

Hansen, Magnus Paulsen

Doctoral Thesis

Trying the Unemployed: Justification and Critique, Emancipation and Coercion Towards the 'Active Society'

PhD Series, No. 10.2017

Provided in Cooperation with:

Copenhagen Business School (CBS)

Suggested Citation: Hansen, Magnus Paulsen (2017) : Trying the Unemployed: Justification and Critique, Emancipation and Coercion Towards the 'Active Society', PhD Series, No. 10.2017, ISBN 9788793483934, Copenhagen Business School (CBS), Frederiksberg,
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COPENHAGEN BUSINESS SCHOOL
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DK-2000 FREDERIKSBORG
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WWW.CBS.DK

ISSN 0906-6934

Print ISBN: 978-87-93483-92-7
Online ISBN: 978-87-93483-93-4

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JUSTIFICATION AND CRITIQUE, EMANCIPATION AND COERCION TOWARDS THE 'ACTIVE SOCIETY'. A STUDY OF CONTEMPORARY REFORMS IN FRANCE AND DENMARK

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HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

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JUSTIFICATION AND CRITIQUE,
EMANCIPATION AND COERCION
TOWARDS THE ‘ACTIVE SOCIETY’

A study of contemporary reforms in France and Denmark

PhD thesis by Magnus Paulsen Hansen

Main supervisor: Ove K. Pedersen

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Doctoral School of Organisation and Management Studies

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1st edition 2017

PhD Series 10.2017

© Magnus Paulsen Hansen

ISSN 0906-6934

Print ISBN: 978-87-93483-92-7

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Abstracts

ENGLISH

Since the late 1980s, European welfare states and labour market regulation have gradually but radically been transformed into ways of underpinning a more “active society” where *active* usually entails paid work or activities, such as training and qualification, that aim towards work. The thesis investigates the transformation towards the ‘active society’ through the spectre of *unemployment* and how it is governed. Two puzzles in the transformations have motivated the inquiry: firstly, the co-existence of a plurality of different, and often contradictory, conceptions of who the unemployed are and why they are unemployed; and secondly, the co-existence of wills to emancipate the unemployed alongside the justification of using coercive measures towards them.

This thesis argues that if we want to understand the varieties within the transformations, the “what?” question, it is necessary to address the “how?”; i.e., how transformations are legitimised. Here, ideas and morality are pivotal. Inspired by French pragmatic sociology (Boltanski and Thévenot), the ideas are approached as *cities of unemployment* that are mobilised to justify and criticise policies related to the governing of unemployment. In these situations where the question of what is the best way to govern unemployment is put to the test, cities of unemployment enable actors to prepare and qualify the reality of the situation for critique and justification.

Each city of unemployment is founded on a principle with specific principles to *try* or test both those who govern and the subjects inhabiting each city, thus entailing a specific understanding of what emancipating the unemployed involves, i.e., what kind of moral subject the unemployed person is with what kind of needs and characteristics. The thesis thus asks which cities of unemployment are mobilised in contemporary reform processes of the governing of unemployment, how are the cities mobilised to justify and criticise, and how do the cities sediment into instruments and institutions governing the unemployed?

The questions are operationalised through an in-depth comparative study of four key contemporary reform processes: two in Denmark and two in France. The thesis is the first systematic investigation into the test situations that unfold in the public debates

with a focus on the plurality of ideas that are mobilised to qualify and evaluate existing policies and justify changes.

The thesis shows how the governing of unemployment is the result of an ongoing sedimentation in the cities tied together in compromises. This makes the governing inherently composite and unstable. The thesis identifies and maps seven distinct cities of unemployment that are mobilised in all debates surrounding all four reforms: the cities of *Demand*, *Redistribution*, *Insurance*, *Incentives*, *Mobility*, *Investment* and the *Paternal* city. Regardless of differences between the four cases, all analyses show that reforms are particularly driven by justifications from the *Paternal*, *Mobility*, *Investment* and *Incentives* cities, which are all tied together in multiple ways. The other three cities do not vanish completely, but in the qualification of the unemployed they are increasingly put to the margins.

Finally, the thesis shows how the tensions between the cities that are mobilised for justificatory purposes are mitigated in categorisations and various institutionalised tests that continuously evaluate the behaviour of the unemployed. The tests, such as triage, screening, interviews and contracts, thus question and settle what kind of subject the unemployed person is, i.e., what city he lives in, how worthy he is, and what instruments will bring him closer to emancipation (i.e., the ‘active society’). In this way, the possibility of requalifying the unemployed is made permanent. A similar experimentalist dynamic is identifiable in the public debates concerning justification and critique. Here unemployment is increasingly seen as a *multi-causal* phenomenon that, in the end, is a matter of how to make the unemployed act in certain ways. The result is a constant uncertainty as to how to attach particular causes to particular categories of unemployment. Hence, the demand for targeting or “personalising” the governing in order to make the unemployed respond to it results in increasingly intimate and often coercive instruments.

DANSK

Siden slutningen af 1980'erne er de europæiske velfærdsstater og arbejdsmarkeder gradvist men radikalt blevet ændret i retning af at understøtte det 'aktive samfund', hvor *aktiv* som regel betyder lønnet arbejde eller aktiviteter, som fx jobtræning og uddannelse med sigte på beskæftigelse. Afhandlingen undersøger vendingen mod det 'aktive samfund' gennem fænomenet arbejdsløshed og hvordan det kan og bør styres. Undersøgelsen er motiveret af at nå til en bedre forståelse af to tendenser: For det første en samtidig tilstedeværelse af en mangfoldighed af forskellige, og ofte modstridende, forestillinger af hvem den arbejdsløse er og hvor han er arbejdsløs. For det andet, en samtidig tilstedeværelse af på den ene side en erklæret vilje til at emancipere den arbejdsløse fra hans passive tilstand, og på den anden side øget brug af tvangsmidler over for den arbejdsløse.

Metodisk argumenterer afhandlingen for at hvis man vil forstå indholdet og forskelligheden i ændringerne (spørgsmålet om "hvad"), er det nødvendigt at adressere spørgsmålet om "hvordan", dvs. hvordan ændringerne legitimeres. Her er ideer og moral afgørende. Med inspiration fra den franske pragmatiske sociologi (Boltanski og Thévenot) teoretiserer afhandlingen idéerne som *arbejdsløshedsbyer*, der mobiliseres når arbejdsløshedspolitikker retfærdiggøres og kritiseres. I disse situationer, hvor spørgsmålet om hvordan man bedst håndterer arbejdsløsheden er sat på prøve, sætter arbejdsløshedsbyerne aktørerne i stand til at kvalificere den komplekse virkelighed til konkrete kritikker og løsningsforslag.

Arbejdsløshedsbyer er bygget op omkring et princip med en specifik forestilling hvad det indebærer at emancipere den arbejdsløse og ud fra hvilket styringen såvel som de styrede subjekter, der beboer byerne, kan evalueres eller sættes på prøve. Hver by tilskriver således den arbejdsløse et bestemt moralsk subjekt med særlige behov og karakteristika. Afhandlingens problemformulering er derfor hvilke arbejdsløshedsbyer der mobiliseres og i nutidige reformprocesser af styringen af arbejdsløshed, hvordan byerne mobiliseres til at retfærdiggøre og kritisere, og sidst hvordan byerne nedlejres i instrumenter og institutioner der udgør styringen af den arbejdsløse?

Spørgsmålene er operationaliseret ved hjælp af et dybtgående komparativt studie af fire betydningsfulde reformprocesser – to i Danmark og to i Frankrig. Afhandlingen er den første til systematisk at undersøge de 'prøvesituationer' der udspiller sig i den offentlige

debat med et blik for mangfoldigheden af idéer, der mobiliseres til at kvalificere og evaluere de eksisterende politikker og retfærdiggøre ændringer.

Analysen viser hvordan styringen af arbejdsløshedsproblemet er et resultat af vedvarende sedimentering af arbejdsløshedsbyer, forbindes med hinanden i kompromisser. Dette gør styringen grundlæggende sammensat og ustabil. Afhandlingen kortlægger syv forskellige arbejdsløshedsbyer, der alle blev mobiliseret i alle fire debatter: *Efterspørgselsbyen*, *Omfordelingsbyen*, *Forsikringsbyen*, *Incitamentsbyen*, *Investeringsbyen*, *Mobilitetsbyen*, og den *Paternalistiske by*. På trods af forskelle imellem casestudierne, er de alle karakteriseret ved primært at være understøttet af den *Paternalistiske by* og *Mobilitets*-, *Incitaments*-, og *Investeringsbyerne*. De resterende tre byer forsvinder ikke fuldstændig fra landkortet men er i kvalificeringen af den arbejdsløse i stigende grad marginaliseret.

Endelig viser afhandlingen hvordan spændingerne inden for og imellem de mobiliserede byer afbødes ved hjælp af kategoriseringer og forskellige institutionaliserede prøver der kontinuerligt evaluerer den arbejdsløses adfærd. Prøver, som fx visitation, screening, interviews og kontrakter spørger og fastsætter hermed hvilket subjekt den arbejdsløse er, med andre ord hvilken by han beboer, hans status, og hvilke instrumenter, der vil bringe ham tættere på emancipation, det vil sige det 'aktive samfund'. Hermed gøres muligheden for at rekvalificere den arbejdsløse permanent. En lignende eksperimentel dynamik kan ses i retfærdiggørelsen og kritikken i den offentlige debat. Her er arbejdsløshed i stigende grad set som et *multikansalt* fænomen, der, i sidste ende, er et spørgsmål om hvordan man kan få den arbejdsløse til at handle på en bestemt måde. Resultatet er en konstant usikkerhed omkring hvordan bestemte årsagsforklaringer tilknyttes bestemte kategorier af arbejdsløse. Således skabes et behov for mere målrettet og "skræddersyet" styring der skal få den arbejdsløse til at respondere samt mere intime, og ofte tvangsbetonede, instrumenter.

FRANÇAIS

Depuis la fin des années 1980, les États-providence et les marchés du travail au sein de l'Europe connaissent des transformations radicales quoique graduelles, les amenant à privilégier une société plus « active », où *actif* a généralement le sens de travail rémunéré ou d'activités rémunérées comme par la formation sur le tas ou la formation professionnelle. Cette thèse étudie ce virage vers la "société active" à travers le phénomène du chômage et sa gestion, la motivation étant d'arriver à une meilleure compréhension de deux tendances : Premièrement, la coprésence d'une pluralité de conceptions différentes et souvent contradictoires sur le chômeur et les circonstances ayant causé sa situation. Deuxièmement, la coprésence d'intentions visant à émanciper le chômeur, d'une part, et de justifications de mesures coercitives à l'encontre du chômeur, d'autre part.

La méthodologie proposée pour étudier et comprendre ces deux tendances suppose que pour savoir en quoi consistent ces transformations, il est nécessaire d'étudier comment les acteurs essaient de les justifier. À cette fin, une étude des idées et de leurs fondements moraux s'impose. S'inspirant de l'école française de la sociologie pragmatique (Boltanski et Thévenot), cette thèse propose une déclinaison du concept de *cité du chômage* pour rendre compte des idées mobilisées dans la justification et la critique des politiques de chômage. Dans de telles situations où la question de savoir comment gérer au mieux le chômage est mise à l'épreuve, *des 'cités du chômage'* permettent aux acteurs de préparer et qualifier la réalité afin de la critiquer et de la justifier.

Chaque cité du chômage est fondée sur un principe particulier se référant à une conception spécifique de l'émancipation du chômeur, et à partir de ce principe tant la gestion que les êtres présents qui y sont soumis peuvent être évalués ou mis à l'épreuve. Chaque cité attribue à chacun des chômeurs un sujet moral défini par des besoins et caractéristiques spécifiques. D'où la problématique suivante : Quelles cités de chômage sont mobilisées dans les processus de réforme contemporains de la gestion du chômage ? Comment les cités sont-elles mobilisées pour nourrir la justification et la critique ? Et enfin, comment se sédimentent-elles sous formes de dispositifs et d'institutions de gestion du chômeur ?

Ces questions sont traitées à travers une étude comparative détaillée de quatre processus de réforme importants – deux au Danemark et deux en France. Cette thèse est la

première à étudier d'une manière systématique les 'situations d'épreuve' du débat public, et cela dans le but de mettre en évidence la pluralité des idées mobilisées pour qualifier et évaluer les politiques existantes et pour justifier des changements.

L'analyse montre comment la gestion du problème du chômage est le résultat d'une sédimentation continue de cités de chômage agencées par voie d'arbitrages. Cela rend la gestion du chômage hétéroclite et instable. Cette thèse révèle sept cités de chômage différentes, toutes mobilisées dans chacun des quatre débats : une cité de la demande, une cité de la redistribution, une cité des assurances, une cité des mesures incitatives, une cité des investissements, une cité de la mobilité, une cité paternaliste. Malgré les différences entre les cas étudiés, ceux-ci se caractérisent par étant fondés surtout sur la cité paternaliste et les cités de la mobilité, des mesures incitatives et des investissements. Les trois autres cités ne disparaissent pas complètement, mais elles sont de plus en plus marginalisées dans la qualification du chômeur.

Enfin ce travail de thèse montre comment les tensions décelées entre les cités mobilisées et au sein de celles-ci sont apaisées à l'aide de catégorisations et diverses épreuves institutionnalisées soumettant le comportement du chômeur à une évaluation continue. Des épreuves comme le triage, le dépistage, des interviews et des contrats questionnent et fixent le sujet du chômeur, à savoir sa cité de 'domicile' ou d'appartenance, sa valeur, et les instruments les plus indiqués pour l'amener vers son émancipation, c'est-à-dire vers 'la société active'. Ainsi la possibilité de requalifier le chômeur est rendue permanente. Une dynamique d'expérimentation similaire se manifeste à travers la justification et la critique véhiculés par le débat public, où le chômage est considéré de plus en plus comme un phénomène à causes multiples et dont la solution consiste à découvrir, en fin de compte, comment amener le chômeur à agir d'une façon spécifique. Le résultat en est une incertitude constante concernant l'attribution de certaines causes à certaines catégories de chômeurs. D'où le besoin d'une gestion plus ciblée et personnalisée pour motiver le chômeur à agir ainsi que le besoin de dispositifs plus intimes et souvent coercitifs.

Acknowledgements

At times, the path towards finalising this dissertation has indeed been ‘trying’. I am deeply grateful to a number of people whom are the main reason for why the trying events have only been parentheses in a process I would truly not do without. Firstly, I would like to thank Ida Lunde Jørgensen, Ivar Kjar, Mathias Herup Nielsen, and Pelle Korsbæk Sørensen – all co-founders of our forum of pragmatic sociology that provided invaluable space for thinking out loud. Somehow, the our reading circle became a stepping stone for acquainting other great scholars somehow sharing the same ‘pragmatic’ passion, including Stefano Ponte, Marie Leth Meilvang, and Thomas Presskorn-Thygesen. A big thanks also goes to Tim Holst Celik, Juan Ignacio Staricco, and Anders Sevelsted – the ‘core’ members of the alcoholised reading group; and to Mathieu Charbonneau for re-connecting, collaborating and joint biking as well as exploration of the delicacies of the markets in Paris. It was also in Paris, this supposedly ‘self-sufficient’ city full of arrogant people (and, I was told, in particular professors) that I met the most remarkable and plain intellectual engagement with my work as well as hospitality towards me and my little family. Thank you, Laurent Thévenot, not least for introducing me to the concept and format of ‘commonality’ of *Ateliers de sociologie et de cuisine*. I hope there will be many more to come.

Thanks to all my former and current colleagues at the Department of Business and Politics, in particular to Martin B. Carstensen and Eva Hartmann for in-depth comments at my final seminar, to John L. Campbell, Grahame Thompson, and Martin Bøje Rasmussen for engaging with my work, to Lene Tolstrup Christensen and Louise Thorn Bøttkjær for comments and moral support in some of those ‘trying’ situations, and finally to Janine Leschke for comments and support throughout all years and for finding ‘pragmatic’ solutions when they were most needed. I am highly indebted to my supervisors, Ove K. Pedersen and Peter Triantafillou, who both stroke the perfect balance between telling me ‘truths’ and respecting, and encouraging me to go with, my own ideas. And, finally, thank you my one love and ‘editor-in-chief’, Franciska Leander Larsen who, together with Matti and Linus, keep reminding me about the necessity of qualifying the goods of life beyond the ‘wooden’ world of work.

Magnus Paulsen Hansen

Copenhagen, 17 February 2017

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Introduction

TOWARDS THE ‘ACTIVE SOCIETY’

Since the late 1980s, European welfare states and labour market regulation have transformed gradually, but radically. In this period transformations seem to follow a pattern that works its way regardless of previous paths. Regardless of whether welfare states are Bismarckian, social democratic or residual, (Esping-Andersen 1990), it has been argued that they are all being transformed into “competition states” (Cerny 1997; 1990; Pedersen 2011), “enabling states” (Gilbert 2002) or “Schumpeterian workfare states” (Jessop 1993; Torfing 1999a). Policies representing the transformations have been given many labels, such as “active social policies” (Bonoli 2013), “active labour market policies” (Hedegaard 2014; Bonoli 2010), and “activating labour market policies” (Dingeldey 2009). The new policies are concerned with “workfare” (Peck 2001; Lødemel and Trickey 2001; Torfing 1999b), “welfare-to-work” (Bonoli 2010), and “activation” (Barbier 2002; 2004; Serrano Pasqual 2007; van Berkel et al. 2012).

The many labels illustrate a certain ambiguity in the transformations. However, what characterises the transformations is a will to construct policies that somehow underpin a more “active society” where *active* usually entails paid work or activities, such as training and qualification, that aim towards work. The term derives from some OECD visions of the late 1980s of what it would take to bring the welfare states out of the economic downturn (Gass 1988; OECD 1989; See also Dean 1995; Walters 1997). Since then, the term has come to be used to describe a direction of change that is, however, qualified in many ways. As I will try to show in the chapters to follow, “active” can in fact imply different and often contradictory meanings in the active society. Hence, the transformation towards it entails uncertainty, tensions and critique. The active society is permanently under construction and has been for the last 25 years. It never quite works as expected and never quite fulfils its promises. It can thus always be improved and always be more active; but why is it that the need to reform, despite radical changes, seems to persist? What is it that makes the ‘active society’ an attractive destination for the majority of political actors in Europe?

The thesis investigates the transformation towards the ‘active society’ through the spectre of *unemployment*. Unemployment is the labour market’s ‘other’. It is not simply a natural phenomenon. It is an invented and plastic category (Salais et al. 1986; Baxandall 2004); a paradoxical and contradictory result of historical struggles and attempts to control and govern the unemployed as well as the employed (Zimmermann 2001; Walters 2000). It defines a population of unemployed people that can be qualified and categorised further with thresholds set for the working population of the labour market and those who are not working, but for various reasons are not unemployed (children, retired, ill, etc.). The category makes the people behind the phenomenon, those who for one reason or another are not selling their labour, ‘governable’. However, the governing of unemployment not only concerns the unemployed; it also sends signals to the rest of society by underpinning why the population should work, what it takes to do it, and why someone fails to do it. The governing of unemployment is therefore embedded with both ‘grey’ numbers, technicalities and rules, as well as ‘colourful’ questions of morality, emancipation and what characterises the good or just society.

Unemployment is a phenomenon that keeps disturbing the harmony of the active society; the thorn in the side that won’t go away. Its numbers oscillate, but never completely vanish. At the same time, the presence of unemployment reaffirms the need to make society even more active. The active society is permanently at war against unemployment. Unlike many other studies (e.g. Martin and Grubb 2001; Estevao 2003; Martin 2014), this thesis has no intention of criticising its failure or providing solutions as to how to make policies more “effective”. Rather, it takes a step back and asks a question similar to the one of why the “proclamation of the failure of the prison has always been accompanied by its maintenance”:

[P]erhaps one should reverse the problem and ask oneself what is served by the failure of the prison; what is the use of these different phenomena that are continually being criticized (...). If so, one would be forced to suppose that the prison, and no doubt punishment in general, is not intended to eliminate offences, but rather to distinguish them, to distribute them, to use them. (Foucault 1977: 272)

This is not to say that the unemployed are our inmates of today, although there are sometimes clear resemblances (Wacquant 2009). Rather, it is to say that the governing of unemployment does a lot more than just respond to a functional problem – it shapes the problem, and by doing so it shapes, or at least intends to shape, the lives and behaviour

of those who fall either inside or outside the immense categories that are tied to this abstract and statistical artefact of unemployment.

In the active society, unemployment is not merely an abstract number; it is a matter of making the *unemployed* active, whether this is working inside or outside the ordinary labour market, participating in a job training course, educating oneself, getting up in the morning, applying for jobs, not receiving benefits etc. This cannot be reduced to an attempt to retrench or dismantle the welfare state, as in the UK in the 1980s (Pierson 1994). The active society does not govern the unemployed less; it governs them differently. In other words, this is not radical, neoliberal *laissez-faire* in action. In fact, it governs more *intensely*. It entails a “politics of behaviour” (Rose 2000) that insists on emancipating the unemployed, even if it takes coercive measures to carry it through. It insists on “targeting” and “personalising” the governing to identify who the unemployed are, and for this purpose develops and revises instruments of screening and continuous evaluation of the unemployed.

The ideas driving the political reforms position themselves at the party political centre, beyond “left and right” (Giddens 1994) as a new “third way” or “new centre” (Giddens 1998; Blair and Schroeder 1998). A pragmatic, managerial and ‘realist’ approach that refuses the teleological language of old ideologies and the clash of classes, and in this way imagines a kind of “post-political” era (Mouffe 2005) in which interests are aligned towards the same goals (Hansen and Triantafyllou 2011). Of course, these dynamics are not entirely new; (reformative) social democracy and the development of the welfare state has from the beginning been seen as a pragmatic “middle way” between capitalism and revolutionary socialism (e.g. Childs 1948; Marshall 1964). However, the transformation towards the active society is not located between socialism and capitalism, but displaced to somewhere between unfettered, deregulating and privatising neoliberalism and the post-war welfare state and labour market regulation. Today, social democrats have become the fiercest critics of the welfare state that their predecessors created, while the once revolutionary left have become its most loyal defenders and right-wing parties now insist on reintegrating rather than acting *laissez faire* towards the unemployed.

VARIETIES

In asking *how* and *what* transformations are unfolding, the thesis is certainly not original. However, by taking a different perspective, the thesis claims that there are dynamics in the transformations that hitherto have been neglected in the literature. There are a substantive number of studies that have theorised the “what” of transformations, and they usually distinguish between two policy approaches that, to simplify, can be labelled the ‘hard’ and the ‘soft’ approach. Table 1 shows some of the most important dichotomies:

Table 1: Varieties of policy approaches in transformations

| | Hard | Soft |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Torfig (1999b: 17) | <i>Defensive</i> | <i>Offensive</i> |
| Larsen et al. (2001: 25) | <i>Social disciplining</i> | <i>Social integration</i> |
| Barbier (2002: 316) | <i>Liberal</i> | <i>Social democrat</i> |
| Torfig (2004: 41) | <i>Work first</i> | <i>Human capital</i> |
| Serrano Pascual (2004: 502-507) | <i>Sticks</i> | <i>Carrots</i> |
| Dingeldey (2007: 824-826) | <i>Workfare</i> | <i>Enabling</i> |
| Dean (2007) | <i>Authoritarian</i> | <i>Egalitarian</i> |
| Taylor-Gooby (2008) | <i>Negative</i> | <i>Positive</i> |
| Bonoli (2013: 19-22) | <i>(Re-)commodification</i> | <i>Active social policy</i> |

Although the dichotomies have different focus points and emphasise different levels of analysis, some are more philosophical and some more instrumental and institutional, they largely seem to agree on the content of the two approaches. At the more philosophical/moral level, the ‘hard’ side entails an individualistic approach, valuing self-reliance, welfare-to-work (Barbier), re-commodification (Bonoli) and work as a moral requirement (Dean), while the ‘soft’ side entails a universalistic approach (Barbier, Torfig 1999b), enhancing human capital (Torfig, Dingeldey, Taylor-Gooby), enabling active participation (Dingeldey) and “enhancing the productive potential”, and work is seen as an “ethical commitment amongst subjects of equal worth” (Dean). Back on the ‘hard’ side, the governed are treated as assisted and poor (Barbier) “rational utility maximizing individuals” (Torfig, 2004) who lack “incentives” (Larsen et al.), whereas

they are citizens (Barbier) and “actors with social resources to be empowered” (Torfing 2004) who lack “competences and skills” (Larsen et al.) on the ‘soft’ side.

The two approaches also differ when it comes to instruments. In the ‘hard’ approach, benefits are short-term and low level (Barbier), shorter, time-limited and harder to get (Torfing, 2004), conditional (Dingeldey, Dean) and quid pro quo (Torfing 1999b), whereas benefits are on a high level and long term (Barbier), and based on reciprocity (Dingeldey, Barbier) and “balanced rights and obligations” (Barbier) in the ‘soft’ approach. When the ‘hard’ approach reforms, it reduces benefits (Torfing 1999b) and enhances the flexibility of the labour market (Dingeldey) as well as the mobility and job-searching efficiency of the unemployed (Torfing 1999b), whereas the ‘soft’ approach “supplements welfare” (Torfing 2004) with activation (Torfing 1999b, Barbier), training, education (Torfing 1999b), up-skilling (Torfing 2004) and investing in human capital (Taylor-Gooby).

Finally, the two approaches entail a ‘hard’ vs. ‘soft’ treatment of the unemployed, which makes it clear that there is a more or less explicit preference among the authors towards the latter side. The ‘hard’ side adopts “conditional obedience” (Dean) and uses “organized systematic use of sanctions”, whereas sanctions are “negotiated” and “marginal” in the latter (Barbier); “restrictions on benefits” in the ‘hard’ approach vs. “positive support” in the ‘soft’ approach (Taylor-Gooby), “sanctions” vs. “self-motivation” (Larsen et al.), or penalties and ‘sticks’ vs. incentives and ‘carrots’ (Serrano Pascual). In the ‘soft’ approach the “coercive aspects (...) play a less central role than in the [‘hard’] approach, which uses “pressure” to re-enter labour market” (Dingeldey). The target group of the ‘soft’ approach needs “empowerment”, whereas the target group of the ‘hard’ approach is in need of “motivation, control and punishment” (Torfing 1999b, 2004).

The findings of the thesis suggest that the existing attempts to describe and theorise the varieties of transformations are at best imprecise and at worst misleading. Firstly, there are more than two ideas that legitimise transformations. In fact, the thesis traces and maps a plurality of seven ideas that are mobilised to justify changes. While some shape transformations more than others, this implies that the transformations are not a matter of selecting between two choices. Secondly, by conflating ideas and instruments, the existing typologies assume that there is a ‘hard’ and a ‘soft’ approach. However, the thesis shows that the use of coercion transgresses the approaches. This does not only

question the conceptual validity of the dichotomies as analytical tools, but has broader normative implications since it challenges the idea of a ‘progressive’, ‘leftist’, non-coercive alternative within the transformation towards the active society. The thesis is thus motivated by providing a better and more nuanced understanding *and* a different critique that has not painted transformations in black and white and chosen sides from the very beginning. While the dichotomies are attuned to criticise the ‘hard’ type of transformations, their normative bias gives them blind spots with regards to the ‘soft’ side, as well as to how the two sides co-exist.

LEGITIMATION AS JUSTIFICATION

This thesis argues that if we want to understand the varieties within the transformations, the “what?” question, it is necessary to address the “how?”; i.e., how transformations are legitimised. It is only by addressing the *dynamics* of the processes that it becomes possible to understand the direction of transformations. This entails regarding the process of legitimation (i.e., *how*) as key for understanding the content of transformations (i.e., *what*). More broadly, the thesis argues that the role of *ideas* is pivotal. The thesis can thus be positioned within a broader “ideational turn” (Blyth 1997) in comparative political economy. This is sometimes labelled “discursive institutionalism” (Campbell and Pedersen 2001; Schmidt 2011b; 2011a) or “constructivist institutionalism” (Hay 2008). This strand (henceforth, discursive institutionalism) has emphasised that ideas matter not only because changes must be justified, but more profoundly, because ideas provide actors with the necessary “interpretive frameworks” (Blyth 2002: 11) for making sense of (Borrás and Seabrooke 2012), and putting value into, institutions and policies.

At the risk of oversimplifying, discursive institutionalism has so far operated with two limited conceptions of ideas when it comes to addressing the interrelation between the *what* and the *how*. Firstly, ideas work as *ideologies*. This take usually goes hand in hand with an emphasis on (elite) actors and their capacity to “persuade” and “convince” the “mass public” by means of “rhetorical strategies” (Cox 2001: 498). Carstensen and Schmidt (2016: 312-22) term this “power through ideas”, describing the capacity of actors to persuade other actors to accept their views of what to think and do through the use of “ideational elements”. It is ideological because it emphasises the way in which ideas become ‘make-up’ instruments for certain privileged actors to legitimize political programmes.

Secondly, discursive institutionalism regards ideas as norms, values, sentiments, philosophies, etc. that are *taken-for-granted* (Béland 2009; Béland and Cox 2010b). A common denominator of this conception is that ideas work at a somewhat “deeper level” (Carstensen and Schmidt 2016: 329; see also Schmidt 2008). Thus whereas ideologies work *on top of* the transformations, background ideas work *below*. Within the community (epistemic or more often simply nations), ideas are shared and legitimate to such an extent that they are taken-for-granted. They are “public philosophies” (Schmidt 2011a), “background ideas” (Schmidt 2008; 2016), “public sentiments” (Campbell 1998), “doxa” (Carstensen and Schmidt 2016: 331), “common knowledge” (Culpepper 2008), “society’s cultural repertoire” (Béland 2009) or a “zeitgeist” (Mehta 2011). They are thus “shared beliefs” (Béland and Cox 2010b). Another capacity of taken-for-granted ideas is that they function as “institutional blueprints” that “dictate” and “tell agents which institutions to construct” (Blyth 2002: 40, 43). Taken-for-granted ideas thus do not demand much reflexivity from either actors invoking them or from those to whom the ideas are communicated.

Ideas as ideology and as taken-for-granted norms and values are combined in a commonly used explanation of “ideational path-dependency” (Carstensen 2010: 850): the influence of ideas thus depend on how they become consistent with the existing prevailing discourse, e.g., how “rhetorical strategies (...) connect new proposals to an existing value structure” (Cox 2001: 498). The legitimacy of the new idea thus comes from already legitimate ideas that the new ideas are somehow connected with; for instance, by means of “frames” which make new programmes conform with already existing and legitimate paradigms and public sentiments (Campbell 2004: 98f). Introducing new ideas is thus a job for ‘framers’ and ‘brokers’ who, in processes of “bricolage”, dress up the new programmes by basically making the new ideas sound ‘old’ and familiar (Campbell 2004; see also Carstensen 2011b). Similarly, Béland argues that “ideological frames” serve as “weapons of mass persuasion” related to existing social and institutional forces. In such a constraining environment, political actors must master the institutional ‘rules of the game’ while manipulating the symbols available in existing ideological repertoires” (Béland 2005: 12).

As fruitful as these theorisations have been, they have limited use for the purpose of this thesis. The conception of ideas as ideologies may unveil rhetoric and manipulation, but it also thereby underestimates a much more productive power of ideas, namely the

capacity that Blyth hints at when speaking of ideas as “interpretive frameworks” (see above). While ideologies mask reality, ideas also have the capacity to enable actors to qualify and evaluate it. When it comes to the conception of ideas as being taken-for-granted, this underestimates the contemporaneousness or co-existence of a *plurality* of ideas that may be used to evaluate unemployment policies. The co-existence of ideas implies that all ideas are somehow in need of legitimization and cannot simply rely on taken-for-granted norms and values. Hence, the conceptions are limited in providing analytical tools for how some ideas drive transformations rather than others, and how this matters to the institutional and instrumental changes in the governing of unemployment.

A theoretical perspective that has more to offer in the understanding of the ‘direct’ capacity of ideas is Foucault’s perspective of governmentality and his genealogical method. Here, ideas work as “governmental rationalities” (Foucault 2008: 2), “regimes of truth” and “veridiction” (Foucault 1980; 2008; 2012). The point of departure of the thesis is thus these productive capacities of ideas as well the closely related issues of morality and politics, and knowledge and mundane governmental techniques, that Foucault has drawn attention to. However, similarly to the conception of taken-for-granted ideas mentioned above, the Foucauldian genealogical method has limitations when it comes to understanding the co-existence of a plurality of ideas. Foucault maps programmes (Foucault 1991: 75; cf. Dean 1988) rather than the tensions between them, and according to some he ends up “assuming too much coherence and order in the present” (Brady 2014: 24; see also Marston and McDonald 2006). This method thus tends to take the legitimacy of the programmes it studies for granted.

Instead, this thesis has taken its primary theoretical inspiration from “French pragmatic sociology” – a strand founded in the late 1980s by the sociologist Luc Boltanski and the economist Laurent Thévenot. They initially developed a theory of the structures that enable people to justify and criticise in everyday situations of dispute (Boltanski and Thévenot 1987; 2006). However, the theory also has great, but largely untapped, potential for studying the interrelation of political ideas and political action (Eulriet 2008). The theory entails a conception of ideas as well as of processes of legitimization that can encompass the co-existence of a plurality of ideas and the tensions and uncertainty that this entails. The thesis thus approaches ideas as cities of unemployment that are mobilised to justify and criticise policies and changes related to the governing of

unemployment. In these situations where there is uncertainty regarding what is the best way to govern unemployment, the reality of instruments, institutions and people is *put to the test*. Cities of unemployment equip actors with the means to prepare and *qualify* the reality for critique and justification.

Each city of unemployment is founded on a principle with specific tribunals to *try* or test both those who govern and the subjects inhabiting each city. Within each city there is thus a permanent search for improvement and to make the governing of unemployment aligned with its principle, as well as a constant questioning of whether, why and how the unemployed behave according to the guiding principle. This entails a specific understanding of what emancipating the unemployed involves and what it takes to do it, i.e., what kind of moral subject the unemployed is with what kind of needs and characteristics. The cities are not ideologies in the sense that rather than hiding what is going on, they equip actors with the means to attach worth to it. Cities are not taken-for-granted, because rather than providing actors with *certainty* at a somewhat sub-conscious level, they demand and work upon an uncertain reality by nourishing and *formatting* the critical capacity and reflexivity of actors. Finally, although the cities of unemployment have a lot in common with “governmental rationalities”, the cities differ by being prepared for engagement in disputes as well as compromises with other cities. The objects and subjects of each city can be, and are, combined in infinite ways, which also brings a certain fragility and instability to the governing of unemployment.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHOD

The key research questions of the thesis aim towards a better understanding of the transformation of the governing of unemployment into the active society by bringing together the *what* (the content of transformations) and the *how* (the legitimization of transformations) in a theoretical framework and research design. The locus of the research concerns neither rhetorical strategies and hidden interests nor intellectual thought or governmental techniques and programmes, but rather processes of justification and critique where the government of unemployment is put to the test. This requires a meticulous analysis of the dynamics between the governing of unemployment and the transformations of instruments and institutions, as well as the actors’ justification and critique of both through mobilising cities of unemployment. The thesis thus asks:

What cities of unemployment are mobilised in contemporary reform processes of the governing of unemployment, how are the cities mobilised to justify and criticise, and how do the cities sediment into instruments and institutions governing the unemployed?

It addresses these questions through an in-depth study of four contemporary reform processes: two in Denmark and two in France. The thesis is the first to investigate systematically the test situations that unfold in the reform processes with a focus on the plurality of ideas that are mobilised to qualify and evaluate existing policies and justify changes.

The cases have been chosen because they provide a large variety of dynamics of transformations by offering an analysis of two rather different countries based on different welfare regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990) and involving reforms that target both the insured unemployed and the uninsured unemployed. Although the selected reforms are not representative of either welfare regimes or of Denmark and France, the reforms are *exemplary* (Justesen and Mik-Meyer 2012: 127; Villadsen 2006: 101) of what can be at stake in the transformation towards the active society, thus challenging some of the assumptions of existing diagnoses and theories. For this purpose, Denmark and France are not chosen randomly. All the dichotomies in Table 1 (except for Serrano Pascual and Larsen et al.) position Denmark, or the Nordic countries, either within or towards the ‘soft’ approach, i.e., the one with less propensity to coerce. This makes the country interesting for questioning, in an exemplary way, this assumption of a less coercitive variety of transformations. France, on the other hand, has been positioned somewhere in between the two sides (Barbier and Théret 2001; Beraud and Eydoux 2009a) due first and foremost to its Rousseauist conception of citizenship, which implies that the state is indebted to the citizens (to provide a secure life), which in turn is “inconsistent” with the idea that citizens have obligations to the state (Barbier and Théret 2001: 177). France is thus “bound to experience limited pressure for job search, and the absence of a consistent punitive orientation” (Barbier and Fargion 2004: 457; See also Barbier 2007: 164; Enjolras et al. 2000). However, concurrently with the emphasis on France’s strong path dependency, others have pointed to profound changes (Palier 2005) where France is gradually leaving its Bismarckian path (Palier 2010b; see also Vail 2008; Vail 2004). The two countries thus provide *critical* cases (Flyvbjerg 2011: 307) to understand the puzzle of how coercion is legitimised as well as how compromises are established in the active society.

The four reform processes are examined through an in-depth study of statements in newspaper articles from when reform programmes are announced until they are adopted. Over 1,300 articles have been studied in two parallel steps. The first mapped the variety of repertoires of evaluation in order to compose a *grammar* of cities of unemployment. The first step was a prerequisite for the second, which was to study the dynamics of how different repertoires are assembled in compromises as well as used to denounce other repertoires in order to (dis)qualify and (e)valuate the governing of unemployment, and finally to understand how these dynamics are tied to concrete changes in the governing of unemployment. This perspective differs from the existing literature in important ways. Rather than establishing ideal types *a priori*, which are then compared to actual changes and countries, the grammar of repertoires derives from the reform processes themselves.

AIM AND KEY FINDINGS

The work of the thesis is motivated by an uneasiness concerning the ongoing transformations. Nonetheless, the thesis deliberately abstains from any *normative* aspirations to compare the transformations to normative standards, such as “de-commodification” (Esping-Andersen 1990) and “social investment” (Morel et al. 2012), unmask the discrepancy between promises made and reality, or examine the way changes are masked by ideological strategies, as the scholars of the ‘ideational turn’ often invoke (see above). Rather, the thesis adheres to an ethos of *non-normative critique* cleared from any “ought to’s” and judgements on what is best, just, legitimate, etc. (Hansen 2016b; see also Triantafillou 2012: 6, 26ff).

The reasons for this are firstly pragmatic and secondly relate to the kind of critiques that are needed to *re-politicise* the transformations and their consequences. In relation to the former, in order to compose the repertoires of evaluation as they unfold in the reform processes, it is necessary to turn the focus away from what they do not do through normative comparison, and towards what they actually do and what realities they produce and shape. The same goes for the latter rationale for the critique. In focusing negatively on how close or how far away transformations are from a desired state, normative criticisms tend to neglect or underestimate the more *performative* capacities and power relations of such transformations. By showing how the transformations are based on fragile and non-predetermined compromises, as well as how the governing itself is

full of contradictions and tensions, the thesis aims to open pathways towards thinking about possible alternative worlds (cf. Hansen 2016b: 139f) to the ‘active society’.

Overall, the thesis has four key findings that crosscut the French and Danish reforms. The first concerns the *type* of transformations; the second the *content* of these transformations; the third the ideational *dynamics* of these transformations; and the fourth the role of *critique* in the transformations as well as in research.

- *Type*: The thesis confirms existing theories of gradual rather than paradigmatic change (Streeck and Thelen 2005). However, the thesis’ focus on the capacity of ideas to qualify the governing of unemployment, as well as the people partaking in this in some way, brings new insights into how changes come about. It shows how the governing of unemployment is the result of an ongoing sedimentation of a plurality of repertoires of evaluation. This makes the governing inherently composite and questions the idea of a coherent regime or set of norms that sets the path. When repertoires are mobilised, it is therefore more a matter of adjusting, strengthening and adding instruments than replacing one set of instruments with another. Although transformations are cumulative, the thesis’ attention to morality and qualification of the unemployed subject show how they can have profound consequences. Furthermore, transforming the composite governing of unemployment is a complex and gradual matter where repertoires of evaluation are crucial to identify problems and suggest solutions. Here, ideological rhetoric and taken-for-granted norms fall short. Changes are not simply legitimised by smokescreens (the increased use of coercive measures is not simply hidden, but justified), or by making transformations appear as preservative and continuous (there is reoccurring uncertainty as to what is wrong and what ought to be done with the governing of unemployment).
- *Content*: The thesis identifies and maps seven distinct cities of unemployment that are mobilised in all debates surrounding all four reforms. In the city of *Demand*, unemployment is a consequence of economic fluctuations and stagnation. Governing is a matter of increasing demand for labour and increasing consumption. The unemployed are thus both workers temporarily on stand by and consumers. In the city of *Redistribution*, unemployment is a symptom of hegemonic interests groups and material inequality. Governing thus aims to distribute wealth and work better. The unemployed person is a citizen at risk of

exploitation. In the city of *Insurance*, unemployment is a social risk that should be collectivised. The unemployed are thus injured parties and entitled to compensation. In the city of *Incentives*, unemployment is caused by insufficient financial incentives to work. Governing aims to generate incentives for the economic men to choose work rather than unemployment. In the *Paternal* city, unemployment is a symptom of irresponsible behaviour and governing and it is thus a matter of making the unemployed take control of oneself through discipline and by setting requirements. In the city of *Investment*, unemployment is the result of lacking societal investments in the human capital of the unemployed. Governing is a matter of investing in the skills of the unemployed to enhance their opportunities. Finally, in the city of *Mobility*, unemployment is the result of the insufficient adaptability of the labour market as well as the unemployed. The unemployed are in need of activity, if not work then a job search, and risk becoming lazy. In this way, the mapping of the cities exposes the politics and morality at stake in the transformations. The analyses of the four cases show that reforms are particularly driven by justifications from the *Paternal*, *Mobility*, *Investment* and *Incentives* cities, which are all tied together in multiple ways. The other three cities do not vanish completely, but in the qualification of the unemployed they are increasingly put to the margins. In all four cases, the cities of *Redistribution* and *Insurance*, are criticised for not being capable of emancipating the unemployed, i.e., making them become part of the ‘active society’. The ‘active society’ thus has an imaginative dystopia, the ‘passive society’, where these cities are too influential. The mix of repertoires driving transformations is both far from what most include in the label of neoliberalism, and furthermore, far from the idea of the two overall approaches presented above. The cities are constantly tied together and the will to emancipate, as well as to use coercive measures, cut across all cities as well as reforms.

- *Dynamics*: Although the composite governing of unemployment is not new, the transformations towards the ‘active society’ accentuate and intensify certain dynamics. This shows how the tensions between the cities that are mobilised to justify are mitigated in categorisations and various and continuous tests that evaluate the behaviour of the unemployed. The tests, such as triage, screening, interviews and contracts, thus continuously ask what kind of subject the unemployed person is (i.e., what city does he live in), how worthy he is and what instruments will bring him closer to emancipation (i.e., the ‘active society’). In this

way, the possibility of requalifying the unemployed is institutionalised. A similar experimentalist dynamic is identifiable in the justification and critique. Here unemployment is increasingly seen as a *multicausal* phenomenon that, in the end, is a matter of how to make the unemployed act in certain ways. The result is constant uncertainty as to how to attach particular causes to particular types of unemployed, i.e., how to target or ‘personalise’ the governing, as well as how the unemployed respond to the governing. There is thus always room for improvement in the ‘active society’. It will always be transforming *towards* it. Part of the experimentalist approach seems to be a demand for more intense and more intimate instruments, stronger incentives, obligations to invest in oneself and to be mobile, and a better upbringing. In this setting, the unemployed are a symptom of the use of wrong medication prescribed by the cities of *Demand*, *Redistribution* and *Insurance*, and the need for increasing or adjusting the doses of *Incentives*, *Investment*, *Mobility* and *Paternal* governing.

- *Critique*: The thesis exposes dynamics of critique in the reform processes that have wider implications for the left and for intellectual critiques of the transformations. The four reforms were not uncontested. The reforms of the unemployment insurance systems were criticised in particular by the cities of *Demand*, *Insurance* and *Redistribution*. However, the critiques are formatted by the dynamics of the ‘active society’. First, they tend to work within the ‘active’ problematisation that separates critical forward-looking solutions from ‘uncritical’ critiques that simply want to preserve. The criticisms thus end up confirming the ‘dystopian’ evaluation provided by the cities driving transformations. Second, whereas the justifications driving transformations deliver fierce moral criticisms, the critiques based on *Redistribution*, *Insurance* and *Demand* have resided in criticising the use of coercion without putting moralities to the test. Intellectual critiques with similar normative foundations are confronted with similar deadlocks. First, they romanticise the past, neglecting its technocratic and coercive history and consumerist values. Second, they underestimate the *performative* ideational infrastructures underpinning the active society by simply denouncing them as false, punitive and/or neoliberal. In conclusion, the findings of the thesis disturb the idea of a progressive, non-coercive, emancipatory and universalistic version of the active society. It does not exist in practice – not because the approach has been mixed with ‘foreign’ elements, but because the cities driving the path towards the active society entail

an increasingly intense and personal control of the behaviour of the unemployed in order to ensure they emancipate themselves.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The rest of the thesis is divided into three parts and a final conclusion. Part I presents the progression towards the composition of a grammar of cities of unemployment. Chapter 2 introduces the meta-concepts inspired from French pragmatic sociology in order to create an analytical grid that encompass a dynamic relationship between governing on the one hand and the justification and critique of unemployment on the other. This is presented with a focus on qualification and uncertain and tense *test situations*. Chapter 3 introduces the findings from the ‘first step’ mentioned above, i.e., the mapping of the plurality of repertoires of evaluation that political actors in the four reforms have mobilised. Seven cities of unemployment are presented. Part II, comprising chapters 4 and 5, presents the findings of the selected reforms of the French and Danish unemployment insurance systems. Both reforms can be seen as *tipping points* that turn the balance of the systems in favour of and towards the active society through making adjustments and additions. Chapter 4 presents the reform process of the so-called PARE (*Plan d’aide et de retour à l’emploi*, ‘Help plan for the return to employment’) in France in 2000, while chapter 5 presents the LAAP (*Lov om aktiv arbejdsmarkedspolitik*, ‘The active labour market policy act’) in Denmark in 1992-93. Part III comprises chapters 6 and 7 and presents the findings of the selected reforms of the French and Danish systems governing the uninsured unemployed. The reforms are more recent than the ones presented in chapter 4 and 5. For that reason, the reforms are more exemplifying of the *intensifications* and *displacements* in the path towards the active society. Chapter 6 presents the reform process of the RSA (*Revenu de Solidarité active*, ‘Income of active solidarity’) in France in 2007-8, while chapter 7 presents the reform of AKGN (*Alle kan gøre nytte*, ‘Everyone can be useful’) in Denmark in 2011-13. Chapter 8 concludes the thesis and discusses the four key findings.

Part I

Towards a grammar of cities of
unemployment

2

Analytical grid

Meta-concepts and methods

In the following I will present the analytical grid of the thesis, that is, the key theoretical concepts and the methodological choices that follow from the overall aim of the thesis as well as from the theoretical frame. In the process of composing the thesis, the aim has been to develop an analytical grid that provides tools to map the plurality of moral and normative structures that are used to justify and criticise policies in processes that lead to reforms in the governing of unemployment, as well as the tensions, sacrifices and compromises between the normative structures. Furthermore, the analytical grid seeks to address the question of *how* normative structures are connected to the governing of unemployment and specifically *what* ideas and ideational dynamics are driving and shaping current transformations of the governing of unemployment.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section presents the key theoretical concepts, which mainly derive from French Pragmatic sociology. There is no canonical ‘text book’ (yet) of pragmatic sociology, but different and sometimes contesting views on how the theory should be interpreted and evolve. The following is thus based on my take on what I find to be distinct, original and productive in this sociology in development (Hansen 2016b; 2016a). Thus, rather than a strict adoption of a comprehensive framework, the concepts are, from the beginning, heuristically chosen and moulded to function as tools for the analytical purpose of the thesis. The key concepts are:

- *Reality test*
- *Qualification*
- *Plurality*
- *Repertoires of evaluation*

Section two further moulds the concept of repertoires of evaluation into the concept of cities of unemployment. The concept qualifies the thesis' take on ideas in relation to the justification as well as the governing of unemployment. The section combines the concepts into a framework.

