. Women’s magazines put most emphasis on the fact that physical exercise helps woman to recover after childbirth, whereas “official” manuals point out that physically fit mother is good for the baby’s health. All in all, the message is clear: exercise and enjoy. Unfortunately, one thing that is common to both women’s magazines and advice manuals is that they do not stand behind their words. For example the leaflet “We Are Having a Baby”, handed out to all pregnant women at the maternity and child care centre, tells about physical exercise as follows:

“it is recommended that one continues to exercise as before the pregnancy, however, one should avoid such activities and dances that include jumps, stretching or other sudden movements. One should be careful of swimming in cold water because of the danger of infection or contractions. Walking is a suitable form of exercise for a pregnant woman.”

So, after one has eliminated activities that include jumps, stretching or sudden movements the only mode of exercise that is left is walking.

Back to the 1970s and my experiences of pregnancy. The idea of painless childbirth, more accurately, the Finnish version of so-called “psycho-prophylaxis” became the theme of my first pregnancy. When I was expecting Jenny I was completely alone and unexperienced as a mother. None of my friends had given birth, and my own mother had passed away. I had to rely completely on the information maternity and child care centres gave me. At

the clinic I was told that if a woman does her share “competently” enough, one does not feel a thing. If the mother is physically and psychologically prepared, she can give birth without noticing much. I took part in all the courses offered by the maternity and child care clinic and believed everything they said. It was the first phase of psychoprophylaxis, later less rigid versions of it have emerged (Valvanne 1986, 205-244). The labour itself turned out to be a great personal defeat. Although I did everything by the book, it still hurt. I figured that there had to be something wrong with my head or psyche, because I could not do it right.

The feelings of guilt I had, were reflected in the stories of childbirth I told to my then best friend. She got so excited about my baby that decided to have a child too, although she was terrified of childbirth. When she wanted me to tell her whether childbirth actually hurt, I was evasive and did not give her any straight answers. The friend took part in a prep course given by a hypnotist and listened to his recordings at home. She even persuaded her father to pay for her to give birth in a private hospital. In the autumn of 1996 it was discussed in public that women’s fear of giving birth has become more common. However, I was not really convinced of the accuracy of the diagnosis. I would claim that fear of childbirth has not become more common, but that the mothers of today are more willing and able to talk about their fears, it might also be the case that doctors and midwives are more prepared to listen to the mothers’ fears nowadays.

When I was giving birth to Matti in 1975, psychoprophylaxis was not taught in its most extreme form any longer. It was admitted that childbirth might actually hurt a little bit, even if you were not completely nuts. However, by that time I had heard several stories of childbirth, all of which were heavily influenced by the first phase of psychoprophylaxis. Fast and easy labour was the word of the day. Fortunately my second child was born according to prevailing norms. I barely got to the maternity hospital in time. This time my husband was not allowed to be present during the labour. He left me on the doorsteps of the maternity hospital and went home. The idea of so-called “new fatherhood” had not yet found its way to the foremost maternity hospital of our capital, or anywhere else in the country for that matter.

When I was expecting Olli, my third child, I decided that being a mature mother of two children, I was not going to take any advice, especially those given by maternity and child care centres, too seriously. I even planned to have a private obstetrician, but at the time that kind of service was not available in Jyväskylä. I was back at square one, but not to worry, everything had changed again. It was now possible to give birth in any position one felt like.

This time my husband did not have to take any courses, it was considered enough that he had been present in one childbirth already – in a sense he had already passed the entrance exam. What happened during the pregnancy had changed radically partly because of the development of fetal diagnostics.

Apart from routine visits to the maternity and child care centre, I had to go to ultrasound screenings. Back then I thought that ultrasound screenings were performed solely in the purpose of determining the exact age of the fetus. I think that the ultrasound screening improved the quality of our family's life. We grew more attached to the future baby. Only years after I realised that ultrasound screening does not only reveal the age of the fetus, but it can be used to detect fetal abnormalities and disabilities. Some have claimed that ultrasound screening might actually be harmful to the fetus.

For me going to amniocentesis was more dramatic an experience than going to the ultrasound screening. I also found it morally difficult. Before going to the test, I discussed it over with my husband and even cried a little. I wished that I had had courage not to go to the test. It was the time for decision- the border between knowing and not knowing was here. I thought then, and I still do, that if amniocentesis had revealed something to be wrong with the fetus, I would have aborted it. I had two children already, I had a job, friends, and many other things I valued in my life. I believed that many good and important things in my life would suffer, if I took up such a time and energy consuming task as taking care of a disabled child. In other words, I would have chosen “comfortable life”.

Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (1994, 329-330) has proposed a similar view: the fact that most women are nowadays gainfully employed, increases the pressure to minimize the risk of having a disabled child. I remember thinking not only about myself and my family, but also what would happen to the disabled child after me and my husband had passed away. If I could not trust that everyone is taken care of when the welfare state was still doing well, I would really like to know what goes on in the minds of those parents who are expecting a “risk child” now. On the other hand, I am not certain that I would even dare to plan having a child in these depressed times. Many times it feels like that we are all more or less unwanted here, with the exception of Nokia data analysts and ABB engineers of course. In any case, I have always thought that this persecution of disabled fetuses is not that far away from eugenics. Because I am strictly against eugenics, my own unethical actions disturbed me. I truly felt that I was betraying my own principles. Only later did I find out that the risk of amniocentesis related miscarriage is about as high as the risk of the baby being disabled.

In her article Sirpa Wrede (1996, 133-180) explores Finnish prenatal care from the 1970s until today. She argues that the notion of risk has changed several times during this period. The change is due to respective organizational and professional changes. Although the sites of the prenatal care have remained quite unchanged in big municipalities and cities – for the large part prenatal care takes place in maternal and well-baby centres – visits to maternal clinics in hospitals (and hence specialized medical treatment) are all the time getting more frequent. Also the professional personnel working in prenatal care has seen radical alterations over the years.

During the 1970s prenatal care was dominated by the midwives, today their impact is diminishing both on the factual and ideological level. By the 1980s health nurses (together with general practitioners) have taken a leading role in prenatal care. When the midwives were still “in charge”, the primary risk or pathology to be prevented was the ill-being of the mother or the baby- the aim of prenatal care was to promote the well-being of the mother and child. During the 1980s maternal centres concentrated on picking out the risk families and educating them. Wrede says: “This notion was described as problem oriented and the idea was for example to monitor which women or families have not used maternity and well-baby services” (Wrede, 151). Besides this social risk consisting of the family, the risk pregnancies or the medical problems were detected. In the course of the 80s, maternal clinics have in effect taken over the care of risk pregnancies. Nowadays over 50 percent of all mothers are referred to the maternity clinics and hence to specialized medical care. (Wrede 152).

Now in the 1990s the family is no more considered the primary source of risk – the focus has shifted to the baby/fetus. “Hence screening tests intended for the detection of malformations and hereditary diseases have gained a major role in prenatal care services in Finland during the recent years” (152) The science-oriented field of obstetrics is increasing its control over pregnant women through the use of new technologies. Medical interventions have gained in importance whilst other aspects of the care of pregnant women have lost ground. Even practicing obstetricians have lost some of their control over prenatal care. In recent years the professional elite in obstetrics has gained more power since obstetrics occupies a central position in making of the guidelines of prenatal-care policy. (153)

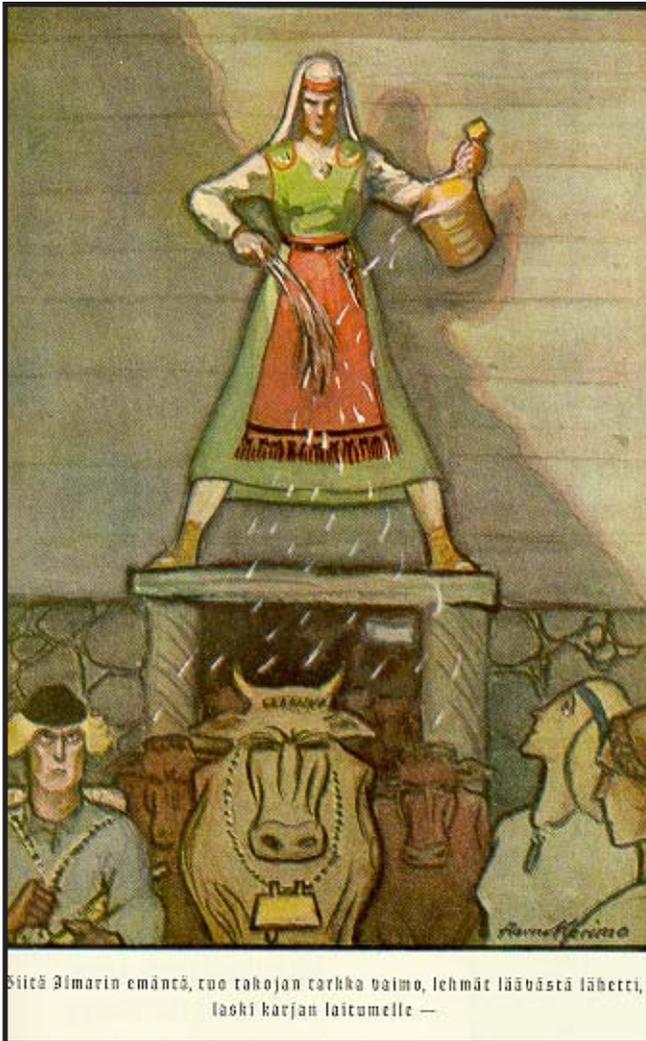
The power of defining risk has been allotted to experts within the Finnish national health policy. The preoccupation with risks in prenatal care and the persistent questioning of the ability of health-care teams to manage medical risks, shapes the practices of primary prenatal care. The criticism of the

services coming from obstetricians and midwives may generate anxiety among all the health-care providers of maternity centres as well as their clients. In turn, this anxiety may cause an increase in the number of unnecessary referrals to specialized care, if health-care teams begin to use referrals as a self-protective strategy against potential accusations in case something should go wrong. The battle of professional dominance concerning midwives, public health nurses, municipal health centre physicians and obstetricians generates 'a risk climate'. As the clients are at the same time viewed as 'knowledgable' and 'demanding' this may lead to a situation where even more emphasis is put on risk.

## The secrets of the womb on screen

In an American popular film *Nine Months*, father-to-be Hugh Grant gets excited about his girlfriend's pregnancy only when he sees the ultrasound picture of the fetus on television screen. In other words, ultrasound screening has opened up a possibility also for other people than the expectant mother to get to know the child before birth. For the first time in the history of human kind it is now possible to penetrate into such part of the female body, inside the womb, that until now has been considered "holy" and "taboo", as untouchable, or as a sign of exclusive feminine power. It would seem that conceptions of modern technology and local manners and beliefs have collided particularly hard in the Finnish periphery – the beliefs that female genitals held magical and supernatural powers were common in Finland until the turn of the 18th and 19th century.

Some of the ancient beliefs concerning female genitals, as well as some of the practises based on them, survived in Finland well until after the Second World War. According to archaic Finnish knowledge, even the sight or a light touch of the female genitals could send you to another world (Aapola 1995, 11-49). Now people can view enlarged pictures of the womb and its contents in obstetrics or genetics conferences. Many popular films use ultrasound pictures as narrative devices, very much the same way x-ray pictures were used before (Cartwright 1995). Ultrasound pictures of the fetus are frequently used to illustrate the turning point of the film or to underline emotionally distressing scenes. In the film *Nine Months*, watching the ultrasound tape made the father of the child to commit himself to the child and the mother. In *Alien 3*, ultrasound picture revealed that the protagonist carried a monster inside her, which eventually led her to commit suicide in order



Siitä Ilmarin emäntä, tuo rahojan tarkka vaimo, lehmät läävästä lähetti,  
laski karjan laitumelle —

Picture 1. In the past, the female genitals were associated with both good and bad magic in Finland. The powers deriving from the female genitals could be used to cause damage in and out of the house. These female powers were also used to protect children when they left home, or cattle when it was let out in the fields in the spring. The picture above is from Aimo Karimo's illustration for 'The Illustrated Kalevala' (1953). It depicts Ilmarinen's wife letting the cattle out of the cow-shed in the spring. The cattle is led out 'between the legs' of the wife.

to prevent the monsters from reproducing. Film *Blue* of Kieslowski's colour-trilogy, presents a woman, who after having lost her child and husband in a car-accident, finds her will to live again by becoming a mentor to a woman who is pregnant with her deceased husband's child. We briefly see an ultrasound picture on the screen when the woman is contemplating her decision.

Both health-care personnel and the immediate family can now by-pass the mother and look straight at the enlarged picture of the fetus on the ultrasound monitor. Ultrasound screening enhances the autonomy of the fetus in many ways. It is impossible to distinguish the womb or any other vital organs of the mother from the ultrasound picture. Furthermore, it is possible to enlarge the picture to any extent; "spawn" can grow to the size of a grown man. Simultaneously with the new technology, the idea of new fatherhood has progressed. In my view it is not that far fetched an idea that in case of divorce new fathers might be more eager to fight for the right to an unborn child than before. In her study Carol Smart (1989) has noted that many fathers suddenly become very interested in their children in a divorce situation. Could it be that in future ultrasound screening monitors can create a new kind of relationship between the father and the baby?

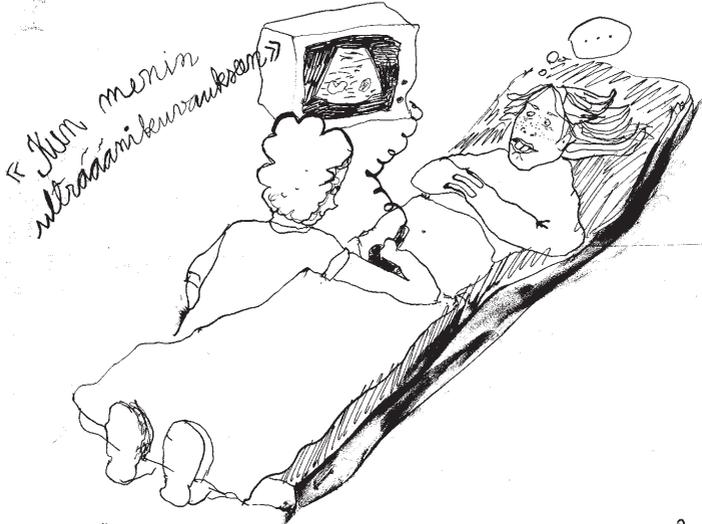
It is obvious that a variety of opinions concerning ultrasound screening and testing prevail among both pregnant mothers and health care professionals specialised in the care of children. There are (male) doctors who eagerly lobby for ultrasound screenings. I believe that there must be midwives both for and against increased testing. Some midwives are trained to work ultrasound screening machines, which obviously has an effect on how they feel about the technology. I suspect that midwives' possible resistance against testing might be sometimes channeled to other matters. For example, some have become ardent spokespersons for so-called "natural" breast-feeding. Breast-feeding is a subject conveniently distant from any technology and it provides a perfect field for showing off one's professional competence. Present pro-breast-feeding ideology, might actually be the result of the increased use of technology in human reproduction. There are doctors who are sceptic about the benefits of the ultrasound screening technology, but dare not not to use it. There are also individuals within the medical profession whose leanings are towards (eco) feminism and are thus opposed to ultrasound screening and prenatal testing in general. In her study of Norwegian health care professionals, Ann Rudinow Saetnam (1994) found many credible reasons for being against prenatal testing. Hesitant or resistant views were based on a variety of arguments. Midwives for example saw that new technologies diminished their own professional competence and increased

the power and the authority of the representatives of technically orientated medicine. Some sceptic minded professionals argue that the benefits of the ultrasound screening technique have not been sufficiently proved, whereas its drawbacks have been well documented.

In the summer and autumn of 1996, the whole of Great Britain was in moral outrage over a mother pregnant with eight children. The mother and her partner were judged especially harshly, because they were seen as cashing in the media by selling their story exclusively to the best paying paper. The case brought up the question of selective abortion in the case of multiple pregnancy into the public debate. The phenomenon itself is an outcome of new biotechnic medicine, for multiple pregnancies often begin with the help of reproductive medicine. Without ultrasound technique it is nearly impossible to determine the number of more than three fetuses. In the days of traditional medicine even double pregnancies were often left undetected and the mother only found out that she was having twins in the delivery room. The ultrasound picture reveals the number of fetuses, and at least in some countries the information is used as grounds for selective abortion. It seems to me that we are dealing with killing science here.

The chance of double or multiple pregnancy is often used as an excuse by which expectant mothers are persuaded to take part in ultrasound screening. I do not know how common it is to have feelings of anxiety when one finds out about double pregnancy, but in the case of my own daughter, who gave birth to twins, finding out was a traumatic experience. She felt that the “other” child was somehow alien, a stranger inside her body. Health of the mother and the child is often used as grounds for ultrasound screenings and prenatal testing in general, but what happens if the mother wants to abort some of the fetuses, or if she feels that the other child is a stranger? Levi-Strauss’s (1989, 24-33) study on ancient native American conceptions of twins shows that they have been either rejected, killed, or respected on the basis of their alleged supernatural qualities. In Tanzania, twins were killed alongside disabled and albino babies (Ulvila 1995). One possible explanation for this cruel practice is that in primitive cultures birth of twins was quite a burden for the mother. However, uncertainty of the father of the children played a major role in many of the conceptions studied by Levi-Strauss. According to ancient native American myths, twins had two separate fathers, one good and one bad, or one right and one false. In a sense twins represented ying and yang sides of humanity that were indistinguishable to the human eye. The fear of twins felt by native Americans or other primitive peoples has transformed; modern technology has given it new instruments and modern times new arguments.

demmu,  
nyt kun olen jo toivumassa, kiitos  
erilajien kannustuksen ja innostuksen,  
noin kuvaelma on paikallaan:



- ETTKÖ ROUVA OLE IHMETELLYT KUN OLETTE NOIN SUURI?
  - (Maimako Sz kun mun jalat tulee penkistä yli?)
  - TAÄLLÄHÄN NÄKYY KAKSI PIENTÄ PÄÄTÄ!
  - (Apua mun lapsella on kaksi päätä...)
  - HYVÄ ROUVA, TEILLE TULEE KAKSOSET!
  - ( - - - )
- Moi ♥ Jenny

Picture 2. Now that I am already recovering from the shock, thanks to all the people who have been so supportive and showed such enthusiasm, I thought that a cartoon of the event might be in order.

