

Political Economy of Re-embedding Liberalism

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door

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*Mevrouw de Rector Magnificus,
Mijnheer de decaan,
Collega's, familie, vrienden,
Dames en heren,*

As we sit here today, we are surrounded by a deep economic crisis of historic proportions. This is something that we all know, not just my academic colleagues but also all my friends and fellow citizens. What fewer of us know is that this crisis has sown fundamental doubt here in the West about how best to govern our economy and deepen our democracy. And what I think even fewer of us know is that this crisis and doubt threaten what may be among the greatest accomplishments of Western democracies: the combination of economic openness and social protection.

This combination is somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand, Western democracies maintain relatively open economies with respect to international trade, investment, and even with respect to limited migration of workers. On the other hand, the same polities have developed very generous social protections – through welfare transfers and services to help economically vulnerable groups, and also through national and firm-level regulations that protect labor standards. Despite plenty of ups and downs and big differences across countries, this combination of economic openness and social protection remains in place particularly in Western Europe. And despite plenty of debate about their virtues and vices, openness gives us cosmopolitan freedoms and shared economic innovation, while social protections foster socio-economic justice and equity for citizens. This relatively beneficent combination has many labels, but I will use the one introduced by political scientist John Ruggie in the early 1980s: “Embedded Liberalism.”

This embedded liberalism may be unusual by pre-War standards and non-western standards. Yet for many years economic openness and social protection could and did reinforce one-another: Moves to open-up markets for goods and capital are dislocating for many groups, and these groups responded by demanding safety nets as the price of liberalization. Similarly, the development of welfare states and labor protections, whatever their origins may have been, fostered support in democratic polities for more international

trade or investment. The label “Embedded Liberalism,” indeed, captures not only the combination of openness and social protection, but also the possible causal harmony between them.

Yet, this harmonious combination of openness and social protection is under attack, and it has been for some time. The reasons why partly involve how openness and social protection causally influence one another: the two may have been accommodating or reinforcing of one another in the past, but they are thought now to be in fundamental tension. The harmony is thought to be lost. The scholars and commentators who best articulate this view have identified many forces that can explain why. Some emphasize how globalization is so deep, or social-policy protections so generous, that both have reached tipping points, limiting their own further growth and leading them to undermine one another. Other commentators emphasize how the rise of new economic players like China or India has changed the globalization game fundamentally. This latter view is eloquently expressed by the *New York Times* columnist and “globalization watcher” Thomas Friedman, who wrote the following about working-time regulations in a global economy: “French voters are trying to preserve a 35-hour work week in a world where Indian engineers are ready to work a 35-hour day. Good luck.” This intuitive view, one with which I suspect many in this room agree, focuses on how outsourcing to India affects French protection of working hours. But the dynamic is thought to apply to all faces of openness and of social protection.

The result is a new conventional wisdom that says that embedded liberalism, the combination of openness and social protection, can no longer be sustained. We now have to choose between economic openness and social protection. We can retain openness and compete in the harsh winds of the global economy only if we give-up key social protections, however democratically-cherished these may be: Friedman famously calls such a choice the “golden straightjacket” of globalization. Alternatively, we can retain social protections by giving-up key aspects of openness: using trade or other protectionism to shelter our hard-won, democratically-chosen welfare states from the winds of globalization. Whatever the details, we have to give up either the “embedded” or the “liberalism” of embedded liberalism.

My message today is that this view is mistaken. It is mistaken, I believe, because it misreads the politics of globalization, politics that underlie openness, social protection and the relationship between them. If we use social scientific research to better understand such connected politics, we discover something surprising. It may be true that some kinds of economic globalization spark politics that reduce some kinds of social protection, and vice versa. But we also find other aspects of economic openness and of social pro-

tections that do not undermine one another, and in fact still reinforce one another. And if we look carefully we can discover ways to steer the relationship between economic openness and social protections. We can identify which organizations or political parties increase our ability to respond to trade, investment or migration with sustained social services and labor standards – and which organizations and parties decrease that ability. Identifying such politics, in short, reveals the line between constraint and possibility, and reveals how to take advantage of that possibility to save the combination of openness and social protection – to “re-embed liberalism.”