The following three sections will present the key analytical concepts and finally outline a model that addresses the role of ideas, actors, instruments and institutions in practices of evaluation. The last three sections describe and justify the choices of case selection, data selection and coding. The final section presents some notes on how the material is read and analysed.

KEY CONCEPTS FROM FRENCH PRAGMATIC SOCIOLOGY

The point of departure for pragmatic sociology is that we live in a world with uncertainty and tensions (Boltanski 2011; Barthe et al. 2013). However, it is not a Hobbesian state of nature with a basic fear of getting killed by the neighbour, but more an ontological uncertainty and changeability with regards to what reality consists of, or with Boltanski's words, an uncertainty about "the whatness of what is" (Boltanski 2011: 75). The reality is regarded as fragile, heterogeneous and *composite* (Thévenot 2001) rather than solid and homogenous. It is this dynamic and insecure point of departure that informs pragmatic sociology's specific attention towards the coordination between the individual person and the environment, which is a difficult, non-predetermined and, at times, trying, process.

Reality test: Fragile reality and its troublesome coordination is encapsulated in one of the key concepts of pragmatic sociology, namely the reality test. The multiplicity of meanings attached to the term (in French *épreuve*) is important. It firstly signifies an uncertain and fragile *situation* in which reality is "put to the test" (*mis à l'épreuve*) or tested by people in something that resembles a trial. Secondly, it signifies a *state*. It refers to a hardship or something trying and testing (*éprouvant*). Thirdly, it is a *capacity*: the verb *éprouver* can be related to experiencing or sensing. In such test situations or "critical moments" (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999), such as disputes, the reality is put to the test by means of the experiences and actions of people. Whereas the starting point of a test is some uncertainty with regards to the 'whatness' of what is, it also contains moments in

which certainty, at least temporarily, is established and agreement or compromises are reached; but only “temporarily” since the ‘noise of the world’ always threatens the situation to “get out of hand and to lead the parties involved to conduct another test, the way throwing a dice or drawing a card can start a game up again” (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 135).

It is these test situations or critical moments that are the privileged research objects of pragmatic sociology (Dansou and Langley 2012). Pragmatic sociology is “pragmatic” by being oriented towards practices and concrete situations and by taking its departure in people’s own sense-making in these situations. The test is usually used to study everyday situations, for instance at the work place, but the term is equally applicable to the object of this study. The point of departure here is the fact that unemployment, or how to organise the relation between those who are regarded as employed and those who are not, is troublesome and constantly spurs test situations in which it is not entirely given for the actors involved (politicians, interest groups, unemployed, etc.) what the most appropriate way to handle them is.

But how are people “equipped” (Thévenot 2002) in order to handle these test situations? When reality is not given and people are forced to coordinate their actions with others, they lean on and are constrained by surrounding objects that make the situations comparable to other situations. Pragmatic sociology speaks of “equivalence”; yardsticks that makes it possible to see differences and similarities, or simply to recognise or disregard what is relevant in a particular situation, (“what matters” in Boltanski’s words (2011)) and finally make a coordination of actions possible. These yardsticks can take a variety of “forms”, such as habits, conventions, statistics, technical objects or juridical tools (Thévenot 1986). This is where the fourth, more institutional, signification of test is relevant as a *device* for testing. People *invest* in these forms to enable coordination (Ibid.).

“Investment” firstly signifies the binding of resources to a particular idea, thereby renouncing investing in something else. Put differently, investments entail “sacrifices”. For instance, the practice of statistics invests in categories. Categorisations are both simplifying, thus inevitably sacrificing nuances when generalising into categories, and indispensable in order to compare particular instances (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 2f). Moreover, categories have an in-built fragility since they are constantly put to the test by other overlapping categories or instances that do not fit the categories (Thévenot

1979). Secondly, the term investment is tied to “investiture”, originally referring to the installation of an incumbent (the insignia can be a garment, the ‘vest’) (Thévenot 2016: 238ff). When actors invest in particular statistical classification, it enables equivalence and coordination and people or things can be compared and actions can be made accordingly, but with this it is also clear that the classification can underpin certain power relations, establishing hierarchies, authorities and categories that enable and legitimise political actions and governing. The governing of unemployment, as will be shown in the coming chapters, is a case in point of being intimately tied to continuous investments in categories that spur ongoing tensions and ‘critical moments’.

Qualification: The continuous investment in forms by actors *qualify* the surroundings. They “equip” reality with particular goods that render it possible to evaluate and value, or simply appraise, the objects in the surroundings as well as the actions actors carry out. Objects and actions are in other words ‘valorized’ (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 131). For example, the capability of a court of justice presupposes a number of qualified objects invested with value for pronouncing a sentence. Prosecutor and defender depend on evidence and witnesses that are qualified according to the accusations. However, the qualification of objects is highly dependent on the situation. For instance, in the court room, all objects and persons become part of a reality (of proofs, clauses, laws, justice, etc.) which is radically different from how they were qualified outside the room. The qualification, including the judicial authority of the judge, is further supported by invested objects in the court room, such as the judge’s robe and wig, the hammer and the bench, as well ceremonial practices, such as rising when the judge enters.

As mentioned, the qualification also rests on particular goods, in the case of the court a number of principles settled in laws and legal practice. It is these goods, or moralities, that provide the binding material in the field of tension in the tests between people, their actions and the reality they act within and upon. Pragmatic sociology, in this sense, is a framework for understanding the qualified or ‘valorized’ relations between people and their surroundings (Hansen et al. 2016: 274f). Although these processes of qualification can be highly institutionalised (as in the case of the court), they are not simply structurally determined and given. They require investments in order to be established and maintained, especially given that the objects, or *dispositifs* as Boltanski and Thévenot

speak of them aggregately (Boltanski and Thévenot 1991), are rarely as homogeneously ordered and spatially delimited as they are in the court room. In the case of unemployment, it is much less straightforward as to what is relevant in test situations, such as reform debates, since the unemployed are already qualified according to a plurality of different and often opposing forms that constitute a patchwork of qualifications and actors. This means that a great many objects can be drawn into the test situations, from a variety of statistics (growth rate, unemployment rate, employment rate, consumption, poverty rate, wage levels, benefit levels, job turnover, education levels and so on) to a particular ‘successful’ programme and the statements and behaviour of individual unemployed people.

While these objects hereby aim to fix the ‘whatness of what is’, they are also loaded with morality. Statistics, for instance, are on the one hand a radical requalification of social life into categories and numbers, and on the other they aim towards producing knowledge to improve society according to certain historically nested ideals of the good society (Thévenot 1990; 2011). Statistics, and qualification in general, fuse together the question of what reality *is* and the moral and political question of how it *ought* to be (Wagner 1999: 348; Boltanski 2011: 69). This “situated” morality makes it very different from philosophical wrestling with abstract principles, or the way a theory of principle-driven justice (e.g., Rawls) is applied to reality (cf. Boltanski and Thévenot 2000: 216).

Plurality: A recurring argument in studies of pragmatic sociology is to show how the qualifications give rise to tensions and conflicts between a *plurality* of moral goods that become visible in these test situations. Tension lurks not only because the world is in constant “flux” (Boltanski 2011: 58), but because the goods fail to appreciate one another and are ultimately incommensurable (Centemeri 2015). The name of the initial research group, *Le groupe de sociologie politique et morale*, indicates that pragmatic sociology is positioned in a cross disciplinary field between sociology (social actions and coordination), philosophy (morality and goods) and politics (tensions, power and conflict). Pragmatic sociology shares this focus on tension with Actor Network Theory; in Bruno Latour’s terminology, “controversies” (Latour 2005). However, whereas the *pragmatic* in ANT (as well as American pragmatism) mainly refers to an application- and problem-solving-oriented process in which objects and the social are assembled in every possible way, for pragmatic sociology it is first and foremost a moral practice in which

reality and goods are concurrently put to the test. A methodological consequence of this ‘muddle’ of morality and objects and practices is, as positively argued for in the preceding chapter, that the researcher’s account remains non-normative.

REPERTOIRES OF EVALUATION: CITIES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Although the plurality provides permanent scope for tests, tensions and critique, there are limits to the ways in which reality can be qualified and actions can be justified and criticised (Boltanski and Thévenot 1987; 2006). In specific places and periods there exists a limited number of more stable structures that enable actors to qualify reality and establish equivalence (Blokker 2011). These “repertoires of evaluation” (Lamont and Thévenot 2000) follow a systematic *grammar* that can be mobilised to establish equivalence, hereby enabling critique and justification, i.e., evaluation. Repertoires are, however, much more than yardsticks or common goods that are simply inadequate to justify actions (outside forums of philosophical wrestling). They are situated.

To borrow another term from Boltanski and Thévenot, they could be seen as “cities” (*cités*) (Boltanski and Thévenot 1987)ⁱ. Within the walls of the city, a certain order or moral harmony rules based on the yardstick or principle that cherishes a particular worth; but the cities are also full of *objects* and *subjects* that reinsure the order of worth (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 130-37). The cities are also ‘equipped’ with *tests* that make it possible to distinguish between more or less worthy objects as well as subjects. Finally, cities are not anarchic, but *governed*. There are instruments to ensure that the inhabitants live in accordance with the order of worth of the city, and within the city there is a constant quest for improving the governing of unemployment, and hence the worth of the city. Cities are thus never complete.

This implies that cities are neither ready-made prescriptions with a complete blueprint nor utopias. They do not simply ‘dictate’ those who govern exactly what to change or what policy tool to introduce. They provide them with *repertoires*. Cities are thus like Foucault’s *problematisations*, “turning a given into a question” (Foucault 2003: 24; 2001). When mobilised, cities thus connect the concrete situation to a general problem and

ⁱ The French term *cité* is more illustrative since it refers to the Greek city-states and hence signifies a society. In *On Justification* , *cité* is translated to “polity” (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006).

foster the preconditions for looking for, justifying or criticising possible solutions. By qualifying their reality, they are pointing towards what matters while deflecting what does not matter, thereby making up the imagination of the political actors and providing them with analytical grids that will guide their quest for identifying problems and finding solutions. They can be mobilised in order to justify as well as criticise, thereby *evaluating* actions and arrangements. They can be used to confirm or defend as well as challenge given orders, and can be mobilised in *reformative* and corrective actions and adjustments *within* the city walls as well as in *radical* or “existential” critiques of other cities by questioning the very principles that the arrangements are built upon (cf. Boltanski and Chiapello 1999: 77; Boltanski 2011: 103f).

It is possible to find different types of cities with different levels of generality. The cities mapped by Boltanski and Thévenot can be seen as the ‘universal’ equipment for engaging in disputes and controversies.ⁱ However, in order to avoid taking certain ideas for granted, this thesis aims to develop a more contextual and inductive typology of repertoires that are directly related to the topic of the thesis – that is, the problem of how to govern the problem of unemployment.ⁱⁱ I term these repertoires *cities of unemployment*. All cities thus have their own ways of qualifying the phenomenon of people who, for some reason or another, do not commodify their time and effort on the labour market (Polanyi 1944). If one tries to specify this extremely generic, though historical phenomenon further, one basically risks entering the gates of one of the cities. The cities thus qualify the phenomenon by pointing out objects that influence it, by attaching particular behavioural characteristics to the unemployed subject and by providing tests by which one can evaluate and improve the governing to make it more just and efficient. The equipment of the cities thus sustain processes for the “subjectivation” (Foucault 1982; Revel 2010: 227f) of the inhabitants of the cities. Cities hereby interpellate the inhabitants as moral subjects. This, of course, entails the unemployed, but by specifying the thresholds between unemployment and employment, the cities are just as much about the employed as the unemployed. Finally, the cities also

ⁱ Boltanski and Thévenot initially mapped six “orders of worth” mobilised in everyday situations of dispute that they associated with canonical texts from political philosophy. The six orders of worth are: *inspiration* (St. Augustine), *domestic* (Bossuet), *fame* (Hobbes), *civic* (Rousseau), *market* (Smith), and *industrial* (Saint-Simon) (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006).

ⁱⁱ There are other theoretical suggestions within pragmatic sociology closer to the issue of government, such as Robert Salais’ “dispositifs of public action” (*dispositifs d’action publique*) (Chatel et al. 2005) or Vando Borghi’s “institutional regimes of justification” (Borghi 2011), but they neglect the moral dimension (and, thus, the subject) so crucial to the worlds, and instead focus mainly on ‘administrative’ effects.

interpellate all those who aspire to partake in the quest for governing the unemployed better. In other words, the cities expect particular capacities and knowledge in order to govern legitimately.

Unemployment is a constant threat to employment, but at the same time it provides meaning for its value and legitimises particular forms of governing. The cities did not rise out of nowhere. They are historical constructs relating to the rise of the market economy whose infrastructure has been developed from tensions, tests, practices and struggles. Cities are thus not pure intellectual constructs. They entail laymen as well as experts, scientific knowledge as well as opinion and abstract as well as folk philosophy. Each city thus has a specific genealogy, but unravelling this is beyond the scope of this thesis. What the thesis does do, however, is provide a detailed account of the life of each city (chapter 3) and explore their respective roles in contemporary transformations of the governing of unemployment (part II and III).

Finally, it may be appropriate to clarify what the cities of unemployment are *not*. Firstly, a study of cities is not a study of ideologies. Cities do not operate next to, or above, practices that hide their real character. Cities are means of legitimation that *qualify* rather than *mask* reality. Their power relies not in distorting reality by means of ideological veils, but in their capacity to tie moral and normative yardsticks to concrete practices, institutions, instruments and (un)employed human beings. Secondly, studying cities is not a study of given norms or values. Cities do not operate in an environment in which they are completely taken for granted and uncontested, but in one of uncertainty and tensions. They instigate and *format* rather than *exclude* critique. Thirdly, cities differ from studying ‘governmentalities’. Governmentality studies map (the genealogy of) *programmes* (Foucault 1991: 75; cf. Dean 1988) or “arts” of governing (Foucault 2008: 2), and to a lesser extent how they interplay. The meta-concepts from pragmatic sociology (test, qualification, justification and plurality) and the concept of cities provide the analytical grid for studying how these tensions unfold in situations where the dynamics are difficult to capture through simply studying governmental programmes as they are presented in their ideal form by intellectuals, for example.

SITUATING TEST SITUATIONS: COMPROMISES, SEDIMENTATION, INSTITUTIONS

It is now possible to integrate the insights presented above into a model that deals with how the dynamics of the test situations in which the cities of unemployment are mobilised relate to the actual governing of unemployment. The question, in other words, is how this ‘realm’ of evaluation (in which justification and critique take place in public) influences and is influenced by everyday governing as well as the supporting institutions.

The concept of compromise is key in understanding how and why the governing of unemployment is composed by a plurality of cities. Compromises, here, should not be understood as a balancing of the interests of various actors, but settlements where elements from several *cities* are concurrently recognised (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 275ff). Compromises make two or more cities compatible by establishing arrangements that assuage the tension between them. Compromises are fragile since they never completely fulfil the logic of one city and always risk being challenged by reality tests based on cities that are not recognised in the compromise.

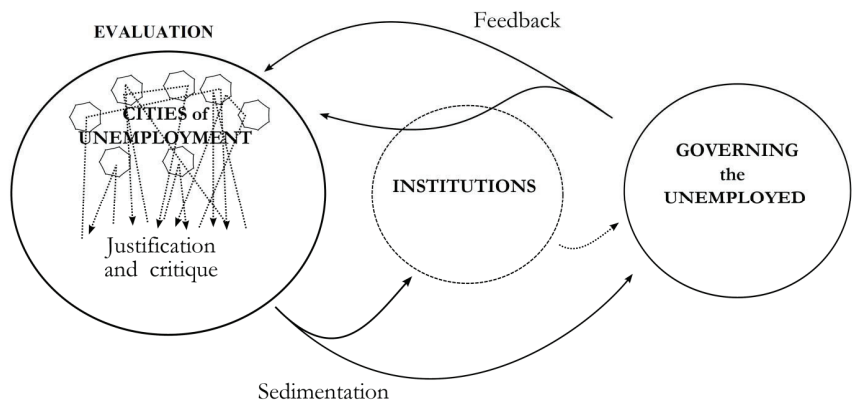
The repeated disputes and testing of a plurality of cities in reality tests *sediment* (Salais 2011). Sedimentation has at least two dimensions in this context. The first is a sedimentation of *instruments*, namely the hands-on decisions concerning how to govern the unemployed in laws, directives, recommendations, etc. Sedimentation here also points to how the policies governing the unemployed do not follow the logic of just *one* city. There is rather an often ambiguous and contradictory hybridisation and layering of the mobilisation of different cities over time. We can thus interpret the assemblage of instruments in place that govern the unemployed at a given time in a given country as the outcome of historical sedimentations that compromise on-going mobilisations of the cities of unemployment. The thesis thus zooms in on four instances of sedimentation.

The second dimension of sedimentation is *institutionalisation*, where an institution is understood from the perspective of pragmatic sociology as a “bodiless being to which is delegated the task stating the whatness of what is”; i.e., “saying and confirming what matters” through repetitive reality tests (Boltanski 2011: 59). The tautological nature of institutions deprives them from basic human capacities of doubt and reflexivity. Institutions are thus non-human beings performing a qualification and evaluation of reality in a stable and repetitive manner. Institutions such as statistics, benchmarks,

categories, definitions, indicators, standards and opinion polls are thus key objects that are mobilised in situations of justification and critique. Their tautological nature and lack of self-reflexivity make them an inappropriate research object for understanding the normative legitimating underpinnings of sedimentation. This only become visible in test situations (cf. Salais 2011: 228) since, in these situations, actors are dependent on normative repertoires of evaluation in order to interpret and make use of institutions (Cruickshank 2016: 70).

From the incomplete list of examples of institutions, it becomes obvious that debates on welfare reforms never work as ‘free lunches’ where political actors chose whatever repertoire they find appealing. In principle they can do this, but whether the evaluation is deemed legitimate is highly dependent on the public memory and institutions in place at a given time. So to return to the concept of sedimentation, institutions should be seen as both the outcome (sedimentation) of on-going debates, as well as informing, qualifying and formatting them.

Figure 1 Situating test situations and cities of unemployment



Institutions, seen as stable and repetitive reality tests, provide the analytical linkage between the level of disputes (justification and critique) and the level of concrete policy changes. Institutions of this kind are an integral and indispensable part of the governing of the unemployed: they set the boundaries between the employed and the unemployed, separate the unemployed into various categories, set criteria for receiving benefits, set benchmarks for job centre performance and so on. Without these capacities to define the ‘whatness’ of unemployment and of the unemployed, rules and laws would simply lose their meaning and impetus. The relation between worlds, institutions and policies as outlined above is illustrated in the figure above.

The main research object is illustrated as the “evaluation” bubble. The question is how actors respond to the questions of how we are governing and how we should be governing. The bubble illustrates how multiple cities of unemployment are mobilised when policies and policy changes are justified and criticised. However, these processes do not occur in a vacuum – i.e., the bubble is highly permeable. First, it is permeated by *feedback*, which is constantly used to qualify and contest arguments.ⁱ I use the term to emphasise how the communicated information (understood in the broadest sense) somehow derives from the everyday life of governing. Feedback can take numerous forms: some of the feedback is highly institutionalised, such as statistics, measuring the achievement of objectives, benchmarking and multiplying ideas and perceptions in the media etc., whereas other forms find less institutionalised ways to reach the ‘realm’ of evaluation, such as the everyday affairs and experiences of unemployment and the instruments governing it that sediment into the (public) *memory* (cf. Berger and Luckmann 1966).

The arrows pointing right in the figure above illustrate the sedimentations of on-going debates and evaluations. Sedimentations are not only changes in policies, but can also lead to institutional changes; for instance, classification systems are modified or new strategies are launched which then have implications for the feedback. Institutions equally play a huge part in the everyday governing of the unemployed; for example, with the classification and screening measures and targets for local agencies (cf. dotted arrow pointing right). The sections below will clarify how the theoretical meta-concepts presented above have been operationalised into a methodological strategy.

ⁱ I borrow the term from John W. Kingdon (1995), who attaches similar meaning to the term (see also Béland 2005: 6f).

SELECTION OF CASES

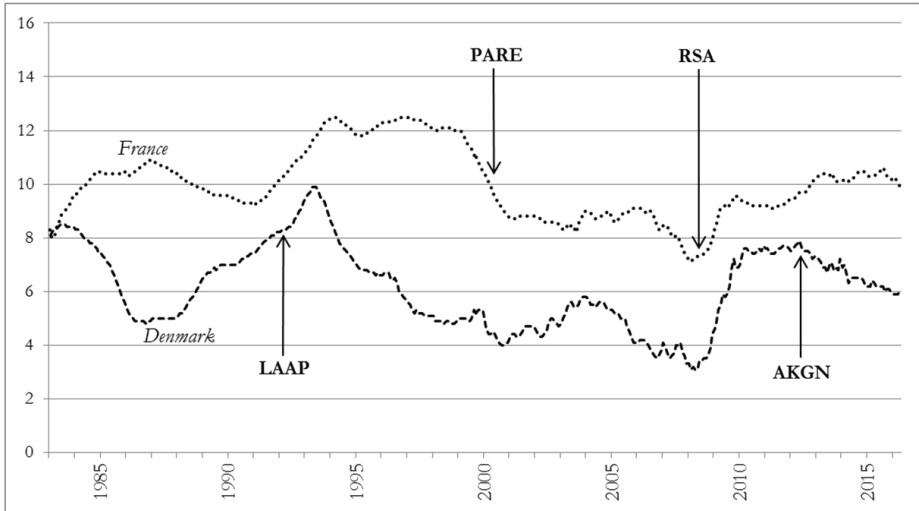
The cases have been selected with the aim of operationalising the research question of the thesis. There are two overall aims of the thesis, and the former preconditions the latter. The first aim (what cities of unemployment are mobilised in contemporary reform processes of the governing of unemployment?) is to develop a typology of cities of unemployment that has relevance beyond this specific case study. The second aim (how are the cities mobilised to justify and criticise, and how do the cities sediment into instruments and institutions governing the unemployed?) is to apply this typology in order to analyse the dynamics and tensions surrounding the transformation of the governing of unemployment in contemporary European societies. The thesis works with a comparative case-study set-up on two dimensions: country and ‘type’ of reform. The purpose of comparing is not to trace the most decisive factors in a causal explanation of the phenomenon, but rather to “cast different perspectives on a problematized phenomenon” (Glynos and Howarth 2007: 207). It is in this latter sense that the selection of cases aims towards ‘maximum variation’. The choice of France and Denmark satisfies this aim since their systems of governing unemployment are predominantly seen as, at least since Esping-Andersen (1990), belonging to different welfare models, namely the Continental Bismarckian vs. the Nordic Social Democratic. Nonetheless, they are subject to resembling transformations, and this provides an interesting comparison of how these play out in rather different environments. If it is possible to trace a resembling plurality of repertoires in both countries, the typology cannot be reduced (or denounced) as simply French, Danish, Corporatist or Nordic.

Furthermore, as mentioned in chapter 1, the countries serve to test some of the analytical as well as normative assumptions of the typologies of transformation mentioned in chapter 1.ⁱ In this sense they are *critical* cases (Flyvbjerg 2011: 307), especially in relation to the question of the co-existence of ideas and to the question of coercion. Their corporatist, republican (France) and social democratic, universalist (Denmark) institutions should make them less prone to change in the direction of the use of coercion. Furthermore, they are exemplary cases for studying the varieties within the active society.

ⁱ See pp. 4, 10.

The thesis analyses two reform processes in each country (see Figure 2). All reforms are justified as “active” and as deriving from a centrist or centre-left position. The reforms provide variation in at least two ways. Firstly, they involve the insured and uninsured unemployed. Both France and Denmark operate with a dual system for insured and uninsured unemployment, and reforms therefore usually only entail one of these groups. The two reforms in each country thus cover a substantial part of the spectrum of unemployed people in each country. This is mainly relevant in terms of developing a typology with the greatest variety of repertoires. It is clear, for instance, that historically the city of Insurance has sediment predominantly in the systems of unemployment insurance. Secondly, the selected reforms are chosen because they are significant by, on the one hand, resulting in substantial changes in the governing of the unemployed and, on the other hand, by being recognised as a significant reform by political actors at the time. If the transformations took place below the public radar, it would take another methodology to map the normative repertoires that underpinned them. The selected reforms of the insured system are also the earliest and can be seen as *tipping points* where the changes in the balance between the repertoires place a new dynamic into the governing of the insured unemployed. In France, the reform of PARE (‘Help plan for the return to employment’) in 2001 introduced an individual contract that designated the actions and measures that would make the unemployed return to the labour market. If the contract was not fulfilled, the unemployed would be financially sanctioned. The reform also strengthened obligations to accept the offers of the job exchange services. In Denmark the reform of LAAP (‘The active labour market act’) in 1993 introduced a similar contract while introducing a variety of instruments: leave schemes to ease access to the labour market, job training for the unemployed and job offers that the unemployed, after a period of time, would have to accept in order to continue to receive compensation. By installing the obligatory contract, both reforms would institutionalise a permanent testing of the behaviour of the unemployed.

Figure 2 Harmonised unemployment (percent) in France and Denmark 1983-2016



* Unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force, seasonally adjusted. Source: OECD (2016), Harmonised unemployment rate (HUR) (indicator). doi: 10.1787/52570002-en (Accessed on 01 July 2016)

The selected reforms of the uninsured unemployed have both occurred within the last ten years. They are thus examples of *intensifications* of dynamics that are already extensively in place. Rather than tipping points *towards* the ‘active society’, the thesis analyses the reforms as cases of tensions and displacements *within* it. In France the reform of RSA (‘Income of active solidarity’) in 2008 introduced a negative tax scheme to increase incentives for recipients to take low-paid part-time work while introducing a number of instruments and obligations that aim to increase the mobility of the unemployed. The reform also introduced an intensified control of the financial behaviour of the household of the recipient. In Denmark the reform of AKGN (‘Everyone can be useful’) introduced obligatory workfare schemes to all able young recipients and increased sanctions and obligatory education.

SELECTION OF DATA

The choice of data is justified in the aim of the thesis to study the dynamic conflicts and legitimisation process surrounding the reform proposals. I chose to analyse the public

debate in newspaper articles since this is a genre where the tensions and dynamics between ideas, actors and the reforms are most visible. The data thus has a high degree of intertextuality (Justesen and Mik-Meyer 2012: 122) where actors constantly make references to, and are confronted with, other statements. This dynamic is something that I would not be able to analyse to the same extent by means of, for instance, a genealogical study of selected ‘monumental’ documents (Villadsen 2006: 101). Since the articles present actors’ views on what is and what should be, the data provides a linkage between the actors’ qualification of the phenomenon and the institutional changes that the reforms are about. Hence, although I do not study the micro-level practices of governing the unemployed, the data can say something about the moral content of the sedimentations, i.e., the concrete instruments targeting the unemployed.

However, how the governing plays out locally in practice, as well as the conflicts and processes of evaluation and sedimentation that never reach the public, are beyond the scope of this method; these would demand more ethnographic approaches (See e.g. McDonald and Marston 2005; Serrano Pascual et al. 2012; Boland and Griffin 2015; Nielsen 2015a; Garsten et al. 2016). Of limitations, one should mention how newspaper articles tend to have less ‘specificity’, as well as the fact that the statements of the actors are filtered by the newspapers. I collected articles (in the national databases, *Europresse.com* and *Infomedia*) from the three largest national non-tabloid and non-specialised newspapers in each country (*Le Monde*, *Libération*, and *Figaro* in France, *Jyllandsposten*, *Berlingske Tidende*, and *Politiken* in Denmark).ⁱ The tabloid formats are disregarded primarily because they tend to favour rhetoric and sensationalised reporting rather than the justifications and criticism which are the object of analysis in this thesis. The specialised media are disregarded because they target a smaller public.

Articles are collected from the day a reform is announced until one month after it was agreed upon (280-450 articles per case), which all in all gives a broad selection of the most important voices in the debate, but also makes it possible to study how the reform process evolves; for instance, how the mobilisation of particular cities leads to changes

ⁱ Although ranked high in terms of number of daily issues, this is why *L'Équipe* (specialised in sports), *Le Parisien* (regional) and *Les Echos* (specialised in business and finance) are not considered in France, and *BT* and *Ekstra Bladet* (tabloids) are not considered in Denmark.

in reforms.¹ Seeing cases as a “bounded occurrence of a phenomenon” (Miles and Huberman 1994), I temporarily limit my case analysis to the period from it is announced until it is officially and legally decided upon. For an overview of details of the cases (period, number of articles and search words), see Appendix A.

CODING

The coding of the data was a process of simultaneously developing and mobilising the typology of the cities of unemployment. In order to be able to begin coding, a tentative ‘grammar’ and typology of different worlds of unemployment was produced. In order to do this, I searched for conceptions of unemployment in the history of economic and welfare state ideas in normative literature on the welfare state and current debates. I chose the history of ideas and the normative literature since these are suitable places to find ordered, ‘pure’ and concise conceptions of my phenomena. The result was a tentative model of seven worlds of unemployment qualified through the construction of a common grammar (e.g., their conception of societal goods, the unemployed subject, how to govern best and how to test and evaluate policies).

On the basis of my tentative typology, I developed a coding scheme that was gradually reconfigured throughout the coding process. When coding each case, a detailed timeline was constructed, noting controversies, changes in reform proposals etc. The coding units are statements that can consist of very short sentences or sequences of sentences, if these build an argument. I coded both direct and indirect quotes since the point is not whether the actor said precisely this or that, but how the reality of the governing of unemployment is qualified. The criteria for coding a statement was that it had to be somehow related to the specific reform and had to involve some kind of qualification that can be either descriptive or prescriptive. This entails that the statement explicitly qualifies one or more of the instruments that are part of the reform. When in doubt of whether a statement was to be coded to a certain code, the statement was still coded. This procedure assured that all relevant data was coded, including that which did not

¹ Since the database of Infomedia had not registered *Jyllandsposten* electronically for the period of the first Danish case, it only contains articles from two newspapers. However, since the reform was heavily debated over a long period of time, it nonetheless has the biggest sample of articles. Since, *Jyllandsposten* does not differ radically in its political position on welfare matters from *Berlingske*, it would most likely not lead to any new repertoires or qualifications.

immediately fit the tentative coding scheme. Hereby, incoherence is not disregarded, but treated as an occasion for adapting and revising the categories of the coding scheme.

In the coding scheme, I distinguish between descriptive, interpretative and pattern codes (Miles and Huberman 1994). The *descriptive* codes describe who is enunciating and what the enunciation is about (solutions, evaluation of existing policies and how to organise governing between actors). The *interpretive* codes refer to the cities of unemployment that actors were mobilising to justify or criticise, as well as the cities they were denouncing. Initially a tentative grammar of seven cities was developed according to readings of normative literature and secondary literature from the history of ideas regarding unemployment. The idea was to establish the largest variety of repertoires in order to bracket the many qualifications of unemployment. The codes were defined according to the established grammar and operationalised with inspiration from Boyatzis' five elements (label, definition, description, in/exclusion, and examples) (Boyatzis 1998). The often subtle difference between the repertoires of the cities called for a very contextual and attentive reading of the statements, in which the question is always whether and how there is a qualification of reality that prepares it for evaluation. Terms like "rights", "equality", "inclusion", and "active" may appear in several of the cities, but with significant differences in their meaning. This implies that methods of automatic and quantitative coding on the basis of lists of key words or "semantic descriptors", which has gained popularity in studies applying the original orders of worth framework (See e.g. Boltanski and Chiapello 1999; Patriotta et al. 2011; Taupin 2012) would be misleading and at best superficial.

Furthermore, every city was accorded an additional code documenting instances in which the worth of the world is denounced. The fact that repertoires can be mobilised in order to be denounced is again something that an automatic analysis of "semantic descriptors" would not be able to catch. The process of coding was characterised by "constant comparison" (Strauss and Corbin 1998) between the definitions of the interpretive codes and the coded material, sometimes causing changes in the coding of statements and sometimes changes in the definitions of the codes. The method ensured the internal coherence in each interpretive code (cities of unemployment) and overall consistency in the coding (Justesen and Mik-Meyer 2012: 36). All changes in the content of the codes, which were substantial, were documented in a logbook. Changes in the

coding scheme thus led to revisiting and sometimes re-coding the cases according to changes in the scheme (see Appendix B).

Finally, the coding scheme comprised a number of *pattern* codes that related to the cross-cutting grammar of all cities (common good, (un)employed subjects) and instances where the issue of coercion and the categorisation of the unemployed appeared. The pattern codes were partly informed by theory and partly evolved through the coding. The importance of coercion and categorisation became particularly clear in this process. The final coding scheme can be seen in Appendix B, which also includes some notes on the revisions the scheme underwent in the process of coding. Appendix C contains some concrete examples of how the data has been coded.

The inductive and highly explorative development of the coding scheme made it difficult to operationalise ideals of intercoder reliability (Boyatzis 1998; Campbell et al. 2013) since the definitions of codes were constantly modified, making it difficult to engage others in the process. Instead, I ensure reliability – not in the sense of objective knowledge, but rather a coherent and consistent method (Justesen and Mik-Meyer 2012: 36) – in two alternative ways. Firstly, I have maintained *intra*-coder reliability by the abovementioned approach of clear and concise code definitions and constant comparison between coded material and the codes throughout at least three readings. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, I ensure reliability through *transparency* (Ibid.) by exposing how the concepts came about and by presenting the findings in a form where the connection between the coding and the raw data is made visible to the reader. The following chapters thus contain more than 800 quotations from the coded data.

ANALYSING

The analysis, whose findings are presented in the following chapters, is based on two readings of the coded material, which consist of more than 3,000 statements. In the first reading, of which the outcome is presented in the next chapter, the content of the individual interpretive codes (the cities of unemployment) was analysed in order to present a grammar of each city of unemployment. Coding, categorising and finally presenting the grammar of the cities resembles the art of *composing* (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 158). It involves picking out those objects that are in “harmony” and confronting incompatible harmonies (Ibid.). Furthermore, it is not a simple and

objective matter of ‘documenting’ findings, but rather hermeneutically thinking along the harmonies and exploring the (infra)structure of each city. Part of this thinking involves integrating reflections of what I consider to be ‘grammarians’ of the various worlds. The composition and presentation of the coded data is thus supplemented by the normative literature and secondary literature from the history of ideas that was initially used to provide a tentative grammar before the coding process was initiated.

Following the ethos of a non-normative critiqueⁱ, the reading and presentation of the material adheres to a principle of *acceptability* (Hansen 2016b). The principle entails practicing a “descriptive pluralism” (Bénatouïl 1999: 382), which is encapsulated in the following quote:

[The] researcher is obliged, in her description, to adhere as closely as possible to the procedure the actors themselves use in establishing proof in a given situation; this approach entails paying careful attention to the diversity of forms of justification. (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 12).

Thus, the operations of actors are not reduced to something hidden (e.g., intentions and interests) or unconscious (e.g., false consciousness) (Lemieux 2008), meaning that the researcher’s reports should, in principle, be *acceptable* to the actors (cf. Boltanski 2011: 25; see also Gros 2012: 157).

The second reading of the material adheres to the same principle, but with a completely different objective. The focus is no longer harmony, but rather tension and conflict. In other words, it looks into the mobilisation of the cities of unemployment in test situations within each of the four cases, of which the findings are presented in chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7. It thus asks the question of how the co-existence of the seven cities of unemployment result in test situations and compromises. In this reading I first of all look for justifications and critique of the reforms. Secondly, I look for the ways in which specific instruments are evaluated. Thirdly, I look for test situations in which there is uncertainty as to how instruments should be qualified. Fourthly, I look for compromises, i.e., ways in which elements from several cities are put together. Particular attention in this regard is placed on categorisations and comparisons of the unemployed. In order to carry all this out, I depend on other types of data. In order to understand the historical context of the reform, I rely heavily on secondary literature on the history of

ⁱ Cf. chapter 1, p. 11.

Danish and French labour market policies, and more specifically the history of the systems that each reform transforms. The historical context also supports the argument of the thesis that the ideas mobilised in the reform processes do not come out of the blue; most have played a part in shaping the ongoing changes. The historical co-existence of a plurality of contradictory ideas is thus visible in the highly composite government of unemployment.

However, this contextualisation proved insufficient to fully understand what was going on in the reform debates. Debates are heavily influenced by the public memory, including slang-like lingua and implicit references to past affairs. The reading, especially of the French cases that I am less familiar with, involved a lot of ‘snowballing’: back-tracking the meaning of these historically loaded colloquial references that were obviously important to the actors’ qualification and evaluation of existing instruments and reforms. The importance of understanding the historical and institutional context of the reforms is accentuated by the fact that the justification of the reforms is as much about criticising ‘what is’ as it is about justifying ‘what should be’. Finally, in order to engage more directly with the question of sedimentation, the legal output of the reforms was analysed in detail.

3

Cities of unemployment

A grammar of tests, governing and subjects

In the following, the grammar of seven “cities of unemployment”, which are mapped and composed on the basis of condensing the coded material of the four cases, will be presented. The cities are:

Demand
Insurance
Redistribution
Incentives
Paternal
Investment
Mobility

The chapter is structured around four key dimensions. Firstly, I outline the overall principle and normative foundations of a city. Secondly, I describe how the city *qualifies* the reality of unemployment and how policies are put to the *test*. Thirdly, the role of *governing* in the city is presented: what does it take to govern best and what kind of governing should be avoided, and when is it necessary (and legitimate) for the ‘governor’ to exercise his authority by means of coercion? Lastly, I show what it implies to be unemployed in each city. In other words, what characterises the unemployed *subject* and what is his path towards a state of emancipation, and on the other hand, what conduct is making him less worthy?

While all the cities provide answers to the abovementioned questions, their radically different qualifications imply that they sometimes (prefer to) operate on different levels, from macro-economic policy and taxation to workfare schemes and the counselling of the unemployed individual. Along this line of reasoning, the cities may appear ‘incomparable’ and, hence, unfit for a typology like the one that will be presented.

However, as will be shown in the following, the cities all induce different moral subjects that are mutually exclusive. This means that although it is possible to identify more or less stable compromises (such as the Golden Age compromise) with what appears as a stable division of labour between various cities, they are exactly *compromises* with in-built tensions. To understand the tensions and compromises, it is initially necessary to bracket and categorise the processes of justification and critique into various normative yardsticks forged by a city of governing, tests and subjects.

The primary source of the statements from the four cases is occasionally supplemented by secondary literature from canonical texts of ‘grammarians’. This serves mainly two purposes. Firstly, it makes clear that the cities do not respect the epistemic boundary between technical and layman discourses. Secondly, and somewhat relatedly, it provides the basis for the examination in parts II and III of how the abstract transcendental principles face dilemmas and tensions in the ‘muddy’ practices of governing the unemployed; something which grammarians can (and often do) neglect, but which those engaging in the justification and critique of the instruments are forced to deal with somehow.

The rest of the chapter presents a condensed extract of what ‘goes on’ inside the cities of unemployment in the selected debates on Danish and French reforms of the unemployment system. Short quotations from the data, which appear several times, are cited with reference to the case they derive from, whereas longer quotations are referenced with the specific article.

All cities have been present in all cases, but with varieties between reforms and countries that will be addressed in parts II and III. I hence treat the cities as transcendental, or at least European rather than national. Although the governing of unemployment has been and remains primarily a national question where national policy makers are held accountable, the occurrence of all cities of unemployment in both countries confirms that ideas do not respect national borders to the same extent. Governing unemployment has always been a comparative endeavour where policy makers, since the very first insurance scheme in Ghent in 1900, have sought inspiration from other countries (Edling 2008; Rodgers 1998). The Open Method of Coordination in the EU and the OECD has provided such fora in recent times (De la Porte et al. 2001; Triantafillou 2011; Hansen and Triantafillou 2011; Esmark 2011).

Finally, the chapter is concluded and a condensation of the grammar of the cities is presented (see Table 2).

CITY OF DEMAND

The grammarian par excellence, though not the inventor, of the city of Demand is evidently John Maynard Keynes. The starting point here, then, is that market mechanisms, even in equilibrium, do not lead to full employment (Galbraith 1987: 233). In the city of demand, unemployment is firstly a question of where the economy is situated in the business cycle between “upturns”¹ and downturns. “In a free market economy, the economic trends fluctuate (in more or less good times) – and with them so does employment”. However, secondly, unemployment is not to be considered “inherent in nature”². It can and should be minimised politically. The state is the primary actor since, being subject to the market mechanisms, neither the unemployed nor the employers have the capacity to exit economic stagnation by themselves “when the market mechanisms do not work”³. If the economy is in a recession, resulting in a lack of demand for labour, it is the responsibility of the state to intervene more or less directly in the economy in order to balance the supply and demand for labour by either raising demand, or reducing the supply. Conversely, if unemployment is low, the governmental interventions should either decrease demand or increase the supply of labour.

The common good is centred around the benefits of a society where “full employment is re-established”⁴ and where the “wheels are turning”⁵. It is a place where “everyone who wants to can get a job”⁶ and do “useful work”⁷. Everyone has a “right to work” as it is “unworthy to begin life by being brushed aside as a redundant”⁸. In this way, the city of Demand ensures an ever “growing economy”⁹, which “restores trust”¹⁰ and promotes “progress”¹¹, “enterprise”¹² and “optimism”¹³. It is also a society in which people consume since consumption is “the main engine of growth”¹⁴.

Qualification and Test: Although the city of Demand tends to take actions outside what is normally considered part of the unemployment system, it does have the means to qualify and evaluate certain parts of the system and the unemployed. First of all, unemployment benefits have an “impact”¹⁵ on consumption or the “purchasing power”¹⁶ of the

population. In Keynesian language, benefits thus serve as counter-cyclical “automatic stabilisers”ⁱ. They “maintain consumption”¹⁷ in times of high unemployment, and are “automatically” reduced as unemployment decreases¹⁸. Benefits, thus, also mitigate the effects of stagnation on the level of unemployment.

Although governmental intervention is needed at both ends of the business cycle, it most often justifies its relevance in “recessions” and “crises” since these are the situations in which the common good of the city is really put to the test. In the city of demand, it is therefore important to qualify the reality as a situation with little or no jobs offered in order to justify intervention. Tests vary in abstraction, from observing the “the ever thinner job advertisement supplement”¹⁹ in a newspaper and personal experiences, such as the “150 rejections I have received during the last two years”, “the number of vacant positions must be no more than a few thousand”²⁰, “where are the jobs? (...) There are simply no jobs to get”²¹, to references to “such a difficult economic situation”²²; the “recession”²³, the “stagnation of the job market”²⁴ and “the absence of job offers constitutes the principal obstacle”²⁵. More statistical evidence is also brought in: “65,000 young people under 30 have lost their job in the first two years of the crisis”²⁶.

Policies are *tested* according to whether they “create jobs”²⁷, or “stimulate the demand for jobs”²⁸.

Without job creation all politics is uphill.²⁹

In other words, the policy test asks whether a given policy benefits jobs creation and employment. “Economic results” should not be “assessed on their own”; they are rather the “basis for fighting unemployment”³⁰. Likewise, rather than caring about benefit expenditures, one should “spend the energy on creating jobs, then the unemployment benefit expenditures will decrease automatically”³¹.

Governing: Governing hence comes with a responsibility for countering the negative tendencies of the market. This is first and foremost the responsibility of the state:

ⁱ Cf. Zimmermann (2006: 33).

The state must accept its responsibility for the high unemployment levels. Only the economic policy influences whether consumption and, hence, production must be raised or lowered.³²

Governing also implies being “pragmatic” beyond the disturbances of “ideology”³³. Governing should “learn” from history’s previous recessions, such as carrying through new “*New Deals*”³⁴ and being efficient and effective. Countering also means spending when few have the means to spend (and vice versa).

We have to ‘lift the lid’ and invest, even if it is with borrowed money.³⁵

Likewise, the government should “courageously” hire when businesses do not.³⁶ Governing in the city of Demand means being cautious with timing and adjusting the policies according to the phase of the business cycle.ⁱ A particular phase calls for the “right medicine”³⁷ at the right dose since too much can cause “overheating of the economy”³⁸. Policies therefore tend to be “temporary” and are supposed to act on the situation “right now”³⁹. It is, for instance, unwise to reduce benefits in “a period of feeble growth”⁴⁰ or when the economic situation is “unfavourable to long term saving”⁴¹. On the other hand, one can “profit from the prosperous economic situation”⁴². Once the business cycle reverses, e.g., “once growth comes”⁴³, the counter-cyclical actions will be unnecessary. These changes in action can be built into the policies so that expansionary actions will “automatically” decrease once exiting the current phase. Government should then “pull back, because the hole will be filled up by businesses”⁴⁴.

There is, however, also a lot of bad governing that is not discretionary, but based on an “ideological doctrine”⁴⁵, “blunted by overspending”⁴⁶, “unreflective”⁴⁷ and only addresses “symptoms”⁴⁸. In situations of recession, inappropriate actions include “austerity policies”⁴⁹ and “cuts in government spending”⁵⁰, which do nothing but “strengthen the supply of labour, i.e., creating more unemployed people”⁵¹. In the same manner taxation that decreases the disposable income of the population “has a negative impact on consumption, and hence on growth”⁵².

Coercion against the unemployed is generally considered inappropriate in downturns:

It is not fair to punish them for the fact that there are no jobs at the moment.⁵³

ⁱ It is in this sense that Keynesians speak of a “discretionary policy” (Sandmo 2011: 419).

By contrast, “it is the duty of the municipality to find a job for the individual”⁵⁴.

Private and public employers must be compelled to solve the unemployment problem.⁵⁵

However, governing the unemployed is dependent on the economic situation. In times of no demand, the “number of whiplashes”⁵⁶ and “sticks” and “carrots”⁵⁷ are inconsequential. In downturns there might be a “negligible group of unemployed who do not want to work. And as long as there aren’t jobs for everyone, these people should be left alone”⁵⁸. However, “if there is labour scarcity, one can always tighten the rules so that the jobless are once again on standby.”⁵⁹

Subjects: Who inhabits the city of demand? As in Keynes’ theory of *effective demand* (Keynes 2006), the population is both a variable in the production and in the consumption function. This creates a kind of janus-faced subject: on the one hand a consumer, on the other a worker. In terms of the unemployed individual, he is a potential worker since “there is no need for people at the moment”⁶⁰. He is unemployed “as a result of the crisis”⁶¹ and “actually wants to work”⁶² and would “almost take any kind of job”⁶³, which, however, is “practically impossible, even if one offers oneself at a bargain price”⁶⁴. He should “be put to work” but only by creating demand⁶⁵, which makes employers less “picky”⁶⁶. The unemployed person is thus a worker that is involuntarily put on standby and remains “prepared”⁶⁷ for better times. Concurrently with being a potential worker, the unemployed is valued as “purchasing power (...) with no propensity to save”⁶⁸.

When it comes to the employed individual, he is in a desirable state both in terms of contributing to growth and is, usually, “ameliorating his purchasing power”⁶⁹ compared to the unemployed. Most problematic in terms of unemployment is when the prospect of unemployment leads the employed into “fear-motivated saving of money that could have been used for consumption”⁷⁰. In this sense, and in general, it is important to strengthen the interest of the employed “in getting the unemployed employed”⁷¹.

CITY OF INSURANCE

The inhabitants of the city of Insurance are bearers of social risks that, in a Durkheimian sense, make them dependent on one another. Unemployment involves the risk of losing

the economic means of self-support. When these risks occur, they are treated as accidents:

No one can say that wage earners are responsible for their dismissal. (...) A dismissal on economic grounds is a serious occupational injury.¹

Since risks in this city are considered inherently social, the question is not who is responsible, but how the (insured) unemployed should be compensated.ⁱ Insurance is, therefore, not about charity, but about sharing burdens collectivelyⁱⁱ (Ewald 1991: 205f).

