



Economics, Racism, and Attitudes toward Immigration in the New Germany

Author(s): John A. Clark and Jerome S. Legge, Jr.

Source: *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 4, (Dec., 1997), pp. 901-917

Published by: Sage Publications, Inc. on behalf of the University of Utah

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/448992>

Accessed: 26/04/2008 14:48

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=sage>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We enable the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Economics, Racism, and Attitudes toward Immigration in the New Germany

JOHN A. CLARK AND JEROME S. LEGGE, JR., UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

A number of different theories have been advanced to explain support for policies which may benefit minority groups. This paper utilizes economic-self interest, traditional racism, and conservative values to explore attitudes of German citizens toward granting political asylum and residency to immigrants. The linear structural relations (LISREL) analysis on a 1991 sample of German citizens suggests that the structure of attitudes is different depending upon which section of Germany (the West or the former German Democratic Republic [GDR]) is considered. East Germans tend to “fuse” traditional racism with conservative values to express a racism argued by “symbolic” theorists while the West Germans tend to separate the concepts, possibly because of the more mature democratic development of West German parties and institutions. In explaining immigration policy, traditional racism tends to dominate the West German model, while economic self-interest partially explains policy attitudes in the former GDR. Still, even in the East, ethnocentrism is a very strong factor in understanding support for restrictive immigration policies. We discuss the implications of the analysis in terms of the literature on American racism and policy reasoning.

Immigration has emerged as a tremendously important issue in nearly all Western nations. Especially crucial is the amount of support citizens are willing to extend in granting citizenship, permits to work, or refugee status in the case of political persecution. Using a 1991 sample of German citizens, this paper explores attitudes toward foreign workers and refugees by employing theories which attempt to explain support or opposition to policies which may benefit minority groups. The chief aim is to explain support for refugee

NOTE: We are grateful to Rosalee Clawson and Markus Crepaz for helpful comments and to Jennifer Sherrock for assistance with manuscript preparation.

Political Research Quarterly, Vol. 50, No. 4 (December 1997): pp. 901–917

status for those fleeing to Germany and examine the proposition that immigrant workers should be returned to their homelands after their labor is completed.

A number of theories have been advanced which seek to explain attitudes toward policies which may benefit minority groups. First, one may oppose beneficial policies because of economic self-interest. Unskilled workers, those dissatisfied with their economic status, and residents of the economically depressed former German Democratic Republic (GDR) may feel particularly vulnerable to foreign workers and refugees. A second explanation of bigotry is what is sometimes termed "red neck" or traditional racism (Sniderman and Tetlock 1986; Sniderman et al. 1991). Traditional racism consists of crude racial stereotyping which may include beliefs of minority group inferiority as well as expressions of not wanting to associate with a particular group. A final theory is the "symbolic" explanation of bigotry. Developed largely from the American politics literature, this thesis holds that as citizens become more reluctant to express prejudice in overt terms, it sometimes is manifested in conservative parties, ideologies, or policies (Kinder 1986; McConahay 1982). Stating that symbolic racism is a fusion of traditional values and negative racial affect, the symbolic theorists, as a rule, have found a weak linkage between self-interest and hostility to minority groups.

In this article we review theories which bear on sentiment toward immigrant groups and describe attitudes of the public toward them. We then use these theories to test a model of policy preferences toward the immigrants.

SELF INTEREST, TRADITIONAL, AND SYMBOLIC THEORIES OF PREJUDICE: AN APPLICATION TO GERMANY

Germany has faced the "foreigner" problem on two fronts. First, beginning in the early 1960s, the nation imported hundreds of thousands of guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*) to compensate for labor shortages, especially in less-skilled employment. Recruitment of new guest workers from non-EEC countries was banned in 1973, but many chose to stay in Germany, bringing their families and becoming de facto immigrants. The largest share of these seemingly permanent guest workers came from Turkey (Booth 1992). The restrictive laws regarding naturalization and citizenship have made it extremely difficult for guest workers or their children to become Germans. Mostly because of the labor shortage problem, Germany as of 1991 had one of the largest populations of non-citizens in Europe (7.3 percent of its residents).

The second aspect of the "foreign problem" concerns asylum. Since the end of World War II, through 1993, Germany had perhaps the most liberal asylum policy in the world. This policy grew largely out of the divided status of the nation following the war and sympathy for those fleeing Communism.

But with the collapse of the Eastern European regimes beginning in the late 1980s, the number of asylum seekers began to escalate rapidly. In 1990, their number was 193,000, far greater than France which stood second in Western Europe at 56,000. While France and the rest of the continent stayed stable during the early 1990s, the number of refugees in Germany rose to 256,000 in 1991 and 438,000 in 1992 (Stalker 1996). The anti-foreign violence of the early 1990s, coupled with the flood of refugees, prompted the Bundestag to pass a 1993 law which toughened the qualifications for asylum status. Following passage, the number of asylum seekers dropped from 322,000 to 127,000.

