State Policy and Gender System in the Two German States and Sweden 1945-1989

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State Policy and Gender System

in the Two German States
and Sweden 1945–1989

Edited by

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ROLF TORSTENDAHL

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Preface

On a flight from Moscow to Stockholm seven years ago the idea of a comparative research project on state policies in Sweden and the two German states in the decades after World War II was born. Bo Stråth, now professor at the EUI in Florence, and myself decided to join forces as organisers, trying to find German colleagues willing to participate. The Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSFR) has generously supported the project with the required means. HSFR not only financed the project and the printing of this volume but, in 1997, arranged a meeting in Prague with all researchers involved in its European research programme. Some of the ideas of the project were tested on this occasion.

This volume on gender policies and women's participation in the labour market is the sequel to a small volume on housing policies in the three states, *Wohnungsbau im internationalen Vergleich*, Leipzig: Comparativ, 1996.

The present book is the outcome of intensive research, culminating in a workshop meeting at Odalgården outside of Uppsala in May 1998, organised by Christina Florin, Bengt Nilsson, and Rolf Torstendahl. Special thanks are due to Christina, who carried the main burden of the arrangements. In addition to the authors in this volume, Kaj Fölster, Diane Sainsbury, Lena Sommestad, and Urban Lundberg took part in the inspired discussions at this conference. All of them presented ideas of importance to the final versions of the papers and their contributions were most valuable. The organisers feel especially indebted to Kaj Fölster with her wide experience in both the Swedish and the West German political discussion.

Finally I want to thank Michael Srigley for his efforts to improve our English and Åsa Karlsson as responsible for the series *Opuscula historica Upsaliensia* for her active support to make this a volume in the series.

Uppsala in April 1999

Rolf Torstendahl

Introduction: Comparing State Policies in the FRG, GDR, and Sweden

Rolf Torstendahl

Three states and three systems, this is how Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic were perceived by most observers in the fifties, sixties and seventies. The rigorous communism of the GDR entailed that the state professed no limits to its interventions for the public good and for the good of its citizens. The state fought for its existence and the Berlin wall was evidence of the challenge from the West. The GDR state responded not only with the Wall but also with a number of spectacular buildings in Berlin but the Wall betrayed its fear of losing manpower resources by openness. Socialism had to become a closed system but still with high ambitions to give both equality and a good life to all citizens. The difficulty lay in turning these ambitions into something more than rhetoric. The GDR system formed a contrast to the liberal-conservative system of the FRG under Adenauer and Erhard with its leading ideology of the 'social market economy', which tended to be more market-oriented than 'social'. Social welfare was, however, essential to its ideology. This system was not radically changed in respect to its principles when the Social Democrats joined the government in the 'grand coalition' of 1966, even though new initiatives can be found. Up to the late 1970s Sweden, the third country of our comparison, was governed by its Social Democratic party alone or in coalition with one minor partner. The

¹ *Wohnungsbau im internationalen Vergleich. Planung und gesellschaftliche Steuerung in den beiden deutschen Staaten und in Schweden 1945–1980*, ed. by H. Siegrist and B. Stråth, Comparativ, vol. 6 (Leipziger Universitätsverlag), 1986.

Swedish Social Democrats were in favour of state influence over society in different respects, even over the private sphere of the home, but they were reluctant to use the orthodox Marxist instrument of nationalisation of the means of production. When companies were brought into state hands in the period after World War II, at least after 1948, this was rather a sign of failure in respect to the influence on the labour market of the economic policy of the state than a conscious ambition to further state ownership.

It is tempting to compare these three countries, where each state showed such different ambitions. There are fields of obvious differences, especially in regard to individual rights and ownership of means of production. Equally important were the differences just after World War II between Sweden, neutral in the war and without war damage, and the two Germanies, devastated in regard to material resources and with an enormous loss of manpower. Such contrasts, important though they are, have not directly created the differences which we are trying to clarify in this book. We have focused interest on how the three polities made use of political means in order to carry through certain aims in relation to the roles played by men and women in the home and the labour market.

In the research project of which this book forms a part, we have wanted to focus on areas that asked for immediate governmental intervention in Europe during the first post-war decades. Thus we have not chosen the rather well-known systems of welfare support for comparison. Housing and the role of women and men in the home and the labour market are the fields selected. They are intertwined, for the new labour market had to provide workers, women and men, for the expanding industrial and commercial sectors, and give them appropriate shelter and a hope of advancement through education for their children when they felt that their material resources were gradually rising. The comparison of housing policies has been carried out earlier.¹ It is to be regretted that we see no possibility for the moment of going ahead with a comparison of other policy fields, such as education, in the three states.

Society was not left on its own in any of the three countries. The state had ambitions and it felt the demand from the population that something should be done concerning the burning questions of daily life. The state was seen as an aid and a maid to clean up the mess after the war. Politicians were not content with fulfilling the demands of the people. They

had ambitions of their own. The state aimed to control and direct if it was to help.

All three states gave support to their populations, mainly in the form of welfare programmes but, indirectly, the limitation of capital resources to be used for the construction of residential areas was of equal importance. Subsidies and housing allowances played a great role in making newer and bigger apartments than earlier available for common people. To what extent and in what way investment in the export industry or conspicuous buildings in city planning or huge housing projects affected the private economy and living standard is far more difficult to show. Suffice it here to state that the differences between the three states in the field of housing were very prominent in the rhetoric of politicians, though far less obvious in the actual policies carried through. One may argue that hard economic facts overshadowed the visions in the field of housing, where capital investment was so important independently of which political ideology the state professed and favoured.

Further, socialist and non-socialist economies alike found an opportunity to increase the labour market through the introduction of women in types of work where they had not been frequently used before, especially not married women with children. To work out the effects of this novelty in the social organisation of work was not easy for experts, far less for the citizens in general. An increase of the family income by a half wage was more obvious than the eventual effects on the costs for day-care of children. When day-care was financed mainly through taxes, its eventual effects on the general level of wages became equally difficult to perceive for the common citizen as the effects of the diverse types of allowances, which were also introduced.

In such ways as these did our three states use economic means of different types to make their citizens accept and support the system promoted by each of them. At least in Sweden and the GDR the state also brought in its own propaganda resources to convince citizens that a break with traditional gender relations was much needed. The gender system treated here is, thus, the loose interrelationships that existed between the two sexes and how this interrelationship was transformed partly through state policy and partly in opposition to state policy.

“Something in the nature of a bloodless revolution ...”

How new gender relations became gender equality policy in Sweden in the nineteen-sixties and seventies

Christina Florin and Bengt Nilsson

So this is the situation. Some of the most influential people in Sweden have said that they think the sexes should no longer have separate roles in history. They want to see a state of affairs in which it will be as natural for a woman to have a job as it is for a man; a society in which men and women help each other with the household work. But are these dynamic people aware that this demand is something in the nature of a bloodless revolution—a revolution in the life of individuals and a transformation of the whole society.¹

These lines were written by a young civil servant for the purpose of informing other countries about the Swedish model or, rather, the Swedish gender model. The title of the book was *Swedish Women, Swedish Men*, and it was commissioned by the Swedish Institute whose function was to promote a positive picture of Sweden in other countries. The year was 1968 and the name of the government official was Anna-Greta Leijon, who then worked at the National Swedish Labour Market Board. The intention was to give a picture of our welfare policies and our strivings for a democratic relation between women and men. We wanted to be seen where changing gender roles were concerned as a country with visions.

This article was sponsored by the HSFR project Visions and bureaucracy aimed at steering societies. We also want to express our thanks to SCASSS (The Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences) which made this article possible through a stimulating research period for Christina Florin.

¹ Leijon, Anna-Greta (1968) *Swedish Women-Swedish Men*. The Swedish Institute: Stockholm, p. 41.

The pictures in the book are telling: they often show happily smiling fathers embracing their children while the mothers are at meetings, take re-schooling courses or are simply having a nice lie-in. But, according to Leijon, it would be long before the bloodless revolution had an impact and the book also revealed deficiencies: there were, for example, far too few places in the day nurseries. On the whole, resistance to change was strong.

It was no coincidence that it was a young woman in a Civil Service department who was the author of this book about Swedish emancipation. Leijon belonged to the group of young, left-wing intellectuals within the Social Democratic Party. She had already gained experience in many areas where she had come across women's issues as problematic—a family with a strong, yet oppressed mother, the girls' secondary school with women teachers who encouraged their pupils to go in for higher studies, the students' association Laboremus with friends who were female radicals, the lobby group 222 with gender role issues on the agenda, the local branch of the Swedish Social Democratic Party at Järfälla with an expansion of the day nursery system on their agenda and, finally, the National Swedish Labour Market Board—the powerful Civil Service department with huge resources and with a special programme for the activation of women.²

The quotation above is interesting for many reasons—for one thing because Anna-Greta Leijon in just a few lines has so lucidly captured the essence of the gender role debate of the sixties and put her finger on the deep-rooted problems that a change in habitual gender identities would entail. A transformation of the actual power relations between the sexes would put a great strain on the established institutions of society—a reorganised labour market, new child-care problems and different roles in the family. A radical change in the social gender system would have such far-reaching consequences that even Leijon herself seemed to doubt whether it could ever be accomplished. And she also grasped which social arenas would first need to be changed—women had to enter public life and get jobs and men had to enter the private sphere and the home. Both sexes had to be ready for change. This time it was not only women who had to

² Interview with Anna-Greta Leijon, 4/4 1997; her (1992) *Alla rosor skall inte tuktas!* Tidens förlag: Stockholm.

adjust to a male norm. Men would also have to take on double roles and become both wage-earners and parents. Every family would thus have two breadwinners and two parents who both took responsibility for the children. In other words, it was a two-breadwinner model and a two-parent model.

But who were the 'influential' and 'dynamic' persons who had observed that the older gender order was no longer valid and saw that the ingrained gender patterns had to be changed? Was she referring to the politicians? No, Leijon had realised that public officials too were involved in politics and at the National Swedish Labour Market Board she had seen how trade-union representatives, industrialists, interest groups, cultural workers and university graduates were involved in the dissemination of ideas and in policy-making. The dynamic people Leijon was here referring to might be called the "gender equality people". Suddenly they were everywhere—in the sixties they appeared at all levels of society and talked about gender roles, gender equality or equality. And when the attempt is made to trace their contributions and networks it is discovered how interrelated all these people, networks, groups, and organisations were. It is about these people, their networks and their political breakthrough that this article is concerned.

A new concept had also been discovered to describe how relations between women and men ought to be. It was called *jämställdhet*, gender equality. Previously people had talked about *women's rights* or *women's equality* but the new concept now began to be used in all sorts of contexts as a parallel to the word equality. The fact that the word gradually had such an impact indicates that it was both relevant and convenient, uniting many people even if it was, of course, interpreted in practice differently by different figures. It bridged class distinctions, sounded moderately harmless and functioned in the same way as the concept of the Swedish *folkhem*, the welfare state, had done in its day—disguising underlying conflicts so that they could be handled. It expressed no power relation and it was disembodied—it had no sexual undertones—the sexes were only supposed to be placed side by side as two abstract beings, symbols or ideal types. It is true that the concept had a visionary content, but it was a moderate vision. It indicated a direction but no explicit commitments or promises. Furthermore, the concept embraced and affected both women and men—it was

normative and educational—new demands were made on both sexes. It fitted in well with the socially minded and politicising spirit of the times that characterized Sweden in the sixties and seventies. As will be seen the gender-equality people were also involved in other linguistic strategies and discursive contexts which conferred cultural identity and made the debaters feel that they were participating in a progressive project.

Eva Moberg was an early advocate of *jämställdhet*, gender equality, as a politically correct term to describe the relationship between men and women.³ The earlier concept of *jämlikhet*, equality, included the word *likhet*, likeness, and could therefore easily be interpreted as if the sexual power of attraction between the sexes was endangered. She therefore preferred *jämställdhet*, gender equality. The two concepts were then used synonymously until the mid seventies when *jämställdhet*, gender equality, was officially introduced as the politically recommended term for political issues concerning the relationship between the sexes.⁴ This was done at the 1975 Party Conference of the Social Democratic Party and marked a breakthrough of the recognition that the gender issues per se had now been upgraded to the level of political issues and were a political field in their own right. In other words, the concept of gender equality was institutionalised in the seventies and this marked the beginning of what has been called state feminism—a political phenomenon implying that the state was now intervening in gender equality issues and that a number of officials in public administration, so-called femocrats or state feminists, were now being employed to handle feminist issues and to open up new fields for the promotion of gender equality.⁵

As early as 1972 Olof Palme had made a historic speech at the SAP Congress on the need to turn attention to the question of women's rights. Two years previously he had talked in Washington about the emancipation of men. The time was now ripe for a division of labour based on

³ Moberg, Eva (1962) *Kvinnor och människor*. Bonniers: Stockholm, p. 28.

⁴ Karlsson, Gunnel (1990) *Mansambället till behag. Sveriges socialdemokratiska kvinnoförbund*. Tiden: Stockholm, p. 171.

⁵ Nb. The term 'statsfeminism' (state feminism) should not be taken as pejorative but as descriptive. See, e.g., Hagberg, Jan-Erik & Nyberg, Anita and Sundin, Elisabeth (1995) *Att göra landet jämställt. En utvärdering av kvinnor och män i samverkan – Sveriges största satsning av jämställdhet på arbetsmarknaden*. Nerenius & Santérus förlag: Stockholm, pp. 156–182.

equality between men and women. According to Palme this called for a great expansion of child-care, of social services and extended participation in the formation of society. Women must be given the opportunity to broaden, step by step, the scope of their political activity. "We want to remove the obstacles that have always existed and still exist for women's equal rights and equal opportunities".⁶ The Party Conference resulted in a Government committee on gender equality under the supervision of the Prime Minister himself which gave it a certain status. The committee was headed by Thage G. Petersson and Anna-Greta Leijon was also given an important role in it. This meant that issues concerning the relationship between the sexes had now been placed on the political agenda and that a new concept—*jämställdhet*, gender equality—had been introduced which was able to distinguish this political issue from other political issues. This recognition was significant for the future. The vision had been given a kind of trademark which had made it easier to recognise it. And the Social Democrats had monopolised the issue—in competition with the Liberals and the Left. The idea of gender equality fitted in perfectly with the Party's hunt for a radical identity.

In spite of the spirit of Swedish moderation surrounding the concept of *jämställdhet* or gender equality, we would maintain that its significance was revolutionary in its time. It marked a new phase in the relationship between the sexes, a new "gender contract" as Yvonne Hirdman has called this relation.⁷ Something was underway which was so revolutionary that Government institutions saw fit to raise these issues at a political level. But how did the issue of gender equality wind up on the political agenda and why did it become part of a major political reconstruction in the welfare state?

⁶ Kullenberg, Annette (1996) *Palme och kvinnorna*. Utbildningsförlaget Brevskolan: Stockholm, pp. 50-66. Quotation p. 65.

⁷ The changing gender relations of the twentieth century have been studied above all by Yvonne Hirdman who calls the relations at different points of time a 'gender contract'. See, e.g., Hirdman, Yvonne (1988) 'The gender system—reflections on the social subordination of women'. *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift* 1988: 3; her (1998) *Women from Possibility to Problem? Gender Conflict in the Welfare State*. Research Report no. 3; her 'Genussystemet' (1990) in *Demokrati och makt i Sverige. Maktutredningens huvudrapport*. SOU 1990: 44.

What do we want to know?

We need to look at these issues at a more general level in order to be able to analyse how the changed relations between the sexes became politics. What theoretical assumptions can contribute to explaining what actually occurs when social problems are defined as so special that they are worth putting on the political agenda? When is the time ripe for an issue to be recognised as a problem? Why do people both inside and outside the political sphere devote themselves to a certain issue that seems to appear out of the blue and makes an impact on the political sphere? What has happened?

According to the American sociologist John W Kingdon a reasonably long period of preparation is often required on the part of various actors in the political arena—both inside and outside the government and elective body—before an issue can be placed on the political agenda.⁸ Kingdon calls these actors *policy entrepreneurs*. When an opportunity presents itself—in Kingdon's terminology a so-called policy window—the interested parties in a certain issue must quickly be at hand and provide immediate proposals as to how what is defined as a political problem is to be solved. These actors have for a long time tried to speak for their ideas in all sorts of contexts, carried them up to decision-making levels, loosened the surrounding system and connected them with the current tendency of the time. In this way these persons have an advantage over other potential actors who do not make it in time before the opportunity is lost. It is not the quantity of the actors that is significant, nor their position within or outside the State. The entrepreneurs can be elected politicians, individual public officials, representatives of organisations, professionals, journalists, etc. The road to success for the entrepreneurs is persistence, long preparation, and channels to power. They write articles, make speeches and take endless contacts until the policy window finally opens and they can enter the rough and tumble of debate. The window can open both during temporary unexpected situations, in connection with accidents, crises and at times when new national climates of opinion emerge or in connection with recurrent political events like special campaigns, elections, new gov-

⁸ Kingdon, John W. (1984) *Agendas: Alternatives and Public Policies*. Little, Brown and Company: Boston.

ernments, etc. The window can also open in times of structural transformation, for example, upward economic swings.

Kingdon's hypothesis of how policy processes emerge and are implemented has been developed in an American political context and need not at all be applicable to a Swedish political culture with a different organisational structure and a different historical tradition. The power structures and the form of political control are probably different in a political system with a strong as opposed to a weak government. The model also has a kind of gender-neutral approach as if the power structures and establishments were neutral and as if male and female actors might behave in the same way. But in spite of these deficiencies it is still worth trying out on Swedish material as a sort of overall frame of analysis because it combines both a structural and an actor's perspective and because we, just like Kingdon, want to trace what resources and strategies action groups and organised interests can mobilise, what visions are envisaged and in what circumstances the state intervenes. We also want to test a viewpoint of concepts in a historical perspective since we think that the actors or policy entrepreneurs can be more successful if they manage to find common concepts and 'languages' for their aims.

We have selected *one question* in social politics and family politics which has to do with the relations between the sexes which acquired increasing ideological explosive power—gender equality and its politicization. The question of a more equal relationship between men and women went to the core of gender identities and demanded changes in regard to the relation of the sexes to each other. It therefore generated considerable resistance and it affected indirectly all the other questions in the welfare state—labour-market policy, child care, family legislation, tax policies, old age pensions, the abortion question etc. In the realm of questions concerning equality, it is also to be expected that dynamic participants will be found with visions concerning the future social gender order to be created.

Who were these agents of change—the equality people—and what arenas did they exploit to advance these questions? What were their visions and what happened when these were politicized and came to be implemented? What symbols, 'language' and myths were the visions constructed out of? Why did we in Sweden gain a special field for equality with such characteristically bureaucratic terms as commissions, delega-

tions, programmes, executives, ministers, ombudsmen etc? How, accordingly, are we to interpret the Swedish gender model, and the attitude of Swedish women, historically and politically, in relation to the State? Why do we get the model of so-called state feminism? These are some of the questions that we shall discuss in the following.⁹

The Swedish gender model

Since the issues concerning the relationship between the sexes and the different roles in the family and society acquired such a central position in the public debate in the sixties, some group in society must have defined them as an urgent problem that should be dealt with. There had, of course, always been conflicts between the sexes but here they were given a prominence and visibility as never before. Something must have happened that caused this awakening and gave a kind of political legitimacy to these issues. Can we explain this phenomenon in terms of the spirit of the sixties and seventies, or relate it to the current dominant ideas or enterprising actors or must we turn to more concrete, material explanations? Or was it just an old problem of the relations between men and women that had gained a new lease of life?

There are many overall factors that might have been significant for the political awakening and the left-wing tendencies of the sixties and seventies—large-scale economic and social reforms with rationalisations and a tougher work climate, the development of the welfare state and the public sector, educational reforms and a general rise in the standard of living giving people both symbolic and material resources so that there was time over for solidarity actions with other groups and people. Some researchers maintain that a special solidarity culture developed among young people—especially students—finding expression in new movements, in a special language where demonstrations, symbols and political rituals provided

⁹ It should be noted that the equality questions have become politics in the Scandinavian countries even if to various degrees and at different times. In all of these countries it has been the social democratic regimes that have put these questions on the political agenda. See *Unfinished Democracy. Women in Nordic Politics* (1983) Eds: Elina Haavio Mannila et al. Pergamon Press, Oxford, pp. 166–168.

a context and a sense of togetherness¹⁰. This commitment focused on the people in the Third World, unjust wars, the working classes, women, prisoners, drug addicts, children, the environment.

This cultural revolt among young people resulted in an agreement between the old and the new Left which, in its turn, led to a general radicalisation of political life. And certainly there are signs of political changes during these decades as a consequence of these revolts among the young and of the growing awareness of how the class society functioned. An organisational wave of solidarity movements swept over the country. A programme on "Increased Equality" was one of the major issues taken up by the Social Democratic Party during this period, a programme including women's issues as an important part and as an aspect of the class issue.¹¹ The subordination of women tended to be characterised rather as an inadequate issue of equality as such, rather than as a matter of power between the sexes of the same class.

But if we content ourselves with referring to the "spirit of the times" and to the left-wing tendency as explanations of the gender equality discourse constructed in the sixties, the politicisation of the gender issue becomes just something that came with a collective radicalisation among students and other radical groups or as an awakening of the Social Democratic Party. The women would then just be one among all the groups that were going to be liberated. But it is not quite so simple. We shall show instead that the new gender equality policy, state feminism and the second wave of radical feminism had deeper endemic roots dating further back in time, much further than the radicalism of the 60's and 70's.

If these events are placed in a longer historical perspective, it is possible to trace a radical feminist policy in Sweden which is early compared to other countries and which is rooted in older specific social structures with a certain degree of interaction between the elites and the people and where

¹⁰ Salomon, Kim (1996) *Rebeller i takt med tiden. FNL-rörelsen och 60-talets politiska ritualer*. Rabén-Prisma: Stockholm. Salomon's book has been discussed in *Häftan för kritiska studier* by, among others, Klas Åmark and Urban Lindberg. See *Häftan för kritiska studier* 1997: 2.

¹¹ See Karlsson, Gunnel (1996) *Från broderskap till systerskap. Det socialdemokratiska kvinnoförbundets kamp för inflytande och makt i SAP*. Arkiv: Lund, pp. 226-266. See also the conclusions of the so-called Alva Myrdal-Committee's work—*Jämlikhet. Allas deltagande in arbetsliv och politik*. (1972) Prisma: Stockholm.

the forms for decision-making were based on consensus and compromise. This means that the Swedish model had a corresponding Swedish gender model which, of course, was not at all equal and which only appears to be radical compared with the gender models of other countries.¹² What, then, was unique about it? Well, it was the fact that Swedish women's social and civil rights happened to be formulated on an individual basis—not vis-à-vis the family. Swedish women had joined the labour force at an early date and since Sweden was a mainly agrarian country well into the 20th century it was the *working* woman who became the norm—the woman who gained legitimacy through her work.¹³ This gave her a certain *bargaining position* within her disadvantaged status and gradually she won recognition as an independent individual.

Naturally there existed also in Sweden a powerful middle-class ideal of femininity with the father as the bread-winner and the mother as the housewife, but it was not as rigidly established in Swedish family culture as in other countries. Institutional factors that changed the patriarchal gender order dating from the 19th century (the franchise, the right to occupy an office, the responsibility for a family, educational opportunity) were introduced in the 20s and in the period between the wars it was precisely the professional women who, through their professional organisations, were able to win a certain amount of political sympathy and gain some success.¹⁴ There is, therefore, some reason to speak of a sort of historical continuity in Swedish women's independent civic relationship with the state from the very beginning of the 20th century.

This relationship can be traced in the position of women in family policy. The 1921 Marriage Code gave Swedish women a unique position.¹⁵

¹² Hirdman, Yvonne (1994) 'Kvinnorna i välfärdsstaten.' I: *Den svenska modellen*. Eds. Per Thullberg & Kjell Östberg. Studentlitteratur: Lund, pp. 180–191.

¹³ Somme stad, Lena (1994) 'Privat eller offentlig välfärd? Ett genus perspektiv på välfärdsstaternas historisk formering'. *Historisk Tidskrift* 1994: 4 (offprint).

¹⁴ Östberg, Kjell (1966) *Efter rösträtten. Kvinnors utrymme efter det demokratiska genombrötet*. Symposium. Stockholm; Frangeur, Renée (1997) 'Feminismen och statsmakten i Sverige på 1930-talet'. Kvinnoarbetskommittén, kvinnorörelsen och SAP 1935–1939. *Arbetshistoria* 80–81, pp. 15–24.

¹⁵ Widerberg, Karin (1980) *Kvinnor, klasser och lagar 1750–1980* (1980) Liber: Lund, p. 71; Therborn, Göran (1996) *Europa, det moderna: samhällen i öst och väst, nord och syd 1945–2000*. Carlssons: Stockholm.

The married woman was placed on an equal footing with the man from the point of view of legal and economic affairs within the family—both husband and wife were given the same responsibilities and rights concerning the running of the home, providing for the family and the upbringing of the children. This was, for the married woman, the beginning of economic and social citizenship based on the concept of the individual, not on the view of the household where the father was the head of the family. The woman was subsequently released, step by step, from legal dependence on the family and a civic relationship between the state and the woman was built up – for example, in 1935 women received a pension on the same conditions as men¹⁶ and a law on the right of women to work was passed in 1939.¹⁷ A reform that raised the work of the housewife to a sort of gainful employment was the right to a sick-leave allowance for housewives in 1955. Married women, then, with or without children, were accorded a type of wage-earner status whether they worked within or outside the home, even if the allowance was minimal and was not more than pocket-money.

The Swedish woman, accordingly, slowly established her legal independence vis-à-vis her husband and became an individual in her own right with a direct relation with the state. She gained an independent role as a member of society and she was recognised and given legitimacy in her capacity of mother and worker. She gradually got, as we have already pointed out in the above, a new bargaining position even if it would take several decades before it could be used for political negotiating. As a rule each step on the road encountered strong and stubborn resistance and in spite of increasing independence the reforms contained in-built patriarchal structures which made it so that gender-segregating effects emerged once the laws were applied. In practice it was by and large the same old gender order as before even if things were happening at another level. Kerstin Abukhanfusa has shown in depth how the reforms conferred different responsibilities and rights to men as compared to women and how

¹⁶ Berge, Anders (1996) 'Socialpolitiken och det sociala rummets organisering'. *Retfærd* nr 73, pp. 25ff.

¹⁷ Frangeur, Renée (1999) *Yrkeskvinna eller makens tjänarinna? Striden om yrkesrätten för gifta kvinnor i mellankrigstidens Sverige*. Arkiv: Lund

it was always the women who got the worst of it.¹⁸ Since the social benefits were in most cases based on the principle of income the women's share of these benefits tended to be smaller, since women had lower incomes or no incomes at all. Does this mean that these formal rights had no significance whatsoever? Yes they did, for the *principles* concerning justice could provide a basis for future negotiations. They could be used as political weapons in debates and controversies, which did indeed occur during the thirties for example when a law denying the right of married women to work was close to being passed.¹⁹ It is here also that the demographic situation was to affect the decision.

In connection with the economic crisis in the thirties there was a steep decline in the birthrate in Sweden.²⁰ This stimulated reform work in the field of family policy involving the implementation of different kinds of collective aids—preventive maternity and child care, school meals, free maternity care, advance allowances, maternity allowances, etc—that is, all the things we associate with the first phase of the development of the Swedish Welfare State. This development continued after the Second World War when Sweden had an economic advantage over the countries that had participated in the war which meant that the ideology of the welfare state could continue to be translated into social reform policy. The basic welfare reforms—housing policy, old age pension, unemployment insurance, child allowances, health insurance and supplementary pension—had already been introduced in the forties and fifties—reforms affecting both men and women.²¹

When we enter the period focused on in our study—the sixties—some programmes in the field of family policy had already gained ground and

¹⁸ Abukhanfusa, Kerstin (1987) *Piskan och moroten. Om könens tilldelning av skyldigheter och rättigheter*. Carlssons: Stockholm, p. 68 and passim.

¹⁹ Current research by Silke Neunsinger, Uppsala.

²⁰ Hatje, Ann-Katrin (1974) *Befolkningsfrågan och välfärden. Debatten om familjepolitik och nativitetsökning under 1930- och 40-talen*. Allmänna förlaget: Stockholm. Hirdman, Yvonne (1989) *Att lägga livet tillrätta*. Carlssons bokförlag: Stockholm.

²¹ The Social Welfare Committee was appointed in 1937 to make a survey of the Swedish welfare system. The Committee was to continue working for 14 years and issued altogether 19 major investigations and 6 pro memoria with investigations and proposals concerning the whole of the Swedish social welfare system in the widest sense. We thank Klas Åmark for this information.

the structures of everyday life were being exposed to new challenges in the form of strong economic growth. The “social landscape”²²—the gender landscape in particular—began to assume a new form. When the extensive reform work was initiated in the sixties the changes were already firmly anchored in the Swedish historical context and the Swedish woman held an exceptional position dating back even before the far-reaching reforms of the seventies. Our first proponents of equality in the sixties began to act more unitedly, both inside and outside the state system in a situation where a lot of ground had already been broken. During the sixties we also had a large generation of young people emerging as the large families of the forties grew up. At the same time the numbers of the old mounted, requiring more care services and increased investment from the public sector.

How had the social art of engineering of the state affected the inner life of the family? The norms governing the relationship of mother-father-child were regulated in greater detail and were opened up to intervention by the state – schooling, working with children, maternity care, child care, divorces, abortion, hygiene, health, housing and much else that affected the family became standardized and bureaucraticized, and the role of women in this process of change was great. In legislation and the regulations concerned with the modern family, emphasis was also placed on the psychological and pedagogic responsibilities of the parents. Even a large part of family life still consisted in getting money to provide for the family and much practical work had to be done in the home to make it work, the emotional side of parenthood became an important aspect which it fell to women to take care of. The mothers, then, were subjected to new demands and controls, but also presented with *new opportunities* along with the increase in status of the child and motherhood by means of the welfare policies.²³ The state had to both give and take in order to maintain a balance between responsibilities and rights. At the same time, the environments in which the child lived were professionalized, and in connection with this there was created yet another civic state for the woman/mother—to serve

²² Ahrne, Göran & Roman, Christine & Franzén, Mats (1996) *Det sociala landskapet. En sociologisk beskrivning av Sverige från 50-tal till 90-tal*. Korpen: Gothenborg, p. 36.

²³ Moqvist, Ingeborg (1997) *Den kompletterade familjen. Föräldraskap, fostran och förändring i en svensk småstad*. Institution of Pedagogics: Umeå University, pp. 49 ff.

the government institutions so that the children would be neat and tidy and could function in school, in the day nursery, and so on. This is another example of a new contract between women and the state.

What were the new problems facing the state?

After the Second World War it became clear that there was something at the very core of the Swedish gender contract that was no longer in balance and called for restructuring. It was as if the war had turned the traditional behaviour of the sexes upside down. The social activities of women had undergone change in a number of areas and this had been noticed by certain people active within and outside government bodies. Certain measuring scales can be used to measure these changes, even if the effects of social policies are not easy to judge. A clear effect was the demographic change which caused the state authorities in the sixties to wish to gain control of the situation and investigate the social conditions. The upward or downward trends of the demographic curves say something about the social temperature existing between the members of a family and it was here that the family statistics showed that something had happened. There were in fact signs that "marriage was being lifted out of the family", that is to say, a growing tendency for the modern family not to be the same as a nuclear family consisting of a married mother and father with children and all members of the family living under the same roof. A family could be practically anything, and the repeated investigations concerning the family showed that the authorities regarded family questions and gender relations as a problem.²⁴ The enormous quantity of official public enquiries set in motion show clearly how questions concerning changing gender relations were of 'burning' interest.

Year	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89
Number	34	74	41

Figure 1. The number of commission reports on gender issues in the sixties, seventies and 80s. Source: Swedish Government Official Reports 1960-1980.

²⁴ Levin, Irene & Trost, Jan (1992) *Women and the Concept of the Family*. (Family Reports 21: Uppsala University).

Figure 2. The annual number of divorces per 1000 married women 1990–1994.
Source: Divorces and separations—background and development. Demographic Reports 1995:1.

The mass of information which was gathered and which was meant to be of use to politicians and government officials covered everything from family life, marriage, divorce, child care, women's labour market, to sexuality, abortion, education, and the situation of single mothers. The Swedish political bureaucrats and professional experts had found a language that was understandable and where words like family, children, care and women were important terms and key concepts. These were the decades of the sociologists and psychologists. What then were the discoveries about, above all, women that were made in these enquiries?

Divorces had increased and marriage rested on a shaky foundation. Marriage was beginning increasingly to be seen as an emotional alliance and therefore living together as a couple involved a greater risk of being exposed to tension when the wear and tear and conflicts of everyday life arrived and when the economic basis for living together did not exist in the household. Figure 2 shows the increase in divorces in the 20th century.

Up to the beginning of our own century, divorces were very rare. During the first decades of the 20th century not even one per cent of all children lived in families where the parents had got divorced but as we can see from the above diagram the annual number of marriages ending with a divorce have increased steadily over the whole century. In the thirties a few thousand couples divorced each year and in the early sixties the corresponding figure was approximately 10,000 couples each year with a peak in 1974–75 with roughly 25,000 divorces per year. If we include separations between cohabiting couples we had reached 50,000 divorces per year in 1991. This means that the divorce frequency today is 25 times higher than that of the turn of the century. There are, of course, other reasons for the increasing number of separations than the frailty of the emotional marriage.

The increasing number of divorces can also be explained by other, more long-term social changes: changing traditions, secularisation, mobility in modern society and the increasing number of women working outside the home. The fact that divorces had become so frequent helped to make them less dramatic, which also made it easier for the parties involved to take this decision. The stigma of shame at being a ‘divorcee’ was being eliminated together with the other markers of humiliation surviving from the old times. In the motivation for the 1974 Divorce Act it was said, among other things, that “marriage shall be seen as a form for voluntary cohabitation between *independent* persons” (italics ours) and according to the Standing Committee on Laws this new law was the result of women’s new position in society and of the decreasing dependence of mothers and children on the husband/father. The new role of the father as seen by the state was also emphasised by the Minister of Justice in the 1974 Act:

Society is now, wholly or partly, responsible for a number of needs that used to be provided for by the family, which means that the economic strain in a divorce situation are not as heavy as before.²⁵

This shows us that there was an awareness that the woman was now less dependent on her husband and that she could, with assistance from the

²⁵ ‘Skilmässor och separationer—bakgrund och utveckling’. *Demografiska rapporter*, SCB, 1995: 1, pp. 96ff.

state, fend for both herself and the children after a divorce. There had also been other changes in the private sphere that the authorities became aware of in the sixties. People had started to live together in the form of marriage but without getting married, that is, cohabiting between unmarried couples was increasing. This was, strictly speaking, not a new phenomenon. In the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century many couples cohabited without getting married which was indicated by the increasing number of illegitimate children.²⁶ However, from the 1930s and up to the middle sixties the number of marriages had increased. But in the sixties it fell again! The decline in the total number of marriages between 1965 and 1974 was 40 per cent (from 60,000 marriages per year in 1965 to 38,000 per year in 1974), while during the same period cases of cohabitation increased from a few per cent in the early sixties to 12 per cent in 1971.

Experts on family law, sitting on the large-scale government commission appointed in 1969 to investigate marriage issues in modern society, highlighted the phenomenon in two major reports which presented new research on these matters from three different countries.²⁷ This report showed that Sweden and Denmark exhibited similar patterns of cohabitation and that this form of living together was more accepted here than in, for example, the US. A questionnaire also showed that there were several reasons for cohabiting in Sweden. Many young persons regarded cohabiting as an experimental marriage without a life-long commitment but a large number of them also had ideological viewpoints concerning traditional marriage—they simply did not want to get married on principle. Cohabitation was also prevalent among those who had already been married before. The following quotation from the commission *To Cohabit and to Marry* shows the new attitudes that were spreading among people.

As has been mentioned before the traditional picture of living together and of marriage has changed and practically all who live together today do so without getting married /. . . / For quite a few persons in our material who now live together it is the case that they have only known each other for a

²⁶ Matovic', Margareta (1984) *Stockholmsäktenskap. Familjebildning och partnerval i Stockholm 1850–1890*. Stockholm university: Stockholm.

²⁷ Jergeby, Ulla & Nordlund, Agnethe & Trost, Jan (1975) 'Sammanboende ogifta förr och nu'. I: *Tre sociologiska rapporter utgivna av familjelagssakunniga. SOU:1975:24*, pp 125–169; Trost, Jan & Lewin, Bo (1978) *Att sambo och gifta sig. Fakta och föreställningar. SOU:1978:55*.

short time and must be said to have moved in with each other during some kind of courtship period. / ... / and for other persons in our material this might be compared with some kind of engagement period in the traditional system. / ... / We can, for very good reasons, assume that there is very great social acceptance of cohabitation.²⁸

The enquiries showed that there had been a clear change of mentality, particularly among young people, in their attitude to marriage. The statement therefore that marriage was being taken out from the family was not far from the truth.

There were also other problems: those couples who did get married did so earlier than their own parents—the age for marrying fell and in 1970 it was 21 years of age for women.²⁹ But in spite of the fact that the couples were young when they moved in with each other or got married there were still fewer children in the families. From having been a country in the 19th century where a small number of women had many children, Sweden had become a country where many women had few children at a fairly early age.³⁰ According to the 1972 report of the experts on family law, even so the number of children born did not correspond to the the needed level of reproduction. It should also be noted that there was also a decline in the birth-rate—the average number of children per woman—after 1964. See figure 3.

The fact that women had fewer children at a fairly early age had other consequences. When the children left home the woman had at least 20 childless years before retiring. This phenomenon began to attract attention in the sixties at a time when industry was crying out for manpower. A discussion arose as to whether it would not be possible to try and draw these married women into the labour market. From the rising frequency of women entering employment, to be dealt with below, clear patterns also emerge which speak of changes in the relationship of the sexes. Could not the housewife also change jobs and be a breadwinner herself? This was to be the next major challenge to the traditional division of labour in the family.

²⁸ *Att sambo och gifta sig* (1978), p. 65.

²⁹ 'Skilsmässor och separationer—bakgrund och utveckling'. *Demografiska rapporter* 1995: 1, p. 23.

³⁰ Liljeström, Rita & Liljeström, Gillan & Fürst-Mellström, Gunilla (1976) *Roller i omvandling. En rapport på uppdrag av delegationen för jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män. SOU* 1976:71, p. 29.

Figure 3. Birthrate, net figures 1960–1969.

Source: Family and marriage I. Report from the Expert Commission on Family Law. Swedish Government Official Reports 1972:41, p.336.

Over and above measurable changes, we can also observe other factors which are probably significant for the new relations of women to men. One such factor was the opportunity to regulate child birth and reproduction itself. The acceptance of the pill and the loop as contraceptive devices in the sixties must have had a profound effect on women's independence and resulted, as we know, in new sexual habits in the form of the so-called sexual liberalism of the sixties.³¹ Another phenomenon affecting women in particular was the growing number of illegal abortions. From the fifties onwards growing numbers of Swedish women started going to Poland in order to have an abortion. There was a lively debate in the newspapers about these "trips to Poland" resulting in a State Commission in 1965. This is a concrete example of how women's individual practice formed the basis of the reconsideration by the state of various kinds of legislation.³²

³¹ Lennerhed, Lena (1995) *Frihet att njuta: Sexualdebatten i Sverige på 1960-talet*. Norstedts förlag: Stockholm.

³² We have borrowed this idea on the significance of individual behaviour for political decisions from the research of Maud Eduards. See Eduards Landby, Maud (1990) 'Att studera och värdera välfärd'. *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift* 1920:2, p. 8ff.; the abortion question has also been dealt with by Swärd, Stefan (1984) *Varför Sverige fick fri abort—Ett studium av en policyprocess*. Stockholm University: Stockholm.

We believe that all these factors taken together—the historical continuity of female independence, the social behaviour of women which showed itself in new demographic patterns and sexual habits and a changing labour market—form the basis of the politicisation of the vision of gender equality in the sixties and seventies. It was, of course, helped along by the general radicalisation of the rest of society. But for an institutionalisation of the vision to take place, it was required that certain agents—or in Kingdon's words, policy entrepreneurs—with contacts with the state authority formulate the problems and that a 'policy window' be opened so that the agents could come together and put these issues on the agenda. We believe that this 'window' took the form of the economic boom in the early years of the sixties and the need for manpower in industry. And there were plenty of females (and males) with visions about women's equality, ready to act in formulating discourses about gender roles and about equality between the sexes. We shall place them at the base of the Swedish political culture—a political alliance between those in the labour market, the bureaucracy, the organizations and the state. These activators managed to find a language which suited the times and to create linguistic situations in areas where people from different sectors of society could interact. It made a favourable impression on people from the media and other intellectual groups and with a little help from the media the ball soon started rolling. The equality-people could now get going.

This language included certain recurring prestige words—long-term commissions and industrial growth, the labour market, gender roles, equality, development, gender equality, welfare, and the good of the child. Much was said about children. These are the titles of some government investigations in one single year—1975:

- Children's social environment
- Society and children's development
- Children's health
- Children's upbringing and development
- Pre-school, school and leisure time
- The economy of households with children
- Children and their physical environment
- Children and their parents' work
- Children's culture
- Children's environment and the national public economy

Child-minding in a historical perspective
A political science analysis of children's political resources
Cooperation in the child-care system
Children's summer activities
Shortened hours of work for the parents of small children

The year 1975 stands out as the peak of the children's century—at least as far as the intentions of the state authority were concerned! Every conceivable aspect of children's existence was investigated and the political parties had different opinions about what was best for the family, but even so, as Jonas Hinnfors has shown in his thesis, they were successful in finding a sort of political consensus that made political decisions possible.³³ What then was the nature of the visions about the parents of the children and about their relations—how would they become good parents and wage-earners? It is an interesting coincidence that the focus was on the welfare of the children at the same time as the women were expected to loosen their ties with the family. This can be interpreted to mean that the equality of women could not be accomplished until the well-being of the child was first taken into account.

The visions of the sex roles and gender equality

In this section we will try to trace some major figures and their various visions. We argue that different groupings and associations gave different meanings to concepts like equality and gender equality but that the reason they could agree was that these differences of opinion could be masked and bridged in practice in a joint discourse where different categories and extremes could be accommodated—members of the Liberal Party and Social Democrats, women and men, liberal feminists and radical feminists. The different groups had different goals, each with its vision of what would happen in the end, but the differences did not need to block the possibility of negotiation. There was a common direction. Here we would especially emphasize that the female promoters of the equality issue often cooperated over party lines and with men. It was a vital strategy for the fe-

³³ Hinnfors, Jonas (1993) *Familjepolitik. Samhällsförändringar och partistrategier 1960-1990*. Almqvist & Wiksell International: Gothenborg University.

male actors in the civil service or politics to find support for their decisions among men with power and influence. The attitude seems to have been the same in all the committees and coordination groups we have come into contact with. It was not possible to make progress without male support—which indicates that women negotiated from an inferior position. This is how Britt-Marie Lepp, formerly a civil servant at the National Swedish Labour Market Board, describes how she and her superior, Ingegerd Jönsson, used to work:

We avoided feminist concepts, we didn't want to get caught in that trap but, who knows, we may have been feminists after all...We were called the 'suffragettes on the 4th floor'. But for us who worked in the 'Detail' (The Detail for activating female labour) it wasn't a question of the struggle for women's rights in the ordinary sense but of a struggle for jobs that needed to be done and that women wanted. When Ingeborg walked in the corridors the male civil servants said: 'Remember not to promise anything'—because she was phenomenal when it came to making people accept and adopt her ideas...She was inspired...She found support for all her propositions—especially with Bertil Ohlsson, the Director-General of the National Swedish Labour Market Board, who was a feudal lord ruling over his realm. If Ingeborg didn't win strong support for a decision among all those who might be against it, she didn't want to proceed—a commendable strategy—otherwise we wouldn't have got anywhere.³⁴

What was new about the discourse of the sixties about gender roles and, later on, equality was the view that women's subordinate position in working life and in society was the result not so much of biological functions and sexuality than of cultural constructions—roles, prejudices, and concepts. The behaviours of the sexes were roles that could be dispensed with. The goal of the new vision was to create a policy that would abolish the socially created differences between the sexes, a vision which was to become a teaching experience for both women and men. A man must be given the right to be a good parent on the same premises as a woman. A woman must be given the right to renounce her caring duties for work outside the home and for a career. Or rather, all should be able to be one and the other—be able to combine work and family—that was the ideal. It was gainful employment for women that would change everything—that

³⁴ Interview with Britt-Marie Lepp 12/II 1997.

is where the focus would be. 'Work' or 'women's gainful employment' became a metaphor with great symbolic force. It became a political lodestar and people mostly pretended that 'work' was gender neutral even if, in reality, all knew that it meant different things for men and for women. Where and when, then, did the discourse first arise concerning the equal rights of the sexes and responsibilities to work and family?

The origin of the demand for a change of the prevailing gender contract must be sought in the practice and experience of the women who had already entered working life as workers or salaried employees even during the decades before the sixties. Even if these women formed a heterogeneous group with great variations in class background and age there are early signs that it was precisely professional women who were the first to take up the subject of women's rights and work. From a questionnaire conducted by the Housewives' Association in 1937 it emerged clearly that for the most part housewives who had worked before getting married also wished to maintain contact with working life for the express purpose of being able to return to it when the children had grown up.³⁵ In Stockholm more than 37 per cent of the married women worked outside the home as early as 1933.

The conditions of the labour market during World War II gave additional support to the growing tendency of women to take gainful employment.³⁶ During the war women also gained increased access to areas of employment which traditionally had been dominated by men. A great number of women also managed to keep in contact with the labour market in the postwar period, but the majority of married women nevertheless stayed at home and were housewives towards the end of the forties and the whole of the fifties. Swedish women had internalised the dual roles at an early stage—they were both mothers and workers. Hirdman's characterization of this period as the 'period of the housewife's contract' is very much to the point. There is a great amount of source material from this period showing that it was precisely the housewife who was both the ideal and the reality in the Swedish average marriage. The statistics in figure 4 show us a picture of the situation.

³⁵ *Svenska Dagbladet* 31/4 1937.

³⁶ Wikander, Ulla (1992) 'Kvinnor, krig och industriell rationalisering.' I: *Kvinnohistoria från antiken till våra dagar*. Utbildningsradion: Stockholm, pp. 188–202.

GIFTA KVINNOR PÅ ARBETSMARKNADEN 1952

Figure 4 Married women in different age groups in the labour market in 1952. (Married 1–3, 15–18 years without children, with one child and with two children).

Source: När, var, hur.1953.

It can be seen from the diagram that the number of women in gainful employment at the beginning of the fifties was still relatively low. The welfare state policies of the forties had considerably eased the situation of women and given them new responsibility in the family but at the same time it consolidated the ideal of the traditional family. According to Klas Åmark this development was in complete accordance with the policy of Gustaf Möller, the Minister of Health and Social Affairs. Möller wished to establish the welfare policies on the principle of allowances with a male bread-winner and a woman working in the home, but the great Social Welfare Committee and LO wished to steer towards a social policy based

on wage earnings.³⁷ The more a person earned, the more that person received in benefits. This line won, and in all probability acted as an incitement to women to enter the labour market. However, cracks in the portrait of the idealised housewife became visible during these decades. According to a Gallup Poll which the Social Democratic Women's Association had carried out in 1953 it emerged that while 61% of women working at home stated that they were not happy with one or several jobs in the household, 63% of those in gainful employment reported that they were happy with their work.³⁸ To be an employed woman did not entail any stigma. And we can see from figure 4 that younger married women with small children had begun working on a large scale as early as 1952. A process had already started in the younger generation in the fifties which then accelerated in the sixties and seventies. By then over half a million women went out in the labour market.³⁹

The vision of equality between the sexes was accordingly focussed especially on work, and the great breakthrough of the sixties for a change in the position of women emerged from the inner core of labour market politics – the trade unions, business and the parties in the labour market. It was this milieu that was the forcing ground for the spreading of idea about women and gainful employment and so, indirectly, for a new family policy and equality policy. The National Board of Labour—AMS—became, as we shall see, an important administrator and source of inspiration for an expansion of the female labour market and with its large resources AMS also became an important producer of ideology in the process of converting housewives into wage-earners.

In the following we shall also maintain that in addition to the significance of the structural explanations there were also important changes in the power structure of the contemporary figures involved. Here we shall primarily deal with the work of organization carried out in connection

³⁷ Cp. Klas Åmark's coming research report on welfare policies in the project '– Välfärdsstat i brytningstid'. The questions taken up in the Social Democratic Women's Association during these years dealt almost exclusively with family questions. Cp. Karlsson (1996) p. 32.

³⁸ Karlsson, Gunnel (1996) p. 230.

³⁹ Axelsson, Christina (1992) *Hemmafrun som försvann. Övergången till lönearbete bland gifta kvinnor i Sverige 1968–1981*. Institutet för social forskning: Stockholm University, nr 21, p. 15.

with the parties in the labour market, in particular SAF, LO and TCO⁴⁰ during the postwar period. The demands on society made by, for example, LO women to balance the equation of work and family life has undoubtedly been undervalued in earlier research. It is here that the new research of Yvonne Hirdman and Ylva Waldemarsson on LO's female politics has contributed important knowledge about women's participation or lack of participation in the largest of the union organizations, LO.⁴¹ The increase in gainful employment had the effect of making visible deficiencies present in the freedom of choice of these women. Discussions, however, on the question of equality of wages led not only to an agreement between LO and SAF but also to the creation of the so-called *Arbetsmarknadens kvinnonämnd* (AKN, the Labour Market Women's Committee), special women's councils within LO and TCO, as well as female union ombudspersons. The activities which developed in *LO:s kvinnoråd* (LO's Women's Council) and in hundreds of women's committees throughout the country were to become important forums for discussions, for the raising of awareness and for decision-making among primarily working women and men, even if the difficulties faced by women in realizing their visions were obvious in the male-run LO.

Behind AKN stood SAF, LO, and TCO. The Women's Committee can be seen as an example of cooperation between the parties involved reflecting the spirit of Saltsjöbaden, consensus. Relatively large economic resources could be used rather freely for educational and propaganda purposes in connection with female gainful employment. The demands to be made on society were to be concentrated on social services (the extension of child care), education (vocational training for women) or changes in economic conditions (an upgrading of work traditionally dominated by women and individual taxation).⁴²

No-one was left in doubt as to the goals of AKN. As early as 1952 it was explained in a statement that:

⁴⁰ Unions of employers, (SAF) workers (LO) and civil servants (TCO).

⁴¹ Hirdmann, Yvonne (1998) *Med kluven tunga. LO och genusordningen*. Atlas: Stockholm; Waldemarsson, Ylva (1998) *Mjukt till formen, hårt till innehållet. LO:s kvinnoråd 1947-1967*. Atlas: Stockholm.

⁴² Anna-Lisa Lagby 1960 in *Fackföreningsrörelsen*, p. 378. Interview with Anna-Lisa Lagby 15/4-97, Mats Bergom-Larsson 12/2-98, Gertrud Sigurdson 3/4-97.

... the willingness of women to remain in paid employment throughout their lifetime [is] a condition for equality between men and women in working life, something which this Committee aims to promote.⁴³

Family and Working Life was the title of a conference in 1959. A new definition of the division of responsibilities in the family was announced; it was no longer thought appropriate to talk in terms of women's issues; responsibility for change lay in both wage-earning and working in the home. Co-operation between AKN and Swedish sociologists like Edmund Dahlström was being developed.⁴⁴ Dahlström had for several years been engaged on investigations for the SNS, the Centre for Business and Policy Studies, a research centre in close contact with SAF, the employers' federation. His findings were later published in the book *The Life and Work of Women*.⁴⁵ We see here how gender questions were being brought into prominence in the realm of public organizations as early as the fifties.

There was, however, substantial opposition to this development in the inner circles of LO. A few centrally placed women, nevertheless, managed, by sustained effort and the building of a tactical network with a few positive men, to bring about changes even here. LO's Women's Council had been engaged in the question since the beginning of the forties.⁴⁶ In 1963 a pamphlet with the title *The Day-Care Issue—A Problem of the Labour Market*, written by Gunnar Persson, the Chairman of the Social Democratic Students' Union, was published under the auspices of LO. The author argued for the expansion of day-care centres to meet the needs of the labour market, but it was not until the mid seventies that such a scheme got seriously underway.

Working women, accordingly, had through practical experience become conscious of the need to have among other things the support of the state as a condition for removing obstacles to the participation of women in the

⁴³ Kyle, Gunhild (1971) *Gästarbetarska i mansambället. Studier i industriarbetande kvinnors villkor i Sverige*. Liber: Stockholm, p. 231.

⁴⁴ *Fackföreningsrörelsen 1959 II*, p. 429.