In the rest of my address, I will try to convince you of this cautious optimism. I will first explain how existing academic study has evolved into a conventional wisdom that the marriage of economic openness and social protection is no longer viable, and I will show that most scholarship, including this pessimistic wisdom, misunderstands globalization politics. I will then spend the bulk of my address discussing my research to understand these politics better. That research, I shall explain, is an optimistic challenge to conventional wisdom. But that challenge is a qualified one, for the politics connecting openness to social protection turn out also to pose important dilemmas as well as possibilities. Understanding how to re-embed liberalism is, hence, a difficult search. Fittingly, then, I can conclude my story of difficult optimism by thanking the many people who have inspired and motivated my own search for it.

1 Political Economy, and the Rise and Fall of Embedded Liberalism

The relationship between economic globalization and social protection is widely studied throughout the social sciences, including economics, sociology, geography and political science. Most of that study has focused on how various aspects of economic openness influence social protections, such as national welfare states. This literature explores what I call *embedding liberalism*: where flows of or openness to trade, investment or migration can spark demands for social protection. Less studied is the opposite causal relationship, what I call *embedded liberalizing*: where existing increases in social protections, such as more generous unemployment assistance or labor-standards protections, might foster a willingness to embrace more economic openness – more trade, migration, or investment. Debate over both directions of the relationship, however, has yielded a wide variety of perspectives: that the relationship is one of harmony, tension, irrelevance, or conditional upon other domestic-political factors.

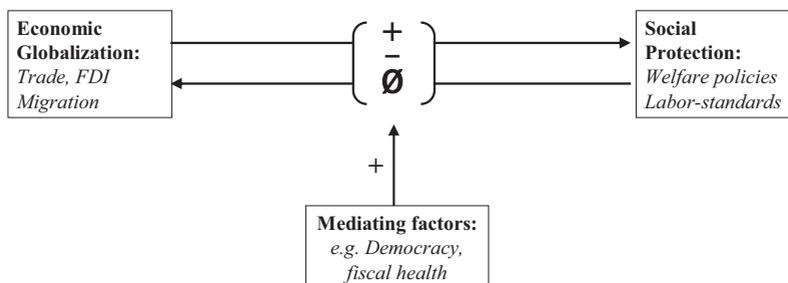


Figure 1

Until recently, these perspectives enjoyed roughly equal traction. But certainly since the current crisis, the most pessimistic perspective has become conventional wisdom. Political economists employing wide-ranging theories and empirical methods have come to believe that openness and social protection are in ever-sharper tension with one another. Among the most eloquent proponents of this view is the Harvard Turkish-American economist Dani Rodrik. In academic articles and his book *Globalization Paradox*, Rodrik contrasts the thin globalization manifested in the pre-1970s Bretton Woods economic system, and the hyper globalization of more recent decades. The latter globalization, he argues, has gone too far for national democracies. In the absence of radically deepened global governance and reduced national sovereignty, there is a much sharper tension between globalization and democratically-chosen social protections. He thinks that today's trade, investment and migration undermine national-level social protections. We are forced, therefore, to choose. And he chooses for putting-the-brakes on globalization, calling for serious limits on trade and investment to safeguard labor conditions against imports or investments that violate democratically-chosen standards. Many other commentators make the opposite choice, to retrench social protections so as to compete in globalized markets. But they share the wisdom that national-level social protections and openness are no longer compatible.

Whether this conventional wisdom is right or wrong, however, depends largely on whether it gets the politics right – that is, whether openness constrains democratic politics like a golden straight-jacket, and whether democratically-chosen safety nets might threaten economic globalization. I believe that existing literature, including this conventional wisdom, misreads the politics of how openness and social protection influence one another. And it does so in at least three ways.