'When I went to the Ultrasound screening'

- have you not wondered why you are so big?
- does she mean that I am too big for this bed?
- I can see two tiny heads here!
- oh no, my baby has got two heads!
- dear ma'am, you are having twins!<sup>2</sup>

It seems that many feminists who have criticised the intervention of medicine into the reproductive sphere (Turunen 1996a and 1996b) consider ultrasound screening as a start of a process whereby the womb becomes transparent, the mother becomes invisible, and the ideas of the “autonomy” and “individuality” of the fetus increase (Turunen 1996b). The idea of the imagined autonomy of the embryo or the fetus lies also behind the discussion concerning so-called “fetal rights”, which has been linked to discussions on abortion and contraception as well as pregnant woman’s right to decline medical treatment or restrictions of her life-style. Riitta Turunen observes that there is at least one case in Finland where medical doctors have publicly demanded that pregnant women should be committed because of their alcohol/drugs abuse.

Ann Rudow Saetnam has noted that there are no diagnostic grounds for routine use of ultrasound technique in prenatal testing. According to her, the technique is in such a wide use partly because of the eagerness of medical doctors and their ability to influence the opinions of midwives for example. However, in my view, the eagerness of those who use the technique should not be forgotten. I would argue that many times it is the attractiveness of the product, that of visual image, that makes women choose ultrasound screening.

In his study on family pictures, Pierre Bourdieu (1990) claims that parents’ documentation of their children has played a major role in the rise of the popularity of photography during the 20th century. Families with children have got a camera, nowadays a video-recorder, more often than families without children. Families with children have more photographs than families without children. Taking pictures has become an integral part of any ritualistic celebration to the extent that if the camera is absent the value of the celebration decreases. One of the most popular subjects of family pictures has been the birth of the child. The nervous father who rushes around the delivery room with his video-recorder has already become a classic figure in childbirth folklore. According to Bourdieu, the new-born child is taken into the family through the photographs parents send to the relatives. The child cannot be ignored within the family once pictures of the new member have been sent and received.

Photography has played an important role in the processes of individualization and democratization in the lives of the people in western societies. Before the invention of the photograph, portraits of the ancestry were a privilege only the rich and the noble could enjoy. However, right before the emersion of photography, also the bourgeoisie had began to have miniature

portraits of themselves painted. It is obvious that there was social demand for the photograph (Tagg 1988). Although the subjects of the very first photographs were landscapes and still lifes, it soon became used in the depiction of people. It could be interpreted that photographs are an integral part of the democratization process of society, for they give everyone a chance to have visual memories of ancestors and the personal past. In comparison to written word, photography is a faster method of documentation, and it could be claimed that pictures have partly replaced words, which were the foremost mode of documentation in the 19th century. (Plummer 1983).

The photograph is part of the process of individualization. Apart from looking at the pictures of our ancestors, we are able to look back at the highlights of our own past. "That is how I looked on my second birthday, those and those relatives were present". Photographs of personal past add to our self-worth; I am valuable enough to have pictures taken of me. It is considered a sign of social success having plenty of photographs with plenty of people in them. The process of individualization has now gone one step further. The child inside the mother's womb is being increasingly regarded as an individual. I firmly believe that this is the ultimate reason for the popularity of the ultrasound screening and why doctors do not have to persuade mothers or parents to take part in it too hard.

Photography has always had two sides. Photography has been used as a method of control right from the beginning. The police and penal establishment have photographed prisoners and criminals. Photographs began to be used for identification. It found its way to passports and identification cards (Tagg 1988). During the time when it was believed that criminal qualities could be identified by the shape of one's skull, size of ears, or the posture of one's head, medical doctors and criminologists tried to identify criminals and mentally ill people with the help of photographs. Even psychiatry has used photography. For example Freud's predecessor Charcot had pictures of (mainly female) patients taken of in order to capture the essence of a hysterical seizure (Jaqueline Rose 1983 and Marnaffe 1991). The use of still and living pictures for the purposes of control is continually increasing. Video control has become common in banks, underground trains, shops, and the homes of the wealthy.

Until the late 19th century doctors did not look directly at the patient; they listened what the patient said, but avoided a direct gaze. With the emergence of ultrasound technique, direct gaze to the patient has become legitimized. The medical gaze has got many forms. Particles are gazed through the microscope, whereas x-rays and the ultrasound go right through the pa-

tient's body. In his book *The Birth of the Clinic*, Michel Foucault depicts the beginning of the development of the medical gaze. In *Discipline and Punish* (1980), Foucault explores how power is exercised socially, and depicts the ways people are monitored and controlled. In the field of visual medicine, medical gaze and the control apparatus of the society meet in a particularly powerful way. Ultrasound technique that reveals the secrets of the womb represents a technical peak of the medical gaze and control, and the culmination point of many ethical problems.

Feminist philosophers and epistemologists have emphasised that visual imagery linked with knowledge represents male power. In many languages words that mean knowing or seeing can be used synonymously. In the case of visual medicine it is especially easy to see how male power is exercised through visual images. The focus of visual medicine is largely on the female body, but it is not only pregnant women who are at the target. Women's breasts for example, are nowadays almost routinely examined by visual medicine.

## Always in the vanguard of progress

The Finnish maternity and child care centre system currently holds the world record. Pregnant mothers and children are not looked after to this extent anywhere else in the world. The service may not always be very individual; class and life-style differences for example are not paid that much attention. However, all expectant mothers are offered free service and their condition is monitored in detail throughout the pregnancy. Over the past twenty years maternity and child care has moved more and more into the direction of extensive prenatal testing in Finland. The current procedure in prenatal testing is the most extensive in the world; double screening of the fetus is nowadays performed routinely and triple screening is common in the case of risk pregnancies.

Within the medical profession, epidemiologists (Vertiö 1995) seem to be the ones who are not entirely convinced that we should talk about screening when we refer to prenatal testing. Usually "screening" means prevention of illnesses that should be discovered in the possibly early stage in order to be treatable. Screening of women for cervical cancer could be seen as an example of successful screening. In the case of cancer of the prostate the situation is more difficult, partly because it takes approximately fifteen years for the cancer of this particular type to develop to the critical stage, and even if

it were found, it could not be cured. The only cure that is available for disabled fetuses is the termination of the pregnancy.

Prenatal testing in Finland is the most extensive in the world. This means that fetuses are screened for disabilities as a routine procedure. The procedure has got at least two phases. The first phase is the ultrasound screening, the second is the maternal serum screening, and the third one amniocentesis. Ultrasound screening and amniocentesis were already in use when I was pregnant with Olli in 1986 and 1987. The latter test was offered for mothers who were in the risk group. In some municipalities this two-phase screening procedure was introduced in the name of cuts to the welfare budget, but nowadays it is offered to all the pregnant mothers. Even if only one severely disabled fetus is aborted, the municipality is saving money. "The care of one severely disabled child costs 250 000 marks a year. If the child's life expectancy is approximately fifty years, the child will cost to the society twelve million marks" (Vantaan Sanomat 17.1.93)

The maternal serum screening is extremely problematic from the point of view of the pregnant mother, mainly because it is highly unreliable. Especially in the case of young expectant mothers these tests are not reliable. If the result of the test is positive, the expectant mother is offered a possibility to go to an amniocentesis, in which a risk of miscarriage is involved. Moreover, the results take a long time and a false alarm can cause great distress. Some mothers interviewed in Päivi Santalahti's (1996) study, told that their anxiety did not diminish even when they had been told that the result of the blood test was inaccurate. In the next Kirsi Lallukka tells about her experiences of the blood test.

On my first visit to the maternity and child care clinic I was given two information leaflets on prenatal testing. The first one was titled "Information on Prenatal Screening for Disabilities in Central Finland", and the other "Information on the First Trimester Ultrasound Screening". The nurse suggested that I read the leaflets at home and then decide whether I want to have these tests taken. That was about all that was discussed about the subject. I asked how common it was to have these tests taken and the nurse replied that about eighty percent of women take part in the first test of the double screen.

In the beginning of the pregnancy I was quite convinced that I was going to go to these tests. I applied the idea of the "woman's right to choose" in my situation and thought that I have got a right to choose whether I want give birth to a disabled child or not. At the time I thought that having a healthy child would change my life radically enough. I thought that I had a right to be selfish.

However, as the pregnancy advanced, I began to hesitate. In the end, I was only certain of the ultrasound screening. Me and my partner Pekka discussed the subject relentlessly, several questions revolved in our minds: now that we had made me pregnant on purpose, did we have right to abortion if something was found in the tests, and if we ended up deciding for abortion, would we have right to try again. What would happen if I gave birth to a disabled child and he or she would rather have not been born because of the suffering? What it is going to feel like, if I do not go to the tests and we do not find out about their results, whatever they are. Why is it that only certain kind of children are welcome? How anyone is able to decide anything at all, when it is known that these tests are unreliable. How is it possible that we have this kind of system in such a wide use and it has not been publicly discussed? Or has it been discussed, but for some reason we have just missed the debate?

I tried to share my worries with some relatives, but the subject made people notably uncomfortable. Some of my acquaintances told me that they found the system humane in the end. They thought that it gives the parents a chance to get used to the idea of a disabled child and in this sense it works for the “benefit of the child”.

Finally we decided that I should make the decision. I would go to the blood test and after that we would reconsider. However, that Monday morning I had my appointment to the laboratory, I got cold feet. I was in a such a state of panic that I stopped twice on my way to the health care centre and was on the verge of turning back home. When I finally got to the health care centre I felt so ill that I only got to hand my referral to the receptionists before I fainted.

So the blood test was taken in the end. After the test we had to wait for the result for a whole week. The practice is that the hospital only gets in contact with the patient if something out of ordinary is found out. On my next visit to the maternity and child care clinic I told the nurse that in my view the result should be told immediately, whether anything was found or not, and I was told that other people had said the same thing and that something should be done about it. I could not just calmly wait for that week before the results came. I phoned several people asking them why it took so long and managed to annoy some of them quite badly in the process. When we finally got the result, we began to wonder what the three week waiting time for the results after the amniocentesis would feel like. I think that for me the worst thing about the waiting time would be knowing that all the time the child is growing, developing and getting stronger inside me.

The body of a pregnant woman, her blood, urine, womb, amniotic fluid et cetera are used for several purposes without her necessarily knowing about it. Women are tested for HIV, their use of alcohol or drugs is tested, and based on these tests they are forced to change their behaviour or seek treatment. According to a data collected by Anne Balsamo (1996, 99-111), women

who have suffered miscarriage have been taken into court for most fantastic of reasons. If drug abuse results in the death of the fetus, the mother is accused of murder. If the miscarriage is the result of sexual intercourse that had been prohibited by a doctor, then woman can be yet again accused of murder. It seems that although women have gained many rights concerning their body after the Second World War, their rights are diminishing in the field of reproduction.

Elisabeth Beck-Gersheim (1995), considers our need to know about the future child as a reflection of the society that has become more and more unstable. The society is nowadays marked by various risks; the balance of nature is faltering, the atmosphere and the climate is changing, and it has become increasingly difficult to predict the changes in the society. In all the western countries the middle-classes are growing. The change has been particularly radical in Finland. A typical feature of the middle classes is the search for certainty and the tendency to eliminate elements that cause uncertainty in one's life. On a personal level people want to increase control over their own lives. Over the recent years a new reason of uncertainty has emerged in the Finnish society. There is no guarantee that the welfare state, our social security system and social services will survive.

The uncertainties of life make us think about our own possibilities and choices more carefully, the number of different single and group therapies that increase individual's control over one's own life is growing. Beck-Gersheim sees a link between the increased will to be in control of one's own life and the parents' will to know about their future child, even manipulate the offspring. Beck-Gersheim writes that in the present day Germany middle-class parents are required to get as much information about the future child as possible in advance in the name of "Good parenthood". At the moment it is debated whether it is morally right to give birth to a child that is known to be disabled. In Finland the official view is that the parents decide, but unofficially the doctors and midwives apparently recommend termination of the pregnancy (Puskala 1995, 40-43). The German and the Finnish debates concerning disabled children and the policies adopted by each country are admittedly different. Ethnic diversity is far greater in Germany in comparison to Finland, however, the German people still live with the traumatic memory of the nazi regime's ethnic cleansing policies and that might have an effect on how people perceive difference.

You may ask why I brought up "foreigners" or strangers in an article that deals with fetal diagnostics? Because strangers – people who represent different ethnic groups and cultures, who speak different languages, and have

different social backgrounds, people who have different abilities, hopes and desires comprise what is called the diversity of life. In Finland we have had relatively little diversity. Finland has been called a monoculture. We have one dominant language as well as one dominant religion, the Swedish speaking minority as well as gypsy and Lappish populations are small. I am not opposed to intercultural education, but I think it is far more effective to actually meet different people. In order to be able to deal with difference we need difference.

The number of abortions performed on the grounds of alleged abnormality is very small. In 1993 there were the total of 210 terminations of pregnancies on these grounds (Santalahti 1995,5). According to doctors of genetic science, the only obstacles for the extensive use of prenatal testing in Finland are lack of funds and suitable equipment. In many less developed countries the number of disabled children is far greater than in our country. There are thousands of children in the world that are born disabled due to malnutrition, lack of education, or poor living conditions. The other end of the spectrum is represented by wealthy countries where there are fewer disabled children born than there are people who have been disabled in traffic accidents for example. As we can see, the spectrum of living and dying is wide in the world.

## Epilogue

Evelyn Fox Keller (1990) has written how birth and life turn into death in the hands of scientists. “The scientists unravel the secrets of life” when they study human genes or “they give birth to a healthy boy” when they build an atom bomb. Acquiring detailed information about the unborn child is not as lethal as building an atom bomb, but it does have its risks. People, mothers and fathers, want to protect themselves from any unnecessary risks, accidents, illnesses, injuries and abnormalities. If couples are only allowed to have one child and boys are valued more, the life of baby-girls is in danger like in China. If parents knew how to manipulate their children in a way that would equip the child with the best possible genes, I am positive they would do everything they could. Everybody wants “beautiful and intelligent” children.

Knowledge and knowing have been depicted in many ways. On the one hand, knowledge liberates, on the other, it restricts. Knowledge can be light in the dark, but it can also be used to control people. There are good and bad

fruit in the tree of knowledge. On one hand it protects life, and saves mothers and children in risk, on the other hand it gives out information that is lethal for disabled or sick children. The Finnish society has got an especially effective tool in its use – the maternity and child care clinic institution. Having given birth to three children I appreciate the services it offers; weighing, measuring, dental care and such. However, I have also seen its drawbacks. Knowledge can create pain, sorrow and tears. Handing out information to parents expecting a child, especially the emotionally vulnerable mother, is a highly ethical question. Unfortunately it has not been considered as one inside the maternity and child care clinic institution. The Finnish health care system, the ethical committees of hospitals, do not admit or recognise laymembers. In the spring of 1997 there were daily news of tests authorities have done on pregnant women. It is namely medical authorities that decide what is necessary testing.

It seems to me that while pregnant there is not a trace left of the mythical strong Finnish woman who is in charge of her own body. The Finnish woman appears invisible and mute in the similar manner as the women of developing countries in the studies of male anthropologists. I remember that when I was a client in the maternity and child care clinic, no-one brought out the moral side of my decisions. I am absolutely positive that no-one warned me of the effect finding out about a disabled child might have on me. (Only later did I learn that ninety-eight percent of the women who find out they are expecting a disabled child terminate the pregnancy) It was told over and over again that it is up to me what I decide to do. I decided to have all the tests that were available. Most of the Finnish women do the same.

We cannot hold back the technology from progressing. However, my wish is that mothers would be more aware of where the new reproductive technology is taking us. In the article ‘Organs Without Bodies’ Rosi Braidotti (1994, 41-56) argues that the aim of biotechnical medicine is to separate human body from both time and space – it seems to me that especially in the field of reproduction the bodies are becoming less attached to time and space.

Body parts that are detachable are also replaceable. Nowadays it is not only possible to acquire semen and egg cells from a “bank”, a womb can be rented too. In this supermarket of medicine, doctors, laboratory assistants, chemists, test-tubes, and freezers alongside with outpatient departments and operating theatres, provide the new leading characters and setting for reproduction, instead of the bedroom and other spaces of home.

As Braidotti, referring to Foucault, notes, reproduction that takes place in

a laboratory is stripped of sexual pleasure and satisfaction. In this article I have explored the institutional maternity and child care system in Finland. Sexual pleasure has not been in the focus, because sex is hardly ever mentioned in the maternity and child care clinics. I cannot remember one conversation that would have touched the issue even slightly. I recoll that some of the leaflets handed out in the clinic mentioned that having “normal sex” is alright until near the childbirth. However, many of the women suffering from childlessness who contributed to Sanna Suomalainen’s study (1995) remarked that sexual pleasure goes out of the window at the moment when the only purpose of sex is to conceive.

The rapid development of bio-power requires radical rethinking of various moral and ethical questions. Legislators face a set of completely new questions, unfortunately the law drags far behind the technology. During the summer and autumn 1997 the rights of parents and babies have been discussed in the Finnish media because of a new law concerning the artificial fertilization. Questions taken up in this discussion are for example whether the children have right to know that they are products of artificial insemination, and if so, should they have a right to know who was the donor of the cells. The debate was initiated by Juhani Pietarinen, a Professor of practical philosophy (HS 8.7.97). In the course of the debate, several biologists and doctors, lawyers, one donor of egg cells, and one woman suffering from childlessness have taken part in the discussion.