⁴⁵ *Kvinnors liv och arbete* (1962), Eds.: Edmund Dahlström, Harriet Holter, Stina Thyberg. SNS: Stockholm,

⁴⁶ Kyle, Gunhild (1979), p. 231. Interview Lagby 15/4-97 and Sigurdson 3/4-97; on the day-care issue and LO, see Hirdman (1998), pp. 253-258. On LO's Women's Council, see Waldermarsson (1998).

labour market.⁴⁷ However, political support for these ideas was not immediately forthcoming, in addition to the fact, already mentioned, that backing from LO centrally was still far too weak. Nevertheless, it had been noticed even earlier within the Social Democratic Party that the Party's links with women employed in the professions were weak. Vague attempts were made to attract this new and interesting group of voters.⁴⁸ This was to take place primarily in competition with the Liberal Party which was first to give prominence to women during the election campaign of 1960.⁴⁹

In an article in *Tiden*, Ulla Lindström, the Social Democratic Minister, used metaphors based on spring-cleaning in connection with the question of gender equality in the sixties. The parties, she says, are letting in a breath of fresh air and cleaning up their programmes before an important election and in the process are discovering *women*.⁵⁰ Ulla Lindström had detected which way the wind was blowing. The goal of equality between women and men in working life and in the home was to be found in the Social Democratic programme from the 1960s onwards.⁵¹ But the solution found in the Party programme to the conflict between employment and work in the home was rather rationalizations within the home than increased participation on the part of men.⁵² There existed, however, inbuilt conflicts within the top levels of the Social Democratic Party, between on the one hand a political establishment strongly coloured by male academics married to working wives—Erlander, Wigforss, Myrdal, Palme and on the other side trade union leaders representing a more traditional view of women.⁵³

Under the leadership of Inga Thorsson, Chairwoman of the Social Democratic Women's Union, however, representatives of LO women and

⁴⁷ Kyle (1979), p. 195, noted that the word equality did not appear in the pamphlet.

⁴⁸ Svensson, Torsten (1994) *Socialdemokratins dominans. En studie av den svenska socialdemokratins partistrategi*. Almqvist&Wiksell: Stockholm.

⁴⁹ Drangel, Louise (1984) 'Folkpartiet och jämställdhetsfrågan' in *Liberal ideologi och politik 1934-1984*, Folk och samhälle: Stockholm, pp. 390-392 and 421.

⁵⁰ Lindström, Ulla (1960) *Tiden*, nr 4, p. 205.

⁵¹ Ohlander (1989) 'Det osynliga barnet. Kampen om den socialdemokratiska familjepolitiken' in *Socialdemokratins samhälle*. Tiden: Stockholm. p. 187.

⁵² Ohlander (1989), p. 183

⁵³ Kullenberg (1996), p. 163, Interview Sigurdson 3/4-97. Cf. the divided attitude of the Liberal Party in Drangel (1984), p. 357.

the women's and students' unions tried to arouse the interest of the Party's executive body in those questions neglected by the Party which were of "great human interest", questions, they claimed, which could even be taken up in an election campaign. Women had the impression that they were meeting party leaders who were trying to listen to them even if party politics was still dominated by a man's and a woman's side, to cite Ulla Lindström.⁵⁴ It is clear that attention was also given to the competition from the Liberal Party in the matter of a possible increase in the number of female voters.⁵⁵ One result of the meeting was the formation of a study group, the so-called *Women's Committee* which was given a certain freedom of action. This committee included representatives in favour of a radical equality policy (Inga Thorsson, Maj-Britt Sandlund, Sigrid Ekendahl, Rudolf Meidner, Per Holmberg) as well as a minority of more cautious party tacticians (Tage Erlander and Nancy Eriksson).⁵⁶ In addition, in 1961 a number of prominent Social Democratic women issued as part of the debate a provocative book entitled *Tio kvinnor tycker* ('The Thoughts of Ten Women').⁵⁷ In this work different voices and mixed viewpoints were presented; it is difficult to make out a unanimous party line.

Nor could middle-class women any longer count on being able to employ a housemaid or have a girl to look after the children so as to reconcile the demands of a domestic and working life. Even here new ideological or practical solutions to the problem were being sought. Support from TCO for the demands being made for working women remained, however, weak for a long time.⁵⁸

The people who championed the visions of a more equal society were also to be found among a young generation of academics with liberal or socialistic dreams. In the ideology of socialism and in the heritage from

⁵⁴ Lindström, Ulla (1970) *Och Regeringen satt kvar! Ur min politiska dagbok*, Bonniers: Stockholm, p. 30.

⁵⁵ Karlsson (1996), p. 169 ff.

⁵⁶ Interviews with Maj-Britt Sandlund 10/4-97 and Anne-Marie Lundgren 11/5-97.

⁵⁷ *Tio kvinnor tycker*. (1961) Lisa Mattson et al. Tidens förlag: Stockholm.

⁵⁸ Irlinger, Irma (1990) *TCO och kvinnorna Tidsperioden 1944-1974*; Ekonomisk historia: Uppsala University; Nilsson, Bengt (1996) *Kvinnor i statens tjänst—från biträden till tjänstemän*, *Studia Historica Upsaliensis*, nr 179, p. 275 ff. Interview Britt Marie Bystedt 3/4-98.

Engels and utopian socialism the oppressed housewife could achieve equality through paid work. Intellectual Social Democrats, who backed the idea of social engineering and believed in the role that the modernized home could play, explored the possibility of a more balanced, comradesly relationship between married couples and they demanded a change of attitude from the men. They were to play a more active part in family life. Optimistic visions of a 'new', more harmonious family were presented by, among others, Alva and Gunnar Myrdal in *Kris i befolkningsfrågan* ('Crisis in the Population Question') as early as the thirties. The home would no longer remain as before only a female domain or a male resting-place. In this synopsis of the future each adult would in principle be self-supporting. Men and women would work side by side and neither had power over the other. The upbringing of children in its new form would make no distinction between male and female tasks. Public education, propaganda in the idiom of the time, should have put an end to the myths of male superiority and of their special duties as providers.

Criticism of the roles adopted in the contemporary family was sharp among the visionaries of the thirties. At the same time it was noted that the narrowed role of the woman created with the coming of industrialism was in the historical perspective only incidental. A key-roll was assigned to professionally led and pedagogically skilled child care. It was not just to be a 'parking-place' for the children of employed working-class families, but open to children from all classes. These ideas on the so-called day nursery schools, which were to be free of the spirit of an institution, were long before their time and were to slumber for more than 20 years.⁵⁹

The arguments concerning equality returned, however, as a theme in the fifties in, among other works, Alva Myrdal's and Viola Klein's *Kvinnans två roller* ('Women's Two Roles'), published in 1957. This book, which received much international attention, made the cautious suggestion that it would be practically possible to return to work after a period at home in connection with the birth of a child. It did not go so far, however, as to dare seriously to question the double role model or demand a change in

⁵⁹ Hirdman (1989), p. 50, 107; Myrdal, Alva & Gunnar (1934) *Kris i befolkningsfrågan*. Bonniers: Stockholm, pp. 286-325.

the man's role. Mothers should have the right to return to working life when the child was bigger. Here there was talk of "the woman's natural life-rhythm".⁶⁰

The liberals also sought aid from the classic ideologists. The individualism of Mills, for example, was central to some intellectuals. Inspiration was also derived from the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights ratified as early as 1946. The condition was equal pay for equal work, equal opportunities for education, the same taxation regulations. The journalist Eva Moberg received great acclaim from the media for her attack on all forms of discrimination between the sexes where children were used as an alibi. Her article, *Kvinnans villkorliga frigivning* ('The Conditional Liberation of Women'), attracted enormous attention. The double roles of women and the housewife ideal were sharply called in question; the latter could be compared to prostitution. The demand for individual freedom was given first place. The cure, according to Moberg, was a demand for inputs from society, above all in the form of education, the creation of a child allowance fund and the building of nurseries. Her contribution to the debate was widely discussed, not least for the suggestions that many women had a greater responsibility for the maintenance of a male society than some men.⁶¹ In her next book *Kvinnor och människor* ('Women and People'), 1962, Moberg was even more explicit as to what she wished to change: the role of men must be reassessed before women could become human beings:

The fulfilment of the goals of feminism requires a radical change of the habits of living, attitudes and values of the average man ...The goal then is that women shall have the same opportunities for free personal development as men, that she shall have a great share in public life and greater responsibility, that she shall have the opportunity both to practise a profession and have a home and children, that she shall be an independent and responsible person. But it is not enough to persuade women to go in this direction and try to remove external obstacles. A prerequisite is that men accept this project whole-heartedly and that they meet the women half-way.⁶²

⁶⁰ Myrdal, Alva & Klein, Viola (1957) *Kvinnans två roller*. Tiden: Stockholm.

⁶¹ Moberg (1961) 'Kvinnans villkorliga frigivning'. In: *Unga liberaler. Nio inlägg i idédebatten*, ed. by Hans Hederberg. Bonniers: Stockholm.

⁶² Moberg, Eva (1962) *Kvinnor och människor*. Bonniers: Stockholm.

After having published these books Eva Moberg wrote a series of articles in the sixties in the journal *Idun/Veckojournalen*. These articles were felt by many to be very provocative but at the same time they initiated a debate among ordinary people about gender roles and about what could and could not be changed. Other media followed suit. The gender-role issues had in Eva Moberg found an interpreter who could popularise them and make them more incisive so that they spread like wildfire through the press and different radical groups.

Tony Elgenstierna has shown in an article that the discourse about gender roles that was first formulated by young researchers and was then taken up by cultural workers and journalists had an enormous impact on new attitudes to male and female behaviour in the sixties and seventies.⁶³ New interesting phenomena emerged in the wake of the debate on gender roles: the new paternal role symbolised by the 'velour daddy' and a male movement finding its ideals and patterns in feminist leftism. Other phenomena were the unisex fashion with an androgynous feature—jeans became the universal garment, the boys had long hair and dressed in velvet coats and lace shirts and girls had short hair and wore Twiggy outfits. Within the field of children's culture, books and TV-programmes were launched which had reversed gender roles, while women's culture festivals tried to upgrade women's experiences.

In the demand for a radical change in the gender roles, a certain amount of sympathy could be expected from the younger generation of liberals, but hardly from the older generations.⁶⁴ The same generation patterns could be detected in the heated debate on sexuality during the first half of the sixties where several young liberals took a leading part. As Lena Lennerhed points out in her doctoral thesis, this debate, however, was increasingly dominated by males. Few women or women's organisations took up the issue of sexual emancipation in the sixties. For those involved in the gender debate it seems to have been an important strategic choice. The debates on equality and sexuality were clearly to be kept

⁶³ Elgenstierna, Tony (1997) 'Könsrolldebatten och dess aktörer i Sverige på 1960-talet'. Unpublished C-essay: Stockholm University.

⁶⁴ Fredriksson, Gunnar (1965) in 'Könsroller. Debatt om jämställdhet. Ed. Ingrid Fredriksson. Studentföreningen Verdandi: Prisma. See also Hinnfors (1992), p. 103.

apart, otherwise the older people in the parties and organizations would be alienated.⁶⁵

A reading of the social democratic magazine *Tiden*, dominated by the above-mentioned generation of young intellectuals, reveals how the equality issue developed from a rather generalized vision and formulations of problems to strategies and concrete proposals for action. A leading article in 1960 proposes that a woman's paid employment is her main role. To break the vicious circle an increase of day nurseries is an urgent necessity.⁶⁶ Ingrid Fredriksson makes the point that society ought not to follow the path of compulsion in order to achieve equality, but that there was no reason on this account to prioritize the present order. The strategy should be to investigate each area one after the other through present and future committees of enquiry and discover what needed changing in order to benefit women in the fields of taxation, social policies, housing, the labour market and education. Concerning the last mentioned field, she suggests that, in the light of her own investigation of gender roles in the schools, both boys and girls should receive obligatory instruction in child care and work in the household. Moreover, it was necessary to work ideologically against a choice of studies based on gender discrimination and seek to influence advertisers and producers of children's programmes on radio and TV.⁶⁷ Maj-Britt Sandlund, who would later have a distinguished career as a Civil Servant, states that the connection between goal and means has not been grasped by leading politicians. She argues that

equality will be gained in the fastest, simplest and fairest manner if the state realises that working life is what constitutes the most important component in the lives of women ...

For this younger generation of women it is no longer a question of women having two roles to choose between—the new thing is that *all* women are to work. From the perspective of her work as a planner, Sandlund presented a number of concrete proposals for action. In the party programme it should be written that the state, in line with a radical, socialist

⁶⁵ Lennerhed (1994), p. 116.

⁶⁶ *Tiden* nr 4 1960, p. 193.

⁶⁷ Fredriksson, Ingrid, *Tiden* nr 1 1963 and nr 2 1964, p. 85.

viewpoint, must be an agent of considerable weight and transfer tasks from individual to social organs of service. The idea of women as reserve labour must go. State institutions such as AMS should actively bring it about that women by means of further education would be channelled into better-paid and more skilled occupations now dominated by men. It was important that the measures taken were selective and to begin with available only to women. A further condition was that work in the home was fully shared. The role of the father would be as important as the role of the mother. Men who had become fathers to begin with should by law be entitled to one week from work in order to become acquainted with the child.⁶⁸ We note that the idea of a month's parental leave for the father existed long before Bengt Westerberg's reform of the 90s. Sandlund, who was later to make significant contributions to the discussion on individual taxation for couples, describes in a subsequent interview her own tactics and strategy and those of other feminists in the following way:

... you learn how the system functions. As a public official you learn how to exercise influence within all fields—how to influence an investigation, the terms of reference, the members, who should be appointed to the state commissions. It was, for example, very important that Rudolf Meidner had a place on the Individual Taxation Commission. We knew that there we had a supporter of individual taxation. Ingrid Fredriksson, Anita Gradin and I had lunch with each of the commissioners. 'Do you have a written summary' of your ideas?' they would ask. We had, of course. That's how it goes. You learn a technique ... / ... / we were also young and beautiful at that time.⁶⁹

In order to be successful in media that were dominated by the middle-class press, it was necessary to recruit allies. A new generation of liberals, social democrats and communists were to form a common front against their respective senior parties. It is against this background that the founding of the so-called *Group 222* should be seen. This organisation, which partly worked in the background—mostly Liberals and Social Democrats—was dominated by young intellectuals from different parties; sociologists like Annika Baude, Rita Liljeström, Edmund Dahlström, architects like Dick Urban Vestbro, Sune and Ingrid Jussil, economists such

⁶⁸ Sandlund, May-Britt, *Tiden* 1963, p. 93 ff.

⁶⁹ Interview Sandlund 10/4 1997.

as Per Holmberg and Rudolf Meidner, and psychologists such as Irene Mattis. But the group also included those who had just started on a political career—Maj-Britt Sandlund and Gabriel Romanus as well as more or less established journalists like Bo and Marianne Kärre, Gunnar Fredriksson, and Svante Nycander. For a few years Group 222, meeting every month, created a thought-bank where political goals for reaching equality between women and men were clearly formulated. Information was gathered by means of inviting lecturers—for example, Olof Palme was there and Lisbeth Palme was a more regular member of the group—concrete proposals for actions were planned and carried out.

It is important to point out that from this time onwards the role of the journalist changed. His work was professionalized in that the passively reporting journalist was transformed into an independent reporter giving his own commentaries and becoming a policy-maker in his professional role. This had a marked effect in the work of Group 222. Maj-Britt Sandlund remembers how they used to work:

We formed a sort of cabal which met at Annika Baude's house at 222 Alviksvägen in order to discuss gender roles in society. We always had a main speaker introducing the theme: people from the press, from the ministries and the civil service. On one occasion I talked about individual taxation—that was my subject—we once had a zoologist talking about birds because we were often met with the argument that in nature ... you know ... sexual differences, but the zoologist explained to us that many birds had male partners which took care of the baby birds ... / ... / we were very efficient ... after every meeting we drew up a strategy: you write this letter, you take contact with this or that person, you write an article, you ring that person, etc. We lobbied—even in Parliament, and we worked together, both men and women.⁷⁰

In her memoirs *The Vision of Gender Equality* Annika Baude has brought together some of the creators of public opinion in Group 222 in order to document the aims of their work in the sixties. The interesting thing is that the group, which met regularly in her living room to discuss gender equality, also wanted to put it into practice. It is striking how many of these persons would later in life have influential positions in society within the fields of politics, media and culture and how they managed to

⁷⁰ Interview Sandlund 10/4-1997.

win over public opinion. The procedure was astonishingly simple, even if it is acknowledged that the involved parties probably had a certain overconfidence in the power of the individual to change social development:

Sweden is not a very large country—it does take long to gather the formal and informal decision-makers for the most important areas. When we had become informed on a major issue—take, for example, joint taxation which was for long one of our pet hates— for weeks afterwards the media was full of articles, leaders, and contributions on the subject. Simple questions were asked and contributions were made to the debate in Parliament, and the topic was taken up in one radio programme after the other. Educational associations for adults and political parties arranged debates. The issue was put on the agenda with a forcefulness that could not be ignored.⁷¹

Besides influencing the media this informal group was active behind the scenes in government institutions, in industry, in education and research and in other organisations. ‘You became a walking collection of arguments for changed gender roles’, says one of its members.

Annika Baude maintains that the ideas of Group 222 had already been manifested in various publications and programmes—this group did not itself create new ideologies, for the foundations had already been laid in the current books, party programmes and research. It was from these that the members of the group drew inspiration and knowledge.⁷² The ideological discourse and knowledge was already there waiting to be introduced to the public, and the members of this group contributed to spreading them and affecting the climate of debate.

An important forum where academics could exert a decisive influence had to do with various types of investigatory work. One of the most significant examples of this was the book *Kvinnors liv och arbete* (‘Women’s Life and Work’). It was found better to use here the phrase ‘gender role’ rather than ‘women’s questions’, when it was shown that basically it was not only a question that concerned women but the oppression of individuals of both sexes. Gender roles did not refer to the biological difference as

⁷¹ Boëthius, Monica (1992) ‘När en studiegrupp blev samhällsfrågor. Om en studiegrupp på 60-talet och dess delaktighet i samhällsutvecklingen’ in *Vision och jämställdhet*, Ed. Annika Baude, SNS: Stockholm, p. 122.

⁷² Letter from Annika Baude, January 22nd, 1998.

such, but to the social consequences of 'human babies being divided into two groups according to sex'.⁷³ This book was financed by the SNS and the Association of Adult Studies 'Industry and Society', and had a major political impact.⁷⁴ Here it was stated in black and white that women were needed on the labour market and that they were as suitable as man for all kinds of work. According to Edmund Dahlström who was leader of the project it was the radical gender-role ideology whose time had come. Since this book was written by researchers, among them the Norwegian sociologist, Harriet Holter, it gained extra weight and became a weapon in the hands of the supporters of equality both as 'a dictionary and as a kind of bible that could be used to crush one's opponents'.⁷⁵ In the beginning the authors had worried about being overshadowed by the so-called 'vulgar debate' which had taken place in connection with Moberg's contribution to the discussion. On the contrary, the result was increased attention. The book was issued in further editions and was translated into English.⁷⁶

When "*Lives and Work of Women*" was published, it attracted a lot of attention. The press conference held to launch the book was covered by the daily, weekly and specialist press. As I remember it, every newspaper had long articles about the book, based on the SNS's press release or on the information from the Swedish Central News Agency.. The concept of the women's issue which was said to be the term used till then to discuss women's problems had now been replaced by the concept of gender roles. 'The question of gender roles embraces the labour market, industry and commerce, taxation and social policy, the life of the family, children, upbringing, education and choice of work'.⁷⁷

The expert leading the project, as mentioned earlier, was the sociologist

⁷³ Liljeström, Rita (1965) 'Om könsroller' in *Könsroller. Debatt om jämställdhet*. Ed. Ingrid Fredriksson, Verdandi Debatt: Prisma, p. 9f.

⁷⁴ The material was distributed to study circles. A prime move in this was the former Secretary of SNS, Stina Thyberg. Following an American idea, SNS was occupied mainly with initiating, financing and publishing, among other things, research on the economy and working life. A network of business directors and researchers was established locally. Annual conferences were held centrally, where subjects of topical interest were explored, for example, automation, educational reforms and women in industry, Interview Stina Thyberg 20/5-97.

⁷⁵ Interview Leijon 10/4-97.

⁷⁶ Interview Thyberg 20/-97.

⁷⁷ *Visionen om jämställdhet*, (1992). Ed. Annika Baude, p. 10.

Edmund Dahlström. He had been a researcher at SNS from the mid fifties and he had participated in different projects on women and the labour market. The book brings out how resources were squandered by not using women in paid work—they represented an unexploited national source of energy. With this thick volume of 550 pages, the issue of gender roles gained intellectual legitimacy and the book provided thorough background information for use in the debate about men, women and working life. Edmund Dahlström and his wife Rita Liljeström became in due course important sources of inspiration for research and debate in family and equality questions throughout the whole of the sixties and seventies.

As has emerged in this section, the proponents of gender equality were firmly anchored in different sectors of society—in the media, in politics, in the Civil Service, in research and in working life. The visions of a new gender contract had different implications for different groups, but those who were active were to be found in their various places, ready to come on stage when the policy-window opened—this occurred with the great demand for workers on the labour market at the beginning of the sixties.

The policy window and the AMS

The role played by AMS in the postwar programme of the Social Democratic Party is now common knowledge. It was emphasised that in the society of full employment it was important for individuals, companies and the best interests of the public to make use of all available work resources. The active labour market policy should be the spearhead and great efforts were made to 'professionalize' the labour market. It was a question of surveying and grasping its development, to regulate and guide it according to scientific methods. The central ideologists and social engineers were, among others, the LO economists Gösta Rehn and Rudolf Meidner. The director-general of AMS, Bertil Olsson, was the one who in practice was to realize the ideas. For some time he had close contacts with the government and he was allowed to depart from established practice when he saw fit. He could act more independently by virtue of the fact that because of his contacts with Gunnar Sträng, the Minister of Finance, he could avoid being given many allocations of money for strictly regulated purposes and instead receive a lump sum of his own which he could use as he wished.

He was regarded by many as dynamic and authoritarian but also as antibureaucratic and he had the advantage that he could also count on support from conservative politicians.⁷⁸ Under the management of Olsson the AMS became, as we shall see, the spider in the web of a policy where several components were faced each other in an unholy alliance. In this report we are particularly interested in his political work in connection with the women's issue.

The extensive material in the archives of the AMS dealing with the women's issue and the labour market provide a good insight into how a state bureaucratic organisation contributes to the gender construction of a society. Political control was exercised directly from the bureaucracy over practical work. In this material we also come into contact with the forms governing the way in which the work of forwarding political ideas took place—in the Swedish political climate it was cooperation and committees made up of different parties in the labour market and traditional political channels that mattered. Swedish administrative tradition and political culture favoured those committees and groups that worked beyond interest and party boundaries.

The efforts to attract women to the labour market were based on a foreseen upward economic trend, manpower shortage and the economic interests of the employers. To this must be added the women's own desire for work outside the home and an active and expansive family policy so that women's gainful employment could be realized without jeopardising the nuclear family. In addition, within and outside the AMS there were also the gender equality activists with an ideological awareness who saw to it that the opened 'policy window' described earlier was vigorously exploited.

AMS recruited other types of public officials than those in the old government agencies. Here 'men and women of practical life' were given priority and the goal of the new civil service department was to achieve better coordination between leadership and those who were to implement the decisions in practical life. The significance of this recruitment policy of the AMS has been investigated by, for example, the political scientist Bo

⁷⁸ Leimar, Tord (1988) *Återblick: Några hägkomster från Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsens historia*. AMS förlag, p. 14 ff. Interviews with Bertil Olsson 17/2-98, Anna-Greta Leijon 4/4-97, Gustav Persson 3/12-97.

Rothstein. According to this researcher this department became a much more successful medium for the implementation of government policy than other departments, where traditional structures made it possible for individual officials to even actively go against planned policy.⁷⁹

A large number of new problems were quickly appeared on the agenda of the newly established civil service department.⁸⁰ One problem was that the changed demographic structure and the growing number of old people in the Western World was noticed soon after the end of the second world war. Statistics showed that people's span of life increased along with a tendency to a rising cost of living. In particular, the situation of women, who dominated in the above mentioned group, was to be the subject of serious discussions in, above all, the US and England and this resulted in research and reports. At the same time industrialised countries suffered from a marked shortage of manpower. The solution was seen in the new policies of recruiting older people and women. (In the terminology of the time the notion 'older applied to what today we would call the middle-aged). Older people ought to be able to work longer and women should also be able to work when their children no longer needed so much care in the home. It therefore became important to upgrade the status of the older working force and of women. It was especially the countries involved in the world war which had experience of the increased use of women within several sectors. Even housewives could now be used in gainful employment.⁸¹

Of special importance in this connection was the investigation concerning women and the labour market, which resulted in the formation of *The Labour Market Women's Committee* in 1951. Reports from ILO and resolutions from the first half of the fifties established that a growing number of older people and women were in need of work while an increase of light jobs requiring less muscular strength was expected in the new service society. Along with this, it was also foreseen that there would be a gradual disappearance of the traditional division of labour between men and

⁷⁹ Rothstein, Bo (1992) *Den korporativa staten. Intresseorganisationer och statsförvaltning i svensk politik*. Arkiv förlag:Lund;Interview with Bertil Olsson 17/2-1998.

⁸⁰ AMS had been set up in 1948.

⁸¹ Interview with Mats Bergom-Larsson 12/2-98. SAF, and Anna-Lisa Lagby 15/4-97, AKN. Statistiknytt SAF om *Arbetsgivaren* nr 1 55. *Arbetsforum* 6/51.

women—especially in countries with a shortage of manpower.⁸² The situation of single mothers and their chances of getting a job were also came under scrutiny. Ulla Lindström raised the issue in the Swedish Parliament and the situation was found to be precarious. Mothers should not really need social care, but usually they were not able to arrange child care in order to be able to work. The prejudices of their surroundings were also seen as a problem as was the fact that women were not aware of the help they could get from AMS.⁸³ We note that AMS was also expected to take on responsibility for social matters. A demand also arose that the women's organisations should offer courses on how to apply for a job, on the pattern of the Fredrika Bremer Association.⁸⁴

The AMS officials thus saw their task as creating packages of practical measures and building a public opinion that would change women's attitudes to paid work. How could cooperation be established between women's organisations, individual officials and politicians? We can study how public opinion was formed by means of the information and publicity distributed to the media. AMS was well ahead of its time where modern marketing was concerned and, according to Bertil Olsson, it was the first government agency to use the media for the formation of its own policy. Articles were published about women's work, rehabilitation and about the problems of single mothers, considered to be one of the most pressing problems of the time. The impossibility of ignoring the changes in the

⁸² In *Labour Review* vol. LX No 6 June-51. Report from the ILO session in May, 1955. Questions concerning provisions for elderly women had already been raised to a limited degree before the War by various women's organizations as, for example, the Fredrika Bremer Association, which through its own channels attempted to take up concrete problems of importance for widows and single women. Questions to do with pensions, insurance and finally employment had been raised to a higher level through contacts with women's organizations, parliament and those responsible for labour market policies. One result of this effort was an enquiry of 1949, based on a presentation of the Widows' Pension Committee, with the task of investigating so-called work-handicapped women. Included among such were single women whether married, separated or widows. The above questions were extended a bit more when 1955 the National Board of Health and Welfare was given the task by the King of making a statistical investigation of the social and economic conditions and problems of unmarried mothers.

⁸³ *Stockholms-Tidningen* 11/6 1957.

⁸⁴ *Hälsingekuriren* 21/8-58.

structure of society was especially pointed out.⁸⁵ Foreign models were copied and much inspiration still came from the US.⁸⁶ AMS had American and English articles and brochures were translated, and their contents were published in Swedish newspapers.

In 1957 AMS had received from Parliament more money for the education and retraining of the labour force. Only a small amount of this money had been spent on women. Now, however, it was calculated that a new folder which had been issued by The Joint Association of Professional Women, The Swedish Housewives Association and AMS would lead to increased pressure from women in general to share in the promised grant. The brochure was to be printed in large editions and distributed to regional employment committees and job centres. At the regional and local levels the committees were recommended to contact the Press for the purpose of providing information about the grant.⁸⁷ We can note that much of the operation aimed at creating good contacts with the Press and radio in order to market the ideas.

Official statements from employers also stressed, as mentioned, the importance of doing everything to activate the valuable labour reserve constituted by women. It was no longer so much a question of the older work force—rather quickly the focus was placed on ‘women’. What would be the advantages for the women who dared to enter the labour market? Work-mates, an income of their own and the feeling that they were needed were stressed as the foremost benefits.⁸⁸ We can see therefore that as early as the fifties different organisations and individuals both within and outside the state display high activity in the matter of women in paid work. As a sign of this we can also note the publicity meeting held in Stockholm’s Concert House in April, 1958.

Even the layout of the programme is worth studying. The artist Ann-Margret Dahlqvist-Ljungberg has a wreath of flowers on the front page surrounding a text of the old suffragette Lydia Wahlström:

⁸⁵ *Folksam* 9/10 1953, DN 20/9 1953.

⁸⁶ Interview Bertil Olsson 17/2-98.

⁸⁷ AMS Archives. Brochure Förmedlingsbyrån.

⁸⁸ *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* 22/5-57. See also *Morgonbladet* 21/5-57 and *Morgon-Tidningen* 22/9-57.

What we have won is quite clear, but we fear how easily it can be lost. If democracy in its outer and inner meaning is defeated, the value of the human being sinks but deepest sinks the value of the woman.

Under the text an alarm-clock has been drawn, a well-known battle-symbol renewed by Elin Wägner. The back of the programme is equally instructive. In a heart-shaped landscape representing both agriculture and industry a woman and a man grip each other by the hand, seemingly making a new contract for the future against the background of a rising sun.⁸⁹

At the beginning of the sixties there was a new dynamic in the field of labour market training. A very wide programme of professional training for women was started. The courses which were organized had at first been created in accordance with the direct needs of the market, above all within the care sector but later it was incorporated into the regular teaching of practical courses in the secondary schools. In 1961 AMS adopted an extensive programme of activities for women. In connection with it there was created within the employment agency the so-called "The Detail for the Activation of certain Labour Resources and Agency for Nursing Staff". To this department were recruited a very enterprising, purposeful and inspiring figure who had long worked on the question of women and the labour market: Ingeborg Jönsson. She came from a provincial working committee and had there come across the problem of Women's limited choice of work and opportunities in reality:

Ingeborg was a work addict who couldn't drag herself away from work, and every weekend she lugged home large briefcases full of tasks which she worked on through half the night. On weekday evenings she usually sat at work and of course I also then had to work overtime ... my poor husband ... he had to come and fetch me late in the evenings and sometimes his eyes were red with anger. I wasn't plucky enough to say no. But Ingeborg was a forerunner and pioneer for women's employment and she had a rare gift of getting her own way. I was extremely fascinated by her. But she didn't make it easy for competitors, and so there was a lot of tension in the air around her ... She is an unknown figure in the women's question and has not received the credit which she deserves. She ought to have been given a major post as boss.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ AMS Archives. Förmiddelingsbyrå. Brochure for the meeting.

⁹⁰ Interview with Britt-Marie Lepp 12/III 1997.

The creation of this unit should be seen as part of the attempt to meet the crisis which had arisen in connection with a shortage, among other things, of nurses. A big effort was invested in winning married nurses back to their jobs and starter-courses, as they were called, were arranged so that they would be able to start again. At the 'Detail' and above all at AMS there arrived over the years a number of energetic and alert women and their efforts to change attitudes to women working for a living were considerable. Gun Kuylenstierna, departmental head of the Employment Guidance Unit—the unit which produced material about choosing jobs for the schools—asserts that the female public officials at AMS were independent professional women who did not run errands for others:

No-one put pressure on us. This was taken absolutely for granted. That women should work was in the air. It was we women at AMS who wanted to change and strengthen women's freedom of choice. We wanted to give the girls knowledge so that could make an untraditional choice. There was much in the papers about gender roles. We who worked with these questions had an education and realized what it meant to be able to work outside the home. No one controlled us in these matters—we wanted to put our own ideology into practice. We devoted much time to making the school material 'gender neutral' so that girls would understand that they could choose among a lot of jobs. The pictures in the material were particularly important.⁹¹

The operation was to be directed at women and it was a question of changing attitudes and roles. The problems were seen as lying in the attitudes of employers and husbands but also in the women's own attitudes to paid work. Other problems were the close ties of women to their home district, their tradition-bound choice of work and their lack of vocational training. The solution was considered to be education, in-service training, repetition and reactivation courses, introduction courses, starting courses and re-schooling. It was also extremely important to create the economic conditions through grants and allocations that would persuade married women to enter the labour market.⁹² Vocational training was the most important thing—on the one hand, AMS developed its own form of labour

⁹¹ Interview with Gun Kuylenstierna 22/10 1997.

⁹² Jönsson, Ingeborg (1965) 'Ny på arbetsmarknaden'. P.44 ff. in *Hemmafru byter yrke?* Ed. Monica Boëthius. Sveriges Radio: Stockholm.

market training, AMU, and on the other they established close cooperation with other educational institutions. In the first year alone 2,500 women participated in these basic in-service and retraining courses mainly within the traditionally female vocations. But there were also some pioneers in, for example, engineering. In 1963 the total number of course participants was 14,400 and the next year it was 16,000.⁹³

There were, of course, obstacles to this new labour market policy which aimed at encouraging and recruiting women in numbers never seen before. The strongest opposition came from the men in LO of which Sigrid Ekendahl had long experience, but there were also other structural obstacles.⁹⁴ 100,000 women wanted a job, but they did not get a job because they lived in the wrong place—where the family lived there was no work. Or they might have the wrong education or simply could not get child care. Evidently it is not easy to steer a country's labour force and get supply and demand for workers to tally at the same time in the same place. According to the investigation *Labour Market Information for the Family* this required greater responsibility on the part of society.⁹⁵

One reason that the public child care system had not been developed to a greater extent was the negative attitude of prominent social democratic women in the National Swedish Board of Health and Welfare to day nurseries. Göta Rosén preferred family day nurseries whereas other Social Democrats preferred institutions in the form of day nurseries.⁹⁶ The officials at AMS realised that the problem of child care must be solved if women to be able to start working outside the home. AMS accordingly started to take an interest in the problem of child care and Bertil Olsson and the AMS simply adopted this issue as part of their domain. Gustav Persson was recruited from the LO to promote the issue of day nurseries

⁹³ AMS Archives Förmedlingsbyrån.

⁹⁴ Interview Sigursen 3/4-97 and Mats Bergom-Larsson 12/2-98. See also Waldemarsson, Ylva (1998) LO's kvinnoråd - 'En paradoxal historia om framsteg och motgång. *Arbetsmarknadshistoria* 85-86: 1998, pp. 54-58.

⁹⁵ *Labour Market Information for the Family*.

⁹⁶ Göta Rosén's negative attitude to communal day nurseries was, according to information received, based on the fact that she had been personally successful in work against criminality among young people where the creation of a home environment and resistance towards "institutional" solutions was important.

which meant that it became an issue for the labour market—an interesting manoeuvre revealing the political power of the AMS. As we have already mentioned, Persson had at the request of the LO carried out an investigation where in his own words he was bold enough to demand an increase of 20,000 extra places in the day nurseries, that is, a doubling of the number that then existed. Persson's task was to travel about the provinces speaking in favour of this expansion of day nurseries. At the time there were only 5000 places in the whole country.⁹⁷

As part of the campaign to increase the number of women in the labour force and remove obstacles to its achievement, AMS welcomed the radio series 'The housewife changes jobs?' which had been started on a private initiative. The editor Monica Boëthius had, according to information in a newspaper, got the idea from AMS, but according to herself it was her own experiences of being a single mother with three children to look after that gave her the idea, together with the ideological inspiration from friends in Group 222.⁹⁸ Within the framework of the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation's adult education responsibilities, the series was arranged in 1965 without any protests from the Board. The aim was said to be to help those who wanted to enter the labour market but had not yet dared to take this step. When the series was repeated AMS launched a massive publicity campaign involving county employment boards, the local press, study circles, adult educational associations and local employment agencies.

The booklet for the series 'The housewife changes jobs?' includes everything from advice about educational programmes and union rights to concrete working schedules and plans for the running of home. Entering the labour market could at the same time be a step towards democracy in the family where everyone learned to take responsibility. An important part of the series dealt with all forms of grants and allowances—here there was money that was earmarked for women—that was the message! However, the voluntary aspect of it all was emphasised and the texts had a cau-

⁹⁷ Interview Persson 3/12-97.

⁹⁸ Telephone interview with Boëthius 24/10 1997. In the social programme, 'Family Mirror', later started by Boëthius, much space was given to practical matters concerning the equality question, for example, by focussing on the building of day nurseries and individual taxation; a full analysis of the series 'The housewife changes jobs?' is in Hirdman (1998), pp. 199-237.

tious tone—it is housewives ‘with flexibility and a sense of humour’ that are needed in working life—and the gender roles would not be basically changed. It was a question of a cautious and unbloody revolution. Curt Staffan Giesecke, the chairman of the Swedish Employers’ Confederation, preferred married women to immigrants in the labour force: the married women had an established infrastructure, they knew the language and they were loyal to the employers and their home district. And the question in the title of the radio series symbolised free choice. The questions in the title of the series meant: Do I dare to do it? Can I do it? What shall I choose? Where do I turn? The essays included in the series were written by, for example, Ingeborg Jönsson at AMS, Gertrud Sigurdson of LO, Britt-Marie Bystedt of TCO, Majken Melander of the Cooperative Union and Wholesale Society and Curt-Steffan Giesecke representing SAF and AKN.⁹⁹

AMS wanted to continue on the way that had been staked out. The ‘Detail’ had already been set up with responsibility for the practical formation of the activity programmes, information and coordination and for giving support to the twenty new posts in the county employment boards throughout the country. The new officials were, significantly enough, called ‘activation inspectors’ and they were to be responsible to the employment agencies in the country as a whole and try to influence and re-train the local employment officers in the issues concerning the work force of women. The ‘Detail’ at the AMS kept track of the operation, took initiatives, gathered comments on proposals and took part in expert groups. A number of trips were made, brochures were published and conferences were held. According to Ingeborg Jönsson, it was a question of:

breaking up traditions, eliminating false notions, changing the attitudes of employers, school staff and perhaps above all the attitudes of men to women’s opportunities to choose more freely their education and work. Through the investigations of the labour force carried out by the Statistics Authorities we know that ... more than 100,000 women can and wish to work if only the practical difficulties are removed.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ *Hemmafru byter yrke? Fem uppsatser till en radiokurs* (‘Housewives change jobs? Five essays for a radio course’). Sveriges Radio: Stockholm 1965.

¹⁰⁰ AMS Archives. Förmedlingsbyrån. Document signed by Ingeborg Jönsson 30/9 1966.

The Detail now had a greater staff. In addition to the senior administrative officer Jönsson, the staff included the administrative officers Margareta Låftman, Britt Marie Lepp and Lilly Persson who were responsible for nursing staff and the new employees, Gun Lahrm-Persson and Anna-Greta Leijon. The group was enthusiastic about their assignment. With their own experience in different fields as a point of departure, they had acquired the motivation for taking part in an emancipating policy. According to many, Bertil Olsson regarded it as his main task to foster this group and saw to it that it gained a strong position in the hierarchy directly under the Unemployment Agency.¹⁰¹

Among the staff of the 'Detail' there was a strong awareness that the position of women on the labour market could not be solved only with measures concerned with employment but that it was also affected by the social structure as a whole. A newly employed official at AMS who came directly from student life in Uppsala, someone we encountered at the beginning of this article—Anna-Greta Leijon—demonstrated in a brochure that she had been brought up according to the modern paradigm of the political women, but had her political roots in the thirties:

Family policy in particular is dependent on the relations and the division of labour between the sexes and the functions of the family. 200,000 children have parents working outside the home but there are only 20,000 places in the day nurseries. This means that there is a great lack of socially organized child care and we must remember that the care provided by trained people in different kinds of institutions is not a bad alternative to the care provided by the mother in the home. In many cases it can be better. The educational and social education provided by the institutions are difficult to give in the majority of homes. It is not a question of destroying marriage and the family nor of depriving the parents of contact with and the upbringing of their children.¹⁰²

This is a clear reflection of Alva Myrdal's ideas. The difference was that now there was greater demand and broader acceptance of these ideas and political support and resources to put them into practice. A pilot scheme was introduced in 1965 in Örebro where single mothers were given vocational training, a place to live and a place in a day nursery. Even a teacher

¹⁰¹ Interview Leijon 4/4-97, Gun Lahrm-Persson 3/12-97 and Kuylensstierna 22/10-97.

¹⁰² AMS Archives. Arbetsförmedlingsbyrån. A-G Leijon draft brochure 22/4 -66.

of domestic economy was employed to teach the young mothers to prepare nourishing meals. The regional radio service was used to spread information. We observe here that rationality and long-term planning which characterised AMS-culture.

It also became necessary to increase the number of women in industry. The number of women in for example the engineering industry had increased by 48 per cent between 1960 and 1965. It was estimated that there were approximately 400,000 women in Sweden without children (or with children over 16) who did not have work outside the home. This was a resource that had to be used. ... A special edition of *Platsjournalen* ('Jobs Bulletin') on women and jobs in industry argued the view that this large reserve must be used and industry was positive to making it easier for the women to take this step. The large companies had taken contact with the AKN and the employers participated in courses arranged by this organisation throughout the country. They also arranged courses of their own in order to entice women to educate themselves.¹⁰³ The brochure *Industry and Women* gave further reports on the measures, experiences and opinions of a limited number of industries. The project *Women in the Weekly Press* presented women in industry. *Femina*, *Damernas Värld*, *Husmodern*, *Året Runt*, *ICA Kuriren* and *Idun-Veckojournalen* published reports from different parts of the country about women working in factories. Discussions about gender roles took place and, gradually, there appeared 'something of the atmosphere of missionary work among the journalists'.¹⁰⁴

One of the tasks assigned to the 'Detail' was to start cooperation groups. It was a matter of reaching as many people as possible. The aim of the new AMS initiative was to reach out to the 30,000 women who, it was estimated, would enter the labour market within the next few years. This is how Ingeborg Jönsson describes it:

We must therefore make every effort to broaden the way to the labour market for those women who for various reasons—lack of information, traditional ways of thinking and, perhaps above all, lack of training—are unable to do the job that they themselves would like to do and which is needed in society.

¹⁰³ *Platsjournalen* 31/1965 and 36/1965.

¹⁰⁴ *Platsjournalen* 2/1965.

The changes taking place, it was argued, placed great demands on society to take various social measures, among others looking after the children. General information was therefore needed about the adjustment of the family to the new situation and about ways of breaking with the traditional division of labour within the family. Men, women and young people required information.¹⁰⁵ This initiative resulted in the Commission for Labour Market Information to Families, consisting of well-known persons from union organisations and industry.¹⁰⁶

Among the goals intended to yield long-term results was the formation of a series of seven regional information conferences in 1967–68. Extensive preparations were made. An *Information Catalogue about Obstacles to Women's Gainful Employment* was distributed to the press. A similar information package was produced where teachers and parent-teacher associations were the target groups. In matters concerning career choice contacts were made with other government agencies and with the school-textbook section of the National Board of Education and the National Swedish Tax Board. Advice was also to be given to companies, and the National Swedish Institute of Occupational Health was consulted about the adjustment of the working environment to women. The question of increased research on the situation of women was raised in this context. The recommended material for further training was their own brochure *Facts, Prejudices, the Future*.¹⁰⁷

The conferences on *Facts and the Future* were perhaps the most important effort made for the development of new attitudes to women and work. This was a combined venture involving the Karolinska Institute, the county employment boards and AKN. The idea was that the representatives of the campaign should have personal contact with practically every-

¹⁰⁵ AMS Archives. Letter from Ingeborg Jönsson to AKN, LO, TCO, Saco, Arbetsarkyddsstyrelsen, Arbetsmarknadens yrkesråd.

¹⁰⁶ Members of this Commission were Gustav Persson LO, Maj-Britt Carlsson TCO, Lars Tobisson SACO, Anna-Lisa Lagby AKN, Ingegärd Örne Arbetsmarknadens yrkesråd, as well as Gunvor Kuylenstierna, Ingeborg Jönsson and Sigrid Ekendahl from AMS. The last was chairman.

¹⁰⁷ In addition *Arkitekten* 6/67, *Fackföreningsrörelsen* 1/66, 19/67, *Kynne eller kön* by Per Holmberg 1966, *Kvinnan i Sverige* issued by AKN 1967 and for statistical information *Kvinnligt förvävarsarbete* 1–3 SCB 1956–66.

body who was somebody in labour market policy. Six regional conferences were planned. The opening speakers were always the county Governor and the county Labour Market Director. The theme was introduced by means of a transportable exhibition, 'The Family Reconsiders', where the everyday division of work in the home was discussed. These conferences were evaluated and carefully documented and can be regarded as a unique illustration of the spirit of the times. What was the result of these conferences?

Let us take an example from Gävle where a *Facts and Future* conference was held in March 1968. The turn-out of both men and women from all the larger private and public companies and organisations in the region at this conference was practically complete. With reference to the then current downward economic trend the County Labour Market Director Vidar Forsberg said that owing to reduced production over the last three years the employers had not treated women as a reserve force! He also challenged those present not to let themselves be affected by temporary situations in the labour market but to strive to take a long-term view. Sture Netterstedt of SAF pointed to the increase in the number of women in the Iron Works and Fagersta Works in the county. Henrik Hjalmarsson, Chairman of Korsnäs-Marma with 10 per cent women on its payroll could only report positive experiences with female employees.

Several speakers made a connection between work and home life. Gunnel Jonäng wanted 'democracy in the marriage' and called for a new basic outlook. Hjalmarsson's conclusion was that a new division of labour in the home was required and that everybody had to work for a new outlook on the family and society.¹⁰⁸ Hanna Andersson, who in an article has taken a closer look at the conferences in other regions as well, has noted that, in spite of regional differences in, for example, industrial structure, the minutes from the conferences reveal that almost everybody agreed that it was a positive thing that women should enter the labour market, even if there was a certain collective rhetoric in the speeches in the prevailing situation. The obstacles for women were their inadequate vocational training which created imbalance between the sexes in recruitment situations. The tax system was also unfair to married women. But the most crucial question

¹⁰⁸ AMS Archives. *Facts and Future*. Conference minutes.

was how the children and the home should be catered for when the mother started work. The purpose of the conferences was to gather together all the parties in the labour market for a discussion on the obstacles that were regarded as blocking the way to equality in the work situation and find solutions for eliminating these. The very fact that large resources were made available at the commencement of a down-trend in the economy indicated a definite breakthrough.¹⁰⁹

We have already pointed out that AMS used modern media to convey their message. It was natural that they should also use the new medium, television. Here private initiatives had already been taken and films were produced which had been given wide distribution not least through television. AMS was, of course, represented in the film produced by AKN for television with the name *A Different Choice of Jobs*. Now the agency initiated another meticulously planned campaign where a commercial company was responsible for producing The 'Second Alternative'—an 11-minute film distributed together with advance information to 180 places throughout the country. The film was shown in the same place several times in the afternoons and in the evenings. The film features the 'modern' women and what she can gain by working outside the home. The solution to the practical problems was rationalisation—more ready-made food, modern domestic appliances and a co-operative family would remove some of the obstacles. Other ways were education or retraining. This is where AMS enters the scene. Its Director-General Bertil Olsson gave an account of all that could be done to pave the way for women. A large-scale evaluation of scientific quality was made by, among others, the researcher, Åke Edfelt, of the effects of using films for this purpose. The results were presented at a press conference. Similar presentations of new career opportunities were made in the form of filmstrips distributed to schools and employment agencies. The emphasis was, as always, on the housewife's freedom of choice.¹¹⁰

We have observed that in spite of the information in schools and

¹⁰⁹ Andersson, Hanna (1998) *Kvinnors ökade deltagande på arbetsmarknaden—en studie av Fakta-Framtidskonferenserna 1968 i Luleå, Uppsala och Malmö*. Unpublished C-essay at the Department of History at Uppsala University.

¹¹⁰ AMS Archives. Films and sound filmstrips. Cp. also Nordberg, Karin (1998) *Folkhemmets röst. Radion som folkbildare 1925-1950*. Symposium: Stockholm, pp 319-352.

through AMS the traditional choices of work continued to dominate. If borders were crossed it was, as it had always been in history, the women who entered male-coded occupations particularly in industry. Few initiatives were made to entice men to take up, for example, medical practice in any other form than that of doctor. It should, however, be noted that attempts were made to create gender-neutral job designations in investigations and presentations from AMS and the Nordic Council. The attempt to change the designation 'sjuksköterska' (nurse) encountered enormous opposition from an active nurses' union.¹¹¹

In this chapter on AMS's major contributions on behalf of women we wished to describe how a government agency conveyed visions of gender equality and how political solutions were presented by government officials together with industry and commerce, organisations and the media. The formal political actors laid down, of course, the economic framework but the application of the policies was performed on other levels. Women were important in this work even if their employers and superiors were men. And where the ways of achieving the goal were concerned the men and women were of one mind. It was to be through paid work that the woman would be emancipated and the work would liberate the woman from her dependency on the man. The old vision that women could have two roles was replaced by a new one: women should be gainfully employed. This was part and parcel of the vision of the young equality people.

It is, of course, difficult to maintain that the very large group of housewives who now entered the labour market in the final years of the sixties and during the seventies did so only as a result of the AMS campaigns and the active encouragement from the state.¹¹² This tendency, as we have shown, had started much earlier and many other reasons can also be found. AMS was only one of the agents. Other phenomena contributed to the increasing amount of gainful employment among women, even if they had not exactly been anticipated. Free school meals, for example, had the effect that the mothers were no longer needed at home to make lunch for their children and therefore they could more easily take a job outside the

¹¹¹ AMS's Archives. Arbetsförmedlingsbyrån.

¹¹² For a fuller description of this process, see Axelsson, Christina (1992).

home or work longer hours in a part-time job. The new system of supplementary pension had also created an awareness among women that they had to have paid work in order to be able to benefit from this pension system. And the real large-scale emigration of housewives to the labour market came with the expansion of the public sector in the seventies when there were women's jobs available which culturally recall women's traditional work in the homes. This is what happened when hundreds of thousands of housewives started to work outside the home; AMS was only one in a series of many different factors at work.

A review of the AMS material has increased our awareness of the fact that the politicising of gender equality had deep historical roots in the Swedish political culture and in working life. If the Swedish woman wished to become an independent and gender-equal individual she must have paid work and it was then in the seventies that the government inducements emerged in the form of social reforms and in the upgrading of gender-equality policy to become a political field of its own. This will be dealt with in the next section.

The 1970s—How the vision of equality was integrated into state structures

What then happened when in the sixties the project of creating equality was taken up by the state, politicized and finally institutionalised? The American scholar Joyce Gelb has in her interesting book on feminism and politics called Sweden the country of 'feminism without feminists'.¹¹³ Her conclusions are based on the observation that in a highly organised country such as Sweden extra-parliamentary groups, protest movements and dissent groups tend quite simply to be absorbed by the state. The Swedish Parliament, its departments and the more than 100 administrative agencies have developed a culture of consensus in which the attempt is made to resolve conflicts with a minimum of controversy. In such a climate feminism cannot flourish—militancy would be regarded as 'un-Swedish'. Parties and institutions in Sweden, according to Joyce, have responded fairly

¹¹³ Gelb, Joyce (1989) *Feminism and Politics. A Comparative Perspective*. University of California Press, pp. 137-177.

rapidly to women's demands for greater power while special women's groups have not had a very strong impact on public authorities.

Joyce Gelb's interpretation of Swedish state feminism seems to be correct in a structural perspective. Organisations, institutions and government agencies were open to new gender relations from below and political solutions were presented within a relatively short period of time. Work to bring about change had already begun with the large-scale welfare commissions after the war and investigations into the social issues involved continued in the sixties and were then implemented as social reforms in the seventies. One area after another in social life were assessed and in the sixties and seventies it was the women's and the children's turn—it seemed that the Social Democrats needed to lay claim to new political areas in order to take the sting out of left-wing criticism. In this perspective Gelb's observation that Sweden was a country with '*feminism without feminists*' was certainly correct.

If, however, Gelb's interpretation is seen from the perspective of those active in the process another scenario emerges. The expression 'feminism without feminists' will then be misleading because it gives the impression that there were no feminist activists in Sweden. Our study shows the opposite—the great importance of the 'policy entrepreneurs' or actors for the spreading of ideas, changing attitudes and, finally, for the politicisation of this issue. The equality people managed to find a 'language' for the '-modernisation' of the family, for the children, for women's work and the gender roles that could unite different wills and ideologies and hide the underlying conflicts.

The politics of equality of the sixties and seventies certainly had 'real' feminist actors and femocrats even if they did not always correspond with our modern definition of the concept of feminism. They were moreover numerous. It is true that the most militant group—Group 8—had a rather small number of members, roughly 1000, but supporters of equality could also be found in quite other constellations—women working in the unions, in the civil service, in the political parties, in various sorts of pressure groups, in various professions and women's organisations. Many of them had quite radical ideas even if the majority was more moderate and for different reasons did not call themselves feminists. The policy of equality between the sexes during the period under discussion did not just drop

from the sky into the hands of officialdom or the state apparatus, even if these institutions were important instruments and agents for its success. Hard-working women lay behind the ideas on equality. The immediate cause of activity in this field was to be found in the personal experiences of ordinary women. Swedish women had started to create a new form of family life after the war; they had started to work outside the home, give birth to fewer children, cohabit with their men, get divorced, change their sexual habits and so on. It was just these demographic changes in the family that could be used as arguments for a new policy. The notion of the male breadwinner had been weakened by the setting-up of the welfare state's social safety-net. This cannot be seen only as a revolution from above or as coming from measures taken by a corporative state friendly to women. [Equally important is the fact that] Swedish women were able to use the existing institutions of the civil service, political parties and organizations for political purposes and to participate in the process of establishing equality. for policy formation and they participated in the process of gender equality. What distinguished Sweden (and the Nordic Countries) from other nations was precisely the fact that the structures could become 'structures of opportunity' and could be used since there existed an historical tradition of women's independence, individualism and citizenship—to draw on.