First, most studies focus on correlation between aggregate measures of openness and of social protection, making assumptions about rather than studying the many stages of politics interlinking them. This obscures the politics that really underlie such correlation. A negative correlation between trade and welfare spending, for instance, might mean that trade causes little economic dislocation, or that dislocated groups keep quiet, or that those groups have little political voice in democratic parties, or that other groups or governments block policy changes that provide social protection. Without studying these disaggregated politics we simply don't know what's going on.

The second misreading of politics involves undifferentiated treatment of openness or of social protection, basing general statements on information limited to one aspect of openness or one aspect of social protection. This is a problem because different aspects of globalization, such as investment as opposed to trade, and different faces of social protection, such as unemployment insurance versus working-hours rules, may have very different political implications.

A third misreading of the politics involves insufficient exploration of how economic globalization and social protection affect one another in ways that we can control. Luckily, some scholars have recognized that the relationship between openness and social protection is conditional. For instance, some find that international trade or FDI can be good news, bad news or no news for welfare states depending on structural-institutional conditions like the depth of democratic institutions or electoral rules like proportional representation. These arguments are important and a clear improvement upon more simplistic views, but they are not very useful, because the conditions they identify are not chosen but born-into: if the structural-institutional circumstances are bad then one is condemned to choose between golden straight-jackets or autarky. Scholars have simply not looked much for other mediating interventions that offer us real agency, where combining openness with social protection can be a choice rather than a birthright.

Misreading the politics of embedded liberalism in these ways turns out to be a problem – not only for social-scientific understanding, but also for identifying possibilities to balance openness and social protection. Misreading the politics, in other words, may lead to undue pessimism. This pessimism befits the worldview of political economists, scholars who take the ugly political underbelly of economic exchange seriously. Yet, against the pessimist nature of my own academic tradition, my research into the globalization politics leads me to more optimistic pastures – to realistic hope that in important ways we can re-embed liberalism.

2 Political Economy of Re-embedding Liberalism

I'll simplify this hope by focusing today only on my research into the way openness influences social protections, though most of what I say is underscored by my other research into how existing social protections influence openness. My research into how openness affects social protection is fundamentally empirical. It draws on many theories to hypothesize about how economic openness affects the wants and influence of actors and their resulting struggles – and as a theoretical matter these consequences are often offsetting, in some ways predicting stronger social protections but in other ways the opposite, predicting retrenchment. In the face of such competing hypotheses, it is to my mind fundamentally an empirical question whether openness and social protection are in practice compatible. Answering such an empirical question may sound simple, but it is extremely difficult, because it involves something very elusive: to discern causal relationships in political life, for instance how trade influences political conflicts surrounding welfare states.

My way of discerning such relationships is important enough to what I do that I should say a tiny bit about my method before I give concrete examples. To avoid misreading the politics I just mentioned, my research mainly analyzes micro-politics connecting economic globalization to social protection: for instance, I study how individual exposure to trade or migration affects individual attitudes about their economic vulnerabilities; how these attitudes might influence support for particular social-policy protections; how such support might then alter the positions of political parties; and how such party positions might fuel actual policy shifts. Particularly when data allow me to study over-time developments, such focus on the micro-politics clarifies what drives political decision-making, akin to the tracing of causal processes. This level of historical and actor-specific detail is usually the reserve of qualitative-historical methods, but I try to discover it using quantitative econometrics. I rely on such quantitative study not for the reasons that you may presume: It's not to generalize to many cases or identify law-like relationships; instead it's to isolate causal relationships and suggest causal mechanisms in the face of other factors being at play, other conditions influencing both openness and social protection. Quantitative study of these micro-politics also makes it possible to find agency – to identify which political interventions work and which fail, to smoke-out who's good and who's bad, in the politics of embedded liberalism.

2.1 *Distinguishing Faces of Openness and of Social Protection*

Let me now give two sets of concrete examples of this endeavor – examples where we distinguish faces of openness and social protection; and examples of how we can steer the relationship between them. First, my research has clarified many ways in which faces of economic openness have distinct implications for different faces of social protection. Some aspects of openness, for instance, might shore-up welfare states or labor regulations, while other aspects of openness unleash politics that undermine the same protections. And various aspects of economic globalization can unleash political struggles that are good news for some aspects of social protections and bad news for other protections. I'll give but one example of each of these dynamics.