Questions emphasising the social parenthood as well as the “biological” parenthood and the hereditary diseases of donators have been discussed. Largely has also been discussed the rights of children to know their “originin”. The proposal for the rights of artificial fertilization concerns only heterosexual couples, not single mothers or lesbian couples. However, on the level of biomedicine, the proposal is not “modest”. Donation of semen and eggshells as well as rental of the womb are included in the law. Anyhow, artificial insemination brings up a complex set of problems for both ordinary people – fathers, mothers, and children – and legislators and health carers to solve. What lies ahead of us if biological parents, those women and men who have donated cells, are granted the status of parents along with so-called social parents?

Probably every person who has felt anger or bitterness towards one’s parents has in some point or another fantasised about being a switchling. One’s mother is not the real one, but a bad, ugly, and poor surrogate. In this kind of situation, would not it be nice to know that somewhere there is a good, rich, and beautiful cell – or womb mother, who just is not aware how unfairly her flesh and blood is being treated. Not to speak of the donor’s family.

When I speculated with an acquaintance about my daughter donating egg cells or son spermatozoon she cheerfully remarked that one day I might find sixteen children on my doorsteps demanding to know why I have not pampered them, but the twins. If cell donors are regarded as mothers and fathers, then it would be only natural that their relatives are part of the extended family. I have not attempted to find any legislative or ethic solutions in my article, but rather to dig up more problems.

I will briefly go back to my primary subject; the mother's body in the hands of bio-power. It is quite obvious that when the mother's body has transformed into individual organs without the body, it becomes objectified. In Finland and in other Nordic countries resources allotted to health care are decreasing.

More and more funds are invested in biotechnic medicine and at the same time budgets of maternity and health care clinics have been cut in many municipalities. I also have got a gnawing suspicion that Finnish mothers are being used as guinea-pigs for medicine. On 20th of May this year the economy pages of Helsingin Sanomat predicted that the next big success story of the Finnish industry after Nokia will be the plants that produce biotechnic medicine. I am horrified by the idea that pregnant mothers and women wishing to conceive would be subjected to ever increasing amount of tests, visits to hospitals and laboratories.

The more I think about the issue, the more convinced I am that born and unborn children are not the only ones who need the help of legislators, although I am not convinced that they can actually help. The authority of the health care professionals is so great that it is not easily shaken. However, the path that has now been chosen is extremely damaging to women's autonomy. All that feminists have demanded and achieved is in danger to disappear in the tangled paths of laboratories.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This article was read and commented on by my colleague Kirsi Lallukka. Also, as the reader will note, she told about her experiences of the so-called double-screen. Initially my idea was to write this article in the form of a dialogue, however, because of limited resources that was not possible. My warm thanks to Kirsi for her help.
- <sup>2</sup> My daughter disagrees with me about the interpretation of the letter or rather with my anti-technology view. She does think nowadays that knowing about the twins in good time before the labour was worth of the short shock in ultrasound and after it.

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Mitchell Dean

## NEO-LIBERALISM AS COUNTER-ENLIGHTENMENT CULTURAL CRITIQUE

If universities can't manage change themselves, how can they comprehend and advise on the management of change in society at large?<sup>1</sup>

I

This remark was made by the Minister responsible for higher education in Australia during the rather acrimonious debates that followed the announcement of university budget cuts by the conservative (Liberal-National) Government elected in March 1996. I cite it here because it allows me to draw attention to certain features of the recent “displacement of social policies”, the theme of our symposium. At its simplest it betrays a lack of sympathy for what might be considered the received functions of universities in the production and dissemination of knowledge and the fostering of debate. The Minister's statement thereby exhibits a great deal of suspicion of what are generally regarded as key Enlightenment ideals and values. More broadly, the recent cutbacks of the public funding of universities in many advanced liberal-democracies illustrate that virtually all spheres of public provision have been affected by the demand for fiscal prudence. Not long ago “the economy” was viewed as the foundation on which prosperity and collective good, among other things, would be based. The economy – now perceived as a global system imposing certain imperatives on each of its regions – has

now become the rationale for the retraction of the funding of any institutional or individual behaviour that might prove contrary to national efficiency and international competitiveness (Hindess 1998). This threat to efficiency and competitiveness can take the form of unproductive academics, social welfare dependency, wasteful public expenditure by representatives of indigenous populations and public broadcasters, and overspending on national health-care. But the simple statement, “if universities can’t manage change themselves, how can they comprehend and advise on the management of change in society at large?”, might be made to stand for more than a change of approach to the economy. It also suggests that the same criteria for judging change in society at large can be applied to any of its institutions. Thus I argue here that what distinguishes the recent “displacement in social policies” is not simply a concern for economy and efficiency. For even to begin to understand this displacement we must attend to the distinctive manner of questioning and criticising how individuals and institutions have previously conducted themselves which the Minister’s statement illustrates. We must also attend to how this form of questioning seeks to derive a diagram of institutional and governmental reform from an image of what the Minister called the “larger society” and to propose the introduction of such a diagram in ever more spheres.

From one perspective, the Minister’s question leads us to speculate on what this image of the “larger society” refers to. On one account, this “larger society” is composed of a national population or community that finds itself in a new global economic order rather different from the post-World War Two system of national economies engaging in mutually advantageous international trade (see Hindess 1998). In this view, the task of national governments is no longer to engage in the prudential management of self-regulating national economies so as to secure benefits to “society” conceived as the members of a national population. Rather, the task of national governments is to reform those kinds of individual and institutional conduct that are considered likely to affect economic performance compared to that of the members of other national and even regional populations. A corollary of this view is that this is often best achieved by contriving and constructing market systems of allocation in domains where they had not previously been in operation. While I am interested in this governmental contrivance of market systems of allocation, and the rationale for it, this is neither all that can be said about the “displacement of social policies” nor the principal focus of this chapter. I want to suggest that the ethos of this mode of problematisation - the distinctive ways of posing questions and criticising how institutions

such as universities have previously operated – leads us far beyond what might be construed as narrowly economic concerns.<sup>2</sup> It requires us to ask what I believe are really fundamental questions such as: What is distinctive and not so distinctive about this mode of problematisation? What follows from such a mode of problematisation? What are social policies to be displaced by? If we are witnessing the abandonment of social reform, then what has taken or will take its place? This chapter seeks to provide some preliminary answers to these questions.

There have been many exemplary studies of the instruments, objectives, and rationalities that constitute the characteristic forms and styles of rule in advanced liberal democracies. Such studies have stressed the importance of the various political technologies and rationalities of government that allow contemporary liberal government to operate “at a distance” through the regulated, accountable and responsible choices and actions of various autonomous agencies.<sup>3</sup> These studies form a necessary condition for understanding the contemporary displacement of social policies. While acknowledging the fruitfulness of such an approach, it should already be clear that the present chapter proposes a somewhat different tack. By focusing on the mode of problematisation, I want to place in the foreground the *ethos* of one highly influential contemporary approach to criticising and reforming government that I shall call “neo-liberalism”.<sup>4</sup> By arguing that the ethos of neo-liberalism is one of “counter-Enlightenment cultural critique”, the chapter hopes to show that neo-liberalism can be approached as a particular way of asking questions about and criticising existing ways of governing things and that it has particular objectives in mind. These objectives exist in an implicit tension with the “Enlightenment” ideal of a rational government of society and are primarily conceived in terms of a cultural renewal or even cultural revolution. By understanding the regimes of practices of advanced liberal government, and the political rationalities and technologies of government from which such regimes are composed, we can begin to arrive at a kind of positive description of the displacement of social policies. It is only by investigating its ethos, however, that we can begin to understand the full ramifications of that displacement.

Let me issue a caveat. None of what I shall argue here is to say that contemporary rule can be reduced to such an ethos or mode of questioning. The constitutive elements of contemporary forms of rule remain radically heterogeneous and irreducible to a particular set of principles, values or injunctions. Moreover, the motivation to specify this particular ethos arises from an attempt to show that elements of contemporary rule can be subject

to and articulated through quite different ethical regimes. Indeed, it might be the case that the fundamental differences found at the level of party politics and political incumbency occur less in terms of the governmental resources various political programmes must draw upon and more in terms of the ethical investments that seek to assemble these resources into a definite form and orient them to particular ends.

The path undertaken here toward a specification of the ethos of neo-liberalism is undoubtedly idiosyncratic, mixing as it does philosophical exegesis of a limited kind and very particular empirical illustration. I contend that there are a number of lines along which we can begin to think about this ethos that appears to animate much of the displacement of social policies. First, there is a line of continuity. Here, neo-liberalism can be regarded as a particular form and instrument of critique. Hence neo-liberalism can be seen as a variant of what Foucault regarded as liberalism's critique of excessive government. In this respect, there is nothing particularly new about neo-liberalism. It is not a significant rupture in how we think and act, and "displacement" itself is a recurrent, if not permanent, feature of rule in liberal-democratic societies. This approach to neo-liberalism is touched upon in the first section of the paper which introduces an account of liberalism, critique, and Enlightenment, largely derived from some suggestions contained in a lecture delivered by Michel Foucault in 1978 (1996). Secondly, there is a line of affinity in the ethos of neo-liberalism. Here we might question the affinities of neo-liberalism with other, contemporary forms of critique. In the second part of the paper, I show that the neo-liberal concern with freedom and the self-actualising subject is shared with recent critical theories and with social and cultural movements.

The first two parts approach the ethos of the neo-liberal displacement from the outside and prepare the way for the third section. There I follow the ethos of neo-liberalism along a line of ambivalence, one that reveals itself to be more like a web than a single line. Neo-liberalism presents itself as a series of paradoxes. Its hostility to notions of a government of society and consequently to social reform appears inconsistent with its desire to restructure and reform institutions and with the invocation it makes that society itself is undergoing enormous changes. Its apparently conservative appeal to family values, hard work, and self-responsibility would appear inconsistent with its radical reformation of institutions, practices, and even identities. Furthermore and more strikingly, neo-liberal strictures against excessive government can be posed against the way in which it has recourse to a permanent motive for governmental interference. In the third section of

the paper I draw upon conceptions of freedom from the later work of F.A. Hayek, and some illustrative recent changes to the government of the unemployed in Australia, to understand such ambivalence. If we attend to the ambivalences of this form of critique and to the different ways in which these can be worked out in specific regimes of government, then this line of ambivalence might also be regarded as a “line of flight” suggesting some of the political choices confronting contemporary political actors, including but not only national governments.

This ambivalence of neo-liberalism can only be understood by grasping the key objective of change promoted by the displacement of social policies. This objective cannot be reduced to the mechanisms, instruments and technologies of government even, and especially including, the governmental contrivance of markets. The objective of neo-liberalism, I contend, lies within the sphere of what it construes as “culture”. One instance of this is the way in which neo-liberal critique involves the abandonment of the apparent paternalism and protectionism of the welfare state for an apparently leveling vision in which the conduct of institutions, government and individuals are all to take what Graham Burchell has called the “enterprise form” (1996: 29). Put crudely, in this instance, in place of social policy, we now find the form of the enterprise applied equally to individual conduct and institutional structures. And, in place of social reform and social change, the form of the enterprise is to bring about a cultural renewal in the way in which individuals understand their lives, their workplaces, and even their personal relationships, and the way in which institutions (whether “private” or “public”, “for profit” or “non-profit”) are to be organised and managed.

My argument is that the ethos of this influential version of neo-liberalism is one of “counter-Enlightenment cultural critique” and that such an ethos animates much of what we might like to consider as the displacement of social policies. The implication of this is that this ethos and form of critique is both pro- and anti-Enlightenment. That part of this form of critique which decries the loss of autonomy and potential cannot be divorced from Enlightenment ends of human self-realisation and freedom. However, that part of the neo-liberal ethos that disputes the possibility of having rational knowledge of society as a totality departs from the conventional Enlightenment means of achieving those ends. The government of “society” is no longer entrusted with the task of achieving individual and collective human emancipation. This is illustrated by the general suspicion of planning and of the State and by Mrs Thatcher’s much quoted phrase that “there is no such thing as society”. Here the notion of the evolution of what Hayek regarded as spontaneous social orders

– particularly that of “the market” – can be mobilised against the idea of rational planning. Yet one should not imagine that its anti-Enlightenment features necessarily pitch neo-liberalism against Enlightenment, reason, modernity, and so on. As a form of critique, it is concerned with the limits of reason and knowledge, not with their abandonment. There is a “slippage”, not a contradiction, between Enlightenment and critique. Neo-liberalism forces this slippage to a precarious position that threatens to rupture the relation between critique and Enlightenment. However neo-liberalism still works between the project of Enlightenment and the critique of it pretensions.

In short, in attempting to specify the ethos of the neo-liberal displacement of social policies, I find I have had to make recourse to three terms: critique, Enlightenment, and culture. By attending to the ambivalence of such an ethos and to the plurality of the ways in which it can be operationalised in advanced liberal democracies, I hope to open up a fourth line along which we might follow it – a line of flight, of metamorphosis and modification, by which this displacement might find itself displaced in turn.

## II

Let us now consider two points from the lectures of Michel Foucault that allow us to better situate liberalism and government in relation to notion of critique and Enlightenment. In a 1978 lecture, Foucault argued that the “governmentalisation of society” and critique were central to the development of the history of “Western culture”. He suggested that

...if governmentalization is really this movement concerned with subjugating individuals in the very reality of a social practice by mechanisms of power that appeal to truth, I will say that critique is the movement through which the subject gives itself the right to question truth concerning its power effects and to question power about its discourses of truth. (Foucault 1996: 386)

What is interesting here is not the historical validity of such a proposition. It would be mistaken to try to verify or falsify it. Nor are these definitions of either governmentalisation or critique very precise. Foucault and others have given much more precise versions of the notion of government. What is interesting is the juxtaposition of the terms “government” and “critique”. Critique is characterised as a counterweight to governmental practices that appeal to notions of truth. It is an attitude that raises questions of the relations between governing and the knowledge of what is to be governed.

Let us accept, then, two fundamental features of those types of society that like to view themselves as “Western” (always, and especially now, a problematic term). The first is the development of the arts and sciences of government, the techniques and rationalities by which individuals and populations are governed and govern themselves. And the second feature is the demand, on the other hand, that such government be subject to a critique. In this critique, government is to be made democratic, accountable, responsible, transparent, efficient, and it is to be conducted with probity, economy, efficiency, due care, and so on. In short such a critique demands that those who are governed, and those who govern, should be regarded as autonomous beings or at least as potentially capable of exercising autonomy. “Critique”, Foucault suggested, “will be the art of voluntary inservitude, of reflective indocility” (1996: 386).

Now, consider the idea of Enlightenment. For Foucault, as for Kant, critique is both the means to Enlightenment and a knowledge of its limits. The motto of Kant’s *Aufklärung* is “*Sapere Aude*” (“dare to know”). According to this motto, critique is the critical attitude or ethos that prepares the way for Enlightenment but preserves the capacity to question any of its particular products. Thus for Kant this requires a recognition that “rules and formulas” are “the fetters of an everlasting maturity” and that “[w]hoever casts them off would still take but an uncertain leap over the smallest ditch, because he is not accustomed to such free movement” (Kant 1996: 59). However, to the extent that critique is a “permanent” ethos that cannot be cast aside, there is a tension between knowledge and critique.<sup>5</sup> If critique is concerned with the limits to knowledge and reason, with how far it is possible to use your reason without danger, then there is what Foucault calls a “slippage” in Kant between Enlightenment and critique (1996: 387). If, according to Enlightenment, government entails the application of reason and knowledge to achieve the perfect telos of society as a totality, then critique becomes both a tool of Enlightenment and a counter to it.

The first point I want to make is that for Foucault’s 1978 lecture “What is critique?” critique is both integral and necessary to Enlightenment and also the ethos that ensures we must approach historical forms of reason and the types of governmentalisation for which they are responsible with a “demeanour of a distrust” or at least a “more and more suspicious interrogation” (Foucault 1996: 388).

Let me introduce a second point from Foucault and then I will cease to trouble you with my no doubt partial and somewhat tendentious exegesis. This point comes from his course summaries (1989). There he argues that

liberalism should be approached neither as a coherent set of ideas nor as a definite institutional structure. Liberalism, he suggests, has been mistakenly characterised as a philosophy based on the “rule of law” and the protection of individual rights and freedom against the unnecessary encroachments of the state. Instead, through its critical and problematising character, liberalism can be approached as a way of posing questions. Now, and this should be emphasised, Foucault calls liberalism a polymorphous and permanent instrument of critique (Foucault 1989: 113). Liberalism is not identical with critique but, to repeat, an instrument of critique. It is an instrument that can be turned against previous forms of government from which it is distinguished, actual forms it is used to reform, rationalise and exhaustively review, and potential forms it is employed to oppose and whose abuses it is made to limit. According to this type of analysis, the key targets of liberalism can change: at the end of the eighteenth-century, it was notions of “reason of state” and “police”; at the end of the nineteenth-century, it was earlier forms of liberalism; after the Second World War in Europe, it was forms of national and state socialist totalitarianism; at the end of the twentieth-century, it includes not only the ideal of a welfare state but also the very concept of the nation.

Neo-liberalism displaces the social policies of the welfare state. Another way of saying this is firstly to characterise liberalism as an instrument of critique, and, as such, an attitude which is both a movement to Enlightenment and a counter to its pretensions; and secondly to place liberalism in a new historical situation. And when we come to analyse neo-liberalism, we need to understand it as an instrument of critique in relation to what it identifies as the problems of government, problems in how we have been governed and how we have come to govern ourselves and others.

