

Gender Orders in German Agriculture:
From the Patriarchal Welfare State to Environmental Liberalism

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The redefinition of masculinity and femininity has been an integral element of the ongoing processes of economic restructuring on a global scale. Indeed, some feminists have argued that the particular forms that economic restructuring has taken can only be understood if considering the differential integration into the global economy of labor powers constructed as feminine and masculine. Thus, the search for cheap industrial labor has drawn on constructions of nimble-fingered and docile women, and the rise of a masculine global managerial class has been paralleled by a feminine „maid trade“ and a trade in sex work. To date most arguments about the gendered underbelly of globalization have emerged from studies of industrial and services sectors.

Yet, in the Uruguay round of trade negotiations and in current talks at the WTO, agriculture has been a central topic. Indeed, the failure to reach agreement on agricultural liberalization almost derailed a final agreement in the Uruguay round, has been a major stumbling block in efforts to start negotiations for a new „millennium round.“ In the current WTO negotiations on agriculture the European Union's (EU) common agricultural policy (CAP) is considered prime culprit. Internationally, the EU provides by far the highest level of support to its agricultural sector,¹ and most intensely resists rapid liberalization. Yet, in the European context, the EU increasingly also has become a facilitator of liberalization and people working on farms are seeing the impacts of policy changes since the Uruguay round.

Here I raise the feminist question of how global governance in the agricultural sector employs and renegotiates meanings of gender. I use Germany as a case that uniquely illustrates the interweaving of international, European, national, and subnational policies. As an EU member, Germany and its constituent *Länder* operate in a system of multi-level governance in which they share authority over questions of agricultural policy with the EU, and the EU serves as the negotiator of German interests at the WTO. Interestingly, although the UN system, the EU, and the German government are officially committed to a policy of gender mainstreaming, gender issues have not become an issue in agricultural trade negotiations. Part of my agenda here is to introduce gender as a relevant category for such negotiations.

¹ The producer support estimate for the EU was \$93,083 million in 2001, followed by the US with \$49,001 and Japan with \$47,242 (*IMF Survey*, 21 October 2002: 322).

Approach and Review of Literature

My feminist constructivist approach to political economy is based on two premises. First, markets are social institutions. Second, gender is a central organizing category in society, employed widely to make distinctions and distribute rewards. As such, the contemporary liberal market economy is a social construct made up of gendered institutions (Runyan, 1997; Inayatullah and Blaney, 1997; Burch, 1997). I adopt the notion of gender regimes to describe the CAP as a gendered institution in a system of multi-level governance. In doing so, I draw on three bodies of literature.

First is the literature on the gendered welfare states. This literature has described how social policies in Europe have built on notions of male breadwinners and female housewives to produce different types of gender regimes. Susanne Schunter-Kleemann (1992) describes West Germany as a country characterized by marriage-based patriarchy.² Here women's employment patterns show a prevalence of phasing following family requirements. Women's labor force participation is low compared to other OECD countries, Germany has the highest discrepancy between women's and men's pay, and there has been a dramatic increase of women in unprotected employment. In terms of an infrastructure allowing for the compatibility of work and family, Schunter-Kleemann calls Germany a developing country. Furthermore, there is pervasive discrimination against women in social insurance systems with the effect that women receive considerably lower pensions and unemployment benefits. Ostner and Lewis (1995) make a similar distinction typifying states by the degree to which the "male breadwinner" ideologies are entrenched in policies. They label Germany a "strong male breadwinner state," in which policies that assume male income earning paired with female housewife and mothering roles are pervasive. Siaroff (1994) has developed a new typology based on work and welfare incentives for women that confirms the notion of a male breadwinner state: in Germany benefits arising from labor force participation go primarily to the father.

The feminist welfare state literature is interesting in that it develops the notion of welfare regimes and illustrates one way in which markets are regulated. Its shortcoming for my purposes is its focus on state-level policies that ignores international constructions and global processes. To the extent that feminist theorists of the state have addressed the EU in a critical fashion, they have

² Other countries in this category are Luxemburg, Austria, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. Other categories are (1) patriarchal countries with aspects of egalitarian work and social structures (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden); (2) family-based patriarchy (Belgium, France, Italy); market-based patriarchy (Portugal, UK); (3) countries with agrarian-clerical structures in transition to market-based patriarchy (Greece, Spain, Ireland); (4) socialist patriarchy in transition to market-based patriarchy (Poland, Hungary, GDR/East Germany after unification).

done so by portraying it as a men's club encoding a new form of patriarchy whose undemocratic policies and practices invariably fail women (Schunter-Kleemann 1992, 1998, Kreisky 2001). The focus on gendered rules and regulations here is replaced by a focus on agents with masculinist interests, the complexity of gendered institutions as social constructs gets lost.

There is a sizeable feminist literature in International Relations and Geography that explores processes of gender construction implicated in the discourses and practices of global restructuring. This literature is diverse as it traverses global space and analyses start at very different geographic scales. There are local analyses probing the effects of global neo-liberal practices in the context of cities or neighborhoods (Kofman, 2000; Kromhout, 2000) and "very local" analyses probing effects at the scale of bodies and "inner landscapes" (Price, 1999; Chang and Ling, 2000). There are studies focusing on states, showing how they employ gendered policies (e.g. regulating prostitution) and women (e.g. Philippino maids) to produce modern state identities in the context of a global economy (Jeffrey, 2000; Chin, 1998). And there are studies that focus on discussions in the context of international organizations and their interactions with NGOs, showing the gender-biased neoliberal framing of much discourse on economic governance (Runyan, 1999) and gendered meanings of new definitions of "worker" in discussions focusing on the regulation of flexible labor (Prugl, 1999). Finally, there are studies that seek to traverse scales by probing discursive practices as reflected in news media that target an international elite (Hooper, 2000; Price, 2000). Broadly speaking, all these analyses illustrate gendered elements of global governance in the economic realm. They broaden the welfare state literature by traversing scales and by expanding the locus of construction to include not only state policies, but also interstate policies and the politics of non-state actors.

Here I seek to combine the radically constructivist approach revealed in the feminist IR literature with a focus on a globalized state in order to arrive at the notion of gender regimes in European agriculture. I seek help in this endeavor from a third body of literature, i.e. the literature on women in development (WID) that has described the impacts on women of agricultural modernization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This literature is useful because it systematically connects the policies of internationalized states to local gender outcomes.

The WID literature has made a number of suggestions. First, it has shown that agricultural modernization and commercialization often entailed a loss of status for women as agriculture was taken over by men, women lost independent sources of income and their subsistence work was devalued (Boserup 1970). Second, it has shown that the ideological construction of women as "non-working" housewives functioned to make their work invisible and facilitated their "superexploitation." "Housewifization" has been particularly virulent in the case

of home-based workers, including the bourgeois housewife, workers in sub-contracting chains and women working in agriculture (Mies 1986, 1992, Prügl 1996). Third, it has shown that colonial governments and development agencies sought to realize the ideal of a bourgeois gender order, often against local practices, through policies that pushed men into a breadwinner role while “domesticating” women (Boserup 1970; Rogers 1980).

In this paper then, I combine insights from the feminist welfare state literature, feminist IR literatures and WID literatures in order to develop the notion of agricultural gender regimes. I take these literatures to make three basic propositions. First, gender regimes are encoded in national policies and laws, but also in the policies and laws of international agencies (welfare state literature; feminist IO literature). Second, gender regimes are supported through rhetorical constructs and embedded in larger discourses of intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions (feminist IR literature). Third, gender regimes are visible in the differential economic outcomes for women and men (WID literature).