What are the factors which might explain opposition to policies which benefit immigrants and refugees? The first is economic self-interest. In term of the guest workers, a threat is present especially to the most marginal workers. The concept of economic self-interest fits with the "victims of modernization" hypothesis advanced by Leggewie (1989) and Heitmeyer (1992), who hold that support for right-wing parties and negative attitudes toward foreigners are a function of "marginal educational or labor positions, low levels of secure group attachment and negative views of one's own future . . ." (Faist 1994: 453). Much survey research on Germany has demonstrated that the deepest fear of the German worker, especially the unskilled, is that immigrants may replace them in employment (Castles and Kosack 1985: 452-53). The newer refugees would appear to threaten only the most marginal positions, but recent research has demonstrated that while second generation immigrants continue to be employed chiefly as laborers in heavy industry, many have been promoted to more skilled positions. Moreover, for second generation immigrants, wages are equivalent to those earned by native Germans when age is controlled (Seifert 1992). Thus, one might expect that those in the most vulnerable economic positions or who are dissatisfied with their economic status would be least sympathetic to policies which might aid the immigrants.

A second theory which may help explain opposition to pro-immigrant and refugee policies is what might be called "traditional" or "redneck" racism. In the context of American racism, individuals may not support policies which benefit African-Americans because members of this group are viewed as being "lazy" or "not trying hard enough" (Gilens 1995). In Germany stereotypes abound as well, particularly toward Gypsies, perhaps the most marginal of the immigrant groups (O'Brien 1988; Grass and Winston 1993). But another important aspect of overt racism in Germany is extreme nationalism which manifests itself in positive expressions regarding the superiority and exclusivity of German peoplehood. Funke (1991: 7-8 in Faist 1994: 451) speaks of a German nationalism which is "defensive" and oriented toward internal enemies (particularly of German unification). Faist includes in the list of

enemies groups such as Gypsies, Turks, and asylum seekers. In all, one might expect those who have the most positive views of Germans as people would be least likely to support liberal immigration and asylum policies.

A final theory which might help explain German opposition toward refugees and immigrant workers might be termed "symbolic." In the American politics literature it has sometimes been argued that as individuals are reluctant to express bigotry through stereotypes which are no longer acceptable, racism may be expressed "symbolically" through support for conservative policies, ideologies, and parties. It often is argued that these conservative values are "fused" with a negative racial affect (Kinder 1986). The literature on racism is filled with debate regarding the appropriateness of combining the two concepts. The Linear Structural Relations (LISREL) methodology employed in this article allows the empirical testing of this possibility but for the moment we assume that the concepts are separate.

There is a good deal of evidence which suggests that a conservative political orientation, apart from any racism, would predict a reluctance to support policies which may benefit foreigners (Sniderman et al. 1996). Like the symbolic racists in the United States, the "neoconservatives" in contemporary Germany do not express racism openly but criticize the Left's agenda of "civil rights, emancipation, and democratization" (Minkenberg 1993: 71). As pointed out by Roberts (1994: 480), in Germany there is an "analytic continuity" between the Christian Democrats and other more extremist parties (such as the *Republikaner*) on certain issues that include immigration. This overlap has allowed extremists to influence policies of the center-right party. In addition, literature from Germany and elsewhere indicates that those with a "Right" political orientation are less likely to express support for liberal social policies to include programs which may aid refugees and immigrants (Hopf 1994; Billet and DeWitte 1995).

We have reason to expect differing attitudinal structures in the former GDR. Unification, and the economic instability it created, has left many East Germans anxious about unemployment and financial security. At the end of 1991, unemployment was named as one of the two most important problems by more than 60 percent of the East Germans, about four times the proportion of those in the Western portion of the nation (Kuechler 1993: 46-53). Whether foreign workers and new immigrants are responsible for the problem is less relevant than the perception that they are taking jobs from German citizens. Likewise, focusing attention on non-citizens may reduce the tensions created by merging what were two nations into one.

Previous research has shown that German identity is a far more important determinant of anti-foreign sentiment than is economic satisfaction (Legge 1996). In this study, we extend that line of research by focusing on specific

policies regarding immigration and foreign workers in Germany. The use of specific policies allows us to test the relative impacts of conservative political attitudes and ethnocentrist bigotry. Further, the differing cultural and economic contexts of the former East and West Germany demonstrate that the factors influencing policy support may be based on different underlying attitudes.

THE DATA AND THE MODEL

The Data

The data consist of a random sample of German citizens which was gathered from November 30 through December 17, 1991. Of 2933 subjects, 993 lived in the territories of the former GDR. The survey included questions regarding German perceptions of foreigners, Jews, and other minorities, economic satisfaction, and feelings about politics in general.¹

The LISREL Model

Figure 1 presents a LISREL model of attitudes toward German immigration policy. The advantage of utilizing LISREL in this instance is that it allows us to test the question of whether the constructs of economic self-interest, traditional racism, and conservative orientation fit unique and separate dimensions (Bollen 1989). Further, the technique simultaneously permits us to examine the relationships between the exogenous and the dependent variables in terms of structural equations. By having both dependent variables in a single model, we are able to attain a more complete and complex explanation of German immigration attitudes without resorting to separate regression estimates.