Unemployment benefits are a substitute for missing earned income, not alms or poor relief.²

The “social safety net”³ provides individual security or “protection”⁴, which is the basic common good in the city of Insurance. The least worthy are situations of “precariousness”⁵ in which the economic situation is characterised by “insecurity and stress”⁶. The principle of insurance is hence about “ameliorating unemployment benefits and noticeably increasing the number of indemnified unemployed persons”.⁷

The collective sharing of risks, however, does not exempt the individual from any responsibility, since he has to recognise *a priori* his belonging to a community of shared risks, and hence his own partaking in collective responsibility. He, in other words, has to show *solidarity* with those who are hit by the accident of unemployment. This implies that the principle of compensation is underpinned and preconditioned by a principle of solidarity that is qualified by a set of membership rules. “Indemnification” is thus “an outstanding debt (*dû*), that is, the counter demand of the paid membership fees”.⁸ This sets the criteria for what it takes to be a member with a right to compensation and for moral conduct, implying that the right should only be exercised if the situation is that of an accident, that is, if the event of becoming unemployed is “involuntary”⁹. In the city of Insurance, the possibility of abuse always lurks, which again leads to issues of control and sanctions to ensure that only those who are technically entitled to benefit from the insurance are granted the compensation. However, employers can also infringe on the

ⁱ On the social character of risks in insurance, see Ewald (1990: 136). The origins of the insurance principle is closely tied to the problems of handling work accidents in the late 19th century (Defert 1991; Ewald 1986), providing the techniques that were later used to establish the first unemployment insurance schemes (see e.g. Zimmermann 2001)

ⁱⁱ Cf. Ewald (1991: 205f).

principle of Insurance by “speculating” on the compensation by temporarily laying off people.¹⁰

Qualification and test. The city of insurance does not engage with the causes of unemployment. Rather, unemployment is an inevitable consequence of the collective striving for goods,ⁱ such as “technological advances”¹¹. What matters is how these risks are managed and whether risks are “securitised rather than casualised (*precarisé*)”¹². This takes vigilance since “precariousness has a tendency to aggravate”.¹³ The qualification of unemployment is a combination of moral critique and technical solutions. Regarding the former it is, for instance, “scorn against (...) [the] unemployed to claim that unemployment is a problem they created themselves.”¹⁴

Workers are casualised by part time constraints or temping jobs: our social security system no longer protects against the risks of poverty. This risk (...) generates the social insecurity reflected in the current pessimism among Frenchmen.¹⁵

Regarding the latter, the city of Insurance is dependent on actuarial sciences to calculate risks and fees and grant rights of membership and compensation.ⁱⁱ This is only possible because the distribution of accidents follow certain mathematical laws which can be calculated by means of statistics;ⁱⁱⁱ for instance, how to distinguish between different risk groups accruing to industries?¹⁶ Or what are the consequences when the earning rights are modified?

The extension of unemployment rights to workers having worked at least 4 months during the last 14 months (as against 4 months during the last 8 months) is considered to be ‘pretty poor’. The proportion of compensated unemployed people, only 42 pct. today, advances only 0.2 pct.¹⁷

When policies are *tested* in the city of Insurance, the question is to what extent there is (economic) compensation for the social risk of unemployment. Contrary to the city of Redistribution, the aim is not equality in the population, but that the transition from employment to unemployment is insignificant with regards to the “conditions of life”¹⁸, leading to an equality between the unemployed and employed with similar social risks

ⁱ Cf. Lehtonen and Liukko (2011: 35)

ⁱⁱ See Ewald (1986); Lehtonen and Liukko (2011).

ⁱⁱⁱ See e.g. Defert (1991).

and hereby “preventing comedown” for the individual.¹⁹ The Insurance test thus pertains to both the levels of compensation and levels of coverage. Although the prime instrument is evidently unemployment insurance schemes, the test potentially applies to all kinds of accidents and illnesses related to the labour market, such as compensation for reduced working capacity due to disabilities:

Their compensation will be reduced by several thousand *kroner* (DKK).²⁰

Further, the test also applies to the general conditions of the labour market, for instance in terms of employment conditions, asking whether the unemployment instruments promote “precarious” or more “durable” employment relations.²¹

Governing. Governing is a matter for all those who contribute to social risks. While the city of Redistribution points to certain classes or privileged and exploiting groups, there is a shared responsibility in the city of Insurance. On the one hand, the co-responsibility of social risks naturalises the causes as mere accidents. Since the risks are collectively constructed, no one is essentially to blame. Hence the “alarming criminalisation of unemployment”²² as well as the “suspicious attitude of unemployment as self-inflicted”²³ is denounced.

It is out of the question to blame the unemployed.²⁴

On the other hand, the co-responsibility also leads to constant uncertainty with regards to the distribution of responsibility in terms of contributions from employees as well as employers. The co-responsibility also induces a common interest in reducing the risks, for instance, instances of fraud or the levels of unemployment. Whereas the latter provides scope for compromises with other cities (e.g. Demand), the former issue of fraud and “speculation”²⁵ provides scope for coercive measures of control, such as “regular control of abuses”.²⁶

Subjects. The subjects in the city of Insurance are beings who feel either secure or “insecure” and “uncertain”; always with a preference for the former.²⁷ The feeling is dependent on whether and to what extent the *chances* for the risk of unemployment are compensated. The unemployed are therefore in principle “unlucky”²⁸. While the

unemployed are “victims”²⁹, the solidarity in the city can only be upheld by a certain spirit of solidarity, or temperance, ensuring that rights are only claimed when needed. Subjects must therefore know and act according to the intentions behind the rights. If people are not to abuse the rights, which may appear as “cheating” or “fraud”³⁰, then they must “understand the nooks and corners of the unemployment benefit system”.³¹ However, there are also those who know this, but “cheat” anyway: it is, for instance, a “moral” problem when “people make demands that they are well aware the social assistance act is not designed for”.³²

Who, for example, does not know of a woman who lives together with the declared father of her son, who nevertheless does not carry his name in order for the mother to receive single mother benefits?³³

Returning to the issue of coercion, this sets up a delicate tension and threshold between two subjects of the city. On the one hand, the solidary (insured) unemployed subject holds a right to compensation and hence to be left alone. Adding further duties (apart from paying fees) equals “rendering the unemployed responsible for his situation”:

It is implicit. Threatening the unemployed with sanctions if they don’t accept the offered job clearly makes them solely responsible for the situation they find themselves in.³⁴

On the other hand, there is the un-solidary “speculative” subject who takes advantage of the rights without being exposed to an accident, or chooses not to subscribe and contribute to the compensation of those exposed.

CITY OF REDISTRIBUTION

The dystopia of the city of Redistribution is a society of various groups with conflicting economic interests. The hegemony of certain groups and the domination and exploitation of others leads to material inequality. Material equality is thus a common good that is both the desired end and the primary means to counter domination and exploitation. Contrary to other cities for which some degree of redistribution may be recognised, it is not subordinated to other principles, such as the ability to play the game of the labour market (Incentives), the compensation of risks (Insurance) or equal opportunities (Investment). Inequality is, in other words, the independent variable that ensures a well-functioning and just society (Wilkinson and Pickett 2009).

If you do not want to share, the consequences are increasing inequality, anger, frustration and despair, and in the end insecurity. These are mechanisms we know from other societies that went down this path and the result is always the same: The weakest are affected adversely.³⁵

The material inequality is directly tied to various reinforcing dynamics related to capitalist societies, such as the concentration of profit and property (Piketty 2013) or commodification (Polanyi 1944; Esping-Andersen 1990). Intervention is, therefore, needed to limit employers and other elite groups in “imposing the dictum of the demands of the market”.³⁶

Redistribution is the prime means to counter-balance these dynamics so “capital is genuinely harnessed”³⁷ to ensure that all groups benefit from the wealth produced. In relation to unemployment, redistribution is not only a matter of balancing the relative strength between capital and labour through taxes and wages; it is also a matter of distributing work and redistributing wealth through unemployment benefits. Whereas solidarity in the city of Insurance implies the sharing of risks, here it is about “sharing out” the production of wealth as well as the “sharing of time in life”.³⁸ Unlike the city of Insurance, this involves a more direct confrontation with the “economic logic”.³⁹

Unemployment is hence not an evil in itself. The possibility of more leisure time can be a good that comes with being unemployed. Hence it benefits both the working population and the unemployed to “distribute work and leisure time better”.⁴⁰ People *do* “commit suicide due to unemployment – however not because they had psychological problems or had problems with killing time, etc. but solely because of economic reasons owing to too low benefits”.⁴¹ In the city of Redistribution, “there is not necessarily work for everyone”, which is why it ought to be possible not to work, for example through absence of leave-of-absence schemes.⁴²

Qualification and test: Evidence of the need for redistribution surrounds the identification of (increasing) impoverishment and “pauperisation”⁴³, such as the “number of young homeless people”⁴⁴. When policies are qualified and tested in the city of Redistribution, it is a matter of whether they lead to a concentration, or rather, privatisation of property, or a socialisation. Redistribution is a way of socialising property to the benefit of the non-owners (Castel 1995). This results in an inherently critical attitude towards “unsocial

cutbacks”⁴⁵ and “gigantic cost-saving programmes providing tax reliefs for the employed and with an extra profit for those with the highest incomes and largest houses.”⁴⁶ Embedded in the issue of socialisation is not just the distributional effect of policies, but also the way they are financed and what role they play in budgetary struggles:

Financing the *RSA* by collecting income taxes from low-incomes seems to me to be a serious political mistake. It has to be seen in conjunction with an increasingly polarised redistributive system [in which] some contribute massively, whereas others benefit massively.⁴⁷

Unemployment benefit claimants, recipients of cash benefits and early retirees have their conditions of life deteriorated in order to make room for reliefs in top taxes.⁴⁸

Qualifying policies are hence a question of who gains and loses in a zero-sum game. The reduction of fees for employers “is 40 pct. higher than the anticipated reduction for workers”.⁴⁹

They dare handing over resources intended for social protection to the hungry financial institutions.⁵⁰

The zero-sum game also qualifies the issue of the distribution of work. Getting a job for the insured unemployed will result in “the cuckoo in the nest effect pushing the marginalised on cash benefits even further back in the queue of unemployment”.⁵¹ Likewise, “inciting the unemployed to accept a job will only rob Peter to pay Paul.”⁵²

Whereas the city of Insurance sees the negative consequences of a capitalist society as a shared responsibility, the city of Redistribution blames agents with egoistic interests for abusing and exploiting their privileged position, such as employers “forcing down wages outcompeting those that play by the rules”.⁵³ This can also result in disloyal behaviour among workers.

If we firstly take a pay cut, it will spread to the rest of society leading to a society with far greater inequality.⁵⁴

The same goes for the unemployed person if his labour (by means of subsidies) starts competing with the regular labour force.⁵⁵ Not only is he then exploited, he becomes a “scab”.⁵⁶

Governing. The influence of private interests often manifests itself in “secret reunions”⁵⁷. There is a certain *civic* demand of representation that suspects the governors of considering particular interests rather than the general interest.

A political elite, on paper representing millions of people, has lost the ability to receive reports from below. The elite has become rootless.⁵⁸

In the same civic spirit, the city grants more legitimacy to those representing the many as opposed to those representing the few. However, representing the many can also be denounced by the unmasking of unions engaging in the “betrayal of unemployed persons”.⁵⁹ The clash of interests between the many and the few sometimes leads to a confrontational struggle in which, contrary to the city of Investment, for instance, employers can never be found in “the same boat as the workers”.⁶⁰

We are not social partners. We are social adversaries.⁶¹

In order to politically change things, employers should “fear that workers lift their heads”.⁶²

There is a tension in the city of Redistribution between, on the one hand, the abovementioned mistrust towards governing authorities for serving the interests of the few, and, on the other hand, that the government of the state “should pursue a redistributive policy”.⁶³ Unlike Insurance, where measures are based on shared social risks that favour the members, it is only the state that can “warn against a two speed system”.⁶⁴ The state is “the guarantor of social cohesion and the common good.”⁶⁵

However, to ensure support for redistributive policies, it is inappropriate to simply distribute from rich to poor and disregard the layer in between.

The more benefits one removes, the larger the risk that substantial parts of the population loses ownership (...). One risks short-circuiting the acceptance of the middleclass to contribute to the community, if it does not experience getting a little back.⁶⁶

The question of whether the benefits and services provided should be “targeted” or “universal” is thus key in this city, leading to a preference for the latter (cf. Korpi and Palme 1998). Ultimately, the city of Redistribution, in a classic social democratic way, imagines a city in which class struggles and private interests are suspended. In line with the universal spirit, the city of Redistribution denounces the “division of unemployed persons in groups”⁶⁷ while advocating a “unified system”⁶⁸. The use of coercion against

the unemployed is problematic because it tends to make people accept the exploiting structures that produce inequality:

Within the new logic of rights and duties there will be more pressure on the candidates to accept pauperising jobs.⁶⁹

Sanctions, however, can be introduced against those who benefit from those structures, such as “employers that will profit from the [scheme] in order to multiply the number of unworthy (*indignes*) jobs”.⁷⁰ Further, the important function of taxation as the prerequisite of redistribution legitimises the need for control, for instance of people (including the unemployed), who “earn their money from moonlighting”.⁷¹

If you introduce a tax, you also introduce control, otherwise it does not make sense. If there is a speed limit on the motorway, someone has to see if it is respected.⁷²

Subjects: The universal preference fits with the overall aim of less material inequality in so far as the unemployed are neither considered subjects of alms (Paternal) nor victims hit by chance (Insurance). They are rather citizens that, due to power struggles, have become exploited, oppressed or “indignant”.⁷³ Echoing T.H. Marshall, it is a citizenship which is not simply liberal, but social (cf. Marshall 1964). Inequality is “unworthy against our fellow citizens, making their existence more economically miserable and humiliating for them”.⁷⁴ Redistribution thus plays the role of restoring “dignity”⁷⁵. By being “equal fellow citizens”⁷⁶, the city of Redistribution grants the unemployed a legitimate political voice.

Many organisations and experts were asked about their opinion. But did they listen to the ones that each day feel their self-esteem go down while watching longingly all those taking the train or the car to the ‘heavenly’ job?⁷⁷

The voice is, however, restricted by the overall goals of material equality and the fight against private and market interests, spurring a tension within the city of what is a proper political voice. Nevertheless, the issue of dignity opens up scope for criticising “control of the way of life of claimants”⁷⁸, as well as for instruments that “disenchant”⁷⁹ the unemployed.

CITY OF INCENTIVES

The principle of the city of Incentives is perhaps the most straightforward and directly applicable of all the cities: it “believes in economic incentives”¹ and aims to “render the return to employment more incentivising”² and “attractive”³. Hence, it seeks to ensure that every unemployed person has an incentive to work so there is no longer the “absurd moment in which one regrets working because it implies losing revenues”⁴. With its roots in neoclassical thinking (e.g., Pigou, 1933), labour supply always tends to generate its own demand in this city. A lack of incentives decreases the disposable supply of labour, which again increases wage levels, thus decreasing productivity and the competitiveness of firms. Being unemployed must be “costly, in order to settle for a dynamic of employment”.⁵

Not only do incentives reduce unemployment, they also “reduce public expenses for public assistance”⁶ by moving people from “passive assistance to actively contributing to the national economy”⁷. More incentives do increase inequality, “but we all become richer when people enter the labour market”.⁸

It is only by allowing the rich to become richer that one gives the poor the desire to become rich one day too.⁹

As much as they are targeting the unemployed, the incentives also send signals to the employed that guarantee the incentives to remain in the job. In a system with a lack of incentives, “one is punished” if taking a job will “undermine trust to the system, and create undue suspicion towards the recipients”¹⁰. If incentives are back in place, “there will be nothing to worry about, since you know you will gain more money when working.”¹¹

Qualification and test: The lack of incentives is qualified in a number of ways. For instance, every third single parent earns “500 DKK or less by going to work” and “every fifth will lose money”¹²; or, it is a “sign of failure” that immigrant workers are taking the “least attractive jobs, despite having thousands on benefits”¹³. But a single person can also be exemplary:

The special thing about him was that he openly admitted that he said no to all jobs with a salary of less than 130 DKK an hour [because] the pay was lower than the daily allowance.¹⁴

The city of Incentives does not approach unemployment benefit as such in absolute terms; what matters is the relationship between benefits and the productive city (Olivienness 1994). It addresses “problems of interaction” between benefits and the labour market”¹⁵, asking whether “it is more profitable to work than staying on benefits”.¹⁶

One of the earliest guides to *test* policies in accordance with the city of Incentives was written by the French economist Lionel Stoleru’s in *Vaincre la pauvreté* (1974). In responding to the question “how to avoid idleness”, the solution is to “make work profitable” (Ibid: 143), and the book contains a detailed cross-country analysis of various ways in which policy makers can establish continuous incentives to work by means of a so-called “negative tax”.ⁱ

Although the benefits are always regarded with suspicion, they are not to be eradicated completely. Poverty is generally considered inappropriate since it hinders people from even responding to incentives.

Reducing cash benefits only has a motivational effect on those with nothing but joblessness as their problem. For the rest it only has poverty-creating effect that demotivates participating actively. Hence, a sanctioning policy should take into account that economic sanctions must never have the consequence that people are put on the street and hereby further societal exclusion.¹⁷

In hindering them from playing the economic game of the labour marketⁱⁱ, the city of incentives thus identifies “poverty traps”¹⁸, “inactivity traps”¹⁹, “financial brakes”²⁰ or “perverted effects”²¹ that “disable the poor by confining them in ‘traps’”²².

Governing: It is hence the responsibility of the governor to strike the right balance between the monetary thresholds of ‘poor vs. able to get along’ and ‘unemployed vs. employed’, with the latter always getting first priority because the benefit itself so easily

ⁱ The negative income tax plays a key role in the case of RSA in France. See chapter 7.

ⁱⁱ On the game metaphor in relation to the negative tax, see (Foucault 2008: 201).

becomes part of the problem. The governor hence acts upon the “motivation effect”²³ of each individual. This makes the governing in the city of Incentives much more complicated and active than a matter of (neoliberal) deregulation.

The city of Incentives is suspicious when evaluating the governing of the unemployed since it always has a potential effect of being too “generous”²⁴ and hereby “excluding people from employment”²⁵. The city of Incentives thus denounces all “measures that reduce the supply of labour”.²⁶ “Unemployment-inducing system errors” (levels of benefits or high taxes on wages) are “our time’s cynical crime”²⁷. Not only can they become a “pretext for doing nothing”²⁸, they also risk putting the country on “the city map of attractive countries for immigrants who do not want to contribute to society”²⁹. Another barrier can be the complexity and opacity of the system caused by “interrelated rights”³⁰. If “the accumulation of benefits remains complex it does not incite people to resume work.”³¹

The use of coercion in the city of Incentives is limited since whether the individual wants to behave rationally and respond to incentives is “optional” and based on “voluntary adherence”³² and “voluntariness”³³. It is in this sense, and only in this sense, that the city of Incentives is liberal, since it formally leaves the choice of working or not open to the unemployed.ⁱ It does not formally “oblige” the unemployed to work (Stoleru 1974: 140f).

However, while direct coercion is excluded from the city, governing through incentives nonetheless works upon the threshold of pleasure and pain, and whether instruments are considered “carrots”, “bonuses”³⁴ or “monetary stimuli”³⁵, or “sticks”, “whiplashes”, “sanctions”, “nudges”³⁶ or “squeezing the wallet”³⁷, this really only depends on what side of the threshold it addresses. Regardless of whether the unemployed chose to act accordingly to the incentivising environment, it is not supposed to be pleasurable for those who “do not play the game”.³⁸

ⁱ See also Foucault (2008: 207): The negative tax “leaves possibility of not forcing [the unemployed] to work if they have no interest in doing so”.

Subjects: The subjects in the city of Incentives are all *homines oeconomici* who are responsive to and act on economic stimuli. They seek out where the monetary reward is highest with as little effort as possible. This is, in the end, what will “motivate”³⁹ them to take a job or do nothing. The reasons for being unemployed thus lie outside the individual.

One cannot blame the persons involved for thinking economically rationally.⁴⁰

If it implies being unemployed, “why should one work?”⁴¹. The unemployed person simply says “if I resume work, I lose”⁴², which means that people would be “idiots if they go from an economically safe life (based on support and benefits) to a more doubtful situation on the labour market”⁴³. The unemployed must “never be tempted to depart from the right track”⁴⁴. Hence it is important that the unemployed know about and “appropriate” the incentivising schemes.⁴⁵

The “motivation effect” is not only targeted at the unemployed subject; if there are no incentives to work, the employed “feels foolish”⁴⁶:

I get up every day and make an effort every day: one could almost wish to become a social security claimant.⁴⁷

Why slave when there is nothing to strive for? We might as well wallow in misery.⁴⁸

Incentivising is the guarantee for those who “get up early to work” as well as a message to those who don’t: “one does not work for nothing”⁴⁹. Incentives to work thus “moralise” the labour market,⁵⁰ which, on this subject, make them a compliment to the city of Mobility’s appreciation of activity. As with the negative tax scheme, it means that the city of Incentives does not make a clear threshold between the unemployed and employed. There is more of a continuum throughout in which the incentive to work (more) should be encouraged economically.

THE PATERNAL CITY

The paternal city aims towards “larger personal responsibility for the welfare of each individual”¹:

Everybody must be able to support oneself.²

The capacity to support oneself must be promoted because it strengthens people’s satisfaction with their lives – and that is more important than the economic bottom line.³

The alternative is “the risk of creating a large assisted population.”⁴ Moving people away from a state of assistance (*assistanat*) equals moving people from “survival to life”⁵.

We must transfer the responsibility of people’s lives back to those who can carry that responsibility. We must dare to demand that everybody contributes and takes responsibility for themselves and the community.⁶

“It is no good lugging a big and growing group of people incapable of taking care of themselves, let alone others”.⁷

Taking responsibility is hence a precondition of becoming worthy and *competent* in the behavioural sense of the term.

Qualification and Test: Being (ir)responsible is closely linked to the inner characteristics and self-perception of the individual, but there is, however, heavy influence from external factors. Following this logic, unemployment is an outcome of a lack of responsible behaviour by the unemployed, which again can be influenced by political intervention. It is thus a question of whether policies “responsibilise”⁸ or ‘de-responsibilise’ the behaviour of the unemployed and the labour force in general that policies are tested:

What the blazes can be done to give more people a real opportunity to regain their authority (*myndighed*)?⁹

This is a test that is applicable to the overall “system” governing unemployment:

We must get rid of the social system’s stifling effect that works counter to self-worth, participation and initiative, which are exactly the qualities that make a human being capable of fending for himself.¹⁰

But it can also qualify policies beyond the system, such as the reduced liability to compulsory military service:

Society has hereby deprived half of the lost generation, the eligible young men, from the possibility of (...) learning order, precision and cooperation. Virtues that are valued on any labour market.¹¹

Although the Paternal city shares the problematic of inner behavioural characteristics with social Darwinist ideas (e.g., Spencer), it differs in recognising that the characteristics can be changeable and politically produced, for instance, by the “practitioner’s language”.¹² Since the city is behavioural, it has a direct interest in how the perception of

unemployment is qualified culturally and by the governing authorities. The attitude and culture surrounding the phenomenon, which is often related to the socialisation of risks in the city of Insurance, is part of the problem. If there is a social risk in the Paternal city, it is the “social risk (...) of dependence”.¹³

It was the attitude of ‘We feel so sorry for ourselves’. We were victims and hence had a right to help. No one said that it could one’s own fault that you had troubles. But the truth is that these people abdicate the responsibility for their own life.¹⁴

The societal acceptance of such attitudes hence bears the risk of spreading a “culture of dependency”¹⁵ or a “provision culture” (*forsørgelseskultur*)¹⁶. In the Paternal city, one is “appalled by a new generation of young people that experiences no connection between work and honey (*yde og nyde*) [and by] the way the breadwinner has become such a vague concept”.¹⁷

Governing: Governing unemployment in the Paternal city, that is, being the *pater*, always involves the danger of misguided kindness and “playing good Samaritans”¹⁸. This resembles the city of Incentives, but in the Paternal city it is not a matter of leading the economic man in inappropriate directions, but simply a matter of inhibiting the unemployed from becoming competent in the same way a child becomes an adult. Contrary to a ‘maternal’ education, the *pater* educates by providing “structure”¹⁹ and “making demands”²⁰ in order for the unemployed to “learn or learn again the rules of the world of work”²¹. The Paternal city is hence characterised by scepticism towards this particular ‘maternal’ state intervention, which serves as a key explanation of unemployment:

The current system, in which the state pays the bill and initiates some polite services, is in reality a weakening of responsibility. It deprives the labour market parties their natural co-responsibility. And it deprives the individual from creating his own existence.²²

It denounces the “all-powerful nannies of the unemployed – employment arrangements, activation services, wage subsidies.”²³ The same goes for simply allocating money to the unemployed:

We do these people a disservice (*bjørnetjeneste*), because you do not get a happier life by being on cash benefits. You do not get more freedom, you do not get more responsibility, you do not get the basis for uprooting your own life in order to move on.²⁴

The employment system is therefore “not supposed to be a comfortable place to be. It is a misunderstanding that employment initiatives should involve lemon pies (*citronmâne*) and wickerwork.”²⁵ An effect of this misunderstood care is that people who would otherwise be able to provide for themselves remain provided for.

I would gladly carry for someone who cannot. However, when I look around, I feel too often that I carry, in fact drag, for a lot of people who, from this point, can do just fine by themselves.²⁶

Benefits should therefore be restricted to “he who cannot provide for himself and who’s provision does not lie with anyone else”.²⁷ Rather than redistribution or compensation, benefits are seen as charity depending on the threshold can/cannot provide, ensuring those who cannot a “worthy and adequate provision”.²⁸

However, the governing in the Paternal city has no *laissez faire* intentions for the unemployed. This, firstly, is because it is never really worthy to be on the ‘cannot’ side of the threshold, and secondly because people will not automatically or voluntarily pass the threshold. Incentives, for instance, “have not shown much power to alter the behaviour of the unemployed” (Mead 1997: 24):

You can neither wave financial carrots nor kick them into work or education by reducing or completely removing their benefits since a lot of people in this group have not the least idea of how to administer money.²⁹

Hence, it proposes a variety of instruments that are enacted to (re)install the responsible behaviour of the unemployed to make the unemployed leave the system “with a straightened backbone”³⁰. Governing, in other words, aims to correct the lack of upbringing and virtue of the unemployed. On the one hand, this process necessitates the participation of the unemployed:

We know it from bringing up our own children. It is not right to not include our children in the cleaning and cooking in our homes.³¹

Most people become proud when their children bring in a Christmas tree they have cut down themselves.³²

On the other hand, the use of coercion is completely integral to bringing up the unemployed. The use of coercion and discipline is firstly a *means* of making the unemployed pass the threshold of incompetent/competent. The instruments of the

Paternal city thus have “an upbringing effect, which makes it clear the municipality is not a gift shop.”³³

Subjects: The justification for the use of coercion relies on the subjectivity of the unemployed. The lack of competence of the unemployed implies that the hierarchy between the unemployed and the authorities is not simply a matter of who is responsible, but a matter of who knows what is best for the unemployed. The unemployed, in the words of one of the contemporary grammarians of the Paternal city, Lawrence M. Mead, have a “gap” between behaviour and intention and are thus in need of direction and supervision (Mead 1997: 6). “We think it’s what you need, and you probably will too”.³⁴ The unemployed person is therefore someone who is to be “persuaded”³⁵.

I think that coercion can be good and necessary. Some people need a kick, to be forced to try new things, to test their possibilities in new contexts. We know that pacification can be invalidating and if a person has arrived at the conviction about herself that she is not good at anything, we cannot simply accept that and say: Well! That’s up to you! And we cannot simply leave behind all those people who cannot find meaning and quality in their lives of public assistance and TV shows. Being one of these experts I actually think that I sometimes know best and must try to stop an unhappy comedown which the person considered cannot see right now.³⁶

In the Paternal city, coercion is part of the process of persuasion:

One has to realise that changes only come if you make an effort yourself. How can such a change of attitude be implemented? How should the citizens (that is those who are leaning too much on the state) learn this? The answer is: the requirement of quid pro quo in order to receive public aid. (...) The individual must get an offer he can’t refuse (if he wants to survive). With such a Sicilian offer, well-known from the mafia, the beneficiary will, at the same time, experience the dignity that comes from making demands on someone.³⁷

It is the same behavioural gap or false self-consciousness of the unemployed that behavioural economics have applied to evaluate labour market policies (e.g. Babcock et al. 2012; Holmlund 2015). Behavioural economics sees policies of incentives as relying on the capacities of economic man and thus inadequate since the lack of self-control of the unemployed leads to “inconsistent preferences”, which makes them “procrastinate (...) against their own, long-run self-interest” (Babcock et al. 2012: 4). The result is

“potential conflicts between an unemployed individual’s current and future selves”, which again “generate a situation where stronger work and job search requirements that appear overly paternalistic in the usual model of *homo economics* may actually benefit the program participants themselves by helping them overcome self-control problems” (Ibid.).

Hence the use of coercion is a means to emancipate the unemployed from their behavioural deficiencies, which, evidently, are especially predominant among young people:

The youth unemployment is one of our greatest societal problems and now we have come to a point where we have to put the whip into service. There are some young people who need a caring push in order to get away from the computer screen, and, after all, we would like to avoid that they end up as long-term unemployed, as we saw in the 80s.³⁸

Now, secondly, besides being a means, coercion (and the discipline it implies) is also a kind of *common societal good* in the Paternal city in the sense that a stable society necessitates respect for the authorities and discipline since “requiring something from people is the implication of respecting them. The day we don’t make requirements, we don’t respect people.”³⁹ This relational good is currently lacking:

The young ones are not at all geared for school, they have no discipline, no respect and a wrong perspective on the teacher; for them, the teacher is the enemy.⁴⁰

Governing in the Paternal city hereby becomes a signal to the rest of the population that exemplifies the authority and worthiness of the responsible employed, and a sign of respect of this hierarchy by “sending a signal that requirements are imposed.”⁴¹

The citizens see that the young do something for their cash benefit. At the same time, the young see that it is worth doing something for the municipality. There is mutual respect in this.⁴²

Governing is also about teaching the unemployed a set of disciplined skills that are recognised on the labour market (and in society), such as “learning to get up on time”.⁴³ Being responsible, autonomous and independent is thus not a free state in which the individual does as he pleases. This latter type of behaviour, often associated with ’68, is criticised and almost ridiculed, for instance as representing the guy who “deep down was the happy, carefree and bright bohemian, who just wanted his benefit without doing more than strictly required.”⁴⁴ Likewise “there is plenty of independence in Maren and the

other young ones; by contrast, they all miss the consciousness of the necessity of working in order to survive.”⁴⁵ The worthiness of being disciplined and respectful is also what provides the right to become a citizen:

There are no longer any bounds, one touches here the limit of ‘forbidden to forbid’ (*interdit d’interdire*) which my generation had showcased. Today, when the unemployed topple into the minimum income support system, they are provided with the means to survive, not to be a citizen. Since Tocqueville it is well known that assistance leads to enslavement. Society must provide the means, possibly by coercion, to put them back in the domain of citizenship.⁴⁶

Citizenship is, then, not an *a priori* right as in the city of Redistribution, but something that is acquired by showing competence and respecting what is forbidden. In a democratic setting, this installs a peculiar dynamic where the citizens, i.e., those behaving responsible and supporting themselves, can on the one hand criticise (and govern) those who do not, while on the other hand be inclined to respect the way things are. The paternal subjects “don’t ask for help”⁴⁷, they rather say, “It’s okay because it’s my own fault so I have to learn it the hard way”⁴⁸.

While the virtues of the Paternal city may appear archaic, the basic premise of a behavioural gap and a subject with no self-control can also be found in contemporary techniques of social work that aim at ‘empowering’ or encouraging the ‘self-mastery’ of the unemployed.¹ For example, it is important that the unemployed are “met by positive demands and expectations, which can strengthen their self-esteem and ambitions.”⁴⁹ Further, the self-perception of the unemployed in these techniques is crucial:

I was walking around feeling terribly sorry for myself. (...) Once I defeated my fear of flying and made the parachute descent with the others, I said to myself that if I could do this, I could do anything. I want a job as quickly as possible and now I also believe I can get one.⁵⁰

The Paternal city hence provides room for the identification of a variety of behavioural “gaps” that load the unemployed with incompetence.

¹ For analyses of such techniques in social policies, see Cruikshank (1993); Villadsen (2007).

CITY OF INVESTMENT

As in the city of Incentives, unemployment in the city of Investment is structural. However, it is not (primarily) an issue of a lack of incentives to work, but is rather caused by historical changes in the economy, which is becoming knowledge-based and changing the conditions of the labour market and society in general.ⁱ In the city of Investment, “skills” are predominantly the precondition for accessing the labour market, i.e., to become “employable”.⁵¹

This raises a problem of justice permeating this city. The necessity of education and skills tends to “exclude” a number of people and groups in society from participating in the “community” of the labour market.⁵² The aim then is to ensure that everyone has the possibility to acquire the skills needed and in this way create a “society in which together we strive for equal opportunities for all.”⁵³ It is a “collective responsibility” that “the nation must invest in order to enable all those who live from benefits or odd jobs to finally get their heads above water, to make up new projects, to rediscover their dignity.”⁵⁴ In the city of Investment, “human beings are able to do more than we get to see immediately”⁵⁵ and investing is really about showing “that there is a need” for the unemployed; “a believe that [he] can do more than we get to see just now”⁵⁶. Rather than a logic of “assistance”⁵⁷ composed of a “safety net”, governing should be based on “emancipation”⁵⁸ in the shape of a “trampoline”⁵⁹ or a “stepping stone”⁶⁰, “enhancing people’s life chances”⁶¹.

The guiding principles are not far from Rawls’ maxim that “those who are at the same level of talent and ability, and have the same willingness to use them, should have the same prospects of success regardless of their initial place in the social system” (Rawls 1999: 63). These ideas tend to align with Giddens’ “social investment strategies” (Giddens 1998) that have paved the way for a vast literature that addresses how and when to invest in “human capital” in order to enhance opportunities and capabilities of the population (e.g. Esping-Andersen 2002; Esping-Andersen 2007; Abrahamson 2010; Jensen 2010; Taylor-Gooby 2008; Morel et al. 2012; Bonoli 2013). Key to this literature is also the diagnosis of a post-industrial society in which knowledge plays a pivotal role in a globalised economy (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1999). In the city of Investment, this

ⁱ Cf. Andersson (2009)

results in a labour market in which “almost no jobs are created for people without education”⁶² and with “intensified requirements to the qualifications of the labour force.”⁶³ Even the “big bosses recognise that if oil and raw materials rarefy, their principal concern will be to find and fasten human resources.”⁶⁴ Hence, the biggest problem of “tomorrow’s society” is a “lack of education”.⁶⁵ This demand for improving skills is “lifelong”, so working life must “oscillate” between periods of work and education.⁶⁶

Enhancing the opportunities and employability of the marginalised results in a win-win situation for society: socially, it hinders the “polarisation between groups” and “society from breaking down”⁶⁷ by replacing “the class struggle” with a “struggle of ranks” (*lutte des places*).⁶⁸ It “finally effaces the social division that undermines national cohesion.”⁶⁹ Economically, upskilling “strengthens employment and competitiveness in the long run”⁷⁰ since “competitiveness is not just about taxes and wages but also about a good primary school, education for the children of blue-collar workers, research that makes us smarter, an efficient public sector, training of the jobless”⁷¹. Furthermore, although investments are “costly, the investment is small compared to a life on benefits and enhanced risk of disease and social problems”⁷², since the “the B-team” may not “put up with being invisible”⁷³. Without any viable opportunities, they may “mark society by means of vandalism, violence or threats”.⁷⁴

Qualification and test: Another dimension in which the city of Investment is sociological is in its qualification of the reality of unemployment. Society is generally taken to be divided between those that are included (in the labour market) and those that are more or less permanently excluded while living “alongside society”⁷⁵. Hence society “does not live up to (...) the principle of equal opportunities”.⁷⁶ It is an “hourglass society in which the dividing line between those on top and the lost generations that are expelled in the bottom becomes more and more pronounced”⁷⁷ and a “waste of a lot of resources, both human and economic.”⁷⁸

The fact that certain groups have not acquired the skills needed and hence have become more or less permanently “excluded” or “marginalised” from the labour market can be explained by the undesirable cumulative dynamics within and between social groups. The groups located outside the labour market are both *excluded* by other groups and by

the governing of the welfare state, while they also unwillingly *exclude* themselves. With regards to the former, the division between an “A- and B-team”⁷⁹ has created a dynamic of a “two speed society”⁸⁰ in which the A-team (those partaking in or are close to the labour market) prevent the B-team from accessing the rights and means it takes to integrate.⁸¹ Part of this dynamic is also the ability of the labour market (and employers) to include these groups; what is sometimes referred to as the “spacious labour market”.⁸² For instance, the recruitment strategies of corporations (“the perpetual couple of CV and job interview”) tend to invoke certain “stereotypes” of the unemployed as “unemployable”.⁸³ Further, if there are investments, a “long term stay on benefits can be restraining as well as marginalising”⁸⁴. Concerning the latter, marginalised groups or individuals are the product of dynamics and “laws of social heritage”:

Children of winners rarely become losers. Children of losers rarely become winners.⁸⁵

Echoing Bourdieu and Passeron’s findings in *Les héritiers* (1964), this implies that there is a recognition of the inadequacy of (formal) access to education to ensure equal opportunities.

In relation to the issue of social heritage evidence, “40 pct. of all young recipients of unemployment benefits are children of parents having themselves lived on benefits and when it comes to immigrants the share is even higher.”⁸⁶ Those “with ‘benefits parents’ have a 3.6 times higher risk of themselves becoming recipients of benefits.”⁸⁷ Particular groups thus form particular risks, which means that the city allows for an immense and plural categorisation of the unemployed (see below, Subjects).

Another way of proving the lack of equal opportunities is by showing a relation between a lack of skills and risk of unemployment.

The number is way, way too high when every tenth young person is without job and education. They are wasting valuable years of their lives by sitting at home.⁸⁸

Young people who do not get an upper secondary education have a significantly higher risk of ending up far from the labour market. The risk of ending up on benefits is ten times higher.⁸⁹

The “spaciousness” of the labour market is also documented by, for example, showing that “only one third of corporations have hired people in subsidised jobs”⁹⁰, or by showing the degree of “the reluctance to deal with” the way the labour market “disqualifies” particular groups such as people with disabilities or the aged.⁹¹

The qualification in terms of risks and opportunities prepares the governing of unemployment for tests. Whereas the notion of “active” also plays an important role in the city of Mobility in the sense of movement and work, it relates to the question of how to prioritise and “activate expenses” in the city of Investment.⁹² It is in this sense governing is either “passive” or “active” and always aims towards a “utilisation that is more effective and active”.⁹³ In these cases, government expenditure should no longer be “considered expenses but investments”.⁹⁴ In the end,

they won’t cost society a thing, among other things because the preventive strategy against long term unemployment works and saves a lot of money – in other words, there is no longer the need for spending as much money in order to raise people up from the swamp.⁹⁵

The policy test is thus essentially asking whether a given arrangement or policy is active, that is, whether it “enhances the opportunities for the unemployed to become employed.”⁹⁶ Is the unemployed person “given better opportunities for perfecting her skills and hereby improving her position on the labour market”?⁹⁷

The question one absolutely has to ask is: has the instrument “improved their employability”?⁹⁸

The test can be mobilised to compare the effect of various instruments, for instance, what does an enrolment to a particular up-skilling programme do to “the chances of finding a job in the 21 months following his enrolment?”⁹⁹, but also to compare countries, such as France vs. the Nordic countries, in how much of the labour force participates in training.¹⁰⁰

Governing: What does it take to govern in the city of investment and “combat against exclusion”?¹⁰¹ First of all, the governor must know the risks and opportunities, that is, the employability of the population, in order to “prevent”¹⁰² these negative dynamics from growing. The “hard core of unemployment” must be attacked by getting the long term unemployed people’s “feet back on the ladder in order to avoid the core from forming by detecting very fast the least employable.”¹⁰³ Secondly, the governor must also be able to disregard (and sacrifice) immediate effects of instruments, whether these are redistributive or budgetary, and think “long-term”, just “like when investing in shares”.¹⁰⁴

Thirdly, since each unemployed person has a particular set of (or lack of) skills, governing must “personalise”¹⁰⁵, “individualise”¹⁰⁶, “target”¹⁰⁷ and “tailor”¹⁰⁸ its instruments. In the city of Investment, there “is no standard menu, no fast-food for returning to employment, but a personalised action plan”¹⁰⁹.ⁱ The governor, embodied in the social worker, hence “listens to the needs of each individual.”¹¹⁰ This takes a “systemic effort” in which “all good capacities work together.”¹¹¹ Accordingly, the effort must not only be “specialist” based on “genuine social work”, but also “interdisciplinary” across “occupational groups and administrative departments so that case workers, teachers and health visitors are not sitting in each their silo speaking each their language.”¹¹² Finally, the governor, when listening to the needs of the unemployed, should have his eyes on opportunities and “resources rather than limitations”.¹¹³ It is about “making the dreams come alive”.¹¹⁴ Hence, although, the unemployed are not really to blame, the social worker ought not to “feel sorry for” them.¹¹⁵

Bad governing is “unproductive”¹¹⁶ public social spending. Although it does not exclude the possibility of insurance and re-distributional instruments, these should always be subordinated to “active” spending.¹¹⁷ Inappropriate governing does not respect these priorities. Government should “invest in human resources rather than repair.”¹¹⁸ Attempts of “cutting the cake in more equally sized pieces”¹¹⁹ are hence faced with great scepticism, since it is a “delusion to think that the public sector can pick up and give the excluded a decent and full life if only they gave them sufficiently high benefits.”¹²⁰ Likewise, the city denounces the way unemployed people are “sluiced from one futile activation offer to the other without any education or life qualifying perspective.”¹²¹ Since the problems of unemployment lie in the way society is divided, and because the city of Investment is one of win-wins, it is also sceptical towards the role of unions and employers’ organisations since they do not care much about the marginalised.

What calls for an even more multifarious governing is the variation in potential. Whereas the necessity of a “personalised” treatment makes the city sceptical towards perspectives that do not pay attention to the individual situation of the unemployed, it is intuitively open towards compromising with cities in order to target and tailor whatever is needed for a particular group. The tailored treatment may involve rights that are universal in principle, but whether the unemployed individual is granted those rights is conditional

ⁱ This resembles what Robert Castel has termed a “logic of positive discrimination” (Castel 1995: 676).

on her specific needs and situation. This is why the first obligation of the unemployed is often to “participate in the evaluation of her professional capacities.”¹²²

The right to investment hence takes a peculiar form. Whereas, for instance, in the city of Insurance the *right* is conditional on the *duty* to pay a membership fee, the duty is not really a duty in the city of Investment. It is taken as self-evident that the unemployed will take advantage of the right (to investment), for the sake of society as well as for the sake of the unemployed since, as noted earlier, helping the unemployed to realise their potential is in essence emancipatory. When governors speak of “rights and duties” in the city of Investment, the two things are aligned, or rather fused and rectified towards the joint emancipatory goal of increasing the employability of each unemployed person and the population in general:

This is the essence of right and duty. We give them an obligation to get an education. Conversely they get the right to complete an education.¹²³

From society we must meet them with the clear message that our expectations are high. They must begin an education. This is what we will introduce a right and duty to.¹²⁴

In this sense, the investment in human capital establishes a creditor/debtor relationship in which the unemployed is indebted, also morally, to the investor and “expected” to act accordingly.¹ This is perhaps why coercion is not alien but rather integral to the governing, and statements like the following seem self-evident in this city:

We are doing the young a disservice if we are not hard on them. It is disabling in itself being on passive benefits. As a young person, your competences and opportunities are weakened by being on benefits.¹²⁵

The Paternal city also speaks of competence; however, it does not refer to the acquisition of skills (necessary to compete on the knowledge-based labour market), but rather the capacity of self-control. Hence, coercion answers a different problem in the city of Investment. It is a necessary means to make sure the unemployed firstly accept, and secondly manage, the investment properly. For instance, the authority has the possibility of “suspending the unemployment benefit, if the jobseeker does not pursue the training that is offered to him with diligence.”¹²⁶

The coercive measures are not only targeted at the unemployed individual:

¹ This point is inspired by Lazzarato’s work on debt (Lazzarato 2011: 15ff; Charbonneau and Hansen 2014).

Too many young people are decoupled from the machinery of society. Therefore, we think that it is necessary to introduce mandatory youth education programs for all young people.¹²⁷

They are mandatory in order to “send a signal to the young and their parents that you do not get around getting an education.”¹²⁸ A “penal action” thus “may be used to give the very young who think the benefit system is a municipal cash dispenser a quick fright so they understand the value of education.”¹²⁹

Subjects: The subjects in the city of Investment find themselves with various degrees of potential that are also realised to various degrees. For society there is the problem of how to handle the unequal distribution of potential, but for the unemployed it is really only about realising these potentials by “learning”¹³⁰ and acquiring skills. The unemployed as well as the employed should always “become smarter”, and hence it is wiser, in the long run, “to work for a low salary in a place where you learn something, than working for a high salary with something that is of no use later.”¹³¹ A worthy individual is thus not only someone with skills and employability, but also someone with an inexhaustible will to “acquire new skills”.¹³²

The term is rarely uttered in the cases, but *human capital* (cf. Giddens 1998: 117) is nonetheless illustrative of the value of skills in the city of Investment.ⁱ Investing in any kind of capital implies an expectation of accumulation that is sacrificed in the present but gained in the future; in this case the development of skills. It also illustrates the way the investment is two-fold. The investor, either the state or a company, comes from the outside, but it is up to the person being invested in to activate the investment. The unemployed person should thus see herself as a kind of enterprise constantly “seizing chances”¹³³ for accumulating capital and improving the chances of selling its commodity, namely her skills. It is in this sense that the unemployed individual is turned into “an actor in the construction of his own project.”¹³⁴

The individual and personalised governing of the city of Investment is closely related to the way the degree of potential as well as the degree of realisation varies. The unemployed “constitute a more and more fragmented population with a variety of paths

ⁱ The equivalent term of “human resources” is, however, widely used in RSA, and LAAP

and needs.”¹³⁵ This includes “young people that have missed the beginning of their lives, professionally unqualified people 50 years old and above, mothers solely raising their children, former inmates who want to start a new life.”¹³⁶ Some are capable of getting an education, others “have substantive abuse problems or mental illnesses”.¹³⁷ The fragmentation of unemployed people entails that in order to ensure equal opportunities, they should be treated *differently*, and ideally as differently as possible. The city of Investment is hence more willing than any of the other cities to divide and classify the unemployed according to the immense variables that may have hindered the realisation of their full potential.

CITY OF MOBILITY

The city of Mobility concentrates all attention to the question of (in)activity. It “encourages activity”¹ while denouncing everything that “keeps [persons] in inactivity”.² The ‘I’ (*Insertion*) in RMI is passive, while the ‘A’ (*Activité*) in RSA is active, and this is what makes all the difference.”³ The city of Mobility hence echoes and reignites the Calvinist ethic to whom “[n]ot leisure and enjoyment, but only activity serves to increase the glory of God”; however, ‘god’ is replaced here with the aim of society’s needs, such as “maintaining social cohesion, that is, avoiding the whole of harmful consequences of inactivity: the despair, the social violence and the insecurity.”⁴ The most worthy state of activity is work. “The exit route is work, again work, always work.”⁵ Regaining activity is a matter of “getting a place within the community of workers.”⁶

The principle idea [...] is that as few young people as possible must take root on public benefits, that everybody can contribute with something, and that it would do every child good to experience their parents saying ‘I am going to work’ with pride in their voices.⁷

Mobility underlies the common good of activity as the necessary capacity of the labour force to move itself to where the work is located.