A close reading of the equal status discourse—the equality programmes, the research problems and the lively public debate—reveals a deep commitment to these women's issues and a wide activity on many institutional levels of society, at least at the discursive level. The active support of men for these issues was extremely important—the whole project took place against a background relatively free of conflict, where patriarchal power was hidden.¹¹⁴ In order to illustrate the intensity of policy-making process we have assembled an 'aerial photograph' of the different agents in this gender equality project. Here can be seen the different sectors from which they were drawn: labour, capital, science, culture, the media, politics and women's organizations. (See figure 5).

The process of explosive policy formulation during the sixties resulted in a period of state institutionalisation in the seventies. The former Min-

¹¹⁴ Exceptions were a few radical organizations which explicitly explained the roll of patriarchy.

Figure 5 The policy making process for gender equality.

ister of Labour, Anna-Greta Leijon, has her own interpretation of this phase. It agrees closely with our own findings:

Many unholy alliances were formed between groups with equality ideologies and the employers' need of a labour force—a sort of marriage between labour, capital, the civil service and radical politics. The expanding municipal sector needed workers at the same time as young radical women were entering the labour market. Things could be achieved, resources existed in abundance. Many things were happening at once. In the trade unions there was an older generation of belligerent women like Anna-Lisa Lagby, Gertrud Sigurdson and Sigrid Ekendahl. These had paved the way for the younger generation, in politics, in the civil service ... so many competent and knowledgeable enthusiasts! Take Ingeborg Jönsson at the AMS—she truly knew how to place women's issues on the agenda. AMS was very important in this connection with its smoothly working and well-organised structure and with tentacles reaching out to all of society's different realities.¹¹⁵

In 1972 the Council on Equality Between Men and Women was set up. The unusual placing of this council close to the secretariat of the Prime Minister made it possible to control political developments in a unique way. Here it had the power to set its stamp on political proposals and bills drawn up for many different fields. The establishment of the Council was a direct consequence of SAP's party-congress of 1972 at which Olof Palme delivered his famous speech. This was wholly devoted to the issues of equality, the first real sign that the party and the government had advanced the issue of equality into the sphere of state politics. This question had gained legitimacy. As Annika Rohde showed in an article, the Council was to be mainly concerned with the attempt to get women to change their behaviour. It appeared more difficult to get the men to change their role in the family. The Council did not think that the state could intervene "in the private sphere"—it was thus easier to attempt to guide public institutions into creating a climate more friendly to women.¹¹⁶ The Centre Party, the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party even suggested that a

¹¹⁵ Interview with Anna-Greta Leijon 4/4-97.

¹¹⁶ Rodhe, Annika (1998). 'A Fighter for Equality. The Institutionalization of Equality 1972-1976' in 'Delegationen för jämställdhet mellan män och kvinnor'. Unpublished D-essay, Stockholm University, Spring 1998.

government commission should investigate this matter. Gradually a state feminist field of gender equality was developed involving ministers, commissions, administrators, bureaucrats, investigations, committees and gender equality programmes.

Let us just present one paragraph from the minutes of a meeting of the Council to give an idea of what the plans and mobilisation process of a project intended to change gender roles were like. It was important to produce concrete results in order to prove that progress was being made. How the deep-lying power relationships between the sexes were to be approached does not seem to have been tackled as a problem. The problem was often seen as lying in inadequate information and education—the atmosphere seems to have been one of great optimism. All was possible!

§ 5 Tora Britta Gjötterberg—the Fredrika Bremer Association—informed us about a campaign against sex discrimination.

Sonja Fredgardh—Centre Party—informed us that they had initiated a campaign on gender equality issues.

TCO had decided to distribute the brochures of the Council.

Bror Rexed—from the National Board of Health—gave an account of the Board's health information.

Monica Ulfhielm reported on the family policy programme and educational programme of SACO.

Margareta Vestin—from the National Board of Education—described the Sex Roles Project in the schools and showed the information brochures distributed by the National Board of Education.

Gustav Persson—LO—reported on the problems of the day-care centres.

Maj-Britt Carlsson informed us about the trial project that had been started for women in heavy industry in Kristianstad.

The Post Office Administration spoke of plans to introduce new stamps with four famous women as motifs.¹¹⁷

This is undoubtedly the Swedish gender model in miniature. The unions, the government, administration officials, the organisations, Parliament, and representatives of popular movements were present. The directives of the Council stated that:

¹¹⁷ State Archives. 'Delegationen för jämställdhet mellan män och kvinnor. Stora Delegationens Protokoll 21/4 1974 (in summary).

The state has to take an active part in the work of changing the situation of women and to improve equality between men and women.¹¹⁸

What political contacts at the highest level had been taken before state commitment was launched? We do not actually know how the Social Democratic Party and Olof Palme argued before they decided to create a special political sphere for gender equality. Different groups give their own account of what was important. Anna-Greta Leijon, for example, made the following interpretation of Olof Palme's reasons for taking up the concept of equality as the main theme of the Party Congress in 1972:

At Järfälla we worked very hard to get the local party to take up the question. We demanded that the government do something. Thage G. Pettersson and Ingvar Carlsson from our local party organization were also members of the local party and stressed the importance of the question whenever it came up for discussion there. Palme in his turn felt the pressure from the local party: it was then he made up his mind. He realised that something politically interesting was coming./ ... / Palme possessed political intuition and clearly saw the opportunity / ... / A new situation was in the offing with the emergence of young, dynamic and well-educated women. We seemed to be completely invincible.¹¹⁹

Other groups such as the Women's Association of the Social Democratic Party and the LO-women also claimed to have helped in persuading Olof Palme to act. Some say that it was Lisbeth Palme with her close contacts with Group 222 who persuaded her husband.¹²⁰ We may have to accept that we will never know exactly why Palme decided to make his famous speech at the Party Congress and later to set up the Advisory Council on equality in 1972. For us it is perhaps more important to reflect on the structural factors that facilitated such a gender policy in the seventies. In this article we have tried to point to a successful interaction between structural factors—the 'policy windows' in Kingdom's terminology—and successful actors—policy entrepreneurs.

¹¹⁸ State Archives, Delegationens direktiv.

¹¹⁹ Interview Leijon 4/4-97. Kullenberg (1996) pp. 71-82.

¹²⁰ The political scientist Olof Ruin in discussion. HSFR Conference, November 1997, Prague.

Kingdon's theory that an issue requires activists who have for long prepared themselves for change before an issue appears on the political agenda turned out to be more or less correct in this context. The 'policy entrepreneurs' had propagated their ideas in all sorts of contexts and had overcome some of the resistance. They had created a discourse and opened new channels to the centres of power. And the 'policy window' could be opened with the aid of the government's long-term investigations where it was maintained that there would be an upward trend in the Swedish economy if only the need for manpower could be satisfied. The married women constituted our greatest unexploited work force and therefore they became of interest to industry and the state. As we have already shown, the discourse on gender equality had strong support among those sections who were in political alliance: the labour market, the bureaucracy, the organisations and the state.

Let us therefore return to what we have already said about the actions of industry. It is interesting that industrialists and employers took such an active part in the Swedish gender policy. Representatives from industry and commerce took an active part in the establishment and financing of AKN. In addition SNS naturally backed the research for and publication of the important book *Women's Lives and Work*. They also had representatives, as we saw, in Group 222. The recruitment films and the co-operation with AMS also revealed the employers' marked interest in women workers.¹²¹ The positive experience of having women in industry was emphasised and efforts were made to refute reports that women, to a larger extent than men, were absent from work because of illness. This was the situation throughout the whole period of the boom in the sixties.

During the downward economic trend of the seventies, the tone was different and the leaders of industry and commerce were not at all as encouraging as in the sixties. One might well have expected that this would have resulted in a backlash for the discourse on gender equality and in a decrease in the number of women working outside the home. Interest-

¹²¹ See, for example, DN 24/10-62 The annual meeting of Employers in Commerce where the employers and representatives of TCO claim that in view of the fact that the number of employed married women had increased by 20% since the fifties while the proportion of men had diminished, "We must see to it that those married women who really wish to work are given the opportunities to do so."

ingly enough there was no backlash this time. The traditional pattern of 'women as a reserve' had been broken during the recession of the seventies. Women working outside the home did not, as was expected, return to the homes. Instead, growing numbers of women entered the labour market and were now actively encouraged by *political* actors in the form of all the new job that were created in the seventies in the public sector.¹²² Something had happened. What causes can be found for this development whereby a traditional pattern governing the 'natural' positions of the genders in the realms of production and reproduction was actually abandoned?

One explanation is that within the elites of the trade-unionist movement, Parliament and the Civil Service there remained an interest in increased gender equality. We have already mentioned the work carried out by LO and the Women's Association of the Social Democratic Party who in the seventies pursued a very radical family policy.¹²³ It can be added that in its programme for family policy of 1973 TCO were very explicit as to the guidelines for gender equality:

- All adult members of a family should have the opportunity to have employment.
- there should be roughly the same proportion of women and men in various types of work.
- Both sexes should be able to be active in unions and in politics to approximately the same extent.
- men and women should have an equal share in the work in the home.¹²⁴

Even if there were not many concrete Riksdag initiatives in this issue in the 1960s—only a few bills from the Communist Party—many of the reforms that would be implemented in the seventies were prepared for by the parliamentary enquiries carried out in the sixties. The fact that the political parties were slow to bring up this issue on the political agenda of the sixties in spite of the activity outside Parliament can be explained by the fact that the major parties did not dare to challenge large groups of sym-

¹²² Axelsson, Christina (1992), pp. 41 ff., 147–155.

¹²³ Karlsson (1996), 226–263.

¹²⁴ TCO's *familjepolitiska program*, 1973 p. 10.

pathisers with a traditional outlook on men's and women's work.¹²⁵ In the seventies, nevertheless, large-scale reforms were implemented which, even if not exclusively motivated by a desire for gender equality, was still of significance for the development of the relations between women and men. Here is a list of a few of the new commissions and laws that were introduced in the seventies:

Individual Taxation Act, 1971
Government Committee on Equality Between Men and Women, 1972
New Family Laws, 1973–74 (dealing with divorce and cohabitation, etc)
Parental Leave Insurance Act, 1974
The Law of Free Abortion, 1975
Parliamentary Commission on Equal Status, 1976
Ministry of Equal Status, 1976
Decree for Gender Equality in the Civil Service, 1976
Right to a 6-Hour Day for Parents with Small Children, 1979
Law Against Sex/Gender Discrimination in Employment, 1980
Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, 1980
Supplementary Pension for the Care of Children in the Home, 1982
All professions are open to women (including the Defence sector), 1980
Council of Gender Equality Research, 1982

Unfortunately, we cannot in this connection discuss all these new laws and how they were implemented. Even if there are many reasons for these laws we still think that their group emergence is evidence that the gender equality discourse had gained a foothold. The groups who feared that there would now be another gender order had no cause to worry. It is true that women were now working outside the homes but the traditional division of labour in the labour market as a whole was never really changed.¹²⁶ Women continued to work in nursing, in offices and education and men continued to work in industry, technology and economics. And research on the welfare state and on the effects of these new laws has shown that the practical results were, in many cases, different from the intentions that the reforms had had from the beginning. Feminist criticism of the welfare

¹²⁵ Kyle, Gunhild (1979), p. 182 ff; see also AK-prot. 1966 24:216; cp. Drangel (1984), Karlsson (1996).

¹²⁶ Wikander, Ulla (1992) *Delat arbete, delad makt: om kvinnors underordning i arbetet och genom arbetet. En historisk essä.* (1991) 'Uppsala Papers in Economic History', no. 28.

state has found that a patriarchal gender structure was embedded in the system.¹²⁷

Men as a group were favoured by the ATP pension system, by the sickness benefits and by other transfer payments since the system was based on the principle of loss of income. The more a person earned, the more that person received in compensation and this hit women since they often had lower wages and part-time jobs. The reforms therefore had different consequences for men than for women. Another example was the unique and modern Parental Leave Act which included the father as an active partner in parenthood. The Act failed as an affirmative action programme since the allowances to the parents were correlated with the wages. In most families there was more gain from mothers staying at home during the child's first year and 90 per cent of the fathers did not take this opportunity to stay at home with the children.¹²⁸

Other reforms have, however, had a gender equalizing effect and accelerated women's interest in taking the responsibility for their own economy through paid work outside the home. Of interest from our perspective is the problem of individual taxation—since women had an important role in this matter. After long drawn-out negotiations the question of individual taxation was solved. Here we see yet another example of the new role played by women—primarily women academics. This question had been brought up at an early date by a few persons in the feminist movement and by some women's salaried employees' associations such as Women in State Employment and the Association of Female Schoolteachers without support from party groupings or central union organisa-

¹²⁷ See among others Eduards, Maud (1986) 'Kön, stat och jämställdhetspolitik'. *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift* 1983:3, 'Att studera och värdera välfärd'. *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift* 1990:2: Åström, Gertrud (1990) 'Föräldraförsäkring och vårdnadsbidrag—om förhållandet mellan ideologi och verklighet'. *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift*, 1990:2; Eduards-Landby, Maud och Åström, Gertrud (1993) *Många kände sig manade, men få blev kallade—en granskning av arbetet för ökad kvinnorepresentation*. Department of Sociology, Stockholm University; *Kontrakt i kris. Om kvinnors plats i välfärdsstaten* (1992). Eds, Yvonne Hirdman & Gertrud Åström. Carlssons, Stockholm; Sainsbury, Diane (1996) *Gender, Equality and Welfare States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; *Det uferdige demokratiet. Kvinner i nordisk politikk*. (1983), ed. Elina Haavio-Mannila.

¹²⁸ Åström, Gertrud (1990) 'Föräldraförsäkring och vårdnadsbidrag—om förhållandet mellan ideologi och verklighet'. *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift*, no. 2, pp. 37-48.

tions.¹²⁹ In the early years of the sixties there existed, seemingly, complete consensus on the issue of separate taxation. Negative marginal effects affected only a small group of high-income earners.

Ten years later the situation was quite different. The political scientist Nils Elvander has drawn attention to the remarkable change in public opinion that occurred in the sixties. He points out that the 1970 taxation reform, which had far-reaching economic effects for a lot of people, was forced through by a few participants in the cultural debate—a situation that has been characterized as unique in Swedish politics. The debate on individual taxation thus became an offshoot of the general debate about gender roles. It was initiated by women with a higher education, for example, Sonja Lyttkens, Karin Christenson, Maj-Britt Sandlund, Anita Gradin and Ingrid Fredriksson, without the support of any major organisations.¹³⁰ This also resulted in a generation conflict and a class struggle between women in employment and housewives in the Social Democratic Party since many thought that they were treated unfairly by this proposal.

There are also other explanations of the fact that gender equality policy gained a foothold in Swedish political tradition even after the boom declined. Gunnel Karlsson has pointed to the great anxiety of the party leaders of the Social Democratic Party about the efforts of the left-wing parties to recruit new members—especially young people and women. The association of the young Social Democrats noted that they were now getting fewer new members and local women's associations had to be dissolved for lack of members. The Women's Association drew attention to the competition in the final years of the sixties from a more militant feminism which was attracting the attention of the media in a completely different way than the more peaceful women's associations. It was, above all, the members of Group 8 who managed to get their opinions about the power relations between the sexes on the agenda, and thereby issue new challenges to the established parties on the question of equality. The chairperson of the Women's Association spoke of the importance of "pull-

¹²⁹ Nilsson (1996) p. 275 and Elvander, Nils (1972) *Svensk skattepolitik 1945–1970*. Rabén & Sjögren: Stockholm, p. 395; see also Florin, Christina (1999) 'Skatten som befriar. Hemmafruar mot yrkeskvinnor i 60-talets särbeskattningsdebatt' in *Kvinnor mot kvinnor. Historier om systerskapets svårigheter* (Fc), Norstedts: Stockholm.

¹³⁰ Elvander, p. 323 and 25 ff.

ing the carpet from under the feet of the new feminists”—they must themselves recover the initiative and begin to formulate and define the problem.¹³¹

Another significant factor in the general political situation of the seventies was the absence of an active militant opposition to the gender equality discourse. The groups that in an international perspective had mainly represented strongly traditional views on gender roles—the Church and politically conservative groups—were at this time strongly marginalized. In Sweden, in contrast with other countries, there were few active free church groupings who were opposed to contraceptive devices and abortion. The Conservative Party and the Centre Party had their weakest period ever in the sixties.

Consequently, the right-wing government which took office in 1976 continued the work for gender equality and for the state feminism that had already been implemented and made permanent in the administration. The right-wing government even tried to outshine the former government in the matter, for example, of the representation of women at a high level. There were, for example, six women members of the government.¹³² It is during this period that the law of gender equality in working life is introduced. It was also the right-wing parties who forced through the bill that women could work within the men's last bastion, the Swedish armed forces. From the mid seventies gender equality was not, from the point of view of party programmes, an issue that divided the political parties and after this period it became a self-evident ingredient in the declarations of policy of all governments. This, of course, did not mean that gender equality had been realized in practice, even if Sweden, according to comparative social studies, is sometimes said to be the country where gender equality has attained the highest level in the world. For two years running the UN has ranked Sweden as the best country for women to live in.¹³³

¹³¹ Karlsson (1996), p. 155, 167.

¹³² Carlsson-Rosén, *Svensk historia*, p. 632.

¹³³ *Human Development Report 1955*, UNDP (1955) Oxford: Oxford University Press; Ruggie, Mary (1984) *The State and the Working Woman. A Comparative Study of Britain and Sweden*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 17; Gelb, Joyce (1989). Cf also Nordic researchers who have demonstrated the unique position of Nordic women: Berte Siim (1993) 'The gendered Scandinavian welfare states' in *Women and Social Politics in Europe*, ed. Jane

The most recent official investigation on women and power speaks another language—of a backlash for women in the labour market, crises in family life, the difficult situation of single mothers and continuing wage differentials between the sexes.¹³⁴ The gap between men's and women's wages has not lessened since the seventies; rather, we notice a certain increase. On the other hand, certain changes have occurred in the relations between the genders and in responsibility for the children—the participation of the fathers in looking after the children has increased significantly. It is therefore difficult to get an overall view and make any generalization about such a large field as equality in a whole country. The power relationships vary with the different sorts of work, classes, regions, ethnic groups, generations and sectors. Nevertheless, what we would like to assert is that what occurred in the sixties and seventies in Swedish gender history was “something in the nature of a bloodless revolution.”

Lewis. Edward Elgar: Aldershot; Christina Bergqvist (1994) *Mäns makt och kvinnors intressen*. Almqvist & Wiksell International: Stockholm; Sommestad, Lena (1995) 'Kvinnor, industrialisering och välfärd. Argument för en komparativ genusforskningen. *Häften för kritiska studier*, no 1; her (1997) 'Welfare State Attitudes to the Male Breadwinning System. The United States and Sweden in Comparative Perspective'. *International Review of Social History*. (1997 Supplement).

¹³⁴ The Women and Power Enquiry. SOU 1997: 83.87. 113, 114, 115.

Women, Work, and the State: Lobbying for Part-Time Work and 'Practical Equality' in the West German Civil Service, 1958–1969

Christine von Oertzen

Generally, visions seem rare in the first two decades of West German postwar gender politics. This observation is all the more acceptable when questions of equality are considered. According to current accounts, proposals aimed at promoting equality vanished from the political agenda after a short revival in the immediate postwar years in order to give way to an almost undisputed promotion of the male breadwinner family. Due to destruction and defeat, motherhood and domesticity became key issues of West German social reconstruction and therefore, married women in particular were expelled from the labour market and reduced to their duties in home and kitchen.¹ It is understood that only in the early seventies did young women take up equality as a central theme again, when they started to struggle for legal abortion.²

¹ Robert G. Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood. Women and the Family in the Politics of Post-war West Germany*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford 1993, p. 279. Klaus-Jörg Ruhl, *Verordnete Unterordnung. Berufstätige Frauen zwischen Wirtschaftswachstum und konservativer Ideologie, in der Nachkriegszeit, 1945–1963*, München 1994.

² See Ute Frevert, Frauen auf dem Weg zur Gleichberechtigung—Hindernisse, Umleitungen, Einbahnstraßen, in: Martin Broszat (ed.), *Zäsuren nach 1945. Essays zur Periodisierung der deutschen Nachkriegsgeschichte*, München 1990, pp. 113–130; Barbara Riedmüller, Das Neue an der Frauenbewegung. Versuch einer Wirkungsanalyse der neuen Frauenbe-

In fact, compared to Sweden and East Germany ideology and practice of the male breadwinner family remained remarkably strong in West Germany. And of course the picture outlined above portrays important characteristics of postwar West German gender politics and discourses, especially of the early years in the 1950s. But it conceals contradictions and important dynamics of change, especially between 1955 and 1970. Focussing on married women's gainful employment I will demonstrate that already at the end of the fifties, new visions of women's equality came up with the emerging prosperity and the constant labour shortage. I will show how these visions were translated into politics during the sixties, and how they were finally implemented in legal frameworks in 1969.

Starting in 1955, the attitudes towards married women's gainful employment underwent a specific social and ideological re-evaluation. In the early sixties, this process turned into an affirmative public consent about married women's work. More and more people accepted that even despite economic reasons wives and mothers wanted to go on with their gainful employment because of a 'personal need', in order to have their own money or to be more independent from their husbands. In the early sixties it became widely agreed that so long as wives and mothers fulfilled their family duties, they had the right to work outside their homes.³ The introduction of part-time work in shop floors, industries, and offices became a public key issue, all the more as many employers were desperately seeking for women workers. Yet, the change of values went far beyond agreements forced by the labour market. It also gave rise to claims for equality for (married) women in the workforce as well as in society in general. The most important demand which resulted from these ideas was the call for part-time work for highly qualified women in the Civil Service, such as teachers and lawyers. This was demanded by women's organisations who achieved their

wegung, in: Uta Gerhard, Yvonne Schütze (eds.), Frankfurt/M. 1988, pp. 15-41; Ute Gerhard, Die "langen Wellen" der Frauenbewegung—Traditionslinien und unerledigte Anliegen, in: Regina Becker-Schmidt, Gudrun-Axeli Knapp (eds.), *Das Geschlechterverhältnis als Gegenstand der Frauensituation. Veränderungen in den letzten 20 Jahren Sozialwissenschaften*, Frankfurt/M. 1995.

³ For details of explanation see: Christine von Oertzen, *Teilzeitarbeit und die Lust am Zuverdiener. Geschlechterpolitik und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Westdeutschland, 1948-1969*, Göttingen 1999 (in print).

aim in 1969. Reflecting the notions and realities of married women's employment since 1955, the emergence of the women's lobby, and its political struggle for 'practical equality' (*praktische Gleichberechtigung*) in the Civil Service law down to 1969, I intend to revise the widespread opinion that the West German women's movement entered the doldrums for more than 20 years.⁴ By identifying the main actors, ideas, agencies, and strategies in the political struggle for reform, my article will also explain why ideas of women's *Gleichberechtigung* in the sixties challenged female concepts of gainful employment without attacking the male breadwinners' dominance.

The political struggle for part-time work in the Civil Service provides a prime example of how visions about gender relations became policy and then legislation in West Germany. To understand the dynamics of this process, one has to visualize the pluralistic social and relatively complex political system of the FRG. Unlike in Sweden and in the GDR where central state institutions, bureaucrats, or selected independent groups played an important intervening part in promoting gender visions and politics in the sixties,⁵ a West German case study has to deal with many different actors not only of all areas of society but also on the federal and national levels. Especially in matters of education and teaching, the federal governments of the *Länder* were responsible for the Civil Service personnel, and they had their own strategies for solving the principal problems according to the different parties in power or to the *Länder's* individual needs. They could even introduce legal reforms opposite to national politics. The national government itself had the authority to issue directives but could only intervene in federal legislation, if it proved unconstitutional. Parties, trade unions, and women's organisations had special committees on the *Länder* level too, where they followed their own interests.⁶ As we shall see in this case study, the promoters of part time work in the Civil Service were lucky to rely on this structure. They used it and profited a lot from federalism, but still: to reconstruct and understand the proceedings remains complicated.

⁴ See also the study by Irene Stoehr, *Der Mütterkongress fand nicht statt. Frauenbewegungen, Staatsmänner und Kalter Krieg*, in: *Werkstatt Geschichte* 1997, No. 17, pp. 66–82.

⁵ See the studies of Christina Florin/Bengt Nilsson and of Gunilla Budde in this volume.

⁶ An overview of the history and the political system of the FRG can be found in: Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Die Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Frankfurt/M. 1989.

In order to make the developments comprehensible I will first outline in general the most important economic, social, and political changes concerning married women's gainful employment in the West German fifties and early sixties. In the second part of this article I will reveal in detail, how the discussion about part-time work in the Civil Service came about. The growing public agreement on married women's gainful employment and the lack of teachers changed ideas about women's rights in the Civil Service first of all in one of the federal state governments. This is why I will turn to the federal level. Here, I will analyze the reasons for the labour shortage in teaching professions, and how it challenged the federal state's attitudes towards its married female teachers. I will also identify who exactly carried out the first part-time reform in the Civil Service in 1960. In the third part, I will switch back to the national scene and follow the formation and policy-making of the impressive women's lobby. I will explain, why from 1964 on a new notion of women's 'practical' *Gleichberechtigung* became an important public issue and how it was promoted and finally implemented in the legislation of the Civil Service, the biggest and most powerful West German employer, in the state bureaucracy itself. In contrast to the response at the federal state level, this claim had no allies in the national state government and administration. Nevertheless, after five years of struggle against the state, parties, trade unions, and national civil servants syndicates, the lobby achieved its aim and abolished the state's traditional concept of the Civil Service as an almost exclusively male domain.

I. General trends: married women's employment and the public discourse, 1950–1965

Family politics and the politics of gender equality are clearly mirrored by labour market politics towards married women. Taking the latter as an indicator for the legal standard of equality, an account of the situation in the early West German fifties turns out badly. The standard of women's education and qualifications was low. Most women were employed in unskilled occupations in the productive and agricultural sectors.⁷ In general,

⁷ Only at the end of the fifties did the number of women in the services sector grow to the second biggest sector employing women. The productive sector remained in the first

women's unemployment rate was much higher than men's, but especially married women suffered from discrimination. Those who were employed had to justify their "double income". Out-of-work wives and mothers with small children had the lowest chances of finding a new job and were the last to profit from the take-off of the *Wirtschaftswunder*. Official labour market policies did nothing to improve their situation. When the percentage of unemployed married women and mothers rose higher and higher, labour administration officials (*Arbeitsverwaltung*) defamed them as the "false" unemployed and tried to expell them from unemployment benefits.⁸ "Work" was the man's affair, and the best task for a married woman was seen as finding a job for her husband. Under these premises, marriage involved a high risk for women on the labour market. Only in 1955 did industrial tribunals declare as unlawful what had been commonly practiced: now, a woman's marriage was no longer allowed as grounds for automatic dismissal. But still, employees tried to avoid giving jobs to married women and mothers as long as they could.⁹ First they wanted to save eventual expenses caused by special rights for women such as the regulations of *Mutterschutz* in case of childbirth or the right for women to take an extra day off every month, if they had to care for a household (*Hausarbeitstag*).¹⁰ Even if in most of the *Länder* the *Hausarbeitstag* did not have to be paid as a normal workday, employers were keen to avoid it. Furthermore, money was not the only argument they used. Industrial production was especially seen as a 'masculine world' where only a 'masculine constitution' could satisfy 'masculine norms'. Mothers did not belong and were not welcome in

place. Klaus-Jörg Ruhl, *Verordnete Unterordnung. Berufstätige Frauen zwischen Wirtschaftswachstum und konservativer Ideologie in der Nachkriegszeit, 1945-1963*, München 1994, pp. 286-288.

⁸ See Christine von Oertzen and Almut Rietzschel, Comparing the Postwar Germanies: Breadwinner Ideology and Women's Employment in the Divided Nation, 1948-1970, in: *International Review of Social History* 42 (1997), Supplement 5, pp. 175-196.

⁹ See in detail: v. Oertzen, *Teilzeitarbeit und die Lust am Zuverdienenden*, Chap. 4.1.

¹⁰ This German peculiarity was introduced by the Nazis in 1943 in order to encourage women to work in the war industry. After the war both parts of Germany retained these regulations. For the debates and politics concerning the *Hausarbeitstag* see the German-German comparison by Carola Sachse, Ein "heißes Eisen". Ost- und Westdeutsche Debatten um den Hausarbeitstag, in: Gunilla Budde (ed.), *Frauen arbeiten. Weibliche Erwerbstätigkeit in Ost- und Westdeutschland nach 1945*, Göttingen 1997, pp. 252-285.

even the traditional branches of female industry.¹¹ The situation in the services trade was no better. Hairdressers as well as grocers' shops would not take on women over the age of 25, and banking as well as insurance managers were certain that married female counter clerks damaged the institutions' dignity.¹²

Legislation in the Civil Service promoted the same gender hierarchies. The state vigorously privileged male breadwinners and almost exclusively reserved the status *Berufsbeamter* (lifelong employment and high state pensions) for men. This tradition which withheld both status and state benefits from most of its female civil servants went back to the early 19th century.¹³ Arguing that women could not serve state and husband alike they had only been accepted when unmarried. This so-called *Zwangszölibat* for women in the Civil Service had been legally abolished by the Weimar Constitution in 1919, but according to Nazi legislation from 1937, which remained in force down to 1953, West German female civil servants could be dismissed when they married, if their husbands seemed able to provide for them.¹⁴ The state used these policies in order

¹¹ The Director of the Federal Labour Administration of North-Rhine Westfalia (*Landesarbeitsamt NRW*, hereafter quoted as LAA NRW) stated: "... der Industriebetrieb stellt auch in diesen Wirtschaftszweigen eine ausgesprochen von Männern geprägte Welt dar, in der für die Arbeitsleistung die männliche Konstitution und männliche Wertmaßstäbe gelten." Many employers were sure, "daß Frauen als Mütter nicht in die Erwerbsarbeit gehören." See report of the LAA NRW to the Central Labour Administration (*Bundsanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung*, hereafter quoted as BAVAV), May 23, 1955, Bundesarchiv Koblenz (hereafter quoted as BAK) B 119/1045, p. 53. For the continuity of this argument, see Kathleen Canning, *Languages of Labour and Gender. Female Factory Work in Germany, 1840-1914*, Ithaca, 1996.

¹² Report: "Niederschrift über die Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Dienststellenleiterinnen der Frauenvermittlung in Krefeld", Januar 1st, 1950, Hauptstaatsarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalia (hereafter quoted as HStANW), LAA NW, No. 236, p. 86.

¹³ Gudrun Kling, Die rechtliche Konstruktion des 'weiblichen Beamten'. Frauen im öffentlichen Dienst des Großherzogtums Baden im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert, in: Ute Gerhard (Hg.), *Frauen in der Geschichte des Rechts. Von der frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart*, München 1997, pp. 600-617.

¹⁴ German: "wenn ihre wirtschaftliche Versorgung nach der Höhe des Familieneinkommens dauernd gesichert erscheint." See *Bundesbeamtengesetz*, 1.9.1953 (*Bundesgesetzblatt* 1953, pp. 207 ff, hereafter quoted as BGBl.) For the 20s and 30s see Ursula Nienhaus, *Vater Staat und seine Gehilfinnen. Die Politik mit der Frauenarbeit bei der deutschen Post, 1964-1945*, Frankfurt/M., New York 1994.

to save salaries as well as employments, and to flexibilise its female workforce: Many women who had to quit their job as civil servants continued working for the state as employees, without prospect of promotion or protection against wrongful dismissal and for much less money. The German mail and telegraphic administration, the biggest employer of female office officials, used this strategy right up to the end of the Second World War.¹⁵

This discrimination against married women on the labour market has never been undisputed. But until the end of the fifties it was almost unanimously agreed that—except in highly qualified occupations—gainful employment should play a minor role in women's lives. Especially married women and mothers should only work when they necessarily needed the money for economic reasons. It is not surprising that Conservative parties and the Churches shared this opinion. But even Social Democrats as well as trade unionist women agreed and did not refer to socialist ideals of emancipation, when they fought for better working conditions. As Robert Moeller has shown, this was mainly due to the Cold War. To insist on socialist traditions in gender politics could easily be interpreted as having something in common with East German communists and therefore was to be rejected.¹⁶ Instead, West German social democrats were persuaded, that women in the 'free' part of the divided nation were to be protected as workers only so long as the male breadwinner system lacked efficiency and failed to support a family on a single income.¹⁷

Ironically, these arguments were disproved at the end of the fifties, when for the first time increased male wages made it possible for families to live solely on the income of the male breadwinner.¹⁸ Even despite discrimination, the female workforce had risen steadily once the peak of unemployment had been overcome in 1952.¹⁹ The labour shortage, which in

¹⁵ Nienhaus, *Vater Staat*, pp. 220–245.

¹⁶ Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood*, p. 219.

¹⁷ von Oertzen, *Teilzeitarbeit und die Lust am Zuverdienenden*, Chap. 1.

¹⁸ Michael Wildt, *Am Beginn der Konsumgesellschaft. Mangelserfahrung, Lebenshaltung und Wohlstandshoffnung in Westdeutschland in den fünfziger Jahren*, Hamburg 1994.

¹⁹ Between 1952 and 1956 the female workforce in gainful employment rose from 4,521,000 to 5,802,000. Compared to 1950, more than 2.3 million women were employed in 1962. Figures: *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 1952–1962, see also: v. Oertzen, *Teilzeitarbeit und die Lust am Zuverdienenden*, chap. 4.

some regions started as early as in 1954/55 and which did not decrease until 1967 resp. 1972, had a most important impact on working conditions, labour market politics, as well as on attitudes towards women's gainful employment. By 1955, when employers could no longer avoid taking on married women, the civil status of working women became more and more irrelevant. The percentage of married women in the female workforce shot up. Between 1950 and 1961 it rose from 19 to 35 percent, and in 1970 as many as 50 percent of all women workers were married.²⁰ Furthermore, the percentage of part-time workers within the female workforce rose from about 4 to 19.3 percent between 1960 and 1970.²¹ On the one hand, government and industry encouraged married women to take on jobs by also heavily promoting part-time work; on the other hand, it became obvious that women took their chance not because of economic need, but also because they wanted to work and to earn their own money. The mass media were the first to discover a 'new female identity' (*Neues Lebensgefühl der Frau*) in West Germany. Like women in England, Sweden and the United States, they seemed to have developed a 'personal need' to work outside their homes. Thus, they would not necessarily resign from gainful employment when their husbands earned enough money to provide for their families but seek employment and extra income for their own interests. Newspapers, women's magazines, and radio broadcasting programs featured women's part-time work as the best solution to make family and gainful employment compatible. So long as wives and mothers would fulfill their family duties (part time) gainful employment was no longer seen as evil, but as a pleasure and need of women, even if they had to care for a household and did not necessarily need the money.²²

This "biggest social revolution of our times", as one newspaper put it already in 1956, compelled a rethinking of gender relations and the meaning of married women's work. This recognition also indicates that the West Germans had shifted their orientation: Fears and rhetoric that a growing female workforce would lead to 'eastern' communist conditions and to the

²⁰ Angelika Willms, Grundzüge der Entwicklung der Frauenarbeit von 1880 bis 1980, in: Walter Müller et al., *Strukturwandel der Frauenarbeit 1880-1980*, Frankfurt/M. 1983, p. 35.

²¹ v. Oertzen, *Teilzeitarbeit*, chap. 4.

²² Ibidem, chap. 1.

death of the German people (*Volkstod*) received less and less attention.²³ Western ideas were the force behind the change. It was especially Alva Myrdal's and Viola Klein's book *Women's two Roles* that led to an understanding that the proceedings on the women labour market and the observed 'new female identity' were part of a structural development in all highly industrialized—western—countries. Myrdal and Klein's book was well-known years before it came out in German in 1960 and became a bestseller. Widely read, it quickly popularized the new view that married women's gainful employment was not an evil, but—to a certain limit—their wish and legitimate right.²⁴

The expansion of part-time work at the end of the fifties challenged traditional concepts of women's employment. Almost every public institution, the political parties, and the churches joint in the debate. Women in the Social Democratic Party (SPD) were the first to revise their positions. Following the party's *Godesberger Programm* of 1959, Martha Schanzenbach, the only female member among the party leaders, carried through a new concept of family policy in 1961.²⁵ The *Godesberger Programm* marks one of the most important turning points in the party's history and its transformation into a 'people's party' (*Volkspartei*).²⁶ Moreover, Schanzenbach's ideas of a new family policy intended to render the party "socially acceptable" (*gesellschaftsfähig*) and a possible choice for a broader spectrum of voters in order to finally come to power with the next elec-

²³ The West German Minister for the Family, the Catholic Franz Würmeling (CDU), was one of the most eloquent protagonists of this argument. Practically, he was less powerful and lost more and more influence, when the Ministries of Labour and Economics, both very mighty centres of power, pleaded for more married women workers in the workforce. In 1962 Würmeling resigned together with the old Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, v. Oertzen, *Teilzeitarbeit*, Chap. 1.3. For Würmeling's policy on married women's employment see: Ruhl, *Verordnete Unterordnung*, pp. 176–198.

²⁴ Alva Myrdal and Viola Klein, *Women's Two Roles. Home and Work*, London 1956. German: *Die Doppelrolle der Frau in Familie und Beruf*, Köln 1960.

²⁵ See Richtlinien sozialdemokratischer Familienpolitik, in: *Jahrbuch der SPD*, 1960/1, pp. 465 ff.

²⁶ Kurt Klotzbach, *Der Weg zur Staatspartei. Programmatik, praktische Politik und Organisation der deutschen Sozialdemokratie 1945–1965*, Bonn 1992. Also: Siegfried Heimann, *Die Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, in: Richard Stöß (ed.), *Parteienhandbuch*, Bd. 4, pp. 2025–2217.

tions in 1961. To reach this aim, 'old' socialist ideals like public education were thrown overboard in favour of an explicit "yes to the family".²⁷ Children should be educated in their families and by their mothers. This also implied a decision against whole-day schools. It is obvious that this concept incorporated conservative values. But concerning wives and mothers, the program did not plead for domesticity. On the contrary, it took into account the changing situation on the labour market and "new demands of the modern industrial society". Mothers could only be satisfactory educators when they had practical knowledge of the world "outside" home and kitchen. Furthermore, married women too had a "right" to work. But they should be free to decide if they wanted to have a job beside their family duties. To guarantee this freedom, male breadwinners should be able to provide for the families. Only then would married women have the chance to work when they really wanted to. Therefore, the claim for part-time work played an important part in the family program in order to facilitate "emancipation without overtaxing".²⁸ This 'soft version' of a socialist emancipatory meaning of gainful employment for married women had a crucial impact on the party's rise to power in 1966 and 1969.²⁹ It neither hurt the breadwinners' privileges nor did it endanger the tangible field of family autonomy. But it attracted women voters and it allowed the party to take over opinion-forming in family politics from the "c"-parties and the Catholic Church, which had dominated the field during the 1950s.

²⁷ Martha Schanzenbach in a committee of the SPD, February 1st and 2nd, 1960, FES, SPD-Fraktion, 3. WP, Nr. 142. See also: Oertzen/Rietzschel, Das "Kuckucksei" Teilzeitarbeit. Die Politik der Gewerkschaften im deutsch-deutschen Vergleich, 1948-1970, in: Gunilla-F. Budde (ed.), *Frauen arbeiten. Weibliche Erwerbstätigkeit in Ost- und Westdeutschland nach 1945*, pp. 212-251.

²⁸ Hety Schmitt-Maass, Die Frau von heute in Familie und Beruf, Manuscript, september 9, 1961, SPD-Pressdienst, P/XVI/204, ASD, PV-Referat Frauenarbeit, Nr. 0208.

²⁹ In 1961, the Party got more votes than ever before, and especially the number of women voters rose, so that the Conservative Chancellor Adenauer lost its absolute majority. Nevertheless, Christian Democrats and Liberals were ready to cooperate and remained in power. The Social Democrats came to power in 1966, when the Conservatives left their small Liberal partner and agreed to a 'grand coalition'. After the elections of 1969, Willy Brandt became the first West German Social Democrat Chancellor, now cooperating with the Liberals himself. See Heimann, *Die sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, p. 2193.

Furthermore, Social Democrats were joined by the Protestant Church. From these quarters fears were expressed that women could soon get too much pleasure from their gainful employment and could be ready to refuse their family duties completely if nobody intervened with attractive offers to combine both 'fields of duty'. Therefore, the Protestant Church pleaded to acknowledge married women's right to work and to promote part-time arrangements.³⁰ The social background of this argument was a severe shortage of manpower in nursing, and especially church-owned hospitals and homes suffered from it. Young women left the profession when they married, because nursing was still very much connected to celibacy.³¹ Demanding changes within the profession and for a public appreciation of married women's work, the Protestant Church became a very important protagonist in the process of changing values. Like all the other voices of the public discourse on married women's work, it called for an acceptance of a new role model for married women which facilitated being wife, mother, and employee. The Conservative parties were not happy to give up their concepts of domesticity, but they saw they had to adapt themselves to the new conditions for better or worse. When in 1966 the Conservative/Liberal Government published the first official report about women's situation in work, home, and society (*Frauenenquete*) it came to the conclusion, that the unchallenged ideal of the married housewife (*"Nur-Hausfrau"*) of the 1950s belonged to the past.³²

II. Federal advances, 1958-1960

Part time work in the Civil Service had been discussed since 1958. As I mentioned before, the subject first came up in the federal governments of the *Länder*. In Lower Saxony, state bureaucrats calculated as early as in 1956 that there would soon be a severe shortage of young academics. For the most part, these problems resulted from the gendered regulations in

³⁰ "Denkschrift über die Teilzeitarbeit der Frauen", in: *Die Mitarbeit* 14 (1965), Nr. 6, pp. 88-96.

³¹ Marlies Cremer, Probleme der Teilzeitarbeit für Krankenschwestern, in: *Deutsche Schwesternzeitung*, vol. 16, 1963, Nr. 4, pp. 117-119.

³² Bericht der Bundesregierung über die Situation der Frauen in Beruf, Familie und Gesellschaft, *Verhandlungen der deutscher Bundestag*, 5. WP, Drs. V/909.

the Civil Service law. It was true that from 1953 on married women could not anymore be forced to quit the Civil Service. Nevertheless, a lot of them did so after some years of marriage. Women teachers left their jobs after an average period of service of only 10 years, and even this would decline to seven years. In the meantime, the percentage of female students rose dramatically, especially at teacher-training colleges, where in 1957 70 % of all students were women.³³ Presuming that more or less all women teachers would marry and leave their jobs after a short period, the state more and more needed young teachers to keep the schools going, and much greater numbers than could be trained for the job.

When the situation was discussed within the federal government, it soon emerged that the Civil Service had to be changed profoundly in order to meet these structural problems. Concerning teachers, the *Länder* themselves were responsible for the Civil Service, and more than half of the federal civil servants were teachers. Male students in particular were being attracted less and less to teaching in primary and vocational schools because it was poorly paid and had a low prestige.³⁴ In relation to the diminishing average of periods of service, training for women teachers did not only seem too expensive, but also a waste of resources. In addition, women teachers apparently no longer accepted the state's traditional practice in gender personnel policies. Part-time work for married women teachers was already an established institution, but not within the Civil Service. If women wanted to reduce their working hours, they had to waive their status and privileges as civil servants and to continue teaching as employees. Obviously, women preferred to resign completely rather than teach under such bad conditions: only five percent of all women teachers worked as employee "assistants" (*Hilfslehrer*). More reasons for this low rate were well known: beside the low prestige of their status they earned much less than their civil servant colleagues. On a half-time job as

³³ Statistical survey, students at teacher training colleges, sommer 1957, Nds HStA, Nds. 400, Acc. 121/81, No. 27, p. 28.

³⁴ Hartmut Horn, *Volksschullehrernachwuchs—Untersuchungen zur Qualität und Quantität*, Weinheim, Berlin, Basel 1968, see also: Dagmar Hänsel, Frauen im Lehramt. Feminisierung des Lehrberufs?, in: Elke Kleinau/Claudia Opitz (ed.), *Geschichte der Mädchen und Frauenbildung*, vol. 2: Vom Vormärz bis zur Gegenwart, Frankfurt/M. New York 1996, pp. 414–433.

employee they only got one third of the salary of a full time civil servant teacher.³⁵

When Lower-Saxony politicians decided to incorporate part-time work for women teachers in the new federal Civil Service law, most sections of the administration appreciated the reform. Only the Ministry of Finance protested. In his opinion, the new regulation violated two basic (male, C.O.) principles of the Civil Service code: First, the “complete devotion to the profession” (*volle Berufshingabe*), and second, “total loyalty” towards the state. In addition, regulations of employment and pension were misused. According to the Federal Treasurer the state could not accept the division between state service and “private service”. Introducing part-time work into the Civil Service law would create a new “type” (*Typus*) of civil servant, who would not feel obliged to unconditional loyalty towards the state. But on the other hand, if the state accepted part-time civil servants, it had nevertheless to undertake to provide (fully) for their old age. To back up these arguments of “costs” for the state the Ministry of Finance referred to common prejudices about married women’s gainful employment: wives and mothers already had a full time job at home, and any additional gainful employment would result in early retirement and high costs. Therefore, the Ministry of Finance (CDU) pleaded for upholding the status quo.³⁶

Typically for the period, he did not win this struggle. The ministry of the interior, chief official of all federal civil servants, as well as the ministry of culture and education (SPD) both succeeded in isolating the Federal Treasurer, not only by clever political bargaining and by emphasising the dramatic labour shortage. In the meantime they produced another line of argumentation, which reminded the state of its duty towards women and mothers in a new way.³⁷ Hitherto, the state had forced his fe-

³⁵ Petition of Erna Scheffler, former Judge of the High Court and now President of the German Association of Women Academics (DAB), May 7, 1965, concerning the part-time work of civil servants, in: Archive of the Trade Union, DGB-Archiv, DGB 24.II, Abteilung Frauen, 24/4290.

³⁶ Federal Ministry of Finance to the Federal Ministry of the Interior, March 12, 1958, concerning civil servants in part-time work, Niedersächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv (hereafter quoted as NdsHStA), Nds. 400, Acc. 121/81, Nr. 27.

³⁷ Note of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, April 4, 1958, NdsHStA, Nds. 400, Acc. 121/81, Nr. 28.

male civil servants to do a fulltime job—regardless of their duties at home. If the state itself provoked overtaxing of its female protégés, it was small wonder that it had high costs for providing for this. In the attempt to manage both family and full professional work, women had to neglect one or the other. Both variations were to be avoided. The state needed well rested, fresh and relaxed women teachers and it had to protect the family. Therefore, female civil servants were to be protected in a special way. If mothers were to educate their own children themselves instead of paying for house service personnel, they needed enough time for it. So “complete devotion to the profession” with regard to married women teachers could not depend on time, but on the quality of teaching. And salaried part-time women teachers had already shown that they were able to fulfil their duties equally well as full-time civil servants. If the state wanted to keep its women teachers, and if it needed to encourage more women to take on teaching posts in the Civil Service, it had to improve their prospects.³⁸

This first official plea for part-time work in the Civil Service is a milestone in West German state supportive measures concerning married women’s employment. It insisted that women’s first task was to care for the family, but from this, it deduced the need for special rights to a life-long professional career. The labour shortage helped to legalise the concept. In 1960, the new Civil Service law passed the Federal Parliament of Lower Saxony with only a few votes against.³⁹ When it came into force in september 1960, women teachers in the Civil Service with children were allowed to halve their working hours for a maximum of 10 years. During these years they got only half of their salary and other benefits, and only half of the years were counted for later pensions.⁴⁰ In November 1963, 157 out of 11500 women teachers in Lower Saxony had taken on part-time service. 90 of these had declared they would have resigned from their job without this opportunity. As the measure was planned for the longer term,

³⁸ Second note of the Ministry of Education and Culture, March 19, 1958, NdsHStA, Nds. 400, Acc. 121/81, Nr. 27, p. 10.

³⁹ Stenographic reports of the session of the *Landtag*, 3rd WP, 13th Tagungsabschnitt, 70th session, october 10, 1960, p. 3902.

⁴⁰ Civil Service Law of Lower Saxony (*Niedersächsisches Beamtenengesetz*), June 14, 1960, § 80, in: Niedersächsisches Gesetz- und Verordnungsblatt 1960, pp. 145 ff.

officials and politicians in Lower Saxony could be content with this result.⁴¹

III. From outside to inside parliament: lobbying for 'practical' equality

On the national level, the federal reform was commented on with open discontent. Even the majority of the *Länder* disapproved of the new regulations in Lower Saxony. Only the southwestern state Baden-Württemberg followed its example and passed a similar reform in 1962. Most officials and politicians felt that honourable and well established traditions had been betrayed for just actual labour market necessities. What was only just acceptable for teachers in federal care would amount to an attack on the state on the national level. And anyway, national civil servants were not teachers but judges, officials in charge for administration, public mail and railways. The national Civil Service was therefore even more a male domain. The arguments against part-time work in the national government and administration were the same as in Lower Saxony. Not only did it cost too much; but to intervene in traditions would amount to intruding on the basic rights of all male civil servants. The national Ministry of the Interior stated time and again that he would never authorize a regulation which undermined not only the principles but also the honour of the *Berufsbeamtentum* as well as the reputation of the state. The trade unions as well as the national syndicate of civil servants *Deutsche Beamtenbund (DBB)* shared this opinion.

However, in 1964 the situation at schools and universities became a national public issue. Not only did the deplorable situation at common primary schools get public attention, but the system of education as a whole. In addition, the "German Union of Women Academics" (*Deutscher Akademikerinnenbund, DAB*) and the "German Ring of Women Organisations" (*Deutscher Frauenring, DFR*) intervened in the debate. Startled by the journalistic campaign complaining about the "German catastrophe in education" (*"Deutsche Bildungskatastrophe"*), they declared part-time work for

⁴¹ Account of the Ministry of Culture and Education, undated, (end of 1963), in: DGB-Archiv, DGB 24.II, Abteilung Frauen, 24/4287.

female academics in the Civil Service to be a matter of political principles.⁴² Within a year, *DAB* and *DFR* activated an active and effective women's lobby.⁴³ For them, the labour shortage in teaching professions was no longer the reason for claiming part-time work—it became a means to promote women's interests, and, as a central part of it, women's 'practical' *Gleichberechtigung*.

How can we explain the sudden emergence of a non-party and non-confessional women's lobby forwarding for their own interests? I think, there are two main reasons to be considered. From its beginnings in the middle of the 19th century, education had been one of the main themes of the German women's movement. Women teachers have always been among its very first rank in the struggle, and apart from social work teaching had not only presented the most persuasive arguments in favour of a 'female' contribution to the public sphere and well-being. In Prussia, women teachers were also the first to get permissions to study at the university.⁴⁴ Many protagonists of the old women's movement were teachers, and some of them, such as Emmy Beckmann, were important figures who reorganized the women's movement after 1945. In the fifties, Beckmann was not only president of the women teachers' organisation, but also President of the *DAB*, and editor of a journal on education and teaching, which explicitly linked up with Weimar traditions.⁴⁵ However, without the general change of attitudes towards married women's work and the reform in Lower Saxony, the women's lobby would probably neither have

⁴² Georg Picht, Die deutsche Bildungskatastrophe, in: *Christ und Welt*, January 1964, see also: Sigrid Metz-Göckel, Die "deutsche Bildungskatastrophe" und Frauen als Bildungsreserve, in: Kleinau/Opitz (ed.), *Geschichte der Mädchen- und Frauenbildung*, vol. 2., pp. 373–385.

⁴³ Both organisations had many members and a functioning network system with annual national meetings. More than 1700 women were member in the *DAB* and one of its local groups. The umbrella-organisation *DFR* united almost all local, regional and national women's organisations. Informations were spread by a journal called "Informationen für die Frau" which appeared monthly. From 1957 on, also the *DAB* had its own journal, called "Mitteilungen des Deutschen Akademikerinnenbundes".

⁴⁴ See for example Brigitte Kerchner, *Beruf und Geschlecht. Frauenberufsverbände in Deutschland, 1948–1908*, Göttingen 1992.

⁴⁵ See *Mädchenbildung und Frauenschaffen* ed. by Emmy Beckmann, a journal founded in 1951.

picked up the call for part-time work in the Civil Service nor the claim for 'practical' Gleichberechtigung. It was the general change that prepared the field for their visions and political demands.

