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and Denmark?

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Is the 'black' American Experience resembled in Britain, Sweden,
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Abstract:

The link between ethnic heterogeneity and support for welfare policy is debated. The thesis of a negative relationship is supported by a large American research effort. Historically the race issue have blocked a number of US welfare schemes, across USA ethnic heterogeneous states have less generous benefits, and citizens having negative attitudes towards blacks oppose welfare. The question is to what extent increased ethnic heterogeneity in European countries will establish the same mechanisms. Three theoretical positions are discussed; the position that the 'black' American experience is unique, the position that it is general, and a middle position of it being contingent on institutional settings. The latter position predicts that the 'black' American experience especially can be avoided in social democratic welfare regimes where the political elites have not played the race card. Empirically the article is based on survey data from UK, Sweden and Denmark, where a number of American GSS items have been directly replicated. Despite indications of American uniqueness and welfare regime effects the findings support the position that the American in-group out-group mechanisms are resembled in Europe.

Introduction

The inflow of Non-western immigrants into Europe has fuelled both a public and academic debate about the consequences of getting more ethnic heterogeneous populations. One of the concerns has been that increased heterogeneity will lower public support for the generous welfare schemes found in many European countries. The prediction of lower public support is often inferred from the American experience, which has been analysed in a bulk of studies. It is e.g. a classic argument that the lack of an American socialist party was caused by the ethnic heterogeneity the American working class (Lipset 1997). Historical studies have shown that American efforts to establish generous welfare schemes was blocked by the race issue, i.e. public and political support for such proposals eroded when it was highlighted that especially black Americans would benefit from such legislation (e.g. Quadagno 1994). There is a negative relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and spending on welfare across the American states and survey studies have shown a clear relationship between negative attitudes towards the black minority and support for welfare policies (Gilens 1999).

The question is to what degree this well documented American experience can be generalised to European countries. We will operate with three positions. The first position is that it can be generalised. This position sees the American experience as the outcome of a very general process of in-group solidarity and out-group hostility, which is well documented at the micro level (e.g. Tajfel 1981). On the macro level the argument becomes a bit more complicated. Alesina & Glaser (2004) uphold the idea of a general negative effect

from ethnic heterogeneity on public support, which they substantiate by showing cross-national correlations between measures of ethnic fractionalization and social spending. However, they do argue that the negative effect will especially be present if the ethnic minorities are concentrated in lower groups of society; as in the American case. They also acknowledge that in order to lower support for welfare policy, political elites need to link the welfare issue to the ethnicity issue. But they find it hard to imagine that this link will not be made ... *'racial conflicts can be used strategically by political entrepreneurs interested (...) in preventing redistribution. By convincing even the not so rich whites that redistribution favours minorities, they have been able to build large coalitions against welfare policies (...) In fact, the extreme right in Europe is already using the race card to oppose welfare policies. We predict that as racial heterogeneity in Europe increases, even the more 'respectable' right will move in this direction'* (Alesina & Glaeser 2004: 218-19). According to Kymlicka & Banting this position has even become dominant; *'the strongly racialized dimension of U.S. welfare politics is no longer seen as an anomaly... but rather as a normal, even inevitable, reaction to the simple fact of ethnic heterogeneity. Indeed, the United States has come to represent the leading international example of the proposition that heterogeneity as such erodes redistribution. Its story has emerged as a sort of 'master narrative''* (2006:286).

A second position, shared by Kymlicka & Banting, is that the American experience is unique. Two conditions are often mentioned; the American's believes in the free market, which leads to individualistic explanations of poverty, and the history of slavery. It has been argued that the combination of these two elements is the basis of contemporary American racism (e.g. Kinder & Sanders 1996). The idea of American uniqueness is also present in Gilens's work. He argues that it is not a general dislike for black Americans that lower support for policy programs, which African Americans (are perceived) to benefit disproportionately from. Low support originates from the stereotype that the out-group is lazy; *'long before the birth of the welfare state, the defenders of slavery argued that blacks were unfit for freedom because they were to lackadaisical to survive on there own. This stereotype has been traced by social psychologists through generations of white Americans'* (Gilens 1999:78). Thus, in this account the American situation is rooted in a unique historical experience and therefore it cannot be expected to be resembled in other countries that become more ethnic heterogeneous.