These brief points allow us to begin to characterise neo-liberalism as counter-Enlightenment cultural critique. We can see that critique is both a preliminary to Enlightenment and a means of establishing its limits and recognising its dangers. And we can see that liberalism is an instrument of critique. However, a final point can be made concerning the type of critique liberalism initiates. As we have seen, liberalism can be understood as a critical ethos in relation to government as opposed to a form of the State or to a juridical and political philosophy. It is an ethos firstly of review under which it is always necessary to suspect that one is governing “too much” (“*on gouverne toujours trop*”) (Foucault 1989: 111). It insists on the need for continual review of the means of government, and on the importance of asking whether such means are not contrary to the ends of governing. Governing too much

in this sense might be worse than not governing at all because it would interfere with the processes that are necessary to government and hence endanger their security. Note when liberalism is characterised as the concern not to govern too much, it recalls, virtually word for word, Foucault's preliminary definition of critique as the "art of not being governed so much" (1996: 384). Thus, for Foucault, liberalism is so closely defined by critique that it is almost indistinguishable from it.

### III

I have been using Foucault's lectures to locate neo-liberalism as an episode within the history of liberalism as a form of critique of excessive government. Two points follow from this. Firstly, we should understand forms of neo-liberalism in relation to what they criticise and hope to displace. Thus when Foucault comes to discuss such schools of thought as the Chicago School of Economics and the German post-war *Ordoliberalen*, he characterises them by what it is they criticise.<sup>6</sup> The Ordoliberals, he suggests, did not accept that the German catastrophe was the consequence of the failure of the capitalist economy but of the failure to implement a capitalist market regime (Foucault 1989: 118). The Ordoliberals accuse earlier types of social government, particularly Soviet socialism, National Socialism, and Keynesian techniques of intervention, with remaining systematically ignorant of the market mechanisms that ensure stable price formation. It is these types of social government the Ordoliberals sought to displace. The Chicago School, by contrast, had a different range of targets. Here the examples of "too much" government were the New Deal, war planning, and post-war macro-economic and social programmes associated with Democratic administrations (Foucault 1989:118-9). The danger of these forms of government, in this account, was that they were seen to have an ineluctable logic: economic interventionism was thought to lead to excessive public sector growth, over-administration, bureaucracy and rigidity, which in turn created new economic distortions leading to a new cycle of interventions.

There is, however, a second insight provided by the discussion so far, one which concerns the affinities of neo-liberalism with contemporary forms of critique. If neo-liberalism is a species of critique, then it should be set against the background of the recent history of critique itself, provided we construe critique so as to include the critical work of social and cultural movements as well as that of intellectuals. In doing so, we can begin to grasp that the forms

governments might take *per se* are not the only possible targets of critique. Critique extends to “government” in a broader and perhaps anachronistic sense that can encompass the government of selves, children, and souls as much as the government of states, populations, and economies.<sup>7</sup> What has been subject to critique in the recent history of our societies is not simply too much government but the effect of too much government on the professions, on the question of knowledge and its regulation, and, above all, on the cultural values of populations within liberal democracies. Critique is often initiated by the opponents as well as the proponents of what has been seen as a “counter-culture”, and it is critique, in keeping with the Kantian understanding, which is undertaken in the name of autonomy, or at least in regard to specific forms of freedom.

This history of recent forms of critique could start with a number of modes of thought which originated in the 1960s and which might seem, at first glance, completely distinct from neo-liberal rhetoric. Firstly, there were a number of critiques of the welfare state broadly located on the Left and associated with the movements of emancipation. The welfare state was understood as a paternalist mechanism of social control, relying on a uniform provision that was bureaucratic, hierarchical, sometimes coercive and oppressive, and often unresponsive to the needs and differences of individuals and communities. One could track this critique through a complex theoretical and practical lineage in the 1970s, no doubt played out quite differently in specific countries. Programmes of community action and community development deployed notions and practices of “empowerment” and “participation” against these ills of the State (Cruikshank 1994). At the same time, Marxist and feminist theories of the welfare state never tired of showing that it functioned to reproduce not only capitalist social relations but patriarchal divisions of labour and forms of dependency of women.

These critiques of the welfare state were allied with the critique of knowledge and professional expertise. At its broadest, scientific knowledge and even “Western Reason” stood accused of an intimate relation with the technological and industrial domination of all facets of existence, with ecological disaster and with the weaponry of mass annihilation. More specifically, the professions were said to be unaccountable systems of exclusion, de-legitimizing local, folk, and alternative forms of knowledge, and de-skilling the population of its existing capacities. Feminism, in particular, argued for a new way of approaching issues of women’s health against a male-dominated medical profession. Doctors were shown to objectify and discipline women’s bodies in a patriarchal manner, to exclude women as healers, and to achieve

and maintain dominance over female occupations such as nursing. What is at stake here is not merely professional accountability but a radical appropriation of control over one's own body and a reassertion of autonomy within the doctor-patient relation – or, more generally, the professional-client relation. The importance of feminist critiques of professional knowledge can be judged by the way in which feminism finds itself engaged in an epistemological project which it comes to regard as absolutely fundamental. Moreover, in search of this new “paradigm”, feminism begins to enter into a close alignment with all of those critiques of “modern” rationality that fall under the rubric of post-modernism.

The feminist critique of the medical profession is perhaps an exemplar of multiple critiques of the formation of needs within the welfare state. The critique of professional domination thus makes way for a “politics of need formation”. “A politics of need formation” means that various clientele of the welfare state reveal that the construction of need is “irreducibly multiple”, appropriate the language of self-determination, and claim “user's rights” (Yeatman 1994: 106-110). One consequence of this is that a “politics of voice and representation” seeks to displace an apparently paternalistic welfare state.

The critiques of both state and of professional domination can be traced to a more fundamental critique. Both critiques are enabled by a cultural renewal of notions of freedom and emancipation and the elaboration of a set of techniques and practices on the basis of this renewal. This trajectory of freedom and emancipation might begin with “counter-cultural movements” of the 1960s, the mass experimentation in drugs among the young, the importation of “Eastern” religions, cults, healing practices, yoga, mediation, martial arts, and so on. It might also encompass another line moving from the “sexual revolution”, through “sexual politics”, to the questioning of sexuality and sexual identity. We might think of all this as a kind of rediscovery, within certain societies that like to consider themselves Western, of a culture of the self and its actualisation. These movements, whether cultural or political, also start to rethink the ways in which it is possible to act as a part of a collective and on oneself. We find here a whole series of techniques for self-actualisation which will prove polyvalent in their application: techniques of consciousness raising, empowerment, self-esteem, alternative pedagogy, rhetorics of voice and representation, and so on.

Critical intellectuals also have a place in the recent history of critique, whether as proponents of “modernist” social theory or of “post-modern” cultural analysis. On the one hand, we have what might be called the “meta-

histories of promise” found both on the Left and within the liberal tradition. They assure us that, despite present detours, the movement of history confirms the ideals of the Enlightenment. Jürgen Habermas is perhaps today the most prominent of those thinkers who attempt to purify political action of all its historical accretions so that the Enlightenment can be fulfilled as it gives itself guarantees against the repetition of the catastrophes of the present century. Modernity, communication and finally law and democracy are all held to contain within them normative grounds that await fulfillment and can be used to judge between the legitimate and illegitimate uses of power.<sup>8</sup> This style of critique is concerned with the foundations for the justification of political action. The same foundations can act as a normative prophylactic against the potentially catastrophic consequences of political action.

Another form of critique is written in an anti-Enlightenment mode and regards the present as a moment of barely endurable despair, emptiness, shallowness, fragmentation, and nihilism. According to this stream of thought the effects of late capitalism have displaced both identity and community with the consumer gratifications of “signs, speed, and spectacles”, to borrow a phrase from Foucault (Gordon 1986: 81). This critique encompasses both the later Marcuse with his thesis of one-dimensionality and a whole current of French thought stemming from the situationism of the 1960s. The diagnosis of the present as a moment of rupture, fragmentation, and cultural upheaval is but one version of this. Jean Baudrillard’s (1983) argument that we have witnessed the “end of the social” or the end of a kind of representational politics in a public political sphere is perhaps the most elegant expression of this current of thought. Another, perhaps less fashionable, example is the kind of conservative cultural critique best represented by Daniel Bell (1979). Bell invokes Werner Sombart’s thesis of the acquisitiveness of capitalism with its tendency to “mass society”, consumerism, hedonism, and with the implosion of the rational individual of the work ethic and its deferred gratifications. Since the late 1960s we have never been short of prophets of a new doom nor of those heralding a new dawn.

There are certainly differences and conflicts between these styles of critique which should not be ignored. However, for present purposes, the points of intersection between the recent history of critique and the neo-liberal displacement of social polices are of interest. Neo-liberalism also operates with a critique of Reason, of professional knowledge and its modes of self-regulation. Neo-liberalism draws upon the intuition that modern institutions have had devastating cultural consequences, leading to a suppression or dissipation of both individual and community energy and potential. Above all,

it shares with virtually all of these other forms of critique a concern for autonomy, this time in the guise of the self-actualising subject. It is often noted that this “culture of self-fulfilment” is the target of conservative cultural criticism in the hands of thinkers such as Daniel Bell and Christopher Lasch. What is less often noted is how neo-liberal critiques of excessive government draw on this culture of autonomy and its critiques of the welfare state. Where the political and cultural movements seek a utopian vision of the emancipated self, the neo-liberal critiques of the welfare state re-deploy the “self-actualising subject” as a technical instrument in the achievement of governmental purposes and objectives. And these governmental objectives are, in their own way, no less utopian. Contemporary liberal rule rediscovers freedom as a technical modality as opposed to an attribute or right of the individual. And so neo-liberalism is able to translate (at least some of, and only roughly) the concerns of social and cultural movements into its own vocabulary and its own set of practical formulae for the review, rationalisation, and renewal of governmental practice. Hence the notions of freedom and of the free conduct of individuals once again become the principle by which government is to be rationalised and reformed.

It is by drawing on the self-actualising subject that neo-liberalism dispenses with a notion of “society” – or, at the least, relegates society to a kind of noumenal, ultimately unknowable sphere. The ideal of a “welfare state” was sought according to a certain schema in which the State would act through a unified “social domain” (the social services) upon “society”. Society was variously construed as: the needs of the members of a population living within a territorially defined jurisdiction of a national state; the rights and threats of individuals as socially responsible citizens or social dangers; or as the locus of the bonds of solidarity. Now, by contrast, neo-liberalism attempts to make government multiple, diffuse, facilitative, flexible, pro-active and entrepreneurial. In its critique of the welfare state, we would be called upon to act on ourselves and others as self-actualising individuals. And self-actualising individuals are thought to move within and between loose “aggregations” (Maffesoli 1991) with their own borders and boundaries, as persons existing in relations of mutual adjustment and identification, as professionals and workers, as service providers, users and customers, and as members of households, neighbourhoods, communities and regions.

This ethos which forms a critique of the welfare state is both a condition and a consequence of the displacement of our regimes of social government. I have already argued that we cannot reduce the assemblage of current governmental practices to such an ethos. To make clear what an account of the line-

aments of “advanced liberal” rule would entail, I shall conclude this section with a brief precis of its central features.<sup>9</sup> In contemporary forms of liberal rule, we witness the utilisation of two distinct, yet interconnected kinds of technologies of government. The first might be called “technologies of agency”. These include the polymorphous use of the contract, techniques of self-esteem, empowerment, consultation, and instruments of voice and representation. These instruments seek to enhance and improve our capacities for participation, agreement, and action. In short technologies of agency put into play our status and attributes as political and social agents. The second can be called “technologies of performance” and would include the new calculative technologies of the audit and accounting, the devolution of budgets, the setting of performance indicators, benchmarking, the establishment of markets, and so on. These are concerned to monitor the activities and capacities which have been put into play so that they might be made calculable and comparable, and so that they might be optimised. Technologies of agency allow flows of information from the “bottom”, and the formation of more or less durable identities, agencies, and wills, whilst technologies of performance enable the indirect regulation and surveillance of these entities. These two technologies are a part of a strategy in which our moral and political conduct is put into play as an element within systems of governmental purposes.

Together these technologies seek a new linkage between the regulation of conduct and the technical requirements of the optimisation of performance. These technologies form components of the assemblage of current governmental practices together with the polysemous rationality of risk (O’Malley 1996). Risk is plural. It is assessed quantitatively in insurance (Ewald 1991) and epidemiology (Castel 1991; Weir 1996). It is assessed qualitatively in what might be called case-management practices (Dean 1995). Certain types of risk, such as clinical risk, might combine quantitative instruments such as risk-screening with qualitative ones such as diagnostics and therapeutics (Weir 1996). Risk also takes forms that are often thought to be incalculable, such as in the case of the mega-hazards of Ulrich Beck’s “risk society” (1992) found in the nuclear, bio-technological and chemical industries. What is important to realise about risk is, however, that it can never be easily divided into a limited and therefore calculable variety that can be readily insured against and an unlimited, and therefore incalculable, type against which we are uninsured and without security (Dean, forthcoming). Rather risk is a set of heterogeneous practices and rationalities of calculation that try to render what is felt to be incalculable calculable, through a wide range of quantitative and qualitative instruments. Even the chemical industry in

the USA, having foresaken the path of quantitative risk assessment, has taken up comprehensive risk management strategies that recognise “worst case scenarios” and thus include attention to training, managerial and organisation systems, emergency procedures such as evacuation plans, risk education and other contingency measures (Pearce and Tombs 1996).

One might also want to talk about a division between “active citizens” and “targeted populations” in contemporary liberal rule. Active citizens are capable of managing their own risk, of exercising their own agency – an agency which is discretely monitored at a distance by the technologies of performance. Targeted populations are comprised of “disadvantaged” groups, the “at risk”, the “high risk”, and now, “special groups”, and require intervention in the management of their risks. This management takes the form of eliciting the self-managing capacities of the targeted populations with the help of professionals who become tutors and coaches in risk management. The aim of this intervention, stated very roughly, is to transform targeted populations into active citizens.

This assemblage of rationalities, technologies, and agents is a condition of and conditioned by a form of pluralism that acts upon our loose forms of identification and aggregation to construct certain types of durable entities (for example, as enterprising persons, communities, households, regions, etc.). And these entities discover themselves as social and political actors in partnership with markets in services and expertise. One might argue, in brief, that a performance government has come to displace a welfare state. This analysis of the new regime of liberal government can help us grasp how the displacement in social policies is taking place. However, it cannot finally grant intelligibility to what might be called the “motivation” – provided that term is construed non-subjectively – for this displacement. It is to address this problem of the contemporary incentive for governing that we turn to neo-liberal conceptions of freedom, particularly that of Hayek.

## IV

I have been characterising neo-liberalism as counter-Enlightenment critique to the extent that it is a version of liberalism and as a cultural critique in that it exhibits certain affinities with other recent forms of critique. The linchpin of both the classical, Kantian notion of critique and the recent varieties of critique is the notion of autonomy. In both, autonomy is thought to be exercised and served by criticism. It is by investigating neo-liberal conceptions

of autonomy – or more specifically, freedom – that it is possible to show how this link between critique and culture works, and to open up a way of thinking about the ambivalence of neo-liberalism raised earlier. It will also allow us to consider the motivation for reform underlying the neo-liberal displacement of social policies.

Let us consider the various conceptions of freedom found in neo-liberalism. You will note I have just used the plural. It is usual to counterpose neo-liberalism with early or classical liberalism. This is not enough for present purposes. The conception of freedom that makes intelligible the ethos of contemporary liberal rule can only be explicated by drawing on different kinds of neo-liberalism. In the following, I refer to Hayek's later work and that of the post-war German neo-liberals, the *Ordoliberalen*, as analysed in Foucault's lectures.

Graham Burchell has observed that (1996: 24) freedom in neo-liberalism is no longer the freedom of the "system of natural liberty" of Adam Smith and the Scottish Enlightenment. It is Hayek's freedom as "artefact". Yet Hayek's "freedom" is a specific kind of artefact:

*Man has not developed in freedom.* The member of the little band to which he had had to stick in order to survive was anything but free. *Freedom is an artefact of civilization* that released man from the trammels of the small group, the momentary moods of which even the leader had to obey. Freedom was made possible by the gradual evolution of *the discipline of civilization which is at the same time the discipline of freedom.* It protects him by impersonal abstract rules against arbitrary violence of others and enables each individual to try to build for himself a protected domain with which nobody else is allowed to interfere and within which he can use his own knowledge for his own purposes. We owe our freedom to restraints of freedom. (Hayek 1979: 163, original emphasis)

For neo-liberalism, freedom is no longer a natural attribute of *homo oeconomicus*, the rational subject of interest. It is an artefact. Yet Hayek's position is important because it alerts us to the different ways in which it can be an artefact. For the German postwar Ordoliberals such as Alexander Rüstow, freedom is something to be contrived by a "vital policy" that promotes the conditions of the free, entrepreneurial conduct of economically rational individuals (Gordon 1991: 40-1). Hayek, however, offers a critique of this kind of approach when he conceives of culture as an intermediate and key layer between nature and reason. Any account of the ethos of contemporary neo-liberalism, particularly in the English-speaking world, must heed the consequences of this kind of critique.

Freedom for Hayek is a product neither of nature nor of public policy and its institutions. Rather, it is a product of cultural evolution conceived as the development of civilisation and its discipline. What is important here is that Hayek can use this theme of cultural evolution to outflank the either/or logic implied in the opposition between the natural and the artificial, between the processes of biological selection and the rational designs of government (Hayek 1979: 155). He considers nature, culture and rational design as three separate processes each of which gives rise to “rules of conduct”. These rules of conduct are stratified: at base, the “instinctive” drives; above these “traditions” restraining the first; and finally, the “thin layer of deliberately adopted or modified rules” (Hayek 1979: 159-160). So drives, traditions, and consciously adopted rules operate within the respective spheres of nature, culture and reason.