Qualification and test: This precondition of mobility qualifies and problematises the labour market, and the policies surrounding it, in terms of flexibility and barriers. A policy

¹ (Weber 2003: 157). On the protestant view of the unemployed specifically, see Zoberman (2011: 89f).

could hence be justified for “accelerating the flow of resumptions of employment by the unemployed.”⁸ The mobility of the labour force is deemed increasingly important due to structural changes affecting the labour market. For instance, “globalisation does not kill jobs, but it imposes changes and adaptations.”⁹

The full employment we promise does not resemble the one of *‘les trente glorieuses’*, with permanent contracts and working full-time. It is becoming much more precarious along with the development of temporary contracts and, recently, of part-time work.¹⁰

The mobility and “flexibility of the labour force” can be limited by a number of barriers, such as “means of transport, health condition or difficulties of childcare”.¹¹ Policies are hence *tested* in terms of their ability to enable flow, or “rotation”¹², in the labour force and thus reduce “frictional unemployment”¹³ while avoiding “bottleneck problems”¹⁴.

The goal is to galvanise the labour market by privileging the adjustment of offer and demand.¹⁵

However, contrary to the city of Incentives, mobility is not a simple matter of making work pay, but of “making transitions pay” (Schmid 1998: 10). Hence, one cannot “rely on the market to resolve the dysfunctions mechanically.”¹⁶

Governing: Due to the variety of barriers, it takes government intervention to match the supply and demand of labour effectively. One example is the labour exchange services, where the unemployed were brought into contact with employers.ⁱ Governing, in this case, aims to “match businesses’ and public authorities’ need for labour.”¹⁷ This entails providing job offers to the unemployed, accelerating the job searching process and making it more efficient, and knowing the needs of employers to avoid “mismatches”.¹⁸ Secondly, governing implies ensuring flow among those already on the labour market, hereby making it accessible, for example, by means of “job rotation arrangements”¹⁹, “leave-of-absence schemes”²⁰, promoting temporary work arrangements and child care provisions, as well as investments in transportation and infrastructure. Finally, governing implies making sure that the unemployed are “at the disposal (*stå til rådighed*) of the labour market”²¹. A prerequisite for this is that the unemployed are “active”. This is important because of a kind of self-reinforcing dynamic that relates to being passive:

ⁱ On the historical origin and dissemination of the exchange services, see Edling (2008); Garraty (1978: 130).

There is a great risk that they are left to themselves and get stuck on cash benefits. The idea with the cash benefit system was to create a springboard for people, but we have to recognise that some of the threads in this trampoline have become tripwires. We have to get people off cash benefits as soon as possible, otherwise there is a risk they take root.²²

For this reason it is imperative “to stir the cooking pot of unemployment.”²³ “Activating” the unemployed involves making sure they are “active”²⁴, “positive”²⁵ or “serious”²⁶ in their job searches and “efficiently and permanently looking for a job”²⁷. However, if there are, for whatever reason, no jobs for the unemployed, being active might as well entail working in “artificial jobs”²⁸ within the benefit system.

For the citizen this makes more sense than mandatory job applications that are never read. It’s the opportunity for including, qualifying and creating an active citizenship.²⁹

Whatever the instrument, the governing of the city of Mobility thus aims at “rehabilitating work”.³⁰

Whereas, for instance, the explanatory logic of the city of Incentives is predominantly structural and the Paternal logic predominantly individualistic, the city of Mobility, like the city of Investment, is unsettled on the question. However, as in the city of Investment, the handling of the structural causes inevitably magnifies explanations that point towards the unemployed individual since below the structural barriers lurks the issue of idleness; the (often hypothetical) question of whether an unemployed person “is willing to take on a job”³¹. If he is on the right side of the threshold, i.e., one of “those who want” a job, governing is a matter of “more targeted actions in order to find the job openings”³² and reinsure him that “society is held liable to provide [him] a job.”³³ However, if he is not, then the inactivity of the unemployed person becomes an occasion for punishment since it breaches society’s common good of activity and work:

The necessity of accepting a job returns to the central measure of national solidarity.³⁴

The rules concerning being available (*rådighedsregler*) must be tightened so as to make it impossible to avoid work and hereby avoid solidarity (*fællesskabet*).³⁵

Coercion thus becomes a means to “fight the attitude: ‘I don’t want to take a vacant job’”³⁶. Hence, it is “normal to sanction unemployed persons (...) who’s job search is not genuine and serious.”³⁷ The threshold marking the possibility of forcing the unemployed to work for his benefit here serves a double purpose. It both punishes the unemployed for inadequate job search efforts, and it emancipates him by making him active:

It has fundamental value to work. We meet people with trust and, to begin with, we give them half a year to find a job themselves. After that, they must work for their benefit.³⁸

As in the 'protestant ethic', work in the city of Mobility has this ambiguous character as both emancipating and a sacrifice of (immediate) pleasures, such as relaxation or even pay.

Subjects: The least worthy of all subjects is the idle – the antithesis to the active. He is struck by “the danger of relaxation” and as such his “unwillingness to work is symptomatic of the lack of grace”.ⁱ Although the idle person, who “is not set for work”, may be a minority, “it’s a minority that shocks.”³⁹ They are those who “prefer to laze around at society’s expense (*regning*).”⁴⁰ He also “lacks professional flexibility as well as a desire to travel to where the job is.”⁴¹ He can, in other words, be “recalcitrant”⁴²; but in general his laziness results in immobility.

Too many recipients live their lives as Robinson Crusoe stranded in a two-roomed apartment with TV dinners and shitty TV.⁴³

If the unworthy unemployed are lazy, the worthy unemployed person is in fact not “unemployed”, but a “job seeker” (*chercheur d’emploi*)⁴⁴ or “available” (*ledig*)⁴⁵. As opposed to the subjects of Insurance, he is a “risk taker” (*riscophile*) rather than a “riscophobic”⁴⁶. This implies that although there may be structural dangers and limits to the mobility of the unemployed, these matters should not occupy the mind of the unemployed subject, since it can do nothing but making him less flexible. The worthy unemployed person is above all someone who is willing to do (whatever kind of) work.

I like it, it gets me moving.⁴⁷

It is almost of no importance what I do as long as I have my hands full. I don’t want to laze the day away.⁴⁸

The unemployed should be “proactive” by “searching uninvited”⁴⁹ and by “appearing in person”⁵⁰ at the potential employer, as well as “flexible” by “being ready to move to another part of the country to get a job and take a job in a supermarket even if you want to work in a clothes shop.”⁵¹ The governor in the city of Mobility, hence, becomes

ⁱ (Weber 2003: 157, 159)

“steely when someone questions whether a jobless academic should clear up the woods or whether an immigrant woman give a hand in a public kitchen”:

I have nothing but scorn for those excuses. If you are prepared for the labour market (*arbejdsmarkedet*) you must have a job that is of use for society.⁵²

In the city of Mobility, there is thus very little sympathy with the city of Investment’s respect for skills.

CONCLUSION: ANALYTICAL GRID AND CRITICAL MAP

The grammar of the seven cities is condensed and structured in Table 2 below. It outlines the key principles, their ways of qualifying unemployment and testing policies, how it should be governed and when and why coercion can be necessary and legitimate; and, finally, what the qualities of the unemployed subject are and towards which state of emancipation he should be led.

What can be concluded from the grammar of cities of unemployment presented above? First of all it implicates that there is a plurality of repertoires of evaluation that share some degree of legitimacy in contemporary debates in France and Denmark in the sense that they can be mobilised in criticism and justification. This says little, if anything, about the *content* of the transformations that the governing of unemployment is undergoing. However, in itself, it says a lot about the *dynamic* of the legitimization of reforms. It indicates that ideas in public debates do not simply work as a coherent set of norms, paradigms or “background ideas” that are taken-for-granted throughout society and hence inform and shape policy changes in a quasi-unconscious manner.ⁱ Furthermore, it challenges existing typologies of transformationsⁱⁱ by *firstly* showing there is a greater plurality and a larger degree of co-existence and tensions in the processes of transformations; *secondly* that the repertoire of ideas is present in both France and Denmark and is thus indifferent to national borders and does not designate a specific deterministic path for a country; and *thirdly* that the justified use of coercion cannot be confined to a singular approach, but rather appears in all cities.

ⁱ See chapter 1, p. 6f.

ⁱⁱ See chapter 1, p. 4.

The second conclusion is that the grammar of the cities bring to light the politics and morality embedded in the justification, as well as the governing, of the unemployed. It shows that there is a lot more at stake in the debates than masking interests and dodgy intentions, or simply finding pragmatic solutions to existing problems. What is at stake are substantially different ideas about what society and people are made of and in what direction both should be heading in terms of governing and behaviour. The morality of the cities therefore not only leads to seven right and most rational ways to govern unemployment, it also leads to seven paths towards the emancipation of the unemployed. However, the politics and morality of the cities is not confined to the phenomena of unemployment; by qualifying unemployment and the unemployed, the cities simultaneously qualify the worthiness of the labour market and the engagement of the employee.

The third conclusion the grammar highlights is how emancipation and coercion are not necessarily contradictory, but rather reciprocal. Coercion, in the many forms it takes in the governing of unemployment, is perhaps increasingly seen as integral to governing. Coercion, in other words, is not a phenomenon that is hidden behind ideologies – it is *legitimised* – and this is one of the reasons why immanent critiques of current reforms for being coercive simply tend to miss their mark. In no other place is the issue of coercion more clear than when actors are forced to evaluate concrete problems, instruments and situations, which is the case when it comes to the data used in this thesis. By contrast, ‘grammarians’ or intellectuals are usually decoupled from hands-on and everyday governing and are therefore not forced to deal with the issue of coercion. For the same reason, an analysis of the intellectual history of ideas or ‘governmentalities’ of unemployment would have difficulties grasping this issue. Furthermore, they would most likely overlook cities that do not currently have strong intellectual support, such as Mobility, Insurance, Paternal and Demand, even though they play an important role *in practice*. Finally, the grammar is a tool, or rather a tactical map, for “those who want to struggle” (Foucault 2007: 3). A map that can be used to navigate *within* the ‘map’ or to clarify what it takes to think *beyond*.

Table 2 Cities of unemployment

| Principle | Demand | Redistribution | Insurance | Incentives | Paternal | Investment | Mobility |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| | <i>Business cycle</i> | <i>Material equality</i> | <i>Compensation</i> | <i>Incentives</i> | <i>Competence</i> | <i>Equal opportunity</i> | <i>Activity</i> |
| Qualification | Stagnation | Struggle between interests, distribution of work and property | Collective responsibility, a matter of chance (un)luck | Unemployment traps | Irresponsible behaviour, absent societal upbringing | Lack of social investment, (un)equal opportunities | Barriers on labour market, insufficient activation of unemployed |
| <i>Test, whether policies are...</i> | ... leading to job creation? | ... increasing or decreasing material inequality? | ... compensating persons when unemployed? | ... generating incentives to stay unemployed? | ... making persons competent? | ... increasing the employability of the labour force? | ... making the labour force mobile and active? |
| Governing | Boost demand through public intervention to achieve full employment | Strengthen social citizenship through redistribution. Share profit and work | Collectivising and de-politicising social risks by granting security. Ensure solidarity | Ensure incentives to work, maximise supply of labour, society that makes work pay | Setting requirements, discipline, increase responsibility, charity | Investing in skills of the unemployed. Reintegrate into society | Maximise and ease transitions, activity and adaptability |
| <i>Coercion needed to...</i> | ... intervening in jobs creation | ... socialise property, counter greed and self-interest | ... ensure solidarity, stop fraud | ... ensure sufficient incentives | ... to induce self-awareness | ... to signal the worth of education | ... availability of work force |
| Unemployed subject | <i>Consumer</i> | <i>Citizen</i> | <i>Victim</i> | <i>Economic man</i> | <i>Dependent</i> | <i>Unemployable</i> | <i>Stranded</i> |
| | Willing to work, exemplary consumer | In risk of exploitation, Disenchanted | Exposed to an accident | Rationally choosing not to work | no self-control/ self-awareness | lack of human capital due to social heritage | Inflexible, in danger of taking root, lazy |
| <i>Emancipation</i> | Consumption | Dignity | Security | Optportunism | Self-control | Release potential | Activity |

Part II

Tipping points

The preceding chapter skewed how the cities of unemployment, as repertoires of evaluation with a distinct grammar, provide the equipment to qualify unemployment and the unemployed and for justifying and criticising the governing of unemployed. In general, the preceding chapter, for the sake of presenting the grammar most concisely and systematically, disregarded the dynamics *between* the cities; the way they are tied together in compromises and integrated into concrete instruments and institutions. In the coming chapters of parts II and III, I analyse the relative weight and worthiness of cities in contemporary transformations. I thus re-read the material of the four different cases of key contemporary reforms in France and Denmark to address how the cities have been used by political actors to put policies to the test and to justify changes, and how these tests result in compromises and finally sedimentation in the form of concrete changes in the institutions and instruments governing the unemployed.

The grammar of the seven cities is indispensable in the sense that it enables me to bring to light the complex dynamics and tensions that are unfolding in the debates and sediment into governing instruments. This is not a matter of displaying complexity simply for the sake of nuance – a quest that is currently haunting the social sciences (Healy, 2016). Rather, the aim is to show how the dynamics *between* the cities is, in itself, key to understand how reforms are legitimised and what the consequences are for the governing of the unemployed. I show how the reforms cannot be understood from the dominance and replacement of one paradigm or set of ideas by another, but only by the way a plurality of repertoires interrelates, i.e., the co-existence of a plurality of ideas as well as of instruments. This not only provides a more nuanced overview of how ideas shape and transform the governing of unemployment, but a clearer one too. Since the first welfare typologies (Esping-Andersen 1990), policies and instruments have been conflated with ideas. The concepts of repertoires of evaluation and cities of unemployment analytically forces us to not take the presence of an idea for granted by the identification of a certain instrument. For instance, just because unemployment benefit levels are (relatively) high in Denmark, this does not necessarily imply that the city of Redistribution is dominating. This conclusion is based on a static view that overlooks how ideas *gradually* shape the governing by qualifying in a certain way. Rather than providing blueprints, it says that if we want to improve the governing, we should add this, do more of this, less of that, adjust this, include those, etc. This will be shown in the following chapter, but to illustrate the conceptual problem with existing typologies, the cities of unemployment can be compared to Bonoli's "four types of

active labour market policy” (Bonoli 2013: 24). Bonoli distinguishes between 1) Incentive reinforcement (e.g., strengthening work incentives, participation in work schemes), 2) Employment assistance (e.g., job subsidies, placement, job search programmes), 3) Occupation (e.g., job creation schemes, work experience programmes) and 4) Upskilling (e.g., vocational training). This static categorisation, however, has difficulties in explaining *how* transformations take place. Instead, it assumes that Continental countries such as France follow the ‘occupation’ path and the Nordic countries such as Denmark follow the up-skilling part. The following chapters show that this is a rather substantial simplification that neglects the co-existence of all these instruments as well as how the use of coercion plays a crucial role in both reforms.

Part II will zoom in on two exemplary reforms that mark what that one could term *tipping points* in the governing of unemployment in France and Denmark. The reform of PARE in France has been described as “the most significant reform of French unemployment insurance since 1958” (Vail, 2008: 344), causing an “inversion of logic” in the system (Villiers, 2003: 110) and generalising the “logic of activation” (Clegg, 2007: 607; Palier, 2005: 139), while the reform of LAAP in Denmark has been characterised as a “track change” (*sporskifte*) (Torfing 2004), setting the scene for future reforms. The reforms mark tipping points since they attune the overall problematisation of unemployment and coming reform process towards the ‘active society’, although this has been running more smoothly in Denmark than in France, which will come as no surprise after reading the following two chapters.

While the changes from both reforms are more cumulative than paradigmatic, they nonetheless mark tipping points by requalifying the unemployed as soon as they are entitled to unemployment insurance. With the adjustments and new instruments of both reforms, the unemployed subject is henceforth only a victim, in the sense given by the city of Insurance, at the margins and basically only at the moment he becomes unemployed. This is clear in the way both reforms introduce continuous testing of the behaviour of the unemployed, qualifying, disqualifying and requalifying him in the Paternal, Investment, Mobility and Paternal cities. This paradoxical marginal position of the city of Insurance in governing the unemployment insurance system in both France and Denmark makes the system more similar to the governing of the uninsured unemployed. Once entitled, the insured unemployed are basically unemployed like everyone else.

Thus, along this path, it seems no coincidence that since the reforms both the French and Danish unemployment insurance schemes have become increasingly aligned with the systems of the uninsured. In France, the local offices (*Assedics*) managed by the social partners were merged in 2009 with the state governed offices (ANPE) into a one-stop agency for all the unemployed; the so-called *pôle emploi* (Eydoux and Béraud 2011: 41). One of the goals with the merger was precisely to reduce “segmentation” in the treatment of the unemployed (Ibid: 53). One of the implications was that all employment subsidies and activation programmes were to be provided by *pôle emploi* to every jobseeker according to her personal characteristics and needs, rather than to her “compensatory status” (Ibid.: 131). Furthermore, since 2008 the unemployed, whether insured or uninsured, have been subject to the same system of categorisation that took its departure in the instruments introduced by the PARE. All unemployed people would thus be assigned a job search profile that divided them up into “type 1” with an “accelerated job search” for immediately employable people, “type 2” with an “active search” for those with an intermediate profile and “type 3” with an “accompanied job search” for not (immediately) employable people (Beraud and Eydoux 2009b: 8-9). In Denmark, the job placement offices (*Arbejdsformidlingen*) for the insured unemployed were merged in 2007 with the local municipal offices for the uninsured unemployed in *jobcentres* (Christensen and Petersen 2014). The reform thus decoupled the social partners (most notably the unions) from the organisation of the governing of the insured unemployed (Larsen and Mailand 2007: 122-123). Similar to France, the merging has resulted in aligning rules and categorisations of the insured and uninsured (Christensen and Petersen 2014: 631)

The chapters in parts II and III all follow the same basic structure. Each chapter begins by providing a historical presentation of the context of the reforms. Through readings of secondary literature, the aim of these sections is to understand the previous sedimentation of cities of unemployment in the French and Danish contribution-based systems of unemployment insurance. Despite their brief character, the sections clearly show that even before the reforms, a plurality of cities of unemployment was found in the systems. The ideas justifying changes, in other words, did not appear like a bolt from the blue. The sections are followed by a systematic analysis of the coded data material from French and Danish newspapers, with a particular focus on the mobilising of cities of unemployment. The mobilising, including critique of cities and compromises in between them, are emphasised in the margins. The use of statements and quotations are

based on different criteria than in the past chapter. The presented statements are exemplary of the test situations that unfolded during the reforms. By deliberately abstaining from normative judgements of the statements, I aim to present the plurality of ways the governing of unemployment is qualified, justified and criticised. In light of the analyses of tests and compromises, all the chapters end with an analysis of the sedimentation into the actual regulatory changes in the texts (laws, conventions, decrees) that were adopted.

‘Help plan for the return to employment’

The French unemployment insurance system put to the test

The process and controversies leading up to the reform of *Plan d’aide et de retour à l’emploi* (‘Help plan for the return to employment’, henceforth ‘PARE’) was officially launched in early 2000 by the major French employers’ organisation Medefⁱ and coincided with the upcoming negotiations of the next three-year convention of the unemployment insurance system. Figure 3 below provides an overview of the key events during the debate up to the passing of PARE.

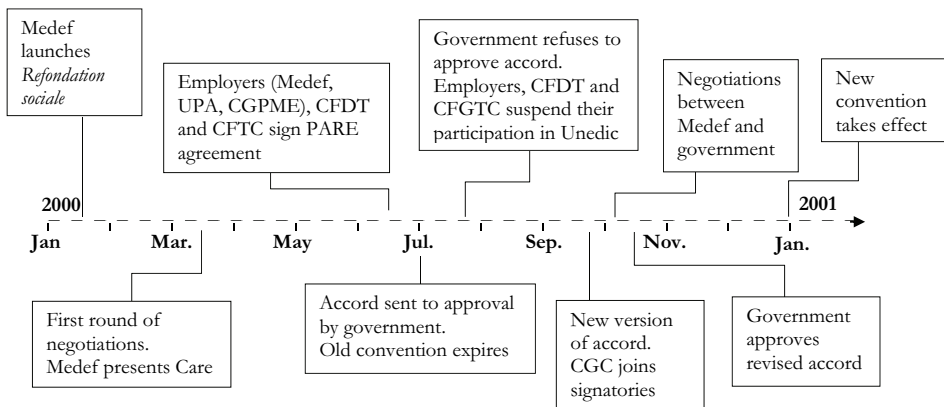
The instruments of PARE included an individual contract that would oblige the unemployed to engage in “personalised” job search activities while getting access to support such as training courses. Further, PARE strengthened requirements to accept job offers from the job exchange service as well as sanctions upon refusals and contractual infringements. The trade unions were divided in their stance towards this, causing intense debate, which in the end resulted in the adoption of the reform with the support of the government. The instruments of PARE did not replace the existing scheme, but by installing various tests they fundamentally changed the way the unemployed were qualified. Hence, PARE marks a tipping point in the governing of the French insured unemployed. With PARE, the unemployment insurance system is first and foremost a wheel in the machinery of the *active* society.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first two sections introduce the historical creation and development of the French unemployment insurance system. The aim is to provide a brief picture of what cities have shaped the

ⁱ Mouvement des entreprises de France

system and have sedimented in its institutions and instruments. The sections thus also pay attention to the intellectual movements qualifying the problem of unemployment. The next four sections present the justifications, test situations and compromises in the reform debate. Finally, the last section analyses the institutional and instrumental changes in the adopted legal convention.

Figure 3: Timeline PARE



CREATION AND REFORMS OF *ASSURANCE CHÔMAGE*

It was not until 1958 that a nationally governed system of unemployment insurance was established in France. Since the end of the 19th century, unemployment was handled by local insurance funds organised by workers and employers and delimited by professional borders alongside local, but publicly funded, schemes of *assistance* involving extensive control and workfare schemes to counter “voluntary idleness” (Daniel and Tuchsirer 1999: 85, 161). Even though the insurance schemes had been subsidised by the state since 1905, they played a marginal role (Ibid.: 89).

Although the post-war reforms initiating the French welfare state were heavily based on the principle of Insurance (cf. Palier 2002: 55f), the governing of unemployment was not. The major reform of *Sécurité sociale* in 1945, marking the beginning of the *trente glorieuses*, can be seen as a compromise between Demand, Mobility and, to a lesser extent, Investment, emphasising a strategy of full employment. According to Pierre Laroque, the founding father of *Sécurité sociale*, it “permits the constant and as perfect as possible adaptation of offers and demand of labour, by a coordinated policy focused on professions, occupational training and placement” (Laroque in Palier 2002: 94; see also Daniel and Tuchsirer 1999: 162f). The strong corporatist beliefs at the time resulted in a system orchestrated by the employers and employees’ representatives where entitlements were contribution-based and hence tied closely to the worker (in practice, the male breadwinner), rather than the citizen (Palier 2005: 136-137). Accordingly, Redistributive issues were subordinated to that of guaranteeing full employment (Palier 2002: 73f).

*Demand /
Mobility /
Investment*

The success of this compromise pushed demands for a nationally coordinated system based on Insurance into the background (Daniel and Tuchsirer 1999)ⁱ. In 1958 the compulsory system of *Assurance chômage* (unemployment insurance) was established by the employers’ organisation CNPFⁱⁱ and the labour unions FOⁱⁱⁱ, a reformist defector fraction of the revolutionary labour union the CGT^{iv}, the Christian labour union CFTC^v and finally the CGC^{vi}, who represented the particularly French managerial class of *cadres*. The system was created under a shared fear of a recession (Ibid.: 185). The aim was both, in accordance with Insurance, to provide employees with “stable resources” and, in accordance with Mobility, to “facilitate redeployment” (Ibid.: 187).

*Insurance /
Mobility*

ⁱ The introduction of a scheme based on insurance was also challenged by the actuarial problem of predicting the risk of unemployment (Daniel and Tuchsirer 1999: 187)

ⁱⁱ Conseil national du patronat français

ⁱⁱⁱ Force ouvrière

^{iv} Confédération générale du travail

^v Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens

^{vi} Confédération générale des cadres. *Cadres* are a (legally recognised) group of skilled managers and executives such as engineers, technicians and consultants. On the historical formation of the class, see (Boltanski 1982).

The scheme was institutionalised in the corporatist body of Unedicⁱ in which the employers and employees' representatives negotiated the convention of *Assurance chômage* every second or third year. Below Unedic, a number of local offices, so-called Assedicⁱⁱ, were set up to collect contributions (from employers and employees, and since 1979, also from the state (Tuchszirer 2001)) and pay out compensation. Although Unedic was established outside the system of *Sécurité sociale*, the state was always involved as a third party with authority to intervene in the negotiations (Daniel and Tuchszirer 1999: 185-86). In 1967, the close ties with the state were intensified when the government established the ANPEⁱⁱⁱ, who worked alongside Unedic with the specific aim of facilitating the transmission of information between employers and unemployed people (Ibid.: 225f), hereby complementing Insurance with Mobility. Until the early 1980s, the involvement of the state resulted in a constant improvement of social rights attached to *Assurance chômage* (Tuchszirer 2001), reaching a rate of coverage of 76 percent in 1976 (Daniel and Tuchszirer 1999: 249).

Insurance

In the 1980s, well past the *trente glorieuses* of close-to-full employment, the rising number of unemployed put the Unedic under financial pressure. This led to a number of reforms of Unedic itself: *within* Insurance thinking, contributions were raised in order to increase resources and balance the funds, which, however, made it too expensive for some to pay the fees and were thus excluded (Ibid.: 257ff). However, the financial difficulties also spurred more radical criticisms of Insurance.

Investment

The so-called *Deuxième gauche*, a movement within the Socialist party and the labour union CFDT^{iv} and led intellectually by Pierre Rosanvallon (Béland 2007: 132).^v In the 1970s and 80s, the *Deuxième gauche* was anti-statist (as opposed to the CGT and FO), advocating governing beyond the welfare

ⁱ Union nationale interprofessionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce

ⁱⁱ Association pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce

ⁱⁱⁱ Agence nationale pour l'emploi

^{iv} Confédération française démocratique du travail. The CFDT was the newest of the five trade unions legally recognised by the state and emerged in 1964 from the Christian CFTC as a secular non-communist alternative to the CGT

^v The five recognised unions participating in the negotiations of Unedic are hence the FO, CGT, CFTC, CGC and CFDT.

state with a key role for the labour market parties (see e.g. Rosanvallon 1981). Later, the critique turned into a critique of a “passive” way of spending resources while advocating an “active welfare state” (*État actif-providence*) (Rosanvallon 1995). In the 1980s and 90s, Investment inspired policies were introduced along these lines to “activate the expenses” of *Assurance chômage*, such as the *Conventions de conversion*, offering vocational training, internships, and preparation for job interviews for people hit by lay-offs for economic reasons (Daniel and Tuchsirer 1999: 320-24).

In 1982 the criteria for compensation were changed. In line with the city of Mobility’s appreciation of work and activity, compensation was made to depend on the period of contribution rather than the circumstances related to the event of unemployment (Tuchsirer 2001). Out of these institutional changes, combined with increasing unemployment, a new group of unemployed came to the fore. These people were not entitled to compensation because they had not contributed sufficiently as a result of long-term unemployment. In 1984, this group was separated from Unedic and included in a state-governed *régime de solidarité* (Ibid.; Eydoux and Béraud 2011: 44-45).

Mobility

In the same period, a number of policy evaluations mobilised the city of Incentives to problematise the “generosity” of the compensation as disincentivising work (Béraud and Eydoux 2011: 132) as well as highlight the negative impact of (employers’) contributions on employment (Palier 2005: 136). As a result, entitlement conditions were hardened and the duration of compensation was reduced (Béraud and Eydoux 2011: 132). The most important change was the introduction of AUD (*Allocation unique dégressive*), reducing the level of compensation every four months while the entitlement was reduced to 30 months (Palier 2010a: 84). While AUD was supported by the employers and the CFDT, the CGT, together with the FO, refused to sign the accord, thus marking a line of tension that would re-emerge in the debate on PARE.

Incentives

AUD succeeded in balancing the budget of the funds of Unedic, but it also reduced the share of unemployed being compensated, which bolstered the demand for policy reform to target the groups that were not entitled to, or

had lost the entitlement to, unemployment insurance due to long-term unemployment, as well as the rise of work-forms (such as fixed-term contracts) which did not grant the same entitlements as traditional permanent contracts (Palier 2002: 224-225). Importantly, this, alongside inspiration from the ideas of the *Deuxième gauche*, led to the creation of the RMI (*Revenu minimum d'insertion*, 'Minimum income benefit of insertion') in 1988. The RMI replaced the old system of social assistance and aimed to re-include the rising group of people hit by the dynamics of social exclusion.ⁱ

Another outcome of the increasing number of unemployed who found themselves outside of the shield of *Assurance chômage* was the mobilisation of the unemployed in various protest movements and organisations (Chabanet 2012). Some were supported by labour unions such as the CGT-chômeurs and AC !ⁱⁱ, while others, importantly, MNCPⁱⁱⁱ and Apeis^{iv}, came from civil society movements. None of the organisations were, however, legally recognised by Unedic.

LAUNCH OF THE DEBATE: MEDEF'S *REFONDATION SOCIALE*

It was the French employers' organisation that launched the debate leading to the introduction of PARE. The initiative grew out of the major restructuring of CNPF in the late 1990s, renaming itself Medef, and a large-scale political programme named *Refondation sociale* (Social restructuring). The offensive new strategy arose from a profound discontent with the government's decision to pass the so-called "Aubry law", named after the then socialist minister of Employment and Solidarity, which, within Redistribution thinking, aimed to create jobs for the unemployed by reducing the working week to thirty-five hours. The passing of the bill was seen as authoritarian and as harmful to French enterprises because it was to

Redistribution

ⁱ On the particular discourse of "social exclusion" in France, see Béland (2007). The trajectory of RMI will be described in more detail in the case of RSA (see p. 86f).

ⁱⁱ Agir ensemble contre le chômage

ⁱⁱⁱ Mouvement national des chômeurs et précaires

^{iv} Association Pour l'Emploi, l'Information et la Solidarité des chômeurs et des précaires

be partly financed by the social protection funds of social partners (Palier 2002: 404).

At the beginning of 2000, Medef convinced the other social partners to gather and discuss the eight “building sites” (*chantiers*) of the *refondation sociale*. The first ‘site’ concerned *Assurance chômage* (Ibid.: 407). The ideas behind *Refondation sociale* were created by Medef’s new vice-president Denis Kessler together with his ‘right hand’ François Ewald, Foucault’s former assistant, whose work on insurance and the welfare state (Ewald 1986) had somehow curiously led him into the private insurance industry (Behrent 2010).

The *Refondation sociale* has a lot in common with the *Deuxième gauche*. It shares, and probably accentuates, its scepticism towards state intervention, seeking to reclaim some of the initiative from the state to the social partners (Vail 2008: 343). The choice is between “reorganisation (*refondation*) or stratification (*étatatisation*)” (Medef in Palier 2002: 405). The programme of *Refondation sociale* was also qualified according to the city of Investment in order to qualify the critique of the state. In particular, this resulted in a denunciation of the city of Insurance. In a city of globalisation, the national state, according to Medef’s president Ernest Antione Seillière, “does not function as a reducer of risks (...), but as a producer of risks” (Seillière in Ewald 2000: 4). Similarly to the diagnosis of Rosanvallon, Kessler and Ewald criticised the current system for being incapable of adapting to the “new risks”, which are not social risks but “risks of existence” such as social exclusion (Ewald and Kessler 2000: 61):

*Investment /
critique of
Insurance*

Today’s biggest injustice relies less in the unequal distribution of revenues than in the inequality when confronted with risk. Traditional social risks (...), the risk for an employee of finding himself deprived from revenue (accident, illness, old age) is progressively substituted by the risk of not being ‘employable’, of not being able to integrate. (Ewald and Kessler 2000: 71)

At the same time, *Refondation sociale* had clear references to Mobility. It was concerned with “dismantling French rigidities”, causing “labour shortages in certain sectors, which, at some point, can be an obstacle for growth.”¹

Mobility

Developing the suppleness of companies, Medef hopes to remove the recruitment obstacles and provide the persons far from the labour market with an experience.²

Paternal

Refondation sociale hence aimed to "galvanise the labour market by favouring the adjustment of supply and demand".³ Lastly, *refondation sociale* also had a particular Paternal aim to install a "new culture of responsibility" where social protection is about giving people a "second or a third chance, and not taking responsibility definitively, in a de-responsibilising way, for people" (Kessler 1999: 620, 630).

THE EMPLOYERS' PROPOSAL

The policy proposal of Medef coincided with the negotiations concerning the renewal of the convention of *Assurance chômage* for the coming three years, which were about to expire July 1st 2000. Because Medef threatened to leave Unedic, the whole institution of *Assurance chômage* was therefore put to the test. Without a renewal, Unedic would have no mandate to manage the system.

*Mobility /
Investment*

Medef's calls for reform were supported by the two other (minor) employers' organisations, the craftsmen's union UPAⁱ and the small and medium-sized enterprises' CGPMEⁱⁱ. The corner-stone of the proposal was the so-called CARE (*contrat d'aide au retour à l'emploi*) contract, an individual arrangement specifying "the reciprocal commitments of the regime of compensation and the job-seeker"⁴ that each unemployed person would sign, and keep, in order to be compensated. The elements of the contract combined the cities of Investment and Mobility while clearly privileging the latter. The contract includes an "assessment of competences and aptitudes" of the unemployed person ending in a "plan for personalised support", outlining the job categories corresponding to his competences or the training needed to access an available job.⁵ After signing the contract, the unemployed individual will meet for an interview every two weeks to follow

ⁱ Union professionnelle artisanale

ⁱⁱ Confédération générale des petites et moyennes entreprises

up on the plan and check whether he participates in “the effective and permanent search for a job”.⁶ From the other side, *Assurance chômage* commits itself to proposing job offers, or if necessary, a qualifying training course. In order to further favour mobility, the unemployed individual would get an additional benefit if he took a job in another business area than his own. If the unemployed “within a certain period” has not received any job offers, his integration into a company will be privileged by Unedic, contributing to the salary paid by the employer”.⁷ This also had an element of Investment:

One jobseeker out of two does not have an education. We will offer jobs with short-term training programmes.⁸

When launching CARE, Medef was very explicit on the binding and ultimately coercive nature of the contract. While Medef promised to “adjust the degression of the allowance” of AUD, it would have “consequences for the terms and conditions of the compensation, which would be revised” if the obligations of the contract were not met.⁹ This was basically to strengthen obligations related to Mobility:

There are vacant jobs. The job seekers have to take them.¹⁰

This would be the case if the unemployed person does not show up for the assessment, if he refuses to take the training course he was offered or does not follow it “with diligence”, if he practices non-declared remunerated work, and, finally, if he refuses a job offer “even though they correspond to his professional competences and are remunerated in accordance with a salary normally practised in the profession and in the region.”¹¹

Despite the details regarding the obligations of the unemployed, many questions were left unanswered in Medef’s proposal, such as who would undertake the authority to sanction as well as train (Assedic, governed by the social partners, or the ANPE of the state?); how to fund the cost for training as well as adjust AUD; and what the content of sanctions would be in case of non-compliance with CARE.

INITIAL EVALUATIONS OF *ASSURANCE CHÔMAGE* AND CARE

The sentiment surrounding the negotiations was characterised by optimism with regards to the performativity of the economy and its impact on unemployment. After the last round of negotiations, unemployment had been decreasing, approaching the symbolic threshold of ten percent.ⁱ Qualifying the situation according to the city of Demand, Unedic consequently anticipated a correlation between growth, job creation and decreasing unemployment in the coming years:

Growth in 2000 (3.6 percent) ought to allow for the creation of 405,000 positions (+ 2.7 percent) and a decrease of 319,000 unemployed. In 2001, a growth of 3.1 percent creates 396,000 more jobs (+2.6 percent) and 294,000 fewer unemployed.¹²

However, the government also explained the decrease as a consequence of the “Aubry law”, which reduced working time (Redistribution), and the “fights against exclusion” (Investment)¹³.

For the trade unions, the decreasing unemployment, and as a result of this, the surplus of the unemployment insurance funds, provided a justification for using the surplus to, in accordance with the city of Insurance, “better compensate the employees who are subject to precariousness”, as well as increasing the “proportion of unemployed benefitting from an allowance from Unedic currently limited to 40 percent”.¹⁴ The CFDT thus proposed to extend the period during which compensation entitlement accrues from the existing criteria of four months’ work during the last 8 months.¹⁵

In addition to modifying the compensation criteria of *Assurance chômage*, the city of Insurance was mobilised to criticise Medef’s CARE. The FO stated that “Unedic is not the property of the employers. It is financed by social contributions from employees and businesses and it is those contributions that are constitutive of the right to compensation.”¹⁶ The CFDT argued that “there are already sanctions when only 41 percent of unemployed are

ⁱ Cf. Figure 2, p. 30.

compensated by Unedic”.¹⁷ The communists criticised CARE for being Paternal by resting “on a logic of suspicion through which the unemployed are once again considered responsible for their own situation.”¹⁸

*critique of
Paternal*

But criticisms were also found in the city of Redistribution. The previous statement thus continues:

*Redistribution /
critique of
Mobility*

Masked as modernisation, Medef reinvents the old conflation: unemployed = 2nd class citizen (*sous-citoyen*) = social delinquent.¹⁹

According to the communists, CARE represented “social racism against the unemployed and poor”²⁰ and used the wealth of Medef’s president as an example of a problem of inequality:

You know, when five million people have trouble reaching the Smicⁱ, Mr Seillière, and when you earn more than 55 times the Smic, when you have 2,200 times the yearly Smic in stock options, you understand, Mr Seillière, that inequality is something that exists.²¹

The redistributive qualification in the case of the CGT led to calls for “guaranteeing a decent revenue for all unemployed” through a better compensation of precarious contracts²², removing AUD, and a “modulation of employers’ contribution in order to better responsabilise businesses.”²³ The CGT’s critique of the interests of businesses was also based on a critique of Mobility:

The employers seek to instrumentalise a system that responds uniquely to the needs of business (...) You have to be young, pretty, dynamic, intelligent, in good health and qualified.²⁴

Similarly, from the city Redistribution, AC !, one of the organisations representing the unemployed, criticised the employers for wanting to “take control of the placement of the unemployed and impose its own terms on the workforce.”²⁵ The FO called CARE an “unconscionable contract” (*contrat léonin*) and accused Medef for wanting to base Unedic on a “logic of profitability intensified by the labour market”.²⁶

ⁱ The Smic (*Salaire minimum interprofessionnel de croissance*) is the minimum wage guaranteed and set by the state.

Although critical of CARE, trade unions also invested in the Mobility/Investment qualification. To the CGT, for instance, “reforming the conditions of security and mobility from passive protection to active security is an inspiring programme”.²⁷ However, the CGT criticised CARE on these yardsticks for not being a “process of integration but an additional instrument of exclusion and selection”.²⁸ In place of CARE, the CGT proposed to limit the recourse to fixed-term contracts while developing qualification contracts for people under 25 years without an education.²⁹ Likewise, while the CFDT predicted “many frictions with Medef” it also, ironically, accused it of “hi-jacking the ideas that CFDT [had] defended for a long time”, notably “the active policies against unemployment” needed to avoid the risk of a “hard core of unemployed subsisting like a cyst in the society of full employment”.³⁰ Not all opposed the use of sanctions though. An unemployed person ironically noted:

They want to reduce allowances? It’s all the same to me because I don’t receive them! If I have to sign a contract for someone to offer me a job, that’s all I ask for.³¹

Curiously, trade unions, when evaluating AUD, also mobilised the city of Incentives. According to the CFDT, “compensation should play an active role to redeploy the unemployed, and degression is one way, among others, to encourage it”.³² Although the CGT wanted to put an end to AUD, they proposed to use the surplus of the funds to let every unemployed person be compensated at 85 percent of the Smic in order to “make unemployment expensive”, hereby “settling on another dynamic of employment”.³³ Thus, the city of Incentives was never put to the test, nor did it later play a significant role in justifying any changes.

AN OFFER YOU CAN REFUSE? SANCTIONS PUT TO THE TEST

In the negotiations in May 2000, trade unions appeared to unite around a critique of Medef’s CARE. Firstly, all of them refused “to enter a process of sanctioning the unemployed”.³⁴ In a first attempt to reach a compromise, the CFDT, CFTC, CGC and FO jointly proposed to rename *le* Care to *la*

Care by replacing “contract” with the less binding “convention”.³⁵ Whereas the contract was seen as defining the basic relation between employer and employee, as well as between insurer and insured, a convention would be voluntary to subscribe to.

Underneath the compromise, however, different qualifications seemed to underpin the engagement of the coalition of unions. The CFDT thought that unions and employers “could converge” if the aim with CARE was to “put everyone’s feet back on the ladder”, but not if it was “to sanction the unemployed”.³⁶ The union criticised CARE by mobilising the cities of Investment and Mobility. Testing the population in terms of Mobility, the president Nicole Notat “knew of few unemployed people who did not aspire to work. (...) In the rare opposite cases, these tendencies are anticipated in the current system”.³⁷ On the contrary, most unemployed people were regarded from the city of Investment as beings with potential:

The interest of everyone is to seize new chances, not to settle oneself in unemployment.³⁸

Similarly, the CFTC criticised CARE for being Paternal by installing an “automatic and generalised instrument which does nothing but introduce suspicion towards the unemployed”.³⁹ Hence, they wanted CARE to be a “supplementary instrument offered voluntarily” and built on the existing scheme of *Convention de conversion*.⁴⁰

A way of circumventing the problem of sanctions, according to the coalition of unions, was to legitimise the Mobility elements of CARE by installing the logic of Incentives to mark the threshold of when to engage in CARE and when not to. CARE could be accepted “when it is not simply a matter of cutting the allowances of the recalcitrant unemployed, but a matter of ameliorating those for the unemployed who are making the necessary efforts to find a job”.⁴¹ CARE should thus be “an optional convention that the unemployed are incited to subscribe to”.⁴² By introducing a “bonus” for the unemployed engaging in CARE, “the coercive dimension is eliminated”.⁴³ In this way, CARE was not seen as sacrificing the Insurance logic, but simply adding an extra, optional layer and category of unemployment next to those “solely being compensated”⁴⁴:

*Investment /
Mobility*

*Incentives /
Mobility /
Insurance*

The question to ask oneself is whether *Assurance chômage* must be strictly oriented towards cold (*sec*) compensation or if, on the contrary, it should be combined with accompanying rights oriented towards the return to employment. (...) However, what is regrettable is that the combination of the two missions are judged as social decline.⁴⁵

*critique of
Mobility*

Meanwhile, the FO, who co-authored the joint statement, took a much less accommodating stance towards the Mobility element of CARE, calling the fact that “the unemployed must engage in an ‘active’ search for a job, at the risk of suspension or removal of allowances” “STO” (*service du travail obligatoire*)⁴⁶, a term that was used for the French workers who were forced by the Vichy government to go to work in factories in Germany during the Second World War.

*Insurance /
Redistribution*

A similar stance could be found in the CGT, the only union not part of the joint statement, as well as the various organisations of the unemployed. Unlike the CFDT, the CGT saw CARE as a sacrifice of Insurance since requiring the unemployed to accept a job proposal in order not to lose their allowance is “making the contributor pay for what ought to be paid by the contributions of businesses and employees”.⁴⁷ Thus, CARE would be the “death certificate of the system of *Assurance chômage* from 1958”.⁴⁸ The Insurance-based critique was backed by a redistributive element of the critique relating to interests and representation. Medef was accused of greed since the surplus in the funds was not used to extend the number of compensated unemployed, but rather to reduce contribution levels:

The employers collect 42 billion Francs by lowering the level of contributions. You could say: Medef 42, unemployed 0.⁴⁹

*Insurance /
Redistribution /
critique of
Mobility*

Allying themselves with the CGT, the associations of the unemployed organised protests around the country, “making the voice of those affected by the debate heard” and calling the trade unions to “turn down the accord of shame”.⁵⁰ One of the associations, the CGT-chômeurs, accused the CFDT of “declaring war on the unemployed”.⁵¹ Denouncing Mobility and mobilising Insurance and Redistribution, they argued that Unedic “will no longer be a system of compensation but a system that hunts delinquents, that is, the unemployed, so as to punish them if they do not accept the jobs that businesses propose whatever the social conditions of those jobs”.⁵² The

movement had support from several intellectuals. among others, Pierre Bourdieu, who greeted the protests, and Robert Castel, another prominent sociologist who supported the protests by giving his view on CARE:

It implicates a complete transformation of the conception of unemployment. Until now, even though compensation was imperfect, it allowed you to touch a deferred wage when you were unfortunately deprived of unemployment. When he was thrown out, the employee was not held responsible for his situation. The logic of the system of unemployment compensation came close to the [logic] of retirement: by working you acquire rights which allow you to continue a decent life, even though you quit the professional city because of age or because of a dismissal. PARE radically calls this logic into question.⁵³

Another sociologist saw Medef's project as part of a "global tendency to recommodify what struggles and the welfare state (*État social*) had achieved to withdraw from the market".⁵⁴

Also, the MNCP argued that "if the battle against unemployment is won without twisting the neck of precariousness and poverty, it will be a Pyrrhic victory".⁵⁵ The MNCP called for the government to intervene in order to restrict Medef's ambition to "impose the dictum demands of the market".⁵⁶

The negotiations ended in an agreement between the employers and the CFDT and CFTC, only two of the five unions, and in terms of representation, only around one third of union votes. To accommodate the criticism of the CFDT, CARE was renamed PARE (Plan d'aide au retour à l'emploi). The unemployed no longer had to engage in a "contract" but a "project" named PAP (Projet d'aide personnalisé), which was considered less obligatory since it no longer derived from civil law.⁵⁷

Despite the semantic change, the content of PAP remained more or less the same. PAP would still be based on a "contractualisation" and sanctions would be enacted upon refusals to take a proposed job; from a 20 percent reduction in the first case to a complete removal of entitlement after the fourth refusal.⁵⁸ Although the parties agreed to suspend the periodic reduction of AUD for those engaging in PAP, it was still uncertain whether the scheme should be facultative or what the role of ANPE would be

(Lyon-Caen 2001: 379). Finally, the CGC joined the non-signatories (the FO and CGT), calling the new scheme “an electroshock of the poor”.⁵⁹

TESTING LIMITATIONS AND AUTHORITY TO COERCE

Despite opposition from the non-signatories, the agreement was sent for approval in June to the government, who had to ratify the convention in law.ⁱ However, the government, represented by the minister of Employment and Solidarity Martine Aubry, was highly critical of the proposal (see e.g. Aubry and Fabius 2000). Finally, after three weeks of intense debate, the government disapproved the accord. The government’s refusal was celebrated by the FO, CGT and organisations of the unemployed as a “victory of democracy”.⁶⁰ In a letter, about fifty leading figures from various factions of parties, unions and civil society from the leftⁱⁱ urged the government to ensure better compensation for the unemployed, “the effective equality of rights for everyone” and the “freedom to choose employment and training in place of a principle of imposed employment”.⁶¹ They also recommended the government to include all concerned actors in the debate, including the organisations for the unemployed and “democratically elected representatives”.⁶²

Part of the criticism was supported by the government. Aubry questioned the agreement based on the already existing Insurance demand regarding increasing the number of compensated unemployed. The agreement’s extension of the period during which compensation entitlement accrues from the existing four months’ work during the last 8 months to 14 months was judged as “weak” and only cost 4 billion out of the expected surplus of 75 billion francs.⁶³ The minister reminded everyone that the proportion of

ⁱ The negotiation and voting procedures are extremely complex and follow more or less official codes of conduct. While it initially demanded the signatory from all social partners, after 1989 a minority can sign an accord. However, non-signatories can demand a new round of negotiations. Further, regardless of whether the accord is unanimously agreed upon, the state (the *Conseil d’État*) ultimately has to approve the accord (Lyon-Caen 2001: 378-79).

