

Family and the Welfare State - Social Ecological Perspectives

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ABSTRACT This paper examines one of the least studied areas that deals with the relation between the family and the state. The welfare state, notwithstanding the changes occurring in it, cannot destroy the family; on the contrary, it improves the family. One needs to examine here whether the relation between family development and family policy is destructive or constructive. In this paper, a simple reductionism is rebutted, and it is argued that changes in family living owe to a reaction of complex sociological factors. The argument is well exemplified with examples from various European countries.

INTRODUCTION

The relation between the state and the family has always been put into question. Both elements of this relation are prototypical for social systems and both of them have undergone deep transformations in that recent period of history that we call modernity. For Aristotle (in his theory of friendship and "oikos") and still for I. Kant (in his "Recht der häuslichen Gesellschaft") personal and material spheres were still integrated. Starting with J.G. Fichte and especially with G.W.F. Hegel, family itself becomes explicitly conceptualised as a juridical relation. In his "Philosophy of Rights" Hegel puts the role of family and marriage into the centre of his social theory. For him, family is the starting point of "civil society" ("bürgerliche Gesellschaft") and in so far a "second root of the state" (cf. Weber 1986). In contrast to Kant's concept of "morality" Hegel's idea of "Sittlichkeit" tries to overlap the private and the public sphere, the individual and the collective aspects of social life. "Family" is a centre of this overlapping consensus ("das Sittliche der Ehe besteht im Bequ Coastline dieser Einheit als substantiellem Zweck", B 163). At this

point, the concept of *Sittlichkeit* implies a spiritual-religious notion ("substantial goal"), which holds for the multidimensionality of Hegel's view on the family ("Was aber dem Menschen natürlich ist, verwandelt er in Gesistige", B 523).

Hegel's theory of the family marks the deep shift from traditional to modern thinking in the relation between family and public life, especially the state. Family, marriage, church, state—all of these institutions have been put in question with the rise of Enlightenment and capitalism. Family relations became letently unstable, they became more and more dependent on societal conditions. Referring to Hegel this instability destroys neither society nor the family, due to the "sittliche Auflösung der Familie" (B 177) as it is marked by the selfconstituency of the child, which has been educated as a free personality. The internal dynamics between formation and dissolution of the family enables society—remember Hegel's concept of "corporations" ("Korporationen") to encapsulate the idea of the family within her own structure.¹

These introductory remarks on some roots of modern social theory could lead the way to our complex question on the relation between the welfare state and the family. The juridical perspective of Hegel highlights that family is a dynamic entity, which logically by its structure contains continuity and delusion, stability and change. This *dynamic perspective* is a very actual one. When emphasising the changes in the history of the family, one of the leading German sociologists of the family *i.e.* concludes that, in the light of his findings, it would be better to talk not of "family", but of "family forms of living" (Kaufmann, 1995, p.5).

Kaufmann's puts a further argument concerning the relation between family and welfare state, that shall serve as a starting hypothesis in the present paper: he argues that family is a "policy resistant area" (ibid., p. 9) - resistant against direct and international efforts of influencing families by interventionist state politics, *i.e.* solely motivated by demographical concerns. This hypothesis provokes a preliminary answer to the leading question of this paper: the welfare state cannot destroy the family, but it can improve families, if its interventionist logic fits their needs. By conceptualising the relation between family development and family policy that way, it could hardly become a destructive, but under certain circumstances a constructive relation. Is this realistic?

FAMILY CHANGE: DESTRUCTION OR TRANSFORMATION?

In modern industrialised societies we cannot find by definition the "traditional", preindustrial family, which is basically understood as the "household family", a family type centred around economic functions but in so far holistic as the family fulfilled in a traditional subsistence economy a wide set of non-economic functions as well. In addition, longterm historical comparisons indicate that the family has always been constituting a changing social institution and that, empirically speaking, family never existed as a uniform pattern. In most cases, in history and in crosscultural comparison different family forms can be found, even when, at a given point in history, a particular family type was in a dominant position. We can also conclude from long-term historical comparisons that there have ever been certain historical periods during which the portion of children being born out of wedlock was much higher than (in most countries) today. By the same means, we can detect that the portion of married individuals among all marriageable individuals was significantly lower than it is

today. Thus, one cannot speak of a historical and geographical universality of the "modern family" so "familiar" to us.

Following the tradition of Talcott Parson's theory of differentiation, generations of family sociologists have been defining the "modern" family with its origin in the first part of the 20th century as being characterised by a -compared with traditional societies- reduced set of functions, especially economic ones. The so-called "Parsonian normal family" (cf. Tyrell and Herlth, 1994), the "nuclear family", centred around basically two subsystems, the parents subsystem and the parent-child relationship, wherein it made sense to distinguish the mother-child and the father-child relationship. There exist many reasons for interpreting the development from the traditional to the modern family as an evolutionary universal phenomenon of modernisation. Some scholars at the end of the 20th century anticipate that this evolution has not yet come to an end: they regard the "modern family" - the Parsonian "normal family" - as becoming further dissolved into so-called "non-conventional forms of living" (cf. Schneider, 1995), *i.e.*, one-parent families, step-family and foster-family systems, unmarried partnerships, artificial reproduction and so on. It seems to be unclear, whether this development can be interpreted as just another change, even as further "modernisation" of the family, or whether it is a kind of signpost to the destruction of the family in its current form.

As one of the first arguments in favour of a negative correlation between the expansion of the welfare state and the stability of the family, the Moynihan report ("The Negro Family") in the 1960s has been the subject of stormy political controversies (Moynihan, 1965). But in the meantime, it is seen by some authors as a "prophetic document" (cf. Neckerman et al., 1988, p. 397). Since then the proportion of out-of-wedlock birth among black Americans has risen to 57 per cent in the 1980s². Family instability, originally viewed in the United States as a problem of the black community, became

increasingly common among the white population. The larger proportion of female-headed families among the poor, the "feminization of poverty", life-long welfare dependency, and teenage pregnancy are further aspects of these destructive processes (cf. Kamerman and Kahn, 1988).

Charles Murray became one of the most prominent exponents in the Reagan era of the 1980s concerning the view that liberal social welfare policies of the Great Society era have reduced the incentive to work and to maintain stable two-parent families. In his book "Loosing Ground" (Murray, 1984, pp. 124ff.), he argued that policies intended to reduce poverty have instead created more poverty, because the disadvantaged reject the traditional avenue of mobility in favour of short-term gains derived from welfare and crime. Murray claimed that work incentive programs under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) lured the "working poor" into welfare. Moreover, AFDC regulations did not permit payment of welfare benefits if the couple were to share a household, regardless of their civilian status. Murray's and other authors similar claims regained political support within the framework of the "conservative revolution" of the Republicans in the mid-Nineties and stopped any efforts of the Clinton administration to reform welfare policies (cf. Murswieck, 1996). But empirical evidence for those claims is nevertheless at least mixed, as Neckerman et al. demonstrate: "although welfare may play a minor role in marital breakup and a more significant role in single mother's decisions to establish independent households, by itself it cannot account for the marked shift to single-parent families among blacks or whites" (Neckerman et al., 1988, p. 406). Instead, the authors point to the problem of male joblessness especially among black Americans as a much more significant cause for the reluctance of men to take over responsibility for their children and their families.³

One of the most prominent representative of the "communitarian" movement, the sociologist Amitai Etzioni broadens this scope by criticising the "parenting deficit" in American society at all. Parents dramatically reduced their time investments for their children within the past thirty years. Instead, both parents go to work with increasingly more working hours within jobs with lower pay. They deposit their children (in the United States) in day care centers with insufficiently educated and low income personnel: "The community - that is, all of us - suffers the ill effects of *absentee* parenting" (Etzioni, 1993, p. 69). Although citing a 1990 Gallup poll which found that one-half of those households with working mothers would want the mother to stay home if "money were not an issue", he nevertheless recognises major ramifications for a political and cultural agenda, concerning a "reevaluation of the importance of children (...). First, potential parents must consider what is important to them: more income or better relationships with their children. Most people cannot 'have it all,'" (ibid., p. 64). Etzioni criticises the "consumerism" and the "careerism" of modern American culture, which inherently devalues children and family and weakens all structural and traditional orientations towards community and care. Thus, he identifies the destructive tendencies for the family not primarily within the welfare state on the contrary, he argues for an active European style family policy (ibid., pp. 70ff.), but within an anti-communitarian, anti-moralistic and in so far anti-social economic culture.