In the course of cultural evolution, Hayek argues, rules of conduct are selected that help human groups adapt to their social environment, prosper and expand. The development of civilisation is thus dependent on the capacity to learn and to pass on these rules of conduct. Cultural evolution is a kind of ongoing learning process. These rules develop in the course of the transition to an “abstract and open” society in which relations among strangers are governed by abstract rules (forming the basis of law) and impersonal signals (such as those provided by prices) (Hayek 1979: 162). Such cultural rules of conduct are not learnt from rationally constructed institutions but from the “spontaneous social orders” of the market, language, morals and law. An important and in a sense counter-Enlightenment consequence follows. Reason does not lead to civilisation; it is its effect. Reason is the consequence of those learnt rules of conduct by which humans become intelligent and it is by submitting to their discipline that humans can become free (Hayek 1979: 163).

The specificity of Hayek’s conception of freedom is that it is both *negative*, in that it is freedom from coercion by the arbitrary will of others, and *anti-naturalist*, in that its conditions are not found in the natural state of humankind. Hayek is thus able to criticise what he calls the “constructivism” of the type Foucault finds in the Ordoliberal. Coming from a very different political stance, such constructivism might best be represented by a thinker such as Karl Polanyi (1957) who showed how the historical establishment of markets in labour, money and land requires active legal and governmental reform. Hayek himself provides a rather different genealogy of the “constructivist fallacy” in utilitarianism (1976: 17-24). Indeed it is in British utilitarianism, as Elie Halévy (1928) long ago showed, that the question of artificial harmonisation of interests by government is first posed.

Liberal and neo-liberal notions of freedom are tied to the question of the market. Here again Hayek's difference from both early liberalism and other neo-liberalisms is instructive. For early liberalism, the market is a quasi-natural reality whose laws must be respected by government. The State must make regulations that allow the natural and necessary regulations of the market to operate and the interests of the rational and free subject to be pursued. For the *Ordoliberalen*, by contrast, the central problem is how to contrive the conditions under which entrepreneurial and competitive conduct can be allowed to come into play and the market can hence operate. Yet again it is the differences between neo-liberalisms that are important. With the Ordoliberals the market appears not as a set of natural relations but as an "artificial game of competitive freedom" undertaken under the legal guarantees and limits established by an institutional and juridical officialdom (Gordon, 1991: 41). In this sense the Ordoliberals, like Polanyi's "institutionalist" thesis, view the functioning of the market and the construction of freedom as dependent on the active interventions of the liberal state and the organisation of a coherent public institutional and legal framework.

For Hayek, by contrast, the market is neither a natural sphere of the relations between exchanging individuals nor an artificial contrivance of appropriate policies. As I noted earlier, the market is a spontaneous social order governed by customary rules selected by a complex cultural learning process. He uses the German word, *Bildung*, to designate a social order that is not a consciously designed institution but established in the course of its own development. The political conditions of the market are ones of developing the appropriate constitutional framework according to the "rule of law". This means that government exercises coercion and restraint of individuals only in accordance with the rules learnt from the process of cultural evolution, or, as he puts it, "...the recognised rules of just conduct designed to define and protect the domain of all individuals" (Hayek 1979: 109). The rule of law means that government is limited to applying universal rules announced in advance and applicable to an unknown number of cases and in an unknown number of future instances. One consequence of this is that it is not possible to make laws which discriminate in favour of or against any particular class of individuals. In this way, it is possible to avoid parliaments and laws becoming the "playball of group interests" (Hayek 1979: 99). Another is that, according to Hayek, the rule of law creates the conditions by which the cultural rules of conduct contained within the spontaneous orders of the market – and indeed of morals, language, and law itself – can be reinforced and not abandoned or transgressed. Hayek thus agrees with the Ordoliberals on the need for definite political and

legal conditions of the market. However, for Hayek these are to be secured by a constitutional framework that limits governmental regulation by a conception of the rule of law that is derived from the rules of conduct arrived at in the process of cultural evolution.

Contemporary liberal forms of regulation are composed from a relatively stable assemblage of elements. However, neo-liberalism, as an ethos critical of government, is plural. Advanced liberal regulation forms the raw material for specific theoretical programmes that attempt to invest liberal regulation with a particular ethos and set of objectives and ideals. The *Ordoliberalen*, in this sense, provide a theoretical blueprint for undertaking activist polices to co-ordinate and facilitate the institutions and agencies necessary for the operation of the market and for the production of types of subjects required by it. The Ordoliberals thus articulate the elements of contemporary rule in a manner consistent with a necessary organising role for the national state in establishing the market as a game of competitive freedom. One could perhaps characterise the recent Labor incumbency in Australia (1983-96) as animated by a similar ethos. Here the national state acted a kind of “obligatory point of passage” through which targeted populations would be transformed into active citizens. Those with disabilities, the long-term unemployed, single parents, indigenous peoples, and all those requiring assistance, would gain access to those services and expertise that would allow them to pursue active citizenship and participation in both civil society and the market.

Conservative parties, at least in the English-speaking world, have followed an approach that could be characterised as both consistent with Hayek while deploying and multiplying the “governmental constructivism” of the *Ordoliberalen*. Here we witness a massive retraction of public provision in the name of fiscal prudence and increased national savings. The relation between this retraction and the *Bildung* of the market is twofold. On the one hand, macro-economic policies follow from the rules of sound financial conduct taught by the market. On the other, the operation of the market is restored to its role of educator in sound rules of conduct. But this species of neo-liberalism adds a twist not really contained within the Hayekian story. It is less of a corollary to Hayek than a kind of *folding* of the objectives of neo-liberalism upon liberal rule itself. It is at this point that governmental constructivism comes into play. If the market teaches the manner in which we should guide our own conduct, then the way in which we gain access to guidance regarding our conduct will be through the construction of markets. Let me give you an example of how the construction of markets can be approached as an educative exercise.

I have recently analysed changing forms of support of the unemployed in Australia (Dean 1995, 1998a). This could be read as a kind of case-study of the different ethical investments of this terrain of advanced liberal regulation. Under the Labor incumbency of 1983-96, the national state introduced case-management approaches to unemployment, and co-ordinated access to job-search assistance, employment exchange services, training, job-creation schemes, and even subsidised jobs. The unemployed person entered into a contract with a national state that promised access to benefits and services, including the guarantee of a job for the long-term unemployed, in return for compliance with the demand that the unemployed practice their “freedom” in a certain way, that is, as active job seekers. The national state in effect said: “if you make yourself into an active job seeker, we will support you and provide access to those services and expertise that will make you job-ready”. To put this another way, the State is constituted by a promise: “we will assist you to practise your freedom, as long as you practise it our way”.

In August 1996, the new conservative Australian national Government moved quickly on the question of unemployment. This Government rescinded the notion of a job-guarantee, and “cashes out” most publicly funded job creation and job-subsidy schemes. In doing so, the conservative Government hoped to establish a fully competitive market in what it calls “employment placement enterprises” (Dean 1998a). Like the policies of the Labor Government, the new policies and plans accepted the need for the unemployed to work on themselves, with the assistance of self-help facilities, case-managers, job-search training, job clubs, and training programmes, in order to make themselves ready and available to take up opportunities in the labour-market. Indeed the language of the “job seeker” and “active” labour market programmes was retained. Both sets of policies share market-oriented objectives. However, under the conservatives, the national state shifted from organising and facilitating access to services and expertise to establishing and co-ordinating markets in such services and expertise. Now the Government’s own agencies were reconstituted as competitors in such a market. The contract between the State and the job seeker is replaced by a myriad of contracts between the job seeker and the competing “employment placement enterprises”. The ethos here is not so much “you can practise your freedom as long you choose to do it our way”, as it was under Labor. Now the ethos is better characterised as “if you require guidance and training in the practice of freedom you must first exercise your freedom as a customer of employment services to gain access to such guidance and training”. We thus have a kind of circular paradox in which it is necessary to exercise free-

dom in order to gain the support and guidance that will allow you to exercise freedom.<sup>10</sup>

The ethos of this form of neo-liberalism is one of a kind of double-play or reduplication, or a folding back of its objectives upon itself. The general objectives of government are consistent with Hayek but its particular tactics are, if you forgive the expression, a kind of deconstructed governmental constructivism. The market is now reconstituted as a global entity seriously compromising the capacities of national governments. As such, it directs the conduct of government in terms of macro-economic policy, fiscal and monetary policies, etc., so that we might learn to govern our conduct as individuals, and as public and private authorities and agencies. This is clearly consistent with Hayek. Yet, at the same time this variant of neo-liberalism seeks to contrive and actively construct markets where they do not exist. Thus it is no longer a question of establishing a social framework for the operation of the competitive market (as, in their different ways, both the *Ordoliberalen* and Australian Labor were). Nor is it a matter of utilising businesses and private and community agencies in the service of social and political objectives. Instead, it involves the re-configuration of the framework of social government as a set of markets in services, provision, and expertise. One way of activating the elements of contemporary liberal rule – as in the experience under Labor in Australia – pays homage to the values, rationality, and rules of conduct of the market but keeps them at arm's length as something exterior to its own exercise. Another way, more in keeping with the dominant strand of neo-liberalism in the English-speaking world, breaches the line between State and Society in order to allow the value and rules of markets to reform all spheres.

This is why the headline rhetorics of the two forms of neo-liberalism are so different. Left-of-centre parties appear more likely to represent their objectives in terms of “active citizenship” and the “active society”, notions which encompass but go beyond participation in the market to include participation in other social spheres, including leisure, domestic work, family caring, and politics itself. They are likely to keep some distance from the more radical dimensions of the promotion of what in Britain in the 1980s became known as the “enterprise culture” (Heelas and Morris 1992). The aims of cultural reform of this latter kind are to revive and extend the norms and values associated with the market including those of “responsibility, initiative, competitiveness and risk-taking, and industrious effort”, to use the list of one of its major political architects (Lord Young of Graffham, quoted in Heelas and Morris 1992: 33).

Yet it is precisely this notion of a reform that can no longer be political (given the retraction of the mechanisms of formal political authority) and social (and its associations with the welfare state) that most clearly articulates what is novel about neo-liberalism in the greater part of the English-speaking world in recent decades. The central mechanism that follows a neo-liberal critique of the welfare state is cultural reform. This is first evidenced in the lineage of targets of conservative cultural critique since the 1970s: the critique of modernism and acquisitive consumerism; the attack on the “counterculture”; the analysis of the dependency culture and its underclass fostered by the welfare state particularly in the USA; and the clarion call for a revival of an enterprise culture in Britain. Neo-liberal cultural critique would have little significance if cultural reform was not conceived as central to implanting the norms and values of the market and the forms of conduct to be derived from it in all spheres, including the institutions and instruments of government themselves.

It is at this point we can begin to see why Hayek’s arguments represent a powerful version of neo-liberalism as a way of thinking about government. Mrs Thatcher’s statement that there is “no such thing as society” could be viewed as a corollary of Hayek’s conception of freedom as arising from the course of cultural evolution which has selected the values and rules of the market. Hayek succeeds in providing an anti-naturalistic conception of freedom that by-passes processes of *social* reform and which restricts *political* reform to imposing limits on the action of government. Yet, as we have seen, reform is cultural not simply because this neo-liberalism has run out of alternatives. It is cultural because what is at issue are the values and rules of conduct that have been developed in the course of the evolution of spontaneous social orders. This is why the ethos of neo-liberalism is at once conservative and radical. It is conservative in its revival and a restoration of the values and rules of conduct associated with these orders, particularly those of the market. And it is radical because, by the process of reduplication and folding back, it multiplies and ramifies these values and rules into ever new spheres including its own instruments and agencies.

Neo-liberalism thus calls for radical cultural renewal. This, at least in one, highly influential version, could be said to constitute its ethos. It rejects the possibility of a rational knowledge of society and its deployment in the direction of public policy. If Thatcher rhetorically dismisses the political salience of society, Hayek (1979: 173) can argue that “there seems to me still to exist no more justification for a theoretical discipline of sociology than there would be for a theoretical discipline of naturology...” We are at the nadir of

a trajectory of social government that might be said to reach its zenith with the relation between *solidarisme* as a doctrine of State and Emile Durkheim's notion of society (Donzelot 1991). Durkheim's conception (1957: 51) of the State as the "organ of social thought" in which "its principal function is to think" now appears as the polar opposite of a neo-liberal position that rejects the possibility of both a theoretical knowledge of society and any centrally directing intelligence.

Hayek's philosophy makes intelligible the goals of contemporary neo-liberalism as no less than the deployment of the culturally acquired rules of conduct to safeguard our civilisation and the freedom it secures. Contemporary liberal government, however, makes this objective operable and practicable by seeking to extend these values and rules into ever new spheres, including the instruments and agencies of government itself. When public authority must act, it must be sure that it does so in conformity with these rules of conduct. For example, according to one influential text in the USA, "reinventing government" is about making it "entrepreneurial" (Osborne and Gaebler 1992). In Australian unemployment policies, the public employment service is replaced by the public employment placement enterprise, itself in competition with private and community employment placement enterprises. But because change can no longer be a rationally directed process of social reform, it must be conducted according to cultural values, rules and norms. So far these rules and values have best been condensed into the cultural form of "enterprise".

## V

I have argued that neo-liberalism can be understood as an ethos of counter-Enlightenment cultural critique. As a form of critique, it can be understood in relation to both liberalism as a critique of too much government and the recent critiques of the welfare state, of professions, knowledge, and of culture, conducted in the name of autonomy of various kinds. It is counter-Enlightenment in the sense that it mobilises its critique to place limits to reason, in order to abandon the quest for a knowledge of society and its corollary, the rational planning of society. In this sense, it refuses the "black-mail of the Enlightenment" from a perspective which sets the strictest limitations on the use of reason by placing that capacity within a narrative of the processes of cultural evolution.

In displacing social policies, however, neo-liberalism does not merely succumb to an economic rationalism concerned with economy and efficiency as is often thought. It multiplies and ramifies the diagram of the market and the rules of conduct associated with it into new spheres. It seeks to construct systems of market allocation where they previously had not existed. It does not merely seek to severely limit the activities of government. It provides a justification and standing reason for governmental interventions.

Nor, I think, can neo-liberalism be reduced to the contemporary regimes of governmental practices which are the conditions of its realisation. I have suggested that contemporary liberal rule can be approached as a complex assemblage of technologies of agency and performance with rationalities of risk that works with a division between active citizens and targeted populations in a new form of political pluralism. Yet, this assemblage can be invested with different ethoi and made to work in particular ways. In Australia during the experience of the Labor incumbency of 1983-96, for example, the national State established and co-ordinated training and other programs for the unemployed even if they were to be provided by a diverse and plural set of agencies in public, private for profit, and community sectors. It even envisaged the establishment of a market in the case-management of the unemployed but placed it under the watchful gaze of an employment services regulatory authority. Moreover, it sought to activate the self-actualising potential of the unemployed but within a compact based on reciprocal obligation between the unemployed person and the State. While government agencies were to be made more efficient, the market was still constituted as a domain exterior to public provision.

The Labor incumbency in Australia was advanced liberal rule without the type of neo-liberal ethos that we have analysed. By contrast, when this neo-liberal ethos invests advanced liberal rule the divide between State and Society is breached. According to this ethos the market provides us with diagrams by which we can reform the conduct of individuals, of organisations, and of public institutions themselves. Government is about the establishment of markets and reconstituting itself as a player in such markets. Rather than a compact between national State and active citizen, enterprising persons enter into myriad of contracts with enterprises providing services and expertise.

Throughout this paper I have been using the term “cultural reform” to describe this ethos of neo-liberalism. This is perhaps too gentle a way of describing this ethos. What the neo-liberal displacement in social policies seeks to accomplish is a cultural renewal in the way in which we live, in our

relations to ourselves, others, our work and our institutions. This cultural renewal is thought to be necessary by this neo-liberalism, I would venture, in order to save “Western civilisation” from the effects of its own Enlightenment and governmental institutions, effects which include not only the imperilling of freedom but more importantly the future survival of such a civilisation.

## VI

Are there any lines of flight to be had from this analysis? Does it lead us, in other words, to consider ways of responding to the displacement of social policies? There are a number of minor lines of flight that are marked out by the structure of our argument. The first would be that a reconsideration of the changing notion of the economy and its putative globalisation would force a re-examination of one set of imperatives for a neo-liberal ethos of cultural critique and renewal. A second minor line of flight exists in the relations between liberalism and critique. How, we might ask, is it possible to criticise government away from the shadow of the norm of “too much” or even “too little” government? How is it possible to criticise government without regarding government as opposed to freedom either in the liberal version in which freedom sets limits to government or in the Marxian or critical theory versions in which the freedom of the subject is opposed to the instrumental domination of the State? This line may mutate into something larger. Yet a third minor line might seek to recover the plurality of the recent forms of critique of professional knowledge, expertise, bureaucracy and the paternalism of the welfare state, particularly from the perspective of those who are positioned as clients or users of services and knowledge.

The questions we have just raised about power, government, domination and freedom seem to suggest a major line of contestation and mutation. Here, I think we can begin with the plurality of the ethical investments that are immanent to advanced liberal forms of rule. In one version, power relations operate neither through pure consent nor pure coercion but under the careful cultivation of the conditions under which “games of freedom” are to be played. This governmental strategy seeks to cultivate the capacities of citizens so that they might better be able to exercise freedom such as, for example, the freedom to enter the labour market and secure a job. This, it seems to me, is quite a different matter from a set of power relations that conceive themselves as operating either through the choice and consent of the governed or by means

of coercion. Under this type of advanced liberal rule, choice and coercion are bifurcated so that while some citizens are obliged to exercise their culturally produced freedom *now* in a myriad of markets of expertise and services, others are simply subject to coercion so they might one day learn to exercise that freedom. There are I think real political alternatives here.