ⁱⁱ The figures came from the socialist party, PCF, LCR (La ligue communiste révolutionnaire), CGT, CGC, SUD (Union syndicale Solidaires), a minority from the CFDT, and the organisation of the unemployed (MNCP, Apeis, CGT-chômeurs and AC !).

those compensated had dropped from 52 percent to 42 percent over the last ten years, and that the extension would cause an increase of only 0.2 percent.⁶⁴

However, it quickly turned out that not all of the government's criticism coincided with the alliance of the left. While the government strengthened the weight of Insurance in the financial allocation of the convention, it did not mobilise any substantive critique based on Redistribution. Rather, it stressed the importance of Investment *vis à vis* both Mobility and Insurance in the conditions of PAP. Aubry had earlier expressed her concerns with CARE:

*Investment /
critique of
Mobility,
Insurance*

If the accord is in accordance with the interests of the unemployed, I have no reason to oppose it. If it's a question of, in a period of recovery, to help the unemployed, especially the ones in the most difficulty, integrate and educate themselves, I can only be pleased. It will be a more effective and active utilisation of the spending of *assurance chômage*. By having this role, the public utility of employment could be mobilised even more. However, if it's a question of setting up a private placement office only for for the unemployed 'in shape', I can obviously not agree. If it is also a question of offering a contract that puts a lot of pressure on the unemployed while leaving the fragile to the ANPE, which will become a social office, it's out of the question. This will result in removing the ANPE and its beneficiaries away from the labour market, confining them within a logic of assistance and subsidised jobs.⁶⁵

While qualifying the instrument as an extraordinary measure of Demand relating to a "period of recovery", the evaluation based on the city of Investment led to two different critiques: one criticising PARE for being unequal and another for it being too equal. In the former case, which is visible in the quote above, PARE was creating a system "in two speeds" where the Investment and Mobility related services are only accessible to those entitled to *Assurance chômage* thus problematising Insurance's membership criteria as it inhibits the Investment principle of equal opportunities:

On the one hand, the unemployed who are the least cut off from the world of work are benefitting from the best job offers in virtue of the new agreement by the Assedic (until now, only the ANPE, a public organisation

and guarantor of equal opportunities before the return to employment, had the monopoly of employment offers). And, on the other, we have the long-term unemployed who, in large numbers, tip into the [systems of] solidarity and assistance of the state.⁶⁶

Along the same lines, the government criticised the agreement for removing existing successful Investment schemes run by the ANPE, such as the *Conventions de conversion*.⁶⁷

The latter critique of PARE of being too equal, in a sense, denounced PARE for *not* subordinating the demands of Mobility to what makes people worthy in the city of Investment, that is, skills. The agreement referred to “competences” and, after 12 months of unemployment, “aptitudes”, which, according to Aubry, would “oblige the unemployed to accept certain jobs that do not correspond to their qualifications”.⁶⁸ “Under these conditions”, Aubry remarked, “tomorrow, was fit for being a cashier”.⁶⁹ For the same reasons, the CGC, representing the *cadres*, wanted to insert the notion of “classification” in order to be certain that one cannot “move an employee down the scale (*déclasser*)”.⁷⁰ Whereas the critique founded in Insurance and Redistribution of the FO and CGT had questioned the use of coercion *as such*, the question for the government and CGC was *when* it was legitimate. Aubry reminded people that as a minister in 1992 she had already introduced the possibility of sanctioning the unemployed if their job search was inadequate or if they refused a job proposal, and hence saw it as “normal to sanction the unemployed”.⁷¹ However, in order for the sanctioning to be “impartial, the decisions should remain the responsibility of the state”, i.e., the ANPE.⁷¹

In July, as a response to the government’s disapproval, the signatories (employers, the CFDT and CFTC) decided to leave the institutions of Unedic. Meanwhile the government had provisionally extended the

⁷¹ Ibid. In practice, however, the sanctions were rarely used, and when they were, it was in cases of non-presence because the unemployed had found a job without giving notice. According to *Le Figaro*, the rare use of sanctions was a result of their disproportionate severity, and hence the opposition to the sanctions of PARE from the FO and CGT was to be found in them being “graduate and less tough”, hereby becoming “realistic and applicable”. Taupin, B. (2000, June 14) ‘Des sanctions depuis 1992 Contrôle des chômeurs : des textes à la réalité’. *Le Figaro*.

convention of *Assurance chômage* to the end of 2000. Despite the symbolic act, the signatories also engaged with the government's criticism. While Medef led bilateral negotiations with the government (Lyon-Caen 2001: 380), the CFDT justified PARE and the stance of the signatories in public. To accommodate the Insurance-based criticism, the signatories emphasised the significance of removing the degression of AUD.⁷² Yet, Insurance in itself was problematised as completely inadequate, and almost inhuman, leading to a situation where "the unemployed were left alone with their difficulties".⁷³ Hence, *assurance chômage* could not simply be a "counter for allowances".⁷⁴ The idea that Unedic should be limited to compensate "was a static conception of the mission of *assurance chômage* that contributed to exclusion".⁷⁵

Insurance

*critique of
Insurance*

Regarding the authority to decide on sanctions, the signatories simply agreed that this ought to be the responsibility of the ANPE. However, the signatories completely dismissed the criticism of PARE, leading to a system with "two speeds". Rather, the French system of unemployment insurance had "in fact" been running in two speeds for the last twenty years, and PARE allowed people to combat this rather than expand it.⁷⁶ The signatories stressed that PARE was also intended for the long-term unemployed within the state-governed regime of solidarity, provided that the state would contribute (financially).⁷⁷

Investment

Another important element of PARE that countered the danger of a "two speed" system was in fact its obligatory character. The CFDT's justification and response to previous criticism mobilised a Paternal qualification of the unemployed person as someone who perhaps does not know his own true interests:

*Paternal /
Investment*

Many doubts would be raised if PARE had been optional. If guaranteeing compensation and services at the same time is good, it's good for everyone. (...) We think that offering the two at the same time is an advancement for the unemployed, not a step back. It is by leaving PARE optional that one approaches a system in two speeds: On the one side, the well educated and well informed unemployed profit from all their rights; on the other, those to whom entering a training course is not self-evident, or those who are already on the road to exclusion, continue to lose hope of their chances. But the

content of PARE is adapted to the needs of each individual. There is no standard model for everyone.⁷⁸

The obligatory nature of PARE hereby forces those who, irrationally, would not sign it if they had the choice. Hence, the need for a coercive element in the “emancipatory approach” of PARE, an approach that “turns the unemployed person, by the help of professionals, into an actor in the construction of his own project”.⁷⁹ The Paternal qualification is in this case closely tied to the city of Investment’s need for a targeted (i.e., unequal) treatment in order to ensure equal opportunities. This also accommodates the criticism of PARE that it leads to excessive Mobility.

Everyone knows that the [personalised] plan of a qualified computer engineer, a laid-off worker in the textile industry or a young person without a professional project will not be identical. There will only be a presentation of job offers for the first, an evaluation of the level of competences (...) perhaps followed by a complementary training course for the second, and a complete assessment of competences for the third.⁸⁰

This leads to a composition where the Paternal qualification underpins the use of coercion in relation to Investment, ensuring that the unemployed make use of the rights which will provide them with better opportunities.

But the Paternal qualification has the same potential in relation to Mobility. This was clear in Henri Vacquin’s, a sociologist and consultant with close ties to the CFDT, justification of PARE.

Sanctions imposed on those who refuse a job within their qualifications are already better than a gradually decreasing allowance which punishes all the unemployed indifferently. And the instrument will make visible to the jobseeker that they often have capacities that they didn’t expect. Regardless of personal preference for a profession, who knows whether the required qualities for practicing it are not similar to other professions? Who knows if a hairdresser would make a good assembly-line worker of electronic chips? (...) PARE is an act of mediation. If an employer seeks an assembly-line worker of chips, it’s up to the mediator, ANPE, to get the hairdresser to understand that he is qualified for that position and will benefit from it. It all depends on the way of presenting it. If tomorrow I am obliged to take a job of one million francs per day, I’m up for it.⁸¹

*Paternal /
Mobility /
critique of
Incentives*

While Vacquin denounced sanctions based on Incentives as too ‘equal’, they were legitimate when based on qualifications (Investment) and the aim of ‘getting the unemployed to understand’ (Paternal), which again would make them more flexible (Mobility).

During the final negotiations, the Paternal qualification was integrated into PARE, which ultimately made the CGC join the signatories. Besides replacing “competences” and “aptitudes” with “validated qualifications” and “professional capacities”, PARE would also take into account the “degree of autonomy” of the unemployed.⁸²

The accord was finally approved by the government in October, involving several modifications and concessions accommodating the critique of the government. The FO and CGT, however, were excluded from the negotiations and remained in opposition to the final accord, condemning “the obligatory PARE” for “preparing for forced underpaid work” and being “social eugenics”.⁸³

SEDIMENTATION: TESTS, SUBJECTS

Having mapped the qualifications and justifications of the changes that PARE makes to the French contribution-based system, it is now possible to identify the sedimentation of the various cities into the assemblage of instruments governing the unemployed. The result is a complex patchwork of institutionalised tests that (e)valuate and categorise the unemployed according to a number of cities. Some of the tests set clear thresholds between being worthy or not worthy, whereas others set up continua. Some look backwards in time, some plan ahead, and some do both. They also appear at different moments in the unemployed person’s trajectory in the assemblage. The tests are visible in the accord of the new convention of Unedic, which describes all the criteria for receiving an allowance, including PARE (Unedic 2000).

Initially, when addressing Unedic the unemployed individual is evaluated both according to the city of Insurance, that is, as a victim in need of compensation, and according to the city of Mobility, as someone who’s

*Insurance /
Mobility*

worthiness depends on his past level of activity. Regarding the former, an instance of unemployment is tested with a focus on a number of criteria that define what “involuntary” unemployment is (art. 2). Furthermore, it checks whether the individual concerned has paid his contributions to the scheme. If the first criterion is not met, the regime of social assistance will take over (at the time RMI, today RSA). If the second is not met, he may be eligible for an allowance in the regime of solidarity. When it comes to Mobility, the unemployed person is tested with respect to his past “affiliation periods”, which is calculated by the number of working hours in the period leading up to the event of unemployment (art. 3). In the new convention, the basic criterion of 4 months of work during the last 8 months was changed to 4 months during the last 18 months, hereby accommodating the Insurance-based criticism of extending the number of compensated persons. The test determines whether the unemployed person is eligible to compensation, or, instead, should address the regime of solidarity. However, while passing the threshold, the “duration of compensation” is dependent on how many hours the unemployed person has worked. The more working hours and the longer the period, the longer the duration of compensation (a five-step scale from 122 to 1825 days) (art. 12). Finally, if the unemployed individual passed the foregoing tests, he is once again evaluated in the city of Insurance by a number of rather complex tests based on past wage levels (the ‘damage’), which govern his entitled compensation (art. 21, 22, 23, 24).

However, once eligible, the qualification of the unemployed person as a victim falls into the background as a number of tests related to the instrument of PARE requalify him.¹ With PARE, the unemployed individual must sign the ‘personalised project for action’ (PAP), which establishes a new set of “rights and obligations” while he receives his compensation. The PAP is dependent on a test, the “in-depth interview”, which evaluates the unemployed according to three cities. The first is Paternal. The interview, is

Paternal

¹ In the document the change is almost symbolically identifiable. While the first part, defining the initial criteria, the unemployed person is named an “employee deprived of employment” (*salaire privé d’emploi*) within the first paragraph introducing PARE, he is henceforth named a “jobseeker” (*demandeur d’emploi*) (art. 14, §1).

“the occasion” for the agent from the ANPE to “appreciate the degree of autonomy of the jobseeker in his search” (art. 14, §2). The PAP must “take account of the degree of autonomy” (art. 15). It is not specified how, but seeing it in the light of the past debate, it is likely that a low degree involves more rights and obligations. Meanwhile, the interview must also “take stock of his qualifications and compare it to available or potential offers on the labour market” (art. 14, §2).

The unemployed person is hence firstly tested in the city of Investment in terms of his employability. If it is sufficiently high, he can remain in the city and the PAP will describe the job types that correspond to his qualifications (art. 15). However, if it is low (again this is a continuum) the PAP includes two paths: one based on Mobility, which suggests “the job type(s) towards which he may like to convert”, or one based on Investment, which outlines the “services and training” that are necessary to “access a job in compliance with the project” (art. 15). Finally, the PAP must also take into account the “personal and family situation” which will set limits to the “potential geographical mobility” of the unemployed (art. 16, §3). While this test sets limits to the city of Mobility, it also legitimises demands to move if the personal situation does not inhibit it.

*Investment /
Mobility*

Throughout the whole period after signing the PAP, the unemployed person must be active in the city of Mobility. He must “carry out positive actions of job search” and be “available and genuinely involved in the move towards the return to employment” (art. 16, §3). On the other side of the threshold, one faintly sees the idle subject who does not search “genuinely”. All non-compliance is followed up by sanctions (as described above in the signatories’ proposal).

Mobility

The period after signing the PAP is characterised by a continuous intensification of evaluation as well as of rights and obligations. Concurrently, as time passes, the ‘degree of autonomy’ of the unemployed decreases. In the first phase, the unemployed person is qualified as capable of finding his own job. It is not until six months after signing that the “actualisation” of the PAP is carried through (art. 17, §1). In addition, the balance between Investment and Mobility changes as time passes. While at

*Paternal /
Investment /
Mobility*

the beginning the unemployed person is obliged to accept an offer that “corresponds to his professional capacities, his qualifications as a result of his diplomas, knowledge and professional experience”, after 6 months the offers should only “be part of the field” of the same professional capacities (art. 17, §1,2). Finally, after twelve months, the ANPE should “accentuate their efforts in order to redeploy those concerned or favour his occupational integration and ensure that he acquires a professional experience”, possibly by means of “regressive assistance” (*aide dégressive*) allocated to the employer (art. 17, §3). In addition, in order to broaden the ‘field’ of interests the unemployed person is offered an “in-depth assessment of competences” (art. 17, §1). Finally, “if, despite all these measures, the beneficiary still has not found a job, his allowances will be retained within the duration of the rights” (art. 17, §4).

By bracketing what was previously, first and foremost, a homogenous group of ‘victims’ with a legitimate need for compensation into a variety of subjects that may change as time passes, but whose primary goal is to somehow once again become part of the ‘active society’, PARE marks a *tipping point*. As shown above, it does not wipe out the Insurance instruments, but rather works upon them and limits their capacity to qualify the unemployed. Furthermore, it consolidates that the primary aim of *Assurance chômage* is to bring the unemployed back into ‘active society’.

The same confrontational lines between actors have continued to influence the reform processes. However, and again similar to the unfolding event of PARE, the criticism has been able to postpone or bring to a halt some reforms, but has not managed to provide an alternative path. The criticism thus remains defensive. Subsequent reforms have consistently focused on the flexibility of the labour force (Mobility). Whereas massive protests in 2006 managed to bring to a halt the *Contrat première embauche* that aimed to make it easier to hire and fire young employees (Cole 2008), the controversial “El Khomri law”, loosening working time and layoff regulations, was adopted as recently as 2016 by the socialist government despite massive protests. Thus, although changes seem to happen at a

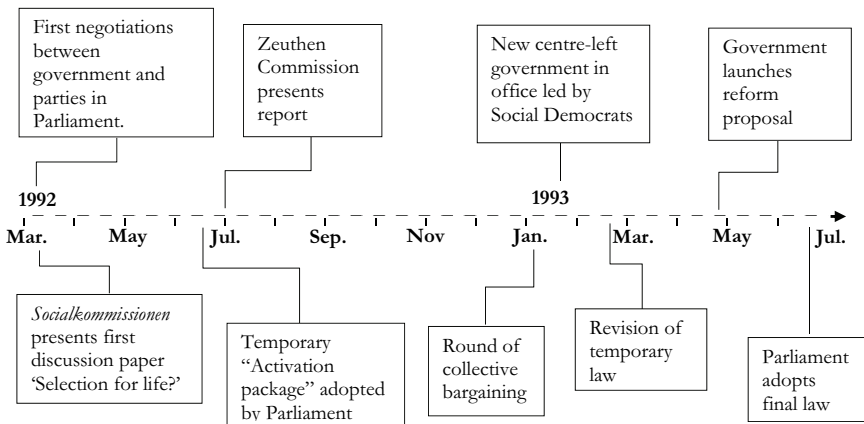
slower pace than in Denmark, for instance, there seems to be no sign that they will be rolled back or take a radically new path in the near future.

The ‘Active labour market policy act’

The Danish unemployment insurance system put to the test

The reform process ending with *Lov om aktiv arbejdsmarkedspolitik* (‘The active labour market policy act’, henceforth LAAP) began with the adoption of an experimental law in 1992 that was set to expire at the end of 1993. Whereas PARE took its root in an explicit call for reform which was clearly confined to the unemployment system, namely *Assurance chômage* and the negotiation of its convention, LAAP is an example of a more disordered process with a variety of parallel test situations of a number of instruments that somehow became tied together. Figure 4 provides an overview of the key events during the debate up to the passing of LAAP.

Figure 4: Timeline LAAP



LAAP introduced an individual contract quite similar to PARE while combining it with a number of different instruments: leave schemes to ease access to the labour market, job training for the unemployed and job offers that the unemployed, after a period of time, would have to accept in order to continue to receive compensation. Further, it changed the rules of entitlement. While the PARE reform was mainly driven by the unions and employers' organisations, the LAAP reform was orchestrated by the state.

This different dynamic is the result of a particular history of the Danish unemployment insurance system that will be presented in the first two sections. As in the first sections of the previous chapter, the historical sources are read with a view to understand the tensions and compromises between cities of unemployment that have sedimented into the governing of the insured unemployed, and hence provided the context for the process of LAAP. Hereafter follows four sections that each present a test situation concerning a specific problem relating to the governing of the unemployment insurance system: wages, financing, subsidised jobs and leave schemes. Finally, the chapter concludes with an analysis of the changes that the LAAP law entailed.

THE CREATION AND REFORMS OF *DAGPENGESYSTEMET*

Unlike in France, where the creation of a national unemployment contribution-based system was initiated by the state, the Danish equivalent was a direct result of pressures from the labour movement, which from the beginning was much more homogenous than in France, and closely allied with the Social Democratic Party. The establishment in 1907 of the unemployment insurance, commonly called *dagpengesystemet*ⁱ, followed the recommendations of a governmental commission which was set up to satisfy the demands from the growing Social Democratic Party (Christensen 2011). Whereas the French system was orchestrated in a tripartite corporatist manner with equal representation of employees and employers,

ⁱ "Dagpenge", literally "daily money" and is the common term denoting the compensation that the unemployed receive.

the employers only played a marginal role in the Danish set-up. They did not initially contribute to, or partake in the control of, the so-called *arbejdsløshedskasser* (unemployment funds) either; these were financed by workers, municipalities and the state. The funds, despite being legally independent, were in reality closely tied to the labour unions that would control the solidarity of Insurance, organise the placement service (Mobility) and also exercise pressure towards workers to enrol in the voluntary scheme. To strengthen Mobility, the funds and placement offices were delimited by professions rather than local borders (Ibid.: 517). The scheme was only intended to be a short-term instrument to compensate for the shortage in labour demand due to economic crises (Demand). The maximum period of compensation was hence only 70 days annually (Ibid.: 519).

Insurance /
Mobility /
Demand

Similarly to the French ‘regime of solidarity’ⁱ established in the 1980s, the economic crisis of the late 1920s resulted in the establishment of so-called *hjælpekasser* (‘help funds’), which compensated the unemployed whose rights had expired. Like in France, the problem with the insured unemployed losing their rights to compensation was a reoccurring issue in the numerous reforms of the Danish *dagpengesystem*. The help funds, which were financed by a special fund with contributions from the unemployment insurance fund as well as the state and the employers, would prevent the insured unemployed from entering the system of poor relief (*fattigvæsen*) (Ibid.: 535). The insurance scheme had a marginal Investment element since the help funds involved the possibility of training at the folk high schools (*folkehøjskoler*) (Ibid.: 557).

Insurance /
Investment

Up until the end of the Second World War, a number of tensions and reforms unfolded within the city of Insurance. Venstre, which at the time was an agrarian party, and the employers’ confederation DAⁱⁱ pushed for the use of individual control cards (*arbejdskort*), popularly labelled “dog tags”, to ensure that people did not receive *dagpenge* while working (Christensen 2011:

Insurance /
Demand

ⁱ See chapter 4, p. 85.

ⁱⁱ Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening (Confederation of Danish Employers) is the umbrella organisation that represents most private employers’ industry associations.

555; 2012b: 487, 499). Further, while in government, Venstre decreased the state subsidies while increasing the membership fees. The government justified the cutbacks as a way of strengthening the “principle of insurance” in the scheme (Christensen 2011: 552). Finally, the help funds were increasingly aligned with *dagpengesystemet*. Previously, the help funds were conditioned on a definition of “extraordinary unemployment”, i.e., the Demand crisis, and had lower compensation rates. The definition of “extraordinary” was gradually loosened and compensation rates increased, and finally the help funds were integrated in *dagpengesystemet* in 1958 (Christensen 2011: 563f).

Demand

While the post-war period was characterised by expanding rights of compensation, the city of Insurance was simultaneously challenged from other cities. Like in France, Keynesian Demand policies focusing on state initiated job creation were on the rise in the decades after the war (Christensen 2012b: 505-7). While these policies reduced financial pressure on the insurance scheme, they also gave rise to the idea that unemployment was the responsibility of the state (Christensen 2012a: 523), which in turn legitimised further financing by the state. The state financing peaked in 1967 when membership fees were reduced to a symbolic contribution. The compensation improved, more groups were covered and the compensation period gradually increased (Christensen 2013: 538-43, 547). However, the transition from a compensation to a tax based scheme also decoupled the financing from the risk of unemployment (Christensen 2012a: 520-22).

Mobility / Investment / critique of Insurance

The decoupling provided further space for Mobility and Investment uses of the funds and further involvement of the state in the organisation of the instruments. This is partly why the unions and employers’ organisations were marginal players in the reform of LAAP. The developments were also fuelled by criticism of Insurance; for instance, by the influential economist and social democrat Bent Rold Andersen, for not bringing people back into the labour market. The solution, according to Andersen, was to further integrate the contribution-based system into the welfare state (Christensen 2012a: 515). In the 1950s, Mobility strategies such as travel support, help finding accommodation and moving jobs to the rural areas, combined with

Demand strategies of regional investments, were introduced to address so-called “unemployment islands” (*arbejdsløshedsoer*) (Christensen 2012a: 500-1). In conjunction with enlarging the set of mobility enhancing instruments, in 1967 the state took over the placement service and control of the unemployed in the so-called *Arbejdsformidlingen* (the Placement Service) that had hitherto been in the hands of the unemployment funds, that is, the unions (Christensen 2012a: 526-7). The post-war period moreover spurred the idea that the labour market, as a result of the increasing mechanisation of the agrarian sector, would need fewer unskilled workers, which resulted in apprenticeship and training schemes targeting unskilled, unemployed workers (Christensen 2012b: 505-9).

The oil crises, rising energy prices and inflation, a huge deficit on the balance of trade and rising unemployment provided the context for the debate and reforms of *dagpengesystemet* in the 1970s. However, unlike in France where the funds were mainly contribution-based, the predominantly tax-based funds in Denmark were not put under the same immediate financial pressure. Even though *dagpengesystemet* had lost a key Insurance component, it was still qualified and problematised by means of the city of Insurance. However, just like the state’s improvement of compensation provided space for other qualifications and instruments, the Insurance debates and sedimentations in the 1970s and 80s would later come to serve as a kind of Trojan horse.

Two examples of this dynamic are worth noting since they came to set the scene for the later reform of LAAP. The first example relates to the possibility of the abuse of rights in the city of Insurance. In the 1980s, criticism of speculative behaviour of both employees and employers soared. On the one hand, employers were accused of strategically laying people off during vacation periods and bad weather conditions. On the other hand, employees were suspected of permanently working part-time with a compensation supplement, while those serving a notice period were suspected of only subscribing to the unemployment insurance once the notice was given (Christensen 2013: 552-4; see also Jensen 2008: 262). As a response, the period of membership required to be eligible for

*Insurance /
Mobility*

compensation was extended. Also, contributions from both employees and employers were again raised (Ibid.: 552-564). However, the problem with speculative behaviour also provided scope for Mobility's critique since they accentuated the obligation to work *a priori* and be at the disposal of the labour market in order to receive *dagpenge* (unemployment benefits)

Insurance

The second example illustrates an instrument that was mainly justified in accordance with the city of Insurance, but could also be glimpsed in other cities. When the social democrats in 1978 proposed the so-called "job offer plan" (*jobtilbudssordningen*), it qualified it as a way to inhibit the growing number of long-term unemployed who were about to lose the right to compensation from entering the state's cash benefit system for uninsured unemployed – *kontanthjælpsystemet*ⁱ (Christensen 2013: 549). By granting the unemployed 9 months of subsidised work, they would regain their right to another 2½ years of compensation, which would be succeeded by a second offer (Kolstrup 2013: 201). This was also the main function the job offers came to serve up until the 1990s (Christensen 2013: 551).

Mobility

However, the job offers contained other qualifications that would later be mobilised to criticise the same instrument. Firstly, the most obvious was also the most implicit: by offering a job, the unemployed were put to work and hence worthy in the city of Mobility. They would be "activated"; a term that would gradually become common in connection with the offers.ⁱⁱ

Paternal

Secondly, the offers were also qualified in Paternal terms. DA, the employers' confederation, supported the job offers; but only in their capacity as "rehabilitation positions" (*genoptræningsstillinger*) (Christensen 2013: 550). Thirdly, the job offers had a distinct Investment element, since the jobs had to fit the qualifications of the unemployed. An element which was strengthened later by replacing the second job offer with a (re-)education offer (Kolstrup 2013: 201).

ⁱ Directly translated to 'the cash help system'

ⁱⁱ The usage of "activation" as a collective designation for the instruments aiming to bring the unemployed from support to employment gained a footing in relation to the introduction of the so-called Youth allowance (*Ungedylse*) in 1990 (Torfing 2004: 171; Kolstrup 2013: 214ff). See also chapter 7, p. 167.

Fourthly, the job offers were seen as a strategy of job creation to increase Demand. Hence the jobs should be “productive and useful for society” (Christensen 2013: 557). Finally, the arrangement prepared *dagpengesystemet* for a redistributive qualification which would later serve as both a justification and object of critique. First of all the job offers had to be paid according to the collective agreements and should be “extraordinary” in order not to push wages down. However, the job offers also had an unintended consequence. The job offers had extended the total compensation period to around 9 years, making it resemble something like the ‘utopian’ idea of a guaranteed “citizen’s income” (*borgerløn*), which had gained intellectual and public impetus since the publication of the best-selling book *Oprør fra midten* (‘Revolt from the centre’) in 1978. Criticising one of the core dimensions in the city of Demand, the three authors, a poet, a politician and a scientist, predicted the coming of the “zero growth society” and called for a “society of economic equality” based on a minimum guaranteed citizen’s income (Meyer et al. 1978; see also Petersen et al. 2013: 100f).

Demand

Redistribution

The job offers were, thus, embedded with tensions: they should be productive (Demand) but at the same time extraordinary while rewarding equally (Redistribution); they should provide the unemployed with new rights to compensation (Insurance) while matching their qualifications to increase their employability (Investment); and they should activate the inactive (Mobility) and rehabilitate the incompetent (Paternal).

THE BLACK BOX OF “STRUCTURAL UNEMPLOYMENT”

Apart from the specific Insurance-related problems, *dagpengesystemet* became part of a more general debate questioning the capacities and goals of the welfare state in relation to the labour market, which would frame the work of two governmental commissions leading up to the reform of LAAP. In contrast with France, the Danish economy was booming in the mid-1980s. Nevertheless, unemployment only modestly decreased to around 8 percent in 1987, when the economy abruptly returned to recession. 1987 was also a year with radical wage rises. Leading economists were interpreting the

events as a problem of “structural unemployment” (Larsen and Andersen 2009). This explanation entailed a radical questioning of Keynesian Demand policies’ narrow focus on conjectural unemployment. The reason why unemployment had remained relatively high was because it had reached the threshold of what two economists earlier had labelled the NIRU (non-inflationary rate of unemployment) (Modigliani and Papademos 1975)¹. In a situation like this, Demand and consumption oriented policies would only lead to increasing inflation and hence to a situation of co-existing economic stagnation, often labelled “stagflation” (Torfing 2004). In 1989, structural unemployment became a central concern for the centre-right government in its white paper on the “structural problems of the labour market” (Ibid.: 181).

While the structural unemployment explanation was clear in its criticism of the city of Demand, it was unsettled on what kind of ‘structures’ were causing it. Besides Demand, the new qualification of unemployment rested beyond the scope of, and often in contradiction with, the cities of Insurance and Redistribution. Yet, as will be evident in the following sections, the cities of Investment, Incentives, Mobility and Paternalism could all be mobilised to identify unemployment-producing structures.

In 1991 two governmental commissions were set up to look into how to tackle the problem of structural unemployment. The first, named the Social Commission (*Socialkommissionen*) and chaired by Aase Olesen, the former minister of social affairs from the Social Liberal Party, Radikale Venstre, was given the task of evaluating the role of benefit levels, including *dagpenge*, with the aim of getting more of the adult population included in the labour market. The second commission, the so-called Zeuthen Committee, would address the “structural problems” specifically with regards to *dagpengesystemet* concerning the “activation” of the unemployed and the financing of the system.

¹ Modigliani and Papademos’ theory was a refinement of Edmun Phelps and Milton Friedman’s theories of a “natural rate of unemployment” that radically questioned the Philips curve’s alleged inverse relation between the rate of inflation and unemployment (Phelps 1968; Friedman 1968).

Much of the existing analyses of the Danish labour market reforms have focused on the construction of this need to reform through the discourse of structural unemployment (Cox 2001; Torfing 2004; Larsen and Andersen 2009). Without questioning its importance, it is only by analysing the process in which the broad discourse is turned into specific changes in instruments and institutions that the moral consequences and plurality of the shift become visible. Further, the idea of structural employment is inadequate for understanding the debate leading up to LAAP. Firstly, as mentioned above, the city of Demand was not only questioned by the idea of structural unemployment, but also from ideas predicting zero-growth, thus countering the belief that unemployment could be effaced. In accordance with the city of Redistribution, ideas of zero growth would advocate the sharing of labour or a citizen's income and thereby allow people to remain outside the labour market. Secondly, the idea of reducing unemployment by increasing Demand was still alive. The idea of structural unemployment did not exclude the presence of conjunctural unemployment, but rather relativised it. Finally, the scholarship on the "discourse" of structural unemployment tends to overlook that, as seen in the previous section, a lot of 'structural' explanations of unemployment were sedimented before the discourse entered.

*Redistribution /
critique of
Demand*

The following four sections highlight key test situations evolving from the debate surrounding the initial law to the adoption of the final law around a year later. Hence, the following will zoom in on four test situations with differing pivotal points. The first concerns a dispute around the Social Commission's proposal of a 'third labour market'. The debate concerns the role of wages and labour in relation to the threshold to the labour market. The second test situation concerns the problem of financing *dagpengesystemet* that followed the publication of the findings from the Zeuthen Committee. The third concerns how the intermediary periods of job offers are criticised and gradually re-qualified. The final test concerns the use of leave schemes in order to create entry points for the unemployed.

QUALIFYING LABOUR AND WAGES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE LABOUR MARKET

Demand

As mentioned above, Demand qualifications were not excluded from the debate. For instance, an economist from the Social Commission estimated that “the use of traditional economic policy could, as a matter of course, reduce unemployment from the current level, 11 percent, to somewhere between 7 and 8 percent”.¹ Likewise, the centre-right as well as centre-left recognised the city, but whereas the Social Democrats would use “long-term investments in the societal infrastructure and expand employment in selected parts of the public sector”, the government recommended increasing consumption through taxation and credit policies². In the temporary law, the city of Demand sedimented in the setting up of ten so-called geographical “enterprise zones” (*erhvervszoner*) where businesses creating jobs would be rewarded with favourable conditions, such as tax reductions and faster case work by authorities.³ The government justified the measure as a “saline injection to particularly exposed areas” and emphasised that it was a “temporary measure (...) to immediately add renewed growth”.⁴ Meanwhile, unions and social democrats were criticising the “enterprise oases” from the city of Redistribution for making employees “outlawed” by “suspending all labour market laws so businesses can do as they please with employees and the environment”.⁵

Redistribution

Redistribution / Investment / Mobility

The city of Redistribution was also mobilised to justify a solution to the lack of jobs, namely distributing work better. For instance, the newly established “Unemployment Party” argued that all the “resources that were spent on the remedy of unemployment and repairing the damage” should be used for compensating the wage loses caused by work time reduction (see also Jensen 2008: 303).⁶ Unlike in France, reduced work time would not be used as an instrument in Denmark. However, the temporary law did include an instrument that aimed towards distributing work. The so-called “*jobrotation* scheme” would expand the rights of wage earners to take leave on the condition that the leave-taker was replaced by an unemployed person. The leave, on the other hand, should be used for either education (Investment) or child care, hereby freeing day care resources (Mobility).⁷

The central concern of the debate, however, was the question of “structural unemployment”. Concurrently with the negotiations of the temporary law, the Social Commission would publish its first discussion paper, entitled “Selection for life” (*Sortering for livet*) (Socialkommissionen 1992). The commission presented a somewhat sociological explanation that went well beyond its primary task of investigating the impact of benefits. The report diagnosed a “polarised society with a soaring group of marginalised and excluded people”.⁸ The commission qualified the group mainly through the Investment, Incentives and Paternal cities. Firstly, the group had an educational deficit compared to the included (Investment). Statistics showed that the risk of unemployment for the unskilled was twice as high as for those with a vocational education, and argued that “a life with unemployment and benefits is inherited”.⁹ It also spoke of a “lost generation” of young people in the early 1980’s recession that had never managed to get a hold in the labour market.¹⁰ Although they were victims of stagnation, Demand policies had failed to re-include the group. Social democrats were worried:

Also, we must do something for their children. Elementary school teachers already speak of new behaviour from children from homes where none of the parents have ever had a job. It’s a family pattern never seen before in history.¹¹

Along Investment thinking, the Commission proposed a special education for the “non-academic” students.¹²

However, according to the Social Commission, as well as the government and employers, the identification of an educational deficit was not necessarily an Investment problem. Rather, on the one hand it was a problem of the level of benefits (Incentives), and on the other hand a Paternal problem related to wage levels. With regards to the former, the question of whether benefits were reducing the incentive to work was extensively put to the test by the commission. The general conclusion, however, was that lack of Incentives was not a problem for the large majority of the population receiving benefits. However, for certain “marginal groups”, young people and single parents, employment could result in reduced income.¹³ The government mobilised the findings as proof

*Incentives /
critique of
Insurance*

of an unemployment insurance system that was “very generous” and where the “high degree of coverage (...) deprives the lowest-paid the economic incentives to work”.¹⁴ Unions, here the LO (*Landsorganisationen*)¹⁵, would radically criticise the Incentives premises:

Believing that by making the lives of people sufficiently miserable they will get themselves a job does not hold water.¹⁶

*Paternal /
Investment*

With regards to the Paternal qualification, it was not (primarily) benefit levels, but rather wage levels on the other side of the (un)employment threshold that explained unemployment.

Many of them are tempted, after ending secondary school, by the fair wages of an unskilled worker and thereby do not even consider placing themselves in the danger zone of unemployment.¹⁷

The idea of the unknowing Paternal subject was thus aligned with the Investment common good of education.

*Paternal /
Mobility /
critique of
Investment*

However, the Paternal qualification also involved a more radical solution that would run counter to the idea of Investment. The Social Commission was sceptical of the capability of the education system to prevent exclusion and produce equal chances. While 80 percent of children from parents with superior positions would get a qualifying education, the same would only apply to one third of children from unemployed parents.¹⁸

And even if you become a lucky break from family tradition and get an extended education, there’s a still a larger risk of becoming unemployed if your parents don’t have one. So even if you initially overcome the social heritage, your parents still rub off.¹⁹

Further, the problem of this group was not simply external mechanisms of exclusion, but certain self-reinforcing mechanisms within the group. The chairman of the commission had insisted on a “No work, no money (*yde-for-at-nyde*) attitude”, which was somewhat ineffective with this group of people, who “were incapable of taking care of themselves, let alone of others”.²⁰ The commission would hence raise the Mobility good of becoming active as a means to encourage responsibility in the Paternal sense. Since the commission did not see any demand for this group on the labour market, there was no reason for them to be at its disposal. Further, the commission

did not see much potential for investing in their employability. Hence, again combining Mobility and Paternal ideas, it proposed the establishment of a “third labour market”:

The advantage of the alternative or third labour market is that the passively supported become active and hereby increase the welfare for themselves and society, gain larger self-respect and relieve the system from a number of control functions, such as whether the unemployed are at the disposal of the labour market.²¹

Similarly, the centre-left newspaper *Politiken* recommended a labour market in “several speeds” with “special zones” of “jobs where the payroll costs and demands make room for the weakest”.²² Instead of increasing the employability (the Investment solution), the unemployed would get a job as well as a wage that would fit their low competence and function in non-market conditions. They would be active (Mobility) and even though their lack of competence would not be rewarded, it would somehow be accepted (Paternal). Later in the reform process, the new centre-left government pursued this idea of “how groups without full work capacity, and hence are not at the labour market’s disposal, can get the opportunity in well-defined employment areas to take on minor tasks without deductions in their benefits”.²³

Everyone must have the chance of a life where you experience that there is a need for you and that you are good at something. But – the responsibility for how you want to live is your own.²⁴

The problem, hence, was no longer that the unemployed were excluded from the labour market, but that they were excluded from working and from being responsible.

When the idea of a third labour market was introduced, it was considered highly controversial because it breached with the premises of the diagnosis of structural unemployment. The Economic Council, for instance, warned “expressly” against a “permanent ‘third labour market’ where jobs are protected against the regular market economy”²⁵:

Paternal

Such an artificial labour market (...) risks creating a situation where the two sides of industry neglect the real size of unemployment and hence agree on untenable wage increases.²⁶

In other words, the ‘third labour market’ would not increase the supply or ‘reserve army’ of labour and lower the NIRU. The ‘third labour market’ was also criticised on moral grounds, mainly for not living up to the responsabilising requirements of the Paternal city. For instance, a politician from the social liberal party Radikale Venstre wrote:

People with a lack of skills and opportunities for matching the requirement of the labour market of 37 hours of intensive and high-skilled work a week put to one side. The situation now is so absurd that everybody talks about an alternative or third labour market - in reality a second-rate labour market where the deviants are placed under the responsibility of the public authorities.²⁷

Hence, the solution, still within the Paternal city, was to somehow adjust the wages so that they would correspond to the productivity of the group. An example of such an instrument, which all centre-right parties and the employers justified, was the so-called “phase-in salary” (*indslningsløn*); a minor wage targeting unemployed youth in particular.²⁸ The lower wage was first and foremost a matter of emancipating the unemployed according to the Paternal city. DA thus argued that “the phase-in salary should be introduced for the sake of the weaker groups, such as the young or long-term unemployed with little attachment to the labour market – not for the sake of businesses.”²⁹

*Paternal /
critique of
Investment*

Proponents of both the ‘third labour market’ and the ‘phase-in salary’ typically wished to create non-skilled jobs for the supposedly non-skilled, marginalised groups of unemployed people. As in the case of the *jobrotation* scheme, training was only an instrument for the wage earners. Both were thus disregarding the value of Investing in the unemployed. If the unemployed were to increase their worth, DA argued, it ought to be through their own actions:

What you can do is be decisive for what you get. It is that simple when you are young and about to enter the labour market. ‘What you can do’ is a combination of natural preconditions, wisdom and experiences. The latter is

especially important when you want to carve a place on the labour market. Experiences grow and alongside you become more worthy to the enterprise that has bought your labour.³⁰

The Paternal tension with the city of Investment was exemplified in a comment from the minister of education from Venstre, who criticised the “misunderstanding that unemployment is the result of the unemployed not being sufficiently talented”:

It is not education that creates jobs but rather the other way round.(...) Of course the two sides of industry would like the state to take care of an increasing part of the labour force and ‘look after’ the young at the taxpayers’ expense. (...) Better by far if the labour market demanded a bit more work by reducing the wage increases for vulnerable groups and limit educational and professional barriers as well as rigid wage systems.³¹

Mobilising the city of Redistribution, the ‘phase-in salary’ was strongly criticised by social democrats who “refused to support a policy of increasing wage inequality”³², as well as by LO:

Redistribution

If we lower the wage in the extreme and take away all social goods, we could create an underground economy that would flourish as nicely as in Hong Kong. But I don’t feel inclined to believe that shoe shiner jobs and other unqualified jobs ought to contribute to solving the problems of Danish society.³³

As a way of accommodating this criticism of the ‘phase-in salary’ and make it more “digestible”, an economist proposed to use “tax subsidies; when businesses pay salaries according to qualifications, it is replenished by the tax system so the result is a socially acceptable total income.”³⁴

Despite the fact that none of the concrete proposals of the ‘phase-in salary’ or ‘third labour market’ were implemented, the temporary law introduced instruments that corresponded to their logics. For instance, employers were given the opportunity of getting a long-term unemployed person “on probation” for two weeks, while the said person would still receive *dagpenge*.³⁵ In addition, all insured unemployed people under 25 would be offered a job after six months with a salary corresponding to their *dagpenge*.³⁶ The law also introduced a so-called “foals scheme” (*følordning*) where the

young uninsured would work in public jobs for a reduced “training salary” (*opføringsløn*).³⁷

FINANCING PUT TO THE TEST

Alongside the more general debate initiated by the Social Commission, the Zeuthen Committee published recommendations that specifically targeted the “structural problems” of *dagpengeordningen* (Udredningsudvalget 1992). Part of the work concerned the financing of the system. All the committee’s recommendations addressed the problem of ‘structural unemployment’, but through mobilising ideas and instruments from the city of Insurance.

Insurance

In line with the reasoning of the diagnosis of structural unemployment, the Zeuthen Committee was concerned with how to “make unemployment more visible”.³⁸ The reasoning was that if the unions negotiating wages could more clearly see the negative consequences of (too large) wage increases (inflation, reduced competitiveness for firms, and in the end unemployment), the wage levels could be stabilised. The committee suggested using “differentiated contributions”, making the individual contributions depend on the risk of unemployment in the given profession or industry.³⁹ Employees enrolled in funds with a low risk of unemployment would hence pay lower fees than those with high levels of unemployment.

The solution nourished an already existing debate on whether some industries were (ab)using *dagpengeordningen* more than others. The employers in the financial sector had complained that industries with short notice terms were “tapping more into *dagpengeordningen* than we do” and hence called for differentiated contributions according to the length of the terms of notice.⁴⁰

Redistribution

The idea of differentiated contributions was criticised, however, from the city of Redistribution due to the fact that membership of the Danish funds was voluntary. Even the centre-right newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* noted that the outcome of differentiated contributions would be that “all those with low risk within the existing unemployment funds will try to move to funds with low risk” thereby pulling them together in different “risk pools”, which would “probably have an unacceptable effect in terms of distribution”.⁴¹

Similarly, but in stronger language, the Social Democrats stated “it is anti-social. Those, who are exposed the most to unemployment shouldn’t pay the most”.⁴²

The Zeuthen Committee also sparked the old recurring issue of the employers’ abuse of insurance to lay off workers in ‘quiet’ periods. At the same time, the metal workers’ union claimed that around 170,000 layoffs a year simply functioned as “relief” for employers.⁴³ This justified the committee’s proposal to let employers pay for the second day of unemployment, which was strongly opposed by the employers themselves. For instance, employers in the construction industry argued that short-term layoffs were due to weather conditions:

It is worrying that distinguished economists can believe that master builder Hansen⁴⁴ can control God and the weather. Expectations of this kind ought to belong to the faculty of theology.⁴⁵

Another shelved Insurance proposal of differentiated contributions came from the DA, who wanted an “actual insurance system” by allowing the high earners to pay a larger fee in order to get a compensation closer to the wage level of their industry.⁴⁶

While the solutions from the city of Insurance were shelved, the idea that there was a need to make unemployment more ‘visible’ for the two sides of industry by letting them contribute more survived. The final finance reform of *dagpengesystemet*, which officially became part of a tax reform and not *LAP*, is noteworthy because it provided a kernel that would requalify the role of Insurance. I will come back to this after the following section.

REQUALIFYING THE ROLE OF JOB OFFERS

While the discussions of financing took place, the job offers scheme was crucially put to the test by various critiques. The first, based on a redistributive qualification, concerned the employers’ motivation for offering these jobs. A number of stories in the media showed how both private and public employers were using unemployed people enrolled in the job offer scheme as regular labour. In the private sector, the phenomenon

Insurance

Redistribution

was especially widespread in the restaurant business, using what were known as “cheap girls” as permanent staff.⁴⁷ An unemployed person working in a job offer reported that she “applied for work down here and was told that [she] could get a subsidy from [her] municipality”.⁴⁸ According to the restaurant business workers’ union, it was not a singular case:

Today it is unfortunately the exception if an employer hires an unemployed person with wage subsidies as extraordinary labour. They are hired as cheap labour for tasks that are absolutely necessary. And by constantly renewing the unemployed who are temporarily employed, in reality a part of the regular labour force is replaced by the unemployed.⁴⁹

An economist from the Zeuthen Committee labelled the job offers “badly disguised state subsidies to businesses” since the “long-term unemployed in job offers were stealing jobs from the permanently employed”.⁵⁰

Also, in the public sector the job offers seemed to serve a similar function. Social democrats called it “grotesque when the municipality of Copenhagen lays off 2,000 of the permanent staff in order to make room for 1,500 long-term unemployed”.⁵¹ According to HK Kommunal, a union representing local authority employees, “it often happens that local authority employees are fired, and then two years later are back in the same job as long-term unemployed.”⁵²

A way of accommodating the critique, the then Conservative minister of labour suggested, was to tie it to the *jobrotation* scheme, hereby avoiding “that others are pushed aside, once the unemployed move in”.⁵³

The second critique of job offers concerned their function in relation to the unemployed. As seen above, their main legitimating function, when the scheme was created, was to make sure the unemployed would keep their right to compensation. This Insurance justification was now criticised, which allowed for a complete requalification of the content of the job offers. Qualified Paternally, Venstre accused the rationale of the job offers for having “the underlying purpose of bringing people back on passive relief”.⁵⁴ Terms like “incubator youth” (*kuvøseungdom*) and the “put-away-factory” flourished.⁵⁵ The chairman of Radikale Venstre, Marianne Jelved joined in:

I find it plainly offensive (...) when young people can be ‘slipped’ into *dagpengesystemet* through artificial municipal employment projects. Hereafter, everyone thinks that everything in the garden is lovely. (...) It is an easy solution, but, to me, at the same time, an indecent solution.⁵⁶

The Social Commission spoke of putting an end to “riding on the eternal merry-go-round of unemployment”.⁵⁷ A way of stopping it was to remove the right to requalify for compensation, which was currently tied to the job offers.

The right to requalify was also criticised from the city of Investment, which argued that the job offers should serve the purpose of qualifying the unemployed to become employable for a regular job. According to two economists from the committee:

Investment

The right to requalify is making it difficult to advance and ‘tailor’ the activation offers and it implies the danger of, in practice, limiting the aim of activation in practice to securing the unemployed another turn in *dagpengesystemet*.⁵⁸

The risk was also related to the employability of the unemployed:

During a prolonged course of unemployment there is a risk that the unemployed gradually loses qualifications, job training and self-confidence. Hence, it often becomes more difficult to bring the person back to lasting employment the later he/she is ‘activated’, which speaks in favour of advancing the activation offers for particularly vulnerable groups.⁵⁹

The Investment now not only qualified the insiders on the labour market, but also the unemployed. Although the term ‘activation’ would henceforth stick to job offers and other schemes targeting the unemployed, the strengthening of educational Investments would question the singular Mobility aim of ‘activating’ the unemployed.

*Investment /
Critique of
Mobility*

The tension between Investment and Mobility became clearest after the beginning of 1993 when the Social Democrats formed a coalition government with Radikale Venstre and two other centre-right parties. It was hence up to the new government to shape the reform that would replace the temporary laws that were adopted less than a year before. As a result of the criticism, it was clear that the job offers were to be part of the reform.