The fight for part-time work of female academics in the Civil Service is an impressive evidence for the existence of a women's movement in the West German sixties, its political cleverness, and its ability to push through their claims. Asking for reform on behalf of academic wives and mothers, professional women terminated the public agreement, that equality between men and women had already been achieved by the end of the fifties. In fact, a new family law and an equality law—both come into force in 1958—had removed the most obvious legal discrimination against women.⁴⁶ Above all, these reforms put an end to the father's final ballot (*Stichentscheid*) in family affairs as well as the husband's right to give in his wife's notice. The reform was therefore mainly celebrated as a final break-through to legal equality between men and women. Although structural and social (*gesellschaftliche*) discrimination still operated, up to 1964 only occasional voices had criticised euphoria and self-satisfaction.⁴⁷ And even if the women's lobby pleaded for 'practical' Gleichberechtigung now, their concept of equality was far from being egalitarian. It referred to a model of gender difference. But contrary to the fifties, women academics took up the more radical potential of these ideas: women and men were different and had different social tasks, but they were to be given the same rights and chances to participate in social life and power.⁴⁸ From this perspective, the women's organisations became aware of more complex and subtle forms of not only formal but social discrimination. This is why part-time work in the Civil Service was advanced to a central issue for them. Not only teachers but al-

⁴⁶ Jutta Limbach, Die Entwicklung des Familienrechts seit 1949, in: Rosemarie Nave-Herz (Hg.), *Wandel und Kontinuität der Familie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Stuttgart 1988, S. 11–32; Gabriele Müller-List, *Gleichberechtigung als Verfassungsauftrag. Eine Dokumentation zur Entstehung des Gleichberechtigungsgesetzes vom 18. Juni 1957*, Düsseldorf 1996.

⁴⁷ Helge Pross, leftwing outsider and Professor of Social Sciences, was one of them. See for example: Pross, *Die halbe Befreiung. Die Frau in der Gesellschaft von gestern und heute*, in: *Informationen für die Frau* 1961, No. 6, pp. 3/4.

⁴⁸ On the concept of gender difference see Irene Stoehr, *Organisierte Mütterlichkeit. Zur Politik der deutschen Frauenbewegung um 1900*, in: Karin Hausen (ed.), *Frauen suchen ihre Geschichte*, München 1987, pp. 373–385.

most all female professionals working for the state were civil servants. And if they wanted to have children and have time to care for the family themselves, they needed the opportunity to reduce their working hours without losing position, pay, and prestige. Lobbying for this political aim also meant fighting offensively for married women's *right* to work outside the home.

The women's branch of the small Liberal Party (FDP), member of the Government up to 1966, became the political spokesman of the women's lobby for part-time work in the Civil Service. There was a long established tradition for women academics who were organized in the DAB to join this party. Marie-Elisabeth Lüders, 'grande dame' of West German parliamentarism and co-founder of the DAB in 1926, had already been member of the Weimar Liberal Party (DDP).⁴⁹ In 1964, Lüders was in her high eighties and not actively involved in politics anymore. But many professionals in the DAB had followed her example and joined the liberals as well. Some of them held important positions, for example jurist Erna Scheffler, who was one of the seven judges in the West German High Court, or young chemist and politician Hildegard Hamm-Brücher, who—after successful elections in Bavaria in 1966—was nominated for the executive committee of the Liberal Party (and became State Secretary in the Ministry of Science and Education in Willy Brandt's first government in 1969).⁵⁰ It is another important part of the success-story, that—despite the temporary discrimination against married women workers—there was a select number of highly qualified women who had influential key positions in the West German public, political, and social life. Many of them were members in the women's organisations united under the roof of the *Deutsche Frauenring*. Due to their common membership in the DAB, they were ready to cooperate crossbench. A few examples give an impressive

⁴⁹ In the 1920s the DDP was a political forum for professional women engaged in the women's movement, but unlike most of them, Lüders stayed in the party when it became more and more right-wing and changed its name to "Deutsche Staatspartei" in 1930. In 1948 she joined the newly founded Liberal Party of Berlin (LDP) and was member of the Berlin City Parliament. From 1953 on she was deputy in the German *Bundestag*. 86 years old, Lüders died in 1966, Irene Stoehr, Marie-Elisabeth Lüders, in: Renate Genth et al, *Frauenpolitik und politisches Wirken im Berlin der Nachkriegszeit*, Berlin 1996, pp. 289–302.

⁵⁰ Ursula Salentin, Hildegard Hamm-Brücher, *Der Lebensweg einer eigenwilligen Demokratin*, Freiburg 1987.

picture of the intertwining of the female lobby: Jurist Elisabeth Schwarzkopf for example, Christian Democrat, appointed to Ministry of Health in 1961, and executive member of the Protestant women's organisations, promoted part-time work in the Civil Service as well as Hety Schmitt-Maass, former executive of an influential women's bureau in Frankfurt, now press-officer of the Federal Ministry for Education in Hesse. As mentioned above, she was also executive member of the SPD and one of the main supporters of the new Social Democratic family programme. Of course there were teachers involved, such as Hilde Kappus, former deputy principal in the federal state of Baden-Württemberg and now leader of the Liberal Party's national women's branch, as well as Anna Mosolf, co-founder of the Hanover "German Women's Club" in 1946, now officer at the Ministry of Education in Lower Saxony and women secretary of the federal branch of the teachers' syndicate GEW.⁵¹

The first manifestations of the growing network took place in autumn 1964, when the *Deutsche Frauenring* started to organize public debates concerning the crisis of education in West Germany. Unlike the public mainstream debate, the academic women did not focus on the disadvantages and deficiencies of the federal organisation of education. From the beginning, their debates centred around the situation of women teachers and their prospects. Education for young girls had to be improved; but for this, women needed lifelong prospects in their profession.⁵² Meanwhile, part-time work was generally accepted in most occupations. Only teachers and female academics were especially disadvantaged when they worked for the state. Judges for example were not even allowed to work as employees. If they wanted to reduce their working hours, they had to quit their position completely and seek employment as lawyers.

In order to keep the issue on the public and political agenda, the lobby pursued different tactics on different levels. On the federal level, women in

⁵¹ See Barbara Heinze and Margit Hirschfeld, *Der Club deutscher Frauen in Hannover*, in: Anette Kuhn (ed.), *Frauen in der deutschen Nachkriegszeit*, vol. 2: *Frauenpolitik 1945-49*, Düsseldorf 1986, pp. 127-136, esp. footnote 6.

⁵² Programme of a public meeting on: "Die Schule und die Stellung der Lehrerin im Bildungsnotstand der modernen Gesellschaft", organized by the DFR, copy from Dec. 12, 1964, women's branch of the FDP, "der FDP-Bundestagsfraktion zur Kenntnis", ADL, A 5-15, Bl. 70.

the liberal factions of the federal parliaments (*Landtage*) systematically presented the federal governments with parliamentary petitions (*kleine Anfragen*) about part-time work for women teachers. On the national level, they had all female civil servants, but especially academics in mind. For this purpose, they submitted a comprehensive petition to the national parliament (*Bundestag*) which effectively attacked the official resistance against reform.⁵³ The author was none other than Erna Scheffler, who had just retired as judge from the High Court and become President of the DAB. Scheffler not only declared a feminist war on the principles of the Civil Service with tenure.⁵⁴ She also intended to strengthen the lobby by equipping it with useful arguments for the legal debate. Therefore, the petition was sent to the women's organizations, to women trade union officials as well as to all female deputies in the *Bundestag* and the *Landtage*, asking them that "female deputies of all factions should get together on this behalf."⁵⁵

Scheffler's main point was a change of perspective. Instead of the state's interests and duties she emphasised women's interests and their right for equality regarding other women in the work force as well as male civil servants. From here she argued that women should have the right to work part-time not because of their different sex, but because part-time work correlated with the "social functions and circumstances of life linked to that difference."⁵⁶ Therefore, Scheffler pleaded that not only mothers were to be allowed to work part-time in the Civil Service, but even wives without children.

Scheffler's petition was an important step towards overcoming the Government's resistance, because it challenged the official arguments on the legal level. But from 1966 on, the lobby successfully made the issue a matter of political principle that could not be solved legally. Constant agitation led to a swing of opinion in the most important syndicates. In June 1966, the teachers union (GEW) and the Association of Philologists abandoned their reservations. When half a year later even the influential *Deuts-*

⁵³ Petition by Erna Scheffler, see footnote 35.

⁵⁴ See also: Erna Scheffler, Ist Teilzeitarbeit für Beamtinnen mit dem Grundgesetz vereinbar?, in: *Die öffentliche Verwaltung* (DÖV) 18 (1965), No. 6, pp. 181-183.

⁵⁵ Annexed letter by Erna Scheffler as president of the DAB, may 7th, 1965, DGB-Archiv, 24.11, Abteilung Frauen, 24/4290.

⁵⁶ Scheffler, Petition, p. 3.

the *Beamtenbund* favoured the reform, the time had come to fight within Parliament. In november 1966 Lieselotte Funcke, member of the DAB and depute of the liberal faction in the *Bundestag*, introduced the first draft bill. It suggested that all female civil servants with children up to 16 years should be allowed to apply for halving their work time or for leaving the service for three years in all. In general, the state was to approve these applies.⁵⁷

The struggle in the different committees of Parliament went on for two years. The lobby outside Parliament was ready to mobilise protests, whenever the project seemed about to fail. And yet another event fostered the project: When the official report on the situation of women in family, work, and society came out in 1966, it gave an important impulse to reform.⁵⁸ First called for by the SPD in 1962, it had taken years to be completed. In autumn 1966 the Government issued a large volume of more than 600 pages. It was not to be denied that professional women academics in the Civil Service were the authors of this documentation. All the women's departments in the administration had contributed comprehensive accounts of the legal status, the situation in the different sectors of employment, education, qualification, and in the families. The report, too, exploded the illusion that women's status and situation were satisfactorily equalised with the legal reforms of 1958. Hedda Heuser, member of the Liberal Democratic Party (FDP) and deputy in the *Bundestag*, expressed a widespread view, when she said that the documentation itself presented social criticism, because it showed "the big gap between the common ideas of women's roles and their real situation in the society".⁵⁹

The Government continued to refuse vehemently to fall in with the call for reform; even though the experts in the Ministry of the Interior did not all have the same opinion. A small faction, the 'constitutionalists', favoured the law, whereas the majority, the 'civil servants', supported the status quo. Powerful in the beginning, the latter faction slowly lost ground. The con-

⁵⁷ "Initiativantrag der FDP auf Änderung des Bundesbeamtengesetzes", Nov. 4, 1966, Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages, 5th WP, Drs. V/1091.

⁵⁸ Bericht der Bundesregierung ... See footnote 30.

⁵⁹ Heuser said, the report "... beweist, wie groß die Kluft ... zwischen der gängigen Vorstellung von der Rolle der Frau und ihrer wirklichen Position in der Gesellschaft ist." Hedda Hauser, *Ein Leben aus zweiter Hand?*, comment to the official report on women ..., sep. 25, 1966, *Archiv des Deutschen Liberalismus* (hereafter quoted as ADL), A 5-30.

stant reference to the old principles of the Civil Service gave rise to growing discontent among the women in all parties of Parliament. Women deputies were especially annoyed by the argument that part-time work for female civil servants was to be avoided because it violated the principle of gender equality within the Civil Service. As Social Democrat Annemarie Renger pointed out, the constitutional right for men and women to have access to every public office included equal chances to stay in the Civil Service.⁶⁰ Renger became the leading parliamentary promoter of the reform bill, and she managed to engage Elisabeth Schwarzhaupt and Gudrun Ensseling from the Conservative Party (CDU) to cooperate. As in the meantime Social Democrats had joined the Government and formed a “grand coalition” with the Conservatives, this meant a very promising combination. And luckily, even the Ministry of the Interior had changed. The new politician in charge, Peter Benda, was a ‘constitutionalist’ and supported the reform. Within this constellation, the women succeeded in persuading the ‘grand coalition’ to introduce a new reform draft bill in 1968 which both parties could accept.⁶¹ Because Christian and Social Democrats held the absolute majority in the *Bundestag*, it was now only a question of time before it was passed. In February 1969 the reform bill finally passed the *Bundestag* without a single vote against it.⁶²

When Hedda Hauser from the Liberal Party welcomed the law, she emphatically announced a new age for women’s work: “From today on”, she said, “female civil servants will be able to follow their family and professional duties—and, let’s spell it out loudly—at the same time their own inclinations, without a bad conscience that either job or family will suffer from it and without suffering from it themselves.”⁶³

⁶⁰ Questioning hour, initiated by the SPD (Annemarie Renger), oct. 25th, 1967, *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, 5. Wahlperiode, 128th session.

⁶¹ Dorothea Frandsen, Auf dem Weg zur Gleichberechtigung. Eine Zeitzeugin berichtet, in: *Ariadne*, No. 30, sept. 1996, pp. 29–35.

⁶² *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, 5th WP, 215th session, february 12, 1969, p. 11658 A.

⁶³ Heuser said: “... ab heute soll es denn also den Beamtinnen möglich sein, gleichermaßen ihren familiären wie ihren beruflichen Pflichten und—sagen wir das ruhig auch hier deutlich—Neigungen nachzukommen, ohne daß sie ständig ein schlechtes Gewissen haben müssen, ohne daß entweder Beruf oder Familie darunter leiden und ohne daß sie selbst einen Schaden leiden müssen.”, *Ibid.*, p. 11664 D.

Yet, the impressive success of the women's lobby cannot conceal the political and social compromises which marked the new law. Women of all political parties and women's organisations had fought together, and they had all agreed that part-time civil servants were not to be promoted so as not to endanger the career of their full-time colleagues. Besides, they did not share the same opinion about *Gleichberechtigung*. Conservative women stressed that *Gleichberechtigung* was not meant to weaken the hierarchy of family and gainful employment. In this sense Gudrun Enseling pointed out that "... the aim of every civil servant to have a family and work part time without accepting disadvantages in the profession ... seems a bit too high. The principle, that decision means sacrifice, is also valid in this connection."⁶⁴

This belief can also be found in the law itself. Because many women accepted the 'sacrifice' as consistent element of the—different—female role model, they also agreed to leave it to the state how to realize the regulation in detail and how to operate 'practical' *Gleichberechtigung* within the Civil Service. Enseling, who had been a high-ranking official in the public mail for years, knew too well about the difficulties of establishing a system that guaranteed equal opportunities for female part-time and fulltime officials, and for women and men. Nevertheless, she seemed satisfied with an appeal to the official administrations to follow the law to the best of their knowledge and belief. Thus, applying for part-time work, women had to run the risk of driving their professional careers to a dead end.

IV. Conclusions

In 1971 the Civil Service law was changed again. From now on, fathers also could apply for part-time work. Male civil servants had successfully protested against 'discrimination'—but they seemed to be happy to have achieved it in theory. Actually, very few applied for reduced working time or parental leave. Whereas the number of female civil-servants in part-

⁶⁴ "... das Ziel jeder Beamtin, die eine Familie gründet, die Anpassung der dienstlichen an ihre familiären Pflichten zu ermöglichen, ohne daß sie eine Einbuße in Stellung und Fortkommen im Beruf in Kauf nehmen mußten, ... [ist] etwas zu hoch gesteckt, denn der Satz, daß Entschluß auch Verzicht bedeutet, gilt auch in diesem Zusammenhang." Ibid., p. 11659 C.

time work rose from 3615 in 1969 up to about 28,000 in 1975, male applicants remained a small minority.⁶⁵ Passing the struggle for 'practical equality' in review, this phenomenon seems reasonable. Unlike the debate on *jämställdhet*⁶⁶ in Sweden, the discussions about *praktische Gleichberechtigung* in the West German sixties remained focussed almost exclusively on women. Of course some female protagonists stated that in future men should help a little more in the household, and women's magazines showed brave husbands ironing by themselves and washing the dishes. Yet, nobody in the sixties criticised the structure of these gender hierarchies themselves. On the contrary, the successful fight for part-time work was based on ideas of gender difference which were not meant to attack established gender relations. Its radicalism consisted in establishing special rights for women in the workforce, in order to enable them to follow their family duties and to guarantee their equal access to gainful employment and qualification.

Undoubtedly, the women's lobby achieved a very important aim. Influenced by the changing ideas about married women's work they took the situation of female civil servant teachers as a peg to hang on new visions of 'practical' quality and to translate them into legal regulations. Doing so, they broke down firmly established gender structures in the Civil Service law which had hitherto excluded married women from the benefits of state service. But they did not want to eliminate gender inequality. The implementation of part-time work was just another special right for women which continued their almost exclusive responsibility for the family. Even so one can hardly overestimate how much the law improved the situation of women on the labour market in total. It confirmed that their status as employees as well as the meaning of their work had changed profoundly. Thus, compared to the West German fifties, it was quite a radical reform. The beginnings of the political struggle point to a time of new departures, where in the end women started once again fighting offensively for their own rights. In this perspective, the situation in the early sixties is in some ways similar to Sweden and the GDR. In all of the three coun-

⁶⁵ Rudolph Epping u. Gisela Meuter, *Teilzeitarbeit bei Beamtinnen. Eine Untersuchung zur Förderung der Teilzeitarbeit im öffentlichen Dienst*, Stuttgart 1977, p. 144.

⁶⁶ See the contribution of Christina Florin and Bengt Nilsson in this volume.

tries it was a time of remarkable dynamics, visions, and political actions concerning gender relations. Yet, compared to the declared intention of many Swedish intellectuals and young politicians to change the engrained gender order profoundly and to abolish the social roots of inequality,⁶⁷ the West German reform was altogether moderate. The different view of part-time work in the three countries is a telling indicator for this dissimilarity: Swedish protagonists like Alva Myrdal were clearly against women's part-time work, because men and fathers should become equal partners in family affairs instead of staying evening visitors. Therefore, she pleaded for a general shortening of working hours for both men and women, in order to establish a two-breadwinner family.⁶⁸ East German officials did not bother too much about father's roles in the families, but they wanted to establish women's social and political 'equality' (*Gleichstellung*) by integrating them as life-long full-time workers.⁶⁹ In West Germany, all participants in the debate agreed that part-time work was the best way to grant new rights to women without infringing the male breadwinner family. Profound critics on this viewpoint had to wait for the seventies. And even then the discourse about equality remained much more concentrated on women and never reached a popularity similar to the Swedish concept of *jämställdhet* which involved men and women alike. However, the lasting strong position of the male breadwinner model in West Germany is not to be characterized as a sign of standstill but as part of a specific change. At the same time, it was a reminder of the past in two different ways. Even if the West German public was no longer preoccupied with East German gender politics in the sixties, the Cold War still shaped perceptions and evoked a distinctive need for stability. Obviously, a 'stable' male breadwinner status provided for this and thus became 'conditio sine qua non' for accepting gender related modifications in a deeply changing society. In the second place I would like to focus on traditions, discontinuities and continuities concerning the (West) German women's movement. As Christina Florin and Bengt Nilsson have shown, a good

⁶⁷ Ibidem.

⁶⁸ Myrdal and Klein, *Die Doppelrolle der Frau*, p. 247.

⁶⁹ Almut Rietzschel, Teilzeitarbeit in der Industrie. Ein 'Störfaktor' auf dem Weg zur 'Gleichberechtigung?', in: Klaus Tenfelde et. al. (ed.), *Arbeiter in der SBZ/DDR*, Essen 1999 (in print).

deal of the visions which shaped Swedish gender politics in the sixties dated back to the 1930s, when the German women's movement suffered a violent backlash, when not only its ideas were driven out but also its promoters. The gap of twelve Nazi years had a crucial impact on postwar women's politics and its protagonists. Contrary to Sweden, where young women and men took action in the sixties, many women of the West German lobby had studied in the late Weimar or in the Nazi years and were at least in their fifties when they took up the struggle for reform. Personally they were influenced by those ideas of the women's movement which had promoted concepts of gender difference.⁷⁰ The credit for having rehabilitated the claim for 'practical' equality in the political agenda of the early sixties and for having induced the state to sanction officially that married women had a right to work, is theirs. The call for egalitarian equality in the seventies was carried out by a new generation of women, often more than 30 years younger than their predecessors. They were the first to have no experience of Nazi Germany or only from their childhood, and they felt so little in common with the sedate ladies of the sixties that it took some time for them to rediscover they had common ancestors from the beginning of the century.

⁷⁰ See: Ingrid Schmidt-Harzbach and Irene Stoeck, Traditionsbewußter Neuanfang. Zur Organisation der alten Frauenbewegung in Berlin, 1945-1950, in: Genth et. al., *Frauenpolitik und politisches Wirken*, pp. 193-223.

Swedish parties and family policies 1960–1980

Stability through Change

Jonas Hinnfors

Family policy puzzles

Thirty-five years ago what was to become the final take-off for one of the most extensive public-sector expansions in the world was set in motion by the dramatic shift in Swedish Social Democratic family policy.¹ In a remarkable leap the number of municipal day-care places went from 18,000 in 1965 to 125,000 in 1975. An overwhelming majority of parents began to rely on day care. The 'two-earner family' soon became a fact with a public policy operating to support it. Today more than 550,000 places are available.²

A policy shift of this kind was by no means self-evident to politicians in

¹ Extensive empirical evidence for this article is found in Hinnfors (1992). The major part of the empirical underpinning is taken from general party programmes and specific policy programmes where family policy is usually discussed as a special item under a specified heading.

² In practice, few private day-care places are available. In 1965 about one third of women with children below seven were employed. Only five years later more than every second woman with small children was in the labour market. The average employment/adult population ratio (all adults: parents+non-parents) during the 1980–1990 period was 76 % for women and 83.5 % for men. The ratio for women was by far the highest among OECD countries (Siaroff, 1994: 86). The percentage of women with small children (0–6 years) in the labour force was 50 % in 1970 compared to 80 % in 1995 (men, 1997: 93 %). The average number of hours worked by Swedish women has increased steadily (Sainsbury, 1996: 107 ff.) but most mothers of small children still work part-time only (average number of hours per week, parents with small children, 1970: men 45 hours; women 29 hours, 1995: Men 42 hours, Women 30 hours) (SOU 1996, # 145, supplement # 10: 260, 263).

the early 1960s. At that time the Conservative Party position on day care and economic transfers was very clear indeed:

'[Economic transfers and public day care] would mean a socialist system, with a substantial part of the responsibility for the care of the youngest children taken over by the government.'³

According to the party, children were best cared for in a good home with a loving mother. Policy instruments such as economic transfers and public services (Linder and Peters, 1989; Lundqvist, 1988) were foreign to the Conservatives. Along the social-policy ideology lines of what Gösta Esping-Andersen (1990) labels the 'liberal type of welfare state', the party favoured minimum government involvement in families' ordinary lives. Tax deductions for families with small children were the Conservative alternative.

Somewhat surprisingly the incumbent Social Democratic Party was quite hesitant about day-care expansion. Instead the 1964 Party Congress unanimously decided on a future introduction of a new system of so called 'child-care allowances' which was deemed to increase the freedom of choice for those women who wanted to stay home with their small children.⁴

Only a few years later both the Conservatives and the Social Democrats abandoned important elements of their family-policy positions. Denouncing the whole idea of freedom of choice as a 'myth' the Social Democrats portrayed child-care allowances as a trap for women and as totally insufficient for working-class families. In their view, a stable economic foundation for blue-collar families or indeed for any family with small children would require two separate wages in the family.

The Conservative Party—incidentally changing its Swedish name from the 'Right Party' to the 'Moderate Rally Party' (1969)—made an equally

³ Troedsson, (1962) 37–38. Extensive empirical evidence for this article is found in Hinnfors (1992). The major part of the empirical underpinning is taken from general party programmes and specific policy programmes where family policy is usually discussed as a special item under a specified heading. However, central party statements will also be found in parliamentary motions and propositions.

⁴ These allowances would come on top of the already existing 'child allowances' along with some modest expansion of the day-care system.

sharp turn, in part trading places with the Social Democrats.⁵ Child-care allowances were now described as sound 'bourgeois' politics.⁶ Even the earlier, detested, notion of a day-care system was more or less accepted.

Looking at the dramatic family policy developments we stand before several puzzles. The Social Democrats and the Conservatives favour opposite social policy ideologies, but at the same time these parties more or less traded places in the 1965–75 family policy game. How was this possible given our overarching belief that there is a relationship between the political parties' social policy ideologies and their social policy instruments?

Moreover, the policy change was unique to Sweden in two respects: first, the heavy emphasis on full-time public day care. Most countries did not enter day-care expansion schemes of a scope and magnitude like the

⁵ On a left-right continuum—by far the most salient dimension in Swedish politics (Esaïasson and Holmberg, 1996)—the *Riksdag* (Parliament) parties line up as follows: the Left Party; former names were Sweden's Communist Party (until 1967) and the Left Party—the Communists (until 1990) which indicate the party's drift away from Soviet-Bloc communism via Euro communism to a version of social democracy. The party's voting share has hovered around the 4 % *Riksdag* hurdle (only exception, 1998: 12 %!). With seemingly bed-rock stability the Social Democratic Labour Party (referred to here as The Social Democrats) usually receives around 45 % (1998: 37 %!) of the votes securing cabinet incumbency 1960–1976, 1982–1990 and 1994–(all but one were minority cabinets). Two parties compete in the ideological mid-field: the People's Party—the Liberals (referred to here as the Liberals) is a mid-sized party (gradually decreasing from about 17 % in 1960 to 5 % in 1998) with a social—liberal middle-class outlook; the Centre Party is a farmers' party with ambitions to catch the 'urban green vote'. This strategy was extremely successful in the mid-1970s when the party peaked at 25 % of the voters (1960: 14 %, 1998: 5 %). On the right flank the Moderate Rally Party (before 1969: the Right Party; referred to here as the Conservatives) occupies a position between social conservatism and liberalism. Over the years the Conservatives have developed into the major challenger to Social Democratic hegemony (voting share 1960: 16 %, 1970: 11 %, 1979: 19 %, 1998: 23 percent). In the 1988 elections the new Environmental Party—the Greens entered Parliament with 5.5 % of the vote; at that time the party exclusively tried to politicise green issues (1991: 3 %—no mandates, 1998: 6 %). Founded in 1964, the Christian Democratic Party never passed the 4 % *Riksdag* hurdle until 1991 (7 %, 1998: 12 %). Originally of a rather sectarian character the party leadership deliberately moved into more middle-of-the-road bourgeois ground in the 1980s. Between 1976 and 1982 various bourgeois constellations were in cabinet position (1976–1978: Lib/Cen/Con; 1978–1979: Lib; 1979–1981: Lib/Cen/Con; 1981–1982: Lib/Cen).

⁶ In the Swedish context *borgerlig*, 'Bourgeois', is used—in a non-derogatory sense—as a synonym for 'non-socialist'. Primarily the usage refers to ideological orientation rather than to social class.

Swedish until much later, if at all. Only recently have the UK and Germany, e.g., really started proper discussions on public day care. Second, the massive public-expansion expenditure increase. Of all the OECD countries only Denmark shows an increase on a par with Sweden. Both countries raised their public-expenditure share of GDP from about 11% in 1960 to about 25% in 1993. The average for other OECD countries rose from about 8% to about 16% (Castles, 1998: 12).

Literally billions of Swedish *kronor* were ploughed into the day-care fleet. This policy shift was launched at the very time when the formerly so successful Swedish economy, including the public sector, began to falter. GDP growth almost disappeared around 1970. The national budget was under great strain with unemployment felt as a real threat for the first time since the 1930's. As the budget-consuming day-care expansion wore on, additional and competing policy instrument proposals were becoming less and less economically viable unless one cut down heavily on the day-care funding (1968, day-care share of public expenditures: 0.29%; 1977: 2.23%). So why did the Social Democrats change policy?

Despite their overall ideological world view—expressed by Gösta Esping-Andersen (1990) as the 'Social democratic type of welfare state'—Social democratic sister parties in the rest of Europe were much more hesitant about taking the family-policy steps their Swedish colleagues did (Sainsbury, 1996: 95–103; Bergqvist, 1999). Why would the Swedes differ?

Nor do more structurally oriented theories offer much help. Along with several other countries Sweden firmly belonged to what Peter Katzenstein (1984; 1985) labels 'small countries' with extensive corporative characteristics. These structural similarities were at their apex during the 'golden age' of capitalistic welfare states (Esping-Andersen, 1996; Stephens, 1996). Why then was Sweden different?

On the one hand, a wide literature would picture the Swedish events as the effect of a 'formative moment' or a window of opportunity being opened up (Kingdon, 1984; Krasner, 1984: 241),⁷ thus allowing the Social Democrats to introduce the new system. But why exactly then? Why move into an extremely costly project at the very time when the public finances began to dip into the red? And why not stick to the well estab-

⁷ On Swedish politics and formative moments generally, c.f. Rothstein, B. (1991).

lished economic transfers to those in real need which were more redistributive than the general provision of public services?

On the other hand, a host of literature would describe the developments as relying on former events making the politicians 'path dependent' upon earlier decisions (Rothstein, 1996). However, if anything, the path trod before should have led us to expect an expansion of the transfers system since child allowances, health insurance and superannuated pensions had been successfully launched already in 1948, 1955 and 1960 respectively. Moreover the national budget was showing severe signs of stagnation around 1970. So why the sudden plunge into uncharted and extremely costly policy terrain?

Ideology: The missing piece. A possible solution

For all the day-to-day changes, the parties have actually been surprisingly faithful to their overarching ideologies. However, in no way has this stability precluded change. *The main claim made in this article is (as will become apparent later) that on the contrary, in several instances it appears that the only way of keeping up ideological stability is through policy change.* Few policy areas would be more suited than Swedish family policy to analyse this claim.

By changing to the public-service day-care sector the Social Democrats did indeed implement a system where more than ever 'collective choice more directly shapes the structure of supply and mode of control' (Kohl, 1981: 314, quoted from Castles, 1998: 11).

Given that policy instruments (such as day care, child allowance, parental insurance etc.), which 'structure the relationship between individuals in various units of the polity and economy' (Hall, 1986: 19; Thelen and Steinmo, 1992; Rothstein, 1996: 26), represent different points on a public/-private continuum,⁸ day care is a more 'direct measure at the command of the state' (Castles, 1998: 11) compared to economic transfers and tax deductions. By changing its standpoints the Social Democrats in fact managed to institutionalise the very essence of their party's ideology. Stability through change ensued.

⁸ These are: 1. Public services, 2. economic transfers, 3. tax deductions (Lundqvist, 1988; Linder and Peters, 1989).

The stability-through-change conclusion counters common wisdom about policy change as something the parties try to avoid in favour of continuity and as occurring only in times of crisis (Downs, 1957; Molin, 1965: 143; Sjöblom, 1968; Gourevitch, 1986).

A world to win or looking back on a lost world?

For all the literature's emphases on the importance of ideas (Krasner, 1984: 228; North, 1996: 23) even dramatic formative changes in ideology or policy seem to appear out of the blue (Hall, 1989: 362; Hall, 1992; North 1996: 111). Do we have to remain satisfied with this lack of prospective capability? How do we advance? In *Lesson-Drawing in Public Policy*, Richard Rose (1993: 145 ff.) combines two related types of 'governmental' reaction to 'environmental' change. Depending whether the environmental changes are 'benign' or for the 'worse', policymakers will end up with different combinations.

The government can either ignore the environmental change or alter programmes and goals. The ensuing four combinatorial effects range from 'policy-deterioration' (same goal, same programme), 'adaptation' (same goal, new programme), 'innovation' (new goal, new programme), 'symbolic gesture, passive acceptance' (new goal, same programme).

Rose does not provide answers to why some environmental changes would be 'benign' and some 'worse' or why a party would actually change or keep its programmes and goals. This flaw can be adjusted. If we regard ideology as general conceptions of preferred states of affairs, policy analysis enables us to show whether actual institutional (i.e. social behaviour, elite norms and standard operating procedures; (Hall, 1986; March and Olsen, 1989; Levi, 1990; Thelen and Steinmo, 1992) developments either approach or depart from the ideologically desired end. Then we stand a better chance than in Rose's rendering, of answering why a certain institution becomes important in the sense that a party wants to change or keep its day-to-day standpoints.

Let's regard the first kind of these relationships (where actual environmental change appears to approach the ideologically desired end) as a situation where the party has a world to win. The second relationship (depart from desired end) is a situation where the party is looking back on

a lost world. In the following we will use these different conceptions to discuss whether the parties (or political actors generally) will be more (a world to win) or less (a lost world) eager to change their standpoints in accordance with new environmental conditions.

A changing world

The 1960 Swedish Government Official Report ('Royal Investigation Commission', Swedish: Statens offentliga utredningar, SOU—one of the centrepieces of the extremely future-oriented ('anticipatory') and thoroughly planning-oriented Swedish Model (Heclö, 1975; Anton, 1980; Hinnfors, 1997)) on the future of Swedish economic trends, emphasised the importance of finding a solution to feared shortages of labour in the manufacturing industry. The commission projected a 13 % increase in the need for manpower over the 1960–1965 period.

Improved efficiency was only possible to a certain extent. To meet labour demand the Commission suggested that women should be encouraged to enter the labour market. Women were pictured as rather hesitant to leave their homes, but the Commission hoped cultural views would change via improved and expanded day-care facilities and an increasing number of part-time positions (SOU 1962, # 10: 40, 97, 147 ff., 175 ff). The same view on the economy and on the importance of women contributing to the manufacturing-industry labour force was expressed by the 1965 Royal Commission on the Swedish economy. Day care was described as 'essential' and the Commission pointed to the fact that now 6,000 children were on waiting lists for day-care places (SOU 1966, # 1: 35, 151; Statistics Sweden, 1971: Tables 248, 253, 396; SOU 1977, # 91: 349).

The Commission's stance was a clear sign of emerging elite-level deliberations on a new family policy although it has to be emphasised that they were not founded on any immediate concern for family policy *per se*. Family policy were more like a corollary to concerns for other policy areas such as the labour market, housing and taxes. Changes in these fields were all forerunners of the later formal institutional changes in rules and procedures directly concerning the family policy (see below: "Indirect Triggers of Change").

Women did in fact enter the labour market, and did so in astonishing numbers compared to early calculations. There is no doubting the extent of

this shock to the system. Already in 1970 the employment figure for mothers with small children reached 50 %. Only five years before the figure was a mere 35 %. Before the end of the 1970s three quarters of all women with small children were employed, a figure way above anything imagined fifteen or even ten years before. What was more, the day-care waiting list figure of 6,000 children which in 1965 had been described as tantamount to a crisis situation soon proved to be nothing compared to what lay ahead. Waiting lists sky-rocketed early in the 1970s to 100,000 children.

What became evident towards the end of the 1960s was that projections made up only a few years before proved complete failures. That the number of women in the labour market would increase was correct as such, but the extent of the increase was far above anything imagined five years before. One reason behind the differences between plans and outcome was the state of the manufacturing industry. Instead of the expected boom a structural crisis hit the manufacturing industry which had to face labour force contraction instead of growth. So where did the women go? Almost all of them entered the public sector which expanded at an unprecedented rate (1965–1970, total labour force increase: 5.9 % annually) and went from 288,000 employed women in 1965 to one million in 1980. The brunt of this increase was taken by the municipalities.

The 1970s can be described as the final leap to the 'social democratic welfare state' (Esping-Andersen, 1990). However, lagging GNP growth and emerging unemployment in conjunction with structural problems in the economy made public sector efforts gradually more difficult financially. As a consequence taxes had to be raised to unheard-of levels.

Let's then go back to the 1960s. In the extremely investigation-prone Swedish political culture, family policy was the object of several Royal Investigation Commissions, each of them active for about three to five years during the 1962 to 1983 period. Since the Commissions include research experts as well as Members of Parliament from both the governing party and the opposition they are key vehicles in the mobilisation of both majority and minority family interests (Elder et al., 1982: 182).⁹

While the 1967 Royal Commission on child allowances (SOU 1967,

⁹ The status of the commission system is a peculiarity unique to Sweden. Traditionally, Swedish Cabinet Departments are extremely small, typically employing about 100 career

52:72 ff.) emphasised growing economic difficulties for large families, the 1972 Commission on family support concluded that all families with small children—including upper middle-class families—were unable to live according to the male breadwinner concept. The Commission stated that ‘In such a difficult financial position economic transfers are hardly the best means of “financial support”. [A better way would be] to create opportunities for the other spouse to contribute to the family’s economy through paid employment which would presuppose the provision of job opportunities and day-care facilities’ (SOU 1972, # 34: 217).

Whichever definition we may use of what would constitute an environmental change in the sense Richard Rose refers to, we are on safe ground in claiming that profound environmental changes took place in Swedish society between 1965 and 1975. The combined effect of hundreds of thousands of women entering the labour market, increasing economic difficulties for families living according to the one-earner model, unprecedented public expansion, and emerging signs of deep structural crisis in the manufacturing industry, all contributed to what was no less than a shock to the political system of a magnitude no political actor could refrain from addressing.

Indirect triggers of change

Apart from the direct effects on family policy the developments had indirect effects through their impact on other policy areas. They, in their turn,

bureaucrats, compared to the ordinary European ministry. One reason for this smallness is the system of temporary Royal Investigation Commissions. Commissions are set up with a specified research task and operate only for a limited time period (about one to five years) after which an extensive written report is issued and the commission dissolves. Hierarchically every commission is tied to a relevant Cabinet Department but even though the department is headed by a Cabinet minister, the commissions are free to carry out their work as they see fit. Commission members, which consist of a mixture of research experts and Members of Parliament, are appointed by the Cabinet. However, in praxis many commissions include members from all major parties and opposing views do have a platform via the commissions even though consensus in the final written report—which often comprises several hundred pages—is preferred. In the end, and although a commission is free to draw any conclusion, the cabinet tends to get things its way but minority members are entitled to express their dissenting views in separate statements at the end of the report should they so decide. Quite often they do. In the 1990s the commission system has lost some of its earlier importance (Johansson, 1992: 223, 242).

had important ramifications for the family-policy deliberations. The fiercely debated 1970 tax reform led to an important policy decision with far-reaching implications for family policy. As a result of the reform, married tax-payers were now taxed individually rather than jointly with their spouses. In the old system of joint taxation the wife's earnings was added to her husband's and both taxed at the highest possible rate. In many cases the marginal tax effect nearly exceeded the woman's income, putting the two-earner family at an economic disadvantage.

Many industrialists feared the old system contributed to labour shortages. The new system took account of the fact that in spite of the old system's economic disadvantages, many women with small children had entered the labour market all the same. Supporting the reform the Liberals claimed that it would increase equality between the sexes. Initially the Social Democrats were more hesitant on the grounds that joint taxation of spouses was to the advantage of those with lower incomes. When it finally turned out that separate taxation would contribute more to the deteriorating national finances the Social Democrats changed their standpoint. Once implemented, the reform in its turn contributed to the consolidation of two-earner behaviour among the general public as separate taxation made the step from home-making to paid employment much more financially rewarding (Elvander, 1972: 280–287).

Another policy field with family-policy repercussions was housing. As in most Western societies Sweden went through a phase of rapid urbanisation with ensuing housing shortages. In order to alleviate this shortage an ambitious effort was launched in 1964 to build one million new flats over a ten year period. However, leading housing-sector representatives soon realised that many new tenements were too expensive for blue collar workers and their families, leading to problems for municipal housing companies who attracted most of their tenants among those groups. Suddenly housing politicians were manoeuvring to link housing and family policies. By improving the family allowance targeted on overcrowded families, a family-policy instrument could be used to meet what were in essence housing-policy aims (Lundqvist, 1992: 93 ff).

The labour-market, tax, and housing examples indicate the importance to family policy of the indirect effect of societal changes. These areas had no immediate relation to family policy as such but the effects of reformed

taxes and so forth certainly changed the premises for parents' decisions about entering the labour market or not (Bacchi, 1996: 101). These developments would prove to have profound effects on the character and extent of the following family-policy implementation.

1970 especially was a turning point. In that year alone, several indicators went through drastic changes: unemployment became a problem for the first time since the war, for the first time a majority of women with small children were gainfully employed at the same time as one-earner families faced drastically deteriorating economic circumstances. However, whether these shake-ups were something to fear or support depended on where you stood ideologically.

Ideologies confronting the environment

Any study of modern Swedish family policies must heed the profound divide between two competing world views around which the Riksdag parties cluster. On the one hand the Conservative Party and the Centre Party do not want to propose any policy instrument that will 'force' women into employment. While these parties may today accept the two-earner family as a totally legitimate way of life they still prioritise economic support to those women who want to stay home with their children. Until about 1970 these parties were outspoken proponents of the one-earner family.

On the other hand, the Liberals, Social Democrats, and the Left Party strongly support the two-earner family concept and are willing to act accordingly. These parties oppose any measure that would 'force' women to stay at home and out of the labour market. Should economic means be available the Liberal Party is willing to introduce some kind of additional child-care allowance to support families financially on top of the existing child allowance.

By far the most important vehicles of change behind the new Swedish family policy have been the parties (and values among the population), but the relationship has been complex. Actors such as the Church and NGOs have been almost negligible in the Swedish context. The state (or, more specifically, the Social Democratic government) initiated Royal Investigatory Commissions very early with the intention to improve the economic standard for families with small children. These Commissions also con-

sidered the new trends towards cohabiting out of wedlock. However, their early work was more focussed on improving living standards and less on changing the whole family policy ideology. No real changes were implemented and institutionalised until profound changes in family values (and, not to be forgotten, a desire to improve one's standard of living) among the general public had led to what was in effect an exodus of housewives into the labour market at the end of the 1960s. A contributing factor was the decidedly corporative Swedish society where the extremely strong unions acted as important channels of discontent from the population to the parties and state agencies.¹⁰

As important actors in the corporative Swedish society, the strong Swedish unions willingly supported arguments based on living standard and job opportunities. During this period both the white-collar (TCO) and the blue-collar union (LO) launched their own investigatory commissions which demanded family policy improvements along those lines.

Pressure groups work in close contact with or indeed inside the parties. Unique to Sweden is the relative lack of women's pressure groups. Instead, women have been rather well organised inside the parties—either as ordinary members or in women's branches (Sainsbury, 1994: 279 ff.; Karlsson, 1996). In an overview Bacchi (1996: 103) holds that in Sweden '[t]he strength of a class-equality discourse ... has made it extremely difficult to bid for collective recognition for "women".' Instead women's pressure-group strategy has been to 'transform ... women's issues into party issues.' (Sainsbury, 1994: 279). Therefore, channels like Royal Commission membership based on a party platform have constituted important platforms for influence for women in the Swedish context.

Particularly from the end of the 1960s, women's and youth branches were active inside the parties, which helped put family policies more firmly on the agenda.¹¹ The Social Democrats formulated their early family policy proposals in the 1964 programme 'Women's Equality' (Kvinnans

¹⁰ After the major new policy instruments had been launched, the municipalities became an important factor since they had to shoulder the immediate responsibility for the day-care expansion, but feelings among the general public has always been that the overarching moral responsibility for the family policies rests with the central government.

¹¹ For an extensive study of the Social Democratic women's branch, see Karlsson (1996).

jämlikhet) headed by Prime Minister Tage Erlander and Women's branch president Inga Thorsson, which was the first ever women's programme in the party's history. However, the programme had only limited impact on the party (Sainsbury, 1994: 280). A few years later the women's branch was indirectly more successful when the influential Alva Myrdal was put up as chair of the party's new 1969 programme 'Towards Equality' (Jämlikhet).¹² The programme placed gender equality on a par with class equality, an important factor in gaining influence over the class-conscious party leadership and also an important step towards moving family policy/gender equality higher up the general political agenda (Sainsbury, 1994: 280; Karlsson, 1996: 15–16, 165 ff. 248–265).

To sum up, pressure-group (and commission) activity have indeed been important instruments for the institutionalisation of Swedish family policies but more in an indirect than a direct way. By far the most important actors in the system have been the political parties, not only because they initiate investigation committees through parliament and the cabinet. This may seem overly 'rational' or an unrealistic 'text-book' version of Swedish politics. However, it has to be remembered that in the corporative Swedish society relations between the extremely well organised unions and other interest organisations and the parties are very close. Often, important parts of the party leaderships consist of the same persons as in the leading organisations.

Early party views

Party programmes and election platforms are both important documents for the Swedish parties (Klingemann et al., 1994: 155–171). Let us start with the general ideological setting that provides the backdrop against which the parties formulate their family policies.

Distinct differences between each party's social-policy ideologies have proved surprisingly stable. These differences can be summarised as follows. The Social Democrats advocate extensive public services as well as government-managed insurance systems against the loss of income. Their

¹² Myrdal was member of the overall party leadership but cooperated closely with the Women's branch chair Lisa Mattson (Karlsson, 1996: 265).

overall idea is to provide freedom of choice through support from the governmental sector. According to this view economic progress in society does not render welfare programmes superfluous. New needs constantly arise and equality—itself a political goal—can best be achieved through measures to insure against loss of income rather than means-tested benefits. In its modern version the Left Party is near this overall view.

In the early 1960s the Social Democrats were somewhat hesitant towards the two-earner family norm. First and foremost the party leadership was eager to secure an adequate standard of living for the working class. Early Social Democrat deliberations on the two-earner family and day-care expansion often concluded that these matters were primarily of concern to a very limited number of middle-class, white-collar women and of minor importance to the working class. The key to the subsequent firm decision to favour day-care construction lies in the fact that the leadership managed to reinterpret the whole family policy discourse in class terms.¹³

With pressure from its women's and youth branches, the Liberal Party had tried to make a 1964 election issue out of improvements for women, and the Social Democratic leaders were eager to do something for fear they would lose voter support. Public services and economic transfers were natural elements of the 'Social Democratic Type of Welfare State' (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Important parts of the Liberal Party's social policy ideology are close to the Social Democrats. Regardless of the seeming contradiction in terms the Liberals belong to Esping-Andersen's concept of the Social Democratic welfare state.¹⁴

In stark contrast to the other parties, the Conservatives advocate a social system of tax deductions supplemented by narrowly-defined support for those 'in real need'. Their general view is to provide freedom through a non-interventionist governmental sector. With social care exclusively supplied via the public sector the individual will become dependent upon 'someone else'. Politicians and bureaucrats will become the sole arbiters in

¹³ True gender rhetoric only began to appear from the party leadership a few years later and gender interpretations were in no way uncontroversial within the party as late as 1980 (see Karlsson, 1996: 16, 334).

¹⁴ No doubt this still holds true even though the party became somewhat more concerned about the possibilities of individual freedom of choice within the general system towards the end of the 1980s.

allocating benefits in shortage situations. According to the Conservatives such collectivisation is equivalent to a reduction of individual freedom.

Certain aspects of the Centre-Party ideology are similar to that of the Conservatives. Both parties favour selective measures for those 'in real need'. However, when it comes to levels of support and defining who is to be considered in real need, significant differences emerge: the Centre Party advocates a more extensive network of support programmes and accepts generous levels of support. This party also advocates relatively high levels of service provision and a system of 'basic security' for all.

From hesitancy to action

Gradually all parties began to take into account the growing number of employed women in the late 1960s. Perhaps surprisingly, the subsequent policy positions were chosen in a way that differed from what could be expected from the traditional cleavage between the bourgeois and the socialist blocs. As a consequence the strategic difficulties for the bourgeois parties have been substantial. The importance of this fact for explaining the actual outcome and implementation of Swedish family policies should not be underestimated.

In the sphere of party politics the mobilisation of family interests was rendered quite complicated as an effect of the Liberals' 'leap frogging' to the wrong side of the bourgeois-socialist divide. Granted, the Swedish political culture has been depicted as the consensual society par excellence (Anton, 1969; Ruin, 1982; Hinnfors, 1997) which would allow for a cross-bloc consensus. However, the history of Swedish family policy only meets this criterion half way since it has been constantly politicised by the two contending family-policy blocs.

Since 1970 proposals for child-care allowances have been rejected by the Social Democrats, who claim that such 'token' measures would only benefit groups who already had the economic means to stay home with their children. Women in lower-income households would have to find employment anyway, leaving their children uncared for. Therefore, the party claimed, a reasonable family income could only be secured with both parents working. Consequently day-care facilities had to be provided which further reduced the budgetary room for new allowances. This overall ap-

proach from the party's leadership mixed well with the new ranks of young women in the women's branch of the party who took over in the late 1960s.

The backbone of the Social Democrats' policy now consists of support for municipal day care and parental insurance. Beginning in 1970, but gaining pace from 1975, massive municipal day-care expansion¹⁵ was set in motion in conjunction with government-financed parental leave (1973) providing six months (later expanded to 12 months) of 90 % wage replacement (later reduced to 80 %) for parents who stayed home from employment after a child's birth.¹⁶ Surprising as it may seem, this policy gained the full support of the Liberal Party, then leader of the opposition, which has been mildly in favour of some kind of new economic transfer ('child-care allowance') only as long as such a measure does not obstruct women's chances of gaining employment.

As shown earlier, family policy norms have changed quite dramatically.

¹⁵ Aimed at children between 1.5–6 years (later 1–6 years). No family policy compromise was reached in the 1960s. Instead an across-the-board agreement was achieved in 1975 on a five year plan to build and provide 150,000 new municipal day-care places. The agreement was reached after a voluntary settlement between the government and the municipalities. Responsibility for the construction and maintenance was given to the municipalities in accordance with the overall consensus that the major part of social policy generally should be carried out at the municipal level. Whereas politicisation characterises the private/public continuum this is true to a much lesser extent for the local-central continuum. There is general agreement among the parties that the lion's share of the welfare state should be carried out locally while centrally regulated and financially supported. Sweden is divided into 289 municipalities, each with extensive constitutionally-based freedoms, including sovereign taxing authority. In the Swedish context municipalities are regarded as the main providers of the welfare state, though in many cases this provision is financially supported by the central government. The day-care construction agreement was voluntary in the respect that no legal enforcement could force the municipalities to heed the agreement, but as long as the municipalities met certain rather precise requirements, such as the number of children per day-care teacher, they were entitled to generous financial aid from the central government. This earmarking proved extremely structuring as regards material standards, teacher density, opening hours etc. of the day-care centres. The requirements were backed up by research carried out by several Royal Commissions during the 1970s and early 1980s (see for instance SOU 1981, # 25).

¹⁶ Technically the parental leave consisted of nine months. Six months provided near full wage compensation (90 % of pre-tax income) Parents with no regular income received a 'guarantee-level' amount of about 1,200 kronor per month. An additional extra three months were paid to all parents at the 'guarantee level'.

At the same time there are important exceptions to the rule. During the entire period the Conservatives have given priority to tax deductions. Until 1972 this was the only position favoured by the party and this led to its isolation in the bourgeois camp in social policy matters. Since then the party has come to accept modest increases in government social policies generally (including day-care facilities, preferably privately run but with governmental financial support). The party also accepts some kind of child-care allowance. All these measures made the Conservatives into a much more credible bourgeois-bloc coalition partner.

Support for child-care allowances is the hallmark of the Centre Party. Apart from the 1960s when the party questioned the effects of collective day care on family values, the Centre Party accepts municipal day care. To cater especially for rural-area needs the party prefers government-subsidised, family-run day care.

Worlds won and lost

Let's go back to Richard Rose's categories introduced earlier and the concepts of worlds won and lost. Even though they share many family policy views the Liberals and Social Democrats use somewhat different arguments. Gender equality is a common Liberal catchword, while the Social Democrats emphasise the importance of equal benefits for lower and higher income groups. With the Liberal Party relying on white-collar voters with substantial numbers of salaried women, and the Social Democrats depending on blue-collar and lower white-collar strata their respective stances had to be phrased differently but when actual family behaviour changed in the direction of two-earner families, both parties could be described as looking forward to a world to win. The Liberals thought themselves in tune with an emerging new middle-class society.

Hesitant at first, the Social Democrats managed to kill two birds with one stone: first, the expansion of public services provided a solid policy instrument with which the party could prove in action its general tenets about the strong state. Second, the proximity between the Social Democratic and Liberal parties in these matters contributed strongly to the division in the bourgeois camp (Särilvik, 1983: 145 ff.) However, mounting demand for child care later proved to be a burden for the Social Democrats

as the waiting lists grew. The party had to face criticism from the unions as well as from increasingly outspoken pressure groups for not giving the day-care shortage proper priority.

In spite of repeated subsidy increases construction lagged behind, triggering widespread criticism. The massive expansion effort from 1975 onwards did provide places to a growing number of children, but mounting demand made the waiting lists longer and a matter of much political dispute. Obviously this was a liability for the Social Democrats since day care expansion has been very popular with the voters, especially women (Oskarson and Wängnerud, 1995: 71). However, most day-care places were available for full eight-hour days which gives additional evidence of support for the two-earner concept. Indeed the provision of full-time places was necessary for the municipalities to receive maximum subsidies from the central government.

Even though the Social Democrats had not intended to devote an ever increasing share of government resources to day care, this development appears to have been inevitable given the initial measures taken. Already by choosing the day care policy instrument the party had indeed 'mortgaged the future' (Hinnfors, 1992: 257, 269; Hinnfors, 1997; see Pierson, 1994: 42 on 'lock-in effects'). Day care costs increased automatically as the number of two-earner families grew at a rate far beyond anything imagined in the 1960s. In part this rapid increase was an effect of the increased availability of day care for women who wanted to enter the labour market. Still it has to be remembered that very few new day care centres were actually constructed before 1975.

The general problem for the Social Democrats has been that their preferred social-policy ideology is so expensive. The party made substantial efforts to extend day-care facilities as well as to extend the length of parental leave. Neither was accomplished satisfactorily (until about 1995). Another drawback was that day care proved to be used more by white-collar than blue-collar groups. This political failure long weakened the party's electoral support.