My formulation so far leaves open the question of the organizational anchoring of the regime, a difficult question in a context of globalization. The feminist welfare state literature unselfconsciously considers states the organizers of regimes.³ In contrast, feminist IR literature often employs regime language in its Foucauldian meaning as regimes of truth. Such regimes need no organizers but become real through institutionalized practices that contribute to creating agents and organizations, including but not limited to states. In this paper I eclectically draw on both of these understandings. I do so in the context of the European Union, drawing on empirical materials from Germany well aware that regimes may have worked out quite differently in other member states, but also that many of their rules operate beyond EU boundaries. Following common practice in EU scholarship, I focus on the interplay of the EU and the national level. From a feminist perspective, this is only a first step that needs to be complemented by an investigation of local contexts to provide an understanding of European gender regimes from a situated perspective. I postpone this investigation, and in this sense this paper is only an initial cut of a more complex social reality.

I proceed in two steps. First, I describe the gender regime of the patriarchal agricultural welfare state that developed in the post-World War II period with its characteristic construction of housewives and breadwinners and its rhetorical anchoring in family farming and anti-communism. Second, I describe the currently emerging regime of environmental liberalism that has drawn women back into farming as housewifized rural entrepreneurs employing a rhetoric of

³ The same is true for the literature on Fordism and Post-fordism.

“multi-functional” agriculture. It seeks to expand organic farming and diversify rural incomes to cope with international competition.

The Agricultural Welfare State and Modernization between Anti-Communism and Family Farming

In the post-World War II era, agricultural policies in Germany revolved around four themes. First was the commitment to modernizing farming. Second was the commitment to maintain rural incomes. Third was the rhetoric of anti-communism, which could be fought by maintaining rural incomes. And fourth was the rhetoric of preserving the family farm. The last three themes were mutually reinforcing: Communism could be fought if rural society could be maintained economically and socially. They often contradicted the commitment to modernization and slowed down the economic rationalization of family farming.

Throughout the post-World War II era, the preservation of “**the family farm**” was a key commitment of German center-right governments that dominated German politics in the 1950s and 1960s. The commitment to family farming also found entry into the European Community. The documents of the Stresa conference, a meeting to develop basic principles of the CAP in 1959, convey a broad agreement that EU member states wanted to ensure the continued existence of family farms as a basic organizational unit of agricultural production. Today about 95 percent of all farms in Germany (new and old *Länder*) are family farms, i.e. they are owned and operated by a self-employed “farmer” with the help of family labor, mostly a “spouse.”⁴

Often considered a traditional form of economic organization, West European family farming is rather a modern phenomenon that developed in parallel with Fordism after the Second World War. A prerequisite for its development was the liberation of European peasantry from feudal dependencies and sharecropping arrangements through land reforms that introduced liberal property rights and the rule of private law into the agricultural sector. On this basis, the modern family farm emerged with the “second agricultural revolution“ of the mid-20th century. Employment opportunities in industry led to an accelerated exodus of agricultural labor after the Second World War, encouraging the substitution of labor for capital. Mechanization (tractors, harvesters, etc.), the use of chemicals (fertilizers, pesticides), the introduction of new breeds of

⁴ In total 65 percent of all people working on farms in Germany were family members in 2001. This is lower than the EU average of 80 percent (in 1997), largely because of the different organization of farming in East Germany, which draws extensively on hired labor (see BMVEL 2002; EUROSTAT 2000). Note, however, that it has been government policy to foster family farming in East Germany; and today most farms in the East are family-owned and operated.

animals and new strains of crops, new methods of cultivation and animal husbandry all led to an enormous surge in productivity of labor and land, reducing the need for agricultural labor and making it possible for a single farmer to sustain a farm together with the flexible labor of his wife (Ambrosius and Hubbard 1989: 171-180). The development of Fordism as an industrial regime of accumulation and mode of regulation was thus paralleled by the creation of the modern family farm, not only as a productive unit, but also as a regulatory mode that helped stabilize farm incomes. A patriarchal family order that allowed male farmers control over female family labor facilitated this regulatory mode. It enabled the flexible deployment of this labor in response to the vagaries of weather and biological growth cycles and allowed the combination of off-farm and on-farm income earning as a form of social insurance (Rieger 1995, pp. 29-30).

The reasons why Europeans pushed family farming were not only patriarchal and economic, but also part of a **discourse of anti-communism**. In the words of Heinrich Lübke, the German minister of agriculture, the preservation of the family farm was necessary for reasons of both social and political order (Conférence, 1958, pp. 47). These reasons revolved around creating a bulwark against communism. Based on private ownership and free enterprise, family farms were thought to guarantee the political stability of the countryside, guarding against the type of communist agitation seen in rural France and Italy. Family farms furthermore constituted an alternative to the large-scale socialist style agriculture of East Germany that agglomerated small land-holdings and turned these as well as the old Junker⁵ estates into large “agricultural production cooperatives“ (*Landwirtschaftliche Produktionsgenossenschaften*). Ironically, in Germany the association of large-scale farming with communism often served as an argument against free market policies and the elimination of price supports. Thus, Edmund Rehwinkel, the long-time leader of the *Deutscher Bauernverband* (DBV), reacted against a Commission proposals for liberalizing agricultural policy by invoking the specter of communism. Such policy, according to Rehwinkel “threatened the existence of the family farm and aimed at the formation of huge collective farms, which would throw European farmers in *kolkhozy*“ (Averyt, 1977, p. 56).

Finally, family farms prevented the depopulation of rural areas along the inner-German border. Indeed, anti-communism in part explains the prevalence of part-time farming in Germany at a rate that is unique in the European Union. The majority of farms in Germany today are part-time farms and their proportion (though not their number) has been on the increase, from 39 percent of all farms in 1977 to 57 percent in 1999 (Hülßen 1980: 17; BMVEL 2002). The preservation of such farms was an explicit goal of German government policy particularly in

⁵ The Junkers were large landowners in Prussia who were instrumental supporters of the Nazi regime.

areas close to the eastern border where it sought to prevent depopulation (Hendriks, 1991, pp. 36, 76-77). This entailed supporting rural industries and encouraging the development of “worker-peasants” who maintained part-time farms but earned most of their income in off-farm occupations. The policy relied heavily on the labor of farmwomen. Typically, the (male) “farmer” took a full-time job, mostly in industry or construction, while the (female) “spouse” worked the farm, drawing on the help of her worker-peasant husband on weekends and evenings.

Anti-communism required that farmers were doing well and for German policy-makers this meant creating an **agricultural welfare state**. Key was the 1955 Agricultural Act, whose main purpose was to guarantee equivalence of incomes for workers in agriculture and industry. The primary measure was not support payments to individuals (as in the welfare system of the industrial sector) but the regulation of markets in agricultural commodities through price supports. The government sought to keep prices of agricultural commodities high enough to ensure farm incomes comparable to those in the industrial sector, and was kept to this commitment by annual reports showing equivalences (Rieger 1995). The price mechanism was complemented in the 1950s and 1960s by social policy measures including an old age benefits scheme paid to the farmer or his surviving spouse, an accident and a health insurance scheme (OECD 1974: 49). Modeling the patriarchal welfare state, these social insurance schemes presumed a male breadwinner and an assisting wife with little or no independent income. Accordingly, the wives of farmers received no independent pension income, but were remunerated through the pensions of their husbands.

National level policies operated in an international context of negotiations that pushed towards the liberalization of agricultural policies already in the early 1950s, in the context of negotiations over a European agricultural union. In these and in later negotiations leading to the formulation of the European Community’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the German government strongly resisted pressures to create an agricultural policy based on free market principles. Given its high level of supports and its relatively large number of small farms Germany had little incentive to open its farming sector to international competition. In the end (and some have argued as a *quid pro quo* for trade liberalization in industrial products in which it was competitive) Germany agreed to a common market and competition from more efficient European producers (France in particular) under the condition that high prices would be maintained so that the social welfare of German farmers was not jeopardized. On paper the CAP pursued a range of objectives (including modernization), but in practice it expended most of its resources on price supports (Moravcsik 1998; Hendriks 1991). From the German perspective, the

formulation of the CAP amounted to a projection of the agricultural welfare state to the European level.