One could add similar findings and interpretations of destructive tendencies for families within the European context. However, most of them lack a honest reference about their indicators: are the tendencies mentioned above indicators for destruction or indicators for change? The reference point for the first position is a certain concept of "normality", an idea how families should be like in order to maintain their functions optimally and, in most cas-

es, an idea of optimised parenting. The reference point for the second position is "individualism", a certain kind of relativism, which interprets those facts under the perspective of autonomy, predominantly the autonomy of women. In a similar manner, Lüscher distinguishes two family models in family rhetoric: "family models which in principle assume an institutional or 'natural' determination of correct family form and others which in principle assume an individualistic or subjective openness" (Lüscher, 1995, p. 62).

An empirical point of view may help to come to realistic interpretations- and at the same time would reduce some of the dramatising. Burkart, using German data, shows that, statistically speaking, a "pluralisation of living arrangements" can be identified only within the age cohort between 26 and 29 years: "The different living arrangements (living with one's parents; living alone; living in a liberal union; being married; living with children) are roughly equally distributed among this age cohort. Among the younger age cohort (up to 25 years of age), living in the family of origin predominates, whereas among the older age cohort (starting with 30 years of age) living in family which they founded themselves predominates" (Burkart, 1995, p. 6). He summarises: "The fear or hope - which expression one employs depends on one's point of view-that large numbers of people turn away from marriage and family, has not been verified. But families change their appearance: They get smaller, family formation occurs later in individuals' biographies, and they get dissolved more often" (ibid.). In her brilliant book on the "postmodern" "brave new families" in the Silicon Valley Judith Stacey adds to this picture the important aspect, that "postindustrial transformations encouraged modern working-class families to reorganise and diversify themselves even more than middle-class families" (Stacey, 1991, p. 254).⁴

Further on, these empirical sketches put the evolutionary question into mind, whether the

transformation of the family - with its potentially destructive aspects - has been caused by the development of the modern welfare state, the development of social security systems, especially of the old age pension plans, or whether the making of the modern family has been the outcome of social changes in subsystems of society other than the state, *i.e.*, within the economical system, the cultural ; system or the legitimisation system (esp. religion).⁵

An alternative argument for blaming the welfare state for family change would point to the genetic role of *capitalism* in the evolution of the modern family by demanding mobility and by destroying the very prerequisites of subsistence economy, dissolving local markets by integrating them into a single world market, followed by the "commodification" of the labour force as dependent workers into the labour market. Empirical evidence for supporting an *economical argument for family change* can be found not only in the literature on past societies, *e.g.* in the writings of Marx on the English working class of the 19th century, but equally in the peripheries of today's megalopolises like Mexico City, Calcutta, or Cairo with their dramatical disruptions of traditional familial norms resulting in crime and anomie. The differentiation of submarkets (for production, labour, consumption etc.) and the residual role of the modern family within all of these markets holds another set of arguments concerning the economical framework.

A third evolutionary framework contains *cultural arguments for family change*. They point to the processes of individualisation and to the "cult of the individual" as a cultural concept of modernity. This concept has been evolved not only by economical and political (esp. democracy and human rights) change, but also by the Western Culture, *i.e.*, with Hollywood's modernised idea of romantic love or the world wide pop culture ranging from the Beatles to Madonna. The cultural individualism includes fundamental antipathies towards all types of community, which, in turn, claim

continuity, obligation and othercentredness. These cultural changes - combined with modern reproductive technologies (esp. birth control) - deeply question the traditional role of women and erode the traditional patriarchal supremacy of men. As a consequence, the family model based on sexist forms of the division of labour has been regarded as being questionable, too. Research on the historical decline in the birth rate within the European cultural hemisphere as well as research on the development of the birth rate in Third and Fourth World countries can be summarised altogether in one formula: "The higher the educational level among women, the weaker the traditional definition of gender roles, the lower, in turn, is the number for children and the lower, as a consequence, is the importance of the family" (Burkart, 1995, p. 8). If one considered the inclusion of girls and women into the educational system as welfare state politics, one could argue that the welfare state distracts the family by means of educational measures, it nevertheless seems to be more precise to regard this correlation as a cultural source of family change.

We should note a fourth source of family change, which can be found within *legitimation arguments for family change*. This framework of arguments highlights the process of secularisation and the loss of spiritual-religious foundations of family models. Although there exist "counterrevolutions" within this type of change, i.e. the rise of fundamentalist efforts to foster Islamic or other traditionalist modes of legitimisation being a case in point, one can diagnose a complex legitimisation transfer from religion ("holy family") towards secular institutions on this societal level, i.e. constitutional courts, social sciences and so on. The goal of the new procedures of legitimisation is "individual autonomy", not only with respect to cultural practices and the questioning of traditional community bonds, but with reference to a concept of individual freedom and responsibility which is unprecedented in human histo-

ry. Anyway, it is very difficult to judge whether the legitimisation change of the family implies destructive or -on the contrary! - constructive tendencies. One could argue, that the value changes help "the family" - understood as an ideal type of community between parents and their children - to survive under new social conditions, as a non-traditional community of individuals. I will pick up this line of arguments at the end of the paper.

Therefore, from a sociological point of view, it would be simple reductionism to blame the welfare state as the one and only catalyst of family destruction or at least family change. In summary, modern family development seems to be more intelligible when considered as "*a horizontal differentiation of familial living forms as a reaction to complex societal changes*" (Vaskovics, 1994, p. 89).

ACHIEVEMENTS OF FAMILIES AFTER MODERNISATION

The current demographic situation of the modern family in the Western World has been described as a result of a "second demographic transition" (cf. Lesthaeghe, 1992) since the 1960s towards a "below-replacement fertility". This transition can be clearly distinguished from the demographic changes in fertility and nuptiality that formed the "first demographic transition" in the 18th and 19th century. Alongside with the influence of economic factors, the recent demographic changes are also closely interconnected with the rise of individual autonomy; the demographic change could be paralleled with the value change explained i.e. by the concept of the "silent revolution" of Ronald Inglehardt. One of the most obvious aspects of this transformation is marked by the *loss of the plausibility of marriage as an institution and by a biographical disposability of parenthood*. Marriage and family became a topic of decision of the individual or the couple, respectively. Parenthood lost its automatism and became one, although very favoured

option among others. With respect to the welfare state: continuous partnership and parental care are no longer a familial contribution to society without saying.⁶

Differences in national, (and religious) cultures in Europe (which are even more marked in a world-wide comparison) result in demographic forms of family development which are typologically distinguishable (cf Roussel, 1992):

a) the South European model (Spain, Italy, Greece, Portugal) is marked by the following characteristics: low fertility; low or high divorce rates; low number of liberal unions; very low number of out-of-wedlock births.

b) the "softened" model (Austria, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland) showing these characteristics: low fertility; average or high divorce rates; low number of liberal unions; very low number of out-of-wedlock births.

c) the Scandinavian model (Sweden and Denmark) showing the following characteristics: fertility rate conditionally high; very high divorce rates; very high number of out-of-wedlock births.

d) the liberal model (France, Great Britain, Norway, the Netherlands) displaying the following features: fertility rates conditionally high; very high divorce rates; average number of liberal unions, very high number of out-of-wedlock births.

Roussel is more in support of the thesis of a demographic rupture emerging in the 1960s which is held by Lesthaeghe and others. He assumes that all Central European states will have joined the "softened" model at the beginning of the 21 century. In the future, family development in Europe will be characterised by the following changes: the number of marriages will continue to decline, relationship prior to cohabitation will be more unstable than marriages, and it will no longer be feasible to measure the frequency of separation in accordance to divorce rates alone, because separations of unmarried couples will have to be tak-

en into account (cf. Salzmann, 1994, p.40).

One might wonder why a liberal society is so much concerned with private facts as the family. We can call this a liberal paradox. With reference to their stability, families must be *self-centered* systems, who follow their own *communitarian logic*. Family is a prototype of a societal community (cf. Parsons, 1979, chapter 8), by quoting Hegel: of "sittliche" community, which at the same time is consciously self-centred and - at least unconsciously-society-centred. This resolves the liberal paradox. The public interest concentrates on the *consequences*, which are the products of familial activities concerning education, health maintenance for their members and the founding of solidarity orientations. The welfare state is profoundly interested in the continuous maintenance of certain functions of the family.