A final line of flight requires us “to think otherwise” about government so that we might “outflank” neo-liberal problematisations, such as the one with which we began this paper, from the outside as it were. Where does a focus on the “reflexive” aspect that is manifested in the “folding” of the objectives of neo-liberalism upon advanced liberal rule lead? I have elsewhere argued that the folding or reduplication that is witnessed in this ethos of neo-liberalism is one way of playing out a fundamental transformation in which the government of processes (of society, economy and population) has entered into a line of modification that has brought about a government of government or what we might term “reflexive government” (Dean 1998b). The liberal problematisation of police and reason of state had as its condition what Foucault called the “governmentalisation of the state” (1991). The “neo-liberal” problematisation of the national and welfare state has, I would suggest, as its condition a new phenomenon of the “governmentalisation of government”. Just as the governmentalisation of the state marked the appearance of a different way of governing social and economic process, so the governmentalisation of government must lead to different ways of governing the structures, practices and processes of government themselves. The reduplications of “neo-liberalism” announce an entire field of governmental invention that it cannot foresee in much the same way as liberal critique did some two centuries ago.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Senator Amanda Vanstone, Minister for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, *The Australian*, 26.9.96. I should like to thank the participants of the symposium for their comments on presentation and my Finnish hosts and the various bodies that made my presence possible at so valuable a forum.
- <sup>2</sup> To clarify, by ethos I mean the particular character of a way of thinking and acting, and the manner of criticising, reviewing, and rationalising how things are done. I mean the style of reformation of current practices as much as the ends which are sought. I mean the purposes that are aimed at by such a manner of thinking and acting, as well as the relation to self and others which is established through these purposes.

- <sup>3</sup> See the various papers in Burchell *et al* (1991), Barry *et al* (1996) and in Dean and Hindess (1998).
- <sup>4</sup> In recent years, terms such as neo-liberalism, economic rationalism, economic liberalism, and advanced liberalism have been used to define the instruments of the displacement of social policies. In this chapter, I shall use the term “neo-liberalism” to refer to a particular style of questioning, addressing, and reviewing government and “advanced liberalism” to refer to the assemblages of techniques and rationalities of government that are characteristic of contemporary liberal democracies.
- <sup>5</sup> Compare this to the following: “... I have been seeking to stress that the thread that may connect us with the Enlightenment is not faithfulness to doctrinal elements, but rather the permanent reactivation of an attitude - that is, of a philosophical ethos that could be described as a permanent critique of our historical era” (Foucault 1986: 42).
- <sup>6</sup> Keith Tribe (1995: 207n) has suggested that the *Ordoliberalen* were not “neo-liberals” in the sense that “...they envisage a wide-ranging programme of social reform, whereas the attention of neo-liberals is focused on competition policy”. While this may be so from the viewpoint of economic *theory*, the Ordoliberals can be regarded as neo-liberals, on Tribe’s and Foucault’s accounts, from the perspective of a form of economic *governance* that sought to reconstruct the operation of a market economy and the regime of the price mechanism, even if this did entail extensive social provision.
- <sup>7</sup> On the recovery of a notion of “government” as a multiple, pervasive and heterogeneous activity, see Foucault’s famous lecture on “governmentality” (1991).
- <sup>8</sup> On the normativity contained within law and democracy and its implications for normative political philosophy see his *Between Facts and Norms* (Habermas 1996)
- <sup>9</sup> For a fuller explication of this view of advanced liberal government see Dean (1997).
- <sup>10</sup> There are still those who are not capable of exercising such a form of freedom because of their youth, lack of motivation or lack of attachment to the work ethic. From the perspective of conservative Government policies, it is legitimate for this population, or at least a segment of it, to be forced to work. In March 1997, the Liberal-National Government introduced the self-explanatory *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Work for the Dole) Bill 1997* into parliament. It was later passed.

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Tuomo Melin

## RECONSTRUCTING SOCIAL PROBLEMS BY RESTRUCTURING SERVICE PROVISION

### Background

In this article it is argued that when the provision of social services shifts from the public sector towards contractual arrangements, the change affects the way social problems are defined. It determines which client groups' needs are prioritized and whose financial responsibility (client charges) is increased or whose financial support is taken away. In contractual arrangements the essential issues are the size of the budget of the municipality responsible for providing the services (budget constraint) and the ability to manage these arrangements. Because of this, the confrontation with social problems or client groups can come to a head. When the provision of social services changes, the view of social problems, their causes and those responsible will change too (See also Hänninen et al. 1995).

From the economic point of view, society tries to solve social problems through social income transfers and by financing social services. In this paper the definition of social problems is connected with the provision of social services. Social services are seen as an answer to such social problems (needs) that can be solved or relieved by producing services. Such an approach to social problems is based on the constructionist research tradition. Social problems are seen as being in constant motion and therefore dependent on interpretation (Jokinen, Juhila and Pösö 1995). If this is the case, one

must ask: What are the factors that affect the definition of social problems, and how do these factors change the definitions?

Hänninen et al. (1995) examine the discursive displacement of social problems in Finland and ask if such problems become individualized. Their aim is not to look for a direct answer to the change in the mode of governance. Instead, they ask what sort of threats and opportunities this change provides for individuals and groups that struggle with social grievances. Several social politicians (e.g. Taylor-Gooby 1994) have recognized a policy shift towards neoliberalism or postliberalism. The most visible feature of the change is a shift in the provision of social services from the public provider towards contractual arrangements. This new mode of provision emphasizes decentralisation, deregulation and the ability of the market mechanism to solve problems (Melin 1994), which are related to effectiveness, equality and freedom of choice.

The first section of this article deals with the provision of social services and the classification of social problems. The second section has been divided into two parts. The first part examines the public service sector in situations in which resources increase, while the second focuses on situations in which they diminish. In the third section the definition of social problems is examined from the viewpoint of contractual arrangements.

## Provision of social services

“Provision of social services” refers to the prevailing mode of arranging the social services by the public sector. In Finland the responsibility for providing social services has been delegated to municipalities. The municipal social services can be divided into provision responsibility and other social services. Provision responsibility refers to those tasks of the municipalities that are defined in the legislation. In addition to these social services, municipalities also voluntarily provide or finance other social services. The means of providing social services (modes of provision) can be classified into three groups:

- 1) public service provision;
- 2) contractual arrangements
  - a) quasi-markets
  - b) services arranged by financial support and grants (from nonprofit organisations);
- 3) services arranged purely on a market basis.

*Public service provision* refers to the production of services which is directly or indirectly under the control of the public sector. The providers of services are the federations of municipalities. Nowadays the provision of services in these federations can be considered similar to governing services through contracts. The purchasing and provision of social services have not been separated, but the workers are employed by the municipality.

*Quasi-markets* refers to a situation in which the provision of social services is not supplied by the purchaser. In this model it is typical that the municipality specifies neither the extent of the services provided nor the beneficiaries. These decisions are made by the providers.

*Market solution* refers to the situation in which social services are entirely financed by the individual or his or her family.

As mentioned above, these alternatives do not exclude each other in municipalities. However, one of them is often dominant. I examine here the definition of social problems through contractual arrangements and public service provision. In Finland, the public sector has a dominant position, although municipalities also buy social services from the private sector or nonprofit organisations. In the 1990s contractual arrangements have become increasingly common in Finland too (Melin 1995).

## Classification of social problems

The classification of social problems is based on the provision responsibility delegated to municipalities. Social problems can be thus divided into three groups:

- 1) social problems that have been officially recognized,
- 2) recognized but unofficial social problems,
- 3) not recognized or hidden social problems.

Social problems that belong to the first group are officially recognized and taken into consideration in public service provision. Under the previous legislation concerning state subsidies, care related to these social problems was paid for through state subsidies – the so-called “ear-marked money”. Examples of such problems were the care for the elderly, abuse of intoxicants, and disability. Social services in this group are considered to belong to the “official service system”. The provision of social services has been arranged either through public services or contractual arrangements.

The second group includes social problems which do not belong to the sphere of the legislation on state subsidies. Municipalities finance solutions to these problems by giving financial support to different nonprofit organisations every year. It is typical that the organisations are also financed by individuals and companies. When financial support is given, municipalities often decide on how the support is used, which obscures the difference to quasi-market models.

The third group consists of social problems which have not been actualized, recognized or considered problems in need of solution. Typically, people try to solve such social problems by themselves or by relying on their own social networks. These problems include prostitution, hunger and overindebtedness. (In the 1990s overindebtedness has become an officially recognized social problem.)

*Table 1. Social problems and provision of social services.*

	Public Service Provision	Contractual Arrangements
Officially recognized social problems	Financed through public expenditure. Service provision is arranged through the public sector. Some of the services are purchased from the independent sector. The main providers are municipalities and federations of municipalities	Financed through public expenditure. Service provision is arranged through the independent sector. The main providers are private providers and nonprofit organisations and associations. Some of the services are also purchased through the profit centres of the public sector.
Unofficial, but recognized social problems	Mainly financed by subsidies from the public sector and private donations. Responsibility for the content and provision of the services lies with organizations or associations.	Financed through the contributions of citizens. Share from public finance is small. Public finance is strictly audited. The status of these social services is lower than that of officially recognized services.
Not recognized or hidden social problems	Financed and organized through citizens' own social networks	Financed and organized through citizens' own social networks

Table 1 describes public service provision and contractual arrangements as a dichotomy. It aims to describe provision in relation to the contents of social problems, in other words, as modes of provision. The most important difference between these modes appears when considering unofficial social problems. The change of governance structures towards contractual arrangements makes it difficult to distinguish them from those social services that have been officially recognized. However, the status of unofficial social problems is lower in the controlled provision of services. When resources decrease, the provision of services for these social problems will be the first to be subjected to financial cuts.

## Public service provision

In the early 1970s it was considered that the public sector should carry the main responsibility for the provision of social services. The objective was to create universal services based on equality. Central arguments for organising service provision through the public sector included the economy of scale, problems of quality control, and the externalities. The private and the nonprofit sectors were not considered capable of financing the infrastructure required by social services. Nonetheless, the organizing of social services through the public sector must be seen as an ideological choice. In the 1970s and the 1980s, the development of social services was focused on the care of the elderly and children's day care. Besides, legislation and services concerning small client groups and services for the disabled were developed. One of the main reasons for focusing on child and elderly care services was the aim of allowing wage earners to combine work with family life. According to Rauhala (1996, 85), "the forming of social services is an ideological and political process where interests clash and interest contracts are made". One can argue that children and elderly persons concern "strong" client groups with a great deal of political power. Accordingly, alcohol or substance abusers are an example of a group whose political significance is small, and their ability to promote their services depends on their political environment.

## Establishment and growth of the welfare state

The good financial situation of the public sector accelerated the expansion of social services in the 1970s and the 1980s, making rapid growth possible. Social problems were "produced", especially in the 1980s, with the conse-

quence that a wide range of social services emerged quickly at the same time as their quality rose. Characteristic of the period were also nationwide social policy reforms. (Lehto 1996) Unofficial and hidden social problems were increasingly but selectively recognized as a consequence of the widening definition of social problems.

When the Finnish welfare state's service system was being built, the authorities, in fact, encouraged municipalities to extend their service provision (see Kokko & Lehto 1993) by means of state subsidies. This led partly to a situation in which the service supply did not respond to local needs. This also explains why the public sector – in other words, municipalities – were chosen as the providers instead of the private or nonprofit sector.

The definition of social problems was extended so that the allocation of state subsidised staff, to a great extent, concentrated in areas of strong client groups. For example, in 1989 the proportion of state-subsidised staff compared to those in employment relationships was 84% in health centres and 57% in residential care homes. In the same year the proportion of posts in home care services was 47% of the labour force (Central Statistical Office of Finland 1992). In children's day care the proportion was 93%. The position of weak client groups improved through the purchase of services, through establishing and strengthening the federations of municipalities, and through financial support.

During the growth period of the welfare state, strong client groups were also able to strengthen and consolidate their relative position by improving their share of the income transfers and their rights to services through legislation. This also legitimated the position of "official" service providers and promoted their dominance in the social service system. This result was linked to the fragmented financing structure of the weak client groups and their reliance on the service provision of nongovernmental organisations and associations. Their relative position did not strengthen, because simultaneously the public sector offered more services for the strong client groups.

## The mature stage of the welfare state

In the mature stage of the welfare state in the 1990s (see Julkunen 1992), with the coming of the depression, the vulnerability of the members of the weak client groups increased even if social problems of this kind were already officially recognized. For example, the position of mental health patients clearly weakened when the operations of the federations of municipi-

palities and the number of services purchased from independent providers were reduced. Noninstitutional care resources have not increased since 1992, even though the number of psychiatric hospital beds was significantly reduced (Kalland 1996, 45-46).

It has been argued that hierarchical organisations try to maximise their capacity (Niskanen 1971). Thus it is claimed that new forms of services have to compete for the same resources and professions have to compete with each other. This means that the binding of economic resources to an ineffective service system restricts the identification of new social problems as soon as economy stagnates. As a consequence, the client groups with official social problems embezzle the financing sources of the client groups with unofficial social problems. A good example of this is service housing, which can be regarded as a substitute for residential care services. In the care of the elderly, the change from institutional to community services has been financially supported by the Finnish Slot Machine Association, rather than by reallocating municipal budget money more effectively within the service structure. The so-called municipal associations have been founded for this reason. They have served as decoys for municipalities. Therefore, official social problems have been financed at the expense of unofficial ones, especially during the economic depression. This development is partly supported by the aims of the Finnish Slot Machine Association to follow the national plans on social welfare and public health service. In this respect, the monopolistic public provision has arguably led to ineffective production of services (Wolf 1988), which again affects the definition of social problems.

The argument of provider-centricity conditions the definition of social problems. According to this argument, public service provision functions self-sufficiently, believing in the superiority of its own experts. However, the service provision offers standard solutions to new social problems or even denies their existence. (An example of this is the discussion about “social exclusion” in the 1980s.) Service provision through the public sector gave its workers an almost monopolistic status in defining social problems and offering solutions (Hautamäki 1993). The weak client groups, which do not have powerful lobbying capabilities, did not manage to express their needs for services, although the economic resources even during the depression made it possible to provide these services. For example, due to cuts in the welfare services for substance abusers, the need for public health services increased accordingly without any overall cost reduction have. (Kalland 1996, 43)

Workers’ strong position can perhaps be regarded as one of the main reasons for the structural rigidity of the service provision in the public sec-

tor. For example, from an economic point of view, one can ask why, in children's day care, municipalities reduced subsidies to family day care rather than children's day care nurseries, when the former was cheaper. The answer is clear: the staff of family day care was largely in employment relationships.

The strong position of officeholders has prevented many officially recognized social problems from turning into unofficial or unknown ones. In 1990, 58% of the labour force in the public social services were officeholders (Central Statistical Office... 1990). When the economy stagnates, measures taken to balance the budget will be restricted to the dismissal of workers, because the relative share of labour costs varies from 60 to 90 % of the total costs in different service provision sectors (Melin 1995). One can argue that the posts in the public sector serve as a buffer to budget cuts. Municipalities have made cuts by dismissing persons with employment contracts, by cutting the so-called "holiday money" of the staff, and by raising client charges. However, municipalities recruited then unemployed persons with employment resources in order to compensate for the dismissals (Melin 1995; Ailasmaa 1996). Another factor behind these cuts may be political. The share of organized labour is high among dismissed officeholders, and they are usually active in local politics (see Lehto 1995). Even though public sector provision was criticized for the lack of choice and voice, service cuts were partly prevented because of the personnel structure.

Characteristic of the mature stage of the welfare state was the diminishing resource basis of the public sector and the carrying out of broad social policy reforms, but also the difficulty of solving new social problems. This was partly a consequence of the rapid changes in society. The official social problems had to be financed in part from sources originally intended for unofficial social problems. There was less and less recognition of the social problems of the weak groups, so that their problems increasingly turned into hidden social problems (this was the fate of e.g. the Counselling Centre for Prostitutes). Competition between client groups and between the professions began.

## A short summary

There are four characteristic features of public service provision which affect the definition of social problems.

1. Public service provision defines through professions and political decision-making processes the social problems which are named as official and unofficial.
2. Political decision-makers are tied to employment contracts, whose flexible use is difficult because of barriers between professions. This leads to the fixing of the budget, which makes it difficult to allocate resources to new social problems.
3. The considerable share of the labour costs in the municipal budget serves to protect the respective services.
4. When public service provision has been formulated on the basis of government subsidies, social problems are considered to be challenged by “universal” services based on equality.

## The force of the market

The economic resources of the public sector were reduced in the early 1990s with the consequence that the possibilities and willingness of society to finance existing services diminished. Because of this, the ideas of increasing the effectiveness of the service sector, of improving the quality of services, and of producing customer-oriented services were brought under public debate. These ideas were not new in Finland. As early as the early 1980s, the *Delegation of Economic Life* (1981) criticized the rapid growth of the public sector and its ineffectiveness, internal rigidity, inflexible use of staff and fixed allocation of economic resources, and the citizens’ biased view of free services. The institutional actors’ (mainly the interest groups’ and later on the central administration’s) demands for reforming the public sector grew (see e.g. Salminen 1986; The Central Association of the Entrepreneurs of Finland 1986; Central Chamber of Commerce of Finland 1989; Paasio 1992; The International Comparison Project of the Public Administration 1993; Foundation for Municipal Development 1993; The *Delegation of Economic Life* 1994; Council of State 1995). Another critical trend highlighted entrepreneurship and flexibility (see Harisalo 1988; Ståhlberg 1991; Simonen 1996). Besides, several researchers of social policy, for example Karisto (1990) and Raunio (1992), emphasized the need to reform public sector provision.