The commitment to creating an agricultural welfare state initially outweighed the commitment to agricultural **modernization**. But agricultural modernization was well underway at the end of the war, with some of the same adverse effects for women as have been reported for rural women in other parts of the world. For women, modernization meant a loss of control over independent income from the fruits of their labor. Before the War, women were (and often still are) in charge of caring for small farm animals and tending vegetable gardens and derived income from their production. While they largely produced for subsistence, they marketed excess, and income from dairy, eggs, jams, fruits and vegetables was their income. The rationalization of agriculture eliminated these sources of women's income. Concerns about hygiene led to a 1930 law forbidding the marketing of milk that was processed in domestic quarters (i.e. kitchens) and prescribed basic equipment of rooms. The government put pressure on dairy farmers to join cooperatives and process and market their milk through the cooperatives. This culminated in the corporatist organization of farming under National Socialism that entailed the prohibition of direct marketing of milk in 1933, of eggs in 1935, and of the processing of fruits and berries in 1936. After the War, many of these laws remained in effect and, in the spirit of continued modernization, were strengthened. While many farmwomen remained in charge of dairy cows, they were not represented in the cooperatives (instead the male farm holders were) and the income from dairying no longer flowed through their hands (Kolbeck 1990: 156-159; Schmitt 1997: 15). Increasingly their labor was for the benefit of "the family farm" managed by their husbands. Modernization and economies of scale in this way entailed a centralization of power on the farm. Technology accelerated this process. The more modern technologies entered work processes and the more production expanded, the more men displaced women (van Deenen and Kassen-Knirim 1981: 71). As women's flexible labor became a prerequisite for the rationalization of farming, women lost of control over their own labor power and their own income.

The structural policies of the 1950s and 1960s sought to effect further rationalization. They focused on the development of rural infrastructures, the re-parceling of agricultural land to allow for more efficient production, and providing farmers access to capital in order to facilitate investments in technology and farm infrastructure (Wilson and Wilson 2001). Modernization accelerated in the 1970s under a new German left-center government that actively promoted farm enlargement and modernization. Farms above a certain threshold of growth received additional national support if they followed a model of modernization and growth through investment. But they also received support if they converted to part-time farming and reorganized to pursue less

labor-intensive production. Reducing excessive family labor (i.e. women's labor) became an explicit policy goal for the first time, and the government set up advisory mechanisms to rationalize part-time agriculture. This often involved investment in heavy machinery combined with a move away from dairying and towards less labor-intensive field crops. In addition, the government encouraged the creation of cooperative-type structures (*Maschinenringe*) for small and part-time farmers to engage in joint marketing, the sharing of large machinery, and mutual aid in times of need. Even the DBV, an organization dominated by large farmers, took up the cause and started to promote models of part-time farming adapted to local conditions. These policies were accompanied by increased social security payments (Wilson and Wilson 2001: 53-63; OECD 1980, Froehlicher 1986).

Structural policy also became an issue at the European level in the 1970s as the EU passed three policy directives to encourage farm modernization, to provide assistance to farmers who abandoned agriculture, and a third targeting farmers in mountainous areas. While the first two were restricted to full-time farms, the third was open to all farmers as long as they worked more than 3 hectares of land. This structural policy sought to preserve small farms only in areas where there were few economic alternatives. For other farms it encouraged growth or closures.

The structural policies of the 1970s explicitly acknowledged that farming had bifurcated in Europe. Increased productivity and high farm prices had initiated a process of restructuring that entailed a progressive reduction in the number of farms and of people employed in agriculture in parallel with an increase in productivity. The number of farms shrunk from almost 1.7 million in 1949 to 381,600 in 2001, the number of people employed in agriculture from 7.1 million to 943,000 (Wilson and Wilson 2001: 26; Franklin 1969: 27, BMVEL 2002, Statistisches Bundesamt 2002). This entailed a consolidation of farms with large farms growing in numbers and the number of small farms shrinking. Whereas holdings of 50 hectares and larger accounted for .8 percent of all farms in 1949, 19 percent belonged to this size category in 2001. The threshold of growth, i.e. the hectare size above which the number of farms has been growing and below which it has been shrinking, has progressively moved higher. In the early 1980s it was around 30 hectares; today the number of farms is increasing only in the size category 50 hectares and more. While the vast majority of farms in Germany still are smaller than 50 hectares – indeed about 35 percent are in the 2-10 hectare category – small farms continue to be the primary victims of agricultural restructuring (BMVEL 2002; see Table 1).

The structural policies of the 1970s accelerated these trends while seeking to cushion hardship through increased social security payments, policies to alleviate

women's work, and policies to support farmers in disadvantaged areas. *Détente* had taken the wind out of the most ardent anti-communist arguments and lessened the need for the preservation of family farming at all costs. Where the development of the agricultural welfare state had relied excessively on women's unpaid labor, agricultural modernization allowed for a completion of women's "housewifization," for their progressive "liberation" from farm labor.

Laboring in the Patriarchal Agricultural Welfare State

The creation of the patriarchal agricultural welfare state, with its emphasis on modernization, anti-communism, family farming, and breadwinner constructions in the social security system, had profound implications on the work of farmwomen. Today women are less likely to work on German farms than men, making up a little more than 36 percent of family labor in all of Germany.⁶ In contrast, in 1949, women provided the bulk (53.5 percent) of family labor (Table 2). Keeping in mind that these statistics do not measure women's household and caring work, their involvement in farm labor (as family members or as hired workers) was shrinking disproportionately. Apparently women joined the general exodus from agricultural labor more rapidly than men. They were either moving into other sectors of the labor force or they were following the model of their urban counterparts to become "non-working housewives."

But aggregate figures do hide complexity. In the 1970s, scholars argued that the consolidation of German farms together with the increasing significance of part-time farming actually resulted in a "feminization of farming." While the number of women in farming had decreased together with the overall reduction of the agricultural work force, Heide Inhetveen and Margret Blasche (1983: 153) pointed out that the proportion of women's labor contribution varied with the size of holdings. In 1976/77, the share of women among full-time family labor in agriculture was under 50 percent on holdings above 20 hectares; but it was above 50 percent on holdings from 10 to 20 hectares, and as high as 80 percent in holdings from one to 10 hectares. Max Pfeffer (1989: 66 - 68) supported the contention that small-scale farming was feminizing with 1980 survey data on labor inputs on family farms. He found that wives on part-time farms averaged more hours of farm work than their husbands, and that the reduction of labor inputs associated with part-time farming was far greater for husbands than for wives (1,685 and 251 hours respectively). Other scholars, however, warned that the notion of a feminization of farming was misleading because there was no overall increase in the proportion of women in the agricultural labor force (Schmitt 1987: 23).

⁶ This is lower than their share in the total labor force (44 percent), but significantly higher than in the industrial work force (24 percent; Statistisches Bundesamt 2002).

Feminization can be measured in different ways, and a look at government statistics allows for a nuanced understanding of the gender order that provided the foundation for the creation of the German agricultural welfare state. Inhetveen and Blasche were concerned about small farms and about people who worked on farms on a full-time basis. Both of these variables are useful to consider because they take into consideration the bifurcation of German farming, and because full-time status offers a first cut towards understanding changes in a gender division of labor, the possible change in women's identification from full-time farmwomen ("Bäuerinnen") to housewives doing supplemental farm work.