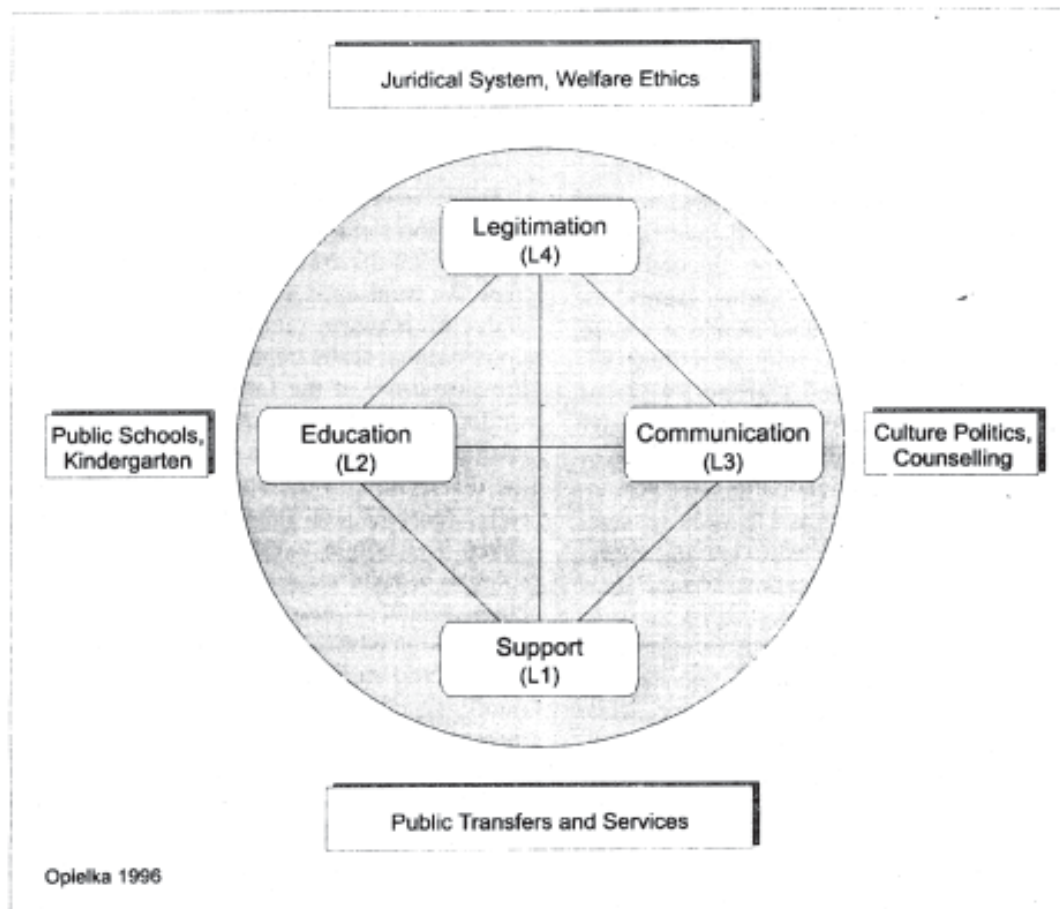
Within the body of literature on family politics and policies a variety of definitions of the functions of the family can be found. Due to the lack of theory on a macro-social level, their differentiation is subject to free choice. In order to give an example: a "recreational function" and a "placement function" (the latter being related to status) has, in part, been placed on equal footing with a "household function", a "generative function" and a "educational function" (i.e. Bethusy-Huc, 1987, pp. 8ff.). Kaufmann argues for a division of the familial functions into five categories: "cohesion and emotional stabilisation", "procreation", "caring and educating children", "household maintenance, health and recreation" and "mutual help" (Kaufmann, 1995, pp. 34ff.). In table 1, I systematically relate these partial functions to four functional categories (level 1 to 4) which, in turn, are systematically related to the areas of intervention of the welfare state: the economic functions regarding household and practical mutual help ("*support*"), the field of generative and educational functions ("*education*"), the functions of mutual emotional support, recreation, cultural and moral action carried out by means of "*communication*", and

those functions aiming at the maintenance of structural patterns and at the feedback of familial action by means of supra-individual values ("legitimation").

In most European welfare states the majority of transfers seem, at least quantitatively, to supplement the economic support functions of the family (on level 1). Family researchers argue therefore that those household functions have become less important in favour of its educational (level 2) and communicative-emotional (level 3) functions. Empirical proof, however, for this line of argument is difficult, because a simple loss-and-gain-pattern has to

take into account that the functions of the family have changed their face within their dialectical relation with welfare state interventions and other societal changes mentioned above. Additionally, they have changed their face because of new needs fulfilled and functions gained, especially in the field of communication, education and so on, but also on the level of support/household functions (*i.e.* in the field of private consumption or management of household technologies). One should reconstruct the change of functions on every of the four levels in order to come to precise results, what cannot be done here.

Table 1 : Family Functions and Fields of Intervention of the Welfare State



The tendency in family sociology to view the family exclusively in the light of its functions should be rendered as problematic, because this notion straightforwardly deconstructs the family into its functions (*i.e.* Meyer, 1993). Under certain circumstances, however, the disintegration of certain functions considerably influences their performance. Two well-known examples for the ambivalent effects this tendency has should be mentioned here. First, the differentiation of care services for the elderly, which are relocated from of the family context to professional service providers. The transfer of old family members to old age homes and other institutions and the evacuation of infirmity and death from the life world of younger people connected to it also causes - alongside with significant costs for the public - that the older generation is less and less perceived as a productive resource for the community. The second example deals with filiation, which is a familial core function. In Germany joint custody is about to be implemented by law as an automatic procedure after divorce as well as for unmarried couples upon their request. In this case, too, the empirical evidence is ambivalent: a "normal family" either dissolved by individual choice or constituted in an informal way only, nevertheless is treated as a normal family proper. Whereas joint custody for liberal unions is likely to have an impact on the stabilisation of this form of living-in addition, it might enforce the perception of this form of living as a "transitory stage" toward marriage (cf. Vaskovics and Rupp, 1994)-, it is likely that the post-divorce stage will become even more complicated. At least, if no relevant mechanisms for safeguarding children's rights were integrated. The very tendency of detaching functions from the concrete family (as an institution) constituted by individuals is a prerequisite for the conception and justification of implementing an automatism in joint custody.

Regardless of how these functional areas are defined and valued: the familial achievements

can no longer be taken for granted. "The arrival of children is less and less a natural event, but a consequence of the stabilisation of the contexts of partnership" (Kaufmann, 1995, p. 10). The future of families will very much depend on whether the cultural and economic conditions for a widespread stabilisation of continuous partnerships can be developed. With respect to the cultural changes, this necessitates the chance for gender partnership, while in the economic sphere this task necessitates the chance for parenthood without enormous disadvantages concerning self-fulfilment of mothers and fathers - what is still the discouraging reality. But how could those goals, which would profoundly affect personal behaviour, be achieved without political mobilisation and state intervention?

RELATIVE AUTONOMY AND SOCI- ETAL INSTITUTIONALISATION OF THE FAMILY

When making an interim conclusion on whether the welfare state does or does not destroy the family from a sociological point of view, we come upon a dynamic relationship, a dialectics between "autonomy" and "institutionalisation" of the family. The hypothesis of the autonomy of the family with regard to welfare state intervention, which is at least a relative one, characterises, among other issues, the discussion on the emergence of the so-called "post modern" family (cf. Lüscher et al., 1990). This notion asserts that, due to the dissolution of cultural prescriptions as well as by other societal evolutions, the degree of institutionalisation of the family should considerably decline and should yield to a patchwork of family types which could be summarised at most under the label of "private living arrangements" (cf. Schneider, 1994; Meyer, 1993).

In the meantime, though, this kind of notions referring to the theory of individualisation, have been qualified or even discarded by their advocates. *E.g.*, Lüscher concedes that

families are "post-modern in a relative manner only" (Lüscher, 1995a, p. 246), because their realities are constructed not only from aesthetic and cultural facts (which might possibly be de-constructed) Rather these realities are predominantly constituted by the shaping of economic and social functions.