A third, middle, position states that the negative relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and support will be contingent on the institutional context. Despite their belief in general mechanisms Alesina & Glaser did mention the importance of political entrepreneurs using the race issue strategically. It was not further theorised but it is easy to argue that differences in party competition might influence the likelihood of political elites playing the race card. Green-Pedersen & Odsmalm (2008) e.g. argue that for strategic reasons the bourgeois Danish parties played the race card while the Swedish bourgeois parties did

not; in the former case a coalition with the right wing party could deliver a majority, in the latter case it could not. So the thesis would be that the American experience is only resembled in countries where politicians have played the race card. Another institutional argument is that the programmatic structure of the welfare state has an impact. In a modern version of the old Titmuss argument Larsen (2006) argues that liberal welfare regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990) fuel an intense deservingness discussion, whereas social democratic regimes hamper this discussion. Thus, the thesis is that the American experience is most likely to be resembled in other liberal welfare regimes and least likely to be resembled in social democratic welfare regimes.

Comparing USA with UK, Denmark, and Sweden

The aim of the article is to study to what degree the mechanisms documented in American survey studies can be found in UK, Sweden and Denmark. Taken the large public and scholarly interest into account it is fair to say that the comparative empirical evidence is modest. Those who predict American uniqueness normally only provide evidence from the American case; often historical. Those who believe that the American case can be generalised (Alesina & Glaser 2004) have shown correlations between racial fractionalisation and total social expenditures at the aggregated level. It makes the thesis plausible but it does not provide 'the smoking gun'. One easy critique is that total social expenses are more dependent on the strength of left wing parties than ethnic heterogeneity (e.g. Taylor-Gooby 2005). One might also point to the fact that within OECD countries there is no connection between ethnic heterogeneity and overall spending – neither is there any tendency to a decline in overall spending within the last decades (e.g. Banting, 2005). This might all be true. But even in that case the critics have not shown that increased heterogeneity will not reduce public support for specific European anti-poverty programs, as it has been the case in USA. Finally, those arguing for the importance of institutions have neither come up with much empirical evidence. At the aggregated level support for welfare policies remain high in Europe but this does not necessarily mean that attitudes towards immigrants have no impact on welfare attitudes.

The aim of the article is to establish a much more direct test of the theoretical suggestions. It is done by asking British, Swedish and Danish respondents the exact same questions about Non-western immigrants, as the Americans have been asked about blacks. American questions from the General Social Survey (GSS) were included in the British Social Attitude (BSA) survey 2009 and the Danish and Swedish ISSP (International social survey program) from 2009 (see below). The items measure attitudes towards Non-western immigrants, as they are believed most directly to resemble the status of blacks in USA; they are cultural distinct, often live in distinct neighbourhoods, and have low employment rates. The term Non-western immigrants are a familiar concept in the Swedish and Danish

context while the term is less clear in a Britain. In order to avoid ambiguity the respondents were instructed that by ‘Non-western immigrants we mean asylum seekers and other immigrants from Asia, Africa, South American and the Caribbean’. In the British case the respondents were also given a show card that stated not included groups. If the argument of American uniqueness is true we should not expect to find the American pattern in any of the other countries. And the other way around; if the American experience is general we should expect to find the American pattern in all four countries. If the effect from ethnic heterogeneity is contingent on institutional structures our expectation becomes more complicated. The further motivation behind the country selection is illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1: Motivation behind the country selection

	Bourgeois political elites have played the race card	Bourgeois political elites have not played the race card
Liberal welfare regime	USA	UK
Social democratic welfare regime	Denmark	Sweden