Dependent Variables

The distributions of the dependent variables are listed in Table 1.² Because the LISREL model divides the nation into respondents living in the former GDR and the West, we divide the sample here, also. Table 1 indicates

¹ The study was conducted by the EMNID Institute, Bielefeld for *Der Spiegel*. Neither institution bears responsibility for our analysis or interpretations.

² The exact questions are as follows. "I am now showing you a list of some ethnic groups of other countries. Please tell me whether members of these groups after proof of individual cases should be recognized in the Federal Republic as refugees or whether they should in principle be rejected: Croats from Yugoslavia; Kurds from Turkey; Albanians from Albania; Gypsies from Romania; Serbs from Yugoslavia;" 1 = accepted; 2 = rejected. "What do you think about the proposition that foreign workers should be allowed immigration for only a few months in a year and then be made to go back to their homeland?" 1 = agree to above; 0 = disagree to above.

that there is considerable opposition to policies which may assist foreign workers and refugees across the East and West. On the refugee question, most Germans do not favor the granting of asylum status to foreign groups although the level of support varies widely depending upon the groups under consideration. There also is some variation depending upon region. Not surprisingly, the Gypsies are the least favored in this regard. Throughout Europe the case could be made that they are among the most unpopular of minority groups. The Albanians do not trail very far behind while the Kurds are perceived much more favorably. While the Kurds are a large minority within the Turkish community, the German public still tends to view them more positively because they have lived in that host nation for some time. The Turks themselves may hold prejudices against this particular minority within its group, but it is possible that Germans make less of a distinction (Blaschke 1991).

The remaining groups in Table 1 are refugees from the civil war in former Yugoslavia where a huge refugee problem exists. In 1992 approximately 2.5 million persons from former Yugoslavia were considered refugees, and comprised approximately 10 percent of the total world refugee population (Winter 1992). While many of the refugees have remained in the new nations of former Yugoslavia, others have sought passage to the West, especially military deserters. But most of these persons do not qualify as refugees in Germany because of the 1993 law. Germans express a clear preference for the Croats over the Serbs in terms of refugee status. Perhaps this attitude has its roots in past alliances dating to the earlier part of this century through the Second World War.

While differences are not large, residents of the former GDR are generally more supportive of the political refugee status than are residents of the West.

≡ TABLE 1
GERMAN ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION POLICY

	West Germany	East Germany
Percentage of Germans who support political refugee status for:		
Gypsies	23.3	24.8
Albanians	30.1	34.5
Serbs	31.2	36.4
Kurds	49.0	54.0
Croats	61.0	54.1
Percentage of Germans who believe that foreign workers should be allowed immigration only for a few months in a year and then be made to return to their homeland	66.4	70.4
Minimum N	1861	944

The only exception is with regard to the Croats, whom the West Germans view more favorably. It could be that the East German's comparatively negative attitude toward the Croats may be explained again by past alliances because in the former Communist Bloc, the GDR was closely aligned with Slavic groups such as the Serbs and the Russians. But for the other groups, the more sympathetic views of the East residents may be reflective of the GDR's long-held status as a captive nation. Prior to construction of the Berlin Wall, many residents fled to the West and until the collapse of the Communist regime, families often were divided.

The second dependent variable is related more specifically to the economic threat that immigrant workers might pose. The question is largely a hypothetical one. Turkish guest workers have been present in large numbers in the western section of Germany since the 1960s. Although not granted citizenship, they are settled and unlikely to be affected by new government policies. Yet some of the anti-immigrant violence of the early 1990s was directed at this group. Thus, not surprisingly, Table 1 indicates that most Germans would like to see guest workers present in their country for no longer than required work periods. They would then be returned to the country of origin. There is a bit more support for this proposal in the East, where economic conditions continue to be more problematic.

The refugee variable is a 6-point additive scale constructed with a 2 assigned if a particular group would be rejected as refugees and a 1 scored if members of the group should be accepted.³ For the variable measuring whether foreign workers should be made to return to their homeland after working, respondents were assigned a 1 if they agreed with the policy and a 0 if they disagreed. Thus, for both dependent variables, higher values represent support for more restrictive policies.