The most dramatic difference among faces of economic openness involves immigration compared to trade or investment. Many will know that migration is much less popular than trade or investment, a pattern visible throughout the industrialized world. I have also found, however, that migration – more than trade or investment – has very different, generally bad news, implications for welfare states and working-time standards. All faces of globalization constitute winners and losers – for instance, in settings like the US and the Netherlands, more trade, FDI or migration alter wage and price levels that often favor higher-skilled and capital owners and punish low-skilled natives. This process applies as much for migration as for trade: It doesn't matter to the broad lines of winners or losers if we are talking about trade that moves jobs to people, or about immigration that moves people to jobs. However, immigration more directly and immediately affects availability of an important labor-input that spreads its effects more visibly and quickly throughout the economy – not just in tradable sectors. And migrant workers may be more vulnerable to intimidation by employers, and this possibility can stifle the political voice of workers. These implications can be bad news for the politics undergirding social protections. With respect to labor standards regulation, research I have conducted with Damian Raess into working-time has found that immigration, more than trade or FDI, tends to increase standard hours and, particularly, the incidence of flexible time, such as temporary and fixed-term contracts.

With respect to broader welfare states, however, the distinct implications of immigration are even more sobering. The individual economic vulnerabilities posed by all aspects of openness can increase support for welfare assistance as compensation for vulnerabilities. This is why exposure to trade and investment can indeed increase support for welfare provisions among individuals, political parties, and polities generally. But immigration tends to play out dif-

ferently because it not only generates economic insecurities; it also directly can hurt, at least in the short term, the fiscal health of nations and solidarity of citizens that undergird support for welfare states. For instance, in industrialized-country settings migrants are disproportionately dependent on many kinds of social assistance. They tend to rely less on contributory benefits tied to work, such as pension or health transfers. But they tend to depend *more* than do natives on non-contributory benefits like disability and poverty insurance. This means that immigration poses net fiscal burdens for welfare states in ways that trade and FDI do not. And concerns about such burdens dampen support for redistribution or social spending.

Embedding liberalism holds, hence, more for trade and investment than for migration, a pattern that in my own research shows up in public opinion, in party platforms, and also in the most down-stream and aggregate measures of welfare effort, like social spending (in Figure 2 below). In both sides of the slide we see on the vertical axis a measure of aggregate social spending in countries, and on the horizontal axes we see measures of economic openness. On the left we see how trade openness (imports plus exports as a percentage of GDP) tends to correlate positively with welfare effort. But on the right-hand panel we see a weaker and even negative relationship, even in this very rough snapshot. I should emphasize that migration’s relative dampening of welfare support turns out to be highly conditional on other factors – for instance on the integration of migrants – an issue I will turn to shortly. For now, however, this one example illustrates how some aspects of openness are more in harmony with social protection than others.

A similar point can be made about different aspects of social protection: openness may consolidate some aspects of social policy but not others, some

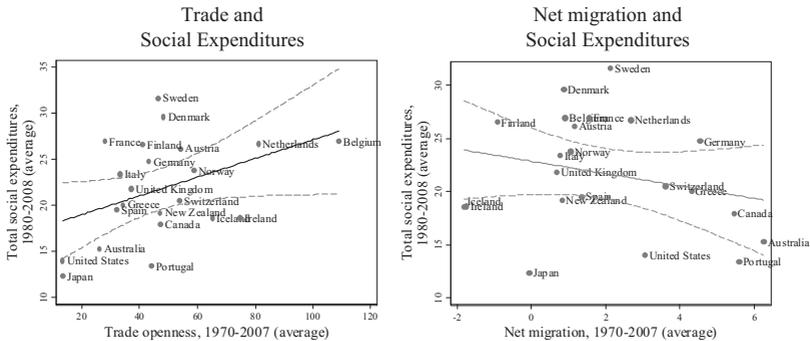


Figure 2

labor standards but not others. My research into bargaining surrounding welfare states has found that trade and investment might have modest or negative implications for passive transfers, like old-age pension transfers, but that they have more positive implications for active labor market policies (e.g. training and placement services). These latter policies mean a lot to workers concerned about their income security but also are more acceptable to employers who marginally pay-for, and see competitive advantages to, providing such assistance.