If welfare regime type is the crucial institutional structure we should expect to find the American pattern in UK but not in Denmark and Sweden; the argument being that harsh deservingness discussions are fuelled by the liberal welfare regime and hampered by the social democratic welfare regime. If the crucial factor is whether the bourgeois political elites have played the race card we should expect the American pattern to be found in Denmark but not in Sweden and UK. That the Republicans consistently have played the race card in American politics is well known and documented. In Danish politics the established bourgeois political elites have also used the issue of ethnicity. It was one of the two main topics that brought the bourgeois government to power in 2001. Since 2001 the Danish people party, an anti-immigrant party established in 1995, have served as the parliamentary basis for this government. In the latest election (2007) the Danish Peoples Party got 13.8 percent of votes. In 2002, 2007 and 2008 this coalition conducted harsh reductions in the social assistance given to immigrants. In contrast neither the British Peoples Party nor the Swedish Peoples Party has got any strong foothold in the parliament and they have not been recognised by other bourgeois parties. Thus, it is argued that in UK and Sweden the mainstream bourgeois political elites have not played the race card.

Despite variations in the institutional arguments one clear expectation can be inferred; the American pattern should not be replicated in Sweden, as the country both has a social democratic welfare regime and bourgeois politicians, which have done their best to avoid a public discussion about ethnicity. So if the American mechanisms can be found in Sweden there is a strong case for the argument that the American experience can be generalised. Using the same line of reasoning Eger (2010) demonstrates in her article 'Even in Sweden' that there is a negative link between ethnic heterogeneity in Swedish regions and public support for welfare spending (pooled cross-section data from 1986 to 2002).

Data

The American items, posed in UK, Sweden, and Denmark, were taken from the GSS, which is the most comprehensive US survey program. Of special relevance is the GSS 2000, as it included the ISSP module on social inequality and a module labelled Multi ethnic United States. The GSS is collected as a face to face survey but the ISSP items are found in an attached self-completion section. The answers given in this large representative sample of the adult American population serves as our baseline for accessing the patterns found in UK, Sweden, and Denmark. In UK the selected American GSS items were included in the BSA 2009. The BSA is the most comprehensive British survey and provides a representative sample of the adult British population. As the GSS the BSA is collected as a face to face survey expanded with a self-completion section that includes the ISSP and a number of other items. The 2009 BSA survey is of special relevance. Besides the new GSS items (twenty) the two surveys have a number of ISSP items in common. In Denmark and Sweden the GSS items were included in the ISSP 2009 survey, which in both countries is conducted as an independent postal survey among a representative sample of adults (response rate 59 percent in Sweden and 56 percent in Denmark). The Swedish follow up procedure is postal, while the Danish follow up procedure combines postal reminders with telephone interviews (see ISSP achieve for details). In all four countries the survey institutes report that no severe bias can be found in the samples. Sometimes the method of data collection differs, which might make a difference in relation to sensitive issues. When collection method differs it is stated and discussed. Finally 'out-group' members are removed from the samples (USA 429 blacks, UK, Sweden and Denmark respectively 228, 144 and 30 immigrants). The article proceeds in two steps. The first step describes the attitudes towards the out-groups in the four different countries. The second step analyses to what extent these out-group perceptions influence various levels of public support for the welfare state.

The basis for a black experience in UK, Sweden, and Denmark – shared identity

The argument about a general negative impact from ethnic heterogeneity is rooted in the general in-group out-group theory. According to Festinger’s old definition (1954) one’s in-group comprises individuals who are similar on some salient dimensions and one’s out-group comprises individuals who do not share that salient physical or social trait. Thus, a fundamental precondition for a recurrence of the black American experience in Britain, Sweden, and Denmark is that the majority populations perceive Non-western immigrants as an out-group. In order to investigate this fundamental precondition the respondents have been asked the GSS question ‘how close do you feel to blacks / Non-Western immigrants’, i.e. in UK, Sweden and Denmark ‘blacks’ was replaced by ‘Non-western immigrants’. Answers are given on a nine point scale where one means ‘not at all close’ and nine means ‘very close’.