Once statistics are disaggregated to account for size and full-time family labor, an interesting picture emerges. It confirms the feminization hypothesis for small farms in the early days of the German agricultural welfare state (Table 3). In the decades after the second World War the proportion of women's full-time labor increased rapidly on small farms until the mid-1970s, while it decreased slowly on large farms, reflecting the bifurcation of farming in general statistics. Apparently the modernization of small and medium-size farms relied on women's unpaid labor. Larger farms could do without that labor. However, trends reversed in the 1970s when the German government for the first time paid serious attention to restructuring with programs to reduce labor on small and part-time farms paralleled by stronger social security schemes. Now the proportion of women among full-time farm labor began to decrease rapidly on small farms, while it actually inched up somewhat on large farms. In other words, the number of women working full time on small farms now diminished more rapidly than the number of women working full time on large farms. The result was a tendency for the proportion of full-time female farm family labor to equalize across farm sizes so that by the 1990s women accounted for only between 10 to 16 percent of the full-time agricultural labor force on all farms. They still make up a larger proportion of farm labor on small farms than on large farms, but the difference has diminished considerably.

The statistical evidence confirms a picture in which the labor of farmwomen constituted an essential part in the construction of the agricultural welfare state. Farmwomen were flexible labor in the 1950s and 60s when farming restructured supported by high prices. They moved out of agriculture where not needed and made up for the dearth of hired farm labor on small farms. While Franklin reported in 1969 that the "urban model of the family" was a "universal aspiration" among rural families, the reality of a "non-working" housewife exclusively occupied in housework and care work was far from being realized. Agricultural restructuring depended on women's labor, especially on small and part-time farms. Farmwomen helped produce commodities for the (mostly European) market, working long hours on farms managed by their

husbands (Claupein and Günther 1991: 33). Their workweek (which included the extensive reproductive work of large households) averaged between 71 and 77 hours (compared to 60 to 66 for men) in a sample survey of all types of family farms from the early 1960s (Franklin 1969: 41). A similar survey from the late 1970s found even longer average weekly hours: 74.9 hours for all farmwomen and 80 hours for women working on part-time farms (Hülßen 1980).

These women were “housewifized” in the sense that much of their labor was unpaid and taken for granted. Their designated labor status coincided with their marital status: In government statistics they were (and still are) labeled “spouses.” Often trained in home economics, they were expected to excel in the role of modern housewives. And they had become dependent on the male farmer in terms of income and qualifications (Schmitt 1997: 15). However, women’s intense involvement in farm work also gave them a fair measure of influence, in part-time farming in particular. In the late 1970s, Hülßen (1980: 190) found a considerable degree of joint decision-making among couples on part-time farms. Younger women especially emphasized that important matters were discussed jointly; furthermore, since they were on the farm all day, they had more information and knew what was needed. And, since decisions about the farm affected women in particular, it made sense for men to involve women in decision-making. Hülßen concluded that, in accordance with social norms, men may have taken on the role of representing the farm to the outside, but women played an important role in decision-making within the family.

The policy changes of the 1970s were followed by the reversal of trends in women’s full-time labor force participation on small farms outlined earlier (Table 3). These policies increasingly exempted small farms from investment supports encouraging farmers either to abandon farming or convert to less labor-intensive part-time farming. The impacts on women were considerable. Federal statistics in 1980 already showed a reduction of women’s work on part-time farms, leading researchers to conclude that there was no longer evidence of an excessive family labor burden on these farms (OECD 1980: 115). Developments freed women on part-time farms to become full-time housewives or pursue off-farm employment. In Rhineland/Palatine fewer women on full-time than on part-time farms defined themselves as pure housewives by 1993. This despite the fact that 23 percent of women on part-time farms also held jobs off the farm (Hübbers 1995: 236). Clearly, their labor power was no longer concentrated in farming. They chose to become housewives or workers in the industrial and service sectors.

Women’s proletarianization and housewifization alleviated their labor burden on part-time farms to a larger degree than that of women on full-time farms. Various studies have shown that women working on full-time farms averaged longer hours than those on part-time farms (Pfeffer 1989: 66; Winkler 1990: 63). For them, the idea of a home, together with the expectation

of providing husbands an emotional repast from the world of work was much more difficult to realize than for women on part-time farms (Inhetveen and Blasche 1983: 191). Home and work were still integrated on full-time farms to a degree that contradicted the myth of the non-working housewife operating in a separate sphere.

But with full-time farms as well there were differences depending on farm size. A study from the late 1980s found that the larger the farm, the less a woman tended to be engaged in farm work and the more she tended to be engaged in housework. The result was a North/South difference in the agricultural gender order. Women on the large farms that typified the German North were more likely to live the model of the "housewife only" than women on full-time farms in the South who tended to put more time into farm labor and less time into housework (Claupein und Günther 1991: 68-72). The male breadwinner model thus insinuated itself into the agricultural sector in different degrees: it was realized most extensively on large farms and on part-time farms. In contrast, on small and medium-size full-time farms women continued to carry a heavy burden of farm work in addition to household work.

Despite differences in the level of women's farm work, housewifely duties seemed to be uniformly women's work regardless of size and organization of the farm. Inhetveen and Blasche's (1983: 195) farmwomen all agreed that housework was women's duty, and van Deenen and Kossen-Knirim (1981: 42) confirmed that less than two percent of men participated in housework on the farm. Indeed, studies from all over Europe show "a heterogeneous division of labor in the area of production and a homogenous division of labor in the reproductive realm of the household" (Claupein und Günther 1991: 34). This division of labor led some to suggest that women needed to rationalize their housework or get their husbands to help in order to reduce their excessive workloads (Bügener 1986: 276 and 280). Yet, things have changed little and Grünwald (1990: 336) bemoaned in 1990 that, whereas all farmwomen work on the farm, only 11 percent of men do any housework.

In sum then, the creation of the German agricultural welfare state in a Cold War context entailed the creation of patriarchal family farms that increasingly substituted labor for capital and employed wives as a flexible labor force. Modernization had destroyed farmwomen's independent sources of income, making their labor available for the benefit of farm. Excessive working hours, especially on small farms, were met by ameliorative measures in the 1970s that "freed" farmwomen to become housewives or (less commonly given the scarcity of rural employment opportunities) find jobs in other economic sectors. While many exited the labor force, women on full-time small and medium-size farms remained as agriculture's flexible labor. Agricultural welfare policies geared towards the securing of rural incomes through high prices

made women's wealth dependent on the wealth of the farm managed by their breadwinner husbands. Social policies codified their new status as economic dependents. But the patriarchal regime of the agricultural welfare state has come under attack and gender is assuming a new role in the distribution of opportunities and resources under a new regime of liberal environmentalism.

Environmental Liberalism and Rural Entrepreneurship: Post-Patriarchal?

Since the 1980s and accelerating after the end of the Cold War, the patriarchal agricultural welfare state in Germany has come under attack on several fronts. First, while the CAP had its liberal critics from inception, neo-liberal policy-prescriptions that came to dominate economic governance in the 1980s served to undermine the welfare logic of the policy. Second, in the context of a strengthening environmental movement the devastating effects of productivist agricultural policies on the rural environment became a political issue. A string of food scandals (from "mad cow disease" to the contamination of animal feed) in the 1990s further threw doubt on the safety of agricultural products and raised suspicion against industrial-style livestock production. Third, with the threat of communism gone, the patriarchal family farm lost an important source of legitimation. It increasingly faces competition from precisely those industrial-style East German farms that the family farm was supposed to foil. Finally, the patriarchal welfare state and the family farm are under attack from feminism. Rural women's organizations are demanding an equal status for farm women as co-entrepreneurs and have won legislation for independent pension rights. And rural women are actively resisting the gender order of the family farm by choosing not to become "wives" and creating a rural crisis of farmers unable to find marriage partners.

Environmental issues received prominence in Germany with the emergence of the Green party in the early 1980s. *Die Grünen* favored a slow-down in agricultural production in order to reduce stress on the environment. The agricultural policies of Helmut Kohl's center-right government, which dominated German politics in the 1980s and into the 1990s, did not blatantly contradict this goal. Unlike the social-democratic government of the 1970s, which had supported farm growth and limited subsidies to farms above a threshold, the structural policies of the conservatives now favored small farms and revived the rhetoric of family farming (Wilson and

Wilson 2001: 65).⁷ Environmentalism and the preservation of the family farm together legitimized a slow-down in the strategy of modernization conceived as economic growth. Increasingly, government rhetoric framed agriculture as multifunctional: In addition to producing income and preventing rural depopulation, it also functioned to preserve the rural landscape.