Thus, those notions approaching the family from a sociological perspective of institutionalisation are more plausible. From this perspective, the phenomena of juridification, continuity, and social acknowledgement taking the forms of norms, moral standards and collective ascription of meaning can be analysed. In one of those attempts, so (regrettably) uncommon to sociological writing, to respond to the question whether family can be conceived as a societal partial system in a sociologically systematic manner, Kaufmann opens his notions with a presumption which is important for our discussion here: "The legitimisation of family politics as a specific area of politics does imply the recognition of the family as a macro-systematic structure" (Kaufmann, 1994a, p.42). Referring to the systematic contributions of Talcott Parsons and Niklas Luhmann, he investigates those functions of families in global society which "they, to a large extent, fulfil exclusively and whose aggregated effects are considered as being indispensable" (Ibid., p.50). He makes a strike at the functional category of *procreation* which is characterised, despite of the obvious liberalisation of partner relationships, by an increase in the normative obligations of parenthood in the course of the 20th century. The "binary code" (Luhmann), which is accepted by society as a whole, can be found under dichotomy "kin/nonkin" and has, in turn, been standardised by family and marital as well as by the law of inheritance (cf. Price, 1995). From this point of view, the juridical construction of family becomes the central linkage between family and society, and between family and (welfare) state. Therefore, it is feasible to put forward the hypothesis, that the effectiveness of interventions

by the welfare state correlates with their opportunity to be codified in laws.

This macro-sociological background given, institutionalisation implies losses in autonomy. At least this is the case, when families fail to represent their very own interests, as specifically embedded in the partial system "family", against the welfare state system and its actors in an effective way. Doing so, however, requires a variety of politically powerful organisations as well as stable institutions which are oriented towards central functional areas in society. Due to different traditions of the welfare state, in Europe the actual situation is extremely diverse, displaying a large spectrum which ranges from highly institutionalised family politics in France, over rather rhetoric family politics in Germany, to the virtual lack of family politics explicitly labelled as such in Great Britain. We should, however, not be deceived by the political power of resistance of the family and its relative autonomy of the familial partial systems against welfare state interventions, as it has been postulated by Kaufmann. On the contrary, we should bring our full attention to the latter: if it were not feasible for the welfare state to destroy the family, it could at least substantially obstruct it. In due course, we will consider if and how the state could *support* the family.

WELFARE STATE AND FAMILY POLICY

It is possible to think of modern societies not being welfare states at the same time? For systematic reasons, societies which are highly differentiated, pluralistic and democratic, are welfare states, *i.e.*, the societal subsystem of the state does not restrict itself to its autopoiesis, but this subsystem is structurally coupled with other subsystems. On one hand, the politics of the welfare state substitutes support in situations of risk which, to a varying scope and degree, were delivered by community systems in earlier times. On the other hand, the welfare

state absorbs new risks for which there exists no social experience in non-state coping. With the exception of some ideologists belonging to "neoliberal" circles (who owe their *raison d'être* to special, mostly vested interests), no honest social scientist would, therefore, argue for an abandonment of social policy. Thus, I start this section with the hypothesis, that in a world market society the lack of a welfare state indeed destroys the family, because founding and forming family became a question of personal choice for individuals who depends to a more or less significant degree on welfare state resources. At the same time, families do not only depend on protection by the state, they - themselves - also protect the welfare state: The welfare state would become unsustainable without stable marriages and families. Research results demonstrate, that the costs for unemployment, health maintenance or care for the elderly are dramatically higher for persons at risk without close familial network.

What kind of *quality* of welfare state interventions concerning family is needed? Familial work in the field of care concentrates in modern families (as in traditional families) nearly exclusively on women. The moral obligation connected with family work disadvantages women against men in all extra-familial spheres of life. A total economisation of familial functions and products is practically impossible and would have, if state agencies would try to do something like that, dramatic negative effects on familial cohesion. Gender partnership, therefore, necessitates a much stronger *inclusion of men* into the context of the non-market community work within the family. Men should participate more actively in the tasks of caring for and educating the children, doing household work, and caring for the elderly, if a (re-) stabilisation of the family should succeed.

Traditional (social democratic) welfare policies have been concentrating on social inequalities resulting from *class* differences and pragmatically - from labour market problems.

This has been characterised as a "commodifying", paid-labour-centred logic of the social security state, which despite some fundamental criticism concerning the role of women or visible minorities, has been viewed as at least an unavoidable step in the evolution of welfare societies (cf. Offe, 1990; Esping-Andersen, 1990). But since the integration of women into the labour market becomes more and more normal, the *number of children starts to become a new central elements of social inequality* - a quite recent phenomenon, which marks the societal role of children as a "public good"⁷. Kaufmann discovers a significant correlation between the birth rate and relative public expenditures for families among the member states of the European Union, but no correlation at all between birth rate and social expenditures of the welfare states (see table 2). He resumes: "The higher the proportion of social expenditures, which is spend towards the families, the higher the birth rate" (Kaufmann, 1995, p. 194). Kaufmann goes on by saying: "The individual economic utility of children *in favour of their parents* tends today towards zero. Because they do contribute neither to the family income nor to the cost of living in old age. Paradoxically, children therefore become a *public good*: sufficient offspring is in the interest of everybody, but everybody, too, has the individual choice to opt out of the necessary expenses. This is a typical situation, which necessitates state intervention" (Ibid).⁸

At least, it can be doubted whether welfare states, their current state of the affairs given, are in a position to address effectively the enormous challenges of politics and policies, which should lead to family stabilisation and, at the same time, to individual and communal options of action. Even when limiting the focus to the EU member states indicates that there are considerable differences between them. As mentioned above, there is a great variation in family development in Europe due to differences in national cultures. Systematic comparative studies on family politics and policies in

the EU member states did not exist before the 1990s. With regard to the genesis of this field of research, the contributions of Bahle should be mentioned (Bahle, 1995). This work has been continued with an international research project on family changes and family policies in the Western World (cf. Rothenbacher, 1995a). The study of Neubauer et al. (1993) provides a good overview. It is, however, limited to a description of political measures, of the representatives of these measures as well as to the discussion of family politics and policies. This fact is even more applicable for the valuable contributions of the "European Observatory on National Family Policies" (cf. Dumon, 1992, 1994) which was co-ordinated by W. Dumon and whose present co-ordinator is J. Ditch. It has rightly been pointed out that comparative research is still in the beginning, provided that family politics and policies are to be regarded not only as a more or less institutionalised area of isolated political measures, but also as a problematic interrelation between the opportunities of family development and the shaping of the conditions of political frame-

works (cf. Kaufmann, 1994, p. 147).⁹

Taking this into account, the comparative overview (Table 2) on the correlation between some demographic key variables (fertility rates, divorce rates and rates of illegitimate births) on the one hand and the portion of expenditures for family and motherhood, all other social security expenditures and national income on the other hand should only be regarded as illustration. Statistical inconsistencies significantly impede cross-national comparison (cf. Rothenbacher, 1995), because particular data is missing, e.g. data concerning the commonness and duration of liberal unions. The latter have often been considered as a substantial indicator for the weakening of marriage as an institution. With regard to the comparison of family policies, similar problems do exist: Especially the portion of expenditures for family and motherhood is highly influenced by different statistical demarcations. In addition, the actual effectiveness of a political measure (involving costs) obviously depends on its combination with other forms of regulation issued by social politics, the industry and pri-

Table 2 : Basic indicators for family development and family policy in EC-countries (in 1988; Numbers in brackets indicate the rank of each country; a = 1991, b = 1989, c = 1987 - the respective category is called "families and children", * = not available) (from: Lewis 1993, pp. 6-7; Kaufmann 1994, p. 149; Salzmann 1994, p. 27; Neubauer et al. 1994, p. 168; Social Security in the Nordic Countries 1990)