Exogenous variables

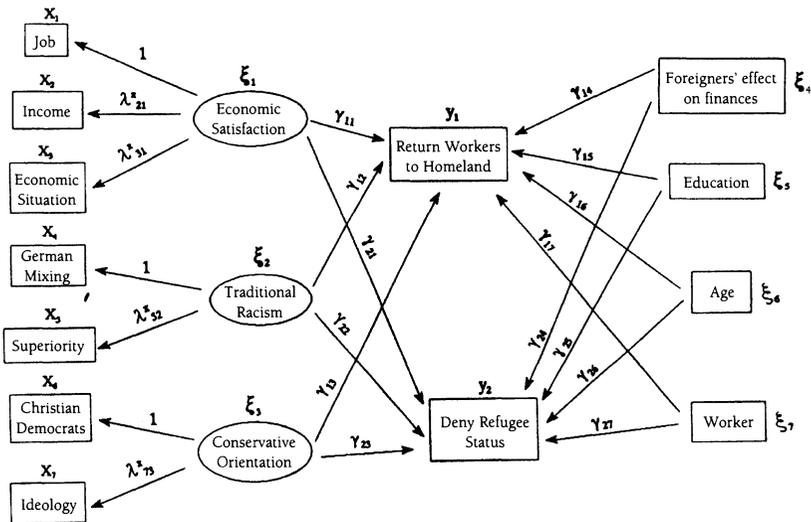
In line with the three theories of policy support, variables were gathered which were thought to be of use in explaining the dependent variables.⁴ The first set of variables examined the economic threat the immigrants posed. A

³ We attempted to develop an endogenous latent construct with each group estimated as a separate factor loading. While policy support across groups was highly correlated, using an unmeasured variable proved impossible because of the highly correlated error term between the immigrant groups. It produced an astronomical chi square and an unstable model fit. Accordingly, we treat the refugee variable as an additive index. Chronbach's α for the scale is .850 in the West and .868 in the East.

⁴ The questions and coding for the exogenous variables are presented in the Appendix. Distributions are available from the authors.

primary measure of economic security is a latent construct designed to tap satisfaction with work, income, and overall economic contentment. The lower the level of economic satisfaction, the greater the opposition to beneficial policies for the workers and refugees. Also included among the economic variables but separate from the above are unskilled worker status and the perceived effect that foreigners have on a respondent's finances. It is hypothesized that unskilled workers and those who feel their finances would be better off without foreigners in the country would be least likely to support liberal refugee and immigrant worker policies.

FIGURE 1
A LISREL MODEL OF ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRATION POLICY



The second set of exogenous variables concerns the explicitly racist element of opposition to immigration policy. For this exogenous latent construct respondents were asked whether they felt that "Germans are superior to other people" and whether Germans should avoid "mixing" with other races. It is expected that as ethnocentrism increases, so also will opposition to policies which favor the immigrant workers and refugees.

A third set of exogenous variables tapped the relationship between a conservative political orientation and attitudes toward foreigners. It is anticipated that those identifying with the Christian Democrats, the more conservative of the major parties, and those more on the "Right" of a 10-point ideology scale would be less likely to support the worker and refugee policies.

Two other exogenous variables were included in the model. Education is important because in many studies of sympathy for immigrant or other minority groups, it is usually the educated who are the most tolerant (Billiet, Canon, and Huys 1991; Hoskin and Mishler 1983). It is also possible that the educated are less threatened economically than others because of their superior status on the job market. A second sociodemographic variable included in the model is age. Age is a potentially important variable because it has been a sensitive predictor of xenophobia (Billiet, Carton, and Huys 1990). In the past, some German samples have shown that it is younger persons who are most receptive to immigrants (Hoskin and Mishler 1983), but it is possible that more recently youth are less receptive because they may be more threatened economically than more established citizens. In fact, much of the violence which occurred toward foreigners in the early 1990s was attributed to youth who felt themselves threatened both by the arrival of the new groups and the collapse of the economy in the East.

Analysis

As in Table 1, since we expected that there could be some differences between Germans who resided in the territories of the former GDR and those in the West, we divided the sample and estimated separate LISREL models for each group. We split the sample in this manner because of the prevalence of a "victims of modernization" hypothesis which is present both in the literature of German politics and in the popular media. The hypothesis has been used to explain partially the xenophobic violence in East Germany around the beginning of reunification in the early 1990s. The "victims" hypothesis holds that many of those most likely to express xenophobic views are the economically disadvantaged among the native Germans. Those who have economic fear are the most prone to perceive the possibility of economic competition from the foreigners. As Roberts (1994: 477) has pointed out, "the special pressures on East Germans since unification can also be regarded as classifiable generally under the heading of 'modernization effects'" (see also Barkes and Moreau 1993: 136, 140-41). Thus, we make our primary division between East and West because economic differences were quite pronounced at the time of reunification, and, while the gap may have narrowed somewhat, remains so presently. To the extent that economic explanations of immigration policy exist at all, they should be especially present among the citizens of the former GDR.