When the social-democratic government came back to power in a coalition with the Greens in 1998, the rhetoric of multifunctional agriculture was entrenched. Environmentalist concerns received a further boost when in November of 2000 the government appointed a Green agricultural minister with a mandate to revamp productivist farming practices in the face of a scandal over the government's hush-up of the first home-grown cases of BSE. The new minister, Renate Künast (the first female agricultural minister in German history, and a woman with no background in agriculture or links to the farm lobby), initiated a consumer-oriented policy, announcing a move away from producing quantity towards producing quality food, and targeting the conversion of at least 20 percent of German agriculture to organic farming. She pushed through a series of popular measures geared towards controlling industrial inputs in food production (banning processing of carcasses into animal feed, controlling the use of antibiotic medication to enhance milk production, rules about caging pigs and hens), and has introduced government certification of organic production. Encouraging dairy and livestock farmers to again produce their own feed, direct marketing of farm products, and diversifying farm incomes all became elements of the new policy (Jasper 2002). Food quality, ecological health, and the humane treatment of animals now were additional criteria to judge modernization.

The burgeoning debate on the environmental impacts of agriculture and on food safety was accompanied by the completion of the European market and by the emergence of **neo-liberal economic orthodoxies** in the forums of global economic governance. The CAP's policy of price support came under massive attack in Uruguay Round trade negotiations. The resulting 1992 McSharry reforms constituted the first serious steps towards a dismantling of the European agricultural welfare state. The main component of this agreement was to phase out price supports and replace them with direct payments to farmers.⁸ The EU has committed to continuing this policy in its Agenda 2000, a policy document adopted in preparation for enlargement.

But, while making European subsidies more transparent, direct payments have become a bone of contention. Placed in the so-called "blue box" in agricultural trade negotiations at the

⁷ Note, however, that the policy change did not mean an attack on high agricultural prices, and large farms continued to reap most of the price subsidies.

⁸ In addition, the agreement entailed a reduction of export subsidies and a commitment to "tariffication," i.e. to the conversion of export subsidies and quotas into tariffs. This would make European subsidies more transparent and de-link them from the vagaries of the world market.

WTO, some (including the developing countries) have argued that they do have an influence on production and therefore should be a target of trade negotiations. Furthermore, European environmentalists oppose support payments to large farmers because they are an incentive to expand production,⁹ but favor payments linked to achieving environmental objectives, designated as “green box” payments for the purposes of trade negotiations. While blue box payments are considered transitional, green box payments are given more legitimacy and are not the target of current trade talks. Europeans tend to see them as permanent, but Third World countries have opposed them as hidden subsidies.

The regime of European environmental liberalism seeks to navigate the pressures of liberalization and environmentalism, increasingly substituting agricultural welfare policies with a combination of market liberalization and structural policies. Beginning in the 1980s, the German *Länder* began to implement agri-environmental schemes that entailed the provision of monetary incentives for farmers to take land out of production and to extensify livestock production. The adoption of two agri-environmental regulations at the EU level in 1987/88 and 1992 paralleled these German policies, the latter constituting a key component of the MacSharry reforms (Wilson and Wilson 2001: 107-108, 194-198).¹⁰ In the 1990s, the notion of “multifunctionality” of agriculture developed in the context of the European Union. This model approaches agriculture not only as a source of production and income, but also a means to maintain the environment and to preserve Europe’s „unique rural heritage“ by supporting „environment-friendly agricultural methods“ (“Agriculture Council: Political Agreement on CAP Reform“ 1999: 9, “The Fifteen at the WTO“ 1999). Because agriculture thus provides public goods as well as private goods, it warrants government subsidies.

Agenda 2000 therefore identifies a second “pillar“ of the new model of European agriculture to complement direct payments, namely **rural development**. Rural development includes some old policies, such as the modernization of agricultural holdings together with supports for early retirement and the establishment of young farmers. But it broadens the emphasis on agriculture to one that focuses on all aspects of rural economies. It seeks to improve the competitiveness of rural areas by improving quality of life and promoting the diversification

⁹ Efforts on the part of the Commission, environmental groups and alternative farmer organizations to link direct aid payments to farm size were not reflected in Agenda 2000, largely as a result of the ^{insistence} of the German government (Fink-Keßler et al. 2001). However, recently Künast has cut payments to large farmers, taking advantage of a provision in Agenda 2000 that allows for “modulation.” The savings are being redirected to promoting environmentally sensitive and animal-friendly forms of agriculture (Jasper 2002; Neuausrichtung ... 2001).

¹⁰ According to Wilson and Wilson (2001: 221) these policies, however, have been more effective in maintaining the incomes of farmers than in changing environmental practices.

into new activities that may provide alternative sources of income. Policies have been geared towards improving the manufacturing and tourism infrastructure and towards promoting business establishment and expansion. Of particular importance are tourism and recreation. The European Social Funds have matched local moneys for rural development to encourage diversification of farm and non-farm activities and to enhance nature protection and landscape care (Wilson and Wilson 2001: 239, 252).

In the German context the greening of agriculture has also entered rural development goals. Support is now provided to promote principles of animal protection, encourage changes towards ecological production, promote local processing and direct marketing, and support investments to enable multiple income earning (Neuausrichtung ... 2001). While these goals are not expressly gender-mainstreamed, Künast is on record (2001) stating that farmwomen have a distinctive role to play in this change towards liberal environmentalism: Because of their role in direct marketing, they are the pioneers of a dialogue between producers and consumers; because of their competence in home economics, they are the ambassadors for healthy nutrition; and because of their work in tourism and direct marketing, they are key to the maintenance of a multifunctional agriculture. Despite this rhetoric, there is only one government-sponsored project that targets rural women, specifically those who have seen massive unemployment as a result of restructuring in East Germany.

Gender mainstreaming may change the vast blindness to the differential impacts of women and men in German agricultural policy. In May 2002, the agricultural council of the EU endorsed gender mainstreaming in European agriculture, emphasizing the importance of including women in efforts of create a sustainable agriculture, given their importance in civil society, the labor force, and for the diversification of agriculture in the context of multifunctionality. One theme pulls through this document, i.e. the association of farmwomen with entrepreneurship and the appeal to their entrepreneurial spirit. The focus clearly is not on making women into farmers but on the development of employment possibilities in new information technologies, telework, local services, rural tourism and recreation, child care and elder care, and support for activities that are environmentally friendly (Rat der Europäischen Union 2002). Gender mainstreaming so far has had the most far-reaching impact in the EU's structural funds. Here it has involved mostly areas of agriculture: agrotourism, crafts, and small enterprises. Mainstreaming has been resisted in other significant issues, such as early retirement and entry schemes that could affect farm ownership and transfer (Braithwaite 2000: 7). In the German context, the government has only begun a model project that seeks to illustrate the uses of gender mainstreaming in public administration. The project focuses on regional advisors as

initiators of entrepreneurial initiatives and regional processes, continuing the European theme of realizing gender mainstreaming by constructing women as rural entrepreneurs.¹¹

Changes in social security legislation have confirmed this reconstruction of farmwomen as entrepreneurs. Following a campaign by the largest established German farmwomen's organization (*Deutscher LandFrauenverband, dlw*), a 1995 legal reform of social insurance in the agricultural sector involved granting independent pension rights to farmwomen. The law went beyond a weakly worded EU directive of 1986, which required member states to allow spouses of the self-employed to join social security schemes voluntarily, and defined the status of farmwomen as that of co-entrepreneurs, mandating their participation in the agricultural pension scheme on terms equal to their spouses. Despite some opposition to the law,¹² it found broad support among federal agricultural organizations. While the dlw saw in it a step forward for farmwomen, the *Deutscher Bauernverband* interpreted it as improved security for the farm family (Troue 2002; Fuhr 1995). Significantly, the law codified a change in the understanding of farmwomen from "unpaid family labor" to "entrepreneur" signaling a detour in processes of housewifization and in the understanding of farmwomen as supplementary unpaid labor in a patriarchal gender regime.