However, although the new Social Democrat minister of labour, Jytte Andersen, considered the job offers an “evil on the labour market” she would not abolish the scheme “because, you see, if we did that, the unemployed would be kicked out of *dagpenge*systemet after two and a half years. Today, the job offers are a condition for keeping *dagpenge*.”⁶⁰ Instead, the minister wanted “to find better ways of making use of [the *dagpenge*]. We must not activate the unemployed. We must activate the funds so they can be used for generating employment.”⁶¹

The minister hence wanted to abolish the requirement (based on Insurance) that hindered the unemployed from making use of a job offer before their entitlement to compensation was about to expire. At the same, she wanted to loosen the Mobility requirements of “being at the disposal of the labour market”; in practice, the demands to apply for a number of jobs every week:

In a situation with such high unemployment, we could turn a blind eye to the ones who have already received 50 rejections. For instance, today there are 200 shoe factory workers but only 12 jobs remain. Today the shoe factory workers must, alternately, apply for the same jobs. It's utter nonsense. Some should perhaps be re-trained while others can use their spare time on culture or in the housing association.⁶²

The minister hereby justified a solution closer to the cities of Demand and Redistribution. The city of Demand was further used as a justification for the responsibility of the government to create jobs:

The labour market reform cannot stand alone. It presupposes that the wheels start turning as well as the creation of activity in society, otherwise it won't function as intended.⁶³

By the same logic, the metal workers' union had urged the previous government to “spend time on creating jobs rather than simply ‘stirring the pot’”.⁶⁴

The Demand qualification of the situation, in addition, provided scope for the city of Redistribution. At least in this period of recession, the unemployed should be allowed to do things which are first and foremost worthy tasks related to being a citizen. Even education could be qualified

like that, as evident in SiD'sⁱ, the largest union representing unskilled workers, critique of "artificial jobs":

People should have the right to choose an education that provides them joy for the rest of their lives. It's better to educate people to become whole persons than qualify them narrowly for jobs which don't exist anyway.⁶⁵

The technicians' union went further and wanted to "free the unemployed from being at the disposal to the labour market", abolish the job-offers and offer all the unemployed an unconditional "basic benefit".⁶⁶

However, in the ministers' response to the latter proposal, it became clearer that there were limits to the critique of Mobility:

What they want, after all, is that the unemployed can withdraw from being available and then almost introduce a guaranteed basic income. That, I think, is dangerous to our responsibility towards the unemployed.⁶⁷

The requirement to be available to the labour market was hence, according to the minister, a legitimate way of responsabilising the governing authorities. Remaining in the city of Mobility, she wanted them to "attach greater importance to the quality of the job search rather than the quantity".⁶⁸ Meanwhile, she wanted to abandon the unemployed's right to employ themselves in "unconventional areas" which, (dis)qualified Paternally, "taste too much of care" (*omsorg*).⁶⁹

The government's solution was, in something that was reminiscent of the ideas of the 'third labour market', to establish "flexible employment areas" by "activating *dagpenge* (...) in employment projects on the condition that some of the unemployed, without optimal labour power, are hired".⁷⁰ In her justification, the minister would oscillate between Mobility and Paternal cities. The fact that these projects would not "create export trade" was not an issue:

We must live up to the obligation that people must have a reason to get out of bed. One can be annoyed about the people sitting on the benches with their big dogs and drinking beers. They've had some opportunities, but

*Mobility
critique of
Redistribution*

*Mobility /
Paternal*

ⁱ Specialarbejderforbundet, today part of 3F.

perhaps no demands were made on them. Yes, of course, we too have a responsibility here, but I believe that the reorientation to *quid pro quo* (*noget for noget*) is a timely arrival.⁷¹

The lack of responsible behaviour was thus rooted in the lack of conditions and requirements. Not only would the ‘new’ job offers ‘mobilise’ the unemployed by giving them “a reason to get out of bed”, they would also serve the Mobility of the working population by carrying out tasks such as “service personnel at train stations or ‘fever patrols’, nursing sick children for parents with a job outside the home”.⁷²

Investment

It was not only the Mobility and Paternal cities that provided justification for the further use of coercion. If the activation ought to be “tailored”, the rights not only had to be less “rigid” (*firkantede*) but also become “duties”:

First of all we must set in much earlier and the offers must be targeted at the labour market-related needs of the unemployed individual. Not all have the same needs. In my opinion it must be a right for the unemployed individual, but also a duty to ensure that the individual receives the targeted offer.⁷³

The fusion of rights and duties would thus answer the Investment problem of how to ensure that the unemployed invest in themselves and make use of their (equalising) opportunities.

The plurality of the qualification of job offers took it very far from the initial function of requalifying the unemployed for compensation. Although the government still justified the ‘non-abolishment’ of the scheme with the city of Insurance, the new qualifications would gradually sediment and turn them into something else. The final LAAP is the first proof of this dynamic and thus marks a ‘tipping point’.

THE AMBIGUOUS WORTH OF *JOBROTATION*

As mentioned above, the temporary law had introduced various leave schemes, named *jobrotation*, to provide entry points for the unemployed. A year after, only a fraction of the expected participants had made use of the schemes. Unions still saw a great potential to turn the question of activation into a matter of labour Redistribution:

If only five percent of the labour force is permanently in *jobrotation*, we can create 100,000 new jobs.⁷⁴

Earlier a Social Democrat mayor had also argued for the use of *jobrotation* as a way of “better distributing the remaining labour”⁷⁵. In addition, it would “reduce the number of people who ought to have a job offer”.⁷⁶

According to the government, the brake holding back widespread usage of the scheme was the employers’ requirement to replace the employee on leave with an unemployed person. Although it was still justified for Redistribution, the abandonment of the requirement displaced the scope of the scheme. Its target was no longer necessarily the unemployed, but to “prevent layoffs”.⁷⁷ Hence the scheme was decoupled from the unemployed while providing Investment in the further training of employees, or possibly for an unconditional “Sabbatical leave”. The latter would function as a kind of Mobility reward that was only granted to those with at least three years of employment. The Mobility qualification was also evident in the overall justification of the new *jobrotation*:

*Investment /
Mobility /
Redistribution*

We must try to make the labour market more flexible (*smidigh*), thus getting more rotation and increasing dynamism in society.⁷⁸

But the sabbatical leave was also problematic to the work ethic of the city of Mobility. An employment consultant provided a curious solution to this problem:

For better or for worse, work is at the centre of an adult life. Outside of it - in weekends and holidays - are short periods in which one, pure and simple, is ‘off duty’. If you have the same conception of leave, it is understandable that a leave of 13 weeks instead of 3 is no longer that attractive.⁷⁹

The consultant hence suggested establishing “leave counselling” with the unemployed advising people in work on “how to set up goals and plan how to create growth and development in a period of leave”.⁸⁰ The solution, however, did not sediment in the final LAAP legislation.

SEDIMENTATION: TESTS, SUBJECTS

By encompassing the four tests presented above, it probably comes as no surprise that the final reform adopted by the majority governmentⁱ consisted of a rather complex set of instruments and laws.

Regarding financing, the ideas of strengthening the Insurance elements were abandoned in favour of a tax reform. Whereas the state's contributions to the insurance funds had been part of its core budget, they were now separated into three funds dealing with *dagpenge*, activation and sick pay respectively. The contributions would be collected by a special "labour market contribution" (*arbejdsmarkedsbidrag*) from the gross earnings that would be adjusted every two years (Folketinget 1993a). It would hence accommodate the wish of LO for an "economic connection between *dagpenge* and activation". In this way, the costs of unemployment were made visible, but at the same time it would also, from the perspective of the working population, allow further scrutiny and tests concerning the effects of activation.

*Mobility /
Investment /
Redistribution*

The pivotal elements of the reform, however, concerned activation, job offers and leave. With regards to the latter, the modification of the scheme was much less a matter of distributing labour between people in work and the unemployed, and more an instrument to increase "dynamism" (Mobility), qualifications (Investment) and labour distribution with the aim of *preventing* people in work from becoming unemployed. Only the "Sabbath" obliged the employer to replace the employee with someone unemployed (Folketinget 1993c: § 9).

Investment

However, the leave schemes of education and child care were also granted to the unemployed. The educational leave gave the unemployed an Investment of up to a year's participation in a programme. While they still

ⁱ The reason why *Vestre* and the Conservative Party rejected the reform, although it contained an array of their own proposals, was primarily because they were never invited to the negotiations, which only took place between the four parties in government (Torfing 2004: 206).

received *dagpenge*, the period would not count within the period of entitlement (Folketinget 1993d: § 55).

The former two instruments, activation and job offers, would be integrated in a set up where, much like the French PARE, the enrolment begins with the formulation of an “individual action plan”. The plan describes the “employment goals of the unemployed”, outlining “activities to achieve the goals” by taking its departure “in the wishes and qualifications of the unemployed, considering the needs of the labour market” (Folketinget 1993b: § 11). At the same time, if the unemployed “without satisfactory reason refuses to participate in the preparation of the action plan, or refuses an offer with reference to the action plan”, they cannot receive *dagpenge* (Folketinget 1993d: § 16). Next to the Insurance-based tests that look backwards (whether unemployment is self-inflicted) (Folketinget 1992: § 63), the LAAP introduces instruments that are “continuously revised” and hence with the permanent possibility of putting the present and future actions of the unemployed to the test; as did the already existing Mobility obligation to be “at the disposal of the labour market” (Folketinget 1992: §62), although the action plan allows a larger variety of instruments related to both the Paternal and Investment cities, and always involves the possibility of sanctions in case of refusal.

There are basically three possible “activities” within the action plan. The first is “job training”, which is similar to the existing job offers scheme, but with the difference that it can be introduced from day one and not only once the right to compensation is about to expire. Another notable change is that whereas the subsidised work previously requalified the unemployed for compensation, the job training now became part of the entitlement period (Folketinget 1993d: § 12, 21). The job training accommodates the city of Mobility, but in response to Redistribution criticism, the salary must be “according to collective agreements” and not “anti-competitive” (Folketinget 1993b: § 13, 14). The second activity is education, which can be either “ordinary educational activities” or a “specifically arranged educational programme” (Ibid.: § 16). The third activity is a “specifically arranged job training course”, which is only for the unemployed “who can

*Mobility /
Redistribution*

Investment

*Paternal /
Mobility*

only obtain employment under normal wage and working conditions with difficulty” (Ibid.: § 22). In other words, these are jobs for the incompetent of the Paternal city, consisting of work “which would otherwise not be carried out by ordinary paid labour” (Ibid.).

LAAP also changed the periods of entitlement. At first sight, the change from a total period of around nine years to seven appears less radical. The changes with regards to what takes place *within* the period are radical, however. Firstly, the distinction between periods of compensation and periods of work (e.g., job offers) that requalify the unemployed for compensation is dissolved. Instead, the entitlement period is divided into two “part periods” of four and three years. The first period should consist of at least one year of the abovementioned activities, based on the action plan. In contrast, in the second period, “efforts are made for (...) full time activities” (Ibid.: § 33). If this is not possible, the unemployed should “receive an offer of employment of an average of 20 hours” (Ibid.: § 34). This plain condition of working takes away the Insurance qualification of the unemployed in this period. They are no longer compensated, but exclusively rewarded for their behaviour, which is evaluated according to how they are qualified. Do they have Investment potential, are they simply having difficulties putting themselves at the disposal of the labour market (Mobility), or are they unemployable with little potential (Paternal)? Hence, the unemployed are continuously put to the test; a test that, as the law states, is based on “judgement” (*skøn*) (Ibid.: § 3). If an instrument fails, the unemployed are requalified, action plans are revised, and another instrument, or “combination” of instruments (Ibid.: § 25), is tested. The experimental character of the new arrangement is underlined by the fact that the unemployed may be offered other “trial and development initiatives” apart from the activities listed above (Ibid.: § 26).

Hence, by requalifying a few instruments with relatively minor adjustments, LAAP tipped the whole *dagpenge-systemet* towards the ‘active society’. This is not to say that *dagpenge-systemet* from one day to the next was ‘active’ or ‘activated’, but rather that it was now *staged* for consecutive tests and

transformations that brought it, and the unemployed, closer to the ‘active society’.

This has certainly been the case in Denmark after LAAP. Since 1993 all talk about job sharing and a guaranteed citizen’s income have died away (Kolstrup 2014: 228). Rather, consecutive reforms have increased Incentives by shortening the entitlement period to two years, strengthening obligations to be available and geographically mobile, and speeding up and intensifying activation measures (Christensen and Petersen 2014). Reforms since 2003 have toned down the educational possibilities in favour of Incentives and Mobility (Ibid.: 644, 662). The reduction of the entitlement period was seriously put to the test in the aftermath of the North Atlantic financial crisis, but it only resulted in minor changes and intensifications of other cities that drove the path towards the ‘active society’. Although a reform in 2012 temporarily increased the entitlement period by half a year, its main ‘solution’ to the unemployed in danger of losing the right to entitlement was more intense and personalised instruments (from the city of Mobility) in the form of a “job alert”, giving the unemployed a right to fast and extraordinary help finding a job (Ibid.: 705-7).

Part III

Intensification,
displacements

This final part of the thesis presents two reforms that address the problem of unemployment in different ways, but reach beyond the scope of the insurance and contribution-based systems. Whereas the two reforms in part II could be seen as ‘tipping points’ within these systems, the reforms in part III are rather modifications of systems that have already adjusted towards being more ‘active’ for several years. Both sets of reforms thus contain very little radical critique of the aim to make the governing/unemployed more active. The reforms thus intensify some of the dynamics that sediment in previous reforms. By *intensifying*, I mean a governing with more scope for the use of sanctions and coercion, an increasing will to avoid a *laissez-faire* approach to the unemployed, an increased attention towards the behaviour of the unemployed (both in evaluations of the governing and in the governing itself), and finally the institutionalisation of tests that are used to further diversify the governing of the unemployed and to sanction inappropriate behaviour.

While the reforms intensify the path towards the ‘active society’, they also exemplify different *displacements* within the path. The two reforms provide an interesting comparison between a reform that was mainly driven by ideas relating to the city of Incentives (the French case of RSA), and a reform driven by the city of Investment. However, none of the reforms are examples of a ‘pure’ mobilisation of a singular city; both cities shaped both reforms, alongside mainly the Mobility and Paternal cities.

The ‘intense’ reforms exemplify dynamics that were less visible in the reforms of part II. Firstly, the city of Insurance is not, and has for obvious reasons never been, sedimented to the same degree in the systems that target the uninsured, and hence does not shape and limit the qualification of the unemployed to the same degree. Instead, justifications of reforms in both cases entailed rather fierce criticism of the city of Redistribution as constraining or even inhibiting the emancipation of the unemployed. Although the city did not evaporate, it was marginalised in both cases to qualify issues beyond the actual governing, such as questions of financing. Secondly, the reforms also exemplify a dynamic in which the governing of unemployment is simultaneously a question of how to emancipate the

unemployed and a spectacle that suspiciously compares the behaviour of the unemployed to the morality of society in general. *Intensification* is thus reflected in an increasingly *intimate* governing with increasing and continuous attention towards the behaviour of the unemployed, both in order to emancipate and control them – the two aims often being impossible to separate. This dynamic is evident both in new instruments of screening, categorising, support, coercion and control, as well as in public attention towards the intimate life of the unemployed. AKGN is in this regard an extreme case of how the unemployed became ‘affairs’ of ‘intimate spectacles’.

Finally, the cases show how poverty among the uninsured unemployed can be qualified and put to the test in the ‘active society’. The threshold of poverty is highly ‘qualifiable’ by the Paternal, Mobility and Incentives cities, but on the other hand tend to exclude the morality of the city of Redistribution. Whereas the city of Redistribution would intervene directly in the phenomenon, poverty in the ‘active society’ becomes something that should be governed with attention to its effects on other dynamics. It can be governed too much and too little. Governing poverty in the city of Incentives is on the one hand a matter of ensuring that the unemployed are capable of playing the game of economic men on the labour market, and on the other ensuring that there are still sufficient incentives to work. In the Paternal city, governing poverty is about striking a balance between charity and not caring too much, which would fail to responsabilise the unemployed. In the city of Mobility, eradicating poverty may infringe upon society’s work ethic by accepting a lack of will to work. In the city of Investment, poverty is a potential problem to the idea of equal opportunities, especially for children, but it also raises the question of when inequality becomes an illegitimate matter of unequal opportunities, or a legitimate outcome of unequal talent as well as the will to use it.

6

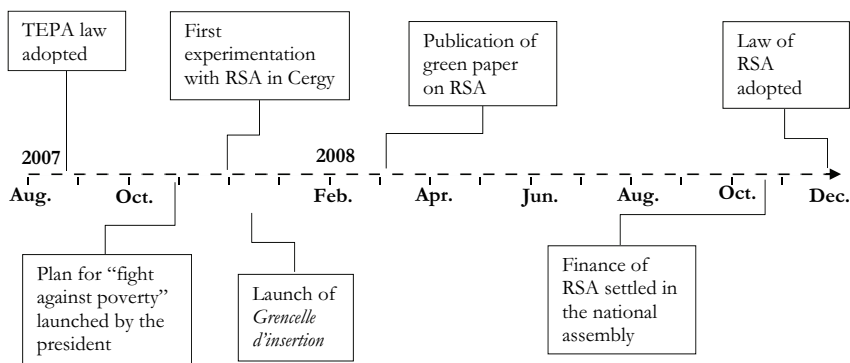
‘Income of active solidarity’

Putting the poor and low-paid work to the test in France

The reform process of the *Revenu de Solidarité active* (‘Income of active solidarity’, henceforth RSA) was launched at the end of 2007, which was at the beginning of Nicolas Sarkozy’s presidency. RSA replaced RMI (*Revenu minimum d’insertion*), which had been in place since 1988. RMI had both introduced a guaranteed minimum income and measures that would aim to reintegrate the recipient into society and/or the labour market, and was organised in a contract between the recipient and the state. RSA entailed a negative tax scheme to increase incentives for recipients to take low-paid part-time work, while also introducing a number of instruments and obligations with the aim of increasing the mobility of the unemployed. The reform also introduced intensified control of the financial behaviour of the household of the recipient. Figure 5 below provides an overview of the key events during the debate up to the passing of PARE.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section analyses the creation of RMI with a view to present how the scheme was the result of compromises between certain cities of unemployment, as well as look into subsequent modifications of the scheme. The next section addresses how the justification of RSA was closely linked to a specific critique of RMI where certain cities of unemployment were mobilised while others were denounced. The third section presents how the justifications of RSA interpellated and aimed to emancipate unemployed subjects belonging to a number of cities. The next three sections present three test situations in which, firstly, the behaviour of the recipient; secondly, the threshold between part-time and full-time work; and thirdly, the financing of RSA were put to the test. Finally, the chapter concludes with an analysis of the sedimentation of tests in the adopted law of RSA.

Figure 5: Timeline RSA



THE WILLS TO INSERTION

As mentioned in chapter 4, the French post-war unemployment system was mainly composed of corporatist contribution-based schemes (including *Assurance chômage*) and a tax-financed system of “assistance” for the most needy. The 1970s and 80s led to the establishment of state-led schemes of “solidarity” that targeted the increasing number of unemployed who had exhausted their rights and hence fell between the *Assurance chômage* and the system of assistance. Despite the introduction of solidarity schemes in the 1980s, there were still groups without any rights to support (Béraud and Eydoux 2011: 132). For instance, the most important scheme of solidarity, ASS (*allocation de solidarité spécifique*), required the unemployed to have acquired five years of work during the preceding ten years (Daniel and Tuchsirer 1999: 325). An influential report in 1987 estimated that around 400,000 people were without social protection cover (Palier 2002: 306).

Paternal

In the 1970s, the growing number of long-term unemployed were interpellated as “*les nouveaux pauvres*” subject to “social exclusion”. The term had already been introduced in 1965 by the sociologist Jules Klanfer (Beland 2007: 126). His book, *L'exclusion sociale*, provided a Paternal explanation as to why a large number of Frenchmen were decoupled from

the prosperous effects of the economy. Klanfer spoke of, for instance, “personal traits” that characterised the unemployed, such as “indecisiveness”, “lack of maturity” and an “absence of the notion of social and personal responsibility” (Klanfer 1965: 69).

In the late 1970s, social exclusion entered the political debate and was coupled with the idea of policies of *insertion*. Here social exclusion involved other qualifications. In accordance with the city of Redistribution, the problem of social exclusion was a problem of citizenship (Barbier and Fargion 2004: 442). In the French context, this involved social, economic and political participation; all of which the group was excluded from and where poverty was seen as the main barrier (Béland and Hansen 2000: 56). At the same time, the dynamics causing exclusion were seen as socially created and related to the city of Investment. For instance, the civil servant René Lenoir pointed to a number of phenomena related to urbanisation that resulted in “uprooting” (Lenoir 1974; cf. Beland 2007: 126). Lenoir criticised the educational system for being too uniform and privileging some intellectual qualities (competitiveness) while disfavouring others (creativity), thus treating children with the same IQ unfairly (Lenoir 1974: 25). The solution for Lenoir was to introduce policies that aimed at “prevention rather than cure” (Ibid.: 84).

*Redistribution /
Investment*

It was in this context that the non-contributory scheme of RMI was created in 1988. The scheme was meant for those with little to no income and incapable of working (Palier 2002: 323). The incapacity could be related to age and the mental and physical condition of the unemployed, but also the situation of the economy and employment. It thus disregarded the Paternal distinction between those who can (and should) work and those who cannot (cf. Castel 1995: 695).ⁱ RMI contained a guarantee of a minimum level of resources to anyone aged 25 or over by installing a means-tested differential benefit (Palier 2010a: 84). The aim of inclusion was institutionalised in a *contrat d'insertion* between the recipient and ‘society’, which was embodied in the social worker where the recipient committed

ⁱ See also chapter 3, p. 57

herself to engaging in a *projet d'insertion* (Ibid.). The activities encompassed health, housing, counselling and activities that targeted employment, such as job search and professional or educational internships (Barbier and Thérét 2001: 161-62; Palier 2002: 324).

*Redistribution /
Mobility /
Investment*

Embedded in the RMI reform, and in its aim of insertion, was thus a compromise between requalifying the unemployed for citizenship by means of Redistribution to make her work and become worthy in accordance with the city of Mobility, and providing her with better chances by Investing in her qualifications and skills. The tension resulted in debates on the conditionality of the benefit related to the recipient's behaviour (Barbier and Thérét 2001: 162). In practice, however, RMI mainly served the redistributive aim. The aim of up-skilling was challenged by the problem of a lack of resources and overloaded institutions, and only half of the recipients signed a contract and very few of those were sanctioned (Ibid.). When the scheme was evaluated three years after its initiation, it was judged effective in improving recipients' living conditions, while the Mobility and Investment effects of inclusion in the labour market were limited (Ibid.: 168-69).

Incentives

However, RMI was also qualified and shaped in accordance with a fourth city, namely Incentives. In 1974 the economist Lionel Stoleru, in his book *Vaincre la pauvreté*, claimed that the problem of poverty was not in contraction to developed welfare states but correlated with it (Stoleru 1974). In the book he presented the idea of a "negative tax", i.e., a benefit that gradually decreases until a certain income has been reached. According to its first proponent, Milton Friedman, it thus "makes explicit the cost borne by society."

It operates outside the market. Like any other measure to alleviate poverty, it reduces the incentives of those helped to help themselves, but it does not eliminate incentive entirely, as a system of supplementing incomes up to some fixed minimum would. An extra dollar earned always means more money available for expenditure. (Friedman 1962: 162)

The ‘founding father’ of RMI, the socialist prime minister and adherent to the *Deuxième gauche*ⁱ Michel Rocard, hired Stoleru to prepare the law.¹ Although the RMI reform, as seen above, entailed other qualifications, the city of Incentives and the negative tax were integrated in the “differential” component that made the size of the benefit dependent on whether the recipient received other benefits.

The target population of RMI was estimated to be around 400,000 people, yet more than one million people have received RMI since the 1990s (1.1 million in 1992; 1.2 million in 2008). If one includes spouses and children of recipients, then the total number reaches 3.5 million (Palier 2010a: 84). The ‘success’ of the scheme was increasingly problematised during the 1990s and 2000s. The evaluations were often orchestrated by the state itself as RMI marked an experimental phase with permanent evaluations of the effects of social policy instruments (Palier 2002: 235; Castel 1995: 697).

RMI’S INTERFERENCE WITH WORK

The criticisms of RMI were mobilised from mainly the Incentives, Mobility and Paternal cities, all of whom questioned the Redistributive element of the scheme in some way. The criticisms all agreed that the problems of exclusion, and even poverty, could not be resolved by redistribution. It was within this setting that RSA would later arrive.

At the end of the 1990s, RMI was intensely qualified and criticised from the city of Incentives. Analyses showed that recipients of RMI were losing income if they took up low-paid part-time jobs (Palier 2005: 139). To take one example of a problem that the analyses raised, the RMI reform was connected to a number of ‘secondary social benefits’ (*droits connexes*), such as *Prime de noel* and housing benefits, which further disincentivised the unemployed to take low-paid jobs (Vlandas 2013: 120). The most important reform following in the footsteps of the critique of disincentives was the *Prime pour l’emploi* (PPE, ‘Premium for employment’) in 2001 (Palier 2010a:

Incentives

ⁱ On the *Deuxième gauche*, see chapter 4, p. 84.

90). Based on the logic of negative tax, this offered a (minor) tax credit to encourage low-paid jobs in order to counter “inactivity traps” (Palier 2005: 139).

The PPE reform, however, did not radically change the belief that RMI performed poorly (Palier 2010a: 85). However, ideas surrounding the model of negative tax still occupied governments at the beginning of the new millennium. In 2005 a commission proposed a scheme, labelled the *revenu de Solidarité active* (RSA, ‘Income of active solidarity’), which aimed to strengthen incentives to work with in-work benefits for low-paid and often part-time employees (Hirsch 2005). RSA was supported by all centrist parties. Up until the election of UMPⁱ candidate Nicolas Sarkozy as president in 2007, the socialist candidate Ségolène Royal had included RSA in her campaign.² However, soon after his inauguration in May, Sarkozy initiated the experimentation with the RSA scheme in 17 *départements*ⁱⁱ.

RSA seemed to fit with Sarkozy’s electoral campaign of “rehabilitating work” (*réhabiliter le travail*) as it valued the work ethic of the city of Mobility and, with a Paternal qualification, promised policies for “the France that gets up early” (*la France qui se lève tôt*).ⁱⁱⁱ The campaign entailed a criticism of the “Aubry law”, which introduced the 35 hour week, and the idea of Redistributing the total work load.^{iv} France was a “country drugged on 35 hours”³. One of the slogans of the campaign was thus “work more to gain more” (*travailler plus pour gagner plus*) (Hirsch et al. 2008: 309). TEPA (*La loi en faveur du travail, de l’emploi et du pouvoir d’achat*) was the first act of Sarkozy and his government led by François Fillon. Apart from the experimentation with RSA, the law entailed a “tax shield” (*bouclier fiscal*) that reduced the income share that can be taken by direct taxes from 60 to 50 percent, and a complete tax exemption for overtime work. The overtime (de)regulation in

ⁱ UMP (L’Union pour un mouvement populaire) is a centre-right party created by Jacques Chirac in 2002. In 2015 it was renamed *Les républicains*.

ⁱⁱ *Départements* is one of three governmental levels below the national level, situated between the regional and the municipal level. There are currently 101 *départements* in France.

ⁱⁱⁱ “Getting up early” refers to the French proverb, “Le monde appartient à ceux qui se lèvent tôt” corresponding to the English, “The early bird catches the worm”. Initiative and responsibility hence ought to be (further) rewarded.

^{iv} See chapter 4, p. 86.

particular had the aim of stimulating Demand by increasing people's purchasing power through increased working hours (Lizé 2013).

The tension between Redistribution and the government's justification was also clear in its criticism of the existing RMI scheme. Sarkozy criticised the "sledgehammer argument" of increasing social expenses and taxes to combat poverty, which had done nothing but "serve to buy the silence of those that live on the fringes of society. Our social expenses have never been this high (...) If this was a strategy that worked we would know about it".⁴ The minimum allowances should again serve the "role of a safety net and not as a settlement of all outstanding accounts".⁵ This kind of criticism was widespread on the right. A commentator from *Le Figaro* spoke of the "generous allocations of the nourishing (*nourricier*) state" where "the suicidal social minima policy had brought about a phenomenon of a descending social elevator (*descenseur social*)"⁶, while a deputy from the UMP stressed that they should "finally break with this 'French preference for unemployment and exclusion' that maintains, with the help of some billions of social benefits, several millions of our co-citizens far away from the labour market, that is away from society full stop".⁷

*Paternal
critique of
Redistribution*

The criticism thus often qualified RMI Paternally as being too caring. Judged on this scale, it qualified the social system as the "*assistanat*"; a term denouncing the allocation of benefits as 'maternal' and its recipients as 'assisted'. The diagnostic of RMI also entailed a critique of the aim of insertion. According to Hirsch, the system of RMI had "stiffened", leaving people in a "permanent pseudo-insertion"⁸. Since two thirds of the recipients of RMI were capable of working, "the system had wrapped up (*emballé*) and shut up (*enfermé*) a population that it was not created for. These people are not in need of social care."⁹ It was thus not further Investment this group needed. RMI was thus the exemplary case of a general problem related to the city of Insurance:

*Paternal /
critique of
Investment,
Insurance*

Society has functioned as a centrifuge throwing the least efficient outside of the system. In place of adapting the demands in order to make room for the most vulnerable, the mechanisms of compensation have been multiplied, category by category. (...) The route towards insertion is often composed of gates that are half open and then closed.¹⁰

The questioning of both the cities of Investment and Insurance was also evident in Lionel Stoleru's diagnosis of the scheme he himself had contributed to. The first problem of RMI was that it did not contain the "means to treat all the *RMIstes* individually; the 'I' had cost much more than the 'RM'"¹¹. To Stoleru, the 'I' was not a matter of Investment, but simply created to "reassure the deputies obsessed by the 'misdemeanour of laziness'" thereby satisfying the worth of the city of Mobility.¹² Importantly, however, RMI did not live up to the city of Incentives. Whereas Stoleru had suggested "the richer a citizen is, the more positive tax he pays; the poorer he is, the more negative tax he receives", RMI "did not have this quality".¹³

It is given to the one who has nothing and completely removed from the one who finds a job and a revenue again. From the moment one gains 100 euro by working, one loses 100 euro of RMI. This is obviously not very motivating for working.¹⁴

Not surprisingly, Stoleru supported the RSA project. The main challenge with regards RSA, however, was its "complexity". In order to be "efficient", the scheme had to be "comprehensible and comprehended". Contrary to the PPE, which "not one beneficiary [had] ever understood; not why, how or when he reaches it", the recipient ought to "appropriate" RSA in order to respond to it as an economic man.¹⁵

REQUALIFYING POVERTY

In order to carry through the experimentation of RSA and prepare the scheme for nation-wide implementation, the government created the *Haut commissariat aux solidarités actives contre la pauvreté*, headed by the inventor of the scheme and former chairman of the 2005 commission, Martin Hirsch. The hiring was somewhat controversial since Hirsch was considered a figure of the left and not in favour of TEPA. Before obtaining the position as *haut commissaire*, Hirsch was president of the association Emmaüs, an influential secular NGO working against the exclusion of homeless people and created in 1949 by the catholic priest Abbé Pierre, one of the most popular public figures in France.

It was Hirsch who, together with Sarkozy, launched the experimentation with RSA in 16 *départments* in October 2007ⁱ. The process was labelled a *grenelle d'insertion*, a kind of consultative roundtable where unions, professionals, recipients of RMI and civil society associations were invited to join by initially signing a letter committing themselves to the government's objective of reducing the poverty rate by one third within five years. Most NGOs, however, were sceptical. According to the *Collectif Allerte*, many of the government's actions during the first five months had "been in contradiction with the goal of reducing poverty".¹⁶ Even Hirsch's former employer Emmaüs refused to "sign a blank check to the government".¹⁷ Despite the scepticism, Hirsch defended RSA with great dedication throughout the reform process, and contrary to many of Sarkozy's other policy programmes, the RSA scheme itself was supported by all centrist political actors.

Hirsch's "fight against poverty" was first of all a fight against "poverty traps" in encouraging an inquiry into the variety in behavioural responses to monetary stimuli within the targeted population of 2 million:¹⁸

How many children? How many working poor? How many single-parent families? It is all this data, the chosen measures, the analyses of their effects, judged in the light of this accepted objective. Setting an objective makes you follow it. (...) The social issue hereby becomes a political issue. Setting an objective makes it possible to see in plain sight where poverty hits the most, within which age groups and within which categories, thereby making the mechanisms that create it come into the open in order to set up the ones to combat it. This is what we have done. With a special attention towards the working poor. Why? Because it is a transitional (*charnière*) population. Accepting poverty in work is the same as making all voluntarism in favour of returning to employment illusory, and it implies letting the organised cleavages around the more and more fragile protections expand. It is to these cleavages that the *revenue de solidarité active* must contribute with a response. It was conceived to remove poverty traps and ensure that, for those who are at an active age, work constitutes the pedestal of income to which the national solidarity must not replace, but complement.¹⁹

ⁱ In the end, 41 *départments* took part in the experimentation.

The problem of poverty was thus not a lack of Redistribution, but related to the allegedly problematic convergence of work and poverty. Poverty was thus re-qualified, in Sarkozy's words, from a "consequence" to "repair", to a phenomenon with "causes".²⁰ It became a dependent variable which, for that very same reason, could only be addressed through independent variables, and not directly.

EMANCIPATING THE ECONOMIC, CONSUMING, WORKING, RESPONSIBLE, UN(DER)EMPLOYED

The recipient of RMI was thus 'trapped' and the RSA scheme became the emancipatory solution. The various instruments of RSA claimed to emancipate unemployed subjects from four cities: Incentives, Mobility, Demand and Paternal.

Incentives

This emancipation was evidently both part of the justification and governmental set-up of RSA. The RSA, according to Hirsch, was "essential" because it involved "the win-win principle" that "if you start working again, you won't lose money", which eventually would "motivate the people to exit unemployment".²¹ An unemployed person who participated in the experiment responded in accordance with the interpellation:

It's motivating because I know that if I do more hours, my RSA will increase.²²

Although the actual rate of the negative tax was not settled, the overall logic of the instrument in the RSA scheme was clear. The principle was integrated by adding a supplementary benefit on top of the existing RMI that would reward the hours worked by the un(der)employed; a reward that gradually decreases with each additional hour until a threshold of between 1.1 to 1.2 times SMIC.²³

The justification as well as the instruments of RSA were, however, much more composite than Stoleru's 'pure' perspective from the city of Incentives. Although the core instrument rested on the economic man, the RSA as a whole responded to, and sought to emancipate, other unemployed

subjects. Firstly, the negative tax scheme emancipated the subject of the city of Demand, namely the consumer:

Demand

Every time an unemployed person finds a job, he improves his purchasing power.²⁴

The goal of the government was hence both to “decrease unemployment and maintain consumption”.²⁵

Secondly, the negative tax scheme did not solely strengthen Incentives to change the behaviour of the economic man; regardless of his behaviour, it satisfied the ‘active’ working man of the city of Mobility and removed a potential excuse for its antithesis, the lazy unemployed. In Sarkozy’s words, the scheme thus aimed to “rehabilitate work” and ensure that

Mobility

not a single person can say: If I get up this morning, I will earn as much as if I did nothing.²⁶

The city of Incentives has no problem with the lazy. Rather, it assumes that everyone is lazy and adjusts the environment accordingly. Stoleru, for instance, had no problem with artists choosing to live from benefits. “Had RMI existed”, Stoleru imagined, “perhaps Van Gogh and Verlaine would have suffered a little less”.²⁷ The prime minister provided a similar perspective when he stated that it was not the recipients of RMI “who should be condemned; it’s the system that derails.”²⁸

However, abstaining from work is not a legitimate option in the RSA scheme. When the president visited one of the *départements* in which RSA had been experimented with, a father said that “because of RSA, I was able to buy a bicycle for 15 euros for my son”. Sarkozy allegedly responded:

You are out of the *assistanat* (...), you have moved from survival to life (*survie à la vie*): the exit road is work, again work, always work.²⁹

RSA therefore addressed neither the poverty nor the purchasing power of the non-working unemployed. RSA transformed the unemployed individual from being a stigmatised ‘assisted’ person into an underemployed worker who strove to work more:

RSA will not figure on the payslip. The employer will not know of it and will not know the sum. An employee benefitting from RSA will then be an employee like anyone else.³⁰

*Incentives /
Mobility*

In accordance with the cities of Incentives and Mobility, it thus functions as a kind of reward system, but also a ‘signalling’ system to reinstall justice for *all* those who “get up early” to work. RSA thus, according to Hirsch, excluded the “absurd moment where you regret working because it makes you lose other revenues”.³¹ Sarkozy addressed those who pay for the scheme in a televised interview:

I want to tell the Frenchmen, it’s you who pay for RMI, but with RMI you don’t live, you survive. What I will do is give these people a chance to rehabilitate through work and not through the *assistanat*.³²

Mobility

Mobility was also intensified by other instruments. Sarkozy noticed that “with 2.2 million unemployed, it is absurd to have around 500,000 vacant jobs without any takers”³³.

The vast majority of the unemployed try to find a job. There are some who don’t want to set out for work. It’s a minority, but it’s a minority that shocks.³⁴

Hence, Sarkozy argued for a “sanctioning process for an unemployed person who refuses two jobs that correspond to his qualifications and his salary aspirations”³⁵. In Hirsch’s words, the “rule of active search for employment” would contribute to “putting an end to the imbalance between rights and obligations.”³⁶ The “*assistanat*” would thus be “replaced by a logic of rights and obligations applicable to beneficiaries, public authorities and to companies.”³⁷ Why? “because there are no rights without recompense.”³⁸ Thus, the RSA would naturally both

reinforce the quality of personalised support and make sure (*veiller à*) of the effective application of sanctions towards those who do not play the game. RSA must be the decisive little push (*coup de pouce*) towards work, not a new form of life-time revenue.³⁹

The justification thus entailed this ambiguous qualification of the emancipation of the majority and potential punishment of a lazy minority.

There was very little criticism that radically questioned the general justification or instruments of RSA. As RSA had been part of the socialists' programme, it was hard to criticise. Most criticism came from sociologists and unemployed people who argued that RSA strengthened the idea that unemployment is the fault of the unemployed. The "responsibilisation of the individual", a sociologist noted, turns the unemployed into "culprits" in "failure".⁴⁰ A collective of the unemployed criticised RSA for suspecting them of "fraud".⁴¹ The criticism was a response to a draft of the legislator's proposal that had been leaked to the public and which stated that RSA would include control of the recipients' "way of life" (*train de vie*) in order to track potential "pronounced disproportions".⁴² A commentator, mobilising the city of Redistribution, argued that "the fight against poverty necessitates questioning the foundation of our economic logic and entails terminating the shaming and tracking of those who cannot manage to make ends meet."⁴³ Similarly, a social worker denounced "the complete harassment" involved, while an unemployed person denounced the "systematic surveillance" of RMI recipients.⁴⁴

The criticism thus mainly targeted an issue related to the city of Insurance, that of fraud, and did not really question the morality of the cities used to justify the scheme. A criticism of a young woman and long-term recipient of RMI, Gwenn Rosière, is quite symptomatic of this dismantling of radical critique. Rosière responded to a local call for opinions on the RSA scheme that was about to be launched in her *département* as part of the *grenelle*. Her highly critical letter somehow reached Hirsch, who responded and initiated a correspondence that would later be published in a book (Hirsch et al. 2008). Rosière initially posed a critique in line with the one presented in this paragraph, but her letters, as well as the whole book, ended up supporting the project. According to Hirsch, Rosière, "seemed, in the most natural way, to having understood our approach" (Ibid.: Blurp).

The absence of a substantial critique of the subject of emancipation meant that the criticism either missed its target by only denouncing coercive and controlling measures, or was sucked into the pragmatic quest of *how* to emancipate.

PUTTING THE RECIPIENT'S BEHAVIOUR TO THE TEST

The lack of a radical critique of RSA coincided with the extensive evaluation of the experiments taking place throughout the country (Okbani 2013). In the same experimental spirit, the *haut commissariat* had produced a green paper inviting stakeholders and citizens to contribute to solving a number of *specific* challenges related to RSA (Hirsch 2008). Thus, simultaneously with the justifications concerning emancipation and what is commonly good for 'Frenchmen', a pragmatic quest for who the unemployed were and what makes their behaviour change was taking place. The mobilisation of the cities of unemployment thus bind together the moral and pragmatic processes.

Incentives

First of all the experiments led to controversies *within* the city of Incentives. For instance, the socialist president of a *department* complained that the government's rate of decrease of RSA would be higher than the one his *department* had experimented with, which would make "the incentive to return to employment a lot smaller".⁴⁵ The economist Thomas Piketty questioned whether the rise in "profits" from around 150 euros in the PPE to 200 euros for taking a part-time job, as well as the abandonment of the maximum duration of one year, would "boost the rate of exit from RMI to part-time work".⁴⁶ The testing also led to a lot of debate concerning the Incentives to part-time work, which will be presented in the next section. However, the tests did not simply confirm the existence of the economic man. A local social worker, for instance, noted that "for a certain number of people, RSA will supplement their meagre resources. For them it's a strong encouragement".⁴⁷ However, there was also another group of recipients:

Mobility critique of Incentives

Some are really helpless facing employment. And when a contract appears they need a considerable support, sometimes a mediation with the employer, simply because they no longer dare ask if they can join their colleagues in the coffee breaks.⁴⁸

The social worker thus pointed to barriers to Mobility that, for some, were there regardless of Incentives. Another social worker thought that the unemployed often disregard Incentives in order to acquire worth in the city of Mobility:

Work is predominantly seen as a way to insure the future and acquire a social status. Often the beneficiaries accept a job, even if they have no financial interest in doing so.⁴⁹

A beneficiary, working 12 hours a week despite any change in income, justified her behaviour in a way that would be disqualified in the city of Incentives, but highly appreciated in the city of Mobility:

I like it. It gets me moving.⁵⁰

Alongside the experiments, a number of surveys of the unemployed were conducted in order to trace the barriers to returning to employment. The surveys put the cities to the test *vis-à-vis* each other. For instance, an opinion poll showed that 32% considered the absence of job offers to be the biggest obstacle to employment (Demand), while 8% mentioned health issues and 6% age (Insurance).⁵¹ 27% emphasised the fact that the offers were “not suitable” as being the main obstacle. This was kind of a black box that could be interpreted according to a number of cities; for 39% of respondents, offers were unsuitable since they did not correspond to their qualifications (Investment), whereas for 19% the offers were too short-term (Insurance), or it was uncertain whether they would gain financially by taking the offer (Incentives).⁵² Similarly, 62% of unemployed people in another survey pointed to their inadequate training for the profiles that employers were looking for.⁵³ This could be taken as a problem of inadequate investment in skills, or an insufficient quality of jobs, but they also correspond to some degree with the idea of the unadaptable unemployed.

*Demand /
Insurance*

*Investment /
Insurance /
Incentives*

Whereas beneficiaries thus did not really put great emphasis on their own inner economic man, 86% of them estimated that the incentives of RSA would encourage beneficiaries to become professionally active.⁵⁴ Similarly, another survey conducted by the *Comité d'évaluation* of the *haut commissariat* confirmed that 42% of the beneficiaries in the “zones” of experimentation “would, thanks to RSA, accept a job that they would have refused before”⁵⁵. Although this confirmed that many recipients *would* like to respond to the economic stimuli, the *comité* concluded that the only “certainty” with regards to the effects of RSA was that a “tailor-made support when it comes to help to mobility or child care removes some of the barriers to employment”.⁵⁶

Incentives

Mobility

Another survey conducted by the ministry of work that specifically targeted parents showed that their job searches were mainly limited by an “absence of means of transport, the price of transport and child care”⁵⁷. Yet another survey, this time of recipients of PPE, confirmed this mobility problem. 6 out of 10 recipients evoked the “cost of job searches (transport, correspondence)”⁵⁸. The evaluations thus led to a number of proposals supposed to improve the means of Mobility for the unemployed. An advisor of Hirsch proposed the financing of driving licences⁵⁹, and a politician from the UMP suggested offering an “option” that would temporarily cover displacement expenses and child care.⁶⁰ The socialists went even further and called for the establishment of a “genuine public service of early childhood, whose absence limits the access of women to work”.⁶¹

The evaluations thus came to underpin the need for intensifying Incentives and Mobility in instruments as well as for treating the unemployed as a diverse group with different needs and values.

THE PROBLEMATIC THRESHOLDS TO AND FROM PART-TIME WORK

An important justificatory context of why RSA was primarily concerned with poor part-time workers was SMICⁱ, the universally guaranteed minimum wage and the main instrument in France to prevent the phenomenon of the working poor. An influential report by a group of economists for the governmental *Conseil d'analyse économique* thus argued that with the increasing amount of part-time work, SMIC was “not an effective instrument to reduce poverty”.⁶² The report was in fact commissioned to argue for fixing the rate of SMIC, which the government considered too high, but it also served as a justification for RSA.⁶³ The economists on the one hand wanted to transfer the question of minimum wages to the negotiations of the two sides of industry, and on the other hand let RSA become the main instrument to fight poverty.

ⁱ Salaire minimum interprofessionnel de croissance

Although the negative tax scheme of RSA strengthened Incentives for the unemployed to take part-time jobs in particular, it was uncertain whether it would have any significant effect. However, the consequences for the threshold from part-time to full time work were potentially disincentivising. To Thomas Piketty, RSA would lead to a “strong reduction in the difference between working 20 and 35 hours a week.”⁶⁴ UMP members had similar concerns. The difference between part-time and full-time work of around 200 euro was “too weak” and “not consistent with ‘work more to gain more’”.⁶⁵ Another spoke of the “risk of perpetual part-time work”.⁶⁶ Another economist, Michel Godet, was even harsher in his critique of the “perverse” effects of incentivising part-time work:

Incentives

*Incentives /
Mobility*

A person working at 60% [of a full working week] on an RSA contract can have the same resources available as a wage earner working full time and paid SMIC, and even more if one considers the connected advantages of RMI that beneficiaries of RMI continue to benefit from. (...) How was it possible to transform the good intentions of the active solidarities into unjust, useless, and perverse transfers? By enriching the working poor, one risks in fact maintaining them in the trap of part-time work and discourage full-time wage earners. The latter will be rebellious from not gaining more while they work more.⁶⁷

Not only did RSA lead to ‘perverse’ Incentives, it also infringed the work ethic of the full-time workers paid close to the SMIC rate. RSA was thus criticised by mobilising the same cities that were used to justify it. Accordingly, RSA also faced criticism of the same Paternal kind that had been posed against RMI. RSA “remained the most complete form of the *assistanat*” and simply consisted of “playing good Samaritans”.⁶⁸

Paternal

Hirsch responded directly to the “falsehoods” of Godet.⁶⁹ RSA would ensure that “a person that passes from inactivity to activity will not end up with revenues superior to a low-wage-earner. The latter will therefore also receive an additional *revenue de solidarité active*.”⁷⁰ Regarding the “connected advantages” of RMI, they would no longer be “attached to a status, but be proportional to the revenue.”⁷¹ Finally, Hirsch warned against this kind of criticism:

Before the presidential election everyone, or almost, was favourable to the *revenue de solidarité active*. During the past year, it has had few detractors. On the contrary, it was supported so passionately that one person told me in a mocking tone that it would be dropped by the president of the republic. Today, when he makes it in strict respect of its initial principles, one sees the temptation of denigration, the fear of acting out, the apology of the status quo. (...) It is however remarkable to note that those who created RMI (...) are in favour of transforming it into *revenue de solidarité active*. I find it more comfortable to be loyal to their convictions rather than changing positions... or not having one!⁷²

Critiques of RSA were thus both wrong and afraid of progress, or even worse, simply cynical or indifferent. There were thus limits to the criticism that the process of the *grennelle* had encouraged.