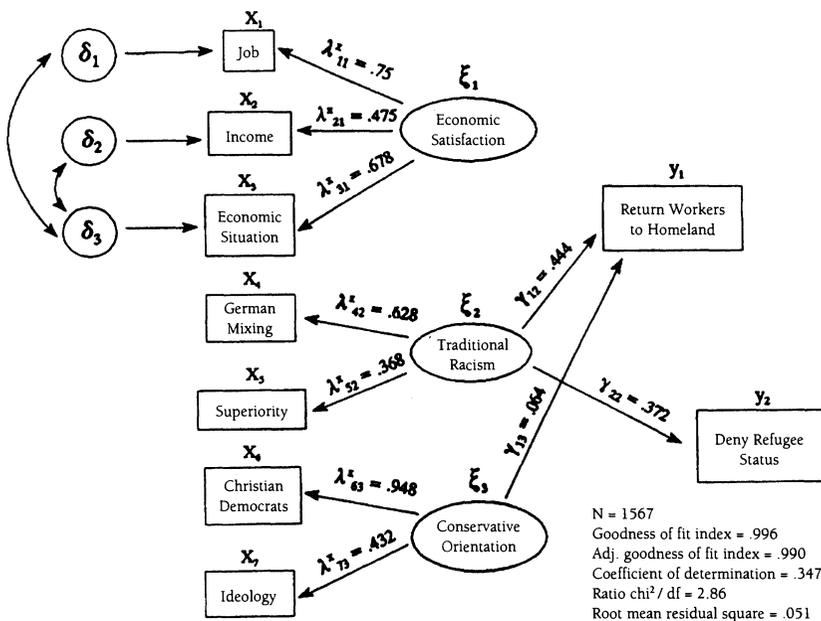
The LISREL model estimates for residents of Western Germany are presented in Figure 2. For ease of viewing the results, we present only those γ and λ coefficients which are of a minimum .05 value at the .05 level of significance or less; however, the model is estimated with all hypothesized paths retained.

Because of the large number of variables which are ordinal, we employed a matrix of polychoric correlations and used Weighted Least Squares (WLS).⁵ The λ^x coefficients reveal that the latent constructs for economic satisfaction, traditional racism, and conservative orientation are sound. The model is a good fit to the data as evidenced by the ratio of chi square to the degrees of freedom and the overall explanatory power of the model is reasonable with a coefficient of determination of .347.

In contrast to the symbolic theorists who view racism as a fusion between traditional values and racism, the confirmatory factor analysis portion of the model reveals that the concepts are best treated separately in this context. We experimented by attempting to free the variables in the conservative orienta-

≡ FIGURE 2

LISREL ESTIMATES OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES ON POLICY PREFERENCES IN WESTERN GERMANY (STANDARDIZED SOLUTION)



⁵ Results are essentially the same whether or not the insignificant paths are eliminated. Figure 2 indicates that the assumption of independent error terms was violated in the economic satisfaction latent variable. By not treating the error term as independent in this construct, the fit of the model was improved in terms of chi square and there was no substantive change in the interpretation of the model. For the exogenous constructs, we fixed the values of "job," "German mixing," and "Christian Democrats" at 1.

tion construct into the latent variable measuring traditional racism but the λ^x coefficients were uncorrelated. Moreover, the model fit worsened appreciably. This finding led us to believe that in line with much of the literature on the U.S. (e.g., Sniderman et al. 1991), West Germans tend to separate conservatism from racial affect.

Figure 2 reveals that an economic explanation of immigrant policy cannot be discerned from the LISREL model. None of the economic variables (including the economic satisfaction construct, the variable which measures foreigners' effect on finances, or the unskilled worker variable) show any impact on attitudes toward either the refugee or the foreign worker policies. One plausible reason for these findings is that in the more affluent West, individuals would see the new immigrants more as a nuisance rather than a direct threat to personal finances. In line with the hypotheses, limited evidence exists which suggests that a "conservative orientation" increases the desire to return workers to their homeland after a limited period of labor, although the γ_{13} coefficient is small (.064). The separate impact of the conservative orientation construct suggests that some Westerners are comfortable with expressing their opposition to liberal immigration policies (at least with regard to immigrant workers) through conventional means of political protest, apart from any reference to "traditional racism." In the West, this might be expected as the parties have been institutionalized for a long period of time and although the "traditional cleavages" (e.g., labor/capital) have recently been deemed inadequate to explain many newer political problems such as immigration, the Christian Democrats are probably viewed as the more cautious of the major parties on the issue (Minkenberg 1993).⁶

Traditional racism, however, is far more powerful than either economic self-interest or conservative orientation in influencing immigration policy in the West to the extent that it overwhelms the explanatory power of the model. As traditional racism increases, as measured by belief in German superiority and reluctance to "mix" with other nations, support for returning workers to their homeland ($\gamma_{12} = .444$) and for denying refugee status to Kurds, Gypsies, and others ($\gamma_{22} = .372$) increase markedly in the expected direction. When one compares the impact of both conservative orientation and traditional racism, the results suggest that Germans residing in the Western portion of the nation arrive at an attitude toward immigration policy chiefly on the basis of