A more surprising example, however, concerns working-time standards. My research suggests that all faces of globalization affect firm-level regulations on total hours very differently than those on working-time flexibility, such as allowing more fixed-term or mandatory overtime arrangements. Workers tend to take particularly strong stands to limit standard weekly hours for full-time workers, but on flexible working hours workers are more split – some seeing flexibility as good for combining family and work, others seeing it as a threat to standardized, fair treatment of workers. Employers, however, are particularly supportive of work-time flexibility, more than they are of more standard hours, because they expect flexible arrangements to increase their responsiveness to globalized markets. The result is that we see economic globalization changing the bargaining between employers and employees in ways that lead to fewer standard hours, but clearly more flexibility.

In a series of articles with Damian Raess, I have found evidence of this pattern in our analysis of the flexibility standards and of the standard-weekly hours set at the level of many thousands of firms in industrialized countries. Figure 3 below provides a snapshot of this dynamic, but to ease visualization it shows only averages across broad sectors in just a single country, Germany. Even such a rough snapshot, however, illustrates a broader point we must take

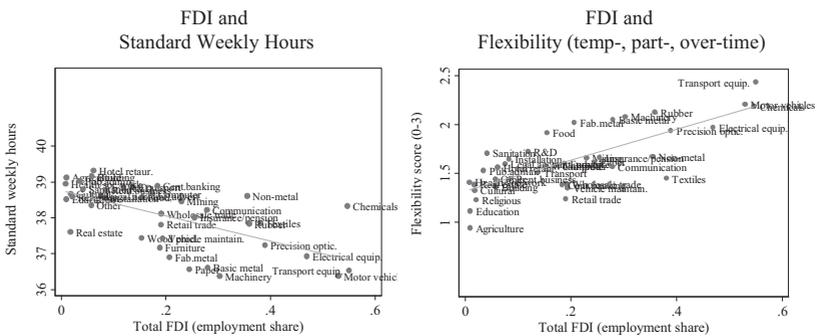


Figure 3

seriously in reading the politics of embedded liberalism: economic openness has favorable implications for some kinds of social protection and not others.

2.2 Re-embedding Liberalism can be what we make of it

More important than understanding which faces of openness and of social protection are most and least compatible is finding interventions that mediate or steer that compatibility. Even where the news is bad, such as immigration's more problematic implications for welfare states, my research looks for mediating conditions under which these implications can be softened. And the mediating conditions for which I am searching are not limited to structural conditions that we cannot hope to change in our lifetimes, like democracy, corporatist Left-labor power, or proportional representation of electoral systems. Instead, I have looked for and found important mediating conditions over which we have genuine political agency. Given the time, let me lay-out just two examples.

One involves the partisanship of the politicians we elect to represent us. It turns out that differences between traditionally Left- and Right-wing parties have fundamental implications for how openness and social protection relate to one another. My research has found that regardless of the measure of economic openness, regardless of the aspect of social policy, one pattern emerges: Left parties are generally friendly to combining openness with social protection, and Right parties are not. The logic, here, is partly a simple extension of an intuition I assume you share, regardless of your own politics: Left parties are more comfortable with governments intervening in markets to assist economically-vulnerable citizens than are Right parties. But that distinction is not enough given the real possibility that Left parties also face constraints that can convince them to put on Friedman's golden straightjacket, and they may be particularly worried about migration's threat to the fiscal viability of welfare states. In actual experience, however, the skew between parties in their attention to redressing economic insecurities seems to prevail. Left parties tend to respond to FDI, portfolio investment, trade by calling for more generous social policies. Non-Left parties however, particularly Right parties, tend not to respond in these ways.