German and European agriculture today is in a process of transition to a regime of environmental liberalism with post-patriarchal pretensions. It considers multifunctional agriculture part of a diverse rural economy where income derives from multiple sources. Gender orders take on a new significance in a regime where growth and efficiency are no longer the sole measures of modernization, where labor-intensive organic farming is pursued as a model and as a means of meeting international competition, where gender equality has become an aspiration, where neo-liberal regulatory context encourages a diversification of rural incomes through tourism, local crafts production, the development of on-farm enterprises and off-farm service jobs. In this context farmwomen may be moving from the role of *Bäuerin* to that of a rural entrepreneur, but the terms of their incorporation into the new regime have not left behind gender politics.

¹¹ The effects of other gender mainstreaming activities have yet to be seen. The ministry has created gender focal points in its various departments and trained department leaders. Its work plan for 2002 also included plans to for a budget proposal that considers gender and is seen as a first step towards creating a gender budget in agriculture (Gießübel 2002).

¹² Opposition existed especially in Bavaria, both among the mainstream farmers' organization and among farmwomen, because of high costs to farmers, a burden in particular for small farmers and for part-time farmers covered under other insurance schemes. Because of these difficulties, the legislature allowed for broad opt-outs from the law in a subsequent corrective action.

Women's Labor under a Liberal-Environmental Regime: Housewifized Entrepreneurship

Policies in the agricultural welfare state amounted to the housewifization of women, their employment as flexible, unpaid labor, and the substitution of their labor as farming became increasingly more capital-intensive. These processes apparently had stabilized by the 1990s, mechanization and housewifization reached their limits, as reflected in a relatively stable proportion of women's agricultural labor force participation at around 36 percent throughout the 1990s. Does the change from a productivist welfare regime to a liberal-environmental regime imply a change in an on-farm gender order premised on the notions of male breadwinner and female flexible labor? Is the entrepreneurship of farmwomen only a fiction to gain them social insurance or does it have a reality outside the pension system? What kinds of opportunities does the new regime offer women and how does it re-code gender relations?

Women's labor is utilized differently under the new regime. Organic farming is labor-intensive, reversing the movement towards capital-intensive farming in the productivist welfare regime and perhaps bringing women back into the agricultural labor force. Direct marketing and the diversification of farm incomes through on-farm enterprises (such as farm tourism, marketing of household and care services) disproportionately draw on the labor of farmwomen. Statistics on women's labor force participation suggest that women may indeed be drawn back into farming (Table 3). While women's full-time labor decreased in all size categories until the 1970s, in the late 1990s this trend stopped. With the exception of the 2 to 5 and the 10 to 20 hectare categories, women's full-time labor stabilized or began to increase, reflecting the increased opportunities for women under a liberal environmentalist regime.

Full-time farm labor no longer is a particularly good measure of women's labor contribution in a context where part-time farms and multiple sources of income earning have become the standard. Following the European system of agricultural accounts, German government statistics today measure labor inputs in full-time equivalents or "agricultural work units" (AWUs). AWUs account for both full-time and part-time farm labor and convert it into working-age male full-time labor equivalents.¹³ Statistics on labor input show that the percentage of female AWUs has increased by one percent in the late 1990s (Table 4), confirming the trend suggested by statistics on full-time labor. This evidence becomes even more robust once farm size is accounted for. While the percentage of women's labor contribution remains highest on small farms (around 30 percent), it has increased since 1995 on both large and small farms with

¹³ The gender bias in this definition needs no comment, functioning not least to delegitimize any consideration of household and care work. Note, however, that all measures of farm labor include on-farm enterprises such as direct marketing and farm tourism.

the largest increases concentrated in very small farms (1.8 percent) and very large farms (1.9 percent). The distribution of increases resembles an inverted bell-curve: relatively high increases at the extremes are paired with more moderate increases in the middle range and a decrease in the 10 to 20 hectare category.¹⁴

A look at changes in AWUs per woman gives an indication of whether individual women have seen their working hours increase as a result of the overall increase in women's labor inputs suggested in Table 4. Here again we find different processes according to farm size (Table 5). On large farms (above 30 hectares) individual women's labor input has hardly changed or has even decreased since 1995, suggesting that the increase of female labor in this size category represents a movement of women back into farmwork. In contrast, individual women on small farms (2 to 10 hectares) clearly are working longer hours on the farm. Here the influx of female labor represents increasing opportunity for those already working on the farm.

The regime of environmental liberalism apparently has entailed new opportunities for women. On large farms, women find full-time opportunities while women on small farms find less than full-time opportunities. It is likely that this increase in women's farm labor is related to the diversification of farm incomes, to women creating new income-earning opportunities as rural entrepreneurs, and to the more labor-intensive production methods resulting from extensification and a conversion to organic methods of farming. There is not enough longitudinal evidence to show the significance of changed gender understandings in the emerging regime. But snapshot studies indicate the high degree of women's labor in on-farm businesses and in organic farming.

Direct marketing and tourism are the primary sources of diversified income under the new regime. A study of Niedersachsen, one of the West German *Länder* with relatively large-scale agriculture, showed that direct marketing was the most important farm enterprise for women in terms of time-input, facilitated by the revival of urban farmers' markets together with the development of on-farm stores. An average of twenty-two hours per week of mostly women's labor went into direct marketing, and the business was especially common on larger farms (Fahning 2001: 41). This contrasts to the findings of a 1991 study of the whole country, which found direct marketing to be more common on smaller farms; indeed it was least common in

¹⁴ The drop in women's labor input in the 10 to 20 hectare category can be explained by the rapid conversion of farms in this size category into part-time farms which typically entails a decrease in women's labor input (though at a lower rate than men's). This is a category of farms below the threshold of growth and the largest size-category with a higher proportion of part-time farms than full-time farms (almost twice as many); in the size-category above (20 to 30 hectares) the proportion is reversed with almost twice as many full-time than part-time farms. It also is the size category in which the ratio of part-time farms to full-time farms has been increasing most rapidly (from 1.82 in 1997 to 1.98 in 1999; calculated from Table 38, Statistisches Jahrbuch 2000).

Niedersachsen and most common in Rhineland/Palatine, the *Land* with the highest number of part-time farms. Most women in this study marketed just one product, predominantly eggs and milk, followed by potatoes, vegetables and fruit. But here as well, women dominated direct marketing. In 40 percent of farms women held sole responsibility for direct marketing, in another 40 percent they shared the responsibility with their husbands (Claupein and Günther 1991: 50-51).

Farm holidays (*Urlaub auf dem Bauernhof*) are the second most-important on-farm business in Niedersachsen, involving the rental of rooms and apartments to tourists, sometimes combined with other services (provision of food, riding lessons, guided tours, baking for guests, etc.). Nationally, farm holidays are particularly common at the coast and in the Alps. Seven percent of full-time farms and 9 percent of part-time farms in Germany participated in this program in the early 1990s (Claupein and Günther 1991: 54). In the Niedersachsen study, women were in charge of 81 percent of the work connected to a farm holiday business (Fahning 2001: 42), suggesting that these businesses provide an important source for women's on-farm employment.