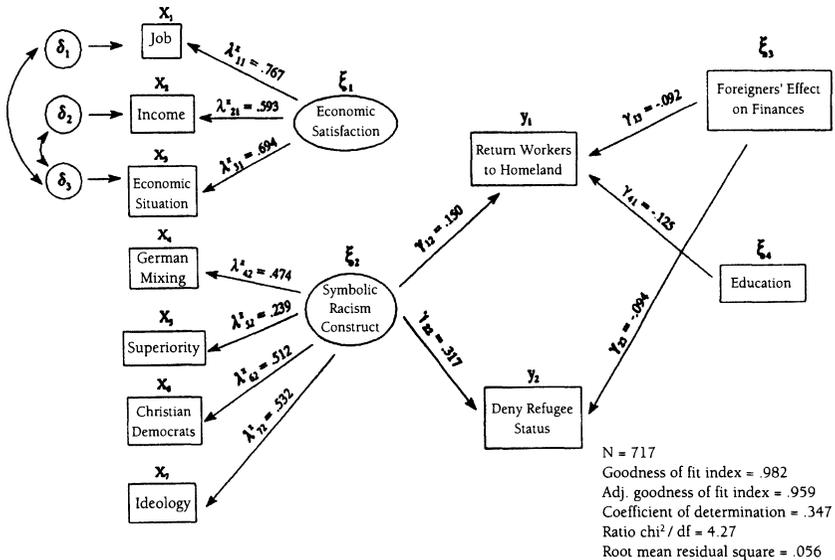
⁶ It is possible that some citizens on the Left face cross-pressures on immigration. While Left voters may have more sympathy for foreign workers and refugees, unions have been in opposition of because of economic competition for employment and housing. Similarly, Right-leaning citizens may favor open labor markets but be prone to anti-foreign prejudice based on ethnocentrism.

their affect toward the immigrants themselves. This affect is determined largely independently of the position of party, ideology, or economic self-interest.

Somewhat contrasting results for the residents of the former GDR are presented in Figure 3. One striking finding is that the East German sample demonstrated greater evidence of a "symbolic racism" interpretation of immigration policy than the more exclusively "traditional racism" hypothesis confirmed with the West German respondents. While it was evident that respondents from the West separated a "conservative" orientation from more base expressions of ethnocentrism, such was not the case for the former GDR. We attempted to confirm the tri-dimensional structure of the measurement model offered in Figure 1 and found that the East German portion of the sample did not fit it well. Instead, a better solution in terms of model fit was derived when we merged the "traditional" and "conservative" constructs. The finding is probably due to newness of party identification in the East and the lag in development of a coherent ideology which can be relied upon consistently, separate from other political cues (Kaase and Klingemann 1994). Because of the novelty of the democratic parties and their positions, the East Germans are less successful than the Westerners in distinguishing them as cues for political action.

≡ FIGURE 3

LISREL ESTIMATES OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES ON POLICY PREFERENCES IN THE FORMER GDR (STANDARDIZED SOLUTION)



In support of a hypothesis of “victims of modernization,” the new “symbolic racism” construct applied to the East Germans works less well as an explanatory factor in immigration than the “traditional racism” construct as expressed by the West. Still, it is related to both refugee and worker policies at least moderately ($\gamma_{12} = .150$; $\gamma_{22} = .317$). Those higher in symbolic racism tend to express less support for giving the foreign groups refugee status and also support a policy which would return workers to their homeland after short stays. But the primary difference between the West and East samples is that economic effects are more pronounced in the East. While the effects of the “economic satisfaction” latent construct still are absent as was the case for the West, the East German model demonstrates that respondents reference their relative financial circumstances when making a decision on both worker ($\gamma_{13} = -.092$) and refugee ($\gamma_{23} = -.092$) policies. The more an individual believes that he or she would be “better off” financially if there were no foreigners in Germany, the greater the opposition to more tolerant immigration policies.

In sum, the most persuasive of the explanations considered for German immigration policy is racism, whether it is expressed in “traditional” form in the West or fused “symbolically” with the measures of conservatism in the East. Compared to the other exogenous variables, it has the strongest and most consistent effects on both measures of immigration policy. As racism increases, support for immigrant workers and refugees declines. The results for the German sample parallel research in the United States which seeks to explain why some individuals oppose programs which may benefit blacks. According to Gilens (1995), a chief explanatory variable in accounting for why some whites may oppose welfare is the stereotyping of African-Americans with labels such as “laziness” or their “unwillingness to try harder.” Similarly, a key concept which explains negative German feelings toward foreigners is a negative racial affect which is characterized by a feeling of “superiority” and an unwillingness to “mix” with other people.