Figure 4 below provides a descriptive summary of this contrast, drawn from my own research into political party statements in favor of and against social welfare and education programs – in virtually all parties in 23 industrialized countries in all elections from 1960 to 2008. Although my analysis bases the conclusions on controlled estimation across parties, countries and years, the Figure provides a simple snapshot of the story in my own country, the

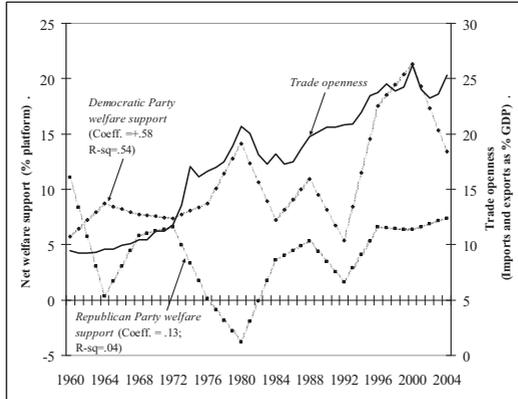


Figure 4

United States. Here we see the broad trend in trade openness since the 1960s, including significant increases in trade following for instance the Tokyo Rounds of trade liberalization. Through the years, we see many instances and a general trend of the Democratic party taking more favorable stances on welfare, and for those stances to soften more in the aftermath of lower trade. If we compare the trends to the Republican party, however, we see no such tendency to respond to increases in trade with more positive stances towards welfare states. Of course, such simple over-time correlations say little if we don't take account the many other factors shaping trade and also the positions of the two parties. But the pattern we see here turns out to hold-up to such considerations in the full analysis of 23 countries and more than 40 years of elections. The story is simple: Left parties respond to trade by tending to embrace welfare states. Right parties do not. What this graphic doesn't capture is the equally important pattern in responses to immigration: Right parties tend to respond to migration with calls for welfare retrenchment, while Left parties do not. Partisanship matters again.

This reminds us of a broader point: that the world of ideas is crucial to re-embedding liberalism: the possibility of combining openness with social protection might not only be mediated by ideas encoded in broad party platforms, but also by ideologies held by governments about particular economic theories, smart or stupid, or by the wisdom or folly of "austerity"... or "3-percent rules" or other notions.

A second and final example of mediating conditions we can control involves worker representation, not just unions at the level of crafts like plum-

bers or sectors like aircraft manufacturing, but also establishment-level works councils (*ondernemingsraden*). Such organizations can be chosen and empowered by workers – or not. My research reveals that trade, investment and migration have strong implications for bargaining over establishment-level standards on weekly hours. And these implications vary a lot depending on the existence of works-council representation: In settings without works councils, globalization unleashes forces that strengthen the hand and favor the prerogatives of employers in favor of higher standard hours. But this effect disappears in settings where works councils have the traction and power to voice resistance – and in fact may actually be able to negotiate difficult agreements with employers that allow a *lowering* of hours in more globalized settings.

Figure 5 below, my final graphic, provides a snapshot of this pattern. It comes from my survey analysis of thousands of establishments in 18 European countries, gauging the standard-weekly-hours for workers in those establishments. The story is stronger if one takes the full variation across companies and years into account. But this snapshot of averages across broad sectors in all countries and establishments in the sample tells the story, if we split the sample between those establishments lacking and those having working-time agreements negotiated by works-council or union representatives. Empowering works-councilors to negotiate agreements changes the dynamic of collective bargaining: it dampens the desire or ability of employers to respond to trade with longer work weeks. Contrary to Friedman’s quip about the folly of maintaining 35-hour work-weeks in the face of Indian 35-hour days, globalization doesn’t have to mean more sweat.