Table 1: Feeling of shared identity. Percent, mean, and standard deviation. USA 2000; UK, Sweden and Denmark 2009

	1:	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9:	Mean	Devia-	N
	Not at								Very		tion	(100
	all								close			%)
	close											
US	8	3	5	5	45	10	12	6	6	5.2	2.0	1548
UK ¹	30	12	19	11	16	5	5	1	2	3.2	2.0	1022
SE ¹	17	13	22	13	21	6	7	1	2	3.7	1.9	964
DK ¹	16	14	20	13	23	7	6	1	1	3.7	1.9	1452

¹ All country means significantly (at 0.00 level) lower than the American Don’t know excluded

In terms of shared identity the data indicate that Americans feel significantly ‘closer’ to the blacks than Brits, Swedes, and Danes do to Non-western immigrants. The US average is 5.2. Most US respondents used the medium bracket of 5 (45 percent). Eight percent used the extreme bracket ‘not close at all’ and six percent used the extreme bracket ‘very close’. The GSS has asked this question since 1996 and there has been a slight trend towards more shared identity with blacks (from a mean of 5.1 in 1996 to a mean of 5.5 in 2008). One can naturally discuss the validity of this US benchmark. Though the question is not severe

negatively loaded one could argue that the face-to-face interviews might push respondents to indicate shared identity. Nevertheless, in UK this question was also asked in face-to-face interviews and actually the Brits indicate the lowest degree of shared identity with Non-western immigrants. On the nine point scale the average is 3.2 and the most common used bracket is actually the extreme position 'not at all close'. This position is indicated by 30 percent. The Danes and Swedes also indicate less shared identity with the Non-western out-group than Americans do with blacks. In both countries the average is 3.7. 17 percent in Sweden and 16 percent in Denmark used the extreme bracket 'not at all close'.

Thus, the first very simple, but very important, conclusion is that in terms of shared identity the out-group of Non-western immigrants in Europe actually seems to be worse off than the blacks in USA. Despite its importance this might after all not be surprising, as white and black Americans have had a long shared history. The differences between the three European countries are more interesting. Despite the fact that the established British and Swedish elites have done their best to avoid the ethnicity issue – e.g. by promoting the term multiculturalism – Brits and Swedes do not feel more shared identity with the out-group than Danes. If any contingent effect is present the data could indicate that the liberal character of the UK welfare state might have fuelled hostile out-group perceptions while the social democratic character of the Swedish and Danish welfare state might have moderated hostile out-group perceptions. But even in the two Scandinavian cases there is a long way to the feelings of shared identity measured in USA.

Lack of shared identity is not necessarily the same as out-group hostility; after all persons in favour of multiculturalism would argue that the trick is not to develop one common shared in-group identity. The trick is to accept and live with out-groups. In order to measure the willingness to live with the out-group we have replicated the GSS question about whether one would favour or oppose living in a neighbourhood where half of your neighbours were black / Non-western immigrants. This question is close to the standard out-group hostility question from the World Value Survey but by specifying 'more than half of the neighbourhood' it measures more than out-group hostility. It also measures negative perception about black neighbourhoods in the US context and Non-western immigrant neighbourhoods in the European context. The cross-countries results are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Attitude to live in neighbourhood where more than half is black / Non-western immigrants. Percent. USA 2000; UK, Sweden and Denmark 2009

	Strongly favour	Favour	Neither favour nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	N (100%)
US	8	15	47	19	12	1912
UK ¹	1	4	51	26	19	834
SE ¹	3	6	43	32	15	920
DK ¹	2	5	27	39	28	1429

¹ All of the country means are significantly above the USA level (at 0.01 level).
Don't know excluded