The rapid growth of organic farming (by 22 percent from 1999 to 2000) constitutes a third significant new source of women's employment in rural areas. Over three percent of German farms today are organic farms. Organic farming is labor-intensive. Whereas an average conventional farm in 2000/01 employed 1.8 workers, an organic farm of the same size employed 2; a conventional farm employed 1.3 unwaged family workers and an organic farm 1.6 (BMVEL 2002). Organic farms also are more likely to engage in direct marketing – almost 60 percent in a study from the mid-1980s (Birnthaler and Hagen 1989). While there are no statistics on the gender composition of labor on organic farms, it is likely that women's labor plays a prominent role on organic farms with their extensive methods of production and their diverse sources of income. Furthermore, in her study of women who manage farms, Schmitt (1997: 115) found that a quarter of her sample ran organic farms, suggesting that organic farming holds a particular attraction to women.

Has women's expanded farm labor under a liberal-environmental regime changed their status? Are they becoming entrepreneurs in their own right or do they continue their status as flexible labor on a more extensive basis? Is rural entrepreneurship expanded opportunity or expanded drudgery? Statistics on women's increased average workload (Tables 4 and 5) could be interpreted as an increase in drudgery. Indeed, case studies show an association of extensive farming and diversified sources of on-farm income with long working hours for women. Claupein und Günther's (1991: 81) evidence suggests that dairying together with growing fodder crops (a

form of extensive farming) and specialized forms of agriculture (often linked to direct marketing) contributed to excessive working hours among women. One-third of their survey respondents worked more than 12 hours per day, and direct marketing (together with caring for children and the old and sick) was often associated with long working hours. Similarly, Fahning found especially long working hours for women on farms that engaged in direct marketing and offered farm holidays (Table 6). Sixty percent of the women in her sample thought that their income is insufficient given their long working hours (Fahning 2001: 49).

But the “self-exploitation” of small entrepreneurs is often considered a welcome opportunity rather than drudgery. Would it be appropriate to think of farmwomen’s new labor practices as entrepreneurial? Is their perceived status changing from that of unpaid family labor to that of self-employed entrepreneur? The statistical evidence is not encouraging. Table 7 shows that the proportion of women in the category “unpaid family labor” has increased while that of men has decreased, suggesting that the redefinition of farmwomen as entrepreneurs has not spilled beyond the pension system. Today a full 63 percent of unpaid family labor in German agriculture is female, a proportion that has increased by more than one percentage point per year in the course of the 1990s.

Complementing this rather dismal picture is the continued reality of male farm ownership and management. Women ran only nine percent of all German farms¹⁵ in 1997, significantly below the current European average of 19 percent and unchanged since 1976 (Fremont 2001: 3, Dobrowolski 1997: 164). And apparently farms managed by women tend to be part-time farms or farms with no men present. In Rhineland/Palatine, of the 8.7 percent farms managed by women in 1993 the vast majority (79.5 percent) were part-time farms (Hübbers 1995: 235). In Bavaria, women managed only 3.6 percent of farms in 1987; most of them were unmarried (Winkler 1990: 61). When women are farm managers, they face considerable discrimination. Schmitt (1997) recounts the following instances: Lessors refusing to lease land to women; tax advisors cautioning husbands to be careful about property rights so they do not lose land in case of divorce; longer probations in apprenticeships and a focus on women’s physical strength. Half of the women in Schmitt’s sample of farm managers were single, but where men were present there was a tendency for men to increasingly dominate farm management. Typically, women’s equality strategies crumbled once they had children. Women then built their own enclaves and developed

¹⁵ The German term “Betriebsinhaber”, literally “farm owner” is misleading. Although joint ownership of farms is customary in many parts of Germany, statistical conventions allow for only one “farm owner.” Wives, who legally are co-owners, are counted as “spouses” or unpaid family labor in statistics. Apparently, once they are married, wives no longer are seen to own. Convention assigns “ownership” to men. The way to interpret this convention is that men are the primary managers and final decision-makers on issues pertaining to the farm. (Compare Inhetveen and Blasche 1983: 26).

new talents: growing berries, keeping goats and marketing cheese, vegetable gardens, and last but not least household and children.

The rural entrepreneurship encouraged by the new European model of agriculture thus has not reversed the farmwomen's status as housewives. Gender continues to operate as a significant category in the division of farm labor and power. The management of farms remains under male control whereas women are becoming housewifized entrepreneurs.

Agricultural statistics are male-centered. They typically measure income-producing labor only, ignoring women's housework, subsistence and caring labor. The effect is that statistics on farm labor offer no understanding of the way in which such work has changed. But survey research offers an indication of the impact of women's increased labor under the emerging regime of liberal environmentalism on their caring and household work?

Despite an often-cited general trend towards "a more egalitarian role distribution in family and farm" (Niebuer 1994: 40), housework and caring work overwhelmingly has remained women's work. Schmitt's (1997) survey of women farmers shows different degrees of egalitarian divisions of labor, but also tremendous pressures for women to revert to traditional roles. Both Schmitt and Hübbers (1995: 236) find that even when women are the designated farm managers, men apparently tend to help out with farm work but not with housework. Similar pressures have been described earlier in a study of gender relations on organic farms, throwing doubt on their potential to transform the patriarchal family farm. Birnthal and Hagen found a tendency for women on organic farms to reject an identity of *Bäuerin*, "a woman with a scarf on her head who runs around in the stables and stands at the stove" (Birnthal and Hagen 1989: 88, my trans.). But, while women disapproved of the traditional division of labor expressed in this image, their lives differed little from the image.¹⁶ The same seems to hold true for women who run on-farm enterprises. According to the Niedersachsen study, farmwomen spend 52 percent of their working time on household and child care, regardless of whether they engage in direct marketing or farm holidays (Fahning 2001: 35).

Despite these discouraging reports, there are elements of promise in organic farming and in the farm enterprises it makes possible. In Birnthal and Hagen's study women were exclusively in charge of baking breads, making cheese, keeping goats and direct marketing.

¹⁶ Birnthal and Hagen distinguish two ideal-types of organic farms. The first consists of existing family farms with traditional gender divisions of labor that had converted to organic farming. Here the conversion often enabled new forms of extended family, allowing more siblings with their spouses and children to earn a living on the farm. Traditional gender divisions were rarely questioned on these farms. The second type consisted of farms newly founded with the express purpose of organic farming. Experiments with egalitarian gender divisions of labor were more typical here. However, there seemed to be a tendency to revert to traditional gender roles in the long-term.

Women saw an opportunity in direct marketing, and those who lacked this opportunity expressed more dissatisfaction with life on the farm. They enjoyed the contacts to the outside that direct marketing allowed them and cherished the recognition they receive from customers. All women felt their work to be excessive; yet, especially on newly formed farms, there was a tendency to adjust the farm work to the women's needs rather than vice versa (Birnthaler and Hagen 1989).

In sum then, the regulatory move towards environmental liberalism together with a feminist push towards more egalitarian roles on the farm has affected the rural gender order of the patriarchal welfare state. Women are moving back into farming, participating in organic production and are becoming rural entrepreneurs. But despite the veneer of egalitarianism woven into discourses of entrepreneurship, gender continues to operate as a category to distribute labor, resources, and power. There is little evidence that women's enlarged opportunities have significantly disrupted their subordinate status. They continue to be in charge of unpaid housework and care work, and while they are considered co-entrepreneurs for social insurance purposes, this does not seem to have affected self-definitions as reflected in government statistics. Yet, the status of housewife has lost some of its shine and farmwomen are rediscovering the direct marketing and independent sources of income that growth and efficiency-oriented modernization had eliminated.

Conclusion

This case study illustrates the way in which gender regimes interweave with modes of economic and social regulation. Such regimes and modes of regulation no longer merely attach to state-level policies of social welfare but are integral to the increasingly international regulatory infrastructure of the world economy. The study identifies rules and rhetorics implicated in such regulation in a multi-level polity – Germany in the European Union. From 1950 to 1980, the agricultural welfare state employed the languages of modernization, anti-communism and family farming; since then, a regime of environmental liberalism employs the languages of free trade, multifunctional agriculture, and gender equality. The gendered regimes of agriculture have had distinctive outcomes for women and men working on farms. In both cases described, gender has operated as a key regulatory means to divide labor, assign rewards, and produce power.

