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own or in coalition with other leftist parties assumed power. In this second part, other gender subjects may have deserved further debate, such as the balance between personal, family and professional life and the status of the gender mainstreaming strategy in policy making.

Finally, the third part deals with the situation of women in the labour market and the taking-on of family responsibilities by men. In the conclusion, while stressing the remaining obstacles, the authors suggest that 'in Spain, politics, ideology and women's aspirations were transformed more readily than the economy was able to respond to the challenge of women's inclusion, and more profoundly than men were able to adapt to the shift in gender relations'. The reader will also benefit from a bibliographical commentary and bibliography of research on gender in various Spanish policy fields. This is a remarkable publication.

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The Territorial Politics of Welfare
Nicola McEwen and Luis Moreno (Eds)
Routledge, London, 2005, 256 pp., £65, ISBN 0-415-34859-5 (hbk)

In a literature dominated by studies of 'horizontal' interactions between labour and employers at the national level, a volume focused on the 'vertical' dimensions of policy-making – both sub-national and supra-national – is most welcome. *The Territorial Politics of Welfare* offers detailed case studies of welfare policy decentralisation in major European countries and Canada, as well as research on the growing role of the European Union.

Luis Moreno and Nicola McEwen's introduction highlights the weakening connection between the welfare state and nation state, as sub-national autonomy leads to variation in benefits within countries, and as EU rules limit national decision-makers. Nicola McEwen and Richard Perry survey social policy devolution in the UK, a process strengthened by the national government's inability and unwillingness to provide insurance against the risks of the 1980s and 1990s. Jörg Mathias presents the decentralisation of German social policy following unification. Decentralisation has not led to innovative experimentation, as even the richest regions face budgetary challenges to meet federal minima. Alistair Cole shows France to remain highly centralised, as the decentralisation of welfare support services has empowered the local, rather than the regional level, through additional administrative responsibilities, rather than policy-setting authority.

Raquel Gallego, Ricard Gomà and Joan Subirats present the concurrent decentralisation and expansion of the Spanish welfare state following the transition to democracy. To illustrate the results of this asymmetric process, they helpfully map the position of individual regions on the state – market and community – family axes. Valeria Fargion calls Italy a 'dual welfare state', where the centrality of contributory pensions in national social spending, and the ability of Northern regions to offer additional programmes in areas such as health and social care, result in higher benefits for citizens of the North. Political conflict on the 'Southern question' of persistent poverty has been transformed into the 'Northern question' of political autonomy demands.

Régis Dandoy and Pierre Baudewyns illustrate Belgium's tension between Walloon preferences for a centralised state and social insurance system, and Flemish preferences for regionalisation, with public opinion data. Kaisa Lähteenmäki-Smith presents a detailed survey of decentralisation across the Nordic countries. Daniel Béland and André Lecours identify a shift in Canadian welfare politics, from initial

Québécois resistance to federal social spending, to a Québécois identity based on provincial social democratic policies.

Steffen Mau examines public opinion on how social policy authority should be distributed between the national and EU levels. Maurizio Ferrera concludes with a theoretically rich and detailed analysis of the differential impact of EU law on social assistance, compulsory social insurance, occupational and private insurance schemes.

The volume opens up fascinating questions for further research. Has decentralisation led to a race to the bottom, as the introductory chapter hints, or has it led to increased benefits, as the UK and Spanish cases suggest? Does devolution of policy-making authority feed or satisfy demands for regional autonomy? Do EU rules constrain or empower the regions? And, ultimately, who does decentralisation benefit and harm?

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Health Governance in Europe: Issues, Challenges, and Theories
Monika Steffen (Ed.)
Routledge, London, 2005, 224 pp., £60, ISBN 0-415-36452-3 (hbk)

This edited volume on health policy is clearly more than a mixed bag of empirical case studies of (public) health policy. Steffen's ambition is to show in what ways the health sector has been subject to Europeanisation; to draw up a comprehensive picture of EU health policy; and to provide sector-specific analyses, all of which stress that the national level is no longer predominant.

The introduction offers conceptual clarifications concerning what we should consider as 'health care policy', which includes more than only national health insurance systems. It also covers public health policies in the widest sense of the word and policies that impact on health systems' growth potential. Regarding Europeanisation, the authors adopt a rather open definition: they do not see it as convergence of national policies, but as one source (among others) of such convergence processes. In addition, the combined empirical findings show that EU influence is but one source of change at the national level among others, and that EU influence is filtered through domestic traditions, which, in turn, limit convergence. Unsurprisingly, due to this position, the book offers little new theorising on Europeanisation. The main endeavour of the book lies elsewhere, namely in tracking down and describing the various ways through which health policy has been Europeanised. Five (familiar) categories of Europeanisation that are stated (EU policy making; adaptation of national policies; cyclical processes combining the first two categories; policy diffusion; and changing domestic opportunity structures) are explored in seven empirical chapters dealing with, for instance, regulation of pharmaceuticals over food safety to blood policy.

The major empirical conclusions emerging from these studies are twofold. First, despite a lack of EU competences, there has been a clear EU impact on member states' health systems. Second, Europeanisation of health policy is an ambivalent and extremely complex phenomenon occurring on various levels/different forms/diverse effects. Both of them are hard to disagree with, and hardly surprising. On a more theoretical note, the concluding chapter attempts to draw lessons from the seven studies of divergent policy sectors. It – unfortunately only briefly – explores explanations for the variety in forms of Europeanisation, such as conceptual problems and vague EU competences, and stresses the importance of EU institutions, especially the Commission and the ECJ, which act as regulators and 'agenda setters'. Three Europeanisation mechanisms are highlighted as being more relevant than