In spite of differences of emphasis, these studies repeated the main critical argument raised by the *Delegation of Economic Life* (1981). Their criticism typically pointed out the ineffectiveness, internal stiffness and lack of choice in public service provision, and emphasized the demand for customer-oriented services. This discussion naturally echoed the debate over the role of the public sector, which was especially heated in France and Great Britain

in the 1980s (see Salminen 1986). A crucial example of this discussion on the European and global dimension is the publication of the International Comparison Project report (1993) of the public administration, entitled “The Best Public Sector In The World”, co-ordinated by the OECD. Without great surprise the solutions to revitalize the public sector that have been proposed and carried out in Finland are similar to those implemented in other European countries.

## Change in the institutional environment

Since the economic situation of Finland’s public sector dramatically weakened in the early 1990s, and the possibilities, ability and willingness to finance the service system decreased, the pressure to shift part of the financing responsibility to municipalities and clients increased, as did the pressure to cut services. Furthermore, the increase in the number of providers in the independent – i.e. private and non-profit – sector was presented as an answer. This was seen not only as a practical solution, but also as an ideologically solid one, in spite of contrary arguments (e.g. Ståhlberg 1991, 526).

In Finland significant changes were indeed carried out in the relations between central government and municipalities. An attempt has been made to increase the effectiveness of social services by promoting the independent production of social services. In the 1980s the institutional environment of Finnish social services was characterized by skeleton laws, decentralization of the provision responsibility, and “earmarked” legislation concerning state subsidies. Changes in the institutional environment took place in 1993, when the legislation on subsidies became formula-based and the legislation on the client charges of social welfare and health services was widened. This made quasi-market solutions possible (Iivari 1995, 79).

One can argue that the mode of provision changed in 1993, when the new legislation came into force. Decentralization and deregulation have created a situation where municipalities are better able to define or recognize social problems themselves by their service provision decisions. Although no significant changes in the definition of social problems have taken place yet – or are known yet – the institutional frame for this has been created. This institutional environment makes it possible for the definition of social problems to vary considerably at the local level.

## Contractual arrangements

“Quasi-market social services” refers to the situation in which the responsibility for the provision of services lies with the public sector, but the service provider can be public, private or non-profit. Each actor (municipality) responsible for the financing decides whether it gives the money directly to the client or makes a contract with the provider. The aim is to increase consumer choice (Le Grand & Barlett 1993). With the quasi-market an attempt is made to introduce competing independent providers (Le Grand 1991a, 1991b).

A characteristic feature of quasi-markets is that in decision-making all the services are placed on an equal footing. The decision-makers must evaluate and compare services, trying to make sure that the utility they get from their last markka will be greater than the utility they would have got from alternative services. This means, for example, that one must decide whether to spend the last markka on the welfare of a substance abuser or on children’s day care. The size of the budget – budget constraint – becomes crucial in the definition of social problems. Besides, the size of the budget is no longer totally determined by the previous year.

The structure of the budget of a municipality changes as a consequence of the quasi-market model. Political decision-makers can now decide on the allocation of money (resources) within the budget constraints on the basis of the contracts made by civil servants. Setting the price, quality and volume of the service in these contracts now crucially conditions, if not dictates, how political decision-makers can evaluate and compare social problems in terms of their scope and content. One could say that the definition of social problems rather depends on budget constraints than on social rights. The political decision-makers can actually change a budget constraint only by increasing local flat-rate taxation, because the state subsidies are formula-based and do not vary.

Another method of expanding the budget constraint would be the client charges. These are, however, still regulated by legislation. Besides, client charges should be mainly levied on such groups whose lobbying positions are strong. On the other hand, the raising of client charges closer to production costs shifts the governance structures towards the market model.

## Conclusions

1. In quasi-markets the purchaser can be said to define the social problems being coped with. An attempt is made to emphasize the position of the client. However, in quasi-markets weak client groups receive less attention, and they are easily passed over since they are not efficient at lobbying.
2. Municipal decision-makers are restricted by their financial resources. The budget constraint actually limits social rights, defining their level and validity. The budget constraint can relax according to political and economic trends. In Finland the role of local tax is conspicuous. In principle, it opens room for the budget constraint to relax and thus makes a rapid reaction to new social problems possible. However, in practice this kind of reaction requires a political ability to swim against the current.
3. Discussion about budget constraints ultimately means discussion about values and, therefore, about the way in which social needs and demands are prioritized. In this respect, budgetary stabilization measures support the decentralization of responsibility to the local level.
4. Formula-based state subsidies still mean that values are assembled and adjusted within the limits of the skeleton laws at the local level. Finnish municipalities are mostly small, and a significant part of their incomes comes from state subsidies. That is why the acceptance of the budget constraint, in fact, is a sign of the municipalities' willingness to comply with national and global rationalities of rule.
5. To the extent that social policy is decentralized to the local level, the risks of individuals are also regionalized.

## A promise or a threat?

The aim of this article has been to examine the definition of social problems from the point of view of social service provision. The basic argument is that the mode of provision of services crucially conditions the definition of social problems. The emphasis on the change in this mode may seem exaggerated, since old and new models of provision coexist. Established institutional arrangements certainly delay the application of the new forms of provision, but legislative obstacles to the new forms of provision have been removed in Finland with the consequence that the labour force in the independent sector has significantly increased.

Another question concerns the interaction between policy and provision. Is the change in provision a consequence of the policy shift, or is it mainly caused by such factors as the scarcity of resources in the public sector or the managerial revolution of information technology applications? This article has not tried to give a definite answer to these questions.

This article has followed the argument that the quasi-markets make competition between providers possible and, therefore, increase the efficiency of service provision. This is a fact – according to economic theory – that should not persuade us to forget that the political power of different client groups must be regarded as a factor which is independent of provision. Strong client groups are able to secure the financing of their social services regardless of the mode of provision. The policy problems then (should) focus on weak client groups, on those who are the most disadvantaged. Their opportunities to organise themselves at the local level are small. From their point of view, the local level is problematic. As a consequence of locally embedded practices and customs, their “social problems” may be seen as individual exceptions to communal norms. In the situation of quasi-markets, these kinds of sentiments (moral economy) may obscure the difference between unofficial and officially recognized social problems.

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Sakari Hänninen

## IS FINLAND GOING BEYOND THE AGE OF ENTITLEMENT?

### Topos

My topic is the newly introduced regime of government with an entrepreneurial ethos in Finland. I am not going to examine governance or regulation as such, but the complex of problematizations that have been variously termed “ethos of government”, “conduct of government”, “mentality of rule”, “rationality of rule”, “enfolding of authority”, and so on. This governmental topos addresses the intersection, or interlinkage, between technologies of the self and political technologies of individuals (Foucault 1988, 19).

The consultative marketing of a number of “new” governmental techniques and tactics, from contract to quasimarkets, from auditing to net-budgeting, from cost-accounting to consultation, from purchasing-providing to partnership, and from solidaristic to responsabilizing norms tempts us to characterize this transformation in Finland as neo-liberal. However, this kind of naming may be somewhat premature. It is not clear whether these techniques are necessarily articulated “into a distinctive set of programmes or formulae of government called neo-liberalism or advanced liberalism” (Dean 1996, 223). It would be easier to agree, though, that we mean economic liberalism or economic rationalism (see Burchell 1996, 22).

## Displacement and normative order

Before taking up topical questions, I want to clarify the problem-space in which we are situated here. This is a normative space – a normative order – and I am interested in the logic of the norm, or more specifically, in displacements in the logic of the norm. Displacements are part of the logic of the norm, as Francois Ewald points out by emphasizing that “it is essential to distinguish between the norm itself and the apparatuses, institutions or techniques of power that bring it into action and function according to its principles...The normative process can obey a variety of different logics: the panoptical logic of discipline, the probabilistic schema of insurance, or the communicative logic of the technical norm”. All these practices can be subsumed under the term “norm” (Ewald 1990, 152-154).

Displacement “does not destroy or annul anything, its operation is topological, it always consists of keeping by exchanging places” (Derrida 1992, 16). In other words, displacement is not replacement; different normative procedures and governmental practices “mark a tendency to relentless proliferation” so that the influence of the norm may produce a shift e.g. from discipline as a constraint to discipline as a regulatory mechanism. Displacement, therefore, follows modular logic, since “norms always refer to, or communicate with other norms, shifting from one level or field of existence to another” (Ewald 1990, 141, 152-153).

In this kind of normative universe – or normative order characterizing the modern era – the displacement and the proliferation of governmental practices cannot be necessarily taken to imply any fundamental rupture in the mentality of rule. In other words, the introduction of a set of new techniques and tactics in the public management of welfare, for example, does not necessarily amount to a farewell to welfarism or social law in Finland. In order to be able to validate such a claim, we would have to be able to specify how the normative order itself is rearranged or restructured as an effect of multiple, mutually reinforcing displacements of normative practices. This kind of remapping demands that we, first, specify the mode of the normative procedures being displaced, and second, outline the topology of the normative order in which this displacement takes place.

The general topology of normative order has been outlined by François Ewald. He introduces a three-dimensional picture of the normative space. Ewald does not explicitly name the first dimension, which refers to the existing modes of experiencing and problematizing practices (e.g. legal practices, welfare practices) governed by norms. However, I want to regard this di-

mension as one in which norms are articulated by rules of reasoning. The norm implies here a rule of reasoning which serves as a principle of interpretation. The second dimension is characterized by Ewald as that in which the norm implies a rule of judgement which “is a principle of communication, a highly specific means of resolving the problem of intersubjectivity” (Ewald 1990, 154). Rules of judgement provide the self-reflexive and critical criteria for problematizing governmental practices, including legal practices, in which law increasingly operates as a norm. Rules of judgement are more fundamental than rules of reasoning, as far as the ongoing governmental transformation is concerned.

The most fundamental dimension – and the most fundamental intersubjective convention – is that in which the rule of justice as the rule of rules provides for a group a common denominator, a rigorous epistemic principle of self-referentiality without any recourse to nature or any other “external instance” in sustaining exchange and order, and in making common experiences and problematizations possible. In fact, the rule of justice is the Norm itself, a mode of self-justification freely determined by the group itself. The norm is the group’s observation of itself, sovereignty without the hypothetical contract (Ewald 1990, 155).

I have sketched the three-dimensional topology of normative order to be able to later explicate the principal features of the Finnish welfarist register (as it used to be) in dominance, and outline the ongoing governmental transformation as a set of displacements of normative practices. Before that, I want to address another question about the mode of the normative practices to be displaced in this transformation. This question refers to a certain way of thinking about politics.

## Displacement of politics in the name of the “social”

François Ewald argues that in the normative age, the technology of risk and the institution of social insurance form the basis for a new way of thinking about politics: the state can now be conceived of in terms of the actuarial view of society. In fact, the state itself becomes a vast system of social insurance (Ewald 1990, 147). Is this actuarial way of thinking about politics – this specific mode of risk management and insurance – then being displaced in the ongoing transformation? I do not think so, despite the strong tendency to privatize risk management and systems of insurance. I am more inclined to think that what is at stake in this transformation is a certain way of think-

ing about democracy as opposed to the market mechanism. Adam Przeworski has outlined this opposition very acutely:

“The market is a mechanism in which individuals cast votes for allocations with the resources they own and these resources are always distributed unequally; democracy is a system through which people as citizens may express preferences about allocating resources that they do not own with rights distributed equally. Hence the two mechanisms lead to the same outcome only by a fluke. Indeed distributions of consumption caused by the market and those collectively preferred by citizens must differ since democracy offers those who are poor, oppressed or otherwise miserable as a consequence of the initial distribution of endowments an opportunity to find redress via the state.” (Przeworski 1991, 11)

It is often claimed that we live in an antipolitical age or that there is currently a strong tendency to displace politics. This claim, as such, misses the point, since there is not just one way – i.e. my way – of thinking about politics. What can be being displaced is always a certain way of thinking about and making politics. It might be argued that there is, at present, a strong tendency to displace a way of thinking of and making politics which provides a normative justification for the procedure of finding redress via the state. The procedure of justification that is under strong pressure of displacement seems to be nothing other than the majority rule of representative mass democracy, a system in which masses factually matter. Would this be then the case in Finland too?

The attack on majoritarian democracy, or democracy as we know it, is seldom direct. Instead, we may read about or listen to statements which argue that there is an immense anxiety over and contempt for politics and politicians, who compete by promises of solving problems. Let me cite Newsweek: “Problem solving (and not liberalism or conservatism) became our dominant postwar ideology. Politicians argued over which problems could be solved, how and by whom. But the debates concerned means more than ends. If problems could be solved, (and most could), they would and should be solved. We were entitled to solutions” (Newsweek 1996, 11). The writer goes on to argue that the “promise of entitlement was not only false, but ultimately disruptive”. On the one hand, it “subtly subverted personal and institutional responsibility”; on the other hand, “the result has been the politics of overpromise. By making more promises than it can keep, government systematically generates distrust” (Newsweek 1996, 14) and anxiety. The writer concludes that “we are caught between the promises of expectations of the past and the insistent social and economic conditions of the present. Sooner or later something will give. It must. Either we will revise our expectations or

condemn ourselves to constant disappointment” (Newsweek 1996, 16). Finally, the reader is reminded that “undoubtedly the new post-entitlement society is often a cold shower”, but evidently a necessary awakening.

The crucial standpoint of reaction against the welfarist register in dominance is pointed out in the Newsweek article: the ultimate target under attack is such a democratic way of thinking about and making politics that urges or submits to the translation of the infinite demands of all citizens into promises of entitlements. Therefore, the principal mode of normative practices to be displaced could be taken to be this politics of overpromise – perhaps just another name for majoritarian party democracy. However, this rights-based mass democratic element is just one moment in the process of displacement, and it really cannot “explain” what is at stake here. It alone cannot specify the way of thinking about politics that tends to be displaced.

There is another moment of this to-be-displaced normative practice that was mentioned in the Newsweek article: the problem-solving tenor or the promise of problem-solving capacity of politics. This tenor is naturally characteristic of the welfarist register, which submits to or obeys the idea of expert government (Rose 1996a, 349). But it also heralds the idea of majority rule, which is echoed in the notion of a democratic welfare state. At this point, we are faced with a challenge: how to interconnect democracy as a majority rule and the political promise of problem solving? The definite answer to this question points out the third element of the to-be-displaced topos.

In order to interconnect mass democracy and the political promise of problem solving – introducing the politics of mediation – one has to govern from the “social point of view” (Rose 1996a, 329; Procacci 1989) or make politics in the name of the “social”, if only because social forces are seen as mobilizing mass politics whose task it is then considered to be to solve socially constituted problems, such as the social question. Needless to say, this kind of politics in the name of the “social” culminates in the social government of welfarism.

Nikolas Rose has very convincingly explored how the “social” might currently face the prospect of being displaced as a key zone, target or objective of governmental strategies (Rose 1996a). One or two already implied points should now be emphasized. First of all, since we are here speaking about tendencies of displacement, not of replacement, it would be wise not to introduce one more new age, such as a “post-social age”, a “post-entitlement age”, or a “post-political age”. Such a periodization easily hurries ahead of the actual social process.

The processual character of this transformation also reminds us of another point: we are dealing with different interdependent moments of a proc-

ess with a specific political profile. We cannot really explore the death of the “social” without simultaneously considering the future of the political promise of problem solving in the democratic context of majority rule. We seem to be witnessing a kind of parallel action aiming to displace the political promise of problem solving by hypothetical contractulist designs, to displace the political gravity of majority by spectacularization of politics or by tribunalization of representation, and to displace politics from the social point of view by the individualization of involvement, obligation and deliberation.

These tendencies – conflictual as they are – leave room for divergent counterforces. Contractulist designs can be opposed by a political culture of contestation which also finds the idea of political problem solving a very thin conception of politics and democracy. Spectacularization of politics can be opposed by republican civic action or by participatory politics of difference, both of which regard mass politics in the shadow of silent majorities as an expression of a culture of apathy. Individualization of obligation, i.e. government through market, can be opposed, or at least supplemented, by government through community. (Rose 1996a, 332)

Even if there is a circle joining these moments – of problem solving, majority rule and the social point of view – one of them may be considered the weak link in this chain, namely the social point of view. Both problem solving as a mode of politics of competence and majority rule as the established democratic procedure seem to be much harder to displace. In fact, contractulist designs are still marketed as problem-solving solutions just as spectacles of political life or tribunals of representation are consumed by the general public, the mass audience.

## From integration to individualization

The force of international restructuring has penetrated Finland. This development has greatly accelerated during the economic recession of the 90s, but it was mobilized in the boom years of the 80s. This is an accumulative process in which governmental initiatives and events have followed, or according to this logic should have followed, one after another so that we distinguish a definite pattern of four stages. These stages can be termed as follows:

1. Integration
2. Restructuration
3. Flexibilization
4. Individualization

I shall briefly outline each stage. Integration has the highest priority for Finland, since the decision to join the EU, and the determination to network tightly with the global market economy, has preceded all other alternatives and future options. This decision has been supported by a definite monetary policy which privileges competent export industries and tries to cut down inflation and keep the currency stable, even if this results in high unemployment and deflation pressures. Besides, the sudden liberalization of the supply of money – predating the integration decision – resulted in the overindebtedness of public and private economy so that, during the 90s, reduction of the public debt has been the primary objective in the political agenda.

Restructuration basically attempts to cut down public spending, a policy line that has been pursued by means of “savings budgets”. Restructuration of the public sector seeks to introduce new public management techniques, tactics and paradigms in the name of efficiency and accountability, especially in the social and health care sectors. The main aim is to reduce relative unit costs. However, these restructuration measures have aggravated rather than alleviated the difficult problem of unemployment, which leads us to the third stage of the process.

Flexibilization of labour markets and deregulation of labour relations still wait to be taken seriously on the political agenda. The main issues of flexibilization are how to lower the threshold of employing new people and how to remove the obstacles distorting the supply and demand of labour. Incentives to work are currently emphasized as the primary means of improving the employment situation. They also constitute the interface between the third and the fourth stage.