Feminist movements and institutional strategies seeking to advance gender equality have functioned to de-legitimize the deployment of gender for these purposes. Gender mainstreaming, a method to systematically probe the implicit uses of gender in public policies and programs, has the potential to further undermine categorical distinctions between women and men. It has

become a topic in European structural policies, but there is a broad understanding in European bureaucracies that the organization of agricultural markets is in no way related to gender orders. In contrast, this case study has illustrated that economic modes of regulation in agriculture are not gender neutral, that commitments to modernization and free trade operate on the basis of gender orders with profoundly unequal effects depending on social location.

Transitions are times of opportunity to take gender orders in new directions. The current transition in German and European agriculture is an opportunity to secure a more egalitarian status for farmwomen. With the method of gender mainstreaming, the European Union has in place a potent policy tool to direct such change. Taking gender mainstreaming seriously would entail a probing of gender orders encoded in economic modes of regulation. Ignoring the connection between market orders and gender orders is to miss an opportunity to foster more egalitarian relations in farm households, empower farmwomen and gain them a voice in agricultural policymaking.

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Appendix

Table 1: Farms in Germany according to Size, 2000 and 2001

Size of Farm from ... to less than ... Hectars of Land	2000	2001 ¹	Change in Percent
	Number of Farms in 1000		
2-10	148.5	142.2	-4.2
10-20	87.0	84.1	-3.4
20-30	46.2	44.2	-4.3
30-50	59.4	58.2	-2.0
50-100	54.6	55.0	+0.7
100 and more	25.3	26.2	+3.7
Total	421.1	410.0	-2.6
Farms with less than 2 hectars ²	37.3	36.9	-1.0
Total	458.4	446.9	-2.5

1. Preliminary results of the Survey of Agricultural Structure 2001.

2. Farms with a minimum number of animals or special crops for which there is a reporting requirement.

Source: Bundesministerium für Verbraucherschutz, Ernährung und Landwirtschaft, *Ernährungs- und Agrarpolitischer Bericht 2002 der Bundesregierung*. Bonn, 2002. Internet Website: www.verbraucherministerium.de. Accessed 6/27/02.

Table 2: Farm Family Labor by Gender and Year

Year	Total	# female	% female
1949	5,640	3,019	53.5
1956	5,082	2,666	52.4
1965/66	3,280	1,683	51.3
1992	1,331	489	36.7
1993	1,269	464	36.6
1995	1,147	408	35.6
1997	1,042	395	37.9
1999	940	341	36.3

Sources: 1949 *Statistisches Handbuch*, Landwirtschaft und Ernährung. 164 Sonderheft. Bericht über Landwirtschaft 156. 156 and 1965/6 *Grüner Bericht*. (All reported in S.H. Franklin, *The European Peasantry: The Final Phase*. London: Methuen, 1969, p. 27). Statistisches Jahrbuch über Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten 2000. Münster: Landwirtschaftsverlag, Table 61.

Table 3: Female Full-time Family Labor by Farm Size, 1949-1999 (in thousands)

Year	Farm Size in Hectares**									
	2-5		5-10		10-20		20-50		>50	
	# of women	%	# of women	%	# of women	%	# of women	%	# of women	%
1949			1,424*	53.1*	462	53.0	199	52.2	22	53.7
1956			1,489*	63.1*	411	50.7	176	50.0	18	48.6
1965/66			757*	68.9*	396	51.9	196	50.6	19	48.7
1976/77	133	84	152	73	201	56	195	49	28	46
1992	3	23.1	5	21.7	9	14.3	15	9.9	6	8.3
1993	3	23.1	4	20.0	8	14.3	13	9.2	6	7.8
1995	2	20.0	3	17.6	6	13.0	11	8.9	7	8.5
1997	.	.	2	14.3	5	13.5	10	9.3	6	7.9
1999	1	12.5	2	16.7	4	12.5	11	11.6	8	10.5

*Figures refer to all farms smaller than 10 hectares

**One hectare equals 2.471 acres

Sources: 1949 *Statistisches Handbuch, Landwirtschaft und Ernährung*. 164 Sonderheft. Berichte über Landwirtschaft 1956. 1956 and 1965/66 *Grüner Bericht* (All reported in S.H. Franklin, *The European Peasantry: The Final Phase*, London: Methuen, 1969, p. 27). Materialband zum Agrarbericht 1978 der Bundesregierung, Bundesdrucksache 8/1501 v. 3.2.78, Bonn (As reported in Heide Inhetveen and Margret Blasche, *Frauen in der kleinbäuerlichen Landwirtschaft*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1983, p. 253). *Statistisches Jahrbuch über Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten 2000*. Münster: Landwirtschaftsverlag, Table 57.

Note: Changes in method limit comparability of figures for 1997 and 1999.

Table 4: Agricultural Work Units (AWUs) of Farm Family Labor by Gender and Farm Size (in thousands)

Farm Size in Hectars	Total			Female			% Female			Change, 1995 to 1999
	1995	1997	1999	1995	1997	1999	1995	1997	1999	
2-5	38.7	.	32.0	11.0	.	9.6	28.3	.	30.1	1.8
5-10	52.5	45.9	41.3	15.9	13.7	12.8	30.2	29.8	31.1	0.9
10-20	93.9	78.8	72.1	27.9	22.6	21.3	29.7	28.7	29.6	-0.1
20-30	81.5	68.6	59.3	22.4	18.9	17.0	27.5	27.5	28.6	1.1
30-50	99.3	89.4	82.9	25.1	23.0	22.4	25.3	25.7	27.0	1.7
50-100	81.2	77.4	75.0	19.4	18.4	18.8	23.9	23.8	25.1	1.2
>100	25.9	23.6	24.9	5.6	5.1	5.8	21.5	21.8	23.4	1.9
Total	507.5	450.5	406.6	137.7	121.4	114.2	27.1	26.9	28.1	1.0

Source: *Statistisches Jahrbuch über Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten 2000*. Münster: Landwirtschaftsverlag, Table 61.

Note: Changes in method limit comparability of figures for 1997 and 1999.

Table 5: Agricultural Work Units per Woman by Size of Farm

Farm Size	1995	1997	1999	Difference 1995-1999
2-5	.23	.	.27	.04
5-10	.28	.	.25	.03
10-20	.36	.28	.25	-.11
20-30	.40	.39	.37	-.03
30-50	.41	.40	.40	-.01
50-100	.40	.40	.40	.00
100 and more	.41	.40	.40	-.01
Total	.34	.33	.32	-.02

Source: Statistisches Jahrbuch über Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten 2000. Münster: Landwirtschaftsverlag, Table 61.

Note: Changes in method limit comparability of figures for 1997 and 1999.

Table 6: Weekly Working Hours of Women and Men on Farms in Niedersachsen

	Full-Time Farms		Part-Time Farms	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
All Farms	63	59	57	49
Farms with Direct Marketing	64	60	63	52
Farms with Farm Holidays	67	62	-	-
Farms with off-farm income earning	65	60	61	42

Source: Ines Fehning, *Frauen sind ein Gewinn! Beitrag der Frauen am landwirtschaftlichen Gesamteinkommen*. Commissioned by the Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten (Göttingen: Agrarsoziale Gesellschaft e.V.)

Table 7: Unpaid Family Labor by Gender (in thousands)

	Total	Male	% Male	Female	% Female
1992	612	277	45	335	55
1995	527	227	43	300	57
1997	522	204	39	318	61
1999	501	187	37	314	63

Source: Statistisches Jahrbuch über Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten 2000 (Münster: Landwirtschaftsverlag), Table 60.