Both the Conservative Party and the Centre Party regarded the new trend towards two-earner families with strong reservations. In their view, this development was triggered by an erroneous Social-Democratic policy which somehow had to be halted. The new conditions were criticised as

harmful to children and to what these parties regarded as the main pillar of society, i.e., the family. Both parties can be described as looking back on a lost world. Rather than being in complete conflict with the new family policy system, their major effort since the 1970s has been to find ways to reduce the number of families where mothers with small children have to work outside the home. It is in this light that their recurring transfers proposals aimed at homeworking mothers (parents) should be seen.

Had the Right Party shown less opposition to direct economic support in the 1960s, it is likely that all parties would have reached a compromise. Some kind of child-care allowance was seriously contemplated by all major parties, and the subsequent expansion of day care would have had to come on top of an existing and costly transfers system. In that case deteriorating government finances would have made day-care extensions difficult. However, the Social Democrats wanted to investigate the matter thoroughly—via the Royal Commissions—before taking a firm stand on actual measures. Meanwhile the bourgeois camp was deeply split. No compromise was reached.

From the bourgeois parties' point of view the essential strategic problem was their constant disagreement over family matters. In spite of their long-awaited 1976 electoral triumph the three bourgeois coalition partners were unable to present a united policy alternative to the Social Democrats. If new economic transfers ('child-care allowance') had been implemented at that time, substantial resources would have been diverted from the means available for day-care expansion. A window for a different family policy was indeed ajar for the bourgeois cabinet but soon closed since the Liberals fiercely opposed any step that would jeopardise the two-earner family concept. Two years later the coalition government collapsed on the nuclear energy issue.¹⁷ As its first major decision the subsequent minority Liberal Government announced an extension in parental insurance by three additional income-insured months. The former coalition partners voted against the proposal which gained majority support from the Social Democrats and the Left Party.

¹⁷ The 1976–1978 cabinet was very close to foundering on the family issue, which indicates the centrality of family policy in Swedish politics. Among voters, family policy usually ranks among the top five to ten issue priorities (Esaïasson and Holmberg, 1996: 178–185).

Somewhat surprisingly, we may conclude that the implementation of the new Swedish family policy was initially a rather passive affair. In the 1960s, no active decisions were made to merge the two-earner family concept into official policy. Important elements in the early 1960s were in fact intended to strengthen one-earner families (by postponing child-care expansion, by increasing child allowances, and improving family-housing allowances) and were initially hesitant towards changing cultural norms. Few envisaged the later developments, but very soon the changing socio-economic environment put the politicians before a fait accompli: they simply had to handle the new situation. Given that the Social Democrats kept their ideological commitments they had to accept the fact that day-care costs peaked in a way unforeseen when the policy was formulated. Later the parties reformulated their goals in accordance with what they regarded as new social realities.

Unintended effects

Paradoxically, when the new wave of women rolled in on the labour market, it was only by changing day-to-day standpoints that the parties managed to claim that they acted in defence of their stable ideologies. Standing at the crossroads between the spheres of intimacy and publicness 'the family' triggers politics and policies which strike at least two fundamental value chords. While much of the debate can be described as dealing with the public-private divide, it is equally clear that 'public' has 'collectivist' connotations while 'private' easily implies 'nuclear family'. The parties stood before traditional left/-right as well as gender-related decisions.

As indicated above the 'state-market' aspects upon which Esping-Andersen concentrates are highly relevant. Equally important, though, is the divide between the public sphere (the state and civil society) on the one hand, and the private sphere (the family) on the other. The 'gender-relevant' policy dimensions elaborated by Diane Sainsbury (1994; 1996) take this latter divide into account. According to Sainsbury the male breadwinner model 'celebrates marriage and a strict division of labor between husband and wife. The husband is the head of the household, and it is his duty to provide for the members of his family—his wife and children—through full-time employment. The duties of the wife are to

make a good home and provide care for her husband and children' (Sainsbury, 1996: 41–42; see also Sainsbury, 1994: 153). By contrast, the 'individual' model does not prescribe a certain family form though it does presuppose shared responsibility for household tasks, with each adult responsible for his or her maintenance and financial support including responsibility for the children (Sainsbury, 1996: 42; Sainsbury, 1994: 153).¹⁸

When they are defined in Esping-Andersen's state-market specific categories, the social policies have remained remarkably stable, while they have changed dramatically in terms of Sainsbury's gender-specific categories. Originally these latter changes were not particularly intended by the parties. The goals and rhetoric of the individual model were formulated to accommodate to actual developments rather than shape them.

Esping-Andersen's and Sainsbury's categories should not be regarded as mutually exclusive. Sainsbury claims that 'mainstream analysis ... has concentrated on redistribution as it affects classes, occupational groups, generations, or other categories of individuals or households' (Sainsbury, 1996: 39–40). Her categories focus instead on the unit of benefits inside the family, the nature of entitlements and their influence on the actual division of labour within the family (Sainsbury, 1996: 41). Variation between her two models could take place independently of which social-policy ideology was applicable. A double approach contributes to the understanding of the family values behind the institutionalisation of Swedish family policy.

Even though many Social Democrats believed that most women were willing to seek paid employment after having brought up their children (Myrdal and Klein, 1956) this view did not come wholly uncontested.

¹⁸ Sainsbury's models (male breadwinner model (MBM), individual model (IM)) are organised along the following ten dimensions: Familial ideology: MBM: husband=earner, wife=carer; IM: both parents=earner/carers. Entitlement: MBM: differentiated among spouses; IM: uniform. Basis of entitlement: MBM: breadwinner; IM: citizenship or residence. Recipient of benefits: MBM: head of household; IM: individual. Unit of benefit: MBM: household or family; IM: individual. Unit of contributions: MBM: household; IM: individual. Taxation: MBM: joint taxation, deductions for dependants; IM: separate taxation, equal tax relief. Employment and wage policies: MBM: priority to men; IM: aimed at both sexes. Sphere of care: MBM: primarily private; IM: strong state involvement. Caring work: MBM: unpaid; IM: paid component. (Sainsbury, 1996: 42.).

Some parts of the women's branch as well as the immediate party leadership felt that child-care allowances targeted on housewives would particularly benefit those women who worked at unhealthy blue-collar jobs. That the 'privilege of a housewife' should not be restricted to the salaried classes alone was still a vital idea among parts of the leadership. Such a view was somewhat supported by one of the major social cleavages in Swedish society: blue collar versus white collar. Until recently, white-collar have been more eager than blue-collar groups to live according to the two-earner model with the children in day-care centres. The early Social Democratic child-care allowance proposals were deemed to allow women the choice to stay home with their small children. Still, a modest expansion of day-care provision was projected to allow women to work, thus averting the feared shortage of labour in the industrial sector. Moreover, the party leadership was concerned about increasing criticism of insufficient public services.

According to Sainsbury, the Conservatives and the Centre Party clearly adhered to the male breadwinner model at the beginning of the 1960s. The Social Democratic leadership was also anchored to that model but on the verge of moving to the individual model. The Liberals have been more or less close to the individual model for the entire period. As from the 1970s onwards, all the parties accepted the individual model but the Conservatives, the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats still defend certain male breadwinner elements.

In turn, the partially unintended effects had far-ranging consequences for later policies by tying up economic resources and creating a government-financed day-care centre labour market where almost 100% of the employees are female. Let us not forget a simple fact about politics. Intended—and outspoken—action will most certainly be challenged. We will never know for sure, but early decisions might have been different had the actual effects been fully grasped by the political actors, who might then have either hesitated themselves or stimulated the opposition to muster resistance against the policies. As it turned out the decisions had tremendous effects upon later developments.

One of many paradoxes in Swedish family policy history is that early major decisions behind the individual model of the welfare state with its gender-equality implications were in fact made by an almost 100% male Social Democratic leadership acting more or less on behalf of working

class families. It was not until 1967 that the Social Democratic women's branch changed to a chair who was more in tune with the two-earner family concept. Class-based rhetoric lingered on during the early 1970s.

Major steps towards institutionalising the new system were more like the unintended (from the party leadership's point of view) consequences of policy measures aimed at securing the class-based social-democratic welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The unintended (though not necessarily regretted) effect of the class-based decisions was the de-institutionalisation of the male breadwinner model and the institutionalisation of the individual model.¹⁹

Conclusion: Stability through change

While some actors look back on a lost world others have a world to win. It was only after finding a formula to secure the living standards of the low-income families that the Social Democrats realised there was a world to win by changing family policy standpoints. Initially the party leaders felt that if day-care expansion was to be given its final go-ahead the costs loomed high. No real changes were implemented and institutionalised until profound changes in family values (and, not to be forgotten, a desire to improve one's standard of living) among the general public had led to what was in effect an exodus of housewives into the labour market at the end of the 1960s.

Slowly it dawned on the leadership that day care provided a powerful means of finally institutionalising a welfare state in keeping with the party's overarching ideology of providing decent levels-of-standard to the whole people. Moreover, through the subsequent firm decision to favour day-care construction the leadership managed to reinterpret its family policy in class terms. The party's overarching ideology rested on the belief that working-class people were entitled to a stable economic foundation. Until the 1960s that goal had seemed possible to reach with one (male) breadwinner per family.

¹⁹ Still some class-based rather than gender-based politics definitely lingers on, indicated by the fact that most women in paid employment only work part-time. Nor has the issue of a shorter working day (preferred by many women) gained the upper hand over increased vacations (preferred by many men) (Oskarson and Wängnerud, 1995: 71).

Towards the end of the 1960s the party leadership came to the conclusion that the working-class standard-of-living could only be secured through two incomes per family. Day care proved to be the only realistic means to make the two-income family possible in families with small children. Consequently the dramatic change in the Social Democrats family policy was the only means to keeping the party's main ideological goal stable.

This policy shift managed to simultaneously accommodate and shape preferences. By accommodating to public demand for a new family policy, the Social Democrats succeeded in shaping the public's preferences into broad support for extensive public services generally. Contrary to earlier research (Dunleavy, 1991: 130) we may conclude that ideology is equally prominent in both 'accommodating' and 'shaping' strategies.

At face value the main bourgeois opponents (Conservatives and Centre) stood empty-handed around 1970, unable at first to react to changing social customs and behaviour by formulating policies on rules and procedures in accordance with their immediately preferred overarching ideologies. Had they followed their ideologically preferred standpoints, the chasm between those backward-looking standpoints and actual social behaviour among the general public would have remained unbridged.

However, and quite surprisingly, we could also easily depict the Conservatives as being able to preserve their ideology by actively changing standpoints. When they took the chalice and swallowed the bitter standpoint of public transfers they actually achieved two important things. First, the party found a new formula to support its long commitment towards a less-than-totally collectivised society without denying women the right to enter the labour market. Second, the party finally managed to consolidate the three bourgeois parties into a viable bloc challenging the Social Democrats. No longer were the Conservatives automatically stigmatised as the unreliable 'laissez-faire-ghost-of-the-Right'. Instead, this shift of standpoints made possible the party's subsequent leading role within the bourgeois bloc.

When the Conservative leadership realised that literally hundreds of thousands of children would lack proper day care, the party modified its policy so as to reduce demand for day care instead of denouncing it altogether. Thereby the overarching goal could remain stable. The party lead-

ership hoped that by accepting what they at first regarded as a very doubtful public-transfer policy instrument (child-care allowances), a much worse outcome where every family would have to rely on collectivised day care could perhaps be halted. The political craftsmanship behind these decisions is a telling example of stability through change.

Policy continuity does not appear to be an end in itself. When a certain new policy standpoint seems to make ideological continuity possible, a party is capable of drastic policy changes. The Social Democrats changed their family policy when they found a new way of framing it in well-trodden class-politics terms. The Conservatives entered unfathomed transfers-policy-instrument waters when such a change vis-à-vis the party's traditional policy ground enabled the party leadership to open up the policy window which in turn led to the consolidation of the bourgeois bloc as a viable challenger to Social Democratic hegemony.

In an alleged world of catch-all parties, ideology is still to be counted on as the parties' measuring rod. By combining ideological world views with societal ('environmental') change we are able to conclude whether the changing world is actually distancing itself or approaching the ideologically preferred society (see Elster, 1986: 20 on a 'feasible set' of alternatives). Parties with a world to win will have an easier job to change their concrete standpoints whereas those parties who look back upon a lost world will have a more exacting task.

In spite of tremendous environmental changes some parts of the parties' social-policy ideologies have remained fairly stable. Admittedly some ideological changes have taken place in conjunction with new social trends but the character of these changes prove the importance of politics. Over the years, party ideologies have tended to change in a way like moving planets in parallel orbits, their relative distances remaining constant. Thus we have room for underlining two facets of what is in essence a paradox of stability through change. First we may claim that in order to keep up stability, stable relative ideological distances, a party sometimes has to change standpoints. Second, the fact that parties often change standpoints in no way prevents them from preserving their ideology stable. On the contrary, change is often the very precondition for keeping the ideology stable in a changing world.

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Gender and Parenthood in West German Family Politics from the 1960s to the 1980s

Wiebke Kolbe

After World War II, West Germany reached a “climax of familisation”. This held true both for the social practice of family life and for social norms and cultural values: in the fifties, more people than ever before married and got children, the average marrying age declined, and the divorce rates were low.¹ In public opinion as well as in the political discourse, the family was discovered and conceptualised as a place of security and refuge, as an “anti-structure to society”,² a nearly sacred institution, free from the state’s intrusion and impact. Historians have described post-war West German family values and politics both as a reaction towards the experiences during the Nazi period and the war and as an attempt to detach oneself from East Germany’s gender and family policy.³

After the mid-sixties, the situation changed dramatically: family patterns altered, and the labour force participation of married women and es-

¹ Reinhard Sieder, *Sozialgeschichte der Familie*, Frankfurt/Main 1987, p. 256 ff., quot. p. 256.

² Heidi Rosenbaum (ed.), *Familie als Gegenstruktur zur Gesellschaft*, Stuttgart 1973.

³ E.g. Robert G. Moeller, *Reconstructing the Family in Reconstruction Germany: Women and Social Policy in the Federal Republic, 1949–1955*, *Feminist Studies* vol. 15 (1989), pp. 137–160; Robert G. Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in the Politics of Post-War West Germany*, Berkeley et al. 1993, pp. 90, 105, 129, passim; Ute Frevert, *Frauen-Geschichte. Zwischen Bürgerlicher Verbesserung und neuer Weiblichkeit*, Frankfurt/Main 1986, p. 268 ff.; Ilona Ostner, *Slow Motion: Women, Work and the Family in Germany*, in: Jane Lewis (ed.), *Women and Social Policies in Europe. Work, Family and the State*, Aldershot 1993, pp. 92–115, esp. p. 98.

pecially of mothers increased rapidly. Gender and generation relations were deeply affected by this. The increasing participation of women in higher and longer education and gainful employment resulted in an individualisation of women's lives and made them more independent of a male breadwinner.⁴ Additionally, the invention of new and the improvement of old methods of family planning and birth control resulted in a separation of sexuality and procreation, liberating women from the fear of unwanted pregnancies and making voluntary motherhood possible. Both developments opened up new options of individual life planning for women. Yet, changes in society did not only occur on a socio-economic, but also on a cultural level: in values, norms, attitudes, perceptions and cultural representations. Social and cultural developments intensified and reinforced each other and led to a radicalisation of society which became most significant in the women's movement of 1968. The 68 movement undermined the concept of the family, defined as a community based on kinship, as the basis of society. The 68ers developed and presented new forms of communities: unmarried cohabitation and communes, with or without children, designed not to last a whole lifetime. Social scientists inspired by the ideas of 1968 claimed the abolition of the traditional nuclear family and held it responsible for individual psychical and mental disorders.⁵ Originating from the 68 movement, the women's movement was a serious challenge to the traditional family as well. Both movements shook established family values and paved the way for a broad social and cultural acceptance of new forms of cohabitation, family life, and gender relations.

On the background of the strongly restorative tendencies in post-war West Germany, the social and cultural changes of the family after the mid-sixties were experienced by contemporaries as even more dramatic than in other countries; they were experienced mainly as a crisis development. We can observe an almost permanent discourse about the 'crisis of the family', which started in the sixties and lasted throughout the following decades. The term 'crisis of the family' referred to the crisis of the

⁴ Cf. Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, Vom "Dasein für andere" zum Anspruch auf ein Stück "eigenes Leben": Individualisierungsprozesse im weiblichen Lebenszusammenhang, *Soziale Welt* vol. 34 (1983), pp. 307–340.

⁵ Cf. Rosemarie Nave-Herz, Einführung, in: Rosemarie Nave-Herz (ed.), *Wandel und Kontinuität der Familie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Stuttgart 1988, pp. 1–10, here p. 7 f.

'normal' family, i.e. the nuclear, patriarchal two-generation family consisting of a breadwinner husband and a housewife with two or more children, which had been the common family pattern for only some decades. The rather conservative crisis discourse can be followed on different levels of society, not least within family politics, where it resulted in the discussion and implementation of new social benefits. The development of such benefits will be studied in this article. But family policy reacted not only to social and cultural changes; it also created central categories and norms of social life, the legal framework and thus the scope and the limits within which social practices of family life, childhood, parenthood, and gender relations could take place. One of those categories was a new concept of parenthood, which emerged after the seventies within a political context originating from the crisis discourse. This article analyses how the new parenthood concept emerged and how parenthood was constructed in West German family politics. Even if the emphasis of the study lies on the political discourse, its interrelation with the social and cultural changes of society will be examined as well as the implementation of the resulting political reforms. Applying a gender perspective, the study is mainly concerned with the gender implications, further with the labour market aspects of West German family policy. The intention is to understand the evolution of a certain kind of parenthood concept and family policy differing from Swedish, East German and other countries' concepts and policies.

The social and cultural change of the family institution in West Germany since the sixties

What exactly were the demographic, social and cultural changes of the family which West German politicians and social scientists were so much concerned about after the sixties? Exploring the family institution, we have to distinguish between marriage and parenthood. The process of change in social practice and in cultural norms and concepts affected both of them in West Germany. Marriage patterns altered significantly since the fifties: The number of weddings per 1000 inhabitants declined from around 11 in 1950 to around 6 in 1989. Moreover, divorce rates doubled

within two decades: Whereas only 14 per cent of all dissolved marriage ended by divorce in 1960, the percentage had risen to 28 in 1983.⁶ During the seventies and eighties, unmarried cohabitation became broadly accepted in society, and the number of men and women practising this new form of partnership increased decisively as well. In West Germany, unmarried cohabitation was the typical form of life for single, young, well-educated couples. In 1990, only 11 per cent of them had children.⁷ In contrast to e.g. Sweden where many unmarried couples had children, most West Germans married when the first child was born—on account of legal discrimination, partly on account of more traditional family values—, but the vast majority of them had been living together before.⁸

Whereas the marriage institution eroded in social practice, politicians still held on to the value of marriage in the eighties. On a programmatic level⁹ and in practical politics, marriage—and not the existence of children—was the pivotal condition for a living form to be defined as and treated as a family. Unmarried couples were not defined as families, but as unmarried relationships (*Nichteheliche Lebensgemeinschaften*), whether they had children or not. They had to pay higher taxes than married ones, and they neither had the right to be the heir to each other nor to adopt children. For unmarried couples with children, the situation was quite com-

⁶ Maria S. Rerrich, *Balanceakt Familie: Zwischen alten Leitbildern und neuen Lebensformen*, Freiburg i. Br., 21 990, p. 12 f.

⁷ Norbert F. Schneider, *Familie und private Lebensführung in West und Ostdeutschland. Eine vergleichende Analyse des Familienlebens 1970–1992*, Stuttgart 1994, p. 131. See also Max Wingen, *Nichteheliche Lebensgemeinschaften. Formen—Motive—Folgen*, Osnabrück 1984.

⁸ According to the results from a sample survey, 85 per cent of those who married in 1980 had been living together before. The respective figures for 1970 and 1960 were only 9 and 4 per cent. Cf. Rosemarie Nave-Herz, *Familiäre Veränderungen seit 1950—eine empirische Studie*, Oldenburg 1984, p. 115. See also Franz-Xaver Kaufmann, *Familie und Modernität*, in: Kurt Lüscher et al. (eds.), *Die "postmoderne" Familie. Familiäre Strategien und Familienpolitik in einer Übergangszeit*, Konstanz 1988, pp. 391–416, here p. 397. In East Germany, the dominating pattern of unmarried cohabitation differed from the West German one: in the eighties, in about 50 per cent of the partnerships, at least one of the partners was divorced and the couple lived together with children. Cf. Schneider, *Familie*, p. 132 f.

⁹ E.g. in the Family Reports published by the Federal Government. Cf. Wolfgang Walter, *Vom Familienleitbild zur Familiendefinition. Familienberichte und die Entwicklung des familienpolitischen Diskurses*, Konstanz 1993 (= University of Konstanz, Social Sciences Dept., Research Programme "Society and Family", Working Paper No. 5).

plicated, since the father had no right to custody of the children. Especially conservative family politicians legitimated the legal discrimination of unmarried couples with the West German constitution, whose article 6 states that "marriage and family are under the state's special protection". The conclusion drawn was that married couples and families were better off than all other forms of living and cohabitation.¹⁰ In Swedish social and family policy, by contrast, marriage was not favoured like that, and unmarried or divorced parents could have joint custody of their children after 1977.¹¹ However, a process of change in attitudes can be observed in Germany as well, and the public awareness of the legal problems of unmarried couples with children has risen during the nineties. Actually, a law giving them joint custody of their children came into force in July 1998.

The social changes of marriage and partnership patterns have been described by sociologists as a deinstitutionalisation of marriage.¹² It was accompanied by declining numbers of children—per family and in absolute numbers. Since the late sixties, the number of children per woman has decreased, continuing a demographic trend which had started in the late nineteenth century. In the seventies and eighties, birth rates declined so much that a pronatalist discourse emerged—something which had been taboo in West Germany until then because of Nazi population policy. The number of married couples who did not have any children at all was increasing as well as the number of those with only one child: in the late eighties, half of all marriages were childless or had one child.¹³ With a total fertility rate of 1.4 in 1992, West Germany reported one of the lowest

¹⁰ GG art. 6 par. 1: "Ehe und Familie stehen unter dem besonderen Schutz der staatlichen Ordnung". Cf. Viola Gräfin von Bethusy-Huc, *Familienpolitik. Aktuelle Bestandsaufnahme der familienpolitischen Leistungen und Reformvorschläge*, Tübingen 1987, p. 6 f.; Schneider, *Familie*, p. 15.

¹¹ Diane Sainsbury, *Gender, Equality and Welfare States*, Cambridge 1996, p. 66 ff.; Anders Agell, Sweden, in: Alec Samuels (ed.), *Social Security and Family Law with special reference to the one-parent family. A Comparative Survey*, London 1979, pp. 149–185, here p. 154. Cf. also Florin's and Nilsson's contribution in this volume.

¹² Cf. Hartmann Tyrell, Ehe und Familie—Institutionalisierung und Deinstitutionalisierung, in: Kurt Lüscher et al. (eds.), *Die "postmoderne" Familie. Familiäre Strategien und Familienpolitik in einer Übergangszeit*, Konstanz 1988, pp. 145–156; Kaufmann, *Familie und Modernität*, p. 410, passim.

¹³ Rerrich, *Balanceakt Familie*, p. 14.

rates in Europe. Only Italy had an even lower one (1.3), while Sweden had by the early nineties reached one of the highest fertility rates in Western Europe (2.1).¹⁴ Although the vast majority of children still lived in so-called complete families,¹⁵ the increase in and growing acceptance of other forms of family life shook and qualified the normative power of the traditional nuclear family. Moreover, the family lost quantitative importance as well: In 1980, in only fifty per cent of all households lived children, and by the late eighties, the number of single households exceeded that of couple or family households.¹⁶

Although the number of children decreased, the qualitative status of parenthood and childhood was enhanced.¹⁷ This process has been described as an increasing institutionalisation and normative strengthening of parenthood—in contrast to the deinstitutionalisation of marriage.¹⁸ It had started already in the nineteenth century, when the mother-child-relation attracted scientific and political attention and mothers were made more

¹⁴ Within the EU, only Ireland reported an even higher figure. Cf. Ann-Sofie Ohlander, *Women, Children and Work in Sweden 1850–1993. Report for The International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo 1994*, Stockholm 1994 (=SOU 1994: 38), p. 50. The total fertility rate indicates the estimated number of children a woman will bear throughout her reproductive period. Looking at the birth rate figures (i.e. the annual number of births per 1000 inhabitants), we get a similar picture: With a figure of 9.6, Italy had the world's lowest birth rate, followed by West Germany with a rate of 10.5 (figures for 1988) (figures for Sweden not reported). Cf. Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *Alles aus Liebe zum Kind*, in: Ulrich Beck, Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *Das ganz normale Chaos der Liebe*, Munich 1990, pp. 135–183, here p. 136.

¹⁵ 90.5 per cent of all children under 18 years in 1981. Cf. Kaufmann, *Familie und Modernität*, p. 397.

¹⁶ In 1987, there were 33 per cent single households, 28 per cent households with 2 persons, 18 per cent with 3 persons, 14 per cent with 4 persons, and 7 per cent households with 5 and more persons. Cf. Rerrich, *Balanceakt Familie*, p. 16.

¹⁷ The sociologist Franz-Xaver Kaufmann puts it the other way round: because of the intensified normative, social and cultural demands on modern parenthood, more and more people decided to remain childless. Kaufmann, *Familie und Modernität*, p. 395.

¹⁸ Tyrell, *Ehe und Familie*; Yvonne Schütze, *Zur Veränderung im Eltern-Kind-Verhältnis seit der Nachkriegszeit*, in: Rosemarie Nave-Herz (ed.), *Wandel und Kontinuität der Familie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Stuttgart 1988, pp. 95–114; Yvonne Schütze, *Von der Gattenfamilie zur Elternfamilie*, in: Alois Herlth et al. (eds.), *Abschied von der Normalfamilie? Partnerschaft kontra Elternschaft*, Berlin et al. 1994, pp. 91–101; Kaufmann, *Familie und Modernität*, pp. 354 f., 410f.

and more personally responsible for the well-being of their children.¹⁹ The process continued throughout the twentieth century, when childhood as such gained more attention. Since the late sixties, a new cultural value and normative demand has emerged because of the possibility of voluntary motherhood (birth control, legal abortion). Women should give birth to a child only if they could take the responsibility. And, vice versa, the biological mother was expected to bring up her child herself and not give it away as a foster child, to a children's home or for adoption. On the whole, the requirements on how to bring up a child 'perfectly' have increased enormously during the last decades.²⁰ The enhanced status of childhood found its expression also in welfare politics: in many Western countries, social and family law followed increasingly the principle of children's well-being and started treating children as legal subjects with own rights.²¹

Since the late sixties, demands concerning the upbringing of children were no longer exclusively made on mothers, but even on fathers. American and European pedagogues, psychologists and psychoanalysts discovered the father-child-relation to be equally important as the mother-child-relation—both for the child and the father, furthermore for the whole family. The maternal task of taking care of and educating children turned into a parental task. Fathers were now considered not only to be capable of but also to be responsible for child-care to the same or at least to a similar extent as mothers.²² This very recent development indicates a

¹⁹ Cf. Elisabeth Badinter, *Die Mutterliebe. Geschichte eines Gefühls vom 17. Jahrhundert bis heute*, Munich 1984; Hartmann Tyrell, Soziologische Überlegungen zur Struktur des bürgerlichen Typus der Mutter-Kind-Beziehung, in: Joachim Matthes (ed.), *Lebenswelt und soziale Probleme. Verhandlungen des 20. Deutschen Soziologentages zu Bremen 1980*, Frankfurt/Main, New York 1981, pp. 417–428; Yvonne Schütze, *Die gute Mutter. Zur Geschichte des normativen Musters "Mutterliebe"*, Bielefeld 1986.

²⁰ Beck-Gernsheim, *Liebe zum Kind*, p. 168 ff.; Marlene Stein-Hilbers, *Wem "gehört" das Kind? Neue Familienstrukturen und veränderte Eltern-Kind-Beziehungen*, Frankfurt/Main, New York 1994; Schütze, *Die gute Mutter*; Schütze, *Veränderung*; Schütze, *Gattenfamilie*.

²¹ See Göran Therborn, The Politics of Childhood: The Rights of Children in Modern Times, in: Francis G. Castles (ed.), *Families of Nations. Patterns of Public Policy in Western Democracies*, Aldershot 1993, pp. 241–291; Stein-Hilbers, *Wem "gehört" das Kind?*, pp. 82 ff., 108 ff.

²² For the USA see e.g. David B. Lynn, *The Father. His Role in Child Development*, Monterey, 1974; Michael E. Lamb (ed.), *The Role of the Father in Child Development*, Madison

transformation of the cultural concepts of childhood, fatherhood, motherhood and gender relations as well as a new construction of parenthood in the sense of shared and responsible parenthood. This new cultural concept of parenthood has found its expression in family and social policy in several European countries: From the seventies onwards, social benefits enabling *parents* to stay at home and care for their newborn children were implemented in West Germany, the Scandinavian and other European countries, and from 1983, the European Council discussed a directive on parental leave and adopted it finally in 1996.²³ Still, the concept of parenthood differed from country to country, since it developed within different social, cultural, political and discursive contexts. In West Germany, the new parenthood concept found its expression in family policy by the introduction of *education allowances* for parents in 1986. This social benefit was a late result of a political discourse taking its starting point in the concern about the crisis of the family. In the following, the development of this family policy discourse and the emergence of parenthood and education allowances since the sixties will be analysed.

The late sixties: The discourse on children's well-being

As in most Western European countries, female labour-force participation increased in West Germany from the mid-fifties, and growing at a disproportional rate was the participation of mothers with children at pre-

1976. For Sweden: Lars Jalmert, *Små barns sociala utveckling. En granskning av forskning om spädbarn, mammor, pappor, könsroller och daghem*, Stockholm 1980, p. 64 ff.; Philip Hwang (ed.), *Faderskap*, Stockholm 1985. For West Germany: Dorothea-Luise & Theodor Scharmann, *Die Vaterrolle im Sozialisations und Entwicklungsprozeß des Kindes*, in: Friedhelm Neidhardt (ed.), *Frühkindliche Sozialisation*, Stuttgart 1975, pp. 270–316; Wassilios E. Fthenakis, *Väter*, 2 vols., Munich 1985. For a research review see Rosemarie Nave-Herz, *Die Bedeutung des Vaters für den Sozialisationsprozeß seiner Kinder. Eine Literaturexpertise*, in: Jürgen Postler (ed.), *Traditionalismus, Verunsicherung, Veränderung. Männerrolle im Wandel?*, Bielefeld 1985, pp. 45–75; Hildegard Macha, *Die Renaissance des Vaterbildes in der Pädagogik*, *Pädagogische Rundschau* vol. 45 (1991), pp. 197–214.

²³ See Sheila B. Kamerman, Alfred J. Kahn (eds.) *Child Care, Parental Leave, and the Under 3s. Policy Innovation in Europe*, New York et al. 1991; European Commission (ed.), *Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the European Union, Annual Report 1996*, Brussels 1997, p. 63 f.

school and school age. Between 1950 and 1980, the percentage of working mothers with children under the age of 15 nearly doubled. In 1950 every fourth of these mothers was gainfully employed, in 1960 already every third. By the eighties, the figure had risen to over 40 per cent. Working mothers became an issue of great public and political interest. Yet, the employment rate of mothers with children at pre-school age increased only a little: from around 30 to some 35 per cent between 1961 and 1980.²⁴ Nonetheless, these working mothers with small children attracted most public and political attention, not only in West Germany. The public, political and scientific perception of the increase in maternal employment differed from country to country, though.²⁵ In many countries, it corresponded with a shortage of labour, and both developments led to crisis discourses, but the crisis definitions could be completely different. In Sweden e.g., the problem was defined in terms of how to increase female and maternal labour-force participation even more in order to mobilise as much Swedish labour as possible to maintain and increase the economic growth of the country. Resulting problems were how to qualify women for and integrate them into the labour market and how to provide sufficient child-care facilities quickly.²⁶ This development of the Swedish political discourse was favoured by a variety of factors, of which the probably most important ones were the following three. Firstly, the trade unions had a strong influence on Swedish labour market policy. They wanted to mobilise native

²⁴ Ingrid N. Sommerkorn, Die erwerbstätige Mutter in der Bundesrepublik: Einstellungen und Problemveränderungen, in: Rosemarie Nave-Herz (ed.), *Wandel und Kontinuität der Familie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Stuttgart 1988, pp. 115–144, here p. 117, and table p. 299.

²⁵ Actually, the increase in maternal employment and its perception cannot be distinguished. See Anita Nyberg, The social construction of married women's labour-force participation: the case of Sweden in the twentieth century, *Continuity and Change* vol. 9 no. 1 (1994), pp. 145–156, and Jakob Tanner, Der Tatsachenblick auf die 'reale Wirklichkeit': zur Entwicklung der Sozial- und Konsumstatistik in der Schweiz, *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte* vol. 45 no. 1 (1995), pp. 94–108, who show convincingly how (labour market) statistics construct social and historical reality.

²⁶ Wiebke Kolbe, Turning Mothers into Parents: Welfare State Politics in Sweden and West Germany since the 1960s, in: Berit Gullikstad, Kari Heitmann (eds.), *Kjønn, makt, samfunn i Norden i et historisk perspektiv*. Konferanserapport fra det 5. nordiske kvinnehistorikermøtet, Klækken 08.–11.08.96, 2 vols., Trondheim, vol. 2, pp. 61–86, here p. 65 f.

married women and mothers instead of 'guest workers' or immigrants to solve the labour shortage problem, since they feared that cheap immigrant labour would undermine their concept of 'wage policy solidarity'. Secondly, the Swedish Government Official Report on future trends in Swedish economy (*långtidsutredningen*) published in 1962, which had an enormous impact on the political discourse, maintained that a further growth of the Swedish national economy could only be achieved if the huge reserve of married mothers was mobilised for the labour market, and the committee suggested expanding public child-care facilities. Eventually, the emerging sex roles debate (*könsrollsdebatten*) spread the idea that women and men had (or should have) equal roles in society and that mothers should be gainfully employed as well as fathers should contribute to child care. The combination of economic arguments and the sex roles debate resulted in a broad political consensus that married women and mothers ought to have the possibility to choose between caring for their children at home and taking up gainful employment. To support them in joining the labour force, the state was to provide for sufficient numbers of child-care facilities. Actually, this was the starting point of a policy of increasing and accelerating the building of day-care centres, beginning in 1963 and enduring throughout the following decades.²⁷

The West German crisis discourse differed a lot from the Swedish one. In the Federal Republic, the increase in the participation of married mothers in the labour force was regarded as an alarming development rather than a solution to the labour shortage, which was just as severe a problem as in Sweden. Yet, this shortage could to some extent be remedied with refugees from East Germany and Eastern Europe, though not completely. Therefore, the Federal Government encouraged the systematic recruiting of so-called guest workers from Southern Europe from the end of the fifties and especially after 1961, when the Berlin Wall was built.²⁸ This became necessary because of the general consensus that the limits of mobilis-

²⁷ Ibid.; Gunhild Kyle, *Gästarbeterska i manssambället. Studier i industriarbetande kvinnors villkor*, Stockholm 1979, pp. 150–232; SOU 1962:10 *Svensk ekonomi 1960–1965. Betänkande av 1959 års långtidsutredning*, pp. 39 ff., 96 ff., 149, 153 ff., 175 ff. Cf. also the contributions of Hinnfors and Florin/Nilsson in this volume.

²⁸ Cf. Johannes-Dieter Steinert, *Arbeit in Westdeutschland: Die Wanderungsvereinbarungen mit Italien, Spanien, Griechenland und der Türkei und der Beginn der organisierten*

ing married women for the labour market had been reached.²⁹ The industry's efforts to attract married women for the labour force by offering part-time work met reluctant or even disapproving reactions from politicians and the public during the fifties. In the sixties however, when the labour shortage still existed, hundreds of thousands of married women actually took up part-time employment. Between 1960 and 1973, the number of part-time workers (nearly all of them female) tripled from 800,000 to 2.6 millions. In view of this part-time-'boom', this kind of married women's gainful employment became at least partly accepted by the public.³⁰

During the fifties, though, public opinion about married women's and especially married mothers' employment had been extremely restrictive. This was partly due to the experiences of the Nazi period, when the state intruded on the supposedly private sphere of family life, and during the war, when many married women and mothers had joined the labour force. It was also partly due to East Germany's family and labour market policy, where married women and mothers were consistently integrated into the labour force and where the state provided child-care facilities. The West Germans wanted absolutely to delimit themselves from former fascist and contemporary communist politics, which in their opinion destroyed family life as well as women's health and were opposed to their natural obligation as mothers.³¹ The 'principle of subsidiarity' (*Subsidiaritätsprinzip*), originating from catholic social theory, became the guideline for Christian-Democratic social and family policy in post-war West Germany. Ac-

Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte, *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* vol. 35 (1995), pp. 197–209, esp. pp. 200 ff.; Jürgen Fjalkowski, Gastarbeiter als industrielle Reservearmee? Zur Bedeutung der Arbeitsimmigration für die wirtschaftliche und gesellschaftliche Entwicklung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* vol. 24 (1984), pp. 399–456.

²⁹ Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood*, p. 177.

³⁰ Cf. Christine von Oertzen, *Teilzeitarbeit und die Lust am Zuverdienenden. Geschlechterpolitik und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Westdeutschland, 1948–1969*, Göttingen 1999. Cf. also von Oertzen's contribution in this volume. Numbers from Ingrid Kurz-Scherf, *Teilzeitarbeit: Individuelle Notlösung und/oder Vorboten einer neuen Zeitordnung? Plädoyer für die Entpatriarchalisierung der herrschenden Zeit-Ordnung*, in: Ursula Müller, Hiltraud Schmidt-Waldherr (eds.), *FrauenSozialKunde. Wandel und Differenzierung von Lebensformen und Bewußtsein*, Bielefeld 1989, pp. 42–57, here p. 46.

³¹ See above, note 3. For East Germany cf. Gesine Obertreis, *Familienpolitik in der DDR 1945–1980*, Opladen 1986, and Budde's contribution in this volume.

cording to this principle, the state shall only interfere in 'private life', when the capacity of smaller social units, such as the family or the business, to guarantee their members' social security has been reached.³² The political reluctance concerning state interference corresponded well with the attitude of most West Germans towards the state, which was skeptical, if not distrustful, again due to the experiences with the Nazi regime. Both people's attitude towards the state and the attitude of politicians attitude towards the function of social and family policy differed from Sweden. The Swedes had a strong confidence in their state, and Swedish policy was characterised by an attitude of social engineering originating from the 1930s. Swedish social-democratic politicians were convinced that policy could and should actively shape and change society.³³

Even if the West Germans were wary of the state, the public objection towards working mothers was so strong that there were even voices claiming a prohibition of maternal employment by law. In an opinion research poll from 1958, 59 per cent of the interviewed advocated such a law for mothers with children under the age of ten. In 1966, public opinion still had not changed in this respect.³⁴ Throughout the fifties and early sixties, several sociological studies asserting the harmful consequences of maternal employment for children were published and became quite influential on the political discourse.³⁵ For most West German contemporaries, the

³² See the so-called *Rotenfelser Denkschrift* which defined the social political positions of the Christian-Democratic party: Hans Achinger et al., *Neuordnung der sozialen Leistungen. Denkschrift auf Anregung des Herrn Bundeskanzlers erstattet*, Köln 1955. From a catholic point of view: Joseph Höffner, *Der Start zu einer neuen Sozialpolitik*, Köln 1956.

³³ For the Swedish attitude of social engineering cf. Yvonne Hirdman, *Att lägga livet tillrätta. Studier i svensk folkhemspolitik*, Stockholm 1990, esp. pp. 10 ff., 97 ff.; Yvonne Hirdman, Social Engineering and the Woman Question: Sweden in the Thirties, in: Wallace Clement, Rianne Mahon (eds.), *Swedish Social Democracy: A Model in Transition*, Toronto 1994, pp. 65–81. For evidence of this attitude in post-war Sweden cf. Florin's and Nilsson's contribution in this volume.

³⁴ Elisabeth Pfeil, *Die Berufstätigkeit von Müttern. Eine empirisch-soziologische Erhebung*, Tübingen 1961, p. 35 f.; Federal Minister for Labour and Social Affairs (ed.), *Bericht der Bundesregierung über die Situation der Frauen in Beruf, Familie und Gesellschaft*, Bonn 1966 (in the following quoted as *Frauenenquête*), p. 78.

³⁵ E.g. Otto Speck, *Kinder erwerbstätiger Mütter*, Stuttgart 1956. For an analysis of this research see Yvonne Schütze, *Mütterliche Erwerbstätigkeit und wissenschaftliche For-*

crisis of the family originated to a high extent from the increase in working mothers, which was experienced as a crisis development itself. The central problem to be solved thus was how to make sure that mothers stayed at home with their children (at least with their children at pre-kindergarten or pre-school age) to prevent the traditional family from being destroyed.³⁶ Following this public and political opinion about maternal employment, West German family policy aimed explicitly at relieving husbands and fathers economically in their breadwinner function in the fifties and sixties: Child allowances and tax deductions for wife and children increasing the male breadwinner's income would enable his wife to stay at home and take care of household and children. Accordingly, the state was very reluctant to support public or private child-care facilities. Both the Christian-Democratic government and the Social-Democratic opposition united in the political goal to make the gainful employment of married women and mothers dispensable.³⁷ This family policy was actually quite functional until the mid-fifties, as long as the Federal Republic faced high unemployment rates. In the following two decades of labour shortage, though, West German family policy conflicted glaringly with the needs of the labour market. In contrast to Sweden, where family and labour market policy have corresponded with each other since the mid-sixties, their contradiction was not eliminated but rather sharpened in West Germany at the same time: In the sixties, the debate about the harmfulness of maternal employment was intensified by a delayed reception of international psychoanalytic research on psychological development during early childhood. As a consequence, children's well-being be-

schung, in: Uta Gerhardt, Yvonne Schütze (eds.), *Frauensituation. Veränderungen in den letzten zwanzig Jahren*, Frankfurt/Main 1988, pp. 114–138, esp. p. 116 ff.

³⁶ Cf. Moeller, *Reconstructing*.

³⁷ See e.g. Franz-Josef Wuermeling, *Die Familie in der industriellen Gesellschaft. Ihr ethischer und wirtschaftlicher Schutz eine vordringliche Aufgabe*, *Bulletin*, January 10, 1957, p. 59 f. The Christian Democrat Wuermeling was the first Federal Family Minister. See also the Social-Democratic post war social policy concept: Walter Auerbach et al., *Sozialplan für Deutschland*, Berlin 1957, p. 113. For the negative attitude of family policies towards child-care facilities see Franz-Josef Wuermeling, *Jugend in der Großstadt*, *Bulletin*, November 25, 1960; Max Wingen, *Der Beitrag der Familienpolitik für die Erziehungskraft der Familie*, in: *Kulturberrat beim Zentralkomitee der deutschen Katholiken* (ed.), *Die Erziehungskraft der Familie. Berichte und Dokumentationen*, Köln 1967, pp. 62–100, here p. 85.

came the key concept of the public and political discourse about the crisis of the family.

Only a certain part of the research on early childhood development gained publicity in West Germany, viz. only the results concerning hospitalism and so-called maternal deprivation. John Bowlby, the 'inventor' of maternal deprivation, had studied children who lived permanently in children's homes and found out that maternal absence led to severe psychic damage. He called this complex maternal deprivation.³⁸ Bowlby's results concerning institution children were in the scientific and public discourse simply transferred to the completely different situation of children with working mothers, who were accused of abandoning their children while they were away at work. As a result, the mainstream of the West German scientific discourse—successively diffusing into the public and political discourse—asserted that the biological mother's continuous presence during the child's first three years was required for his or her healthy psychic development.³⁹ At the same time, the international research, as it was adopted in scholarly discourse in other countries, had quite a different character. Whereas the theories about maternal deprivation started dominating the West German scientific and political discourse about child care and family life only some fifteen years after their emergence,⁴⁰ they had in the meantime been complemented or displaced in other countries, e.g. the United States, Great Britain and Sweden, by other psychological and pedagogic theories. The research which became important for e.g. the Swedish discourse after the late sixties asserted that maternal employment and public child-care as such were not harmful for small children, who could

³⁸ John Bowlby, *Maternal Care and Mental Health. A Report prepared on behalf of the World Health Organization as a contribution to the United Nations programme for the welfare of homeless children*, Genève 1951.

³⁹ Cf. Schütze, *Mütterliche Erwerbstätigkeit*, p. 124 ff.; Sommerkorn, *Erwerbstätige Mutter*, p. 130 f.; Ursula Lehr, *Die mütterliche Berufstätigkeit und mögliche Auswirkungen auf das Kind*, in: Friedhelm Neidhardt (ed.), *Frühkindliche Sozialisation*, Stuttgart 1975, pp. 230–269, here p. 242 ff. For an analysis of Bowlby's and others' theories on the mother-child-relation see Denise Riley, *War in the Nursery. Theories of the Child and Mother*, London 1983, p. 92 ff.

⁴⁰ Indicating this delay, Bowlby's most famous book *Maternal Care and Mental Health* was published in German first 22 years after the English edition: *Mütterliche Zuwendung und geistige Gesundheit*, Munich 1973.

very well relate to more than one constant person.⁴¹ The political demand for particular scientific results was thus quite different in different countries.

In West Germany the political discourse maintaining that the biological mother was so important for the child led to demands for a *maternity allowance* (*Muttergeld*). It was to be paid to mothers who exclusively took care of their children and were not then employed. This social benefit aimed explicitly at restricting the labour force participation of mothers. The most engaged advocates were psychoanalysts and paediatricians such as the well-known doctors Theodor Hellbrügge and Johannes Pechstein. They raised their expert voices, warning in an emotional language of the terrible consequences for especially babies and small children of having them in day-nurseries. In their opinion, the result of institutional child-care was “socially handicapped children”. They asserted that West German mothers did not know enough about small children’s psychic development: they joined the labour force, leaving their babies to inadequate public child-care facilities, in fatal ignorance of the disastrous consequences of their doing. Therefore, the doctors demanded both an information campaign for young women and welfare benefits for mothers which would encourage them to stay at home with their small children.⁴² This expert discourse addressed explicitly and successfully to politicians and the public. During the sixties and seventies, medical and social scientists, philanthropic organisations, the churches, and the trade unions were all united in the demand for some kind of social benefit for mothers ena-

⁴¹ Cf. Schütze, *Mütterliche Erwerbstätigkeit*, p. 135; Ivan F. Nye, Lois W. Hoffman, *The Employed Mother in America*, Chicago 1963; Ivan F. Nye, Lois W. Hoffman, *Working Mothers. An Evaluative Review of the Consequences for Wife, Husband, and Child*, San Francisco et al. 1974; Riley, *War in the Nursery*; Jalmert, *Små barns sociala utveckling*; Siv Thorsell, *Könsrollsfrågan och barnomsorgen*, in: Annika Baude (ed.), *Visionen om jämställdhet*, Stockholm 1992, pp. 94–105, esp. p. 94 f.

⁴² E.g. Theodor Hellbrügge, *Zur Problematik der Säuglings- und Kleinkinderfürsorge in Anstalten*.—Hospitalismus und Deprivation, in: *Handbuch der Kinderheilkunde*, vol. III, Berlin et al. 1966, pp. 384–404; Johannes Pechstein, *Sozial behinderte Kinder*, in: Theodor Hellbrügge (ed.), *Kindliche Sozialisation und Sozialentwicklung*, Munich et al. 1975, pp. 79–101; Johannes Pechstein, Elisabeth Siebenmorgen, Dorothea Weitsch, *Verlorene Kinder? Die Massenflege in Säuglingsheimen. Ein Appell an die Gesellschaft*, Munich 1972, esp. p. 82. See also many of the articles in the scientific journal *Der Kinderarzt* in the sixties and seventies.

bling them to stay at home to care for their small children.⁴³ In 1969, Marie Schulte-Langforth, a former scientific expert of the Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, worked out the first detailed proposal for a maternity allowance. It was taken up by the well-known social scientist and advisor for family and population policy Max Wingen and by the *German Society for Public and Private Welfare* who presented “recommendations for the introduction of a maternity allowance”, to the Social-Democratic Family Minister Käthe Strobel in 1971. Maternity allowances were also discussed in the regional youth welfare departments at the beginning of the seventies.⁴⁴ Still, the time was not yet ripe for such a new welfare benefit: The ideas about how and for which groups of mothers it should be realised differed too much, which was one reason why it was not implemented in politics during the sixties and seventies. The main reason, however, were the enormous costs.

The early seventies: The first *parents* appear

The famous anthropologist Margaret Mead had already in 1954 called the discourse on maternal deprivation “a new and subtle form of anti-feminism in which men—under the guise of exalting the importance of mater-

⁴³ E.g. Elisabeth Pfeil, *Die Frau in Beruf, Familie und Haushalt*, in: Ferdinand Oeter (ed.), *Familie und Gesellschaft*, Tübingen 1966, pp. 141–175, here p. 172; Edith Hinze, *Lage und Leistung erwerbstätiger Mütter. Ergebnisse einer Untersuchung in Westberlin*, Berlin, Köln 1960, pp. 289 f., 294; DGB, Abteilung Frauen (ed.), *Programm des Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes für Arbeitnehmerinnen*, Düsseldorf 1969, p. 20; Klemens Brockmüller, *Gesellschaftliche Funktionen der Frauen besser honorieren*, *Gewerkschaftliche Rundschau für die Bergbau- und Energiewirtschaft* 1968, pp. 110–119, here p. 116; Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge (ed.), *Die Mutter in der heutigen Gesellschaft. Gesamtbericht über den 63. Deutschen Fürsorgetag in München*, Frankfurt/Main 1964. Cf. also *Frauenenquête*, p. 84.

⁴⁴ Marie Schulte-Langforth, *Muttergeld. Vorschlag einer Hilfe für Mütter mit kleinen Kindern*, Stuttgart 1969; Max Wingen, *Ein Muttergeldkonzept und seine Problematik*, *Zeitschrift für Sozialreform* vol. 17 (1971), pp. 268–280; Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge, *Empfehlungen des Deutschen Vereins zur Einführung eines Muttergeldes, Nachrichtendienst des Vereins für öffentliche und private Fürsorge* vol. 51 (1971), pp. 174–175. Wingen was a scientific expert in the Federal Ministry for Youth, Family and Health in the sixties. In the seventies and eighties, he worked as a professor at different universities and as a scientific advisor on family and population policy.

nity—are tying women more tightly to their children than has been thought necessary since the invention of bottle feeding and baby carriages.”⁴⁵ Against the background of the emerging women’s movement, Mead’s remark gained new relevance and actuality. The women’s movement was a radical challenge to the traditional family. Marriage and motherhood became suspect as the primary tasks of women, or as a female destination altogether. Feminists accused the traditional family of being oppressive to women and of being an important tool in maintaining a patriarchal society. Female self-realisation was the new slogan, and this—feminists assumed—was something which could hardly be achieved within the traditional family. Women should become economically independent of their husbands by taking up a gainful employment. They should have the right to decide about their own bodies by practising birth control and being offered free abortion.⁴⁶ Actually, a broad ‘new’ women’s movement started in West Germany on the abortion question. It was the fight against a restrictive abortion law which united many feminists, which gave the movement strength and which was most spectacular in the public.⁴⁷ Through the women’s movement, the conservative crisis discourse got new nourishment. When the social development of thousands of married women and mothers entering the labour force was accompanied by the women’s movement’s claims for female emancipation and equality (*Gleichberechtigung*), this was experienced as a threatening combination by contemporaries who wanted to maintain the traditional gender order and family pattern. Women seemed now to refuse to fulfil their primary roles as wives and mothers, to accept marriage as their purpose in life, and to bear and rear children, searching for their so-called self-realisa-

⁴⁵ Margaret Mead, Some theoretical Considerations on the Problem of Mother-Child-Separation, *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* vol. 24 (1954), pp. 471–483, here p. 477. The discourse on maternal deprivation gained publicity in the U.S.A. as early as at the beginning of the fifties, which explains Mead’s—in comparison with West Germany’s—early reaction.

⁴⁶ For a “classic” of the West German new women’s movement see Alice Schwarzer, *Der “kleine Unterschied” und seine großen Folgen*, Frankfurt/Main 1975.

⁴⁷ For the history of the West German new women’s movement and its campaign against the abortion law see Frevert, *Frauen-Geschichte*, p. 276 ff.; Alice Schwarzer, *So fing es an! 10 Jahre Frauenbewegung*, Köln 1981; Alice Schwarzer, *Frauen gegen den Paragraph 218. 18 Protokolle, aufgezeichnet von Alice Schwarzer*, Frankfurt/Main 1971.

tion instead. The demands for a maternity allowance intensified and increased during the seventies, which may be interpreted as a reaction to women challenging the gender order. Actually, we can observe a discursive struggle: the children's well-being discourse was to a certain extent established as an anti-discourse against the women's emancipation discourse. Conservatives like the Christian-Democratic member of parliament Albert Burger and the social scientist and political advisor Max Wingen asserted that women's equality was realised "at the expense of their children", that "the needs and demands of (small) children set limits to [women's] emancipation", and they claimed "young adolescent women's protection against a misdirected idea of emancipation".⁴⁸

Since the mid-seventies, maternity allowances were discussed in parliament as well, now under the new term *education allowance* (*Erziehungsgeld*).⁴⁹ At the same time, a new factor appeared in the debate: the problem of incipient mass unemployment. The period of economic boom and labour shortage was coming to an end, and unemployment figures were increasing. In this situation, education allowances were also discussed as a means of reducing the number of unemployed women, who suffered of the labour market situation even more than men.⁵⁰ In 1977, the federal state of Lower Saxony, led by a Christian-Democratic government, planned to introduce education allowances in a regional pilot project and

⁴⁸ Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographische Protokolle VIII/151, May 10, 1979, p. 12097 f. (Albert Burger); Max Wingen, Bevölkerungspolitik als Gesellschaftspolitik—eine Replik, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 21/1978, pp. 29–37, quot. p. 35; Max Wingen, Rahmensteuerung der Bevölkerungsbewegung als gesellschaftspolitische Aufgabe, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 52/1977, pp. 3–19, quot. p. 11 f. See also Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *Vom Geburtenrückgang zur Neuen Mütterlichkeit? Über private und politische Interessen am Kind*, Frankfurt/Main 1984, p. 118 f.