In USA most respondent in the face-to-face interviews - 47 percent - used the neutral bracket 'neither favour nor oppose' but still 19 percent answer 'oppose' and 12 percent answer 'strongly oppose'. GSS has asked the question since 1990 and there has been a trend towards less negative attitudes. In 1990 47 percent of the non-black Americans either 'opposed' or 'strongly opposed' living in a black neighbourhood. In 2000 this share is reduced to 31 percent, as seen in table 2, and in 2008 the share was down to 22 percent. Compared to this American level the British, Swedish, and Danish attitudes to the out-group of Non-western immigrants are again more hostile. The neutral bracket is with 51 percent and 43 percent also the most used, respectively in UK and Sweden. But more Brits and Swedes than Americans 'oppose' or 'strongly oppose' living in neighbourhoods where more than half are Non-western immigrants. The share is 45 percent in Britain and 47 percent in Sweden, which is around the most negative level measured in USA (1990). The Danish public is even more opposed to live with the out-group; 28 percent 'strongly oppose' and 39 percent 'oppose'. Thus, 67 percent of the Danish respondents oppose, which is much higher than any level measured in USA.

It should be taken into account that the American results are collected in a face to face situations, which could give too positive answers (in the UK case this item was posed in the self-completion module in order to avoid a face-to-face effect) but it seems fair to conclude that in terms of negative attitudes towards out-group neighbourhoods the Brits, Swedes, and especially Danes seems as hostile as the Americans. Thus, the characteristic American negative attitudes towards out-group neighbourhoods can also be found in Europa. As to possible contingent effect the result could indicate that (despite the positive American attitudes) playing the race card could matter for hostility towards living in out-

group neighbourhoods; the Danish population was most negative. There is no regime pattern.

The basis for a black experience in UK, Sweden, and Denmark – stereotypes

The perception believed to be most unique American is the idea that the out-group is lazy (see above). The GSS has since 1990 asked Americans on a seven point scale whether blacks are ‘hardworking’ (1) or ‘lazy’ (7). The most common answer is the neutral bracket 4; 44 percent of the non-black Americans gave that answer in 2000. 23 percent answered 5, 11 percent answered 6, and 4 percent used the extreme category ‘lazy’, i.e. 38 percent responded on the negative side of the scale. In contrast only 8 percent uses the negative side of the scale when asked about the work ethic of white Americans i.e. the difference is a remarkable 30 percentage points (in 2000). The perception of black laziness has been stable since it was first measured in the GSS in 1990. The mean was 4.5 in 1990, which declined slightly to 4.3 in 2000 (which also is the level in 2008).

Table 3: Judgement of work ethic among blacks / Non-western immigrants. USA 2000, UK, Sweden and Denmark 2009. Percent, mean and standard deviation

	1:	2	3	4	5	6	7:	Mean	De-	N
	Hard-						Lazy		via-	(100
	working								tion	%)
US	2	4	13	44	23	11	4	4.3	1.2	1864
UK ¹	3	6	22	46	14	5	4	3.9	1.2	728
SE ¹	3	10	25	42	14	6	1	3.8	1.2	971
DK ¹	1	6	20	45	17	9	3	4.1	1.1	1405

¹ Levels are significantly below the US level (at 0.01 level).
Don't know excluded

Asked the same question about the work ethic of Non-western immigrants our surveys reveal that the perception of lack of work ethic in the out-group is not unfamiliar to Brits, Swedes, and Danes. With a mean of 4.3 the stereotype is a bit stronger in USA and the face-to-face situation might have pushed in a positive direction. In UK, Sweden and Denmark the question was responded in self-completion (though there was a Danish follow up by phone). Nevertheless, the results do indicate that the Europeans also have negative perception about the work ethnics of their out-group. In Britain the mean was 3.9 and 23 per-

cent used the negative side of the scale. In Sweden the mean is 3.8 and 21 percent use the negative side of the scale. In Denmark the mean is 4.1 percent and 29 percent use the negative side of scale. In terms of contingent effect it does not seem to matter whether the political elite have play the race card or whether respondents live in a liberal or social democratic regime. Especially, the latter finding is surprising, as comparative research show that in of terms explaining poverty, respondents living in social democratic regimes are much less inclined to refer to laziness than respondents living in liberal regimes (Larsen 2006). One add-hoc explanation is that due to the nature of their labour market the out-groups are much more likely to work in liberal regimes (in the low paid service sector) than are the out-group of Non-western immigrants in social democratic regimes.