EC-Countries	Total fertility rate	Divorce rates (per 1000 existing marriages)	Illegitimate birth rates (births outside marriages/1000 total births)	Social Expenditures in % GDP	Expenditures for Family/Motherhood in %GDP	Expenditures for Family/Motherhood in % of Social Expenditures
Belgium	1.57 ^a (8)	8.4 (7)	106.7 (10)	27.7 (6)	1.8 (10)	8.4 (8)
Denmark	1.56 (9)	13.1 (1)	446.8 (2)	29.3 (3)	3.5 (2)	11.6 (4)
Germany	1.42 (10)	8.7 (6)	156.9 (6)	28.3 (4)	2.1 (8)	7.7 (9)
France	1.82 (5)	8.4 (7)	263.3 (5)	28.0 (5)	2.8 (4)	9.8 (7)
Greece	1.40 (12)	6.0 (10)	20.6 (14)	16.5 (14)	0.2 (14)	1.6 (14)
Ireland	2.17 (1)	0.0 (14)	118.7 (9)	22.4 (10)	2.6 (5)	11.9 (2)
Italy	1.34 (12)	2.1 ^b (11)	58.3 (13)	23.1 (9)	1.1 (12)	4.6 (12)
Luxembourg	1.64 (6)	10.0 ^b (4)	120.8 (8)	26.2 (8)	2.4 (6)	10.5 (6)
Netherlands	1.61 (7)	8.1 (9)	101.5 (11)	30.9 (2)	1.9 (9)	5.3 (11)
Portugal	1.42 (10)	* (12)	137.1 (7)	17.0 (13)	1.2 (11)	6.4 (10)
Spain	1.28 (14)	* (12)	91.2 (12)	17.2 (12)	0.3 (13)	1.7 (13)
Great Britain	1.84 (3)	12.3 (2)	251.4 (4)	22.1 (10)	2.3 (7)	10.6 (5)
Norway	1.84 (3)	9.37 (5)	360.0 (3)	26.4 ^c (7)	3.1 ^c (3)	11.6 ^c (3)
Sweden	2.10 ^a (2)	10.7 (3)	483.8 (1)	35.2 ^a (1)	4.2 ^a (1)	12.1 ^a (1)

vate action. The high portion of privately owned housing in the Netherlands, e.g. has not been included in this table, whereas family-related rent rebates in Germany have increased the portion of family-related support payments. Similarly, the same holds for the lack of countable periods of raising children in Denmark and the Netherlands, which, however, does not harm the women in question because the popular pension plan in these countries does not start out from participation in the labour market.

When we focus the central question of whether the effects of the respective welfare state on the family are deconstructive or constructive, definite results are hard to reach at. At first glance, a simple correlation between the expansion of welfare state payments related to family policy and family development does not seem to be an easy one, even more so because the basic indicators for family development employed in table 2 do not allow for an unambiguous assessment of the stability of the family, as already discussed above. A high portion of illegitimate births, at the same time, could be a sign for the breaking-up of the two-parents-family as well as it could indicate an increase in the number of liberal unions which, in turn, must not take second place in their quality to married individuals. A kind of welfare state evaluation with more precise answers on the question about its destructive/constructive tendencies can only be obtained within the context of careful research including the respective social-ecological framework. The latter, in turn, dramatically aggravates the comparability of the results. In our context here, it should be sufficient to outline some exemplary problems with those four countries in Europe which are most like to be influential for socio-political developments in the future: France, Germany, Sweden, and Great Britain (cf. Kaufmann, 1944, pp.155ff.; Schmid, 1996, pp. 74-134, 159-169).¹⁰

France has the longest tradition in family policy, fuelled by the motive of family as an

institution (i.e., a "familialist" notion) and by motives originated in population policy i.e., a "natalist" notion). These motives are represented by actors related to it: the social doctrine of Catholicism and the nationalist bourgeoisie (cf. Schultheis, 1988). This results in a system of daycare institutions for small children and pupils which has the highest density in the European Community and in policies safeguarding a guaranteed minimum income, especially for single parents and low income families. Today, France - which had the lowest birth rate in Europe between 1830 and 1950 - has the second highest birth rate in the EC. Also, the portion of large families with three or more children is higher than in other EC-countries. Due to liberalisation in the 1980s, the number of out-of wedlock birth strongly increased raising to 28.2% in 1989. The vast majority of these children has been acknowledged by both parents. In 1989, the Constitutional Court has ruled that liberal unions and marriages are equal in law. In addition, the labour force participation of women in the child-bearing age between 25 to 50 years is high, ranging between 75 to 80 percent. Kaufmann values France as a "model of successful family policies which succeeded in the attempt to bring the modernisation of familial living conditions into line with the economic, social and demographic needs of the country to a large extend" (Kaufmann, 1994, p. 158).

Family policy in Germany is rooted in an institutionalistic understanding which defines marriage and family as an epitome of privacy (cf. Gerlach, 1996; Münch, 1990). After the World War II, an open debate with arguments taken from population policy were made taboo because of the family policy of the Nazis motivated by race theory and eugenics. Alongside with grounds based on the family as an institution - which were investigated by Lüscher (cf. Lüscher, 1995) under the term "family rhetoric" - and beginning at the end of the 1960s, motives concerning policies for women and children increasingly emerged as well as the

socio-political motive of compensating social disadvantages deriving from parental responsibilities. As a result, there exists the concept of "burden payments for families" ("*Familienlastenausgleich*") which is unique to German family rhetoric (cf. Pechstein, 1994; Netzler, 1995). Due to the federal organisation of the state and to the delegation of responsibilities for social services to the municipalities and federal states, there are significant regional differences in the supply of preschool care. On a national level, following the changeover of power to a liberal-conservative government in 1981, family policies concentrates on monetary transfers, in particular such ones which should safeguard the temporary leave of employed women for raising their children in their first three years of age. It is a characteristic of German family policy that it is highly isolated from other political areas (cf. Kaufmann, 1994, pp. 159f.).¹¹ Empirically speaking, Germany has one of the lowest fertility rates in Europe, a low rate of gainful employment of women, and a relatively low number of out-of wedlock births. In the discussion of family policy, these facts are persistently traced back to the incoherence of a practice of family policy which can hardly be covered by ambitious platforms. At the same time, we have, here in Germany, the most intensive discussion on "crisis" and "dissolution" of the family (cf. Burkart, 1995; Lüscher, 1995a), which is perhaps surpassed only by the debate in the US. This German discussion has been exaggerated simultaneously by a frivolous delight at the potential degrees of freedom of "individualisation" and by a romanticized mourning for the end of communal living forms, for which family was regarded as being prototypical (cf. Opielka, 1996). Empirical studies (most prominently among them: the German "Survey on Families"), however, show that in Germany - in West Germany as well as in East Germany - the family is not an "endangered species", but these studies indicate that familial orientations are of a central importance for the overwhelming ma-

jority of the population, not only in their normative meaning but also for their practice of everyday life (cf. Bertram, 1991, 1992).

In Sweden, for historical reasons, the constellation in family policy is completely different from both France and Germany. Very early in recent history, a high priority was given to the extension of women's rights and, thus to equal treatment of both sexes, which was formally achieved quite early, *i.e.* during the 1920s. At least during the 1930s and 1940s, Swedish family politics and policies contained a component which was markedly oriented toward population policy and partially oriented toward eugenics justified by paternalistic-economic reasons, even among the ruling Social Democratic Party. This was an attempt to keep the community of the "people's home" homogenous (cf. Myrdal, 1941; Henningsen, 1986, pp. 96ff.). After World War II, Swedish family policy turned its attention simultaneously to affirmative action for the equalisation of both sexes in the labour market and to a diminution of the effects of marriage by a far-reaching equalisation of married couples and liberal unions, by separated and independent parental power for both parents as well as by individualised taxation and individualised social security. Today, Sweden possesses the highest labour force participation rate among women in Europe - with an extraordinarily high portion of part-time work among women, though-, and the highest birth rate in Europe. This unusual combination is generally said to be caused by the extended infrastructure of day-care institutions and by the generous possibilities of reducing work time existing for both parent. By international standards, Sweden holds a top rank in parental leave by men, even if the number of men taking this leave does not significantly exceed 10% of all leave periods taken by women and men.