DISCUSSION

A number of important conclusions emerge from this study of attitudes toward German immigrants. The first is the weakness of the concept of self-interest when it is matched against race in explaining policy reasoning. Perhaps one fault with our measure of self-interest may be that it is defined too narrowly by its focus on the individual. In Germany and elsewhere it often is *national* economic conditions which evoke a political response, such as a vote (Lewis-Beck and Lockerbie 1989).⁷ But in this case the dependent variable is

⁷ Unfortunately, the interview schedule does not contain a question on national economic conditions. But our findings are in agreement with Hoskin (1991: 89-93) who

not a vote and the connection between self-interest and policy seems much more direct. Others have documented the limitations of self-interest in explaining behavior (Monroe 1994) but what is of little comfort is the alternative explanation—that is, the power of race or ethnocentrism in overriding a rational calculation of the costs and benefits of policy. As expected, the economic impacts which were hypothesized to exist occurred only in the former GDR and even in that instance, the effects of economic self-interest were comparatively weak when compared to the ethnocentric construct.

The results also offer insight in examining the types of racism which explain policy opposition toward the immigrants and refugees. Our findings offer some support to those on both sides of the issue as to whether “symbolic” racism is a legitimate construct which can account for political behavior. The case of Germany suggests that the usefulness and validity of symbolism is highly contextual. In the West, the part of the nation that has the longest experience with democratic political institutions, the “fusion” of conservative values and racial hostility is largely absent and citizens express opposition to refugee and immigration policies through racial overtones which are largely separated from party affiliation or conservative ideology. In contrast, in the former GDR, where the phenomenon of democratic parties was brand new at the time of this survey, the conservative values and traditional racism were combined into one construct which was most successful in explaining attitudes toward immigration policy. This leads us to postulate for future comparative research that a symbolic view of race in which conservative values and a more base ethnocentrism are merged is most likely in polities with immature democratic political institutions.

A final important implication of this study is what the findings may indicate with regard to the notion of policy reasoning. The question often is posed as to how individuals arrive at a policy preference given limited information due to a lack of interest in politics and policy questions. Our findings suggest that affect plays a role. Many are opposed to beneficial policies toward immigrants but their opposition is not due to any rational calculation of economic costs and benefits to the individual. Instead, our findings seem to be in conformance with the research of Sniderman et al. (1986) which suggests that with an issue as powerful as race or minority groups, individuals, particularly the less educated, quickly determine their likes and dislikes and immediately jump to the end of the policy reasoning chain. They then may “reason backwards” to justify why they advocate a certain position toward a minority group.

found weak and inconsistent linkages between economic fears and attitudes toward immigrants in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1980s.

The reason why the economic self-interest explanation may be limited in this sample of Germans is that policy preferences are determined more from the immediate likes and dislikes of an individual toward immigrants or minorities in general rather than the effect these groups may have on one's pocketbook or job prospects. In the upheaval which Germany experienced during reunification in the early 1990s, the more emotional explanation seems likely.

APPENDIX: QUESTIONS AND VARIABLE CODING FOR EXOGENOUS VARIABLES

Economic Satisfaction Latent Variable

Please tell me how pleased you are with your income (work). 1 = completely unpleased; 2 = rather unpleased; 3 = rather pleased; 4 = completely pleased.

How do you judge your economic situation today? 1 = very bad; 2 = bad; 3 = so-so; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Symbolic Politics Latent Variable

Party Preference 1 = Identifies with Christian Democrats; 0 = Identifies with other parties.

Ideology (1 = Left ... 10 = Right).

Traditional Racism Latent Variable

We should be careful that we keep Germans pure and prevent the mixing of people (1 ... 6) (high codes indicate agreement).

If someone says "we Germans are superior to other people" is that your opinion or can't one say that? 1 = one cannot say that; 2 = undecided; 3 = somewhat true.

GDR 0 = resides in the West; 1 = lives in the territories of the former GDR

Age was coded as exact age at the time of the survey.

Worker 1 = unskilled worker, 0 = all others

Education 1 = elementary school without apprenticeship; 2 = elementary school with apprenticeship; 3 = further schooling without completing exams; 4 = completed exams for secondary school; 5 = studium.

Foreigners' effect on finances. Given that there were no foreigners in Germany, do you believe that things would be better for you financially, worse, or would it not change you finances? 1 = better, 2 = would not change; 3 = worse.

REFERENCES

Backes, Uwe, and Patrick Moreau. 1993. *Die extreme Rechte in Deutschland*. München: Akademischer Verlag.