⁴⁹ In the following, the term child-care allowance is used synonymously with the source term education allowance, since child-care allowance is the internationally usual term for this social benefit.

⁵⁰ In December 1976, the unemployment rate had reached 4.8 per cent, which corresponded to about one million unemployed. The rate for females was higher: It amounted to 6.1 per cent. Cf. *Die Frau in der offenen Gesellschaft. Materialien zur freibeiwillig-sozialen Politik* 1–2/1977, special issue on unemployment. See esp. Roswitha Verhülsdonk, Spezielle Probleme der Frauenarbeitslosigkeit, pp. 2–4, and: Die Lage auf dem Arbeitsmarkt. Februar-Bericht 1977 der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, pp. 16–18.

asked the Federal Government for financial support. The Lower Saxonian social minister Hermann Schnipkoweit argued in the *Bundesrat* that an education allowance would solve two problems at once: working mothers would get the possibility to care for their new-born child, and several unemployed women could get the mothers' working places instead. This would be an economical solution, since a mother receiving an education allowance of 350 DM per month would be much cheaper for the state than a woman receiving unemployment benefits amounting to 60 per cent of her former net income.⁵¹ The same ideas can be found in the federal Christian-Democratic party's "programme for regaining full employment", presented in 1977.⁵² The Federal Government of social democrats and liberals doubted, though, whether introducing education allowances would help to solve the unemployment problem and criticised the effort to (ab)use a family policy measure as an instrument of labour market policy in times of economic crisis.⁵³

The transformation from the gender specific term *maternity allowance* to the gender neutral *education allowance* after the mid-seventies indicated that the mother's person became less important. The focus shifted towards the child instead, or rather towards the activities of caring and

⁵¹ Deutscher Bundesrat, report on the 446th sitting, June 3, 1977, p. 108 f. For comparison: In 1977, the average gross wage of a female industrial worker was 1,486 DM per month. For female white-collar workers, the average gross wage amounted to 1,924 DM per month. My own calculations based on Statistisches Bundesamt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1978*, Stuttgart 1978, pp. 452, 457. For the later implementation of regional child-care allowances in Lower Saxony in a pilot project from 1978 to 1980 see: Institut für Strukturforchung und Entwicklungsplanung (ed.), *Erziehungsgeld: Förderung der Betreuung und Erziehung von kleinen Kindern und Verbesserung der Lebenssituation von Familien; Modellversuch in Niedersachsen*, Hannover 1982; Federal Minister for Youth, Family, Women, and Health (ed.), *Erziehungsgeld, Erziehungsurlaub und Anrechnung von Erziehungszeiten in der Rentenversicherung. Gutachten des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats für Familienfragen beim Bundesminister für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit*, Stuttgart et al. 1989, p. 69 ff.; Christiane Schiersmann, Germany: Recognizing the Value of Child Rearing, in: Sheila B. Kameron, Alfred J. Kahn (eds.), *Child Care, Parental Leave, and the Under 3s. Policy Innovation in Europe*, New York et al. 1991, pp. 51–79, here p. 69 f.

⁵² Cf. Ursula Münch, *Familienpolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Maßnahmen, Defizite, Organisation familienpolitischer Staatstätigkeit*, Freiburg 1990, p. 54 f.

⁵³ See Herbert Ehrenberg, Social-Democratic Federal Minister for Labour and Social Affairs, Deutscher Bundesrat, report on the 446th sitting, June 3, 1977, p. 109 f.

educating. This became also clear in the first parliamentary bill on child-care allowances, which was proposed by the Christian-Democratic party in the *Bundestag* in 1974. Its aim was “to promote the child’s development to the best possible extent” and it was “grounded on the insight that the first three years of life are decisive for the child’s further development.”⁵⁴ What was new in the seventies was that the child’s well-being did not necessarily need to be guaranteed by the mother any more. Feminists claimed that it was not alone the role of mothers to take care of children, but that children needed their fathers as well. Psychologists, pedagogues, and social scientists defined fathers as persons capable of taking care of small children and important persons to whom children could relate emotionally.⁵⁵ Actually, more and more men accompanied their wives to birth preparation courses, attended the delivery, engaged in baby care and began to reflect about their role as fathers.⁵⁶ These ideas and practices of fatherhood were something new in modern European history, and they had a revolutionary potential, destroying old norms of the male breadwinner family and of complementary gender roles. The impact of the new concepts on the political discourse during the seventies was obvious: the advocates of children’s well-being started to refer to more research stressing the relevance of one or several persons to whom the small child related.⁵⁷ And from the middle of the decade, politicians were discussing education allowances in seemingly gender neutral terms. They were demanded for ‘parents’, ‘families’, or for ‘mothers or fathers’. But there were striking rhetorical inconsistencies: gender neutral and gender specific terms were used synonymously. Education allowances were advocated for ‘the family’, ‘one parent’, and ‘mothers’, and all these terms were used as synonyms, assuming without question and explicitly that ‘one parent’ was “as

⁵⁴ *Entwurf eines Gesetzes über die Gewährung von Erziehungsgeld (Bundeserziehungsgeldgesetz—BEGG)*, BT-Drs. 7/2031, April 24, 1974, p. 5 f.

⁵⁵ E.g. Rosemarie Nave-Herz, *Das Dilemma der Frau in unserer Gesellschaft: Der Anachronismus in den Rollenerwartungen. Texte und statistische Daten zur Einführung in eine “Geschlechter-Soziologie”*, Neuwied, Berlin 1972, p. 31 ff. See also above, note 22.

⁵⁶ Cf. Fthenakis, *Väter*, vol. 1, pp. 131–209; Schütze, *Veränderung*, p. 109.

⁵⁷ See e.g. Federal Minister for Youth, Family, and Health (ed.), *Zweiter Familienbericht. Familie und Sozialisation*, Bonn 1975, p. 44 f., *passim*.

a rule the mother", as in the above-mentioned Christian-Democratic party bill. In other cases, the inconsistencies derived from the use of gender neutral terms in a gender specific context. Education allowances were claimed for 'parents', using a gender neutral language, but all arguments for the reform referred exclusively to the specific living conditions of '-mothers', as in the Federal Government's *Second Family Report* published in 1975. These inconsistencies made clear that the 'parent' for which education allowances were designed was just another term for 'mother'.⁵⁸

However, *parents* had entered the political discourse, and the new cultural and political concept of parenthood was something innovative, in spite of the mentioned inconsistencies. One could at least expect that its emergence indicated the beginning of a change in the cultural and political construction of the family and of gender relations. Still, this process of cultural and political change went on rather slowly—at least in comparison with Sweden where a law on parental leave was implemented in 1973 and where the two-breadwinner family became the legal norm and the dominating social practice already in the seventies.⁵⁹ Moreover, the West German transformation from motherhood to parenthood proceeded with a rather uneven development including internal contradictions and inconsistencies.

To begin with, the Federal Government introduced a social reform in 1979 which interrupted the development from motherhood towards parenthood. Not being fully convinced of the concept of child-care allowances, the coalition of Social Democrats and Liberals offered a paid *maternity leave* (*Mutterschaftsurlaub*) of six months only for gainfully employed mothers instead—five years after the introduction of parental leave in Sweden. Maternity leave was supported by a job guarantee, and *maternity benefits* were to substitute for regular wages. The West German government presented this as a health policy reform, which allowed them to refuse the opposition's claims for including fathers and non-employed mothers. The leave was exclusively motivated with the gainfully employed mother's need of physical and psychical regeneration after a delivery. The Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs obtained even a special expert

⁵⁸ *Zweiter Familienbericht*, pp. 93 ff., 137 ff. Cf. also Kolbe, *Turning Mothers*, p. 68 f.

⁵⁹ Cf. Florin's and Nilsson's contribution in this volume.

opinion to prove this need.⁶⁰ This reform, and especially its motivation, was a sort of anachronism, a step back into the fifties and sixties, when family and maternity policies focussed on the health of mother and child rather than on child care.⁶¹

The introduction of maternity leave had a labour market aspect as well. The Federal Government presented the reform originally as part of a programme to consolidate the national economy. The hope was—as in the case of child-care allowances, where the Federal Government had refused to combine family and labour market policy aims—that maternity leave would contribute to relieve the labour market, since unemployed persons could at least be temporarily employed on the working places of mothers in maternity leave.⁶² But employers' organisations and the Christian Democrats doubted the reform's positive effect on the labour market. They criticised it for being a "working place prevention law" (*Arbeitsplatz-verhinderungsgesetz*) instead, since in their opinion it was too expensive for the businesses. The result would be employers hesitating to engage young women, who were likely to become pregnant.⁶³ Furthermore, the Christian Democrats criticised paid maternity leave for discriminating against non-employed mothers. They feared that the reform would encourage these mothers to take up a gainful employment during pregnancy in order

⁶⁰ *Gesetzentwurf der Bundesregierung zur Einführung eines Mutterschaftsurlaubs*, BT-Drs. 8/2613, March 5, 1979. For the expert opinion see Johannes Zmarzlik, *Verfassungsmäßigkeit des Mutterschaftsurlaubs. Sozial-, arbeits- und familienpolitische Fragen*, *Der Betrieb* no. 16, April 17, 1981, pp. 843–847.

⁶¹ Cf. Wiebke Kolbe, *Mödrarna och välfärdsstaten. Svensk och västtysk moderskapspolitik under 1950-talet: en jämförelse*, *Historisk tidskrift* vol. 112 no. 4 (1992), pp. 502–516, esp. pp. 503, 506 f.

⁶² BT-Drs. 8/2613, p. 9; Münch, *Familienpolitik*, p. 56; Michael Schreyer, *Aspekte einer Wirkungsanalyse des Mutterschaftsurlaubs*, *Sozialer Fortschritt* vol. 28 no. 4 (1979), pp. 73–75, here p. 73.

⁶³ See Deutscher Bundestag, *Stenographische Protokolle VIII/144*, March 15, 1979, p. 11394 (quot.: Stefan Höpfinger from the Christian-Social Union, the Bavarian sister party of the Christian-Democratic Union) and p. 11403; *Sozialpolitische Wohltaten nicht auf Kosten der Betriebe. Argumente gegen den Gesetzentwurf zum Mutterschaftsurlaub*, *Deutsche Handwerkszeitung*, May 11, 1979. For more details cf. Wiebke Kolbe, *Wie aus Müttern Eltern wurden. Wohlfahrtsstaatliche Politik in Schweden und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1945–1990*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Bielefeld, Dept. of History and Philosophy, 1999, chap. 7.

to profit from maternity benefits as well. In the name of equality between employed and non-employed mothers, the Conservatives claimed child-care allowances for *all* mothers instead of a maternity leave for only gainfully employed women.⁶⁴ Equality between different groups of mothers became the central matter of dispute in the family policy discourse of the late seventies and early eighties. It was much more dominant than the question of equality between the sexes or an expansion of maternity leave to fathers.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, all contemporary proposals for an education allowance formally addressed both parents. During the late seventies and early eighties, the opposition took frequent parliamentary initiatives to introduce federal education allowances for 'parents', and some Christian-Democratic federal states introduced at least regional allowances.⁶⁶ Still, it took nearly a decade before a federal reform of education allowances for parents was introduced, which eventually institutionalised the new parenthood concept in West German family policy.

The eighties: The conservatives' dilemma

The eighties were—not only in West Germany, but in other European countries as well—the decade of conservative backlash: The political climate altered, a 'new conservatism' emerged, and the former Social-Liberal Federal Government (since 1969) was replaced by a coalition of Christian Democrats and Liberals in 1982. The following analysis concentrates on the conservative discourse since it has become the dominant one in West Germany's family policy in the eighties, leaving distinct marks on the construction of parenthood. In the political discourse on the family, the 'con-

⁶⁴ See Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographische Protokolle VIII/144, pp. 11388, 11393, 11403, passim, and VIII/151, pp. 12087, 12097, 12104 f., passim; *Stellungnahme des Bundesrates zum Gesetzentwurf der Bundesregierung zur Einführung eines Mutterschaftsurlaubs*, BT-Drs. 8/2613, p. 17.

⁶⁵ Cf. Kolbe, *Mütter*, chap. 7 and 8.

⁶⁶ E.g. *Entwurf eines Gesetzes über die Einführung eines Familiengeldes (Bundesfamiliengeldgesetz—BFGG)*, BT-Drs. 8/3443, November 28, 1979; *Entwurf eines Gesetzes über Familiengeld für Nichterwerbstätige (Familiengeldgesetz—FamGG)*, BT-Drs. 8/3577, January 18, 1980. For the federal states' benefits see Federal Minister for Youth, Family, Women, and Health, *Erziehungsgeld*, pp. 75–91.

servative turn' resulted in the emergence of a 'new maternalism', praising the rediscovery of maternal values in an inhuman, rationalised world. It was propagated by conservative politicians like the Christian-Democratic Labour Minister Norbert Blüm and the *Christian-Democratic Employees' Social Committees*.⁶⁷ Feminists also accused parts of the women's movement, especially the new 'difference feminists', for supporting the conservatives—even if not intended—and for undermining the feminist movement's claims for gender equality.⁶⁸ The most prominent and contested example for a feminist new maternalism was the so-called mothers' manifesto (*Müttermanifest*) published by a group of female members of the young environment party *Die Grünen* in 1986. It led to a severe conflict between the party's feminists and other feminists.⁶⁹

Another expression of the new conservatism was the emergence of a broad and enduring pronatalist discourse from the mid-seventies onwards, gaining acceptance and legitimacy in the Federal Republic for the first time. Pronatalist aims were combined with the children's well-being discourse and with the value of the so-called 'family housewife'. The falling birth rates became another legitimisation for intentions to restrict female and maternal labour force participation—besides the children's well-being discourse and, usually unspoken, the continuing mass unemployment.

⁶⁷ CDA, *Die sanfte Macht der Familie. Leitsätze der 19. Bundestagung der Sozialausschüsse der Christlich-Demokratischen Arbeitnehmerschaft*, 9.–11. Oktober 1981 in Mannheim, Königswinter 1982; Norbert Blüm, Einführung: Wir sind für die Mutter, in: *ibid.*, pp. 6–10; Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographische Protokolle VIII/151, p. 12110 f. (Norbert Blüm).

⁶⁸ E.g. Gisela Anna Erler, *Frauenzimmer. Für eine Politik des Unterschieds*, Berlin 1985. Critical: Astrid Osterland, *Konservative Tendenzen in der Frauenbewegung* (I), in: Wolf Schäfer (ed.), *Neue soziale Bewegungen. Konservativer Aufbruch im bunten Gewand*, Frankfurt/Main 1985, pp. 72–79; Claudia Pinl, *Vom kleinen zum großen Unterschied. "Geschlechterdifferenz" und konservative Wende im Feminismus*, Hamburg 1993. In the eighties, the women's movement found itself split into the branches of 'equality feminism' and 'difference feminism'. This was an international phenomenon. See e.g. Libreria delle donne di Milano, *Non credere di avere dei diritti*, Torino 1987, who were regarded as typical representatives of 'difference feminism' and controversially discussed even in other countries.

⁶⁹ Das Müttermanifest. "Leben mit Kindern—Mütter werden laut", in: Marion Meier, Monika Oubaid (eds.), *Mütter—die besseren Frauen. Über den Zusammenhang von § 218 und Hausarbeit*, Braunschweig 1987, pp. 84–88. For the feminist controversy about the *mothers' manifesto* see Inka Haas, *Gebärstreik. Frauen gegen den staatlich verordneten Muttermythos*, Frankfurt/Main 1998, p. 135 ff.

The *Third Family Report* published by the Federal Government in 1979 e.g. maintained that the state could legitimately intervene if it were proved that married women's labour force participation led to a severe decrease of the birth rate.⁷⁰ The conservative discourse with its specific mixture of children's well-being and pronatalism thus concentrated on mothers rather than on fathers or parents.

However, the Conservatives could not evade the ongoing change in society. They found themselves in a dilemma: On the one hand, they were concerned about the social and cultural transformation of gender relations and family patterns and endeavoured to uphold traditional family values. On the other hand, they were aware that the process of social and cultural change was an irreversible one, at least to a certain extent. Therefore if they did not want to lose political credibility and electors, they had to adapt their cultural norms and values both to the social development and to the gender equality discourse. They did not only submit to the discourse of modernity, though. On the contrary, they adopted 'opposing' values too, trying to make them fit into their own view of life.⁷¹ The emergence of education allowances and the new parenthood concept can be interpreted as originating from an uncertainty caused by an ongoing erosion of the common ideas about the family, the parent-child-relation and gender relations. This erosion led to attempts to reestablish new identity-producing, reliable concepts and to react with adequate political reforms. This happened in a process of permanent negotiation and contest,—or, as Reinhard Koselleck puts it, a process of a "semantic struggle to define political and social positions and maintain or push through them", which

⁷⁰ Federal Minister for Youth, Family, and Health (ed.), *Dritter Familienbericht*, Bonn 1979, p. 31. Although the Third Family Report was published by a Social-Liberal government, it was written by an expert committee with rather conservative members. They were: Willi Albers, Professor in Economics, University of Kiel (chair), Rosemarie von Schweitzer, Professor in Domestic and Consumption Sciences, University of Gießen, Hermann Schubnell, Professor in Population Sciences, University of Mainz, Rita Süßmuth, Professor in Educational Theory, Teacher Training College Dortmund, and later Federal Family Minister.

⁷¹ Of course, the advocates of 'modernity' had to make concessions to the conservative discourse as well. For more details of this discursive struggle cf. Kolbe, *Mütter*, chap. 7. To avoid the impression of a merely functionalistic interpretation, it should be emphasized here that the mutual impact of opposing discourses does not only result in an adoption of certain political strategies and tactics, but often also in a change of people's convictions.

“has been constitutive for all periods of crisis”.⁷² These “conflictual processes that establish meanings”⁷³ often resulted in compromises. In the case of West German family policy, the result was a conglomerate of ‘-traditional’ and ‘modern’ family values and gender norms characterising also the construction of parenthood in the eighties. The following analysis of the education allowance reform implemented in 1986 will illustrate the ensuing inconsistencies and internal contradictions within the West German parenthood concept.

The construction of parenthood in West German family policy in the eighties

The conservatives borrowed the term equality from the discourse on equality of the sexes and converted it into a term of political struggle for their aims,⁷⁴ maintaining that “our question of equality goes even further than socialism’s question of equality. We do not only want equality between man and woman on the labour market, we also want equality between the non-employed woman and the employed housewife and mother.”⁷⁵ Consequently, from 1986, the new coalition of Christian Democrats and Liberals replaced maternity leave by an education allowance according to the flat rate principle (i.e. at the same amount for everyone) for *all* mothers in the name of equality between employed and non-employed mothers.⁷⁶ Inspired by Alva Myrdal’s and Viola Klein’s model of ‘women’s two roles’,⁷⁷ conservative politicians proclaimed a female “freedom of choice” between the roles of housewife/mother and worker—

⁷² Reinhard Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichte und Sozialgeschichte*, in: Reinhard Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, Frankfurt/Main, 21992, pp. 107–129, quot. p. 113 (my translation).

⁷³ Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, New York 1988, p. 5.

⁷⁴ Wolf Rainer Leenen, *Bevölkerungsfragen zwischen Alltagsideologie und politischem Kalkül, Soziale Welt*, special issue 1, 1982, pp. 221–242, here p. 223.

⁷⁵ Federal Minister for Labour and Social Affairs Norbert Blüm, *Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographische Protokolle VIII/151*, p. 12110.

⁷⁶ *Gesetz über die Gewährung von Erziehungsgeld und Erziehungsurlaub (Bundeserziehungsgeldgesetz—BERzGG)*, December 6, 1985, BGBl. I 1985, p. 2154.

⁷⁷ Alva Myrdal, Viola Klein, *Women’s two roles. Home and work*, London 1956.

but not a male freedom of choice between the roles of 'houseman'/father and worker.⁷⁸ At the same time, though, the Christian Democrats declared their support for the values of 'equality', 'freedom of choice' and 'partnership' between the sexes.⁷⁹ Accordingly, they had included fathers in their claims for an education allowance since the late seventies, and when it was finally introduced in 1986, it actually addressed 'parents', enabling either the mother or the father to stay at home with the newborn child for some months. By this welfare reform, the new cultural concept of responsible parenthood was eventually institutionalised in West German family policy. In contrast to Sweden, where politicians tried to use a gender neutral language as far as possible, talking mostly about 'parents' when the law on parental leave was introduced, responsible West German politicians mentioned explicitly that the new 'parents' included also fathers. Consequently, and differing from Sweden, the West German term *Eltern* (parents) was often explicitly used as a synonym for *Mutter und Vater* (mother and father).⁸⁰ In contrast to this, education allowances were most often motivated in terms of children's needs for a close relation to their mother—not to their father or either of the parents. In the eighties, there were still rhetorical inconsistencies like the above mentioned: Many politicians used the term 'one parent' as a synonym for 'mother'. The whole discussion about the introduction of education allowances in parliament as well as in most of the mass media centred on mothers. So did the government's information material about the new social benefit, which

⁷⁸ E.g. Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographische Protokolle VIII/151, pp. 12073, 12097; X/157, September 13, 1985, pp. 11785 f., 11789, 11798 ff.; X/174, November 14, 1985, pp. 13054 ff., 13058.

⁷⁹ E.g. Leitsätze der CDU für eine neue Partnerschaft zwischen Mann und Frau. beschlossen auf dem 33. Bundesparteitag der CDU vom 19.–22. März 1985 in Essen, in: Heiner Geißler (ed.), *Abschied von der Männergesellschaft*, Frankfurt/Main 1986, pp. 191–214; Federal Government's Press and Information Office (ed.), *Politik für Frauen*, Bonn 41989, pp. 59, 136 ff.

⁸⁰ E.g. Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographische Protokolle X/157, pp. 11786, 11789 (Christian-Democratic Family Minister Heiner Geißler); X/174, p. 13053 (Geißler's Christian-Democratic successor Rita Süßmuth); Federal Minister for Youth, Family, Women, and Health, *Erziehungsgeld*, p. 76 f.; Federal Government's Press and Information Office, *Politik für Frauen*, p. 59; Federal Government's Press and Information Office (ed.), *Politik für die Familie*, Bonn 41989, p. 20 ff. Cf. also Kolbe, *Turning Mothers*, pp. 72, 76.

presented as a rule mothers and hardly ever fathers as recipients of education allowances in its case examples.⁸¹

In spite of this, the law on education allowances created parenthood as something gender neutral—at least at first glance. The terms ‘parents’ or ‘one parent’ were used synonymously with the terms ‘family’ or with ‘mothers or fathers’. However, there were not only contradictions concerning mothers, fathers and parents between the reform and the political discourse, but also within the reform, since its design was partly contradictory to the gender neutral concept of parenthood: education allowances were not designed as a social benefit to substitute for regular average or higher wages. Rather, they were conceived of as giving some extra financial support to single-breadwinner families for the time when the economy of the family was extraordinarily burdened with expenses for the newborn child. At best, they were designed to replace a low income understood as an extra salary. The allowances were paid to all parents—either mothers or married fathers—who took care of their newborn children themselves, independent of whether the parent had been gainfully employed before the child’s birth or not. The allowance was paid at an amount of 600 DM, while the monthly average gross wage of a female industrial worker was nearly four times as high as that.⁸² The benefit was paid for ten months, and employed parents had the right to *education leave* (*Erziehungsurlaub*) during that time. After the leave, they had a claim to their job. Part-time employment up to nineteen hours a week could be combined with receiving the benefit, on the condition that the employer agreed to the reduction of working hours. Periods of education leave were taken into account in the pension scheme. Those who combined part-time employment and education leave faced disadvantages, though: They lost their ‘baby years’ from the pension scheme partly or

⁸¹ E.g. Federal Minister for Family, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth (ed.), *Erziehungsgeld, Erziehungsurlaub*, Bonn 1995; Federal Government’s Press and Information Office, *Politik für die Familie*.

⁸² In 1986, the average gross wage of an industrial worker per month was 2,223 DM for females and 3,159 DM for males. For white-collar workers, the average gross wage amounted to 2,945 DM per month for females and 4,349 DM for males. Our own calculations based on Statistisches Bundesamt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1987*, Stuttgart 1987, pp. 483, 490.

completely. The law thus impeded the combination of employment and education leave.

The maximum education allowance was paid to all parents during the first six months. After that period, it was means-tested, depending on the family income. The Federal Government estimated that because of the income limits, in 1986 only 40 per cent of all parents would receive the maximum allowance and 20 per cent would lose their claim to the benefit completely after the sixth month.⁸³ Until 1994, education leave was gradually extended to three years, but education allowances were paid only for the first two years, whereas the last year of the leave remained unpaid. Since the benefit was not increased and income limits were not lifted, its real value diminished even more. In 1997, about a decade after the implementation of the reform, less than ten per cent of the couples with one child were entitled to receive the whole education allowance after their next child's birth. Fifty per cent of the West German and forty per cent of the East German couples lost their claim to the benefit completely after the sixth month since their income was too high. Because of their lower incomes, single mothers received on average higher education allowances than couples. But even among them the portion of those who did not obtain any benefit from the seventh month onwards was comparatively high: about one third in West and one fifth in East Germany.⁸⁴ This development gradually undermined a family policy benefit once meant to increase the appreciation of care work. For the majority of parents, the most important effect of the education allowance reform had turned out to be the claim to the job rather than economic security during the leave. Yet, due to the protests of the employers' organisations and parts of the ruling coalition, who had criticised that education leave would be too favourable for the employees and too costly for the enterprises, dismissals during education leave had been allowed 'in certain

⁸³ *Gesetzesentwurf der Bundesregierung: Entwurf eines Gesetzes über die Gewährung von Erziehungsgeld und Erziehungsurlaub (Bundserziehungsgeldgesetz—BERzGG)*, BR-Drs. 350/85, August 16, 1985, p. 16.

⁸⁴ My own calculations based on microcensus data. Cf. Kolbe, *Mütter*, chap. 8. East Germans were usually entitled to higher education allowances and more often than West Germans received them for longer periods than six months since their average incomes were lower.

cases'.⁸⁵ On the whole, the reform favoured non-employed parents more than gainfully employed ones. The limited security concerning the job, the low amount of the allowances, and the disincentives for combining education leave and part-time employment made a main breadwinner necessary. This corresponded with a tax and social law most favouring single-breadwinner families most.⁸⁶

Moreover, education allowances were explicitly designed to substitute for public and private child-care facilities, since they were regarded as cheaper for the state and better for children's psychological development. West Germany remained one of the European countries with a very low supply of child-care facilities especially for children under the age of three and for school children in the afternoon. In 1990, only two per cent of West German children under the age of three and five per cent of the school children were provided with a place in a public day-nursery.⁸⁷ Additionally, there were hardly any all-day schools. Schools finished at different times every day, at the latest about lunch time. A parent was expected to be waiting for the children whenever they came home, to prepare lunch for them and to help them with their homework. The lack of child-care facilities and all-day schools meant in practice that one parent had to give up his or her job or could only work part-time for several years after a child's birth. Taking care of children thus remained the duty of one parent to a higher degree than in Sweden and East Germany, where parents were partly relieved from that duty through welfare state institutions like public child care, all-day schools, and free school meals.

In contrast to the Swedish construction of equally shared parenthood in a two-breadwinner family, the West German political concept of parenthood

⁸⁵ For the criticism and final compromise see: Bangemann äußert Bedenken gegen Erziehungsgeld-Gesetz, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 14, 1985; Streit über das Erziehungsgeld. Das Thema Arbeitsplatzgarantie, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 4, 1985; Ein Gesetz gegen die jungen Frauen, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, July 17, 1985; Kabinett beschließt Einführung eines Erziehungsgeldes, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 18, 1985; Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographische Protokolle X/157, pp. 11803 f., 11815 f. (members of the liberal party). Cf. also Münch, *Familienpolitik*, pp. 58–61.

⁸⁶ Cf. Kolbe, *Mütter*, chap. 2 and 8.

⁸⁷ In East Germany and Sweden, the percentages were 50 and 33 respectively for children under the age of three and 85 and 60 respectively for school children. See, also for comparative data on other European countries, European Commission, *Equal Opportunities*, p. 62.

was a modernisation of the women's two-roles model. This model suggests three different periods in the course of a woman's life: firstly, a period of education and some years of gainful employment, secondly, a 'family phase' of 15–20 years until the children leave school and/or home and, thirdly, the return to employment until retirement.⁸⁸ The model was modernised in three aspects in the eighties. Firstly, the pure 'family phase' was made shorter: only 3–6 years, until the children entered kindergarten or school. Secondly, it was followed by a combined period of part-time work and children being looked after in the kindergarten. Part-time work was even allowed during education leave, i.e. during the 'family phase'. Thus, a new transition period between the family phase and the later employment phase was created. Thirdly, the model was extended to 'parents', embracing fathers as well as mothers—at least formally. But the West German concept of parenthood did not mean a shared parenthood in the sense of fathers' and mothers' equal and symmetric responsibility for both child care and family maintenance. West German parents were rather made into unequal parents with complementary tasks: one parent was mainly responsible for child care, while the other was chiefly responsible for family maintenance. This complementary construction of child-care parent and breadwinner parent was neither a gender neutral nor an equal one: the child-care parent was socially and economically dependent on the breadwinner parent, and the political and public discourse on family policy and gender relations made unambiguously clear that the child-care parent was supposed to be the mother, while the breadwinner was conceptualised as the father.⁸⁹ The formation of the new concept of parenthood thus did not really challenge the strong male

⁸⁸ Cf. Myrdal, Klein, *Women's two roles*.

⁸⁹ This construction shows quite well that gender is a relational category: One sex/gender cannot be imagined isolated from the other; it is always implicitly related to its opposite. The meaning of gender is thus created in terms of difference. Moreover, the gender difference is usually connected with a hierarchy, the male being the dominant, powerful category. Cf. Joan W. Scott, Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, The Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism, *Feminist Studies* vol. 14 (1988), pp. 33–50, esp. p. 36 ff.; Yvonne Hirdman, Genussystemet, in: *Demokrati och makt i Sverige. Maktutredningens huvudrapport*, Stockholm 1990 (=SOU 1990: 4 4), pp. 73–116, here p. 76 f.; Dorthe Gert Simonsen, *Kønnetts grænser. Poststrukturalistiske strategier—historieteoretiske perspektiver*, København 1996, p. 114 ff.; Iris Rittenhofer, *Køn som diskurs*, in: Ann-Dorte Christensen, Anna-Birte Ravn, Iris Rittenhofer (eds.), *Det kønnede samfund. Forståelser af køn og social forandring*, Aalborg 1997,

breadwinner model, which had dominated West Germany's social and family policy since the Second World War (and the German Reich's policy since the emergence of a modern welfare state at the end of the nineteenth century), but it modernised it at least—in contrast to Sweden where the emergence of parenthood in social and family policy went hand in hand with an erosion of the former male breadwinner model.⁹⁰

In spite of the formal institutionalisation of parenthood, education allowances aimed primarily at mothers. Actually, nearly 99 per cent of the recipients of the benefit were mothers, and the percentage of fathers taking education leave has hardly increased since the reform's implementation.⁹¹ Consequently, politicians and social scientists discussed the effects of the reform almost exclusively with respect to mothers. Their judgements differed according to their political orientation. Conservative politicians like Family Minister Rita Süßmuth and the Ministry's scientific expert commission were convinced that the reform would improve women's position on the labour market, enabling them to return to gainful employment some years after a child's birth—whereas before the implementation of education leave, they had to give up their job when they wanted to stay at home longer than only for some months.⁹² Female social-democratic poli-

pp. 17–49; Carol Hagemann-White, *Die Konstrukteure des Geschlechts auf frischer Tat ertappen? Methodische Konsequenzen einer theoretischen Einsicht*, *Feministische Studien* vol. 11 no. 2 (1993), pp. 68–78, here p. 71.

⁹⁰ Cf. Kolbe, *Turning Mothers*, pp. 72, 76. The male breadwinner model approach was introduced in comparative welfare state research by Jane Lewis and Ilona Ostner. They distinguish different “welfare regimes” according to the strength of the male breadwinner notion in social policy. Cf. Jane Lewis, Ilona Ostner, *Gender and the Evolution of European Social Policies*, Bremen 1994 (= ZeS-Working Paper No. 4/94, Centre for Social Policy Research, University of Bremen). Until the 1960s, all Western European countries can be classified as having strong male breadwinner models. Since the sixties, Sweden is regarded as a weak male breadwinner state, whereas the Federal Republic of Germany still belongs to the strong male breadwinner countries. See also Sainsbury, *Gender*, p. 41 f., who describes the Swedish parenthood concept as one element of the ‘individual’ welfare state model, which corresponds to Lewis’ and Ostner’s weak male breadwinner model.

⁹¹ Cf. Federal Minister for Youth, Family, Women, and Health, *Erziehungsgeld*, p. 50; Bettina Paetzold, “*Eines ist zu wenig, beides macht zufrieden*”. *Die Vereinbarkeit von Mutterschaft und Berufstätigkeit*, Bielefeld 1996, p. 117.

⁹² Deutscher Bundesrat, report on the 554th sitting, September 27, 1985, p. 445. Similar also *ibid.*, p. 448 f. (Cornelia Schmalz-Jacobsen, liberal senator in Berlin); Federal Minister for Youth, Family, Women, and Health, *Erziehungsgeld*, p. 195.

ticians and scientists like Heide Pfarr, Professor of Law at the university of Hamburg and later Social Minister of the Federal State of Hesse, who served as a scientific expert in the parliamentary debate about education allowances in 1985, held the opposite opinion: In their eyes, education allowances discriminated against gainfully employed mothers and rather worsened than improved their situation since the law did not offer the possibility to combine child care and employment and the benefit did not substitute for a regular wage.⁹³ Pfarr and other feminist jurists and social scientists criticised the education allowance reform for furthering the model of 'women's two roles' and for intending and successfully reaching the unspoken aim of forcing women out of the labour market at least for a period of several years.⁹⁴ Margarete Landenberger even argues that education allowances are an example of a family policy measure serving to solve labour market problems: The policy of excluding certain groups from the labour market was made more attractive by declaring it as a means of family policy and as a matter of female 'freedom of choice'.⁹⁵

⁹³ Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographische Protokolle X/157, p. 11806; X/174, pp. 13046 f., 13058 (female members of the social democratic party); Deutscher Bundestag, Committee for Youth, Family, and Health, report on the 60th sitting, October 17, 1985, pp. 88–92 (Heide Pfarr).

⁹⁴ Pfarr, *ibid.*; Heide Pfarr, Das Erziehungsgeld ist nicht viel mehr als eine Gebärprämie, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, March 9, 1985; Heide Pfarr, Schöne neue Frauenwelt, *Die Zeit*, March 15, 1985; Heide Pfarr, Mit dem "Ja" zum Kind sackt die weibliche Berufsbiographie ab. Von der Illusion einer beliebigen Vielfalt der Lebensentwürfe der Frau. Rede zur Verleihung des Elisabeth-Selbert-Preises, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, December 3, 1991; Gunhild Gutschmidt, Letztlich ein "Männerförderungsprogramm". Die Auswirkungen von Erziehungsgeld und Erziehungsurlaub, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, January 9, 1993; Gunhild Gutschmidt, Die gerechtere Verteilung des "Arbeitsmarktrisikos Kind". Erziehungsurlaub und geld drängen Frauen zugunsten von Männern aus dem Berufsleben, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, August 4, 1997; Marion Malzahn, Erziehungsgeld—des Ministers Beitrag zur Frauenemanzipation. Was die Bundesregierung unter Gleichberechtigung, Partnerschaft und Wahlfreiheit versteht, *Kritische Justiz* vol. 18 no. 2 (1985), pp. 184–192, esp. p. 190 ff.; Ostner, Slow Motion, p. 102 f.; Kirsten Scheiwe, Labour Market, Welfare State and Family Institutions: the Links to Mother's Poverty Risks. A Comparison between Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom, *Journal of European Social Policy* vol. 4 no. 3 (1994), pp. 201–224, here p. 216.

⁹⁵ Margarete Landenberger, Erziehungsurlaub: Arbeitsmarktpolitisches Instrument zur selektiven Ausgliederung und Wiedereingliederung von Frauen, in: Karl Ulrich Mayer, Jutta Allmendinger, Johannes Huinink (eds.), *Vom Regen in die Traufe: Frauen zwischen Beruf und Familie*, Frankfurt/Main, New York 1991, pp. 262–288, esp. pp. 277, 282, *passim*.

Conclusion

Although the principle of subsidiarity suggested that the state would not intrude into the private sphere of the family, West German Christian-Democratic family policy proved the contrary. From the very beginning, it reacted to socio-economic, demographic and cultural developments concerning the family institution. In doing so, it established certain norms of 'the family' and of generation and gender relations. Thus, it shaped the framework for the social practices of family life, promoting certain forms of living and discouraging or even discriminating against others. Conservative family politics, which has dominated West Germany's federal family policy most of the time since World War II, except in the seventies, aimed at making maternal employment superfluous and at encouraging mothers to stay at home and care for their (small) children. These politics corresponded well with labour market policy until the mid-fifties and from the mid-seventies onwards. In the two decades of full employment and labour shortage in between though, they conflicted glaringly with the needs of the labour market—a contradiction that was hardly resolved. As a result, the increasing number of working mothers had to solve the conflict between child care and gainful employment individually, without the help of the state or even with state policy impeding this task. Christian Democrats wanted to relieve the double burden of working mothers not by building child-care facilities—which was the main strategy in Sweden and East Germany—but by enabling mothers to give up their employment in order to take care of their children themselves at least for a certain time. Maternity respectively education allowances should serve this purpose. Yet, the Conservatives had to make concessions to the social and cultural changes of family life and gender relations: since the seventies, they have expanded their concept of educational allowance to include fathers. This eventually led to the education allowance reform addressing both parents, by which a new concept of parenthood was institutionalised in West German family policy. The result of a rather conservative discourse maintaining children's well-being, pronatalism, maternal values and the values of the traditional family, interfering with the challenges of social and cultural change, was a rather inconsistent concept of parenthood. Accordingly, the relations between 'mothers', 'fathers', and 'parents'

were contradictory as well. The emergence of new constructions of parenthood was an international phenomenon. Still, parenthood concepts varied from country to country, since they developed within different social, cultural, political and discursive contexts. Whereas Swedish parenthood was conceptualised as equally shared parenthood with both mothers and fathers being responsible for child care and family maintenance, West German 'parents' consisted of a child-care parent and a breadwinner parent with complementary tasks.

The Man and the Equal Family

A Study of the new images of masculinity in the educational radio and TV programmes in Sweden, 1946–1971

Roger Klinth

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to study the *new* family centered man that was shaped in Sweden during the sixties. The sociologist Linda Haas maintain that Sweden was the first country in the world to adopt an official policy of equal parenthood.¹ In the beginning of the seventies the 'two-breadwinner-family' became the norm and plans for a large expansion of public child care were presented.² The policy of equal parenthood has also produced reforms in areas like prenatal care, parental education and the right of fathers to participate in the delivery of their children. However, the most significant of all reforms designed to bring about equal parenthood is Swedish parental leave, originating in 1974. Haas argues that this leave was not only the first of its kind, but also remains the most financially generous and flexible in the world and the one most directly tied to the principle of equal parenthood.³

¹ Haas, Linda, (1992), *Equal Parenthood and Social Policy. A Study of Parental Leave in Sweden*, State University of New York Press: Albany, pp. 12–15.

² Hammarlund, K. G., (1998), *Barnet och barnomsorgen. Bilden av barnet i ett socialpolitiskt projekt*, Historiska institutionen i Göteborg (diss), pp. 141–164. Axelsson, Christina, (1992), *Hemmafrun som försvann: Övergången till lönearbete bland gifta kvinnor i Sverige 1968–1981*, (Institutet för social forskning nr 21) Sociologiska institutionen: Stockholms universitet, pp. 15–48.

³ Haas, (1992), pp. 13–14.

Helga Maria Hernes describes the development of the equality policy in the Nordic countries in three steps. Women's right to professional labour was the first and measures against unequal treatment when they finally achieved this right the second. In the seventies the third step was taken. This step involved men and was aimed at improving their responsibilities towards the family and the children.⁴ Despite the relatively late involvement of men in the official policies I maintain that few periods are more suited for an investigation of changing images of parenthood and masculinity than the sixties. The pedagogue Kajsa Ohrlander points out the importance of studying the discursive process leading to new attitudes and policies. Ohrlander calls the period preceding radical political changes a formative period. During these ideologically turbulent periods old state of affairs are questioned, the debate is intensified and discursive revaluations are made.⁵ The sixties was in many ways a period of revaluation and ideological turbulence. "Breaking up from conventions, protest against authorities and political radicalism [...]" were, according to the historian Kim Salomon, significant marks of what he calls the sixties "—spirit of the age".⁶ The historian Yvonne Hirdman argues that periods of rapid political, economic or ideological change often affect the understanding of gender. The outlines of, what Hirdman calls, the "gender contract" becomes visible and it is possible to view gender rules as illogical and immoral.⁷ In their article in this anthology Christina Florin and Bengt Nilsson point out the importance of the historical actors in explaining the relatively rapid development of the equality policy in Sweden during the sixties. The success of the equal status policy was not something that happened solely because of favourable circumstances and preconditions—"there were real actors behind the politics", actors that reso-

⁴ Hernes, Helga Maria, (1987), *Welfare State and Woman Power. Essays in State Feminism*, Norwegian University Press: Oslo, p. 19.

⁵ Ohrlander, Kajsa, (1995), "Moderniserande kvinnlighet—gammal manlighet: socialpolitiska betydelser av genus i formeringen av den tidiga svenska välfärdsstaten 1900–1914", *Arkiv för studier i arbetarrörelsens historia*, nr 63/64, pp. 36–38.

⁶ Salomon, Kim, (1996), *Rebeller i takt med tiden: FNL-rörelsen och 60-talets politiska ritualer*, Rabén Prisma: Stockholm, pp. 72–76.

⁷ Hirdman, Yvonne, (1988), "Genussystemet: reflexioner kring kvinnors sociala underordning", *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift*, 1988: 3, pp. 58–59.

lutely tried to influence state bureaucracies, political parties, media establishments, corporate bodies etc.⁸

In this article I will focus on one of these actors—the educational programmes on radio and tv. The overall aim of the study is to investigate how the ideas of equality and equal parenthood that were shaped during the sixties effected the notions of masculinity and male responsibility in the family. Because of the long tradition of educational programmes focused on family issues this medium offers an interesting insight into the historical changes of masculinity and family relations. From their origin in the thirties the educational programmes for adults have traditionally intended to help those groups which, it was felt, had fallen behind as far as knowledge was concerned. The main goals for the programmes have been formulated in terms like: greater democracy, modernity, social and economic progress, equality etc.⁹ Since women during the sixties were defined as one of those under-privileged groups, programmes and educational courses aimed at improving their professional competence and family position were prioritised.¹⁰ Titles like *The Condition of Equality*, *Can We Afford the Family?* and *Women and Labour* show up in the sixties and indicate that equality between women and men has become an important topic for the educational programmes to deal with. Several persons who were involved in the production of educational programmes in the sixties and seventies also had close connections with the influential equality networks that were started during this time. The producers Monica Boëthius and Rita Liljeström were among these people. They were active in an equality network called Group 222. The group contained several well-known politicians, journalists and academics across the whole political spectrum.¹¹

⁸ Florin, Christina, Nilsson, Bengt, (1998), *Something in the Nature of a Bloodless Revolution: How New Gender Relations Became "Equal Status Policy" in Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s*, in this volume.

⁹ Lindell, Ingrid, (1998), "Det politiska spelet kring övergången från Skolradion till Utbildningsradion", Unpublished manuscript for a coming article in an anthology about the history of the educational programmes, p. 1.

¹⁰ SOU 1973:19, (1973), *TRU:s försöksverksamhet*, pp. 391–399.

¹¹ *Visionen om jämställdhet*, (1992), Annika Baude (red.), SNS Förlag: Stockholm, passim. Even though they were not members of the "inner circle", the former Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme and his wife participated in the first meeting of the group.

The educational programmes and the corporate state

The organisational structure behind the educational programmes is interesting in the way it displays the corporate character of the Swedish welfare state. Many researchers have described the 'Swedish model' as a corporate model.¹² Strong labour organisation and interest groups have since the thirties been an influential power in Swedish political life. Through a system of councils, boards, and committees they have been able to affect policy making and to influence social and economic reforms.¹³

In many ways the educational programmes are a mirror of the Swedish corporate model. When the programmes started in the thirties they were a product of a collaboration between the public but autonomous radio company (Radiotjänst, later *Sveriges Radio*) and the adult education organisations. In the fifties a lot of struggle arose over who should control the content of the programmes. *Sveriges Radio* was anxious to maintain their independent position while the interest organisations and the corporate movements wanted to increase their access to the radio medium. The state also showed considerable interest in the struggle to control the educational programmes. When parliament in 1964 decided to expand adult education in radio and tv the struggle between the three parties involved accelerated. In 1967 the Social Democrats, who were in government position, set up a committee (the TRU-committee) to investigate the possibilities of creating a separate state-governed unit for educational programmes. The historian Ingrid Lindell claims that this step was an effect of the government's attempt to gather all educational efforts under one state ministry and thereby make the educational programmes a part of the total state educational policy. The way the radio law was constructed, the state could not influence the programme policies that *Sveriges Radio* decided.¹⁴ However, in their final report the committee wanted to involve the parties traditionally responsible for the educational programmes. They recommended a special group containing representatives from the Ministry of Education, the adult education organisations and the popular movements to function as an advi-

¹² Rothstein, Bo, (1992), *Den korporativa staten: Intresseorganisationer och statsförvaltning i svensk politik*, Norstedts juridik/Allmänna förlaget: Stockholm, passim.

¹³ Hernes, (1987), pp. 73–74.

¹⁴ Lindell, (1998), pp. 1–18.

sory council.¹⁵ Remarkably enough the state committee also got the assignment to produce a quite extensive collection of test programmes that were broadcast alongside the educational programmes produced by *Sveriges Radio*. In this way the state committee once appointed became a rival to the company and was given the exclusive right to radio and tv production in Sweden. The criticism of this model was severe. *Sveriges Radio*, the bourgeois parties and the popular movements all joined in the criticism. Because of this turbulence another committee was set up. In their final report in 1973 a different model was presented. The committee suggested a separate unit, free from both state control and ties with *Sveriges Radio*. This time a consensus could be reached. In 1976 *Utbildningsradion* (The Educational Radio) was decided on and, at least temporarily, the struggle over who should control education in radio and tv was over.¹⁶

So, when it comes to the question of state policies and bureaucratic strategies the case of the educational programmes are quite complex. The content of the programmes has been an almost constant source of conflict, but also an arena for collaboration between the state, the strong popular movements, the adult educational organisations and the public radio company. Concerning the question of equality between the sexes the rivalry and organisational turbulence can not be seen in the actual programmes. Equality courses were produced both by *Sveriges Radio* and by the state committee (TRU), and the content of the programmes does not display any important differences.

Perspective, questions and material

During specific times and in particular social contexts certain forms of masculinity stand out as more modern, reliable and desirable. These forms of masculinity gain a predominant position and therefore they are able to affect definitions and dominate processes that shape private and public policies directed at, for example, the family.¹⁷ Masculinity can be studied

¹⁵ SOU 1971: 36, (1971), *Produktionsresurser för tv och radio i utbildningen*, p. 86.

¹⁶ Lindell, (1998), pp. 1–30.

¹⁷ Connell, Robert W, (1995), *Masculinities*, University of California Press: Berkeley, Los Angeles, pp. 67–86. Lupton, Deborah & Barclay, Lesley, (1997), *Constructing Fatherhood: Discourses and experience*, Sage Publications: London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, p. 9.

in relation to a great variety of social and cultural contexts—occupational life, sports, school etc. Each context offers potentially different approaches and ideals. In this article masculinity will be studied in the context of the family. This context highlights certain relations and thereby certain aspects of masculinity.

The psychologist Hanne Haavind argues that the relationship between men and woman in itself is important for the construction of gender ideals. Haavind describes gender relations, not as an encounter where women and men stand side by side facing an abstract society, but as a struggle of interest *within* the gender formation itself. A struggle that requires constant negotiation. Women and men constitute both the possibilities and the limitations of each other's lives.¹⁸ Not only does the relation to women affect the construction of masculine ideals, but notions of children and childhood are also important for this process. According to the sociologist Martin Woodhead the concept of children's *needs* is a basic fundament in public and private policies of parenthood constructed in the Western world during the twentieth century.¹⁹ Attempts to change parenthood must be adapted to notions of children and childhood. This adaptation, however, also works in the other direction. Since neither definitions of children's *needs*, nor images of gender are historically fixed, changes in ideals of parenthood might influence the way children are looked upon and the way their *needs* are defined.

Important arenas that effect the way masculinity is understood also must be searched outside the family unit. Maybe the most characteristic feature of masculinity is intimately connected to men's occupational life.²⁰

¹⁸ Haavind, Hanne, (1985), "Förändringar i förhållandet mellan kvinnor och män", *Kvinnovetenskaplig Tidskrift*, 1985: 3, p. 21.

¹⁹ Woodhead, Martin, (1990), "Psychology and the Cultural Construction of Children's Needs", *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood*, Allison James & Alan Prout (ed.), The Falmer Press: London, New-York, Philadelphia, pp. 60–74. Se also: Hewitt, Martin, (1992), *Welfare Ideology and need: Developing Perspectives on the Welfare State*, Harvester Wheatsheaf—Barnes & Noble Books: Hemel Hempstead, pp. 174–192. Hewitt claims that the talk about *needs* are closely connected to the 'regimes of truth' that the philosopher Michel Foucault perceives as the essence of policy making processes.

²⁰ Humlesjö, Inger, (1998), *Om manslighetskonstruktion i historieskrivning, fackföreningar och fackligt medlemskap*, unpublished paper presented at the FRN-conference on historical aspects of masculinity, Stockholm, aug. 1998, p. 3. Kvarnström, Lars, (1998), *Män i staten. Sta-*

Even though the two breadwinner family since the '70s has been elevated to the official norm, men's position as economic subjects has traditionally been, and probably still is, an important source of power. Some researchers, however, argue that the Swedish welfare state from the thirties and onward has taken the utmost economic responsibility for the citizens and thereby weakened men's established position as family providers.²¹ As a consequence, the breadwinner model in Sweden is regarded as less accentuated compared to other European countries and USA.²²

To be able to unpack the influence of the equality ideas on the construction of family-based masculinity I will use the following questions: How is male responsibility in the family defined and how do these definitions change in the educational programmes 1946–1971? Since this article is focused on family-based masculinity, fatherhood is a central issue. What is regarded as a positive masculinity in relation to children and how is the responsibility of men for the care and upbringing of children formulated? The exclusive male position as breadwinner has probably been the most characteristic feature of family-based masculinity in Sweden during the last century. In what way did the equal status ideas affect the notion of men's responsibility as family providers?

The study is structured in two main periods and the method used is a qualitative analysis of the dominant discourses of these periods. To be able to understand in what way the equality ideas of the sixties added other dimensions to the modernisation of family-based masculinity this study will begin with a short look at the educational programmes dealing with family issues broadcast in the forties and fifties. The second part of the study deals with the educational programmes between 1960 and 1971 which have as their main focus equality between the sexes.

tionskarlar och brevbärare i statens tjänst 1897–1937, Almqvist & Wiksell International: Stockholm, pp. 171–194.

²¹ Frykman, Jonas, (1996), "Plats för en karl", *Kulturella perspektiv*, 1996: 3, p. 7.

²² Sommestad, Lena, (1998), "Welfare State Attitudes to the Male Breadwinning System: The United States and Sweden in Comparative Perspective", *The Rise and Decline of the Male Breadwinner Family?*, Angélique Janssens (ed.), Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, pp. 163–174. Von Oertzen, Christine & Rietzschel, Almut, (1998), "Comparing the Post-War Germanies: Breadwinner Ideology and Women's Employment in the Divided Nation, 1948–1970", *The Rise and Decline of the Male Breadwinner Family?*, Angélique Janssens (ed.), Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, passim.

