

constitutional pluralism. The establishment of societal unity was a complex problem for Heller and Abendroth. As the contributions collected in the volume show, the level of complexity has increased with Europeanization and internationalization. The approaches put forward in the book offer intelligent food for thought concerning why the simple – hasty – conclusion »back to the nation-state« cannot be drawn, but also how the reality of a society legally integrated at various levels can be captured theoretically and above all how it can be opened up for measures which shape it in a social direction. All in all, therefore, this collective volume represents critical scholarship at its best.

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**J. CALLAGHAN / N. FISHMAN / B. JACKSON / M. MCIVOR (eds.):  
In Search of Social Democracy. Responses to Crisis and Modernisation**

Manchester and New York 2009  
Manchester University Press, 304 pp.

**P. DIAMOND / R. LIDDLE (eds.):  
Beyond New Labour. The Future of Social Democracy in Britain**

London 2009  
Politico's, 288 pp.

**M**uch has been written recently about the dire state of social democracy, its intellectual emptiness, and the need for programmatic and organizational renewal. After all, in 2010, only five out of 27 member states of the European Union are ruled by social democrats. Britain, France, Germany, and many other states are governed by center-right and liberal parties, with the social democrats trying hard to re-build their credentials in opposition. It seems to be the perfect moment to re-define social democracy and adapt it to a fast-changing global context.

Two edited volumes, both published in 2009, approach the topic from different, yet often complementary angles. »In Search of Social Democracy,« edited by John Callaghan, Nina Fishman, Ben Jackson, and Martin McIvor, is a collection of academic essays. It presents a critical, yet optimistic and forward-looking alternative to the apocalyptic writings of the moment. The strength of this book lies in its comparative and multidisciplinary approach to social democracy. Divided into three parts, the book strikes the (difficult) balance between the past, present, and future of social democracy and manages to successfully link classic socialist and republican thought with the challenges of modern policy-making in various countries across Europe and abroad.

»Beyond New Labour. The Future of Social Democracy in Britain,« as the title promises, takes stock of New Labour's legacy and outlines future challenges, but also looks beyond the rim of the teacup. It is more policy-oriented, which is hardly surprising, considering that both editors, Patrick Diamond and Roger Liddle were advisers to the Labour government and currently work for the center-left think tank Policy Network in London. »Beyond New Labour« is critical of New Labour's achievements in office, and calls for »new thinking.« However, Diamond and Liddle state that »the problems« social democracy needs to address have changed in nature – perhaps profoundly, but there is no need to question either fundamental goals or the basic means. The renewal of New Labour is yet to take place and, according to the editors, there are four major intellectual challenges that a period of renewal needs to address and develop: a sufficiently sophisticated critique of the market; a more coherent response to the rise of individualism in our societies; greater clarity with regard to Labour's approach to equality; and a redefinition of the role of the state.

Both books remind the reader that questions of equality, redistribution, freedom, and democracy are at the very heart of the social democratic project. Both stress the need for a re-definition of equality – or social justice, as Patrick Diamond labels it. Looking for an alternative to New Labour's Third Way approach, Kevin Hickson (»In Search of Social Democracy,« Chapter 11) recommends the work of British socialist politician and theorist Anthony Crosland (»The Future of Socialism,« 1956). In particular, Crosland's concept of equality, which entails more than just equality of opportunity, but also equality of outcome (income and wealth) is still central to the social democratic project in Britain, Hickson argues convincingly. Patrick Diamond, in the volume edited by himself and Roger Liddle (Chapter 8), agrees that New Labour needs to radically re-define the notion of equality. However, he argues that Crosland's approach to equality »is based on an ideological world-view and a set of assumptions that are likely to be inadequate for the future,« without referring to the original text. Diamond then outlines a basis for a »new political and policy strategy,« focusing on the importance of education for citizens of all age groups, extended asset ownership, a fairer tax and benefits system which would assist individuals in dealing with new social risks, and changing structures of work and welfare in order to »attack inequalities in access to cultural capital in the family and beyond.«

»Beyond New Labour« gives a critical account of social reality in Britain and rightly challenges common phrases such as »Broken Britain.« In particular, Mary Daly's critique of New Labour's family policy is thought-provoking (Chapter 7). Daly argues that, despite considerable achievements, the Labour government's family policy appears rather narrow. It was driven mainly by socio-economic motives, while questions such as gender equality and the protection of the family as a valued social institution were neglected. Moreover, she demonstrates that New Labour's reform process had strong moral and normative undertones, focusing

on the »problem family« rather than all families. Here, a comparison with other European countries could be insightful, for example Germany, where child poverty is prevalent.

Some of the most horizon-broadening essays from »In Search of Social Democracy« are arguably the ones taking a comparative perspective. For example, Ashley Lavelle (Chapter 1) and Norman Flynn (Chapter 2) compare social democratic policies in different western European member states and Australia since the 1970s. However, the authors' conclusions are quite different. Lavelle argues that, without a return to the economic growth levels of the 1950s and 1960s, social democratic parties will not be able to implement redistributive policies again and that, consequently, the »neo-liberalisation of social democracy is here to stay.« Norman Flynn presents a more optimistic picture. Comparing fiscal policies, social spending, and economic performance in France, Germany, and the UK since 1970, Flynn discovers more similarities than differences between the three countries. He comes to the conclusion that, despite high unemployment and fiscal deficits, the welfare state will not experience crisis as long as the economies remain competitive and the EU provides protection for European businesses against completely free competition from low-wage economies.

Against the background of deepening European integration it is indispensable to look at social democracy from a European angle. This is what Gerassimos Moschonas (»In Search of Social Democracy,« Chapter 9) does when he asks why social democratic parties do not follow a more radical, left-wing »Social Europe«-agenda at EU level. Moschonas takes an institutionalist approach and states that the »multiplicity of power centers of European governance« makes it difficult for national political parties to make an impact. He argues that the EU poses a »role« problem for social democratic parties in particular. The reason is that the control of the market and capitalism entails a »strong central authority« and a strong political force capable of pursuing policies that are different from the market's. In such a polycentric system, the argument goes, ideological and programmatic renewal is not encouraged. Moreover, and in my opinion more importantly, social democratic parties across the EU are quite heterogeneous in their programs and do not coordinate their activities sufficiently. While Moschonas raises very important issues which clearly deserve academic attention, the picture he paints is gloomy to the point of fatalism. Couldn't it be that their status as opposition parties allows social democratic parties across the EU27 a more constructive, open dialogue, more room to maneuver?

Both are well-written and thought-provoking books for social democrats in need of renewal. The two edited volumes complement each other quite well. One provides a more theoretically-informed historical perspective, while the other offers practical guidance for future policy-makers in Britain, and also abroad. Both books are forward-looking. In her afterward to »In Search of Social Democracy,« Nina Fishman critiques the narrow horizons of western European social

democratic politicians. However, she leaves the reader with a positive outlook on social democracy's future, stating that, as long as they remain »self-confident and vital,« social democratic parties will be able to influence non-market solutions, as has happened in the past.

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