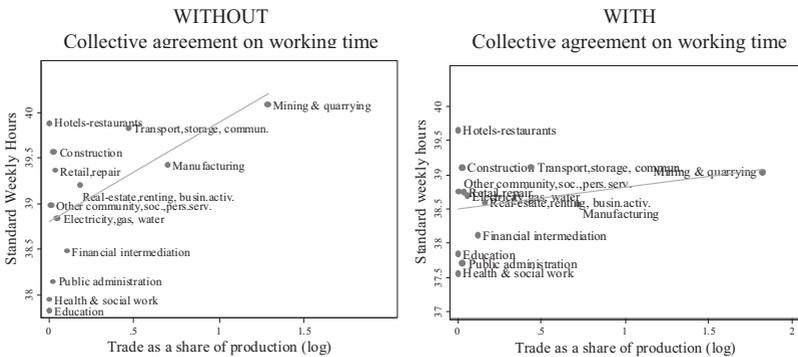


Figure 5

These are just two examples of interventions over which we as citizens, employees and employers have considerable control in responding to globalization. Many other interventions are worth considering, and are a big part of my future research. For instance, I have just begun learning about the conditions mediating how immigration plays out for social protection. My existing research has found that the bad-news pattern where immigration can undermine support for welfare states is very much conditional upon the level of economic integration of migrants – though, interestingly, NOT conditional upon the socio-cultural assimilation of migrants. Where migrants are well integrated economically – where they experience unemployment and social-policy dependency at a rate comparable to natives – we see that immigration no longer has the negative implications for welfare states that I articulated above. Such economic integration, I have found, is more important than cultural assimilation, and is not simply reducible to the character of the immigrants; it depends on something else. That something else, such as good integration policies, I haven't yet identified. Doing so is an important mission of my professorship. And there is no better place to pursue this mission than the UvA, a world-class center for research into immigrant integration and inequality.

2.3 *Political Dilemmas of Embedded Liberalism*

I want to conclude and preview more of my future research by clarifying how globalization not only opens-up possibilities that facilitate, but also dilemmas that complicate, re-embedding liberalism. I know less about these dilemmas than I do about the possibilities I have traced so far. But I want to flag just one of them.

Ensuring that a given level of openness doesn't undermine social protection can sometimes clash with ensuring that a given level of social protection doesn't undermine the maintenance of openness. The examples of political possibility on which I have focused involve how *existing* openness can facilitate rather than undermine social protection. But the relationship between openness and protection is, as I said earlier, a two-way street – where *existing levels* of social protection also can have downstream implications for the politics of openness. An important part of my research, in fact, has been to see if the same kinds of constraints and possibilities identified above apply to this other direction as well – to *embedded liberalizing*. The answer is usually “yes.” More generous welfare states tend to buy public support for trade openness but not for migration. And Left parties tend to embrace globalization when social protection is generous, while Right parties often soften support for

openness when safety-nets, what they see as burdens, are strong. Here, then, important conditions to *embedding liberalism* also enable *embedded liberalizing*.

However, this is not always true: My research also has identified potential collisions on the two-way street. Some of the aspects of social protection most likely to be spurred by economic openness turn out to be different than the aspects that are most effective in buying support for globalization. For instance, my research has found that trade and FDI tend to spur training services more than health or pension transfers. But the social protections that are most meaningful to addressing subjective insecurities and to buying support for economic globalization are not training and relocations policies but instead the passive provisions providing income guarantees – like health and pension transfers, or job protection legislation. This is a principal finding of research I carried-out with Geoffrey Underhill and Panicos Demetriadis into the origins of sustainable financial openness, where health and pension transfers are more meaningful in buying support than are other kinds of welfare services. This pattern poses a clear dilemma. My future research will explore policy mixes or packages that might be solutions to this dilemma. For instance, a package of reform might include a reduction of some social protections like job-protection regulations, but also expansion of unemployment assistance, particularly training assistance, might be a viable response to openness *AND* a viable tool to buy more openness. If so, this mix, already known as “flexicurity,” might be worth supporting not just as welfare reform but as a way of consolidating embedded liberalism.