Programmes, programme manuscripts and written course material from the period 1946–71 will be used as empirical material. Since family life and gender relations were primarily discussed in programmes for adults, this category has been prioritised. There are nine programmes left in the archives originating from the two decades before the breakthrough of the equality ideas in the 1960s. All of these programmes will be used. The series of programmes called *Barn, ungdom, föräldrar* (Children, Youth, Parents) from 1959 is labelled a radio course and, consequently, it also contains written course material. The other programmes from the early period are called educational lectures and all that remains of them are written programme manuscripts. In the 1960–70s, all 28 programmes available are gathered into five separate courses, each with written study material. Since many of the programmes exist only in the form of written manuscripts, this study will not discuss any aspects of how men, women, family life, etc are represented in pictures or verbally. The written course material are generally more detailed than the actual programmes they were built up around. Therefore, the written course material, especially in the later period, gets more attention. From the two radio courses broadcast in the beginning of the sixties no programmes are left in the archives and, consequently, the analysis has to rely solely on the written course material.

The forties and fifties: The ‘helpful’ man

The notions that dominate the early period (1946–1960) can be characterised as striving to adapt masculinity and gender relations to what is regarded as modernity. In the modernity discourse notions are mainly based around the aim of breaking up the gender-separated family model. Ideal images are presented as comradeship and shared responsibility for both child care and house work. Despite the domination of the modernity discourse the ideas of this early period are not entirely homogenous. The meaning of masculinity and ideas about the male contribution to the family life are subjected to negotiation and re-interpretation.

A clear tendency in the programmes of the early period is to criticise the traditional division of family work and so-called ‘male privileges’. The family is considered to be in need of modernisation and democratisation and men are criticised for obstructing this process. In the course *Barn,*

ungdom, föräldrar (Children, Adolescents, Parents), Curt Norell describes the image of what he considers to be the true symbol of destructive and backward parenting—the author Frans Kafka's father. Norell compares the tyrannical and degrading upbringing that characterised Kafka's childhood with the thesis of the philosopher Martin Buber. In Buber's view, relation and respect should be the guiding principles of upbringing. The authoritarian and punishing father becomes a symbol which is contrasted with the relation-oriented 'leisure-time dad' who plays with his children and takes them on fishing expeditions.²³ In the attempt to modernise family-based masculinity, questions of symbolic and practical value such as reading the newspaper instead of 'helping out' with the housework, taking a nap after dinner, but also issues like the illegitimate sexual demands that husbands are said to make on their wives and male control over the family economy are also taken up and criticised.²⁴

In the programme *Vi har varit gifta i fyra år* (We Have Been Married for Four Years) both the man and the woman consider housework and child care to be a joint responsibility.²⁵ Their arguments are motivated by what they consider as modernity. Both man and wife have professional jobs and their ideas of modern family relations are distinguished by a will to support each others both psychologically and in practical matters. The woman and the man should be able to talk freely about everything and, according to the man, it is ridiculous to feel ashamed to meet the neighbours on the stairs when one 'helps the wife' to carry out the garbage or at the carpet-beating rack in the backyard.²⁶ 'Comradeship' and 'team spirit' are words used to describe the ideal image of marriage and family life.²⁷ Even though women are occasionally criticised,²⁸ the main target in the

²³ Norell, Curt, (1959), *Barn, ungdom, föräldrar*, Course book, *Sveriges Radio*: Stockholm, pp. 62–69. *Barn, ungdom, föräldrar*, (1959 a), 29/11, B 70, VUX, MI: 3 (p. 1).

²⁴ *I nöd och lust*, (1946 a), 11/3, written manuscript, B 70, RK, MI: 526 (pp. 2, 6, 8 f.). *I nöd och lust*, (1946 b), 8/4, written manuscript, B 70, RK, MI: 526 (pp. 2 ff.). *Äkta makar emellan*, (1947), 8/1, written manuscript, B 70, RK, MI: 596 (p. 8). *Barn, ungdom, föräldrar*, (1959 b), 22/11, written manuscript, B 70, VUX, MI: 3 (p. 9).

²⁵ *I nöd och lust*, (1946 a), pp. 6 f.

²⁶ *I nöd och lust*, (1946 a), pp. 2 ff.

²⁷ *I nöd och lust*, (1946 a), pp. 3, 7.

²⁸ *I nöd och lust*, (1946 a), pp. 2, 8, 9.

dialogue between husband and wife in the programme is men. It is primarily against them the message of modernity is directed. They have to change their antiquated habits and their reluctance to take an active part in housework and child care. The frequently used words 'help out' summarise the essence of the modern masculine approach. Prejudice and old-fashioned stereotypes of masculinity should be abolished and replaced by an open and pragmatic attitude to all duties connected with the family. The emphasis on helping out, however, indicates that the gender-separated image of family life still influences the picture. One aspect of the 'help-out-system' that is worth noting is the inferior position that the man ends up in as far as housekeeping and child care are concerned. Domestic work is based mainly on the premises of the woman. Together with the criticism of the traditional family role of the man and his masculinity, this probably contributed further to the already heavy female domination over family life—even though the intention was the opposite.

The ideal image of masculinity and family life presented above have a lot in common with the utopian visions that Alva Myrdal formulated in the thirties. The modern society, argues Myrdal, should be built upon loyalty and social responsibility. In her vision, modernity is characterised by a fight against inequalities and social hierarchies. The same principles also ought to be the foundation of family relations. Myrdal argues that public propaganda in schools, churches, advertisements and even comic strips should be used to attack the myth of the natural superiority of the man and the one-sided emphasis on his provider role.²⁹ Alva Myrdal argued that the continued existence of the modern family is conditioned by the success of involving also the father in child care and household duties.³⁰

The headmaster Gustaf Mattsson presents the most detailed description of masculinity that occurs in this material. Mattsson adds to the criticism of the uncommitted and distanced family man but he also makes an

²⁹ Wennström, Elsy, (1986), "Drömmen om den nya familjen: Alva Myrdal och befolkningsfrågan", *I framtidens tjänst: Ur folkhemmets idéhistoria*, Gidlunds Bokförlag: Stockholm, pp. 150–165.

³⁰ Myrdal, Alva, (1938), "Vart tar pappa vägen?", *Idun*, 1938: 10:e september, pp. 15, 28. See also: Halldén, Gunilla, (1990), "Alva Myrdals föräldracirkel 1931—en pedagog beskriven via sina anteckningar", *Se barnet! Tankegångar från tre århundraden*, Rabén & Sjögren: Stockholm, pp. 145–176.

attempt to re-evaluate the masculine contribution to family life. Mattsson is critical of those fathers who consider their contribution to the family completed when they arrive with their monthly pay check. The male influence over family life and child care is, according to Mattsson, just as important as the female influence. Mattsson claims that children can never develop harmoniously if they do not establish a close contact with their father as well as with their mother when they are young.³¹ Mattsson maintains that the psychosexual development of boys can be severely harmed if they only have contact with women during their childhood.³² In his lecture Mattsson uses, what he regards as children's (boy's) *needs* to legitimate the place of the father in the family. Mattsson has a distinct notion of what masculinity should be, and the role of the father is to give the boys a proper initiation into the world of manliness. Despite the fact that Gustaf Mattsson agreed on some of the critique against what is called an 'outmoded' way of performing masculinity his accounts must be interpreted as something of a reaction towards the modernity discourse. Mattsson is not satisfied with just 'helping out'. He has an firm intention of not letting the man play second fiddle in the family orchestra. In emphasising the father as sex-role model for the boys, Mattsson, however, is not unusual for his time. The family historian Joseph Pleck has categorised the notions of fatherhood from 1900 onward in three phases. The significant notion of the first half of the twentieth century is 'the father as sex role model'. Both for the sons and for the family at large the role of the father was to personify masculinity—in contrast to the mother's femininity.³³

Even though many of the educational programmes in the early period of this study advocated a less firm division of male and female duties and characteristics, the rhetoric was often ambiguous and filled with implicit or explicit reservations. Those who criticised the gender-separated family mostly stressed the fact that the system must be modified, but they never proposed any fundamental overthrow of the predominant gender order. Through increased rationalisation and a more equitable division of house-

³¹ *Far och barn*, (1946), 21/1, written manuscript, B 70, RK, MI: 565 (p. 2).

³² *Far och barn*, (1946), p. 7.

³³ Pleck, Joseph H. (1987), "American Fathering in Historical Perspective", *Changing Men: New Directions in Research on Men and Masculinity*, M. Kimmel (ed.), Sage: Beverly Hills, CA, pp. 83–97.

work the old system could be adapted to satisfy what are considered modern demands. No voices are raised for men to sacrifice any commitments or positions outside the home—for example, their position as breadwinners.

The reluctance to make radical changes is characteristic of the way the modernisation of family life and gender roles was handled in Sweden during the forties and fifties. The sociologist Edmund Dahlström calls the predominant ideology of this time “the moderate sex-role ideology”. The essence of the moderate ideology is that reforms and rationalisations of housework should enable women to handle the responsibility for the home and, eventually, a professional work.³⁴ Britta Lövgren claims that the only way to an increased civil influence, available to women in the forties and fifties, was through a modernisation and rationalisation of housework.³⁵

The sociologist Jan-Erik Hagberg maintain that almost nothing has been written about the everyday history of men. In the large-scale investigations of housework and family life conducted in the forties, the man was a peripheral figure. He went to work, but he seldom participated in caring for the home and the children. According to Hagberg, no one suggested or even expected that the man should take part in housework.³⁶ Despite many similarities a somewhat different picture characterises the educational programmes of the same time. The value of the male contribution in the home is manifested in practically all the programmes. Even though the ideas of what the man should do in the home differ, agreement that the man, besides his responsibility as breadwinner, also has a responsibility for housework and child care is prevalent. A possible explanations for this divergence is the different materials involved. The investigations Hagberg bases his assumptions on had obvious political implications as they were produced in a campaign to raise the status of the housewives. Therefore, it is maybe not strange that Hagberg see so few demands on

³⁴ Dahlström, Edmund, (1962), “Analys av könsrollsdebatten”, *Kvinnors liv och arbete*, Studieförbundet Näringsliv och samhälle: Stockholm, p. 23.

³⁵ Lövgren, Britta, (1994), “Hemarbetsfrågan i svensk politik under 1930- och 1940-talen”, *Kvinnans plats i det tidiga välfärdssamhället*, Annika Baude & Cecilia Runström (red.), Carlsson Bokförlag: Stockholm, s. 21–37. See also: Hirdman, Yvonne, (1989), *Att lägga livet till rätta: studier i svensk folkbemspolitik*, Carlsson Bokförlag: Stockholm, pp. 176–215.

male participation. The educational programmes, however, were basically a pedagogic forum where the modernisation of parenthood and family life in general was the objective. This shift of interest is probably vital for the visibility of the man.

The picture characteristic of the discussion in the educational programme, by contrast, tallies closely with Arne Nilsson's theories about successive familization and increased intimacy during the twentieth century. The 'engagement' project directed primarily at working-class men during the first half of the century, according to Nilsson, aimed mostly at linking them more closely to the family. Even the modernising visions which the Myrdals formulated during the thirties are interpreted by Nilsson as an attempt to strengthen the family and increasing the engagement of men in the family. Nilsson maintains that during the last hundred-year period man have been successively linked more closely to the family.³⁷

The sixties and seventies: The 'emancipated' man

When we look at the educational radio and TV courses from 1960 to 1971—with equality between the sexes as the main focus—the criticism of the traditional family with the husband as the breadwinner and the wife as the homemaker is further accentuated. Emancipation is the catch phrase. The emancipation that is considered necessary to transform the woman into an adequate social individual is also directed towards the man. The emancipation of the woman is conditioned by the emancipation of the man.

In the following I will try to analyse how the concept of male emancipation is understood in relation to the somewhat different ideals of family organisation that characterise the educational programmes in the former

³⁶ Hagberg, Jan-Erik, (1994), "Mannen som växte ur sitt hem", *Kvinnans plats i det tidiga välfärdssamhället*, Annika Baude & Cecilia Runström (red.), Carlsson Bokförlag: Stockholm, pp. 75–86. Hagberg bases his assumptions on the investigations made by Brita Åkerman during the 1940s—*Familjen som växte ur sitt hem* (1941), *Gammal och ny familj* (1944) och *Familjeliv och hemsarbete* (1947).

³⁷ Nilsson, Arne, (1996), "Homosexualitetsforskning som mansforskning. Några iakttagelser från en studie", *Forskning om manligheter. Bidrag från mansforskningskonferensen i Karlstad i oktober 1995*. Forskningsrapport 96: 8: Högskolan Karlstad, pp. 60–63.

and the latter part of the sixties. Issues concerning men and masculinity are given more attention in the three courses from the latter part of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s. With the sex role theory as the tool of interpretation different aspects of manliness are discussed. The course *Jämställdhetens villkor* (The Conditions of Equality) focuses in particular on men. The theories of the origin and the structures of the male sex role, which are discussed in the equality courses from the end of the sixties, will be analysed in a separate section. The aim of that section is to study what notions of masculinity are embedded in the theory of the sex roles, but also what possible repercussions the new construction of masculinity could imply for men's family commitment.

The early sixties

The two educational courses of the early sixties—*Har vi råd med familjen?* (Can We Afford the Family?) from 1963 and *Hemmafru byter yrke* (Housewife Changes Occupation) from 1965 are distinct examples of the revaluation that notions about gender and parenthood experienced during the sixties. The courses contain an interesting mix of ideas which can be related both to what Edmund Dahlström calls “the moderate sex-role ideology”, based around the rationalisation of the house work, and to “the radical sex-role ideology” (Dahlström's term) introduced by young academics like Eva Moberg and the participants of Group 222. Instead of rationalisation of the homework the radical ideology described the right to professional work as the most important way to improve the position of women.³⁸

In the contributions to the courses in the early sixties that can be related primarily to ‘the moderate sex-role ideology’ the man in the family is seldom mentioned. Notwithstanding the comic strip on the front page describing a son telling his paper-reading father to wash the dishes, Carin Boalt's contribution in the course book hardly deals at all with men's family work. The wife is the self-evident central figure of the home. It is to her the advice about a rationalisation of the housework is directed.³⁹ The same emphasis on the wife/mother can be found in the article by Margit

³⁸ Dahlström, (1962), pp. 22–29.

³⁹ Boalt, Carin, (1963), “Vad händer med familjearbetet”, course book, *Har vi råd med familjen?*, Monica Boëthius (red.), *Sveriges Radio*: Stockholm, pp. 68–85.

Wohlin.⁴⁰ Despite the example in Majken Melander's contribution describing how housework could be divided through a work scheme where both the father and the children have responsibilities it is still the mother that plans and delegates. Moreover, Melander discusses children's household responsibilities, far more than men's.⁴¹ The implicit picture of men's place in the family is quite similar to the 'helpful' man, typical of the educational programmes in the forties and fifties. The woman plans and runs the home and the man, in a spirit of camaraderie, helps along.

In the contributions made by authors defending ideas representative of the radical equality ideology a lot of emphasis is put on woman's right to professional work. The tone towards the housewife system is sometimes biting. Per Holmberg claims that "One reason for the low status of domestic work is that the home in many cases has become a place for a 'senior citizen existence' for women of working age".⁴² Men also get criticism. Sonja Lyttkens declares that "It is only natural that children and old people need a care taker, but why should an adult man need that."⁴³ Instead of rationalisation of the homework, women's economic independence is emphasised as the best way to create equality.

However the sometimes harsh criticism directed at the nuclear family in the educational courses at the beginning of the '60s, it is not the family as such that the debaters want to replace. The nuclear family is untouched as the basic unit for social life. According to the debaters, the problem is the antiquated and irrational social patterns that still dominate the family.⁴⁴ Also, the value of the biological parents is emphasised. In the ideal

⁴⁰ Wohlin, Margit, (1963), "Barnkostnaderna—ett fördelningsproblem", course book, *Har vi råd med familjen?*, Monica Boëthius (red.), *Sveriges Radio*: Stockholm, p. 113. In Wohlin's description the question of the best interest of the child is the dominant one, not the liberation of the woman.

⁴¹ Melander, Majken, (1965), "På ny kula hemma", course book, *Hemmafru byter yrke*, *Sveriges Radio*: Stockholm, pp. 24–28.

⁴² Holmberg, Per, (1963), "Familjen—en näringsgren", course book, *Har vi råd med familjen?*, Monica Boëthius (red.), *Sveriges Radio*: Stockholm, p. 54. Boëthius, (1963), pp. 144, 151. Lyttkens, (1963), "Familj och skatt", course book, *Har vi råd med familjen?*, Monica Boëthius (red.), *Sveriges Radio*, Stockholm, pp. 114–131.

⁴³ Lyttkens, (1963), p. 131.

⁴⁴ Boëthius, Monica, (1967), *Har vi råd med fruar?: En ofullständig handbok i misshushållningens alla grenar*, Proprius Förlag: Stockholm, pp. 62–75. In the courses, consti-

model for organising family life, which Per Holmberg advocate in the course *Can We Afford the Family?*, the main part of the child care takes place in the home, carried out by both the man and the woman. Public child care is regarded as a complement. The professional work of the man and the woman should not have a negative influence on their relations with their children.⁴⁵

The vision of a family-life with equal opportunities for both sexes outlined by Monica Boëthius and Per Holmberg in the educational courses of the early 1960s is based rather on the idea of maximization. Equality is seen as a means to release both material and personal resources and men as well as women are regarded equally as the family's bread-winners. According to Boëthius, a division of responsibility according to gender is neither economically or socially rational. Only when equality has been achieved can the full potential of the family, but also of the individual person, come to expression.⁴⁶

Despite the fact that the place of men in the family is only taken up for examination to a limited extent in the actual courses, both Boëthius and Holmberg make the point that responsibility for the home must be divided equally between man and wife. Holmberg maintains that men are "[...] jointly responsible, both from a legal and an objective point of view, for child care."⁴⁷ Boëthius also criticises men for what she regards as their uninterested attitude in questions concerning equal parenthood. Even if men are forced to forgo their own comfort, argues Monica Boëthius, they have a lot to gain when it comes to emotional relations, less stress, and lower demands on success and social prestige.⁴⁸

The ideal archetype of masculinity which characterises the family-centred equality model, defended by authors like Per Holmberg and Monica Boëthius, shows great similarities with the concept of 'the new

tuting the data of this study, as well as in other contemporary forums Boëthius defends the nuclear family as the most important form of cohabitation. According to her, it is the bonding to the traditional family roles that prevent us from experience the unique possibilities of a well functioning nuclear family.

⁴⁵ Holmberg, (1963), pp. 64 ff. Lyttkens, (1963), pp. 134 f.

⁴⁶ Holmberg, (1963), pp. 64 ff.

⁴⁷ Holmberg, (1963), p. 56.

⁴⁸ Boëthius, (1963), p. 38.

fatherhood' which Björn Beckman introduced into the debate in 1965. Beckmans article with the subtle title "Mannens andra roll" (The Second Role of the Man) is one of the very few contemporary writings on family centred masculinity that was produced within the frame of the radical equality movement of the early sixties. Therefore his article is useful for the attempts to unpack the notions of masculinity in the context of the equal family, made in this article. Even though Beckman has a positive attitude towards public child care, he declares that he and his wife do not want to lose any time with their children, especially when the children are small.⁴⁹ The ideal model which Beckman promotes have the same outlines as the one Holmberg advocated. To the same extent as the wife, the husband, according to Beckman, should take the chance to stay at home on a part-time basis to take care of the young children.⁵⁰

In summary it can be concluded that the educational courses of the early sixties reveal in an interesting way the discursive transformation that family questions underwent during this decade. The rationalizations of the 1940s and 1950s were challenged by radical ideas of equality. The fact that the people behind the three contributions to the courses who most clearly represent these radical ideas on equality were all active in Group 222 (Sonja Lyttkens, Monica Boëthius and Per Holmberg) also demonstrates the impact which the ideas of equality came to have at an early date on the educational programmes. The connection with the equality groups of the early sixties is to be seen not least in the way the family was discussed. Instead of abandoning the nuclear family as the feminist Simone de Beauvoir proposed, Eva Moberg, member of the People's Party and perhaps the leading figure of the radical equality movement, argued that this unit had value. Nevertheless the family had to be reformed and made equal.⁵¹

The attempt to link the husband more closely to the family which found expression in the educational programmes broadcast in the fourties and fif-

⁴⁹ Beckman, Björn, (1965), "Mannens andra roll", *Könsroller: Debatt om jämställdhet*, Ingrid Fredriksson (red.), Bokförlaget Prisma—Studentföreningen Verdandi: Stockholm, p. 170.

⁵⁰ Beckman, (1965), pp. 169 ff.

⁵¹ Moberg, (1962), p. 116. Se även: Boëthius, (1967), pp. 62–75. *Radikal Familjepolitik* (1964), Gunvor Hildén, Ingemar Mundebo, Gabriel Romanus, Ola Ullsten & Carl Tham, Folkpartiets Ungdomsförbund: Stockholm.

ties can be detected even in the early sixties. But the familizing of the husband, which Arne Nilsson describes, enters a new phase with the entry of the radical ideas on equality of the sexes into the arena. The admittedly 'helpful' but incompetent man who dominated the scene during the fifties and sixties hardly offered any real incitement for an extended involvement of the male in family life. The family model based on a shared responsibility for both home and work on the other hand opened the door of the home to the husband to a greater degree. The husband was described as an asset to the family and not least to the children. The perhaps most radical aspect of the discussion conducted in the programmes was that the husband's right to fulltime employment was questioned. The ideal model favoured by, for example, Per Holmberg entailed that the husband too should forgo his working-hours for the benefit of the children and the family.

The late sixties and early seventies

In the following section three educational courses will be analysed. Family issues and masculinity are primarily discussed in *Jämställdhetens villkor* (The Condition of Equality, by Rita Liljeström) and *Det handlar om dig* (It is About You, by Åke W. Edfeldt, Bengt Anderberg and Sune Tjernström), while the course *Kvinnor och arbete* (Women and Labour, by Cecilia Bäcklander and Ella Frith-Powell) is more focused on aspects of woman's professional labour. Therefore this course will not be used to the same extent as the other two.

On the basis of Edmund Dahlström's categories, it could be said that all three courses under the late sixties and early seventies represent the radical ideology concerning gender roles. Despite the fact that a woman's gainful employment was held to be basic to equality, in many cases the definitions found in the courses broadcast both at the beginning of the sixties and at the end differ as to how an equal family is to be achieved and organized. This shifting of focus is significant when it comes to analysing manliness and the place of the man in the family. The motto for the section on living together included in the course 'It's about You' (produced by RFSU) runs: "A screen of air, a roof of light ...".⁵² The vision presented has to do with

⁵² Edfeldt, Åke, Anderberg, Bengt & Tjernström, Sune, (1970), *Det handlar om dig*, course book, Brevskolan: Stockholm, p. 80.

'liberation'—cultural, but not least sexual.⁵³ While it is pointed out in the course 'It's about You' that it is not "more remarkable to sleep with another person than to have a long, exciting conversation",⁵⁴ Rita Liljeström stresses in the course *The Conditions of Equality* the factor of power which she argues lies in sexuality and not least the subordination which it entails for the woman who seeks 'erotic ranking' as a compensation for education, gainful employment and political engagement.⁵⁵ The historian Lena Lennerhed claims that the equality movement never integrated the ideas of sexual liberalism promoted by, for example, RFSU in the sixties.⁵⁶

Despite the different viewpoints on sexuality there are many similarities in the way Liljeström and Edfeldt regard family and parenthood. This is above all true of the criticism of the nuclear family and the emphasis placed on the child's need of a wider social range of contacts. Both Edfeldt and Liljeström direct severe criticism at the traditional nuclear family in their courses. According to Edfeldt the nuclear family has become a 'cage of cohabitation' upheld through romantic myths.⁵⁷ Neither children nor adults could have their need for social security and company fulfilled in families of the traditional type.⁵⁸ Also Liljeström adds to the critique of the nuclear family. The myth of the family obstructs the reformation of society towards equality between the sexes and collective loyalty that Liljeström considers necessary.⁵⁹ Critical remarks are also levelled at the housewife system.⁶⁰

⁵³ Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 39, 42, 52, 56.

⁵⁴ Edfeldt, (1970), p. 70.

⁵⁵ Liljeström, Rita, (1968), *Jämställdhetens villkor*, course book, *Sveriges Radio*: Stockholm, pp. 53 ff., 33 f.

⁵⁶ Lennerhed, Lena, (1994), *Frihet att njuta: Sexualdebatten i Sverige på 1960-talet*, Norstedts Förlag: Stockholm, pp. 115 ff. See also: Thörnander, Gunnel, (1965), "Dubbelmoral i ny tappning", *Könsroller: Debatt om jämställdhet*, Bokförlaget Prisma—Studentföreningen Verandi: Stockholm, pp. 155 f. Thörnander stresses that men often use women sexually with sexual liberalism as a disguise.

⁵⁷ Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 64 f.

⁵⁸ Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 59, 64.

⁵⁹ Liljeström, (1968), pp. 49 f., 55.

⁶⁰ Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 59, 61. Bäcklander, Cecilia & Frith-Powell, Ella, (1971), *Kvinnor och arbete*, Kursbok, TRU, Brevskolan: Stockholm, pp. 11, 13 f., 22, 25, 28. Liljeström, (1968), pp. 107 f., 121.

In the educational courses of the early sixties, the 'needs' of children were defined as needs for committed parents. Even if the benefits of collective child care were agreed on, the relation to the parents stood out as the most important. The definitions of a child's needs which dominated the courses at the end of the sixties are concerned instead with extended social circles. "Children benefit from growing up with more adults than just their parents."⁶¹ The discussion can be summarized as follows: Children need grown-ups—but not necessarily their biological parents. Children do not just need grown-ups but many grown-ups. Children also need to have the company of many other children.⁶²

In the course 'It's about You' the extended family is pointed out as a good alternative to nuclear family. While the traditional marriage is described as a contract of ownership the freedom of the extended family is praised.⁶³ The extended family is considered to be "[...] a more developing way of living".⁶⁴ In 'It is About You' the extended family is outlined as a concrete form of cohabitation. Liljeström also uses the notion of the extended family, but she presents a more loosely formed definition of it. She often associates it back in time to the pre-industrial extended family or family of relatives and sets this in relation to today's nuclear family. In comparison with the pre-industrial extended family, the nuclear family is considered to be a more vulnerable institution. If any of the parents fail to fulfil their parental obligations there are no 'substitutes' ready to take over.⁶⁵ Instead of talking about the extended family as such, Liljeström uses the notion 'parental reserves'.⁶⁶ What these are and how they are related to the nuclear family, she does not, however, go into. In order to provide alternatives to the western one-couple family, both Liljeström and Edfeldt also turn their gaze to family-life in other cultures.⁶⁷

The critique of the nuclear family must partially be understood in the

⁶¹ Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 64 f.

⁶² Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 64 f.

⁶³ Edfeldt, (1970), p. 67. See also: Liljeström, (1968), pp. 65, 67, 129, 161 f.

⁶⁴ Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 64 f.

⁶⁵ Liljeström, (1968), p. 76. See also: Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 64 f.

⁶⁶ Liljeström (1968), p. 76.

⁶⁷ *Jämställdhetens villkor*, (1968 a), 19/11, B 70, VUX, MI: 13. See also: Liljeström, (1968), pp. 136–140, 145 ff., 178, 182. Edfeldt, (1970), p. 77.

light of the political radicalisation at the end of the 1960s. Not only was the nuclear family was a target of criticism in the late sixties, but also institutions like the school, psychiatric care, the cultural sphere etc were called in question.⁶⁸ In his article *Från liberal rörelse till socialistisk kamp mot patriarkatet* (From Liberal Movement to a Socialistic Struggle Against the Patriarchate) the former member of Group 222 Dick Urban Vestbro maintains that also the equality movement was affected by the changing political climate. According to Vestbro the left wing took over the sex role question at the end of the sixties. As a consequence, the struggle against capitalism and imperialism was given the highest priority and the sex role question was labelled "the so-called sex role question".⁶⁹ Eva Moberg who stunned the Swedish public with her radical ideas at the beginning of the sixties was suddenly regarded as something of a well-intended but slightly conservative grandmother of equality.⁷⁰ New angry women like Kajsa Ohrlander turned up on the scene declaring that there was no woman question—only a class question.⁷¹

What place then did the man receive in the new visions that were created? In her educational course Rita Liljeström claims that men (but not necessarily the biological father) have an important function for children. Boys need men to be able to develop a secure sexual identity.⁷² But Liljeström, however, is adding a new dimension to this picture. She argues that the man as a male prototype is only needed until full equality has been achieved. "Since we are still at the stage between an old patriarchal society and a society where the roles are levelled out, we may have to accept a transitional period where boys initially learn to feel safe in their sexual identity and later dare to break free from it."⁷³ Liljeström also delivers criticism against contemporary research about fatherhood. The focus on the

⁶⁸ Salomon, (1996), pp. 72–76.

⁶⁹ Vestbro, Dick Urban, (1992), "Från liberal rörelse till socialistisk kamp mot patriarkatet", *Visionen om jämställdhet*, Annika Baude (red.), SNS Förlag: Stockholm, pp. 61 f.

⁷⁰ *Vi Föräldrar*, (1973), "Var står du idag, Eva Moberg?", 1973: 2, p. 66. Interview with Eva Moberg.

⁷¹ Ohrlander, Kajsa, (1970), *Kvinnor som slavar*, Tribunserien—Aldus/Bonniers: Stockholm, pp. 5 f.

⁷² *Jämställdhetens villkor*, (1968b), 29/10, written manuscript, B 70, VUX, MI: 13 (s 4). Liljeström, (1968), p. 76.

⁷³ *Jämställdhetens villkor*, (1968b), p. 4.

biological father as fundamental to children's social and psychological development has contributed to the maintenance of the nuclear family as the dominant form of cohabitation and thereby children's social space have been limited. Liljeström argues that close contacts with other adult men, not necessarily the biological father, should instead be the point of departure.⁷⁴

In the family model of the late sixties, compared to the one advocated in the early sixties, parenthood is given a somewhat different meaning. The principle of shared responsibility for the home and the children is embraced in both the models, but opinion differs as to the value of the biological parents. While the family-friendly model of the early sixties promoted the biological parents, the focus in the educational courses of the late sixties was on many adult and child contacts. The strong emphasis on the child's need for people other than its biological parents also caused the discussion about the man's place in the family to fade away somewhat. Both the challenging demand to assume responsibility and the insistence on the value of the father for the child which characterized the educational courses during the early sixties were toned down. It is no longer enough that the mother gets a job and father comes home and takes his share of responsibility for the family—the nuclear family as such is presented as something of a stumbling-block to equality. By criticising the one-couple family and instead stressing the importance of widened social circles, the arena where equality was sought was shifted from the sphere of the home to working places and nurseries. The hand stretched out to men, which characterized the courses at the beginning of the sixties, was not perhaps withdrawn, but its meaning became harder to interpret. Male models were needed, but only during a transition period.

Louise Drangel also draws attention to the reevaluation of the emancipation of men that followed in the wake of the political radicalization of the late sixties. Even if none of the political parties argued for the dissolution of the nuclear family, Drangel's view is nevertheless that the strong emphasis on fulltime work for women and society's responsibility for child-care which the Social Democrats and the Left advocated "crushed the 'radical-liberal' dream of parents who shared half and half the up-

⁷⁴ Liljeström, (1968), pp. 69–76.

bringing of their own children".⁷⁵ The emphasis on a child's need of contact with many other children—which must be understood in the light of the debate on child-care which, for example, Rita Liljeström was deeply engaged in⁷⁶—opened a backdoor for those men who did not wish or regarded themselves as unable to take on extra parental responsibility ... Even the historian Lars Trägårdh points out the paradoxical element in the emancipation process which occurred in Sweden in the sixties and seventies. The economic dependence of the woman on the man was transformed into a dependence on the state. This dependence consisted partly in the fact that it was primarily the public sector which generated the new jobs, and partly because a woman's job was made possible by means of public child-care. As against this the man was freed from his responsibility as the provider and was not compelled to shoulder any new duties.⁷⁷

The male sex-role

Maybe the ambivalence about the male place in the family did not only have to do with the revaluation of the nuclear family. The development of new gender theories that took place during the sixties also contributed to a new understanding of manliness as such. Christina Florin and Bengt Nilsson claim that sex role theory, soon after its introduction in the Swedish debate in 1962, became the leading ideology of the equality movement.⁷⁸ In an article from 1967 "Om könsroller" (About Sex Roles) Rita Liljeström states that the aim of the sex role theory is not the creation of a gender-neutral being.

⁷⁵ Drangel, Louise, (1984), "Folkpartiet och jämställdhetsfrågan", *Liberal ideologi och politik 1934–1984*, Folk och Samhälle: Stockholm, pp. 414 f.

⁷⁶ Liljeström, Rita, (1972) (1980), *Uppväxtvillkor. Samspelet mellan barn och vuxna i ett föränderligt samhälle*, Publica/Liber Förlag: Stockholm.

⁷⁷ Trägårdh, Lars, (1997), "State Individualism: On the Culturality of the Nordic Welfare State", *The Cultural Construction of Norden*, Øystein Sørensen and Bo Stråth (ed.), Scandinavian University Press: Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oxford, Boston, pp. 279–281.

⁷⁸ Baude, Annika, (1992), "Inledning", *Visionen om jämställdhet*, Annika Baude (red.), SNS Förlag: Stockholm, p. 10. See also: Vestbro, (1992), p. 58. Thorsell, Siv, (1992), "Könsrollsfrågan och barnomsorgen", *Visionen om jämställdhet*, Annika Baude (red.), SNS Förlag: Stockholm, p. 98. Florin & Nilsson, (1998), pp. 28 f.

Equality entails the abolition of the gender monopoly of certain qualities and behaviour, not the wiping-out of differences or a rectifying of 'the poetic plus and minus poles of existence': a more equal distribution of 'motherliness' to the man, alcoholism to the woman, women of science and nimble, patient male hands.⁷⁹

Instead, the goal was expressed as the right to be *yourself*. Since the sex roles were supposed to obstruct both men and women from gaining access to their *real* personality, feelings, and perceptions, the struggle had to be against the 'mutilating' roles.⁸⁰ In the three educational courses that were broadcast at the end of the sixties and beginning of the seventies the sex-role theory was the dominant frame of interpretation. It was within this frame that a new image of men took shape.

Liljeström is quite moderate in her criticism of men. Since Western culture—or the 'patriarchal society' as Liljeström labels it—is considered to be the creator and upholder of the unequal sex role system, it is this system that becomes the main target of criticism. As a result of the industrial system, men and women were separated and the ties of loyalty that held the pre-industrial extended families together were broken. According to Liljeström, this process resulted in one-sided male concentration on competition, efficiency, reason, etc.⁸¹ The male role has become destructive to society, women and not least to men themselves. Liljeström describes the dark sides of the male role. Heart problems, stomach problems, drug problems, criminality, loneliness, etc. The symbiotic relationship the cultural system has created between women and children has, furthermore, made the man an outsider in the family. If, despite this, a man still tries to get involved in child care, he is often scorned by both men and women for being 'less of a man'.⁸²

Criticism of the man's role became almost synonymous with the social criticism that emerged in the wake of the political radicalization of the sixties and seventies. Men and masculinity were associated with the darker

⁷⁹ Liljeström, Rita, (1965), "Om könsroller", *Könsroller: Debatt om jämställdhet*, Ingrid Fredriksson (red.), Bokförlaget Prisma—Studentföreningen Verdandi: Uppsala, p. 23.

⁸⁰ Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 61–77.

⁸¹ Liljeström, (1968), pp. 6, 13, 42–49, 53 f. Edfeldt, (1970), p. 65. Bäcklander, (1971), p. 8.

⁸² Liljeström, (1968), s. 87. *Jämställdhetens villkor*, (1968b), p. 1. The title of the programme dealing with the male role is titled: "The prize of manliness".

and more degenerate sides of modern society. The extremely gloomy, but obviously one-sided picture of the history of both men and western civilization was used as a basis for the legitimization of and as a contrast to the visions of an equal society as advocated in the actual educational courses. The emancipation of men was presented as a struggle with liberation as the professed goal—liberation from the destructive human norms which western culture had provided him with. By not placing the struggle for power in a gender context but instead stressing the struggle between men and women on the one hand and cultural conventions on the other an image of mutuality and shared gains was created. Equality was presented as a mutual project where men and women shoulder to shoulder fought against a diffuse male society whose main weapon was enslavement in roles. That the man could take advantage of the gender-role system was, admittedly, mentioned, but this exploitation was described almost in terms of self-deception and a suppression of true needs.

The sex role theory, as it is presented in this material, contains a notion of a split between roles and self.⁸³ Ideal life is depicted as a balancing act between emotion and reason. A personality which is considered to be complete can handle both of these sides. If male emancipation is placed beside female emancipation, the former appears to be almost a negative of the latter. While it is felt that the male grows as a human being through relations and emotions, the emancipation of the woman is aimed at developing aspects of knowledge, reason and competition. Like a micro cosmos, the sex role theory reflects the way in which the discourse of equality was formulated at the macro level. In this way, the vision of equality between the sexes was made part of every human being as a notion of inner balance. Despite the fact that the gender-role theory was presented as a theory of learning there lurked nevertheless an undefined image of a universal human nucleus about the presentation made in the courses—a sort of pre-social self which represents the authentic, unblemished human being.

Even if the primary aim of the sex role theory—as it was presented in the educational courses—was not to wipe out the sexes as separate categories, the new normality that was its effect can be said to have pathologised

⁸³ Edfeldt, (1970), pp. 60–78. Liljeström, (1968), pp. 16 f., 83.

sex differences. Liljeström states that the modernisation process experienced by men in the last 100 years has excluded "larger expressive registers". Their social sides have been pushed back in favour of individual striving. The demand not to be feminine has created an emotionally disabled man.⁸⁴ The goal was formulated as individual freedom and a balance between emotion and reason, but the heavy emphasis on balance led to an understanding of the male as lacking essential human qualities. The sociologists Helene Aarseth and Øystein Gullvåg Holter have called the ideal of parenthood that they consider significant for the sixties and onwards "the androgynate". In contrast to earlier historical periods, men are now supposed to be just as good at relations as women are. A common theme among the adolescents on whom Aarseth and Holter base their study is the father as a handicapped person.⁸⁵ The concept of deficiency or handicap also constituted an important ingredient in the male movement that emerged during the late 1970s. Through group discussion and exercises in contact men attempted to recover what they saw as lost aspects of their personalities. Contact with children was presented as a way back to a sound and fully masculine personality.⁸⁶

The purpose of the gender-role theory—as it was presented in the educational programmes during the late sixties and early seventies—was then not to obliterate the man and woman as categories. The goal was instead formulated as individual freedom and balance between reason and emotions. The strong emphasis on balance, however, gave rise to a sense of deficiency. In order to be a harmonious human being the man had to discover those sides of his being that the masculine role had deprived him of. The notion of a handicapped man, or as Elisabeth Badinter puts it, a "sick

⁸⁴ Liljeström, (1968), s 47, 70, 82 f., 186. Bäcklander, (1971), s 10, 33. *Jämställdhetens villkor*, (1968b), p. 1.

⁸⁵ Aarseth, Helene & Holter, Øystein Gullvåg, (1993) (1994), *Mäns livssammanhang*, Bonnier Utbildning AB: Stockholm, p 47.

⁸⁶ Clatterbaugh, Kenneth, (1990) (1997), *Contemporary Perspectives on Masculinity: Men, Woman and Politics in Modern Society*, Westview Press, pp. 9 ff. Clatterbaugh labels the male movement of the '70s the "pro-feministic male movement". Klinth, Roger, (1997), *Pappor, mammor och barn i en kulturell brytningstid: två nedslag i debatten om familj och föräldraskap*, 1961–62 och 1977–79, Linköpings universitet, Tema Barn, pp. 29–39. Frykman, Jonas, (1995), "Space for a Man", *Men on Men: Eight Swedish Men's Personal Views on Equality, Masculinity and Parenthood*, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs: Stockholm, pp. 158 ff.

man",⁸⁷ diverted criticism from the man himself to the system which it was thought had damaged him. As the family is basically a relational unit, the manifestation of relational deficiency could hardly be considered a positive asset when the man sought to justify his place in the family. In addition to the aspect of justly shared responsibility for home and children, the man could participate in the home for his own sake—to improve his emotional and relational competence. In the educational courses of the early sixties the man was seen as vital to the equality project, but in the latter part of the decade focus was more on the importance of equality for the physical and psychological well-being of the man.

Conclusion

The ideas on equality that established themselves over a broad front during the 1960s also came to colour the educational programmes. A new generation of producers with radical ideas on equality was given the task of making programmes and courses which aimed at stimulating women to take the first step into working life, motivate an extension of public child-care, but also adapt family life to the changes which this structural change would lead to. Adaptation also concerned to a high degree the man within the family. The female emancipation sought could only become reality if it was matched by a reciprocal emancipation of the male.

The primary purpose of this article has been to study how concepts about manliness and the place of the man in the family have changed during the 25 years covered by the study. The focus has been placed on the sixties and the beginning of the seventies and on the reevaluation of the family and parenthood which took place as a result of the entry of ideas on gender equality into the arena of the family in a historical perspective. As early as the early sixties educational programmes were produced with a clear equality profile. Several of the people behind this programmes were also connected with the radical equality groups that appeared at the beginning of the sixties.

⁸⁷ Badinter, Elisabeth, (1992) (1994), *XY om mannens identitet*, Forum, pp. 166 ff. During the seventies, it was men's emotional handicap and distance from the home and the children, not violence and brutality, that were debated.

Since the main focus of this article is the equality ideas of the sixties and seventies it is, however, easy to forget that intentions to modernise and 'domesticate' men were on the agenda already in the 1940s. The so-called male privileges were severely criticised and the ideal was formulated as 'helping out'. Despite the sometimes severe criticism, men's exclusive role as family providers was never questioned. The effort to forge closer links between men and the rest of the family, formulated in the programmes, agrees quite well with what Arne Nilsson has called the familization of the man. During the whole of the twentieth century, according to Nilsson, voices have been raised for a widening of men's engagement in the family. Men have indeed successively increased their participation in the family.

The demand, which dominated the actual educational programmes during the fourties and fifties, that the man ought to 'lend a hand' with the home and children was replaced at the beginning of the sixties by a demand for shared responsibility—both in the sphere of work and in family life. Two rough models based on somewhat different ideological points of departure dominated the picture. The liberally influenced model dominated the early part of the sixties. In this model the nuclear family and the biological parents were central. The ideal model of family organisation was described as two parents equally sharing the chief responsibility for the care of their small children. Public child care was considered positive but should function primarily as a complement. The ideal model of the early sixties was radical in the sense that it also touched men's position as breadwinners.

The three courses broadcast between 1968–71 by contrast were dominated by a criticism of the nuclear family. Words like 'the marriage cage' were used to describe a form of family which was regarded as having played out its role. The emphasis on alternative forms of child-care and family life which find expression in the educational courses also changed the conditions for men within the family. Equal responsibility was still stressed but, as distinct from the courses of the early sixties, a greater emphasis was placed on the responsibility of society for the child's upbringing. This increased responsibility of society also meant a diminished demand on those men who did not wish or saw themselves as unable to take on a greater responsibility for the child.

Not only was the value of the biological father questioned, but also

what was considered to be the nature of manliness—competition, reason, individuality, rationality, etc. Masculinity was thought of almost as a by-products of the capitalistic and patriarchal system. Through the sex role theory, relations and emotions were depicted as something men did not have enough of. Family relations and child contacts were presented as last resorts helping men to heal their wounds caused by the destructive male role. The emphasis on destructive male characteristics and emotional and relational deficits created an ambivalent picture of family-based masculinity. By making woman (and not least children) the norm for social interaction the meaning of male emancipation was somewhat transformed. Emancipation became liberation. More than men were presented as assets to their families the families were presented as assets to them.

Women's Policies in the GDR in the 1960s/70s: Between State Control and Societal Reaction

Gunilla-Friederike Budde

A well-known proverb advises, "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth!" According to that saying, one shouldn't look for the negative side of a gift which at first blush seems generous—and certainly not speak of it in critical terms—in order not to appear unappreciative. This is exactly the dilemma which women in the GDR were constantly facing. Long accustomed to emancipatory rhetoric and fundamental laws from the State,¹ they found it difficult to enunciate the limits of the equality given them as a gift from 'Father State,'² especially since this could be viewed as an anti-State opinion.³ Furthermore, a comparative look at other countries—specifically, a look over the Wall—quickly silenced all criticism, since their own emancipation seemed so much more advanced, and that of their 'Western sisters' so backward in comparison. As a matter of fact, with the beginning of the new women's movement at the end of the sixties, the Westerners often pointed to the so much more independent, and therefore supposedly also more self-

¹ In my opinion, these began earlier than in Scandinavia in general, and particularly earlier than in Sweden; in contrast to what Christina Florin and Bengt Nilsson emphasize in their contribution. Cf. "Something in the nature of a bloodless revolution." How gender relations became "equal status policy" in Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s, above.

² Hildegard Maria Nickel, "Mitgestalterinnen des Sozialismus"—Frauenarbeit in der DDR, in: Gisela Helwig u. dies (Ed.), *Frauen in Deutschland 1945-1992*, Bonn 1993, pp. 233-256, p. 235.

³ This "scissors in the head" is also emphasized by an editor of the high-circulation and apparently much-read women's magazine "Für Dich," in: Monika Jaeckel, Länderbericht: DDR, in: *Deutsches Jugendinstitut 1990*, pp. 6-72, p. 57.

confident, East German women in order to underscore their own demands. It seemed to them that in the GDR, the rights they had wrested from men in their arduous struggles, and about which they were still trying to raise women's consciousness, already constituted national policy.

For East German women, the specific mixture of the comparative and relational history which was unique to German-German post-War history⁴ had a rather numbing effect. Like Snow White in the fairy tale, the 'mirror on the wall' was telling them that their own situation was really the 'fairest'. The result of the constant contact with the Western and apparently less contented 'step-sisters' was that the ambivalent consequences of the GDR's equality policies were pushed into the shadows. The State's programmatic promises to be solely responsible for implementing women's equality were accompanied by the claim of having the power to decide what an East German woman was supposed to want and what she was supposed to be like.⁵ This definitional monopoly served to severely limit female autonomy in spite of all openings and options which the SED state offered to its women.

This GDR-specific constellation of a "society ruled through and through"⁶ (*durchherrschte Gesellschaft*), characterized by a particularly strong state will to direct and desire to control, makes it difficult to look behind the ideological vision of those in power to discover possible variations—or even alternative ideas—on the part of female actors. The GDR dictatorship was lacking an autonomous public, and accordingly, an autonomous women's movement which had, in a multitude of initiatives since the late sixties, been making its voice heard in Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany and elsewhere, and was slowly gaining in influence. The "*Demokratische Frauenbund Deutschlands*," (Democratic Women's Alliance of Germany—*DFD*), founded in 1947, was a 'daughter' of the Party; as were all other mass organizations. It simultaneously served as a mode of

⁴ See Jürgen Kocka, *Vereinigungskrise. Zur Geschichte der Gegenwart*, Göttingen 1995.

⁵ On the German-German world of images and their similarities and differences, see Gunilla-Friederike Budde, "Tüchtige Traktoristinnen" und "schicke Stenotypistinnen." Frauenbilder in den deutschen Nachkriegsgesellschaften—Tendenzen der "Sowjetisierung" und "Amerikanisierung"; in: Konrad Jarausch and Hannes Siegrist (Eds.), *Amerikanisierung und Sowjetisierung in Deutschland 1945–1970*, Frankfurt a.M. and New York 1997, pp. 243–273.

⁶ This was how Alf Lüdke and Jürgen Kocka characterized it in their essays in: Harmut Kaelble, Jürgen Kocka and Hartmut Zwahr (Eds.), *Sozialgeschichte der DDR*, Stuttgart 1994.

transmission; consequently, its function as a mouthpiece for women was limited.⁷ Those who publicly advocated women's rights usually did so in small doses and strategically, pursuant to State directive and control, as functionaries bound by orders. As such, since the opening of the East German archives, we have found out a great deal about the state's ideas and plans regarding women's and family policies and their forms of realization; in contrast, relatively little about the reactions of women, and even less about their own desires and dreams.

Nonetheless, I will attempt in the following comments to focus on the actors—also the beneficiaries of the measures—in addition to state directives and implementation of women's and gender policies. This is done by way of interviews, but is definitely also based on archived materials, since the GDR did, in its thirst for self-documentation, store feedback from citizens (*Eingaben*) and other less comfortable documents which illuminate the “other side”—albeit in a strictly classified manner.

In looking at women's policies and their implementation in the GDR, the general question arises of whether the period selected for the workshop, namely the sixties and seventies, doesn't derive too much from a “Western perspective”. How were women's policies made in the first decade of the GDR? Can the “transformation”, which rightly is ascribed to Sweden and the Federal Republic for the sixties, be observed with similar clarity in the GDR society? Since the seventies, was the course really set in the direction of progress, in the sense of an unrestrained development toward equality, or can contrary tendencies be identified as well?

1. Years of break-up: The fifties

From the beginning, East German women's policy was labor policy.⁸ The two aspects were inseparably connected with one another. Consistent with the Socialist classics, led by August Bebel and Clara Zetkin,

⁷ On the history of the DFD, see Elke Mocker, *Demokratischer Frauenbund Deutschlands (1947–1989). Historisch-systematische Analyse einer DDR-Massenorganisation*, Diss. FU Berlin 1991.

⁸ Comparative studies on the situation of East and West German women in the labor market following the second world war now in: Gunilla-Friederike Budde (ed.), *Frauen arbeiten. Weibliche Erwerbstätigkeit in Ost- und Westdeutschland nach 1945*, Göttingen 1997.

equality meant integration into the labor market. Family exigencies, economic necessity and state propaganda fostered that process: many women were required to be self-sufficient or were their families' sole breadwinners; the "lack of men" caused by the war—contemporaries referred to it not very gallantly as a "surplus of women" (*"Frauenüberschuß"*)—as well as the increasing exodus from the country led to shortages in the labor force and necessitated taking advantage of the "women's reserve" (*"Frauenreserve"*). In addition to the economic necessity, the state was also endeavoring to guide women from the private sphere, where influence and control was more difficult, into the more easily manipulated public sector of the labor market. This endeavor was backed by the state-directed publicity which established the ideal image as the working woman, and which increasingly made the role of the "mere housewife" difficult to justify.

The integration of women into society's production processes was established with the help of legal regulations. The Soviet military administration's Order 253, of 17 August 1946, established "equal pay for equal work" and was codified within Article 18 of the GDR's constitution three years later. This was complemented by qualification programs especially designed for women; supporting measures soon followed. The "Law for the Promotion of the Work Force, for the Increase in Productivity, and for the Improvement of the Material and Cultural Status of Blue- and White-Collar Workers" (*"Gesetz zur Förderung der Arbeitskräfte, zur Steigerung der Arbeitsproduktivität und zur Verbesserung der materiellen und kulturellen Lage der Arbeiter und Angestellten"*), passed in April of 1950, established both a right and a certain obligation to work. Two years later, the "Resolution to Develop Plans for the Promotion of Women" (*"Beschluß zur Erarbeitung von Frauenförderungsplänen"*), as well as the associated "Measures to Increase the Number of Women Active in Industry" (*"Maßnahmen zur Erhöhung des Anteils der beschäftigten Frauen in den Betrieben"*), attempted to acknowledge women's "special situation" of having "double burdens" by introducing a

⁹ On the history of "Housework Day" in the GDR and the FRG, see Carola Sachse, Ein "heißes Eisen." Ost- und westdeutsche Debatten um den Hausarbeitstag, in: Budde (Ed.), *Frauen arbeiten*, pp. 252–285.

monthly "housework day" (*Haushaltstag*) for women.⁹ In addition, the "I. Implementation Regulation for the Order to Establish Pre-school and After-school Facilities" (*I. Durchführungsbestimmung zur Verordnung über die Einrichtung der vorschulischen Erziehung und Horte*), which was issued in September of that year, marked the beginning of childcare facilities as well as of counseling centres for pregnant women and mothers, the latter being started in June of 1953. It also ushered in material assistance on a multitude of levels, all of which combined to assist women in maintaining their balancing act between gainful employment and work in the home.

Dramatically increasing rates of women's gainful employment in East Germany attest to the success of these state initiatives. In the mid-1950s, half of all women in the GDR were gainfully employed; this figure rose by ten percent in each of the following decades. The East German media depicted women at work or active in their brigade—hard-working tractor drivers, city mayors with a vision for the future, or expert engineers—in magazines, DEFA films and novels; this was consistent not only with the state propaganda, but also with the subjective experiences of many East German women. The minutes of the early women's meetings, characterized by the pathos of a new beginning, reflect the fact that the speaking was dominated by extremely self-confident women who proudly pointed out their position in the production process.