- Billiet, Jaak, Ann Carton, and Rik Huys. 1990. "Een Sociologische Verklaring Van de Xenofobie in België." *Tijdschrift voor Sociologie* 11: 431-66.
- _____. 1991. "Les Determinants Sociaux de la Xenophobie en Belgique." *Recherches Sociologiques* 22: 65-90.
- Billiet, Jaak, and Hans DeWitte. 1995. "Attitudinal Dispositions to Vote for a 'New' Extreme Right-Wing Party: The Case of Vlaams Blok." *European Journal of Political Research* 27: 181-202.
- Blaschke, Jochen. 1991. "Die Diaspora der Kurden in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland." *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 16: 85-93.
- Bollen, Kenneth A. 1989. *Structural Equations with Latent Variables*. New York: Wiley.
- Booth, Heather. 1992. *The Migration Process in Britain and West Germany*. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate.
- Castles, Stephen, and Godula Kosack. 1985. *Immigrant Workers and Class Structure in Western Europe*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Faist, Thomas. 1994. "Immigration, Integration and the Ethnicization of Politics." *European Journal of Political Research* 25: 439-59.
- Funke, Hajo. 1991. *Nationalismus im geeinten Deutschland*. Berlin: Aktion Sühnezeichen.
- Gilens, Martin. 1995. "Racial Attitudes and Opposition to Welfare." *Journal of Politics* 57: 994-1014.
- Grass, Gunter, and Krishna Winston. 1993. "On Loss: The Condition of Germany." *Dissent*. 40: 178-88.
- Heitmeyer, Wilhelm. 1992. *Rechtsextremistische Orientierungen bei Jugendlichen*, 4th rev. ed. Weinheim and München: Juventa.
- Hopt, Wulf. 1994. "Rechtsextremismus von Jugendlichen: Kein Deprivationsproblem?" *Zeitschrift für Sozialisationforschung und Erziehungssoziologie*. 14: 194-211.
- Hoskin, Marilyn. 1991. *New Immigrants and Democratic Society*. New York: Praeger.
- Hoskin, Marilyn, and William Mishler. 1983. "Public Opinion toward New Migrants: A Comparative Analysis." *International Migration* 21: 440-62.
- Kaase, Max, and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. 1994. "The Cumbersome Way to Partisan Orientations in a 'New' Democracy: The Case of the Former GDR." In M. Kent Jennings and Thomas E. Mann, eds., *Elections at Home and Abroad: Essays in Honor of Warren E. Miller*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Kinder, Donald R. 1986. "The Continuing American Dilemma: White Resistance to Racial Change 40 Years after Myrdal." *Journal of Social Issues* 42: 151-71.
- Kuechler, Manfred. 1993. "Framing Unification: Issue Salience and Mass Sentiment 1989-91." In Russell J. Dalton, ed., *The New Germany Votes*. Providence, RI: Berg.

- Legge, Jerome S., Jr. 1996. "Antiforeign Sentiment in Germany: Power Theory versus Symbolic Explanations of Prejudice." *Journal of Politics* 58: 516-27.
- Leggewie, Claus. 1989. *Die Republikaner: Phantombild der Neuen Rechten*, 3rd rev. ed. Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag.
- Lewis-Beck, Michael, S., and Brad Lockerbie. 1989. "Economics, Votes, Protests: Western European Cases." *Comparative Political Studies* 22: 155-77.
- McConahay, John B. 1982. "Self-Interest versus Racial Attitudes as Correlates of Anti-Busing Attitudes in Louisville: Is it the Buses or the Blacks?" *Journal of Politics* 44: 692-720.
- Minkenberg, Michael. 1993. "The New Right in Germany: The Transformation of Conservatism and the Extreme Right." *European Journal of Political Research* 22: 55-91.
- Monroe, Kristen R. 1994. "A Fat Lady in a Corset: Altruism and Social Theory." *American Journal of Political Science* 38: 861-93.
- O'Brien, Peter. 1988. "Continuity and Change in Germany's Treatment of Non-Germans." *International Migration Review* 22: 109-34.
- Roberts, Geoffrey K. 1994. "Extremism in Germany: Sparrows or Avalanche?" *European Journal of Political Research* 25: 461-82.
- Seifert, Wolfgang. 1992. "Die zweite Ausländergeneration in der Bundesrepublik." *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 44: 677-96.
- Sniderman, Paul M., Edward G. Carmines, Geoffrey C. Layman, and Michael Carter. 1996. "Beyond Race: Social Justice as a Race Neutral Ideal." *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 33-55.
- Sniderman, Paul M., Michael G. Hagen, Philip E. Tetlock, and Henry E. Brady. 1986. "Reasoning Chains: Causal Models of Policy Reasoning in Mass Publics." *British Journal of Political Science* 16: 405-30.
- Sniderman, Paul M., Thomas Piazza, Philip E. Tetlock, and Ann Kendrick. 1991. "The New Racism." *American Journal of Political Science* 35: 423-47.
- Sniderman, Paul M., and Philip E. Tetlock. 1986. "Symbolic Racism: Problems of Motive Attribution in Political Analysis." *Journal of Social Issues* 42: 129-50.
- Stalker, Peter. 1996. "Asylum Seekers: Facts and Statistics." *Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies* http://oneworld.org/overview/refugees/stalker_asylum.html
- Winter, Jelena Zlatkovic. 1992. "Izbjeglice iz Bosne I; Hercegovine u Hrvatskoj: uzroci dolaska, regulacija i organizacija prihvata." *Migracijske Teme* 8: 127-40.

Received: June 27, 1996

Accepted for Publication: June 17, 1997