It is also astonishing that family structures in Sweden basically remained the same, despite of all the efforts to reduce the importance of marriage. Although one out of two children is

born out of wedlock, *i.e.* outside of a formal marriage, most children grow up with both parents. Marriage, which eventually occurs quite often in long-lasting liberal unions seems to be entered into for the perspective of mutual support in old age.¹² In a way, the Swedish model of family policy - which, by the way, is only occasionally addressed under this label - seems to have transformed the agrarian-productivistic concept of two partners being actively involved in a process of production according to the demands of a modern industrial society; there is, at least, no room left for a housewife marriage (still so predominant in Germany). In this regard, the Swedish model also differs from that of France (or the US) where an exclusive concentration on women on family work is quite acknowledged. Despite of reservations, especially by conservative Europeans elsewhere, a destruction of the family cannot be detected in Sweden.

In Great Britain, the situation differs from all examples cited above. The term "family policies" is not employed there, too. There are two reasons for the fact that the portion of expenditures for families and mothers in relation to total social expenditures is above the average of the EC (cf. Table 2): First, social expenditures are understood in a significantly individualised manner. Second, considerable allowances are made for the benefit of families in need. The background for this is a concept of the welfare state aiming at fighting poverty, with the consequence that low income families - even with breadwinners among them - and single parents get allowances, whereas families whose income is above the poverty line (as defined by social assistance agencies) are extremely disadvantaged (if compared with people without children). This, in turn, has the consequence of a high rate of female gainful employment with the most likely motive of securing families' livelihood. It is remarkable, that there is a strong emphasis on policies related to children and that there exist diverse movements dedicated to children's rights.

Otherwise, a reductionist concept of the state's tasks and the handing over of safeguarding subsistence to the market logic and individuals (including the abandonment of legal protection of motherhood and a thin supply of day-care institutions) corresponds with an ideology of privacy.

The four welfare states that have been discussed above with reference to their profile in family policy, in a certain way constitute ideal types for principles of construction because, in my opinion, they allow for interesting points of reference with regard to the future shaping of family policy in Europe. For the purpose of conciseness necessary in this contribution, I shall outline their major features only. In doing so, I fall back upon a proposal made by Claus Offe¹³ who differentiates between four political-ideological pushes in the recent discussion on the welfare state in Europe (which also occur in North America). "Privatisation", "inclusion", "exclusion", and "guarantism" (cf. Offe, 1990, pp. 185ff.). Offe argues that these four strategies are sufficiently closely related to four political main currents which are predominant at the end of the 20th century: the liberal one, the social democratic one (*i.e.*, "traditional socialists"), the (right-wing) "conservatives", and the "green-alternatives".¹⁴

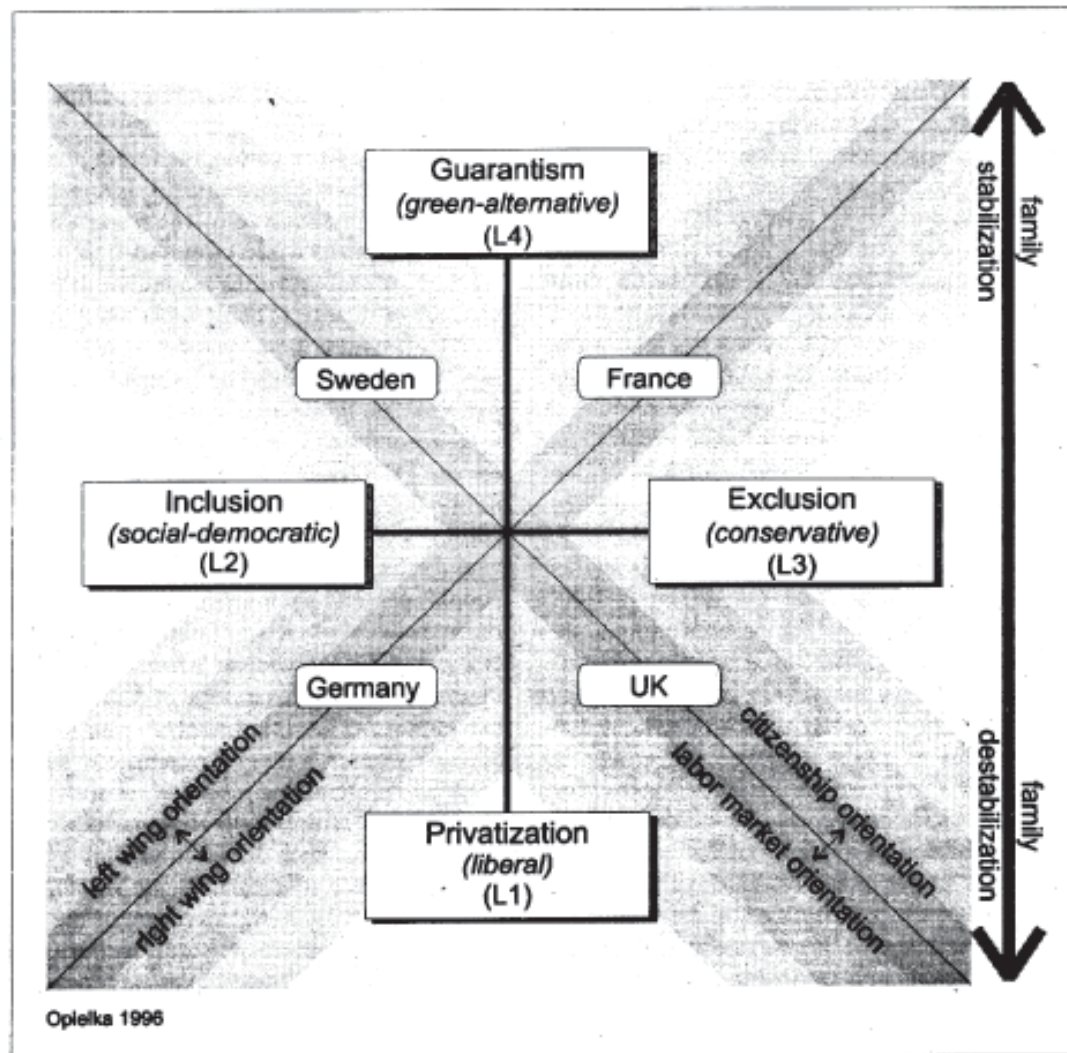
In historical terms, the policy of "inclusion" which has been used for the inclusion of individuals into the systems of social security which were outside that net before, has been predominant during this "social democratic century" (Ralf Dahrendorf). The concept of "inclusion" characterises the traditional social democratic model of the welfare state. From this point of view, inclusion was understood as a "de-commodification" (cf. Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 44ff), *i.e.* as a liberation from the total dependence on the employer-worker relationship by means of strengthening the position of the wage earner. It is questionable whether this strategy has met its definite ends - as it is frequently argued nowadays - or whether it suffers from deficits in its legitimacy, because

of the competition wage-earning workers experience from additional socio-political actors. From a family policy perspective, this position is a problematic one any way, because mechanisms of social security remain conceivable only within the context of gainful work.

In table 3, I have graphically arranged the four options of the policy of welfare states. In this regard it should be noted that particular political strategies have been assigned to the

four European welfare states. The political strategies never are clear-cut ones, though, but the respective countries constitute mixtures of these ideal types¹⁵. From a family policy perspective, I place the German model of the social welfare state into the field of interpenetration between "inclusion" and "privatisation". Germany belongs to the "inclusion" type due to its social democratic tradition, which, in terms of family policy, can be proven by the im-

Table 3 : Four Welfare State Options in Europe



provement safeguarding measures within the context of the pension system against the risks surviving dependants might have to cope with. At the same time, there exists a strong tendency to comprehend family not as a societal task, but primarily as a private task, which, in turn, finds its expression - among other aspects - in the principle of "subsidiarity", in extremely limited systems of public day-care for children, in the lack of out-patient care for the elderly supporting the family, and in the taxation model of "Ehegattensplitting" (i.e. the tax load is unequally distributed among married couples with dual income in disadvantage of the wife). These disadvantages given, it would be more adequate to provide parents with direct transfer payments or to take affirmative action in the labour market policy favouring women (as mothers) (cf. Ostner, 1995).

Traditionally, the welfare state model of "privatisation" has been supported by the employers' camp. Under the current conditions of both a heavy burden upon individual incomes caused by incidental labour costs and of the significant indebtedness of public budgets, this model meets significant response again and again. With regard to the effects on families, this approach is not very problematic under the precondition that incomes from participation in the labour market and property, respectively, are distributed relatively equally in society as well as between different types of families and households and between parents and people without children, resulting in similar prerequisites for conducting one's life: If these preconditions were not met, one could assume that familial living forms with their higher degree of vulnerability, which is due to the care for dependants (in most cases: for children) could be destabilised by a lack of welfare state interventions. I have indicated this dynamics in table 3 by an arrow positioned on the right side.