But these women's forums of the fifties also served in large measure to illustrate the limitations of this integration. The female actors described their experiences in lively debates. Only late in the proceedings, following the obligatory bows and pat phrases of thankfulness directed to the SED regime, did the tension usually rise when a woman laborer or farmer ascended to the speakers' podium. Dozens of women from all areas of employment, voices quivering nervously only at first, were waiting to provide concrete, sometimes humorous but always very self-confident descriptions of their everyday working life; generally, these included harsh judgments of their male colleagues. The harmonious cooperation between male and female workers, depicted above all in the media, was quickly exposed as an illusion. The talk was not of peaceably cooperating colleagues working together to build Socialism, but rather of competition and resentment. What took place behind closed doors within the enterprises, namely at meetings of the

women's committees which were established in the enterprises in 1952,¹⁰ was aired to a larger public which was not what the SED had intended.¹¹

The numerous meeting minutes reveal that at the women's conferences, women in no way acted exclusively as zealous thankful recipients of state handouts. On the contrary, the records convey the impression that here, at least in the early years of the GDR, a cleverly veiled, semi-public opposition culture was being cultivated, which above all contradicted the idealized image of the collective "we" of the East German work force. Despite all claims to the contrary, the GDR too had its typical women's and men's areas of employment, typical men's and women's jobs, and traditional hierarchies in enterprises among female and male blue- and white-collar workers. The power of the state was apparently often unable to penetrate through to the microlevel of relationships among workers; it failed as a result of internal dynamics in the enterprises. In narrative interviews, East German women are almost unanimous in complaining about encountering difficulties within the family and at their workplace if they developed career ambitions going beyond mere white-collar employment. As early as the fifties, working wives were accepted virtually without limitation by East German men; however, female colleagues—and especially supervisors—were tolerated only with the utmost reluctance.

As such, the fifties seem to be a period of time during which, at least in terms of the labor market, a series of measures were undertaken by the state which had the goal of providing a general opening of opportunities for women and their integration in the long term. However, the talk was always of "a solution to the women's question", not of calling traditional gender roles into question. Led by the short-circuit equation of gainful employment with emancipation, women's steps forward were measured according to a "male way of walking."¹² The goals were correspondingly

¹⁰ On the role of the enterprise women's committees, see Petra Clemens, Die Kehrseite der Clara-Zetkin-Medaille. Die Betriebsfrauenausschüsse der 50er Jahre in lebensgeschichtlicher Sicht, in: *Feministische Studien* 1 (1990), pp. 20–34.

¹¹ On this point, see: Gunilla-Friederike Budde, "Heldinnen der Arbeit". Öffentliche Fremd- und Selbstdarstellungen von Arbeiterinnen in der DDR der fünfziger und sechziger Jahre, in: Klaus Tenfelde and Peter Hübner (Eds.), *Arbeiter in der SBZ/DDR*, Bochum 1998 (in press).

¹² Nickel, *Mitgestalterinnen*, p. 233.

unilinear. Women were supposed to catch up with what men had already attained. The lifelong male employment biography, without any gaps at all if possible, was "declared as the normal case."¹³ Women's variations, with breaks for family reasons and more flexible hours of work, were branded as a deviation from that, full of defects, and to be overcome.

2. Transformation or continuity? The sixties

Nonetheless: the issue of equal rights for women was on the agenda from the very first years of the GDR. As such, the break occurring in the sixties seems, at first glance, to be less striking than in, for example, the Federal Republic or Sweden. But it existed nevertheless. Beginning in the early sixties, the discussions on women's issues became more differentiated. There is no other point of time in GDR's history when traditional gender roles were called into question so openly in magazines and official documents. "Taking the goal of overcoming the cultural system of gender polarization as a measure of emancipation, the sixties are the most progressive years in the GDR's history."¹⁴

Just at the end of the fifties, when the euphoria of new beginnings was waning, "anti-fascism" as a basis of legitimation was paling and a look over at the West was causing dissatisfaction instead of self-confidence, it became important to secure existing loyalties and/or create new ones. This was the atmosphere which had led to an increasing wave of emigration in the last years before the Wall was built, such that vacancies existed in all areas of the labor market—especially those requiring high qualifications—for which replacements had to be found. Statistics which were held strictly confidential document that a large number of those who had moved over to the West were apparently highly-qualified young men. More and more, the GDR was becoming a "women's country". With the housewives' brigades established in 1958, the so-called "mere housewives" were to be uti-

¹³ The same is true for the West German labor market, as Karin Hausen and others have shown. See *ibid.*, *Frauenenerwerbstätigkeit und erwerbstätige Frauen. Anmerkungen zur historischen Forschung*, in: Budde (Ed.), *Frauen arbeiten*, pp. 19–45.

¹⁴ Susanne Diemer, *Patriarchalismus in der DDR. Strukturelle, kulturelle und subjektive Dimensionen der Geschlechterpolarisierung*, Opladen 1994, p. 72.

lized, initially for seasonal labor, in order to benefit the production process both in ideal terms and on a long-term basis.¹⁵

The beginning of the sixties marked a shift of the women's *Leitbild* from the working woman to the working woman with qualifications.¹⁶ The search was on for "women to be developed"—the original GDR language was "*zu entwickelnde Frauen*"—to staff the enterprises. The laborer was to become a skilled laborer; the skilled laborer a master craftsperson; the master craftsperson was to go to school and then assume a leadership position—this was the ideal-typical career path for East German women. The starting gun for that action was fired with a document published one day before Christmas by the Politbüro of the SED and supposedly initiated by Lotte Ulbricht. The stated goal of the Communiqué, titled "Woman—Peace and Socialism" ("*Die Frau—der Frieden und der Sozialismus*") was to "take more advantage of women than we have to date in building up Socialism." It was conceded that the "capabilities and achievements of women" had thus far been "insufficiently utilized to promote their own development and to further societal progress." Above all, the lack of women in leadership positions provided the opportunity to point out deficiencies in the promotion of women. "All leadership positions within the Party in industrial and agricultural enterprises, the state apparatus, cultural institutions, trade unions and other mass organizations" were held to be committed to "realizing the resolutions of the Party and the government regarding promotion and development in a more goal-oriented manner and continually supervising their implementation."¹⁷

The aim of this comprehensive campaign was a long-term shift in direction. Enterprises, official authorities, secondary schools and univer-

¹⁵ For the GDR viewpoint on this, see: Hans Jürgen Arendt, Zur Entwicklung der Bewegung der Hausfrauenbrigaden in der DDR 1958 bis 1961/62. Eine besondere Form der Einbeziehung nichtberufstätiger Frauen in die Lösung der volkswirtschaftlichen Aufgaben beim Aufbau des Sozialismus, in: *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 1979, pp. 53–79. In contrast, Monika Mattes paints a less successful picture with Vom Ich der Küche zum Wir des Kollektivs. Zur Geschichte der Hausfrauenbrigaden, in: 1999. *Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts* 2 (1996), pp. 36–61.

¹⁶ See Irene Dölling, Gespaltenes Bewußtsein—Frauen- und Männerbilder in der DDR, in: Helwig/Nickel (Eds.), *Frauen in Deutschland*, pp. 23–52; p. 28.

¹⁷ *Die Frau—der Frieden und der Sozialismus*, published by the Central Committee of the SED, Women's Working Group, Berlin 1962, p. 5.

sities were now obliged to provide regular reports as to which positions women were being utilized for, why they were poorly represented—or lacking altogether—in leadership positions, and which measures were being considered to alleviate that lack. It was expected that periodic lists of “women to be developed” (*“zu entwickelnde Frauen”*) would be submitted, to be followed by reports of female success stories. Brigades were dispatched for assessment visits and discussions in enterprises, clinics, primary and secondary schools, and were given the task of reporting the situation to the state. The departments of agitation and propaganda directed the mass media to devote themselves regularly to the topic of highly-qualified women, and ordered quarterly reports to be submitted regarding where, how often and in what form this order had been complied with. Women’s conferences were called and subsequently assessed.

In the first years following issuance of the Communiqué, the numerous reports, evaluations, and analyses bluntly exposed the existing dismal state of affairs. The motto was “overcoming the underestimation”. Too much was being left to “run itself” in terms of the promotion of women; the special situation of women was not being taken sufficiently into consideration; enterprise directors were holding onto too many traditional prejudices; the demands placed were too high in comparison with male colleagues; the topics selected by women in the area of science and academia were treated too marginally; male colleagues and spouses were too backward; women allowed themselves to get discouraged too quickly: This was the ever-recurring catalogue of explanations contained in the countless analyses of the causes.

In contrast to this activism of good intentions, which at least spurred on discourse, no concrete measures followed for quite some time. After all, the SED state felt obliged to do more detailed research and establish scientifically something which was apparently a matter of public concern. In May 1964, the GDR Council of Ministers resolved to create the scientific council “Women in Socialist Society” (*“Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft”*) within the GDR’s Academy of Sciences. The leader of the research group was the lawyer Prof. Dr. Anita Grandke. The “Perspective Plan of the Scientific Council” (*“Perspektivplan des wissenschaftlichen Beirates”*), dated 30 March 1965, stated: “The Council is commissioned by the Council of Ministers to precisely analyze the situation of women in the

GDR, and to outline the perspectives for the development of women by 1970/80 as well as the situation and development of the family. It is to coordinate scientific work and secure community involvement, as well as to assist the Council of Ministers in preparing important decisions." It continued, "Women's development has attained a high level in the GDR. It is now crucial to place the emphasis on the full realization of all of women's capabilities and talents, consistent with the demands of the comprehensive building up of Socialism and the continued development of the personalities of our women. In this, we must proceed from a scientific analysis of the situation of women, the specific conditions for development within individual areas, and with a clear view of the perspectives of women in terms of fundamental issues." Four working groups were assigned the following topics: 1. The societal role of women in the comprehensive building up of Socialism, taking the development of women in the area of employment into special consideration; 2. Problems in the development of Socialist family relationships; 3. Basic issues associated with the technologization of housework; and 4. The role of intellectual-cultural life for the development of women and their active involvement in the development of literature, art and cultural life as a whole.¹⁸

"Everyone found it important to solve the problem of women ideologically, by doing away with antiquated attitudes on the part of men, but at the same time providing women with the consciousness that they have equal rights and have equal skills", was the conclusion stated at a discussion evening with scientists, white- and blue collar women workers on the Women's Communiqué in Dresden on 12 and 13 January 1962.¹⁹ In fact, the multifaceted campaigns which followed the "Women's Communiqué" seem to have fostered the desire for discussion on the part of the East German public as well. The "women's question" was on everyone's lips, and this provided the excuse for openly stating criticisms which had previously been expressed only with hesitation. After all, one could always point to the Communiqué when demanding opportunities for advancement or when confronted with discrimination—and have a real chance of success.

¹⁸ See *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen*, hereinafter abbreviated as SAPMO, DY₃₀/IV A2/904/332.

¹⁹ SAPMO DY₅₃/21/613/7431.

In contrast to the fifties, the role of men, and specifically their familial responsibilities, were now being discussed openly. Beginning in 1962, the media could apparently no longer afford to give short shrift to these issues. As the women's committee of the SED concluded just a few months after the appearance of the Communiqué, "In general terms, it can be stated that, beginning with *Neues Deutschland* and continuing in almost all district newspapers, the problems of women played a larger role following the Communiqué. Letters from readers, articles on competent women and girls, interviews with council chairs, party secretaries, BGL-directors (trade union officials) and other responsible functionaries, as well as women's pages ... appear almost daily."²⁰

When the initial vigor was threatening to wear off two years later, women continued to insist self-confidently that they be taken seriously. At a conference of the central leadership of the health services trade union on 2 October 1963, Dr. Böhmer, a woman, took the offensive. The war metaphors which peppered her comments underscored women's awakened pugnacity: "I would like to say that this fortress of prejudice [against women in leadership positions] did not even fall under the heavy artillery of the Women's Communiqué. Some claim: the fortress is probably invincible. Then again, there's another side which says: maybe the artillery of the Women's Communiqué just wasn't heavy enough. I would like to say this: the fortress is not invincible, and the artillery is outstanding. The problem is surely with the positioning of the cannons in some places, where the artillery isn't being adjusted and handled properly ... These are the ones who, following the appearance of the Women's Communiqué, exhibited an incredible amount of activity, so that—and I say this from personal experience—some women stood there baffled as to how they could have been voted onto a commission from one day to the next. Some women didn't know what they were getting into. They were inside so quickly. That all wore off again. You know that there are functionaries today who are hibernating when it comes to women's promotion and the content of our Communiqué ... I certainly hope that these functionaries won't be sleeping for seven years like Sleeping Beauty. I think it's up to us, we women have to wake up these functionaries; of course, not with a

²⁰ SAPMO DY30/IV 2/17/18.

Prince's kiss like with Sleeping Beauty, but with substantive discussions."²¹

At the end of 1969, the Berlin newspaper *Für Dich* published an article titled "Must the Household Scale Hang Crooked?" which addressed the rhetorical question, "Can the main portion of household chores, which amount to about 50 hours per week for a 4-person household, continue to be allotted to women at a rate of 80 %?" in order to follow immediately with the answer, "Absolutely not. Men simply must take over 50 % of it." This was followed by a series of exemplary 'cases', in which individual women reported on their successes in retraining their husbands.²² A short film by the DEFA studios, commissioned by the Women's Committee of the FDGB (trade union association) on the occasion of "Women's Day 1969", attempted to portray a transformed role consciousness: it showed a father who left the house early in the morning with a little child, dropping it off at the kindergarten of his enterprise, and who got into line at the HO state shop after work and then took care of the necessary housework. However, an image which was supposed to be thought-provoking was in danger of being misunderstood. As the Women's Committee warned after looking through the script, "The impression must in no way be raised that only on the 8th of March should men live up to their responsibilities at home with housework and child-rearing."²³

In addition to demonstrating the increased amount of attention accorded to the issue, these actions also show the shift in emphasis in women's policies during the sixties. Previously, the concentration had clearly been on the role of women in working life, whereas now the significance of the family was taking center stage. With the passing of the Family Law Code (*Familiengesetzbuch*) of 1965, the work of women as housewives and mothers was to receive recognition as necessary societal work equal to gainful employment. This paved the way for the inevitable state support for the family.²⁴

²¹ SAPMO DY₃₄/2941.

²² SAPMO DY₃₄/7763.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ This was also reflected in the rapid increase, beginning in the seventies, of family research studies. This is emphasized by Anita Grandke in her "preface" in: Jutta Gysi (Ed.), *Familienleben in der DDR. Zum Alltag von Familien mit Kindern*, Berlin (East) 1989, p. 7.

The first steps in that direction had already been taken in 1954 at the initiative of Justice Minister Hilde Benjamin, but the publicly-discussed drafted legislation had not yet taken legal effect. Other topics, such as nationalization and solving problems in the labor market, were considered more urgent at the time, particularly since the SED was dominated by those sharing Friedrich Engel's opinion that the family would no longer play a significant role in a Socialist state, since its function would be taken over by the state.²⁵ Furthermore, the SED state exhibited a certain insecurity when it came to the family, whose great ideological significance was recognized, but which seemed much more difficult to regulate and control due to its private character.²⁶ Added to this was the fact that at that time, the hope still existed that in the area of family law, the unity of German legal development would be maintained.²⁷

But this was by no means the end of the issue. In 1965, a revised text was published for public debate; millions of copies were distributed. Thousands of suggestions addressed directly to the Minister were received from the people. A total of 23,737 were registered.²⁸ In the Ministry, Hilde Benjamin had all suggestions, objections and points of criticism transferred to a punch-hole card system especially developed for that purpose; they were then discussed by working groups. In the end, approximately 230 suggestions for change from the population were taken into consideration in the final text of the legislation. Most of them were letters written by women. In the magazine "*Neue Justiz*", the Minister warned against allowing "the people's discussion to largely become a women's discussion".²⁹

Between April and October 1965, the GDR's newspapers constantly initiated discussion of the Family Law Code, answered letters to the editor,

²⁵ According to Anita Grandke in an interview, cited in: Andrea Feth, *Hilde Benjamin—Eine Biographie*, Berlin 1997, p. 207. See Friedrich Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, in: Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Berlin 1973, pp. 26–173 (German edition).

²⁶ See Gesine Obertreis, *Familienpolitik in der DDR 1945–1980*, Opladen 1986, p. 321.

²⁷ See Feth, *Hilde Benjamin*, p. 216 et seq.

²⁸ Submission by the *Grundkommission zur Ausarbeitung des Familiengesetzbuches: Begründung der Änderungen des Entwurfs des Familiengesetzbuches* of 6 October 1965, SAPMO-BA JIV 2/2A/1123.

²⁹ *Neue Justiz*, 1965, p. 230.

and published exemplary stories, for example, that justices of the peace in Karl-Marx-Stadt had invited all couples married within the past six weeks to an event in order to allow the young spouses to discuss their concerns with experts; or that jurors and judges had been holding local discussions in small groups in order to do justice to many various interests.³⁰

The FLC (*FGB*) finally passed into law at the *Volkskammer* on 20 December 1965. According to it, the basis of family relationships was the principle of the marriage bond for life and of the equal position of women in all areas of life. Without being expressly stated, it followed that the FLC referred to marriages in which both partners were employed. This *Leitbild* was definitely consistent with societal reality in the GDR, in which as early as 1965, 70 % of all women of working age were employed, making up 46 % of the entire work force. Furthermore, Hilde Benjamin emphasized that the idea of equality demanded that both spouses had the responsibility of mutually supporting one another's work and social activities. She also demanded a new men's consciousness in childcare and -rearing, which was then provided for in § 9. At the same time, § 12, Sec. 2 provided that the spouse who does not earn any income contributes to the support of the family by working in the home and raising the children. Divorce was possible "if the court has determined that serious grounds exist to believe that the marriage has lost its meaning for the spouses, the children, and therefore for the community as well" (§ 24, Sec. 1). One of the divorced parties would receive custody of the children; the other would receive visitation rights and must pay child support (§ 25). Alimony for a divorced spouse was generally allowed for a maximum of two years following the divorce (§ 29). Upon divorce, common assets were generally to be divided in equal shares (§ 39, Sec. 1).

3. The time of the "*Multipolitik*": The seventies

In her speech at the 2nd Women's Congress of the GDR, held on 11–13 June 1969 in Berlin, Ilse Thiele, Chairwoman of the *DFD*, drew the following conclusions: "The development of behavior patterns within the

³⁰ On this point, see also the biography by Marianne Brentzel, *Die Machtfrau. Hilde Benjamin 1902–1989*, Berlin 1997, pp. 314 et seq.

family which promote the personalities of all family members is not being achieved without conflicts, and—as everyone knows – it’s not all domestic bliss. Add to this the new social position of women, their desire to receive further qualifications and education, which are accompanied by more changes in family life. Men and women must feel themselves equally responsible for the raising and care of the children, and for taking care of household chores. We should all work toward developing relationships in all families which are consistent with the character of our Socialist society.”³¹ In her subsequent speech, Prof. Lieselott Herforth, based on her professional everyday experiences, underscored the fact that the equal parental responsibility anchored in the FLC was not yet in any way consistent with reality: “It’s true that women give birth to the children—on that level, it’s safe to assume that we won’t attain men’s equality—but every child that comes into the world has parents ... conclusion: men have children too (laughter). Many of my male colleagues have told me, bursting with pride, that they had just had a son or a daughter!—and even presented me with their vacation papers for the happy occasion (laughter). But—and this is certainly a contradiction—I unfortunately also occasionally hear: “How stupid, Mrs. X is having another baby! It just won’t work with these women! They’re throwing our entire plan to the dogs (laughter and applause).”³² With this, both women underscored the fact that the consciousness-raising process, especially when it came to men, had not yet been completed; to some extent, it had not yet even started.

Within a few years of the effective date of the Family Law Code, experts in the GDR were even forced to admit that the gap between the *Leitbild* espoused there and the actual situation had gotten larger instead of smaller.³³ Above all, developments in *three areas* showed how little the behavior of many marriage partners fit within the prescribed framework: First of all, more and more married women and mothers were taking part-time instead of full-time work.³⁴ Secondly, the birth rate declined rapidly;

³¹ SAPMO DY₃₁/54.

³² Ibid.

³³ Cf. Autorenkollektiv (under the direction of Anita Grandke), *Familienrecht*. Textbook, Berlin (East) 1972, p. 34.

³⁴ On this point, see also: Christine v. Oertzen and Almut Rietzschel, Das “Kuckucksei” Teilzeitarbeit. Die Politik der Gewerkschaften im deutsch-deutschen Vergleich, in: Budde

and finally, the number of divorces also increased steadily.³⁵ All three phenomena show clearly that the equally-balanced division of work between the genders had apparently still not been realized; that the lion's share of household and familial responsibilities was being shouldered by women;³⁶ and that they were seeking undesired compromises like part-time work and limiting the number of children because of these chronic excessive demands upon them.

It was this drastic drop in the birth rate and the significant increase in part-time work, which had not led to successive employment of previously non-working women as intended, but rather to a reduction in the working hours of full-time employees,³⁷ which provided the impetus for the socio-political measures resulting from the VIII. Party Conference of the SED in 1971. Under the motto, "Influencing the Reproductive Function of the Family" (*"Beeinflussung der Reproduktionsfunktionen der Familie"*)—known as "*Muttipolitik*" ("Mommy policies") in the GDR vernacular—the SED developed a concept in family policies the following year which was above all designed to lighten the burden of working mothers. The "Law on the Interruption of Pregnancy" (*"Gesetz über die Unterbrechung der Schwangerschaft"*), effective as of 9 March 1972 which provided for abortion on demand within the first three months of pregnancy to be funded by the social insurance carrier, was not a reaction by East German legislators to women's demands, as had been vehemently made by members of the new women's movement in the Federal Republic since 1971. Rather, welcoming the trouble for the FRG government, which was under pressure on the issue, as a desired side effect, it was used to introduce a number of socio-

(Ed.), *Frauen arbeiten*, pp. 212–252; Christine v. Oertzen's contribution to this workshop, her completed dissertation on the subject, and soon, the comprehensive studies by Almut Rietzschel on the history of part-time work in the GDR.

³⁵ An analysis of the realization of the resolutions taken at the IX. Party Congress in the area of women's policies from the year 1980 stated: "The number of divorces rose steadily until the mid-1970s. With 44,803 divorces in the year 1976, the highest number since 1965 were registered. Since that time, the number of divorces has remained almost constant." SAPMO DY30/IV 2/2042/29.

³⁶ According to the report on studies undertaken by the Leipzig Institute for Market Research regarding 80% of the tasks to be done, in: *Die Wirtschaft* 22 (1974), pp. 12 et seq.

³⁷ On this point, see the comments by Rietzschel in: Budde (ed.), *Frauen arbeiten*.

political measures categorized under the motto “the will to have children” (*der Wille zum Kind*). In May of 1972, three new regulations were issued at once which were primarily directed to women: the “regulation on the increase in state assistance for births and the lengthening of maternity leave”, the “regulation on the introduction of the 40-hour work week and increase in minimum vacation time for working mothers with several children”, as well as the “regulation on the granting of loans at preferred rates to young couples” with the possibility of “*Abkindern*” (“childrening off the loan”—decreasing the debt with each additional child). Starting in 1974, these benefits also applied to single parents; nurseries and kindergartens were built up; and finally, years spent raising children were taken into account when calculating retirement pay.³⁸ Although these measures benefitted the women of the GDR on the one hand, they were actually in conflict with the equality principles contained in the FLC. In reacting to women’s double burden exclusively by granting them special privileges, the SED state’s family policies simultaneously reinforced the traditional role divisions and the idea that family tasks were primarily women’s responsibility. The compatibility of family tasks and gainful employment became a purely women’s problem; men, in contrast, were largely absolved from family responsibilities.

The ideas of East German women and men did not remain unaffected by this. In a survey undertaken by the GDR’s Institute for Opinion Research in the summer of 1975 on “the position of women in the family and society”, whose findings were kept locked up as “strictly confidential”, the question of whether married women with small or schoolchildren should be employed was answered with “she should be fully employed” by only 9.8 % of women. 72.1 % were in favor of “shortened hours”, and a full 9 % thought that they should “not be employed”. The opinion that women should interrupt their working lives until the children are at least three years old was approved by almost 72 %. Twenty percent of these had, in fact, taken a break of two or more years following the birth of their children. The question of the optimal number of children was answered with

³⁸ See Ute Gerhard, Die staatlich institutionalisierte “Lösung” der Frauenfrage. Zur Geschichte der Geschlechterverhältnisse in der DDR, in: Kaelble et al. (eds.), *Sozialgeschichte*, pp. 383–403; p. 391.

two by 72.6 % of respondents. Only about 8 % found three or more children to be desirable, while almost 15 % preferred one-child families. Sixty percent of the women responded to the question of who took care of the children when they were sick with "I do"; not quite 2 % answered, "my husband".³⁹

Apparently, the results of the survey had an alarming effect. Inge Lange informed Erich Honecker of the results at the end of November, along with a handwritten note, "I suggest discussing these questions in the Central Committee!" As usual, however, she simultaneously attempted to twist the results for the benefit of the SED government by way of clever maneuvering. Glossing over problems, her own assessment emphasized the fact that "The overall less positive assessment of this entire issue complex compared with the survey of 1970, is apparently the result of the higher standards which many women have derived from their equality."⁴⁰

The fact that this 'equality' had not been achieved by any means in the seventies either, contrary to the countless soapbox-style speeches made since the existence of the GDR; that in reality there was actually movement in the wrong direction, was discussed behind closed doors, if at all. The *DFD*, the official representative organization of East German women, had been perverted more and more in the course of its existence from being the mouthpiece of "women laborers and farmers" to being the mouthpiece of the Party. Critical voices were heard from other sources as well: above all, women songwriters and authors began to envision alternative female realities in song texts, essays, and novels. As Christa Wolf, echoing the thoughts of many, wrote in the preface to Maxie Wander's protocol collection titled "*Guten Morgen, du Schöne*" "Women, matured through their real and relevant experiences, have signaled a radical demand: to live as complete persons, to be able to use all their senses and capabilities." She continued, "This demand represents a great challenge to a society ... after all, whether intentionally or not, society created the demand; it can no longer be satisfied *only* with plans for women's promotion, childcare facilities, and financial support for children; and I believe that it cannot be attained by delegating more women to those bodies where all

³⁹ SAPMO DY30/IV 2/2942/34.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

over this man's world, in our country as well, the 'important questions' are being decided by men. Should women even have the desire to be integrated in larger numbers into those hierarchically-functioning apparatuses? To take over roles to which men have done so much damage over the centuries?"⁴¹ Books, songs and films which posed these heretical questions and presented "unmanageable heroines" advanced to cult status. In a place where an autonomous public was not allowed to articulate its concerns, they represented a counter-publicity whose desires and utopias of gender equality were not system-specific and were very similar to those of their "sisters" in the West.

⁴¹ Christa Wolf, *Berührung*. Ein Vorwort, in: Maxie Wander, "*Guten Morgen, du Schöne*." *Frauen in der DDR. Protokolle*, 8th ed., Darmstadt 1981, pp. 9–19; p. 17 (German edition).

Women, Labour Market and Gender: Policies in the Two Germanies and Sweden, 1945–89

Rolf Torstendahl

Introduction

"Finally it can be stated that female industrial workers in the GDR obtained new chances and space primarily in the fields, where it was part of the state policy and economic necessity", says Annegret Schüle in an analysis of industrial work as a possibility for emancipation in the GDR.¹ Her formulation of the problem is appropriate not only for the GDR but seems to have a much wider validity. It is hard to find examples of a consistent gender policy that were not to a large extent directed by a state policy which took not only women's emancipation into consideration but also economic interests and diverse other political aims, which were merged into a whole.

However it can be questioned if it is not to ask too much of any policy, to demand that it should consistently further only one specific idea as part of an ideological formation or structure. As is stated by Deborah Stone, policy-making is not only about solving public problems, but about how groups are formed, split and re-formed to achieve public purposes.² Policies are the outcomes of a series of discussions and considerations where ideological formulations form one part and costs, material resources and

¹ A. Schüle, "Industriearbeit als Emanzipationschance? Arbeiterinnen im Büromaschinenwerk Sömmerda und in der Baumwollspinnerei Leipzig", in G.-F. Budde (ed.), *Frauen arbeiten. Weibliche Erwerbstätigkeit in Ost- und Westdeutschland nach 1945*, pp. 100–120, quot. p. 117.

² Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*, 2nd ed., New York & London, 1997 (W. W. Norton), p. 27.

tentions are involved. "A may influence B" would then mean that A is (part of) a cause for B, working together with some other conditions which are difficult to specify. However, the "may influence"-relation in the matters of concern here is also of a character that must have been observed by the politicians concerned, and their actions and measures taken must be related to expectations according to this model.

The relations—too complicated to be visualised in the simple model—between the normative system in society in general (or rather among men and women in general, for prevailing norms may not be the same in the two sexes) and the policy-making process are of fundamental importance for the question of policy-making regarding women's participation in the labour market. It has been shown in several of the contributions to this volume that there were frequent feed-back loops between policy formulations on one or the other level or even between ideological statements and the norms which prevailed, so that propaganda through different media were of vital importance for the process. The norms behind the policy that was sponsored by party or state were not immediately accepted in all strata of society.

There are reasons to doubt that the interplay between general social norms and state policy was the same in the three countries, even though the feed-back loops may have been the same. If state policy changes only under the pressure from a massive majority in the electorate, this is something different from the case when a change of state policy is undertaken with the aim of influencing the prevailing normative system in society. These differences and even other may be found in the discussions on the gendered structure of labour.

The analysis within this project of state policy in relation to the gender system has made use of discussions of the following types of questions:

- 1 efforts to regulate the labour market in the private sector in favour of women
- 2 regulation of state employment of women
- 3 regulation of male employment to influence gender relations
- 4 family support
- 5 demographic considerations for a policy of family size
- 6 efforts to influence roles and division of work in the household
- 7 efforts to influence male ideals and the male role.

This does not mean that a consistent comparative factor analysis has been made of these factors but rather that they were used differently to clarify what was characteristic for the debate and the formation of the state policy in each of the countries. The questions mentioned above then constitute a framework rather than a list of factors. Within the elaboration of these questions the differences between the three states are examined.

A new ideology for women's participation in the labour market?

As is mentioned by Gunilla-Friederike Budde in her contribution to this volume the constitution of the GDR from 1949 with its explicit clause no. 18, that similar pay should always be given for similar work, set a standard for those who strove for women's participation in the labour market.³ In West Germany the constitution of 1949 offered another key to women's mobilisation through its clause forbidding discrimination.⁴ Being one of many changes in the two German states after the war, it would seem that the cause of women's participation in the labour market was one of the

³ Budde in this volume. See also G.-F. Budde, "Einleitung: Zwei Welten? Frauenerwerbsarbeit im deutsch-deutschen Vergleich", in G.-F. Budde (ed.) op. cit. pp. 7-18, esp. p. 8. The regulation was preceded by a statute in 1946 from the Soviet military administration. This is often taken as the origin though it has been recently shown that it may be questioned if it was really of the same content. (See C. v. Oertzen and A. Riezschel "Comparing the Post-War Germanies: Breadwinner Ideology and Women's Employment in the Divided nation, 1948-1970", in *International Review of Social History*, vol. 42, 1997, Supplement 5, pp. 175-196.

⁴ Ines Reich-Hilweg, *Männer und Frauen sind gleichberechtigt. Der Gleichberechtigungsgrundsatz (Art. 3 Abs. 2 GG) in der parlamentarischen Auseinandersetzung 1948-1957 und in der Rechtsprechung des Bundesverfassungsgerichts 1953-1975*, Frankfurt/Main, 1979; Vera Slupik, *Die Entscheidung des des Grundgesetzes für Parität in Geschlechterverhältnis. Zur Bedeutung von Art. 3 Abs. 2 und 3 GG in Recht und Wirklichkeit*, Berlin, 1988; Ingrid Langer, "In letzter Konsequenz ... Uranbergwerk. Die Gleichberechtigung im Grundgesetz und im Bürgerlichen Gesetzbuch", in Angela Delille & Andrea Grohn (eds.), *Perlonzeit. Wie die Frauen ihr Wirtschaftswunder erlebten*, Berlin: Elfantenpress, 1985, pp. 72-81; Barbara Böttger, *Das Recht auf Gleichheit und Differenz. Elisabeth Selbert und der Kampf der Frauen um Art. 3.2 Grundgesetz*, Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 1990. (I want to thank Wiebke Kolbe for making me aware of these books and articles.)

changes that was caused by the war and the consecutive ideological and political reorganisation of the two states. However, it has been pointed out in recent research that the links to the past were considerable, not only in the sense that women had in fact been part of the labour market earlier and especially during the war, but also in the sense that the debate was not new and the positions, both in favour of women's right to work and to become independent and against such ideas, had been proclaimed and developed earlier. However, German models for organisations and ideological formations could be sought only in the period before 1933.

Thus, in several respects the situation was a new one in the two German states and with the new situation followed revised ideological positions, new policies and more or less new ways for implementing such policies. The importance of 1945 cannot be neglected, though it would be false to say that all arguments, policies and habits that came after 1945 were new inventions. In Sweden, on the other hand, continuity is dominant. The debate of the thirties, going on up to the outbreak of war, was continued after the war. The war years (when Sweden as a neutral country was not directly affected by war damages, though defence costs and the loss of trade hollowed out the economy of the country) were a period when social reform projects were given a lower priority than before and after, but they meant in no way a new start. Social Democrats, who had formed a broad coalition with other parties during the war years, decided to govern alone and to continue the reform work that they had started before the war, now with higher ambitions and according to a new complete programme called the post-war programme of the labour movement. However, this programme did not envisage a reform of women's participation in the labour market or a reformed family or gender policy. In this respect a change came only in the 1960s.⁵

Another difference which must be noted between Sweden and the two German states is that some of the actors in the issue of women's rights and women's roles and family policy remained the same in Sweden as before the war, among them not least Alva Myrdal, while almost all of those who

⁵ Ann-Sofie Ohlander, "Det osynliga barnet? Kampen om den socialdemokratiska familjepolitiken", in K. Misgeld, K. Molin and K. Åmark (eds.), *Socialdemokratins samhälle. SAP och Sverige under 100 år*, Stockholm: Tiden, 1988, pp. 170-190, esp. 182-184.

had been active in the German debate earlier had left the political scene after the war.

Thus, even though a certain continuity existed in values and fundamental social problems in the German scene both in the East and in the West, the year 1945 formed a rupture in politics and ideology-formation, which gave to many questions a new start, among them the issue of women's participation in the labour market. In Sweden this was not the case. There continuity was dominant in this question as in other questions of social reform.

It seems that the GDR was the only one of the three states which had from its very start in 1949 a sort of gender policy. Equality between men and women was state policy (with unclear implications), which was hardly the case in Sweden or the FRG. It is also to be noted, as is underlined by Gunilla Budde in her contribution to this volume, that in the GDR of the nineteen-fifties and sixties there never existed a women's policy, only a part of labour market policy directed toward women. Women were regarded as part of the labour force in the first hand and they could and should contribute as usefully as possible to the national economy.

In Sweden and the FRG there emerged strong women's movements which urged the leadership of the states to adopt a policy toward women.⁶ In the FRG this policy was in the first hand protective and patronising in the fifties and sixties and women lacked an effective spokesperson in the political leadership. In Sweden there were several prominent female political figures, both in Social Democracy and in the opposition, and first among them was Alva Myrdal, who was not only politically active but also concentrated on questions of women's rights and women's roles. Among other well-known and influential women in the top layer of the Social Democratic party were Ulla Lindström and Inga Thorsson who also represented the continuity in the party from the thirties into the post-war society when they had a great impact on the policy of the party not only regarding women's policy but also concerning a wide range of other questions.

⁶ Marie Theres Knäpper, *Feminismus, Autonomie, Subjektivität. Tendenzen und Widersprüche in der neuen Frauenbewegung*, Bochum: Germinal, 1984; Maud Eduards, *Kvinnorepresentation och kvinnomakt*, Stockholm, 1980; Yvonne Hirdman, *The Swedish Welfare State and the Gender System*, Uppsala: Maktutredningen, 1987; Kjell Östberg, *Efter rösträtten. Kvinnors utrymme efter det demokratiska genombrottet*, Stockholm: Symposion, 1997.

Yet, even with their position at the party centre and the pressure from the well-established women's organisation within the Social Democratic party, a traditional working-class gender conservatism dominated the policy of the party—and the state—in the initial phase after World War II.

Sweden later developed a state policy toward women. As shown by Christina Florin and Bengt Nilsson there was a rapid development of the ideological situation in Sweden. Equality in the traditional formal sense of equal rights was soon regarded as not enough. Equality asked for implementation and a really equal share for women in economic respects and in power in society. This second, strong programme in the second half of the sixties became the stance of the radical women when the state through several partial reforms adopted the prudent first programme of equal rights. It is to be noted that neither the one nor the other programme was in the first hand based on a labour market ideology. Both programmes comprised the situation of women in society in general. Both had consequences for women's participation in the labour market, but this was not a first-hand objective. This does not mean that the role of women in the labour market was neglected. This question was the concern of specific committees and a council within the trade union central organisation, LO. Professional women had a long tradition of defending and extending their rights in the labour market, and continuity was strong when this attitude spread to other groups of women in the labour market.⁷ Thus, it is only logical that the state came to be engaged in a policy towards women when Social Democrats had secured power and the activity of women to guard and increase their rights on the labour market had won some ground among the women of their core voters.

The FRG was from the very beginning cautious about interfering in economic matters. The equal rights that were part of the state policy according to the constitution referred to formal rights and had no direct implication for the standing of women in the labour market, their payment or their possibilities to make a career. The FRG state continued to maintain this formal position up to the reunion in 1989 (formally concluded in 1990), though pressed to introduce a prohibition of discrimina-

⁷ Östberg 1997; Yvonne Hirdman, *Med kluven tunga. LO och genusordningen*, Stockholm: Atlas, 1998.

tion through the EEC regulation 76/207 from 1976. The West German state thus acted slowly and reluctantly in questions relating to women's place in the labour market and in society in general. However, it must be observed that affirmative action was discussed in society and some measures in this direction were taken on regional and local levels. Plans for the promotion of women (*Frauenförderpläne*) were introduced in order to increase the number of women in such areas of the labour market where they were underrepresented.⁸

Thus, only the GDR had an ideology of women's rights with direct implications for the labour market—in principle. The implementation was, however, less consistent with the initial declarations, especially in the seventies and eighties. Sweden's state policy came to be labour-market oriented only secondarily, and in the FRG the state took care not to influence the labour market through policy measures in favour of women and it maintained its neutrality combining it with a claim to guard the formal equality of women.

Ideology formation versus policy and implementation

The ideology of the family as an "anti-structure to society" and as an institution free from the state's intrusion and excepted from its impact was a fundamental feature of the FRG society. Wiebke Kolbe shows that this ideology—in itself created in reaction against Nazi family policies—was fundamental for the state policy in the FRG for a long time. It gave ground for the notion of the crisis of the family, for this crisis could only be conceived in relation to the traditional, nuclear family with one breadwinner. New forms of cohabitation were not accepted as families and matrimony was regarded as the basis of the family. Even without children two persons united through matrimony were regarded as a family, while the cohabitation of a man and a woman outside wedlock, even with children, was not recognised as a family.

⁸ Christine Homann-Dennhardt, "Gleichberechtigung via Rechtsnorm? Zur Frage eines Antidiskriminierungsgesetzes in der Bundesrepublik", in Uta Gerhardt & Yvonne Schütze (eds.), *Frauensituation. Veränderungen in den letzten zwanzig Jahren*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1988, pp. 166–188. (Wiebke Kolbe made me aware of the facts and the literature).

The development analysed by Kolbe demonstrates that there was a close connection between commonly accepted ideology and state policy. The new trends in family life, which transformed lifestyles in most European countries in the nineteen-sixties to the eighties had their impact also on German society. However, when a new legislation was introduced, they were legally transformed into something that was acceptable to the family ideology. This occurred clearly in the case of the discourse on children's well-being which was used, in the FRG, to buttress the central role of the mothers in upholding the family and devoting their undivided time to the family. Consequently, the role of the mother for the children was secured by the institution through state policy of a maternity allowance, payable only to mothers who devoted their time exclusively to their family and were not gainfully employed.

In the 1980s the discussion in the FRG on gender relations in society had become widespread and intense and had produced results in many local communities and regions though not on the federal level. When the federal parliament, in 1986, decided on a new programme for children it was no longer called a maternity allowance but an educational allowance and was directed not only to mothers but also to fathers, though with no obligation for fathers really to use the possibility opened to them.

In the FRG the process of changing state policy in matters relating to women and family was true to the model of a gradual change from ideas among men and women in society to party politics and to parliamentary decisions and government actions. This was not the case in Sweden. As shown in the contribution by Christina Florin and Bengt Nilsson party politicians came in at an early stage—Social Democrats and Liberals in the first hand—but, as underlined by the authors, bureaucratic initiatives were also frequent. In this respect Swedish bureaucracies—primarily the Labour Market Administration (AMS)—acted in an advanced way in the sixties, a way which came to be more frequent in the seventies and eighties in all types of questions; this occurred also in several other countries.⁹ In the fifties and sixties, however, the rule was to leave the initiative to the government, if a new policy was to be introduced. When, in the sixties,

⁹ R. Torstendahl, *Bureaucratisation in Northwestern Europe: Domination and Governance*, London: Routledge, 1991, esp. pp. 150–165.

young women in public service, as Anna-Greta Leijon, Gun Kuylenstierna, Maj-Britt Sandlund and Ingeborg Jönsson, took different initiatives to promote the case of women and advance the idea of gender equality, they did so with the tacit assent of their administrative superiors, above all Bertil Olsson, the head of AMS. But it is important also that Olsson had a very close relation to the Social Democratic government and had privileges in dealing with the labour market problems in his own way. Several of the female bureaucrats who acted to promote a specific policy were also well-known members of the party—Anna-Greta Leijon, a future minister.

It should also be noted that AMS was a very specific administration. As observed by Bo Rothstein, AMS was created in a specific way with Olsson as its first head. He was entrusted with special powers to recruit his personnel. A favourable attitude to the goals of the new administration was more important than bureaucratic merits and several of the new public servants came from trade union employment.¹⁰ In spite of Olsson's good relations to the government he also had the ear of politicians from different political quarters. It is important that this informal and innovative environment was the setting for the activities of the young female bureaucrats who launched their ideas for a new gender equality policy (with implications for women and family).

Bureaucrats taking the initiative for a new policy was not common at the time. Later, when initiatives more often came from bureaucratic bodies, they most often tried to negotiate a solution acceptable for all involved parties (within a sort of network) before it was sold to the government. This was not the case with the gender equality policy. The bureaucrats involved were not content with taking an initiative but they also propagated openly for their ideas in society. This means that they were trying to form an ideological conviction among the broad layers of society for their ideas, and they used two different channels for their campaigns. In the first place they used the ordinary media where they contributed under their own names, in the second place they joined forces with persons of the same convictions in the question of gender equality even though these came from different political parties. The group 222, a vital but loose organisa-

¹⁰ Bo Rothstein, *Den socialdemokratiska staten*, Lund: Arkiv, 1986, pp. 106–134.

tion in this connection, comprised persons of several political attitudes but most of them had central positions in the media world of Sweden.

These were extraordinary methods for the initiation of a state policy. Civil servants of some of the most important governmental administrations were in this manner able to take initiatives for the carrying through of gender equality in Sweden. They were organised in specific branches of the administrative giant, the AMS, and were given a free hand to engage in propaganda and policy-making in this respect. Of course, this must have happened with the knowledge and acceptance of their administrative superiors and the political leadership, but they preceded political action in the field. The bureaucratic activities were started in the latter half of the sixties. Only in 1972 did the Social Democrats make their Party Congress decision of 1964 on equality between men and women the basis for a gender equality programme with clear policy implications and make gender equality a party goal. The Social Democratic government immediately afterwards appointed its Advisory Council on Equality (*Jämställdhetsdelegationen*) and declared that "the state must take an active part in the work of changing women's position and improving gender equality".

The bureaucratically manipulated initiative was thus successful. Propaganda through books and newspapers, radio programmes, and even films, made the central ideas known to a broad Swedish public (even if it is impossible to guess how many were convinced by the arguments). When the Social Democratic party took up the idea for implementation in 1972, it took the political lead in women's equality questions which had earlier been at least partly with the Liberals. Finally, the government transformed vital parts of the programme into legislation on parental leave and related questions.

The change in the Swedish party situation in relation to family policy is analysed by Jonas Hinnfors in his contribution to this volume. Among other things he shows that an equality policy with labour market implications had effects in the party right-left scale. Individual rights, including the rights of women in a legal structure, had been a liberal emphasis, but the new family equality programme of the Social Democrats asked for public economic intervention on a scale which was disliked out of liberal principles.

Thus, in Sweden it is not evident that a change in public opinion preceded state policy in the question of gender equality with consequences for

the labour market. The process is more complex, the role of the bureaucracy is irregular and crucial, public investigations with representatives for politicians, bureaucrats and interest organisations paved the way, and ideology formation among the general public was parallel to the party and government decisions.

From policy implementation to gender traditions and general norms in society

Gunilla Budde in her contribution to this volume shows that there was a wide gap between state policy and policy implementation in the GDR. In many respects it will seem that the gender division in society as a whole was mainly the same in the 1980s as it had been just after the war in spite of the very clear policy declarations in favour of gender equality that were central to the East German state. Perhaps it is also a question of regression when the SED party launched its "mum policy" (as it was known in the GDR) which made it possible to maintain and reinforce male breadwinner ideals in the GDR.

The latter example also illustrates another important angle from which implementation must be viewed. It is no easy task to change society through state policy and the extent to which this is effected is difficult to measure. It will seem that policy measures that follow the demands of the dominant groups in society and which confirm the existing normative system are more easily implemented than measures which challenge the norms of many citizens. The GDR leadership seems to have gradually taken the easier way rather than the more difficult. It will also seem that their policy measures from the early phase of the GDR state did not effectively change the normative system into the desired direction. Gender traditions were strong and were revived when a possibility was given.

One of the reasons for the relative failure of the early equality programme of the GDR state may have been that it was very radical and wide, if it was to be taken seriously. Both in the FRG and in Sweden programmes, at least at the start, were more modest or, in the FRG, very modest, and therefore the challenge to the existing normative structure was negligible or at least hardly provocative. Later, in the 1970s, Swedish

state policy was sharpened but, then, the public had been prepared through propaganda and through earlier measures taken.

It will seem that propaganda may be an important means to change the normative system in society in general in favour of a policy which is desired to be implemented. However, the examples of the GDR and Sweden give different lessons. The GDR state used both newspapers and radio to promote its views, and in this respect there is a similarity to Sweden where these media were also used to make the general public favourable to new norms and values and acquainted to the implications of such norms and values in daily life as is shown by Roger Klinth in his contribution above. It may be tempting to see a difference in the effects of this propaganda in the two states, and to explain the difference by the authority behind the programmes and articles advancing the propaganda. As Klinth shows, in Sweden there was always an individual person who was responsible for a radio (and later TV) programme and newspaper articles were always signed by the author. A debate was encouraged. In the GDR it seems that propaganda had a more anonymous form with the state as the bogus author, a fact that hardly encouraged debate and engagement.

A change in the division of labour and men's roles

It seems obvious that one of the factors that facilitated a change in the gendered division of labour in the decades following World War II was the need for labour in an expanding industry. In the years immediately after the war no such great change was visible, and in West Germany, though not in Sweden, the first years after 1945 were years of considerable unemployment. Only in the early 1950s did unemployment give way to scarcity of labour in industry in the Federal Republic of Germany.

As has been shown by Christine von Oertzen and Almut Rietzschel in different connections, the attitudes to part-time work can be related to this situation. They show that in 1948, one of the unemployment years, part-time, normally half-day, work was regarded as an evil which had to be accepted for war widows who were the only supporters of their families. Only as long as they had this function were they accepted in the labour market, and soon preference was given to providing them social welfare support instead of employment. Around 1953/54 full employment was

reached and women began to ask for employment, often half-day employment. A new debate about the meaning of work for women arose. If married women were employed outside the household, should their income be regarded as independent of that of their husbands? In the FRG the conservative state government changed policy several times in order to solve the problem of the social need of labour and the preservation of traditional norms. Individualism, which was the initial starting-point leading to a system of taxation according to two breadwinners per family where both men and women were employed, had to give way to a traditionalism, where the woman's income was taxed as an extra surplus on her husband's income if her income exceeded a low taxation minimum. Men were then regarded as the normal supporters of their families and women's income as an irregularity that was hit by hard taxation.¹¹

The change in attitudes between 1948 and 1954, which meant a change from total negativism to acceptance even though fundamental values were the same, can certainly be related to the demand for labour. In fact, married women were the most attractive group for an expansion of the social manpower. The alternative in all three countries under concern was immigration, and the costs of housing, schooling and providing for the needs of immigrant groups were considerably higher than including housewives in the work-force. As is shown by Veronica Beechey and Tessa Parker in the case of Britain, women's part-time work was used also as a fundamental means to obtain flexibility in the industries where women were employed, while in the case of men overtime and short-time were the main regulators for changes in demand.¹² Thus, it was by no means exceptional when GDR high officials discussed female participation in production in economic terms, though they tended to regard all day-care for children etc. as extra costs for female workers.¹³

¹¹ C. v. Oertzen and A. Rietzschel, "Comparing the Post-War Germanies: Breadwinner Ideology and Women's Employment in the Divided nation, 1948-1970", in *International Review of Social History*, vol. 42, 1997, Supplement, pp. 175-196; idem, "Das "Kuckucksei" Teilzeitarbeit. Die Politik der Gewerkschaften in deutsch-deutschen Vergleich", in G.-F. Budde (ed.), *Frauen arbeiten*, 1997, pp. 212-251.

¹² V. Beechey & Tessa Perkins, *A Matter of Hours. Women, Part-time Work and the Labour Market*, Oxford 1987 (Polity), esp. p. 76.

¹³ Oertzen & Rietzschel in IRSH 1997, Suppl., p. 184-5.

What is specific in the Swedish case is the growth of an official equality programme for families which included a new role for males. The emancipation of men, as the term was in the 1960s and 1970s, meant that men had to be freed from the traditional role expectations. As shown by Klinth, considerable effort was made by individual actors in politics to convince Swedish men that they needed another conception of their tasks in society than the traditionally inherited one. Of course, it is impossible to measure the acceptance of the message about the new male role but it is noteworthy that the use of the social aid system for families could be used equally by men and women and a change in attitude certainly took place. For the aims of this investigation it is most important, however, to see that the state used indirect means—propaganda through its agencies for the use of the family programme in the first hand—to change attitudes rather than rigid and compulsory policy measures to force men into new roles.

In the other two countries even less effort was made to change the male role during the period under consideration here. In the FRG individual and sometimes organised propaganda for a change of male attitudes can be noted, but the state did not engage itself in this goal.

Conclusion: Policies and the change of a gendered society

There is one important similarity in the carrying through of a policy aimed at changing old gender divisions of labour in the three countries under study here. In all three countries the state has in one way or other acted to relate legislation closely to a wide-spread ideological conception in society. This has been carried out in different ways, but obviously it has been deemed important that the distance between prevailing ideological convictions and political practice should never be vast.

This means that the ideological value of gender relations was great. In many other questions governments dared to take decisions in order to form an opinion or even to show that existing convictions were badly founded. In many economic matters, school and education matters, agricultural matters, and matters concerning communications, governments did not make public opinion a touchstone for the feasibility of carrying through reforms. But in gender relations they did.

This does not mean, however, that official policies—beside these there were party policies of a more or less determined equality content—were the same in the three countries, or that they used the same methods to relate state policy to prevailing ideology. On the contrary, it has been shown here that the FRG state was least innovative in this area. In the FRG the state tended to follow changes in public opinion rather than try to change it. The GDR state acted in the opposite way. Its policy was determined by the government in the first place and the official state policy was then propagated to the public in order to make ideology conform to policy rather than the reverse. In Sweden the state acted both ways. Civil servants were authorised to propagate certain policy standpoints without an official state policy to relate them to. When the opinion was established, party (the Social Democrats) and state were moved to make this policy official and the basis for legislation.

It seems that the question of gender roles and labour market was a very typical example of Deborah Stone's idea that policy-making is a question of forming and reforming groups and spreading convictions. This is what happened in all three countries, Sweden, the FRG and the GDR. It is also apparent that one cannot conclude from the differences in political forms between the three states what would be their adopted policy and which means would be used to implement it. Especially not the latter. Most energy was devoted to ideology and bringing state policy and ideology into harmony. The ways of doing this were dissimilar and may be said to correspond to what might be expected from the political system. Activities and initiatives through individuals and groups were of utmost importance for this process.

In spite of all the energy that was spent on the forming of a new ideology it seems that old convictions had a firm grip on large parts of the population in all three countries. Patriarchalism was traditional and strong and could not be extirpated in just a few years. The role of men had to be changed at the same time, for gender relations are mutual. The effort to create a new conception of men's roles and to make men accept them was much weaker and came later, if it came at all. It is visible in Sweden both as ideology and as a weak state policy; one may doubt that it existed in the GDR; the change may have been quite strong in the FRG in some parts of society, while the state and its policy were almost unaffected by such ideas.

Thus the strong ideological movement to change women's roles in society and to make it possible for them to take part in the labour market according to their wish led to state action and legislation in some respects though no strong groups propagated a new male ideal and little state support was given to reforming men's roles and conditions in society.

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Three states and three different systems, this is how Sweden and the two Germanies were perceived by most observers in the fifties, sixties and seventies. However, the three states faced similar problems in their social policies. One major problem was the overheated labour market. To make women gainfully employed would solve part of this problem, but this solution clashed with traditional values and the existing division of labour between men and women. Was the state willing to transform the existing gender system, which means could be used, and were men and women in society willing to accept such a transformation? These are the main questions treated in this volume.

The book presents the result of one part of a comparative research project on state policies in Sweden and the two German states in the decades after World War II. Both Swedish and German historians have been involved and they have studied not only policy but also implementation.

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