Insurance / Redistribution

Nonetheless, the perverse effects were also qualified and criticised from the city of Insurance and Redistribution. From the city of Insurance, part-time work was a symptom of increasing insecurity on the labour market. According to a sociologist, RSA would “multiply bad odd jobs by institutionalising a second labour market based on the precariat.” This was mainly due to ‘perverse’ incentives for employers who would be “content with hiring part-time workers knowing that the employees benefit from assistance.”⁷³ Also, the socialists warned against an “increase in precariousness”.⁷⁴ Concurrently, the problem was qualified according to the city of Redistribution as a consequence of exploitative employers. An economist argued for “sanctioning employers who profit from RSA in order to multiply unworthy jobs”, and also called for measures that “oblige the industries to open negotiations on minimum wages and the reduction of part-time work”.⁷⁵ Also, the FO, one of the largest unions, wanted the government to ensure that “capital would genuinely be harnessed (*mis à contribution*)”.⁷⁶ Rather than questioning RSA as such, these criticisms pointed towards solutions outside of the scheme and current reform process (minimum wages and regulation of part-time work). The debate regarding the financing of RSA became symptomatic of this ‘marginalisation’ of more radical critiques.

FINANCING PUT TO THE TEST OF REDISTRIBUTION

Despite the fact that the majority of political actors supported the content of RSA, the adoption of the law nonetheless ended up being controversial. The controversy surrounded the question of how to finance the RSA. Initially Sarkozy wanted to finance RSA partly by abolishing PPE.⁷⁷ The financing led to criticism, legitimised by the city of Redistribution, from both the left and the right. For instance, the social liberal and third largest party, MoDemⁱ, argued that “RSA was perfectly well-founded but the solidarity cannot rest on the most poor without calling on the most rich”.⁷⁸ The socialists complained that “RSA in reality is an arrangement that undresses the poor full-time workers in order to dress the poor part-time workers!”.⁷⁹ Deputies from the UMP as well as Hirsch suggested financing RSA differently by limiting the possibilities for tax breaks (*plafonnement des niches fiscales*) that the richest benefitted from.

The government changed their approach with justification from the city of Demand. The financing of PPE would not be redeployed to RSA, “because we are going through a period of weak growth. It does not seem optimal to amputate purchasing power at a time where economic activity must be supported.”ⁱⁱ ⁸⁰ The government thus proposed to finance RSA by raising a tax on property.⁸¹ The proposal, however, did not stop the criticism. Because of the “fiscal shield” mentioned above, the richest part of the population would not be paying the additional tax. The government’s final proposal, which was adopted by the national assembly, accommodated the critique and installed a “global ceiling” on tax breaks that would work outside of the fiscal shield.⁸²

Somewhat paradoxically, the criticism resulted in both substantial changes in the financing of RSA while also legitimising its content, which, as shown earlier, was justified by a rather strong critique of the city of Redistribution. It may have become financed in a less unequal manner, but RSA itself

ⁱ Mouvement démocrate

ⁱⁱ The lower expectations for growth and increasing public deficit in spring 2008 were the first signs of the impact of the financial crisis on the French economy.

strengthened instruments that would fundamentally contradict the aim of more material equality; at least between the non-working recipient and the rest of society.

SEDIMENTATION: TESTS, SUBJECTS

The adoption of RSA in the national assembly and in the senate was run through quickly in a process of “urgency”. After a few debates it was adopted by the two chambers at the end of November 2008 and signed by the president on December 1st, which was exactly 20 years after the adoption of RMI. RSA would come into force as of June 2009, but the law did not bring the experiment to a halt – it generalised it. At the same time the law became applicable, the findings from the initial experiments were presented to the government (L'Assemblée nationale et le Sénat 2008: Article 2). Furthermore, during the coming five years, the policies were evaluated by an “evaluation committee” in relation to the progress towards the objective of reducing poverty as well as incentivising work (Ibid.: Article 1). The findings were discussed at an annual “national conference” that gathered the relevant stakeholders (Ibid.: Article 32).

Besides the law generalising RSA (L'Assemblée nationale et le Sénat 2008), a decree specified the details regarding the conditional situation of resources of the recipient, the modes of administration, sanctioning measures and the negative tax (Premier ministre 2009). The negative tax was set at a rate of accumulation of 62%, meaning that each time a recipient gains 100 euros, for instance, he will lose 38 euros of his RSA since only 62% of the work-related income will be deduced from the RSA income (Ibid.: Art.D. 262-4). RSA takes into account “all resources of the household”, including other social services such as the *prime de Noël* and housing assistance (L'Assemblée nationale et le Sénat 2008: Art.L. 262-3). The Incentives are thus ensured from the first hour to the last worked. It thus “incites the exercise of professional activity and fights against the poverty of certain workers, regardless of whether they are wage-earning or not” (Ibid.: Art.L. 262-1).

Incentives

Once eligible, which requires the fulfilment of a vast number of test criteria (over 25 years old, thresholds regarding income and savings of household, etc.), the recipient is subject to certain “rights and obligations” (Ibid.: Art.L. 262-27 to 262-37). The recipient has the “right to social and professional support (*accompagnement*) adapted to his needs and organised by one dedicated referent.” (Ibid.: -27). The support is always up for revision, thus installing a permanent test situation:

If the examination of the situation of the beneficiary brings out that, due to difficulties, another organisation would be better to directly conduct the necessary support actions (...) the referent proposes a new orientation to the president of the general council. (Ibid.: -30)

The support actions are documented in the “personalised project for the access to employment”, which is developed “together with the referent” (Ibid.: -34). This “contract”, which is “freely debated (...) specifies the positive and repeated actions of job searches that the beneficiary commits to carry out” (Ibid.: -35).ⁱ The elaboration of the contract takes into account a number of factors relevant to the Mobility of the beneficiary. Some (potentially) set limits to the Mobility, such as “training” and “qualifications”, as well as the “personal and family situation”, while others work in the opposite direction; for instance, the “situation of the local labour market”, “the nature and characteristics of the applied jobs” and “the expected wage level” (Ibid.). All this information defines what a “reasonable job offer” is, which the beneficiary only has the right to refuse twice (Ibid.). In this case the beneficiary is “erased from the list of job-seekers” and the allocation is suspended (Ibid.: -37). In general, sanctions are valid once “the beneficiary does not respect a stipulation of the contract” (Ibid.: -35). The contract (and its potential revision) is thus a permanent test of the availability (refusals, search effort, etc.) and adaptability (willingness to be geographically mobile, to adjust demands for skills, wages, etc.).

Mobility

The need for Mobility also opens up rights for the recipient. The “personalised help for the return to employment” has the “aim of taking

ⁱ The form of the “project” was inspired by PAP (*Projet d'aide personnalisée*), which was used in the system of *Assurance chômage* (See chapter 4)

charge of all or parts of the reported costs on the occasion of the resumption of a professional activity, whether it is a job, taking a training course, or creating a company” (Premier ministre 2009: Art.R. 5133-10). The costs comprise “transport, dressing, accommodation, hosting young children, obtaining a diploma, license, certification or authorisation that entails a professional activity” (Ibid.: -11).

Investment

RSA did allow some Investment, but, as in the justification of the scheme, it was clearly a marginal city. The beneficiary is encouraged to engage in contracts (*contrats d'accompagnement dans l'emploi*), that is, employment contracts (the recipient is interpellated as the “wage earner”), but with special “insertion companies” and “insertion workshops” (*atelier chantier d'insertion*) (L'Assemblée nationale et le Sénat 2008: Art. 18). The contract of the recipient may have the aim of “professional education”, but the main goal of the contracts is to “develop the experience and competences of the wage earner” (L'Assemblée nationale et le Sénat 2008: Art.L. 5132).

Insurance

Finally, all recipients are subject to “control” to counter the risk of “fraud”. The control against fraud relates to the city of Insurance, that is, the question of whether the recipient has actually been exposed to the risk that entitles him to compensation. Meanwhile, there is something else at stake here. The city of Insurance is primarily interested in the event of unemployment and in ‘speculative’ behaviour, such as continuing to receive compensation even though the compensated is no longer unemployed. The problem here seems not to be entitlement to compensation, but rather entitlement to charity in the Paternal sense. The control of the recipient, or rather the household of the recipient, encompasses an “evaluation *forfaitaire*” of whether there is a “clear disproportion” between a “way of life” and the “resources declared” (L'Assemblée nationale et le Sénat 2008: Art.L. 262-41). The evaluation takes into account a list of “elements” connected to the household (Premier ministre 2009: Art.R. 262-74): constructed and non-constructed property, maintenance of buildings and means of transport, as well as more intimate elements such as appliances, objects of art, jewellery, spending on holidays, restaurants, cultural goods and services, and sports and recreational clubs. It is thus in fact not the actual resources of the

Paternal

household that determines whether the household deserves the allocation, but its behaviour, including the most intimate behaviour. The test of entitlement is thus permanent and implies, for instance, that it is forbidden for relatives to support the recipient financially in any kind of way (Helfter 2015).

Nonetheless, it does qualify the recipient in terms that fit well with the justifications of RSA, such as the justification that the recipient should always be motivated to work, and thus his “way of life” should always be less pleasurable than someone on the labour market. It also fits the Mobility justification that it is only through work that one gains worthiness and freedom to live without showing moderation. Finally, it ensures a relation of subordination in which the recipient, through his behaviour, shows humility and respect to the breadwinner of the *pater*. In this way the control of the ‘way of life’ of the recipient(s household) can be seen as the sedimentation of concurrent dynamics in the public debate. The governing of the unemployed aims both to emancipate the unemployed, that is, *transform* things from the way they are, as well as make sure that the current state of affairs, regardless of whether they change anything, do *not* put the hierarchies and moralities of society to the test.

*Mobility /
Paternal*

‘Everyone can be useful’

Putting the long-term unemployed and the youth to the test in Denmark

This last analytical chapter will present the final case of a reform process – a reform that intensified a governing that was already intense and transformed over the last 25 years to underpin and strengthen the active society. The reform process of *Alle kan gøre nytte* (‘Everyone can be useful’, henceforth AKGN) was initiated in May 2011 when the future Social Democrat prime minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt gave a speech on Labour Day. AKGN, which was adopted around two years later, transformed the system of uninsured unemployed – *kontanthjælpsystemet* – in several ways. It reduced benefits and installed an “education injunction” for young recipients, required all ‘able’ recipients to work for their benefit, strengthened sanctions, introduced new instruments towards the ‘vulnerable’ recipient and young single parents, and created a complex system of “triage” in order to categorise the recipients according to a variety of instruments.ⁱ

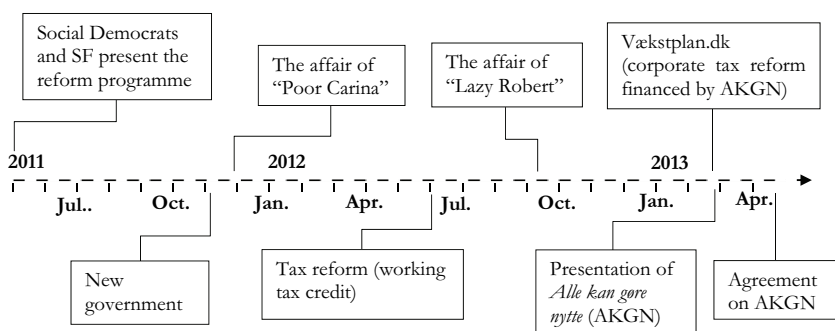
Like the vast majority of past reforms, AKGN was supported by the major parties; in this case all parties except Enhedslisten, which is a coalition of movements from the radical left. Just as in the past, there was very little involvement from the unions, who traditionally put their efforts into *dagpengesystemet*, which is the system for ‘their members’. From the first reform proposal to when AKGN was adopted, the process was ‘interrupted’ by two public affairs in which two individual recipients of

ⁱ It also entailed an extension of the “support obligation” of married couples to all couples “resembling” married couples. Since the extension had little to do with unemployment, it will be disregarded in the following presentation.

kontanthjælp (the benefit for the uninsured unemployed) exemplified its dysfunctions.ⁱ In different ways the affairs put the question of whether the system was in fact underpinning the ‘active society’ to the test. Figure 6 provides an overview of the most significant events.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section looks into the state’s involvement in the governing of the uninsured unemployed since the first ‘social’ reform in 1933. It highlights key changes with a focus on the youth and previous workfare measures. The next five sections present the key qualifications and tests during the reform process. Firstly, the diagnosis of rising unemployment and in particular youth unemployment in the aftermath of the North Atlantic financial crisis will be presented. The second and third sections present the two affairs concerning individual long-term unemployed people, known as ‘Poor’ Carina and ‘Lazy’ Robert. The fourth section analyses the problem of institutionalising the qualification of the recipients with a system of “triage” (*visitation*). The fifth section presents how so-called “utility jobs” became a panacea for all able recipients. The final section analyses the legal and institutional content of the final reform with a particular focus on the system of triage.

Figure 6: Timeline AKGN



ⁱ For an analysis of the role of media as well as the impact of the affairs on public “attitudes”, see Hedegaard (2014).

THE WELFARE STATE AND THE UNINSURED UNEMPLOYED

In 1933, the first comprehensive reform of the poor relief system dating back to the 19th century marked the unfolding of the welfare state in the coming decades. However, the ideas shaping this and consecutive reforms were very far from the mobilisation of the city of Redistribution that Esping-Andersen would later attribute to the development of the Danish welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1985; 1990). They also did not radically break with the former system.

The chief architect of the reform was the Social Democrat minister of social affairs K.K. Steincke. On the one hand, the reform expanded social rights; on the other hand, the rights were deliberately excluded from certain groups of the population. The uninsured unemployed were predominantly part of these excluded groups, where the old poor relief instruments remained. This implied that the recipient of help could be deprived of his right to vote (a clear sign of the Paternal city) and “recalcitrants” were sent to work houses (Kolstrup 2011: 199). The law distinguished between those whose needs were underserved and another group with sub-categories of “workshy, grossly negligent breadwinners, habitual drunkards” and “tramps, destitutes and prostitutes” (Ibid.), in other words, a composite group of unworthy subjects from the Paternal and Mobility cities. Although the former group was treated with less stigma, the help was not a compensation in the city of Insurance sense, but a loan to be repaid (Ibid.: 202).

*Paternal /
Mobility*

Another group excluded from the expansion of rights who often coincided with the group of uninsured unemployed was the so-called “anti-social”. Inspired by eugenic thought, Steincke believed that the “unhindered reproduction” of this group of mentally deficient, psychopaths, alcoholics and prostitutes constituted a “threat of degeneration” that would undermine the welfare state financially, socially and morally (Koch 1996: 55; see also Koch 2006). Extensive programmes of compulsory sterilisation thus

provided a means to reduce the use of internment that was considered both costly and inhuman (Koch 1996: 58).

Whereas the “antisocial” group was considered incorrigible, the unemployed youth was qualified differently in the reform of 1933, although still within the Paternal and Mobility cities. The recession and rising unemployment of the 1930s spurred a fear of a “radicalisation” of the youth towards Nazism and Communism among the established parties (Christensen 2012b: 460). The solution became the establishment of a number of “work colonies” (*arbejdskolonier*) where the unemployed would be exposed to physical work and educational programmes. In the beginning, the subscription to the colonies was voluntary, but it soon became conditional for receiving any financial support and was extended to young people up to 24 years old as well as the long-term unemployed who had lost their right to unemployment insurance (Ibid.: 462). The mandatory placing was justified as the Paternal saving of the incompetent, whose irrational emotions could lead them down the wrong track:

The young one suffers from restlessness and depression, nervousness and discontent to everything and everyone, easily loses the sense of responsibility and self-control, and gives into feelings, varying from complete despondency to wild desperation. (Julius Bomholdt in Sode-Madsen 1985: 36)

Everyone would thus benefit from going to the ‘colonies’:

The youth, whose core (*kernehus*) is still fresh, will volunteer, and those left are the few who are victims of the unemployment psychosis. Those who need a stay with work and education the most are perhaps so passive that they cannot pull themselves together to do anything. (Ibid.: 75)

It was not only the work colonies that would prevent radicalisation; the economic boom of the post-war period would also avoid the creation of a youth proletariat who never acquired the necessary work discipline to hold a job (Christensen 2012b: 460). The economic boom of the post-war period rendered the work colonies superfluous (Sode-Madsen 1985), but the instrument would mark the first targeted governing of the unemployed youth.

Although the work houses and the programmes of sterilisation persisted up until the 1960s, other ideas from other cities of unemployment gradually sedimented. The unemployed were increasingly considered as “fellow citizens” (*medborger*) whose poverty was the result of events beyond their control (Kolstrup 2012: 188f). The unemployed hence had “potential” and could be “resocialised” or “rehabilitated” by the new profession of social work (Ibid.: 172). The culmination of these ideas was the Social Assistance Act (*Bistandsloven*) of 1974. The act combined elements from the city of Investment with the cities of Insurance and Redistribution. Individualised needs-oriented assistance from the social worker would release the potential of the unemployed (Investment) while the financial support (without sanctions) should help to maintain previous living conditions, hereby providing security (Insurance) and the necessary means to exert citizenship (Redistribution) (Kolstrup 2012: 213; 2013: 139).

*Redistribution /
Investment /
Insurance*

However, in the 1980s, shortly after it was implemented (1976) and in the midst of an economic crisis, the act was questioned from a variety of cities. Firstly, the act was criticised from the city of Redistribution for relying too much on “professional judgement” (*fagligt skøn*), leading to illegality and no guaranteed minimum income (Kolstrup 2014: 142ff). Secondly, its benefit levels were criticised from the city of Insurance for disincentivising people from enrolling in *dagpengesystemet* (the unemployment insurance system), which led to the introduction of a “ceiling” (*dagpengeløft*) to ensure that benefits did not exceed *dagpenge* (Ibid.: 162). Thirdly, the act was criticised as disincentivising the recipient to work; among others by the then minister of social affairs Aase Olesen, who would later chair the Social Commission (Ibid.: 182).ⁱ

*Redistribution /
Insurance /
Incentives /
critique of
Investment*

The criticism gained serious impetus in the late 1980s and 90s, leading to far reaching changes. The flashlight especially, once again, turned towards the youth. In emphasising “no work, no money” (*yde for at nyde*), the centre-right government in 1989 introduced special instruments towards the youth. Young unemployed people (18-19 year olds) were entitled to a lower benefit

*Incentives /
Mobility /
Investment*

ⁱ See chapter 5, p. 114.

to increase incentives to work or educate themselves and were required to participate in “activation” projects that combined work and training after 14 days of unemployment (Kolstrup 2014: 218; Torfing 2004: 174). In the same period, the Social Commission published its work, which described the unemployed as having a lack of educational skills, problems of social heritage and a lack of incentives to work. During the 1990s the group entitled to the low “youth benefit” was gradually extended to everyone under 25 (Kolstrup 2013: 222-26). Under the Social Democrat led government, the reduced benefits were increasingly arranged in order to push young unemployed people towards education (Kolstrup 2014: 197-99). The Active Social Policy Act of 1997 universalised many of the measures targeted at the youth. Instruments of “activation” henceforth applied to everyone and ought to be mobilised as soon as possible, and non-compliance was to be met with sanctions (Ibid.: 205-6). It emphasised the “rights and duties” as well as specifying the “responsibility” of the recipient (Kolstrup 2014: 200). Furthermore, the goal of making the recipient return to the labour market overshadowed all other aspects (Ibid.: 201).

Paternal

Incentives

In the 2000s the entrance of a centre-right government led to certain displacements, but also a general intensification in the sense of increasing sanctions and control of the behaviour of the uninsured unemployed. The incentives to work, especially for families, and especially for immigrant families, were consistently scrutinised. Similarly to the problem of *droits connexes* in France,ⁱ families had access to additional support that lowered the financial “carrot” for working and thus constituted “problems of interaction” (*samspilsproblemer*). A number of instruments were introduced and intensified: a general “ceiling of social benefits” (*køntanthjælpsloft*), a special low benefit for people living in Denmark less than 7 out of the past 8 years (labelled “start help”) and a rule requiring married recipients to work a number of hours in a given period in order to prove that they were available for the labour market (Kolstrup 2014). Concurrently, the up-skilling dimension of activation was increasingly toned down. Instead it should be “job-targeted” (*jobnær*) (Ibid.: 264). The displacement from

ⁱ See chapter 6, p. 143.

Investment towards Mobility and Incentives, as well as the intensified use of sanctions and incentives, were justified by an influential evaluation of Danish activation measures that fundamentally questioned whether the up-skilling instruments had any positive effect on employment (Larsen 2013: 139f). The economists concluded that the participation in “active labour market programmes” (ALMP) had extremely little effect, if not a negative one, on the unemployed person’s chance of becoming employed. However, this was not a critique of the idea of “activation” as such, since the programmes had another much more efficient effect that they, inspired by earlier studies in the US (Black et al. 2003), labelled the “threat effect”:

There might, however, be more to the story; for example, a very important threat effect of ALMPs that affects the behaviour of unemployed individuals before they become enrolled in ALMPs. For some unemployed, participation in ALMPs might not be very attractive, perhaps because it is stigmatizing, it is like a tax on leisure time (you receive your unemployment benefits, but you have to turn up at ‘work’ each day), and the payoffs are clearly not very promising. It is therefore argued that to avoid participation unemployed will increase their job search effort and lower their reservation wages, and as a consequence they will leave unemployment faster when faced with a threat of programme participation than without the threat. (Rosholm and Svarer 2004: 3)

The “threat effect”, in other words, made the unemployed less lazy and more mobile. They thus came to the conclusion that

it would seem that a very active labour market policy regime relies mostly on the threat effect. [...] [I]f policy makers wanted explicitly to achieve a maximal threat effect, there would be several ways of doing that, including the introduction of strict search requirements and severe sanctions for non-compliance, lowering the [unemployment insurance] benefits, introducing programmes that are truly cold, wet, hard and have no skill-enhancing components (e.g., cleaning beaches) and so on. (Ibid.: 35)

Another intensification towards the active society occurred in the categorisation of the recipient of *køstanthjælp*. In 2000, the first national system of “triage” (*visitation*) divided the unemployed into five categories corresponding with specific targeted instruments. This, and subsequent systems, responded to both a need for a more precise governing and a

critique of the judgment of case workers (Nielsen 2015b). In 2004, the categories were replaced by five new “*match* categories” that estimated the proximity of the unemployed to the labour market (Ibid.: 54). In 2010, the five categories were merged into three categories: the “job ready” (*jobklare*), the “action ready” (*indsatsklare*) and the “temporarily passive” (Ibid.: 52). Although the categorisation aimed at aligning all governing towards employment, the latter category also provided some scope for the type of social work that the act of 1974 had envisioned.

CRISIS DIAGNOSIS AND THE ‘THIRD WAY’ OUT

*Redistribution /
Demand*

In November 2011, a new government composed of the Social Democrats, the socialist party SFⁱ and the social liberal party Radikale Venstre was formed. Before the election the Social Democrats and SF had already announced a reform programme of *kontanthjælpsystemet* (the system of social assistance for the uninsured unemployed).¹ One of the core elements was to abandon the “poverty benefits” (the “ceiling” and the other reduced benefits that the previous government had introduced). The reductions were originally supported by the Social Democrats, but in the post-financial crisis climate in which the rising material inequalities and austerity agenda were put to the test, new winds seemed to blow. Mobilising the city of Demand, the government initiated a “kickstart” with public investments contributing to “job creation”.²

Investment

However, the crisis was also qualified in accordance with the city of Investment. According to the prime minister, the Keynesian stimulation of the economy was insufficient and could only be a short-term instrument to deflect the most immediate effects:

We are in a new reality where competition – including from emerging markets – is ruthless. Now, they are not just cheaper. They have become smarter. (...) Competitiveness is not just a matter of taxes and wages. Competitiveness is also about our educational level, our infrastructure and about the way our society functions in general. (...) Intuitively, all Danes

ⁱ Socialistisk Folkeparti (‘The Socialist People’s Party’)

know that. We all know quite well that we must live by being skilful and productive. That we must create value for every hour we work and that we must create more value than many others if we want to remain one of the richest countries in the world.³

The government thus asked for further “investment in people” to ensure the readiness of the unemployed once the crisis ended:

We must be ready to ride on the wave, once we get new growth. (...) It is not a question of whether there are enough jobless, but a question of whether there's enough labour force.⁴

The Investment diagnosis became an issue of urgency in relation to the youth. Similarly to the work of the Social Commission around 20 years earlier,ⁱ the unions' sponsored think tank emphasised the importance of education for the future employability of the young unemployed:

The risk of being on *køntanthjælp* is more than 10 times higher [for young people without a post-secondary education].⁵

Meanwhile, youth unemployment continued to increase after the new government entered office.⁶ The minister of employment, the Social Democrat Mette Frederiksen, was “deeply worried” since “9 out of 10 under-30s on *køntanthjælp* haven't completed an education. If we don't change our course, we risk them becoming the losers of the future.”⁷ The diagnosis within the city of Investment implied that if young people were to have equal or better opportunities, there was only one emancipatory path: education. Thus, according to the minister, “without the will to obtain an education, no *køntanthjælp*”.⁸ Also, the think tank suggested imposing an “obligation to education” (*uddannelsespligt*) for young unemployed people that would “send a signal to the young and their parents that there is no getting away from getting an education.”⁹ This need to use coercion in order to make sure the youth invested in themselves took a particular form that I will get back to.

While the government had announced its intention to reform *køntanthjælpsystemet*, the launch was ‘interrupted’ by two ‘affairs’ concerning

ⁱ See chapter 5, p. 114.

two long-term recipients of *køstanthjælp* that brought other cities of unemployment into the debate.

THE AFFAIR OF “‘POOR’ CARINA”

The affair of ‘poor’ Carina turned the intimate life of recipients of *køstanthjælp* into a public spectacle. It also turned a debate on poverty into a question of *køstanthjælpsystemet*’s effect on the lifestyle of recipients in which the Paternal, Incentives and Mobility cities were mobilised.

One of the first actions of the government, supported by the left-wing party Enhedslisten, was to abandon the “poverty benefits” (except for the youth benefits) that, according to the government, were below the poverty threshold. Only a few weeks after the parliament’s vote, the affair of “poor Carina” unfolded; an affair that later fed back into the debate concerning the reform of *køstanthjælpsystemet*. Even today, five years later, “poor Carina” is still part of the public memory. The controversy began when a socialist politician suggested that the state should offer Christmas aid for poor people. In response to this, a sceptical politician from the new libertarian party LA¹ stated that it was “scornful of the millions of starving people around the world to speak of poor people in Denmark.”¹⁰ The socialist politician felt confident enough to publicly invite the libertarian to discuss the question of poverty in Denmark, as well as the legitimacy of abandoning the low benefits, to an exemplary reality test; but within which city? Although the call for state involvement was clearly underpinned by diagnoses of insufficient Demand and Redistribution, the test was first and foremost a test within the Paternal city of the need for charity. Later, other cities entered the affair, but never the cities of Demand and Redistribution.

Paternal

With media attention, the socialist politician organized a visit to an allegedly poor family. The visit was at the home of a 36 year old single mother (who remained anonymous, but was referred to as “Carina”) of two children, who agreed to have her household budget scrutinised. Carina had a total income

¹ Liberal Alliance

of 15,728 DKK (€2,000) per month, with 5,000 DKK (€700) available for food, clothes and leisure activities.¹¹ According to the libertarian, Carina's situation did not stand the Paternal test:

Material poverty doesn't exist in Denmark. The 25 percent of the population on public benefits are caused by the lack of a responsible social policy in Denmark when it comes to including people in the labour market. Our welfare society is a failure if we give up on these people and put them on passive assistance. (Joachim B. Olsen in Petersen 2014: 47)

Soon the household budget of Carina was the object of debate on social media and among most political actors. Was it irresponsible of her to spend money on cigarettes in her situation? Was her telephone bill too high? Should she get rid of her dog? And so on.¹² In this sense, the affair is a radical example of the testing and control of the household on RSA that goes beyond the question of entitlement.ⁱ Or more precisely, as with RSA, the question of entitlement is not settled once and for all, but subject to continuous testing through the behaviour of the recipient.

Throughout the affair that followed, Carina became exemplary of a plurality of subjects from different cities of unemployment. SF tried, unsuccessfully, to turn the attention towards the lack of jobs and the government's responsibility to create more of them.¹³ Carina, first of all, became exemplary of the lack of monetary Incentives to work. The question of whether Carina's situation was simply a result of rational economic behaviour was put to the test in a number of evaluations of the single parent recipient. A liberal think tank estimated that this group would only gain 1,000 DKK monthly by taking a job. "It is so little that for some it will be outweighed by the effort of taking the bus to and from work", the think tank judged before concluding:

But appeals do not deliver more hands on the labour market. Incentives do.¹⁴

Another analysis from the ministry of finance revealed that 14,250 people would gain no more than 1,350 Danish kroner monthly from taking an

Demand

Incentives

ⁱ See chapter 6, p. 160.

unskilled job. The minister of finance recognised that this was “14,250 too many” since “there must be economic value in working even if we also have a welfare society in which there must be an efficient security net ensuring one receives help if one cannot work”.¹⁵ The minister of employment “fully acknowledge[d] that there [were] problems of interaction between *køntanthjælp* and the labour market.

But it was never the idea that the abolition of start help and the other low benefits would stand alone. (...) This is one of several elements and that is why we have heralded a tax reform to increase low-paid employees’ rewards for going to work.¹⁶

Mobility

However, according to the minister, the tax reform’s increase of the working tax credit “only gave an answer to *some* of the problems with Carina.”¹⁷ Concurrently, Carina was exemplary of a problem of the city of Mobility to whom incentives were only secondary:

No matter how little the difference between wages and *køntanthjælp* may be, it must never be voluntary whether you go to work. (...) As a Social Democrat, I support a tougher judgment of work availability (*rådgødsbedsvurdering*) than the one that stands today.¹⁸

The coming *køntanthjælpsreform* would therefore “accentuate the right and duty to work.”¹⁹

Paternal critique of Redistribution / Insurance

Finally, Carina became exemplary of phenomena belonging to the Paternal city. Here, Carina was proof of a certain loss of self-control and ‘childish’ behaviour among recipients of *køntanthjælp*. In response, the minister of social affairs criticised the “norm slide” towards an “entitlement mentality” (*krævementalitet*) in society (Petersen 2014: 51-53), and an influential economist (who earlier participated in the Social Commission) denounced the lack of “moderation”:

Yes we have become spoiled. We take many welfare services for granted and we don’t know the price of the services.²⁰

An ex-recipient claimed to know that “in the underclass, all they think about is getting money from the municipality.”²¹ There, the “victimhood mentality” thrived:

We felt so sorry for ourselves. (...) We were victims and therefore had a right to help. No one said that it could be someone's own fault that you were in trouble. But the truth is that these people disclaim their responsibility for their own life.²²

Recipients could not take refuge in the city of Insurance. According to a head of a job centre, "many [recipients] develop a lifestyle where they get used to the life on benefits."²³

The explanation was a lack of Paternal virtues of "upbringing" and "respect". According to the economist, the "right-and-duty discussion as common upbringing is more important than ever."²⁴ Similarly, Mette Frederiksen saw the "passive" benefits as doing the unemployed a "disservice" (*bjørnetjeneste*) because you do not get a happier life by being on *køntanthjælp*.

You don't get more freedom, you don't get more responsibility, you don't get the basis for uprooting your own life in order to move on.²⁵

According to the minister, there was a "far too large a propensity" among local caseworkers to "indirectly maintain people on *køntanthjælp* because the caseworkers, with all their heart, wish to secure people's income."²⁶ Instead, she suggested another attitude towards the unemployed:

To me, making demands on people is a consequence of respecting them. The day we don't make demands, we don't respect people. And what is the alternative? That some of them get stuck and then we can meet again in 20 years and, once again, find a young woman near her 40s who has been sitting 18 years on *køntanthjælp*? That simply won't do.²⁷

The Paternal measures were not only necessary to 'responsibilise' the recipient. As the single mother Carina illustrated, there was a danger of transferring the mentality of the unemployed parents to their children. Thus the problem with Carina is "that this woman has been on *køntanthjælp* all her adult life. This means that the child grows up in a family where it never sees anything else."²⁸ A think tank claimed that around 40 percent of young recipients of *køntanthjælp* have parents who have been on *køntanthjælp* within the last 10 years, hereby concluding that the "social heritage" of young people with "*køntanthjælp* parents" resulted in them having a 3.6 times higher chance of becoming recipients of *køntanthjælp*.²⁹

THE AFFAIR OF “LAZY ROBERT”

Redistribution /
Investment /
critique of
Mobility

The tax reform, as well other reforms of, for example, the early retirement pension, had postponed a more detailed programme of the coming reform of *køntanthjælpsystemet*. Meanwhile, the debate about the system exploded once again in September 2012 after the long-term recipient Robert Nielsen, who called himself “lazy Robert”, participated in a discussion programme on public television. In the programme, Robert put the city of Mobility to the test by simply disagreeing with the idea that the unemployed should be at the disposal of the labour market unconditionally. He had thus often refused offers and refused to show up at meetings with the job centre, even though he was sanctioned. Referring to a janitor job at McDonald’s that he quit after a half a year because he fell out with the manager, Robert justified his right to *køntanthjælp*:

As a human being I am faced with a choice in the job centre; shall I take a shitty job in McDonald’s for 100 *kroner* an hour, or do I want to continue on *køntanthjælp*? And here I say that the job is so poor that I would rather be on *køntanthjælp*; if not, society must provide an offer that corresponds to my competences and strengths.³⁰

There were elements of both Redistribution and Investment in his reasoning. Regarding the former, *køntanthjælp* was a means, like strikes and demonstrations, to demand a job that “you could be proud of” and to have the “right not to become aggrieved when you work”.³¹ Robert Nielsen thus basically echoed Esping-Andersen’s principle of de-commodification (supposedly of the Scandinavian countries) to ensure that “citizens can freely, and without potential loss of job, income, or general welfare, opt out of work when they themselves consider it necessary” (Esping-Andersen 1990: 23). Regarding the latter, he wanted a job that corresponded to his competences (although he had not completed an education) and a job that “was developing for oneself and the surroundings”.³²

However, in the following months, the city of Mobility was not impaired but reinforced. The ironic self-naming of “lazy Robert” was rather taken very seriously. Whereas it was mainly the *budget* of Carina that was scrutinised, it was *availability* in the case of Robert Nielsen. How was it

possible, as he had proclaimed, to “fly under the radar” of the job centre? What exactly happened when he quit the job at McDonald’s? Why did the sanctions not seem to affect him? And so on.³³ The liberal party Venstre wanted to

Mobility

make the sanctions so tough all over the country that specimens of recipients of *køntanthjælp* resembling Lazy Robert, who tried to avoid ending up doing something, will be punished so severely that they die out.³⁴

According to the right wing newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, Robert Nielsen was exemplary of a spread of laziness throughout society:

The workshy non-Western immigrant women are (...) far from the only problem (...). Far into all classes of society (...) it has become completely natural that one can say no to work that does not fit oneself and let diligent Eastern Europeans do the job.³⁵

Robert Nielsen thus became another symptom of coinciding events in the city of Mobility, namely inflexible, picky unemployed people and employers with vacant jobs. According to Venstre, it was “absurd” that despite “thousands on *dagpenge* and *køntanthjælp* (...) we have nonetheless put ourselves in the situation where there are jobs that unemployed Danes do not take”.³⁶

We must break with the attitude that it is better being on passive support than picking strawberries. We must re-establish that there is more prestige in getting out of bed than in sleeping late.³⁷

The criticism also turned towards the governing of the recipient in the local job centres, thus putting the city of Investment to the test. The conservative newspaper *Berlingske* claimed that the job centres were too focused on upskilling the unemployed, hereby “despising the Danes and foreigners who go to work every day to clean and help in the kitchens, in the stables or in the greenhouses.”³⁸ The chairman of the social services directors’ union recognised that it was “paradoxical that we import a labour force when we have unemployment.

*Mobility /
critique of
Investment*

Perhaps we should be even sharper with sanctions. Danes do not face financial difficulties because they get money from the state.

The municipalities' confederation emphasised that they *did* sanction the recipients extensively (30 percent of them during the last year), and that "we have some tough rules which means that the jobless must make a dedicated effort to find a job if they want to receive the benefit."³⁹ However,

... unfortunately there is a smaller group of jobless who can, but do not want to, make a sufficient effort to get a job. This group should feel the financial effects rapidly if they do not live up to the obligation to be available for work (*rådighedspligten*).⁴⁰

The organisation suggested an "intensified obligation to be available for work" for this group, entailing that it was no longer up to the job centre to prove insufficient availability, but up to the unemployed themselves to prove the opposite.

The government largely rubberstamped the criticism towards both Robert Nielsen and of the governing of him and his 'like'. The prime minister insisted that they would "inspect the employment initiatives closely and if there are people out there like 'Lazy Robert', tightened demands will be placed upon them."⁴¹ Like the municipalities, she also separated recipients into two groups who would need different instruments. Next to the 'Roberts' there were "all the many people who would like to have a job" who "should not suffer from the few who resist taking a job" and thus would be subject to less control.⁴²

However, adding the parallel Investment diagnosis of the youth, the questioning of the Incentives and responsibility (Paternal) of Carina to the (im)Mobility of 'Lazy Robert' means that it takes a more complex categorisation of the recipients to mitigate the tensions between the many subjects.

CATEGORISING BETWEEN AND WITHIN CITIES

As mentioned earlier, the existing system of triage operated with three categories of uninsured unemployed: the "job ready", the "action ready", and finally the "temporarily passive". The latter category, "*match* category 3, became seen as part of the explanation of the long-term recipients

(including Carina and Robert Nielsen). A think tank argued that the category corresponded to a “kind of ‘guaranteed minimum income’ (*borgerløn*) in which ‘rights and duties’ are suspended” and that municipalities had an economic incentive to place people in this category.⁴³ The minister of employment regretted that “so many are put in *match* category 3 because, other things being equal, it’s harder there to get back to the labour market” and thus also implicitly criticised the judgment of the case workers.⁴⁴ Thus all persons in *match* category 3 should be part of the active measures. Her justification echoed the ‘disservices’ given to Carina.

*critique of
Redistribution*

In itself, the *match* category of “temporarily passive” was dangerous since the unemployed were hereby “labelled (*påkelistet*) a classification which could have a self-reinforcing effect”⁴⁵ and hence put the unemployed at an “imminent risk of becoming trapped in *køntanthjælp*, and if you don’t get out and around among other people, may fare worse”.⁴⁶ The classification ought to be in the positive language of opportunities.

Investment

To me [changing the category] is the first step confronting the passive culture in *køntanthjælpsystemet*. We shall no longer simply look at people, but give them an active initiative (*indsats*). (...) This entails another philosophy of man. I have not yet met a human being who cannot profit from a proper social professional initiative, if it is good and targeted at the individual human being.⁴⁷

Although this group needed “extra help”, the “objective” was now “work for everyone”. The minister had “from personal experience seen how some recipients of *køntanthjælp*, whom the system had given up on, suddenly begin to flourish when they are put in an environment that believes in them.”⁴⁸ Governing the unemployed necessitated “a belief that people can do more than we get to see just now”⁴⁹, i.e., that “Everyone can be useful”⁵⁰. The message to the long-term unemployed or the young mentally ill would no longer be that they “do not have to get up in the morning”, which was simply a “too tough message” to send.⁵¹ The principle of compensating injury from the city of Insurance was thus seen as constraining people rather than emancipating them. The true “solidary” message was

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critique of
Insurance*

Yes it is tough, and the road will be rocky, but we will invest some money, some time and some energy in order for you to get into the community (*fællesskabet*).⁵²

The goal of the group was thus the same as for all other unemployed people, but the instruments differed. A report ordered by the ministry of employment showed that the most vulnerable recipients were “thrown backwards and forwards” (*kastebold*) between the different divisions of the municipalities.⁵³ Mette Frederiksen, the minister of employment, argued for a “cross-disciplinary”⁵⁴, “coordinated” and “holistic”⁵⁵ initiative with supportive “mentors”⁵⁶. The immigrant women were also qualified as a group that had been categorised in the passive *match* category. According to Frederiksen, *køntanthjælpsystemet* was “de facto a parallel early retirement pension for women with minority backgrounds.”⁵⁷ In future, with the introduction of an “integration injunction”, “we will make demands, have expectations and count on the immigrants.”⁵⁸

The future system of triage would thus no longer care about “where people come from, but on what opportunities they have for succeeding in society”.⁵⁹ Whereas the group of “vulnerable” recipients were in need of “care and patience”⁶⁰, the ‘non-vulnerable’ needed more uncompromising instruments. The threshold thus defined the two subjects *within* the city of Investment: those with and those without a capacity to fulfil their potential.

Mobility

However, the former group was in fact a composite of various subjects. Firstly, the qualification echoed the affair of ‘Lazy Robert’ by saying that “people who can work must work”⁶¹ and hence the “rules of availability [had to be] tightened so that one cannot choose to do without work, that is, do without the community (*fællesskabet*).”⁶² While sanctions were a “natural consequence of rights and duties”, it should “primarily be used towards the resourceful recipients of *køntanthjælp*.”⁶³

Investment

Secondly, the message and instruments responded to the crisis diagnosis as well as both Carina and Robert Nielsen as examples of the long-term unemployed without an education. This implied that the unemployed youth would be faced with an “education injunction” and a new benefit that would no longer be *køntanthjælp* but “education help” (*uddannelseshjælp*).

Financial support was henceforth conditional on engaging in educational activities. According to Frederiksen, this was *not* to be considered “financial whipping”:

No, because the greatest gift we can give those who can obtain an education is to press them to do it. To some it is necessary that we add a financial pressure because otherwise they think that it is easier to refrain from doing it.⁶⁴

The youth were hence qualified Paternally as being easily tempted down the wrong path, as economic men in need of Incentives, and finally as people who, for the benefit of themselves and society, ought to accumulate human capital. In relation to the latter, the minister argued that the youth were not taking advantage of the Investment, i.e., opportunities, they were offered.

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Incentives /
Investment*

There are too many who don't make an effort and don't take obtaining an education seriously. My position is that we should be tough against the young ones who can, but who don't take the trouble. One should have the courage to say: Now your benefit is removed.⁶⁵

“Education help” replaced the “youth benefit” and was reduced to the equivalent of the universal state-sponsored study grant, SUⁱ. Importantly, the category of “youth” was expanded to include 25-29 year olds, who as a consequence had their benefits halved. A think tank supported the expansion since their analyses had shown that the 25-29 year olds were, on average, on *kontanthjælp* 25 percent longer than the 18-24 year olds; allegedly because of the disincentivising financial support. Furthermore, they claimed to show that young unemployed people close to becoming 25 tended to “stick around in the system.”⁶⁶ Although some unions criticised it for treating “adults” as youths⁶⁷, the expansion of the category was widely supported. Frederiksen called it a “system error” that it “is more profitable remain iddle than educate themselves.”⁶⁸ Even the chairman of the social workers' union agreed that “completely well performing young people who could begin an education and who really do nothing but scratch their backsides because they don't really want to begin” should have a benefit corresponding to SU.⁶⁹

ⁱ Statens Uddannelsesstotte

Investment

The prospect of getting more recipients of *kontanthjælp* into educational institutions led to criticism of the government's proposal. The technical and vocational schools questioned whether the use of coercion towards the youth, forcing them into schools, was really compatible with the city of Investment. The schools warned against enrolling more students "without motivation".⁷⁰ The confederation of employers in the construction industry noted that "it is impossible to cram motivation and skills down the throats of the students".⁷¹ The schools would instead become "depositories for social problems".⁷² The problem was not simply that these young people performed poorly, but that it affected the ones that *were* motivated. According to the chairman of the technical and vocational schools, they were "struggling to avoid an image as a garbage can education" and "worried that the smart young ones will leave the technical and vocational schools if they have to team up with 27 year olds who are forced there by the job centre."⁷³

Paternal

The problem within the city of Investment of how to distribute investments according to potentials and talents was thus put to the test. In other words, is the governing ensuring equal opportunities, or is it rather restricting the opportunities for the (most) talented to realise their potential? The inclusion of the "weak" entailed a risk of "pushing the gifted pupils aside", a director of education argued.⁷⁴ Concurrently, it was also uncertain whether the "weak" were in fact weak, or had simply, according to the Paternal city, received too much comfort and security. The director divided the "pupils" into two categories that he wanted to physically separate in the schools: first, a group of "decent, correct and well-behaved" young people who did well; and second, a group who "drop out or drift around in the system":

They don't see any reason to get ready. If you ask them why, they say that 'it is comfortable (*hyggeligt*) to attend school and I get SU.' Many feel they don't have to make an effort. They have a firm believe that no matter what bad choices they may make, society will ensure that they are well off.⁷⁵

The response of the government by and large recognised the critique.

It is no use that the schools must carry such a big social responsibility that it lowers the educational standards, or makes the young people who are eager to obtain an education get an inferior one.⁷⁶

The solution, according to Mette Frederiksen, was “triage and a very precise assessment ensuring that the ones getting the education injunction are education-prepared.”⁷⁷ Further, the “education-prepared” (*uddannelsesparat*) group was a “composite group” in need of different instruments.⁷⁸ The group with many drop-outs, for instance, needed a “flex-education”, the group “that would like to obtain an education but has weak academic premises” needed “reading and spelling courses”, while others needed “mentoring” or “apprenticeships”.⁷⁹

JUSTIFICATION OF ‘UTILITY JOBS’

Although the reform would transfer young recipients to educational programmes, there was a residual group of non-vulnerable ‘adult’ recipients as well as young recipients who were either not “education-prepared” or waiting to enrol in a programme. According to the government, all these were “job-prepared” (*jobparat*). In the earliest reform proposal, this entailed a “right and duty” to work for *køntanthjælp*.

Mobility

If you are capable of working it is only good for society and the individual that you are offered a job and must show up every day and perform a task of public utility. (...) I think that it is perfectly logical that you must work for your *køntanthjælp*, if you have the slightest capacity for work.⁸⁰

The government wished to create special “utility jobs” (*nyttejobs*) for all “job-prepared” recipients of *køntanthjælp*, such as cleaning beaches, cities and forests. The jobs came to function as a kind of ‘compromising device’, underpinning and making the triage and past affairs compatible.

The utility jobs were inspired from practices that some municipalities had already developed, in particular the so-called “immediate activation” in the municipality of Aalborg, where since 2009 the job centre’s “project garden service” had obliged young recipients to work 34-37 hours a week in “utility creating projects” in order to receive benefits (Nielsen 2014: 10). The utility jobs first of all had a “threat effect” similar to the one identified by the economist mentioned earlier. A conservative councillor from Aalborg explained:

There is a scare effect which works. So even if this is a garden project which doesn't qualify for much else than gardening, it gets some people quickly in ordinary jobs and keeps others going.⁸¹

A manager of a job centre in Aarhus applied a similar approach and claimed that “when we confront them with the condition for receiving benefits, 40 percent immediately prefer to search for jobs by themselves.”⁸² Similarly, the Danish National Centre for Social Research recognised a “motivational effect that makes some of the stronger jobless recipients of *køntanthjælp* find a job instead of entering the system.”⁸³ There was thus an underlying idea that the ‘unpleasantness’ of these jobs would work in a similar way to financial Incentives. Rather than monetary carrots, it would be freedom from the subordination of utility jobs that would make the unemployed find an ordinary job. The minister of employment thus estimated that there will be many “who after a short while will think that it’s probably better to find paid work when one has to work to get *køntanthjælp* anyway.”⁸⁴ The utility jobs would ensure better control of the lazy, a local politician from Radikale Venstre argued.

Paternal

Mobility

The majority want to work. They may have lost their hope, and therefore it is a matter of motivating rather than whipping them. But there is of course another group that does not want to apply for all jobs and that we have difficulties controlling whether they are really at the market’s disposal. You know, we can’t force them to send an application to a cleaning company. Here, the *køntanthjælpsreform* will help since now their alternative will be utility jobs.⁸⁵

The lazy may not be the economic man responding to sanctions and Incentives (like Lazy Robert), but now he would be forced to work anyway.

Investment

Next to threatening the recipient to find a job, the utility jobs also underpinned the worth of Investment by encouraging recipients to educate themselves. The largest trade union, LO, thus had “no problems with the municipalities getting tough in order to make the youth understand that an education and a lasting job is also best for themselves.”⁸⁶ In this way the utility jobs eased the tension between the cities of Investment and Mobility.