The third type of the welfare state could be labelled "exclusion". There is a close connection to the "inclusion" approach discussed above sharing the same assumption that the

"latent functions of socialisation and normation of the welfare state can only be fulfilled under the preconditions that 'inclusion' does not go 'too far' and that the 'second best' solution (more concrete: paying a visit to the social security office) is considered as a significantly worse solution and thus being a deterrent one" (Offe, 1990, p.193). At least in its present form of post-Thatcherism, the British welfare state is oscillating between a conservative option of restricting welfare state payments to care groups of the welfare state itself (according to the "Beveridge" tradition, parts of the lower classes belong to these core groups¹⁶) and an ideologically even more accentuated liberalistic renunciation of welfare state intervention at all.

Country to this position, the fourth position, i.e., the position of "guarantism", is attached to time-honoured motive of the trade unions, which perceived a "de-commodification" of mechanisms safeguarding the individual's subsistence in society as being most likely guaranteed by universalistic systems of regulation, which, in turn, should be independent from participation in the labour market. Only when this precondition is met, "normal" wage earners can get a feeling of security as they would not be threatened by a competition on undercutting wages provoked by groups with disadvantages in the labour market (women, young people, persons unemployed for long terms). From the point of view of family policy, Offe's analysis of the approach of "guarantism" offers important hints for a strategy in order to stabilise families. "The improvements and guarantees for women with an 'incomplete' educational and professional biography as well as for mothers and widows - it is remarkable that these bills have been driven toward by a liberal-conservative government - are suitable for lifting out their material situation of the grey area of family subsidiarity and welfare payments, at least with regard to those forms stipulated by social security legislation. Of course, the principle of guarantism constitutes the core

of a widely discussed outsider's opinion arguing for a decoupling of the participation in the labour force from the legal right to obtain modest, but nevertheless sufficient payments by means of a guaranteed basis income for all citizens" (Offe, 1990, p. 195).

The welfare cultures in Sweden and France approach the model of "guarantism" from different sides. As Sweden is concerned, this is true in so far as a unique combination of guarantist elements (more prominently among them: basis income in old age, child care, and care support), which are cushioned by corporatism, and inclusive elements oriented towards the labour market *e.g.*, with reference to transfer payments, parental leave is safeguarded within the context of gainful work; this approach is contrary to that in Germany) can be found there. The French model, in turn, combines in its family policy guarantist elements independent from labour market impact with a conservative orientation leading to significant socio-political discrimination against non-integration in the labour market if this non-integration occurs outside acknowledged traditional family roles.

With regard to all the other implications of the axes illustrated in table 3, I only go into the assumption contained in the marking on the right corner, that a "guarantist" family policy most likely has positive effects on family stabilisation. Whereas - as already indicated above - the opposing assumption of destructive tendencies of liberalist policy - *i.e.*, of a renunciation of the welfare state proper - can not be proven easily, astonishing evidences may be found for the assumption that social policy in general and family in particular are more likely to bring about constructive effects when they are shaped by "guarantism". How else could the demographic "record of success" shown, *e.g.*, for Sweden and France in table 2 be interpreted?

The exemplary discussion of four welfare state models and their stance towards families allows for a single, yet incomplete, answer to

our central question: the family cannot be destroyed by the welfare state (at least: not yet). The vast differences in family development seem to be interrelated with the national cultures of the welfare state - this is an interrelation on which research in family science did not cast much light up to now. This allows for the conclusion that our introductory hypothesis stating that the family is a "policy resistant area" is hardly tenable; it might be of some use as an optimistic negative assumption: the welfare state cannot destroy the family, but it is able to influence family development and concrete family forms to a considerable degree.¹⁷

THE CONSTRUCTIVE WELFARE STATE - SOME OUTLINES

What kind of welfare state intervention is most promising to support families - and not to destroy them? Living as a family - and his means basically: bringing up children - should be viewed as *one sustainable way of living*. Netzler proposed the concept of "value equivalence" (Netzler, 1995) to argue for family-oriented transfer systems, which transform familiar work to the effect of having an economic outcome not exactly equal to the participation in the labour market, but make family life sustainable. Child rearing should become a biographical period with a set differentiated rights, because (only) rights can be granted by the welfare state: rights of a sustainable income guarantee at least on a level which is markedly above the poverty line; rights of participation in different public spheres by guarantees for re-entering the labour market; rights for further education to maintain and update one's labour market competencies, and so on.

The socio-political increase in value of parenting from a parents' points of view, should constitute the core concept of the continuing development of the welfare state as indicated against the background of the analytical reflections discussed above. I have, however, attempted to demonstrate that the func-

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As a conclusion, yet another perspective will have to be taken into account when discussing the construction principles of the welfare state according to their relation with the family. I fall back upon Hegel's considerations, mentioned in my introductory remarks, on the differentiation between functions of the state on one hand, and the dialectical relationship between the state and the family on the other hand.

In a discussion about the ethical premises of the "post-modern social state" Koslowski criticised Hegel's idea of the state as an all-embracing umbrella of modern society: "Because Hegel's dictum - that what is rational is actual, and what is actual is rational - is not correct, it can also be said that the actuality of the state is not the actuality of the moral idea, but the struggle to actualise this idea in an ever deeper way. (...) The state and the churches present and keep alive the content of moral idea" (Koslowski 1990, p. 37)¹⁹ Koslowski's approach implies neither to super-elevate the state nor to demand too little of it. His emphasis on the interpenetration of the different spheres of society by the state and by the different state functions (*i.e.* social security state, cultural state or territorial state) merits attention. Koslowski's systemic view on the modern welfare state corresponds to a certain degree with the Post-Parsonian approach employed in the present paper, especially when it comes to the anchoring of its ethical principles and, in my words, its legitimating functions. In the latter perspective, however, Koslowski's approach appears to be incomplete: not only the (Christian) churches, but a set of different subsystems have taken over the function of legitimisation in modern societies, *i.e.* the scientific institutions as well as those institutions which foster the mixture of secular and religious rituals of modern societies that Robert Bellah has termed "civil religion" (*cf.* Opielka, 1996). This multidimensional view on society holds for some reluctance toward Koslowski's ethicist advocating within a duality of individual

vs. state, "that the mixture is too strongly on the side of the state bureaucracy, that this gives rise to crises in social insurance and in the relationship between the generations, and that therefore we must come to see the need for restructuring the way social insurance is weighted and for a greater degree of provision based on personal responsibility" (Koslowski, 1990, p. 43). On the contrary, I have tried to argue above that in modern welfare states the sources for income, services and welfare at all are manifold and should by no means be reduced to "personal responsibility" - understood as reliance on market income - and state provision only. This differentiation is needed, because the modern welfare state penetrates and regulates nearly all spheres of welfare production, at least to a certain degree. Non-regulation or deregulation consequently have to be scored critically whether they improve or worsen the living conditions of certain groups in society.

The influence of the welfare state on the process of family development - from the micro-perspective of families as well as from a demographical macro-perspective - seems to find its most clear-cut expression (historically as well as currently) within the system of old age pension plans. Although there is not very much evidence for a direct statistical correlation between the establishment and the amount of pensions on the one hand and, *i.e.*, the fertility rate of a certain population on the other hand, one may wonder whether the socialising of making provisions has any effect on family planning. Some authors are confident to offer evidence for such a connection and speak of a "welfare state illusion": "The social insurance system is leading to decreasing investment in future in the form of children. It is reinforcing the trend towards childless marriages or marriages with few children" (Koslowski, 1990, p. 48)²⁰. The arguments are convincing at first glance: "The modern 'contract between the generations' sets the traditional scheme of things on its head. Parents are no longer acquir-

ing capital as they once did to provide for themselves and their children, but rather, the children, via the state's system of compulsory savings through social insurance, are providing for their parents, for themselves and for their own children, *i.e.* for their grandchildren." (ibid., p. 50) Following this argument childlessness becomes rewarded. Another "welfare state illusion" should be added: "the older, working generation have distorted perception of reality and systematically overestimate the value of their assets in the form of their accumulated pension entitlements." (ibid.) Consequently this line of arguments concludes in a call for a "new subsidiarity", where "the family will play the primary, but not the only role" (ibid., p. 55). Following a broad discussion in Germany on the reform of the Bismarckian pension plan, Koslowski argues for a contributory basic pension and for the abolishment of the compulsory, income related pension system for wage earners. The economic assumption behind is "that provision for retirement can be made very largely by acquiring private capital" (ibid., p. 45).