Individualization implies that the conduct of people living or relying on social assistance and living allowances is examined and monitored more closely. There is a determined effort to revise these schemes according to the responsabilizing rules of conduct. The new divisions and classifications are constructed so that “work motivation” or incentives to work could not be downplayed by “incentive traps”, “income traps”, and the like.

The process “from integration to individualization” parallels the governmental transformation in which steps towards a new mentality of rule are taken. At this point, one can again pose the question if we, in Finland, are witnessing a transition to strategies of government that can be called “neoliberal”? One can find dozens of programmatic statements, government documents, policy tracts, committee reports, authoritative records, and official texts of all kinds that make an effort to justify these measures in the language normalized along the lines of the New Public Management Para-

digm. However, we cannot take these statements at face value, as if these written words were a mirror of governmental practices.

Without trying to neglect on purpose the weight of the textual evidence of a neoliberal turn, I want to open up another perspective on this transformation. I shall do so by taking up some counterfactuals which seem to be difficult to identify with neoliberal strategies of government.

1. Finland's decision to join the EU, just like the monetary policy of the 90s including the huge public support to private banks in financial trouble, manifests "sovereign anxiety" (Shapiro) and reflects the priorities of national security policy, the "reason of state", rather than any truly liberal inclination.

2. The restructuration of the Finnish public sector has welcomed marketization and privatization. However, the political elite cartels exhibit a certain determination to find a "third way": a new politics of ownership; a new politics on insurance, not just social or private but a combination of the two; and a new politics of social assistance, a welfare mix.

3. It is symptomatic that the flexibilization and deregulation of labour relations have not advanced practically at all in Finland. This step has been so far successfully circumvented mainly due to the strong quasi-corporatist resistance of the powerful labour unions. There is a kind of stalemate at this stage of the transformation.

4. The drawbacks of flexibilization in turn build pressure on the public savings demands. Income-dependent entitlements of strong interests are well safeguarded by the same quasicorporatist arrangements, but the unemployment benefits and social assistance entitlements of the more vulnerable groups are now threatened. These savings measures are justified in the name of incentives to promote responsible conduct. This credo of individualization – in contrast to many other individualisms – is dictated by economist postulates and often by rational choice calculus. The principal feature of this problematization resides in economism.

These counterfactuals – sovereign anxiety, welfare mix, labour relations rigidities, economism of individualization – do not obviously refute the thesis that the ongoing transformation in Finland obeys the governmental vision of neoliberalism. However, it might be better to call this vision economic liberalism or economic rationalism. There is more to this than plain terminology. The crux of the matter is that this process does not follow any single logic and can therefore only be captured in a variety of forms. This is also a normative process, which unfolds in a way ridden by tensions and dissonance between differ-

ent rationalities of rule and is, in fact, catalyzed by contradictions. Of course, we may claim that such contradictions between competing rationalities represent a tension or dissonance within liberalism itself (Osborne 1996, 117).

To develop this standpoint further, I want to pay attention to some other features of this transformation. I shall alternately apply different perspectives: political, pedagogical and economic. From the political point of view of government, Nikolas Rose has drawn out four significant features of liberalism, which here may be reduced to three: 1) a novel specification of the subject of rule as active in their own government; 2) an intrinsic relation (unmediated by the state) to the authority of expertise; and 3) a continual questioning of the activity of rule (Rose 1996a, 44-47).

If these features are applied as criteria of judgement, what could be said about the nature of the Finnish governmental transformation? There could be a short and pithy answer: this process “from integration to individualization” cannot be said to live up too well to these criteria. Even if responsible self-government has been marketed as a promise of this transformation, its true standard of personhood is still embedded in a traditional ethos of discipline, hard work, cultural uniformity and unanimity, self-constraint, thriftiness and entrepreneurship. Such an entrepreneurial ethos may well tally with economic liberalism but certainly not that well with political liberalism and pluralism. This cultural orientation is reinforced by a basically quasi-decisionist rule, in which “islands of excellence” are called forth. This unreflective mode of policing can still advocate measures to reduce state intervention in the management of welfare. Besides, this kind of regime of rule can utilize private consultation and expertise without relying at all on truly independent expert agencies.

From the pedagogical point of view, this displacement of social policies might be paralleled with the Platonic will “to ban the poets from the city state”, since we are dealing with struggles over different regimes of ethical comportment, over who has the moral right to lead communities (Dean 1996, 217). Welfarist practices may be opposed because of their pedagogical implications rather than just for financial or budgetary reasons. If this were the case, it would be easier to understand why the reduction in living allowances and social assistance for the most vulnerable groups of people has been given such importance, far beyond the economic significance of these measures. “Beating up the poor”, to put it in Baudelaire’s words, expresses a corrective logic claimed to better respect and recognize the self-esteem of people in distress, or as Baudelaire phrased: “With my energetic treatment (i.e. by giving a blow), I had thus restored his pride and his life”. This kind of “violent logic” may be advo-

cated as well by liberals of indifference and neoconservatives of social control as by Nietzschean followers of new justice.

Another perspective on the ongoing transformation could be called economic, but one that is culturally embedded. This reading challenges economism on its own ground. And I mean absolute economism, which is an antihistoricist genre, an absolutely individualized mode of problematization. Instead of examining how individuals act, it postulates what man is like by nature as a rational being, and this naturalized postulate is then used foundationally. Absolute economism as an individualized mode of problematization *par excellence* always finds what it is looking for: this transformation is here to realize the true nature of economic man. Since the conclusion only repeats what it presumes, the historical situation need not be further examined. However, if it were analyzed more carefully, one might find that many of the proposed “neoliberal” solutions echo what in Finland have been typically advocated in times of depression. Such as the following:

- new divisions and classifications for eligibility and noneligibility for social assistance;
- a new division of labour between the state and local government: decentralization of decisions and responsibility to the local level in managing “social problems”;
- pressure to reduce the number of socially assisted by tightening norms;
- pressure against the legal protection of vulnerable groups;
- demands for more flexible and mobile labour markets and for cheaper labour;
- glorification of incentives and thriftiness;
- pointing out the importance of voluntary and communal action;
- glorification of entrepreneurship, and a new politics of ownership.

A list like this is by no means meant to prove that the ongoing transformation only repeats past experiences and reactions, or that it just continues the prewar development which was broken by the solidarist and welfarist arrangements that were stirred by the war experience and established during the postwar period – as if the course of events could be reversed and one could return to square one. If this were the case, we could argue that the Finnish “welfare state” was essentially a product of long postwar reconstruction that has now come to an end – and that it really was a kind of redemption of the promise “Go and get slaughtered, and we promise you a long and happy life”. In any case, one has to examine this governmental transformation in an intrinsic relation to the economic process of self-valorization and reappropriation. One cannot just textually invest “economy”,

or *a priori* economist postulates, into the governmental process as another explanatory instance. One can only avoid economist explanations by paying attention to the interpenetration of self-valorization of capital and governmental self-articulation. Such a perspective naturally focusses on the practices of calculation which permeate power relations (Foucault 1990, 94-95). In this way, one can also escape the parallel fallacy of treating effects of the transformation as stemming from the decisions of individual subjects. This process of transformation cannot be read as a realization of an original project but as a process of dissemination.

## Restructuring the normative order

When the governmental transformation is seen as a process of dissemination – intentional and nonsubjective – one can better perceive that its logics may be “perfectly clear”, although no one has invented them and few can be said to have formulated them (Foucault 1990, 95). Dissemination naturally refers to a series of molecular and local events, episodes and choices whose dispersed, heterogeneous, divergent, and often discordant effects can only later be read into a mental pattern. Such a reading is always a matter of selection and emphasis. One should, though, realize that the topological displacements of welfarist practices are now carried out (as contracts) under duress. This necessarily repeats the point made earlier: the governmental transformation is located in a specific conjuncture of self-valorization, i.e. within a period of severe recession.

The three-dimensionally outlined normative space provides a frame in which the interpenetration of self-valorization and governmental self-articulation can be examined in terms of calculation, i.e. in terms of the operation of the norm.

To answer the question about the kind of governmental transformation that the ongoing displacements of normative practices imply, one has to outline what the welfarist register in dominance is like as a normative order under restructuration. If the welfarist mentality of rule is outlined as a normative order, it will be easier to distinguish what is organic (rules of justice) and what is more conjunctural (rules of reasoning) to welfarist mentality.

The normative order of the welfarist mentality of rule can be encapsulated in the following set of rules (here I have utilized some of Ewald's formulations):

### *I. Welfarist rules of justice*

1. Rule of recognition: we must respect isothymia, equal human worth in spite of differences in personal characteristics; recognition should be mutual.
2. Rule of proportionment: responsibility should follow risk, high responsibility high risk; each person should take upon himself a proportional part of the risk according to endowments.
3. Rule of normalization: convention by consensus to keep the community together should work without the exclusion of anyone; normalization is, therefore, the basic principle of socialization, a language of reaching common understanding in the choice of norms.

### *II. Welfarist rules of judgement*

1. Rule of (self)limitation: we must set limits to excess; it is best that we exercise self-restraint or apply the principle of responsible self-limitation; to succeed in this we have to create associations, or associative relations, where we can negotiate common standards. (Offe 1992, 63B94)
2. Rule of redress: for wrongs done one should be able to find redress via the state; to do this, each individual must be taken as in principle similar to others and made comparable to all others by equalization.
3. Rule of interdependence: national efficiency and social minimum are positively correlated, intrinsically interlinked, and reciprocally conditioned.

### *III. Welfarist rules of reasoning*

1. Rule of factuality: in making conclusions we have to concentrate on the pure factuality of facts, on the pure observation of occurrences, so that we can construct difficult situations as problems to be solved by treating problems as positive facts.
2. Rule of representation: we have to represent reality with or without the help of those whom we want to help by representing them.
3. Rule of objectification: we have to confer an objective status, or objectivity, on all those processes which we want to intervene in and change for the better.

This sketch of the welfarist normative order helps to assemble the most relevant tendencies of displacing normative rules specific to welfarism, and to examine the ongoing governmental transformation more closely. I shall presuppose that these tendencies of displacement can point in two different directions: either towards a more neoliberal order or towards a more neoconservative order, which could be also called the “politics of re-

industrialization” (Connolly 1987, 17-30). Connolly has claimed that (in the US) the “major threat to welfare liberalism does not now come from its traditional adversary, the marketeers, but from the new ideology of re-industrialization” (Connolly 1987, 20).

The ongoing governmental transformation in Finland can now be characterized in these terms. I shall locate the major trends of displacement by proceeding rule by rule. In this way, the following picture emerges:

1. There are important tendencies that are modifying the welfarist rule of recognition in such a way that excellence, outstanding example and capacity are extolled while idolatry, dependence and incompetence are being labelled as losers’ qualities. The ethos of these displacements is not to better realize the equality of opportunity or to eliminate obstacles to rule of law in a liberal vein. Rather, they embody a conservative cultural orientation which demands superiority (megalothymia) to be collectively recognized. This is exemplified in a kind of national “hero hunting” or “hero worship” and in folklorist identity constructs associated with the responsible individual. This orientation has not yet replaced the welfarist ethos of isothymia, but it has suspended it. If such a neoconservative turn gained the upper hand, one would be witnessing the adoption of a kind of paternalist moral economy which actually contradicts the logic of the norm.

2. The welfarist rule of proportionment demands that risks imposed by circumstances on the weak should be compensated for, while the liberalist mentality of rule emphasizes that each individual and institution should be responsible for his/its own risks. The recent experiences in Finland, however, powerfully illustrate that only the high institutional and entrepreneurial risks taken in the 80s have been guaranteed by the state. This kind of “politics of surety” as an archaic practice illustrates a conservative ethos of sacrifice. This sacrificial ethos stems from the experience of “sovereign anxiety” about order, and it clearly contradicts liberal rules of justice.

3. Normalization as a welfarist principle of socialization has deemed it necessary to try to socially integrate the most marginalized groups of people by avoiding all “languages of difference”. These are considered to weaken the operation of the norm as a common denominator. The liberal respect for difference and politics of difference naturally challenge the rule of normalization by an ethos of pluralism. Such a liberal ethos cannot be said to have gained much momentum in Finland. It has done so only sporadically and selectively. On the contrary, there are signs of a cultural offensive aiming to reactualize traditional, communal morals and to supplement normalizing

procedures with more uniforming rules of conduct. This is also evident in the maxim stating that all of us should become entrepreneurs, or intrepeneurs. This maxim has quite an onto-theological echo devoid of any serious liberalist tenor.

4. The welfarist ethos of limiting excess has been pursued in Finland mainly by way of state intervention. There is, though, an obvious tendency to develop the welfarist mentality of rule in the direction of responsabilizing individuals. Although this strategic move is made in the name of competition, it clearly exemplifies a politics of reindustrialization. The dominant tendency in Finland is to “release the breaks” in order to induce economic growth. All that Connolly tells us about the reindustrialist strategy applies to the Finnish case:

“The reindustrialists outbid the marketeers and welfarists in their devotion to economic growth; they insist that it be given the highest priority. The state must exercise new initiatives... The reindustrialists themselves devote most of their attention to incentives they hope to initiate on the supply side of the economy to spur private investment, work effort, productivity ...(and so on).” (Connolly 1987, 202)

In spite of the neoconservative pressure, in Finland, the welfarist rule of limitation has succeeded in retaining its grip in the core domain of reproduction of labour. Global economy, however, compels Finland to further open up competition. This naturally checks and balances the state’s reindustrializing role.

5. Welfarism and liberalism do not basically differ in their conception that contingency can be fundamentally just: all people are equal before chance. Insurance as a rule of justice can accompany liberalism as well as welfarism. Their difference lies rather in the dimension of the rule of judgement. Neoconservatism deviates from both of them by making an appeal to tradition as a just cause. Welfarism and liberalism, however, have quite divergent views of the range and reign of chance. For liberalism, the taming of chance is the work of the “social”. The displacement of the “social” can, therefore, release the “just moment”. As we can be equal before misfortune, it is up to us to insure ourselves. It is characteristic of liberalism’s oxymoronic rhetoric that it makes this “responsibilization” necessary in a non-aleatory way. Welfarism assumes that the “social” can tame chance and contingency for good: social insurance works against misfortune. According to the welfarist rule of redress, the “wrongs done” – in contrast to misfortune – have social causes. Therefore, redress should be sought via the state.

The welfarist mentality of rule, unlike liberalism, covers a much broader range of social issues than just insurance. There is now, in Finland, a strong tendency to emphasize the role of insurance at the expense of other “social policies”. So far this tendency cannot be said to have displaced the rule of redress. It is still exercised in the form of social services, assistance and transfers. The neoconservative tendency towards moral economy has not over-run it either. A certain neopopulist twist to the welfarist conception is, however, discernible as social causes are compensated for by labelling strategies. This makes the state a retributor rather than a compensator. Even if such neoconservative tendencies may have gained some momentum, for example in the talk of the “new helplessness” or the “new crime”, no rule of retribution has yet displaced the rule of redress. The welfarist strategies have still managed to keep us swimming against the current due to the reflexive rules of judgement, i.e. for democratic reasons. The reflexive questioning of rules seems to strengthen rather than weaken the welfarist mentality. Since the rules of judgement can condition the working rules of justice, the conservative undercurrents find it difficult to realize.

6. Welfarism, liberalism and “reindustrialism” are all devoted to economic growth and efficiency. However, the welfarist rule of interdependence makes the fundamental point that all of us – belonging, grouped or gathered together – have profited from the raising of the welfare minimum and the quality of life of those under severe distress. This rule has been often articulated as follows: investments in efforts to combat deprivation pay off. There is a reciprocal relationship between national efficiency and social minimum. Such a claim may have been occasionally approved by liberals and even by conservatives from the (Hobbesian) point of view of order. This seems to be the case in Finland too. However, the link between national efficiency and social minimum has been loosened for the simple reason that one can no longer convincingly talk about national economy at all. Since the question of order has not been truly globalized, welfarists can still quite effectively use the weapons of their adversaries to defend the rule of interdependence. This amounts to reading *Leviathan* backwards.

7–9. Since the welfarist rules of reasoning are strongly intertwined, the tendencies of their displacement can be examined together. The intellectual style of reasoning characteristic of welfarism regards socially vulnerable and politically challenging situations as problems to be solved by translating them into factual truth claims, which expert government must then professionally cope with. In this process of translation, the role of empirical social research

has been central. It supports a way of thinking about politics (state intervention) in the name of the “social”. The problem-oriented social research also names the “social” that it examines. Social government – the welfarist mentality of rule – can be properly exercised only by relying on the knowledge-production of those social research and expert agencies that are closely interlinked or affiliated with state administration. Even though this organizational network of administrative and professional agencies of expert government has not been dissolved, its tasks have been redefined and rearticulated to better meet the new rationalities of rule. A conspicuous and revealing transformation is the powerful intrusion of a way of problematization that is provided by social economy and welfare economics, and the devaluation of the role of social sciences proper in expert government. This transformation naturally accompanies a more fundamental displacement of the “social” way of thinking about politics. In fact, there is a tendency to displace welfarist rules of reasoning, with the result that counterfactual argumentation, contractualist designs and constructivist elaborations have become prominent individualizing modes of the problematization of government. This is a discursive turn which strengthens the liberalist mentality of rule.

The above analysis of the governmental transformation is at best sketchy. It is tempting to selectively emphasize certain tendencies at the expense of others. One can surely ask how one might “write the history of an assemblage”. (Miller 1997, 1) Without having tried that, one can admit that no generalized, articulate model of this complex transformation can be produced. There is a kind of delicate balance between divergent forces and tendencies. It might be better not to talk at all about a dominant governmental register, but about a new mentality of rule in the making, about the ongoing restructuring of the normative order. The situation reminds us of a kind of S-curve. Crucial neoconservative undercurrents in the dimension of the rules of justice push it “backwards” and articulate liberalist tendencies in the dimension of the rules of reasoning pull it “forward”, while welfarism continues to provide the rules of judgement which still maintain the balance.

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