*Mobility /
Paternal*

While the utility jobs threatened the recipients towards work or education, they also had some value in themselves. The recipients engaged in utility

jobs would first of all “be useful” and live according to the work ethic of the city of Mobility. It would also liberate the recipient from the critique of *køntanthjælp* as a “passive” benefit. From now on it would have nothing to do with either Redistribution or Insurance, but first of all a “quid pro quo” for labour. He would neither be lazy (Mobility) nor live on other people’s money (Paternal). Utility jobs would therefore replace previous activities of job training with a “univocal focus on work” because “doing a piece of work has greater value than being in activation.”⁸⁷ The utility jobs would hence reinstall society’s “support” for *køntanthjælp*, which the affairs of both ‘poor’ Carina and Lazy Robert had put to the test.⁸⁸

The recipients working in utility jobs would also be brought closer to the competent subjects of the Paternal city. They would “get a sense of what sort of thing working time is”⁸⁹ and “learn to get up in the morning every day”⁹⁰, while the jobs would have “an educational effect that made it clear that the municipality is not a gift shop”⁹¹.

Paternal

The governing of the unemployed through utility jobs was denounced as “throwing suspicion on the unemployed” by Enhedslisten. Likewise, an unemployed person participating in a scheme similar to utility jobs noted that it was “unpleasant to feel audited and be ticked off for attending or not. It is like going to elementary school again.”⁹² Mistrust is inevitable towards the irresponsible or potentially lazy, however, and evident in the difference in measures between the ‘young’ and the 30 plus: whereas the young would be met with an instant requirement to work for the benefit, the latter group would initially be “met with trust (*tillid*) and given 6 months to find a job themselves. After this, they must work for their *køntanthjælp*”⁹³ (see also Regeringen 2013: 21).

*critique of
Paternal*

Just as with the ‘job offers’ scheme of LAAP,ⁱ the utility jobs were also criticised from the city of Redistribution for being a “sweatshop arrangement”⁹⁴, “crowding out wage earners employed on completely ordinary conditions”.⁹⁵ The government responded to the critique (which

Redistribution

ⁱ See p. 123f.

remained marginal) by ensuring a limited duration of 13 weeks for the utility jobs and insisting that they would not replace ordinary work.⁹⁶

Finally, just like the RSA reform, its financing was criticised. Even before the reform was adopted, a large majority of the parliament had reserved savings deriving from the reform (reduction in benefits) to finance cuts in corporate taxes.⁹⁷ Members from both the Social Democrats and SF denounced the financing as “socially unjust”⁹⁸ and a “reverse Robin Hood”⁹⁹. However, unlike in the case of RSA, the criticism led to no significant changes. Despite the plural qualifications of the recipient of *kontanthjælp* by the influential political actors during the reform process, none of them considered the recipient as in need of further Redistribution.

SEDIMENTATION: TESTS, SUBJECTS

Incentives

Before going into the actual *kontanthjælpsreform*, it should be noted that the Carina affair, as mentioned earlier, already played a role in the tax reform that was adopted in June 2012. Importantly, this reform entailed an increase in the tax credit on work for all “engaged in active employment”, and another tax credit on work targeting single parents in particular, hereby increasing the Incentives for recipients resembling Carina (Folketinget 2013a: § 1).

Investment

The core of AKGN came in the shape of a new and highly composite system of “triage” that tested and categorised the uninsured recipient. Whereas the previous system operated with one benefit, *kontanthjælp*, the reform instantly divides all recipients into two categories with each their benefit. On the one hand, there are “adults” (30 plus) as well as young recipients who have obtained an “education providing a formal qualification”. All these will receive *kontanthjælp*. On the other hand, there are young recipients without an education who are entitled to “education help” (*uddannelseshjælp*), which is the lower benefit corresponding to SU. Hence the recipients are divided into those who can stay in the city of Investment and those who are excluded because they are either too old or have already benefitted from an investment.

The latter group of recipients of *kontanthjælp* is yet again tested and split up into two categories according to factors that are less clear-cut than age and formal education. From then on the categorisation is based on probabilities. In the triage the recipient is “job-prepared” or “activity-prepared” (Beskæftigelsesministeren 2013: § 1). The “job-prepared” are recipients who “are assessed to be able to get a job within a brief period (...) and must be available for the labour market” (Ibid.: 17). The “activity-prepared typically have complex problems and therefore ought to receive a cross-disciplinary and holistic initiative” (Ibid.). The “activity prepared” are not economic men. On top of *kontanthjælp*, they receive an “activity supplement” if they commit to engaging in the suggested activities (Beskæftigelsesministeren 2013: 56). This entailed a “coordinating case worker”, mentors and an “early” and “work-targeted initiative” (Regeringen et al. 2013: 10). Although this may sound like Investment, the activities do not seem to fully believe in the potential of the recipient. The goal is not education or skills, but simply some kind of (protected) work; for instance, a job in a “social economy enterprise” (Ibid.). In terms of sanctions, they are also to be qualified Paternally as people who cannot fully control themselves:

Paternal

The system of sanctions must take into account that activity-prepared recipients of *kontanthjælp* do not always have the possibility of meeting the demands that are made of them. (Regeringen et al. 2013: 9)

This is not at all the case with the “job-prepared”. First of all, they get a lower benefit to ensure Incentives to work. Secondly, upon categorisation they are put to the test in the city of Mobility. In the first three months they are met with “unambiguous demands to search for jobs”, while the municipality must “support and council the citizen in his/her job search through an intensive interview course” (Styrelsen for Arbejdsmarked og Rekruttering 2013: 2). The period of ‘trust’ was thus shortened from six months. If they fail the test, a period of more suspicion towards the recipient seems to set in. Henceforth, they “must work for their *kontanthjælp*” in utility jobs (Ibid.). Utility jobs are not about up-skilling:

Incentives

Mobility

Whereas trainee positions in a company aim to improve the skills and improve the possibilities of the jobless for [getting an] ordinary job or to clarify employment goals, the utility initiative must keep the jobless active

until the person can begin in a job or an education. (Styrelsen for Arbejdsmarked og Rekruttering 2013: 1)

Further sanctions towards the “job-prepared”, echoing the affair of Lazy Robert, are intensified to counter recalcitrant behaviour. For instance, the reform introduces the possibility of “enhanced availability” to make sure that recipients “cannot hang on to the benefit systems by systematically circumventing the demands that are made of them” (Regeringen et al. 2013: 9). This “lacking will to make oneself available for work” can result in the loss of *køntanthjælp* for up to three months (Folketinget 2013b: § 1 (65)). Another instrument to counter ‘lacking availability’ is the so-called “paradox alert”, which is a regional “telephone hotline that companies can call if they experience paradox problems” (Regeringen et al. 2013: 13).

Investment

Another overlapping system of triage is also mobilised towards the ones entitled to “education help”, i.e., the young without a formal education. As mentioned above, these are included in the city of Investment and thus subject to an “education injunction” (Folketinget 2013c: § 1 (44)). Education here is both a right and a duty. The recipients are divided into three categories: the “activity-prepared”, the “education-prepared” and the “overtly education-prepared”. Initially, the latter group, those that are

Mobility

“assessed to have no barriers (...) for beginning and obtaining an education” (Styrelsen for Arbejdsmarked og Rekruttering 2014: 2), “are not in need of help and support” (Ibid.). Rather, they are potentially lazy, which is why they are immediately required to work in “utility jobs” and are subject to the same sanctions as the “job-prepared”. They are sanctioned if they “reject a job” that they are “referred to” and must “exploit [their] employment opportunities until they begin the ordinary education” (Folketinget 2013b: §1 (21, 25)). Furthermore, the lower benefit ensures Incentives to not only work, but also to educate themselves.

Incentives

Investment

After the initial screening out based on an interview, the process of triage ought to be different from the one used on the recipients of *køntanthjælp*. Henceforth, a series of tests is initiated over three months. The triage insists on the potential of the recipient, and it hereby insists that the case-worker does the same. It is only a question of how long it will take. The “education-

prepared” are assessed to be able to begin and complete an education “with the right help and support” within a year (Styrelsen for Arbejdsmarked og Rekruttering 2014: 2). The “activity-prepared”, on the other hand, “need extra support and help for more than a year before they can begin an education” (Ibid.). However, in the initial screening, “all young people are met as education-prepared” (Ibid.: 1) and it is only in “exceptional circumstances” that the recipient can be categorised initially as “active-prepared” (Ibid.: 3). In this way, the idea “that people can do more than we get to see just now”ⁱ is institutionalised.

The first step of the “thorough triage” is that the young are “forced to consider relevant educational opportunities” (Ibid.). Hereafter a number of activities can be initiated, such as trainee positions in a company, counselling, interviews, up-skilling and reading, writing and arithmetic tests to help the recipient “overcome barriers on the path towards education” (Ibid.: 3-4). In the continuous assessment, the case workers are encouraged to take into account a number of factors which “can be important for the likelihood of a recipient to complete an education” (Ibid.: 2). There are factors of “motivation in relation to education” such as “well-being”, “self-confidence”, “self-esteem” and future “expectations”; factors of educational competences such as “drop-outs” and “performances and attitudes in elementary school”; and factors of health such as “mental health problems”, “exercise” and “sleep”. Finally, the “social background” of the recipient should be considered. In what seems like a compromise with the city of Insurance, “negative life events” can put off the ‘right and duty’ to education. Similarly, factors from the city of Redistribution (“financial situation”) and from the city of Mobility (“distance to education”) set limits on the opportunities for the recipient. There are also factors of social heritage relating to the city of Investment, such as “parents’ educational background” and “acquaintances’ educational backgrounds and attitudes to education”. Finally, there are factors of social heritage that derive from the Paternal work relating to the (lack of) upbringing of the recipient and a

Insurance

Redistribution

Investment

Paternal

ⁱ Cf. p. 179.

transfer of a ‘passive culture’, echoing the ‘risk’ of Carina’s children.¹ These include “parents’ commitment to the young” recipient and their “attachment to the labour market during childhood”.

Investment

However, if the recipient is categorised as “activity prepared” after three months, he, like the “activity-prepared” recipients of *kontantjælp*, is qualified as less of an economic man (he also receives the “activity supplement”) and less responsive to sanctions. He is also entitled to the same intensified support, but unlike the recipients of *kontantjælp*, he is still subject to the “education injunction”, which means that all activities must have education as their final objective and that the “municipality is required to estimate if a person who has applied for or receives education help (...) continuously meets the requirements for the help by actively participating in the individually orchestrated education-targeted initiative” (Folketinget 2013b: §1, 21).

In this way, the plurality of cities ensuring the active society is sedimented and distributed into the highly complex institution of this system of triage: a system that establishes more or less worthy subjects within and between subjects. AKGN is on the one hand a displacement towards the city of Investment that insists on the potential of (almost) all young uninsured unemployed people. At the same time, it is an intensification that removes some of the last loopholes of the cities of Redistribution and Insurance. In the new system, benefits do not disappear, but they are neither a way to redistribute or compensate. Rather, they are qualified as “quid pro quo”, adjusted to incentivise work and education, and conditional on obedience towards the worthiness that corresponds to the particular subject that the recipient is categorised as being.

¹ Cf. p. 175.

Conclusion

The permanent trying of the unemployed

The preceding five chapters have sought in different ways to answer the thesis' research questions of *what cities of unemployment are mobilised in contemporary reform processes of the governing of unemployment, how are the cities mobilised to justify and criticise, and how do the cities sediment into instruments and institutions governing the unemployed?* It has developed a new and more nuanced typology of seven distinct cities of unemployment that focuses on their capacity to qualify the phenomenon and govern unemployment for evaluation, whether in terms of critique or justification. It has operationalised the typology to analyse a variety of test situations and show how compromises have been reached and sedimented into the composite governing of unemployment in four key reforms in France and Denmark, each of which address both the insured and uninsured unemployed. With their own combination of instruments, each reform aimed to lead the governing of unemployment closer to the 'active society'.

In France the PARE reform (chapter 4) introduced an individual contract that designated the actions and measures that would make the insured unemployed return to the labour market. The reform also strengthened obligations to accept the offers of the job exchange services. Directed towards the uninsured unemployed, the RSA reform (chapter 6) introduced a negative tax scheme to increase incentives for uninsured recipients to take low-paid part-time work while introducing a number of instruments and obligations that aimed to increase the mobility of the unemployed. The reform also introduced intensified control of the financial behaviour of the household of the recipient. In Denmark the LAAP reform (chapter 5) introduced a similar contract to PARE while introducing a variety of instruments: leave schemes to ease access to the labour market, job training for the unemployed and job offers that the unemployed, after a period of time, would have to accept in order to continue to receive compensation. The AKGN reform (chapter 7) introduced obligatory workfare schemes to all able young uninsured recipients and increased sanctions and obligatory education.

By looking into the public debates surrounding the four reforms, the thesis has exposed the politics and morality at stake and the fragility and tensions in the transformation of and within the governing of unemployment. Finally, it has exposed a number of cross-cutting dynamics, such as the close relation between coercion and emancipation, the qualification of the unemployed through categories and institutionalised tests, and the intensified attention paid to the behaviour of the unemployed and what causes it – both in public debate and in the instruments and institutions that constitute the governing of unemployment.

In the following I elaborate on key findings that cut across the four cases and thus, hopefully, have broader relevance. The three sections correspond to the three findings briefly presented in chapter 1 concerning the *type*, *content* and *dynamics* of the transformations. The fourth finding concerning the role of *critique* will be addressed throughout all three sections.

CUMULATIVE TRANSFORMATIONS, COMPOSITE GOVERNING

Regarding the *type* of transformation, the findings of the thesis are congruent with theories emphasising changes that are not rapid ‘punctuated equilibria’ but “gradual”, “incremental” and “cumulative”, such as “institutional drift” and “layering” (Streeck and Thelen 2005; Hacker 2004). Parallel to and sometimes inspired by these debates within historical institutionalism, discursive institutionalism¹ has departed from a conception of ideas as the consecutive replacement of one “policy paradigm” with another as crises mark the passage from one to the next (Hall 1993). Instead, they have emphasised the role of agency in driving incremental ideational changes (Béland 2007; Béland and Cox 2010a; Carstensen 2011a; 2011b). A common denominator, regardless of whether the theories are concerned with institutions or agency, is a conception of ideas as *tools* that are strategically used to bring about changes. In his analysis of French transformations (including PARE), Bruno Palier argues that changes become acceptable because they are “ambiguous”, since “the different positions which actors adopted toward the new measures shows that they agree on the same measure, but for very different – often

¹ Cf. chapter 1, p. 6f.

contradictory – reasons.” (Palier 2005: 137). Palier terms the new instruments “polysemic measures” (Ibid.: 138) and concludes that “changes in institutions and logics in French social policy come about less through an explicit and radical ideological change than through a change in the policy instruments.” (Ibid.: 141). The polysemy and ambiguity thus operate as kinds of ideological masking that work *on top of* actual changes. The reasoning resembles the argument put forward by discursive institutionalism that that the power of an idea, such as neoliberalism, lies in its vagueness, ambiguity and “flexibility” (Schmidt and Thatcher 2013; Carstensen and Schmidt 2016: 324).

While all four cases confirm the lack of a homogenous “social policy paradigm” (Palier 2005: 142), the analyses do not show ambiguity and vague concepts as driving the transformations. Rather, it is a matter of a *plurality* of relatively unambiguous ideas that are tied together in unstable *compromises*. This implies that the ideas that the thesis has mapped, the cities of unemployment, are not tools in the hands of strategic actors. They are, in other words, not separable (as independent variables) from both actors and the governmental transformations. On the other hand, cities of unemployment do not work their way as self-evident taken-for-granted paradigms. It is thus a different type of explanation that the thesis invokes. The argument of the thesis is not that this and that idea *caused* this change, but that the fact these ideas were mobilised in these ways, regardless of underlying intensions, made a difference to the gradual transformation of the governing of unemployment. Processes of justification and critique matter simply because people would not be able to make sense of governing instruments and institutions without them. Without ideas to qualify the ‘whatness’, the complexity and composite character of the assemblage and institutions would make it unmanageable. It is thus not the ideas themselves, but the situations in which they are mobilised that matter. Here, the capacity of ideas (to qualify and evaluate) intersect with existing institutions and instruments, uncertainty and tensions as to how to qualify them, contingent events and the reflexivity of the people involved.

The co-existence of a plurality of ideas that sediment into a composite governing also challenges the idea that the governing of unemployment within countries is characterised by different homogenous paths or regimes. This is not to say that there are no differences between countries, but rather that, analytically speaking, one should be cautious to assume what is taken-for-granted or uncontested in a given national setting. The history of governing unemployment in both France and Denmark is a process of

permanently unstable systems that are constantly put to the test and consequently adjusted. The historical contextualisations of each reform indicate that even before the economic downturn of the 1970s, in the heyday of the *trente glorieuses*, there was not a complete consensus as to how to interpret and govern unemployment. The governing of unemployment has never worked flawlessly, and has thus always been subject to continuous test situations that demand justification and critique.

This entails that the legitimacy of the governing of unemployment is neither self-evident, deriving from taken-for-granted norms and values, nor grounded in false smokescreens. Legitimacy is a much more dynamic matter of legitimation and delegitimation generating feedback and sedimentation.¹ If one lets the analysis be driven by the normative question of whether the governing is legitimate or effective, one thereby easily becomes absorbed by this circle of justification and critique (cf. Hansen 2016b: 134). The critique becomes a pleading in an already staged trial. This is of course a perfectly valid aim of analysis, but it has limitations when it comes to mapping the spectrum and content of ideas that are mobilised. Instead, the thesis has adopted a non-normative approach that seeks to take the justifications and critiques of actors engaged in reform processes seriously. The non-normative approach should neither be confused with a value-neutral ‘objective’ science nor as implying an uncritical approach that indirectly endorses the current transformation. As stated in the beginning of the thesis, the study is driven by uneasiness towards the turn towards the ‘active society’. On the other hand, it is also driven by a curiosity and openness to the kinds of realities and power relations the turn produces. This is important in order to avoid indulging in the comfortable but imprecise diagnosis, “it’s neoliberalism, stupid!” – the idea that every ‘leftist’, from social democrat to communist, as well as radical social movements, are united in denouncing; in fact, they rarely speak about the same thing (Hansen 2015: 305). The findings presented in the following two sections illustrate that although the turn towards the ‘active society’ is not simply neoliberal, its *content* and *dynamics* may provoke a wish for “not being governed like that” (cf. Foucault 1990).

¹ Cf. Figure 1, p. 26.

JUSTICE AND GOVERNING IN THE ‘ACTIVE SOCIETY’

As regards the *content*, the mapping of the cities of unemployment exposes the politics and morality at stake in the transformations. They are used to distinguish the unemployed, qualify them as more or less worthy, and govern them accordingly. All cities contain legitimate inequalities between its subjects that are reinforced by governing in accordance with its principle. The question of which cities are mobilised to justify transformations towards the ‘active society’ is thus not a question of more or less governing, but of what kinds of governing and in accordance with which yardsticks and with what kind of hierarchies and forms of legitimate coercion.

The analyses of the four cases show that reforms are particularly driven by justifications from the Paternal, Mobility, Investment and Incentives cities tied together in multiple and distinct, but often similar ways. In the justifications mobilising these cities, there are certain patterns of coercion, or to put it another way, governing, that in one way or another are recognised as being unpleasant for the unemployed. In the cities that are left to the margins of the ‘active society’, the use of coercion is legitimate against those who are somehow breaching the morality of the city. Elsewhere, coercion is legitimate towards the speculative or fraud-committing in the city of Insurance, the egoistic or greedy in the city of Redistribution, or those who do not spend or create jobs in the city of Demand. In these cities coercion is thus not emancipating the one who is coerced; rather, it is used as a means to ensure that emancipation is generally possible in the city. In the ‘active society’, coercion plays a more ambiguous role. For instance, although coercion in the city of Mobility can play a similar role as an act of punishment to signal that lazy behaviour breaches its work ethic, coercion (e.g., the obligation to search or work for benefits) governs the unemployed towards their emancipation, which is more activity. Similar patterns can be seen in the city of Investment, where coercive measures to ensure that the unemployed invest in themselves are justifiable; in the city of Incentives, where increasing the relative undesirability of being unemployed frees the enterprise of the economic man; and in the Paternal world, where coercion is integral to bringing up the unemployed to take responsibility for their own lives. In all cases, coercion functions as different forms of “chemotherapy” – governing must be cruel to be kind. (Boland and Griffin 2016)

The issue of what is a “right” and a “duty” is subject to a similar requalification in the ‘active society’. It is not that there were no duties before the governing became ‘active’:

in the city of Redistribution, rights come with citizenship, but being a citizen entails duties, such as paying taxes; and in the city of Insurance, rights derive from membership, which entails paying contributions in solidarity. However, rights and duties are two different things in both cities. Justifications of all four reforms emphasise the importance of “rights and duties”, but again in a different way. Whereas rights are accessible *a posteriori* (after obligations have been fulfilled), it is rather the other way around in the ‘active society’: as soon as rights are activated, so are duties. “Rights and duties” is thus always a pair in the ‘active society’, and sometimes they are completely inseparable, such as the right and duty to education in the city of Investment, or the duties in the Paternal city which emancipate by responsabilising.

The moralities and governing thus correspond poorly to the dichotomous thinking of two opposing approaches that the existing comparative literature so often invoke as driving transformations.¹ Firstly, when mapping repertoires of evaluation that are used to justify transformations bottom-up, the question is not whether or not they entail coercive measures, but how they do it. ‘Sticks’ and ‘carrots’ are in other words inseparable or preconditions for each other. Furthermore, the literature seems to presume that the ‘soft’ approach remains generous, universal, egalitarian, etc. and is somehow capable of encompassing and conserving the ‘classic’ welfare ideas of Redistribution and Insurance. To this end, the Nordic countries are repeatedly pointed out as the ‘actually existing’ materialisation of this ‘soft’ and more socially just way. Denmark in particular is singled out as exemplifying the “politics of social solidarity” (Thelen 2014) or “flexicurity” (where security is not sacrificed) (Madsen 2002). As mentioned in the introduction, France, although it is rarely pointed out as best practice, also ought to keep a ‘soft’ non-coercive approach in line with its Republican legacy, while its Bismarckian heritage would make it a strong defender of the city of Insurance. However, both Danish and French reforms entail a more individualised governing with an increased and justified use of coercion towards the unemployed.

On the surface this is a puzzle, but not if one looks at the four reform processes. The moralities of both cities of Redistribution and Insurance were fiercely criticised in all reforms; mainly Insurance in the cases of the unemployment insurance systems and Redistribution in the cases of the uninsured. Thus while a static picture of the governing

¹ See Table 1, p. 4.

in both countries might show fairly ‘generous’ systems compared to the Anglo-Saxon and Southern European countries, the *direction* of change clearly distances the cities of Redistribution and Insurance in both countries. Money is still transferred to the unemployed, but to a lesser extent for compensating and redistributing. When it comes to justification, the cities thus play key roles in the imaginative dystopian inverse of the ‘active society’ – the ‘passive society’. The governing of the ‘passive society’ “invalidates”ⁱ, makes the unemployed “survive” rather than “live”ⁱⁱ, leaves them “alone with their difficulties”ⁱⁱⁱ, and by making no demands, it does not “respect” them^{iv}. The cities that are mobilised to justify the turn towards the ‘active society’ thus keep finding and disqualifying elements of Insurance, Redistribution and Demand in the governing that enhance unemployment and inhibit the emancipation of the unemployed. The city of Investment questions short-sighted passive spending; in the city of Mobility, such spending breeds a scandalous attitude that money is not solely a reward for (burdensome) work; the Paternal city warns against making the unemployed irresponsible by nursing them too much; and according to the city of Incentives, such spending demotivates the economic man. According to all four worlds, the focus on conjunctural unemployment neglects an array of causes of unemployment that have nothing to do with a lack of available jobs.

The cities of Redistribution, Insurance and Demand, however, do not vanish completely, but they are increasingly marginalised in the qualification of the unemployed. The three cities are made the preserve of those who are already part of the active society with its equality in financing between tax payers (RSA^v), keeping of compensation rates for those engaging in activation (PARE^{vi}), right to leave (and distribute work) as a reward restricted to the busy working population (LAAP^{vii}), right to union rates for working, with the exception of the unemployed (AKGN^{viii}), and the means to consuming preserved the *working* poor (RSA^{ix}).

ⁱ See p. 58.

ⁱⁱ See p. 150.

ⁱⁱⁱ See p. 99.

^{iv} See p. 175.

^v See p. 157.

^{vi} See p. 99.

^{vii} See p. 129.

^{viii} See p. 167.

^{ix} See p. 149.

Finally, it is worth returning to the question of neoliberalism. Is the mix of repertoires driving transformations congruent with what many interpret as a neoliberal era (e.g. Hall and Lamont 2013; Schmidt and Thatcher 2013)? The findings indicate that there are good reasons for being cautious with placing the transformations in the neoliberal master narrative. Neither the ideas nor instruments of the four reforms fit with the ‘classic’ idea of neoliberalism as a welfare state dismantler. Foucault’s and others’ studies of varieties of neoliberalism (Foucault 2008; Lemke 2001; Mirowski and Plehwe 2009; Dean 2012) have nuanced this understanding to open up more interventionist and constructionist versions, such as the school of *Ordo* liberalism. Within this broader perspective, the city of Incentives has clear threads to neoliberal thought, for instance, through the negative tax. The city of Investment has obvious elements from another neoliberal school, the Chicago school and the works on human capital by Gary Becker (1964), but it is clearly also informed by social democratic thought (Andersson 2009). The Paternal and Mobility cities, on the other hand, seem difficult to label as neoliberal, even in neoliberalism’s most generic definition as somehow concerned with organising according to the market. This is not the concern of the two cities. Unlike the cities of Incentives and Investment, the Paternal and Mobility cities do not presume a labour *market*. They are concerned with making the unemployed work (on whatever conditions) and with making them capable of providing for themselves (and their families). The ‘active society’ is thus a peculiar and often contradictory composite mix of ideas to which applying the label of neoliberalism would neglect some important moral underpinnings and conflate others.

MULTI-CAUSALITY AND THE MANY-FACED EMANCIPATOR

With regards to *dynamics*, the composite mix of ideas driving the four reforms towards the ‘active society’ result in ongoing test situations where tensions between cities become visible. For instance, the cities of Mobility and Investment clash in the question of the right to refuse work that does not fit the skills of the unemployed (PAREⁱ) and in the question of whether the unemployed should simply be activated or up-skilled (LAAPⁱⁱ, AKGNⁱⁱⁱ). The city of Investment and the Paternal city contradict each other by the

ⁱ See p 97.

ⁱⁱ See p. 125.

ⁱⁱⁱ See p. 177.

former insisting on the potential of the unemployed, thus being worthy of investment, and the latter qualifying some as permanently incompetent, thus being worthy of charity or protected work (LAAPⁱ). Finally, the cities of Incentives and Mobility clash in the question of freedom to choose not to work vs. obligation to work and whether the unemployed should be motivated to work for the sake of earning (more) money, or merely for the ethical value of working (RSAⁱⁱ).

How are the tensions mitigated between the four cities driving change? The previous four chapters have shown how the moral tensions result in a permanent trying of the unemployed – at the level of both justification and critique, as well as governing. Therefore, there is nothing that indicates that contradictions will inevitably lead to a crisis. Rather, they seem extremely productive, leading to calls for further reforms in the direction of the ‘active society’. In the processes of justification and critique, tensions and compromises cannot simply be reduced to a conciliation of interests of various actors. No political actors involved in reforms adhere to a singular city of unemployment, and most of them mobilise a plurality of them.

Instead, actors are aligned towards an interest in the relation between the behaviour of the unemployed and the causes of unemployment. This underpins an overall problematisation of the governing of unemployment that seems distinct and central to the way in which the four cities of Investment, Mobility, Incentives and Paternalism shape the ‘active society. In this *multi-causal* formatting of the question of unemployment, there is always scope for refinement and it is always debatable which explanations matter the most. There is thus always room for improvement in the ‘active society’ and hence room for more governing. In this setting, the unemployed, by being unemployed, are a symptom of the cities of Demand, Redistribution and Insurance prescribing the wrong medicine, hence the need to increase or adjust the doses of Incentives, Investment, Mobility and Paternal governing. As long as there are vacant jobs and/or people are laid off, the unemployed can always acquire more skills, be more mobile, have better incentives and be more responsible. The path towards the ‘active society’ therefore seems infinite and independent of the economy’s condition. There are always more people to include, who can always be included faster, while the thresholds marking the

ⁱ See p 118.

ⁱⁱ See p. 152.

‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the active society can always be more distinct. Furthermore, reforms never seem to work quite as intended; one reform invariably calls for another.

In this permanent trying of the governing of unemployment, the unemployed are qualified in two rather contradictory ways overall. On the one hand, the unemployed are outcomes, and victims, of malicious governing where justifications and critique partake in an experimental and managerial quest for better governing to emancipate the unemployed. As is evident in all four cases, this does not preclude the use of coercive measures, but these are used to ensure that the unemployed make the right choices in order to emancipate themselves. On the other hand, and this is clearest in the ‘intensifying’ reforms of the uninsured recipients of benefits, the unemployed are a potential enemy of the moralities of the ‘active society’; they are people who deliberately refuse to participate in the governing that will bring them closer to the ‘active society’. It may be a minority, “but it’s a minority that shocks”ⁱ. As the case of ‘Lazy Robert’ indicates, it does not take more than a single person to initiate this qualification of the unemployed.ⁱⁱ Here the use of coercion is legitimised differently. Rather than emancipating the unemployed, it resembles a *spectacle*, i.e., a punishment that predominantly sends signals to the rest of society (cf. Hansen 2015: 202-204; see also Peck 2001: 23; Wacquant 2009). The two qualifications of the unemployed entail two different qualifications of the ‘audience’ – those already included in the ‘active society’. In the former case, its people are *emancipated* by working (hard), using their talents, striving to earn more and being self-supporting. However, in the latter case, its people are *burdened* by carrying the incompetent, namely those who do not exploit their opportunities and those who refuse to work. The ‘active society’ is thus concurrently the ideal place to live and constantly threatened by forms of living that contradict its moralities.

Coercion and control can thus both be legitimised for the sake of those outside the ‘active society’ (the unemployed) and for the insiders (the employed) to insure that the ‘active society’ *is* the most pleasurable place to live. One of the outcomes of the two concurrent qualifications could be a certain acceptance of a group of unemployed remaining outside the ‘active society’ and its privileges. The more governing intensifies

ⁱ Cf. p. 71.

ⁱⁱ Cf. p. 176f.

towards emancipating the unemployed (they had the opportunities, incentives and upbringing), the more the idea that (some of) the unemployed are to blame, or at least not worthy of living in the 'active society', can flourish.

This gradual re- and potential dis-qualification of the unemployed also sediments into governing instruments and institutions, but firstly it is worth noting how the multi-causal problematisation as well as tensions between the cities sediment. In the governing of the unemployed, the thresholds between cities and the various qualifications of the unemployed entail an encounter with what could be termed the *many-faced emancipator*. Firstly, there are tensions and uncertainties regarding which mobilised cities are transferred into an initial screening of the unemployed. These institutionalised tests of triage and categorisation, often organised around interviews, basically ask what kind of subject the unemployed person is *and* hereby qualify the precise aim and content of being "active": is it a case of skills, being more flexible and mobile, getting an incentive to work, becoming responsible, etc.? This is not to say that there were no tests before, but the tests based on Insurance and Redistribution looked backwards, i.e., they asked whether the unemployed person had done his duty so he could claim his right. However, the evaluation institutionalised by all four reforms is forward-looking while remaining interested in the past, present and future behaviour of the unemployed. It asks: "tell us who are you and what have you done", hereby retroactively establishing the causes of the unemployed person's situation, and, looking forward, the necessary corrective actions.

Here, the individual plans and contracts, which all reforms somehow entail, are central. They establish the obligations and rights in order to emancipate the unemployed according to who they are. The plan radically changes the way the unemployed are qualified, intensifying both uncertainty as well as the trying of the unemployed. Both the French and Danish plans are inherently unstable and revised and adjusted continuously according to the current situation of the unemployed. The result is a process in which the question of who the unemployed are is continuously put to the test. The same continuous testing revises backwards the explanations for the situation. Initially unemployment may be caused by an 'accident', but once the plan begins, this is irrelevant. Here, the unemployed individual may be qualified as someone with potential and hence worthy of investment, but as time goes by he or she may be re-qualified as immobile or irresponsible. Looking forward, revising the plan may accordingly result in a

new end goal, which may entail the emancipator changing face and thus emancipatory status, e.g., from being worthy on the labour market (just in need of being matched to a job), to being equipped with (unreleased) potentials for acquiring more human capital, to being in need of economic motivation, to being worthy of nothing but a subsidised low-paid job, and perhaps, in the end, to being ‘worthy’ of being poor.

Finally, it is worth asking how this institutionalised and continuous trying surrounding the individual plan of the unemployed person qualifies his or her voice. The instrument of the plan implies a functional and future-oriented formatting (Thévenot 2006) where the activities of the authorities, as well as of the unemployed, are qualified in terms of their expected effect on the desired outcome. The format, in other words, qualifies the unemployed as a dependent variable in an experiment where a number of independent variables are tested; something which resembles the present obsession with ‘evidence-based’ policymaking (Triantafyllou 2015). The interest is thus displaced from the question of what instruments can reduce the collective and statistical artefact of unemployment, to what instruments will make the unemployed person employed; or, at least, the solution to the former problem is said to be found in the latter.

It is within this setting that the voice of the unemployed matters as a means of understanding the degree of social heritage, limits to mobility, lack of self-control, responsiveness to incentives, etc., and for providing the necessary engagement to fulfil the plan. The voice of the unemployed is hence limited to a *source* of knowledge and *sign* of engagement in the plan. The voice is a means of knowing who he is and what he has done, and that he confirms his engagement in his plan and wants to be part of the ‘active society’. What happens if the unemployed person raises his voice and criticises the governing in the ‘active society’? The case of AKGN perhaps provides some disturbing hints. Both the affairs concerning ‘poor Carina’ and ‘Lazy Robert’ illustrate how issues of unjust governing (from the perspective of the unemployed) are almost immediately ricocheted back to a scrutiny of the unemployed reminiscent of the institutionalised tests asking “who are you, and what have you done?”. The only difference being that it takes place in public as ‘intimate spectacles’.

The current challenge is to invent forms of critique, subjects, governing and forms of work that are not easily absorbable by the dynamics of the ‘active society’ – not only for the sake of those unemployed who may have doubts towards the governing they are confronted with, but equally to open paths towards that question the inequalities and

power relations within the ‘active society’. The need is made no less important by the fact that the only potent alternative to the ‘active society’ at the moment seems to be coming from the populist right.

Each European country has its particular history, test situations and sedimentation in relation to the governing of unemployment; even within clusters of welfare regimes, divergence is substantial. Furthermore, even each reform within a single country has its own particularity. This obviously raises the question as to the relevance of the findings beyond the concrete objects of analysis – i.e., the four reforms. In terms of validity, the four reforms certainly do not qualify as a representative sample of France and Denmark, the Continental and Nordic welfare regimes, or Europe as such. Both Denmark and France each have their unique composite mixture of seven cities of unemployment. However, although the transformative path of other countries should be studied separately, the analysis of the thesis can contribute to the general discussion and theorisation of European employment and labour market policy, including the role of neoliberalism. Hence, the findings of the thesis have relevance for countries that are witnessing resembling transformations towards a more ‘active society’ and are introducing similar instruments and institutions.

By tracing similar ideas and resembling dynamics in two different countries and in two different systems of governing (insured and uninsured), it is likely that similar ideas and dynamics are in place in other countries with similar histories, and where a turn towards an ‘active society’ is in the making. The argumentative strength and general relevance of the study lie in its systematic, comprehensive and, importantly, in-depth analysis of a small but heterogeneous selection of cases. The method does not unveil generalisable cause-effect relationships, but rather provides a toolkit for critically opening eyes towards resembling situations. It is thus my hope that the concepts and theorisations can be useful for putting the turn towards the ‘active society’ *itself* to the test wherever it is unfolding.

Appendix A

Selected cases

| | France | Denmark |
|--------------|--|---|
| | <i>Insured</i> | |
| | PARE – <i>Plan d'aide et de retour à l'emploi</i> | LAAP - <i>Lov om aktiv arbejdsmarkeds-politik</i> |
| Period | 5 th of April 2000 to 1 st of January 2001 | 1st of March 1992 to 1st of August 1993 |
| Search words | "PARE", "Plan d'aide et de retour à l'emploi", "Projet d'action personnalisé pour un nouveau start", "contrat d'aide au retour à l'emploi", "contrat d'aide pour le retour à l'emploi", "contrat d'aide et de retour à l'emploi", "conventions d'aide au retour à l'emploi", "contrat d'aide et de retour à l'emploi", "refondation sociale" AND "medef" AND "chômage" | "aktiv arbejdsmarkedspolitik", "zeuthen-udvalg*", "aktivering*" AND "arbejdsmarked*", "dagpengeområde*", "arbejdsmarkedsreform*", "socialkommission*", "arbejdsmarked*" AND "strukturproblemer*", "aktivlinjen" |
| Articles | 281 | 439 |
| | <i>Uninsured</i> | |
| | RSA – <i>Revenu de Solidarité Active</i> | AKGN : <i>Alle kan gøre nytte</i> |
| Period | 1 st of August 2008 to 1 st of January 2009 | 1 st of May 2012 to 18 th of May 2013 |
| Search words | "Revenu de Solidarité Active", "RSA" | |
| Articles | 316 | 354 |

Appendix B

Coding scheme

DESCRIPTIVE, INTERPRETIVE AND PATTERN CODES

| Descriptive codes | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Who speaks? | Every coded statement is coded according to who enunciates. Sub-codes: Civil society, Employers' organisation, Government, Governmental agency, Practitioners, Labour unions, Newspaper, Politician (Centre Left, Politician Centre Right, Politician Far Left, Politician Far Right), Scholar, Social workers' rep., Think tank, Unemployed (person/organisation), Unemployment insurance org., Other (person/organisation) |
| Evaluation of existing policies | When the existing policies, or fractions of them, are evaluated, this can include everything from statistics to anecdotes, from normative moral justifications to descriptions. |
| Solutions | A solution concerning the problems the reform is dealing with is proposed. |
| Organisation | Statements involve the issue of how to organise the governing of unemployment between actors and organisations, e.g., social partners vs. state, national vs. municipal, disciplinary vs. actor-centred. |
| Societal good/bad | References are made to the impact of policies/unemployed on the well-being of society as a whole, that is, beyond the unemployed or group of unemployed the policy is directly targeting |
| (Un)employed subject | The persona of the unemployed or the employed is somehow qualified |

Interpretive codes

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Cities of unemployment | Instances in which a repertoire of evaluation is mobilised to justify or criticise Sub-codes: Demand, Redistribution, Insurance, Paternal, Mobility, Investment. |
| x Cities of unemployment | Instances in which the morality/principle of a repertoire is denounced. Sub-codes: xDemands, xRedistribution, xInsurance, xPaternal, xMobility, xInvestment. |

Pattern codes

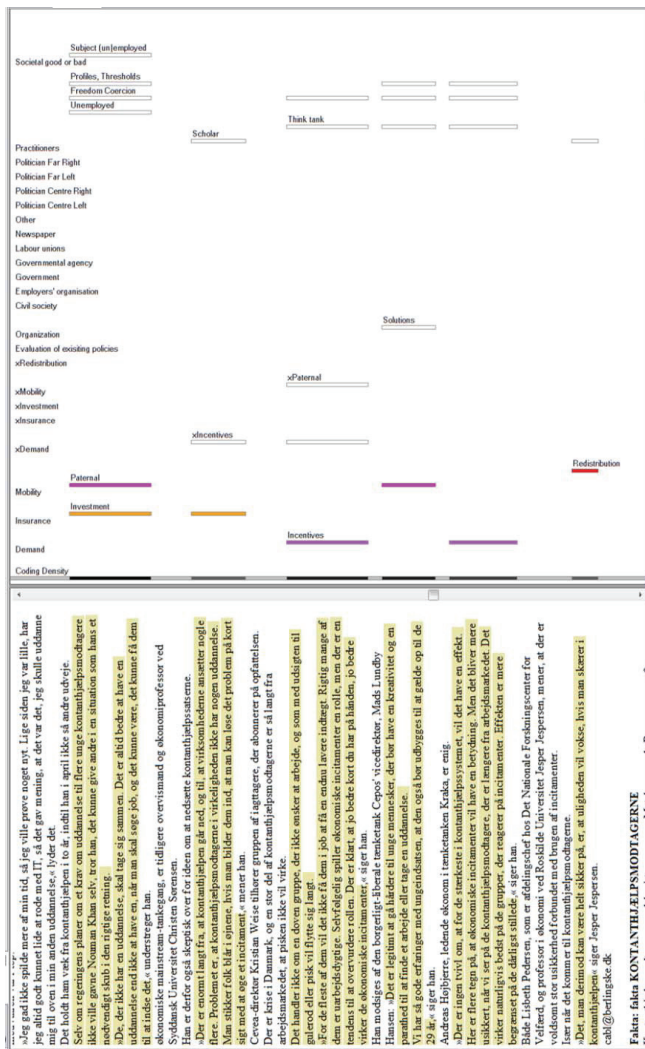
| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Societal good/bad | References are made to the impact of policies/unemployed on the well-being of society as a whole, that is, beyond the unemployed or group of unemployed the policy is directly targeting |
| (Un)employed subject | The persona of the unemployed or the employed is somehow qualified |
| Freedom/coercion | The question of whether and how to make use of coercion towards the unemployed. |
| Profiles/thresholds | Categories, thresholds and comparisons are used to distinguish between different types of unemployed. |

CHANGES IN CODING SCHEME

The tentative grammar entailed seven cities of unemployment. The seven cities were: Social citizenship, Insurance, Incentives, Paternalism, Social Investment, Transitional and Coaching. Although the final coding scheme was still composed of seven cities of unemployment, these were seven substantially different cities. For instance:

- Initially, the typology involved a city of “Social citizenship” focusing on social rights and universalism. However, this city was too close to particular objects that were mobilised in many cities, and hence did not mobilise to justify or criticise the governing of unemployment as such, but was considered a tool. For instance, “rights” play an important role in both “Insurance” and “Investment”, and even “Incentives” acknowledge certain minimum rights. On the other hand, another topic closely related to social citizenship proved to be pertinent in most cases. This was the issue of economic inequality in which the governing of unemployment was evaluated according to its redistributive effects. Hence, the city was re-qualified and re-coded as a city of “redistribution”.
- The tentative typology involved a city of “Paternalism” as well as a city of “Coaching”. Whereas the former distinguished between competent and incompetent/childish human beings, the latter saw human beings as more or less realised selves. Initially all matters relating to punishment were coded as paternal, but it quickly became clear that the issue of punishment and coercion was generally identifiable across most repertoires of evaluation. In other words, it was a subject (and legitimate possibility) in all cities, and hence should be considered a *pattern* which belongs to the grammar. Excluding the issue of punishment from the Paternal city made it clear that it shared a lot in common with the Coaching city. Both take a behavioural view of the unemployed, and both trace the causes of unemployment to the individual person’s lack of mental and cognitive capabilities. Hence the behavioural qualifications in the Coaching city were recoded as “Paternal”. On the other hand, the qualification of the unemployed as being one with inner potential was recoded as Investment, as this was in harmony with this city’s aim of equal opportunities and non-discrimination.
- At an early stage, I added a city of “Inclusion” to capture the role of social work and the qualification of unemployment as a problem of social heritage. This, however, appeared intertwined with the Investment city’s common good of equal opportunities and its belief in the (human capital) potential within the unemployed. Once the cities were merged, they appeared to illustrate a variety of tools and qualifications *within* the principle of investment.
- A repertoire that I had expected to be buried in the graveyard of history, but, nonetheless, was frequently mobilised in both France and Denmark, was the city of Demand, building on Keynesian thought.

Examples of coding in nVivo



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List of abbreviations, terms and actors

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|--------------------------|--|
| AC ! | Agir ensemble contre le chômage; French social movement |
| AKGN | Alle kan gøre nytte; 'Everyone can be useful' (reform, see chapter 7) |
| ALMP | Active labour market programmes/policies |
| ANPE | Agence nationale pour l'emploi (see p. 84) |
| Apeis | L'Association Pour l'Emploi, l'Information et la Solidarité des chômeurs et des précaires; French organization for unemployed and precarious workers |
| Assedic | Association pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce (see p. 84) |
| <i>Assistanat</i> | Term designating the people receiving public benefits (see p. 145) |
| ASS | Allocation de solidarité spécifique (see p. 140) |
| <i>Assurance chômage</i> | The French system of unemployment insurance (see p. 82) |
| AUD | Allocation unique dégressive (see p. 85) |
| CARE | Contrat d'aide au retour à l'emploi (see p. 88) |
| CFDT | Confédération française démocratique du travail ; French union confederation (see p. 84) |
| CFTC | Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens ; French union confederation (see p. 83) |
| CGPME | Confédération générale des petites et moyennes entreprises |
| CGT | Confédération générale du travail; French union confederation (see p. 83) |
| <i>Dagpenge</i> | The Danish benefit for insured unemployed (see p. 108) |
| <i>Dagpengesystemet</i> | The Danish system of of unemployment insurance (see p. 108) |
| DA | Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening; The Confederation of Danish Employers |
| <i>Deuxième gauche</i> | 'The Second Left' (see p. 84) |
| DI | Dansk Industri; 'Confederation of Danish Industry' |
| FO | Force ouvrière; French union confederation (see p. 83) |

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Enhedslisten | Danish left-wing political party |
| <i>Kontanthjælp</i> | The Danish benefit for uninsured unemployed (see p. 164) |
| <i>Kontanthjælpsystemet</i> | The Danish system for uninsured unemployed (see p. 112) |
| LA | Liberal Alliance (Danish political party) |
| LAAP | Lov om aktiv arbejdsmarkedspolitik; The active labour market policy act' (reform, see chapter 5) |
| LCR | La ligue communiste révolutionnaire (French political party) |
| LO | Landsorganisationen; The Danish Confederation of Trade Unions |
| Medef | Mouvement des entreprises de France (see p. 86) |
| MNCP | Mouvement national des chômeurs et précaires; French organization representing unemployed. |
| MoDem | Mouvement démocrate (French political party) |
| PAP | Projet d'action personnalisé |
| PARE | Plan d'aide au retour à l'emploi; 'Help plan for the return to employment' (reform, see chapter 4) |
| PCF | Parti communiste français (French political party) |
| Radikale venstre | Danish Social-Liberal Party |
| <i>Refondation sociale</i> | Social restructuring (see p. 86) |
| <i>Régime de solidarité</i> | Regime of solidarity in France (see p. 85) |
| RMI | Revenu minimum d'insertion ; 'Minimum income benefit of insertion' (see p. 86) |
| RSA | Revenue de solidarité active; 'Income of active solidarity' (reform, see chapter 6) |
| <i>Sécurité sociale</i> | French system of social protection encompassing disease, work accidents, family benefits and old age schemes. |
| SF | Socialistisk Folkeparti; The Socialist People's Party of Denmark |
| SU | Statens Uddannelsesstøtte; The Danish universal state-sponsored study grants (see p. 181) |
| UMP | L'Union pour un mouvement populaire (see p. 144) |

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| Unedic | Union nationale interprofessionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce (see p. 84) |
| UPA | Union professionnelle artisanale |
| Venstre | Liberal Danish political party |

Endnotes

CHAPTER 3, CITY OF DEMAND

¹ AKGN

² LAAP

³ AKGN

⁴ LAAP

⁵ LAAP

⁶ LAAP

⁷ LAAP

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¹¹ PARE

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¹³ LAAP

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¹⁶ RSA

¹⁷ RSA

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³⁹ LAAP

⁴⁰ RSA

⁴¹ RSA

⁴² PARE

⁴³ AKGN

⁴⁴ Froslev, L. and Brøndum, C. (1993, May 1) '589 dage igen'. *Berlingske Tidende*.

⁴⁵ AKGN

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 49 LAAP
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- ⁷⁹ LAAP

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CHAPTER 8

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