3 Conclusion

The above overview has been necessarily very brief. But I hope it has been enough to get you to doubt the conventional wisdom that we must give-up on Western democracy’s extraordinary combination of economic openness and social protection. Taking politics seriously, we have seen, opens-up possibilities to reclaim that combination. The possibilities lie in recognizing which kinds of economic openness and which kinds of social protection unleash political struggles that maintain or deepen parts of embedded liberalism. The possibilities also lie in knowing which kinds of representation and policy interventions we can and should choose, and which we should avoid, to steer the ways openness and social protection influence one another.

These possibilities are, alas, far from endless. Supporters of some aspects of welfare states face important reasons to fear some aspects of globalization,

and lovers of some aspects of globalization should fear some social protections. Furthermore, we have glimpsed politics that underlie dilemmas as well as possibilities for reconciling openness with social protection. But even here understanding the politics reveals how constraints can be navigated, dilemmas mitigated. The optimism that my research reveals, hence, is one where social science reveals the line between constraint and agency in politics, and shows us how to take advantage of that agency through politics. This is a scientific rather than “Panglossian” optimism. But it is precisely the grounding of possibilism in the real world that can meaningfully inspire and I think should inspire.

I conclude my address with a few words of thanks. First, I thank those most directly involved in my appointment to this Professorship, the College van Bestuur, Dean Edward de Haan, Head of the AISSR Research School Anita Hardon, and the former Head of Department Wouter van der Brug. I am very grateful for and honored by the trust they have shown me with this appointment. I feel particularly strong and personal gratitude to Wouter van der Brug, whose support and commitment to me as a colleague, scholar and friend has been extraordinary throughout our years together in the faculty.

Second, I thank the community of scholars in my own Department who have and continue to make that UvA such an enriching place to practice social science. Most distinctive of that community are two assets that are often overlooked: a truly rare and lively representation, on equal footing, of the full spectrum of theories and methods of our discipline; and the virtually universal commitment to the study of politics not for its own sake but in the explicit and conscious pursuit of human political betterment. Though I would like to name all who have touched me with these graces, I can only mention a few. Within my research group, I particularly thank for their consistent support and commentary Uwe Becker, Luc Fransen, Annette Freyberg-Inan, Daniel Muegge, Andrea Ruggeri, and Jonathan Zeitlin. Jonathan, I should say, is a scholar whose work inspired me as a grad student and continues to challenge with his own vision of possibilism. Within the broader Department, I am also particularly grateful to Paul Aarts, Marlies Glasius, John Grin, Marieke de Goede, Otto Holman, Gerd Junne, Jean Tilly and Robert van der Veen for their commitments to a broad International Relations and even broader Political Science. Beyond my own Department, I am particularly grateful to Herman van der Werfhorst, Anita Hardon and Jose Komen, whose many contributions to my academic life are deep and make the whole of our social science community greater than the sum of its parts. I want extend my warmest academic gratitude, however, to my friend and colleague Geoffrey Underhill, who hired me into this University and who has worked so tirelessly, some-

times thanklessly, to build a strong International Relations community at the University.

To my group of loved ones and friends, there is so much more I want to say than this occasion allows. But for now I will thank only two of you by name: Anton Hemerijck, among my oldest friends, one whose brilliance as a world-class political economist is surpassed only by the purity of his friendship; and Ram Manikkalingam, who became my closest comrade at MIT and remains not only a brilliant political intellectual and uncanny mediator but also a friend of boundless generosity.

Finally, I thank my family. My brothers, Ian and David, and my parents, David and Lynn Burgoon, could not be here today, alas. Their unconditional love anchors me still. And to my parents, I must add that so much of who I am and try to be reflects their parenting, not least their obsessions with education, debate, and public service. My sister and best friend, Kathy Burgoon Armstrong, I thank for her undying sacrifice and love for me and my family. And with my US family so far away from me, I am all the more grateful for the love of my Dutch family, Caroline, Miriam and Jaco. But I reserve my deepest thank you for my dearest Nicole and our children Max and David. You three are, simply, the lights of my life. It is through your ever-growing greatness that I feel a daily sense of wonder – and the most intimate affirmation that I am right to feel cautious optimism about our world.

Ik heb gezegd.