The whole argument lacks, however, the insights of a realistic systemic approach to the inner differentiation of modern societies. First of all, the assumption that the decision for having children is, to a relevant degree, influenced by long-term considerations about economic support by one's children in the period of old age has very few empirical evidences. On the contrary, those industrialised countries esp. in Southern Europe, with a low extension of old age pension plans seem to have a low fertility rate as well. More important, however, is the evidence, that the decision for having children in modern societies has become much influenced by the support systems within the period of active parenthood (parents leave, children allowances, and above all, a well-established system of public child care). The most striking examples for that case are France and Nordic countries, esp. Sweden.

Secondly, it does not seem very convincing

to escape the all-embracing world-wide division of work and the multidimensional interconnection of the modern world by returning to a simple do-ut-des-principle, which has never been valid in pure type within traditional economies, too. Quite the reverse, the modern welfare state with its socialising effect concerning the provision for a large scale of risks appears to be entirely adequate to a differentiated society, which very few fundamentalists want to get rid of. Nevertheless, our discussion on advantages of the different types of welfare states has clearly demonstrated, that according to the respective model families seem to gain more or less support by society. A liberal economism, *i.e.*, which overemphasises the market forces of individual wages and properties, turns out to be subcomplex and therefore antifamilial.²¹

The welfare strategy which has been called "guarantism" proved to be successful in the field of family development; an outcome which a traditional economic thinking does not expect. If we think about the outline of the future welfare states, we should realise that family is made from individuals but is also a part of society. In order to survive productively in a modern society, the individual needs the shelter of the small community - the family - as well as the shelter of the great community - the society. "Guarantism" will be put into effect by concrete political measures, *i.e.* by a basic pension system as it is working in the Nordic Countries, in the Netherlands or to a certain degree - in Switzerland (cf. Opielka, 1997).²² It will be realised to an even greater extent, if a "guaranteed income" would be implemented. There are many reasons in favour of such an unconditional entitlement for all members of a given society, and, of course, a lot of scepticism concerning its implementation has been expressed (cf. Opielka and Vobruba, 1986; Offe, 1992; Scharpf, 1994). Very few research has yet been done on the effects of such a social reform on families. From the point of view of existing "guarantist" welfare politics and their results, one might hope that those effects

will be quite positive. However, the multicomplexity of familial change on the way to modernity calls for multicomplex welfare reforms as well. The very question in debate is their direction.

NOTES

1. I labelled this sociological "idea" of the family as a community-type within society as "structural institution" (cf. Opielka, 1996).
2. This is a higher percentage than in the "leading" European society, the Swedish one, with a proportion of 48 per cent (cf. Lewis, 1993, p. 7; see table 2) although one has to take into account that welfare conditions in Sweden are quite different from those in the United States.
3. This interpretation is at least ambiguous. A study on Dutch single mothers in houses for battered women showed, that the welfare state took over the role of a breeder in replacement for a male partner. This supplementary function of the welfare state (mainly by its non-discriminatory program of social assistance) reduced, obviously the need for the women to get married (cf. van Stolk and Wouters, 1987).
4. Stacey demonstrated that divorced working class women use in times of economic depression their kin network in a creative way and claim also the active support of their former spouses. Under certain circumstances the "modern" family will be transformed after the dissolution of the original relations of marriage and kinship into an "extended family" with a renewed kin network, which Stacey calls a "postmodern" family (cf. Stacey, 1991, pp. 251-271).
5. To a certain degree the differentiation of society as all-embracing social system into four subsystems follows Parson's AGIL-scheme (economy, polity, societal community, fiduciary system) (cf. Opielka, 1996).
6. This effects of demographic change do not necessarily mean that marriage and parenthood are less important for the people, but could be interpreted as an enforcement of commitment towards partner and child.
7. Although the duality of public-private is sub-complex it may help economists to understand the sociological findings; similar proto-economic arguments within the debate on family policy occur around conceptions like "human capital" used within the 5th Report on Families for the German Federal Government (cf. Bundesministerium für Familie und Senioren 1995).
8. Netzler employs a broader societal definition of "risk" with similar results: "The structural inconsiderateness" (Note: this term was introduced by Kaufmann into the German discussion of family politics: M.O.) toward families is not primarily constituted by assessing the family as an 'private issue' (which does not contradict its simultaneously accepted quality as a 'common good'), but is constituted by the non-perception of a risk incline of family *vis-à-vis* individuals without children caused by the lack of taking into account maintenance responsibilities in the case of need-oriented social transfers which, in turn, put a significantly heavier burden of losses in welfare when risks occur" (Netzler, 1995, pp. 44f.).
9. For a positive example see Gauthier (1993).
10. Concerning the demographic models mentioned above it has to be noted, that the "South European model" does not correspond with welfare patterns analysed here and is not viewed as influential for future European family policies.
11. We, at the State Institute for Family Research at the University of Bamberg, currently attempt to systematically analyse the impact of political processes not typically assigned to family policy under the project title "Continuous Observance of Politics and Policies Related to the Family".
12. The high degree of volunteer activities in Sweden (and, more generally, in Scandinavia), which topples the degree of such activities in other European countries might serve as an illustration for a considerable orientation toward community not restricting solidarity and mutuality to familial contexts. Vice versa this orientation, at the same time, supports the (communal) idea of the family (cf. Wolfe, 1989, pp. 168f.).
13. Offe's proposal starts with the assumption, that the welfare state sorts the population into three main categories: (a) people who, due to stable incomes from market participation or property, do not depend on transfer payments (be it money, goods, or services), (b) the core group consisting of the clientele of the welfare state who enjoys being legally entitled to portions of societal "transfer capital" (de Swaan) and (c) a residual category of those people who only - if at all - have access to welfare state payments under the precondition that they must meet certain behavioural standards.
14. In a similar attempt, Gösta Esping-Andersen differentiates between three welfare state regimes: (a) the liberal one, (b) the conservative (and strongly "corporatist") one, and (c) the social democratic welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1990, pp. 26ff.). As he concentrates on political economy, he neglects the "green-alternative" approach directed towards the legitimising bases of modern welfare states.
15. The structure of the table follows a systematic logic which has been leaned at the AGIL-scheme of Talcott Parsons, which cannot be discussed here further (cf. Opielka, 1996).
16. An element of "guarantism" originating in the "Bevridge" model does exist in the British tradition of

social policy. It can be detected in the policy concerning poor people and the state-controlled health system, but at least actually it does not seem to be a prominent feature in British social policy.

17. It is possible to put forward a sociological assumption for this fact by referring to the predominant structural medium of the welfare state, i.e., the medium of the law. In modern democracies, the law posits every individual as an irreducible subject of law. As long as the family, in turn, is the birthplace of the individuals, for the sociological and systematic reasons mentioned above, the welfare state as a constitutional state could destroy the family at the expense of self-destruction only.
18. Authors like Borchert (1989) argue that family oriented transfers should not be tied to the marriage status but to the support obligations towards children.
19. I cannot discuss the philosophical presuppositions of Koslowski's Anti-Hegelianism in this context, but one may suppose that Koslowski tends to replace the "state-ism" of Hegel with a certain kind of (Catholic) "church-ism", resulting from a misunderstanding of Hegel's dialectical theory of society (for a better understanding of Hegel's social theory see Taylor, 1979).
20. For further references concerning a discussion on this topic in Germany see Borchert (1989), who criticises that the reform ideas on social security by the established social actors provoke "social reforms into the catastrophe". As the subtitle of this book suggest.
21. This has been discussed quite clearly in a recent book on "the missing child in liberal theory", with reference to the situation of families and family policy in Canada (O'Neill, 1994).
22. Concerning the critical discussion with Koslowski it should be mentioned, however, that his proposal of a contributory basic seems to accept, by effect, at least partially the societal presuppositions of a policy of "guarantism".

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