From negative perceptions of the out-group to opposition to welfare policy

The next question is to what extend these more or less similar negative out-group perceptions actually influence public support for welfare policy. Here the institutional argument would either be 1) that in order to create public resistance the citizens need to be told by the bourgeois political elites that the out-group benefits disproportionately from the schemes, or 2) that universalism might not create an in-group that can include Non-western immigrants but it creates a situation where – because benefits and services are given to everybody – the discussion of deservingness of different subgroups becomes irrelevant. In order to test this we need to explore the link between out-group perception and policy attitudes. In the models to come, out-group perception will be measured by the hostility toward living with the out-group and the stereotype of laziness, i.e. the question of shared identity is not used. By taking the items where the American attitudes are most hostile we create a conservative test for the argument that the American mechanisms are resembled. Public support for welfare policies have been measured on three different levels; 1) a target group specific level where we have replicated a GSS item that ask about spending preferences for ‘improving the conditions for blacks / Non-western immigrants’; 2) an anti-poverty level where we use the ISSP item which states that the government should reduce spending on benefits for the poor, and finally 3) a general level where we use the ISSP item that ask about support for general redistribution. In the next three sections these three different levels of support will be treated one at a time.

Out-group perceptions and support for spending on the out-group

Table 4 shows the attitudes towards spending on improving the living conditions of blacks / Non-western immigrants. In USA 51 percent use the neutral bracket ‘about right’, 19 percent answer ‘too much’ and 31 percent answer ‘too little’ is spent on improving the conditions for blacks. This is naturally a relative measure and it does change over time. In 1973 26 percent answered ‘too much’, which increased to 30 percent 1978. In the period from

1983 to 1993 the share answering ‘too much’ was around 20 percent, which then increased to 25 percent in 1994 and 1996 where the discussion about the reform from AFDC to TANF was intense. Then came a drop down to 19 percent in 2000, as shown in table 4, and a recent drop down to 15 percent in 2008.

Table 4: Attitudes to public spending on improving the conditions for blacks (USA 2000) and Non-western immigrants (UK, Sweden and Denmark 2009). Percent

	Too little	About right	Too much	N (100%)
US	31	51	19	1043
UK ¹	10	33	57	965
SE ¹	15	42	43	748
DK ¹	22	47	32	1289

¹Level (means) significantly above the US level (0.01 level)
Don't know excluded

When the Brits (also in face-to-face interviews) in 2009 were asked the same questions, 57 percent answered that ‘too much’ was spent on improving the conditions for Non-western immigrants. This is a very high level. It is three times as high as the share measured in USA in 2000 and around twice the share ever measured in the GSS survey. Furthermore, it is difficult to see any prior large improvements in British benefits or services to Non-western immigrants, which could have triggered the negative British response. The share in Sweden and Denmark answering ‘too much’ is also above that ever measured in the GSS. But it should be taken into account that all Swedes and most Danes answered in a postal format. Nevertheless, it is still surprising that 43 percent in multicultural Sweden answer ‘too much’ and again it is difficult to find any prior improvements that could trigger a very negative response. It might also seem surprising that fewer Danes, 32 percent, than Swedes answer ‘too much’. However, this effect can probably be explained by recent Danish reforms. As mentioned above the Danish bourgeois government made recent reductions in the social assistance of Non-western immigrants, which were widely discussed and leave the impression that recently it is an area where spending has been reduced. But still 31 percent answer ‘too much’.

The findings indicate that the Europeans are much more opposed to spend public money on Non-western immigrants than Americans are to spend money on blacks. Turning to the differences between the European countries the findings indicate that it does not matter whether politicians have played the race card or not; the Danes are not more opposed to spend than Swedes and Brits. It does seem to matter whether respondents live in a

liberal or social democratic welfare regime; the Brits are more opposed to spend than Swedes and Danes. However, we need to turn to micro-level in order to test whether the higher support for spending in Denmark and Sweden is caused by a weaker link between out-group attitudes and spending attitudes.

At the micro level we will use a simple statistical model that besides giving us a measurement of the impact from out-group perception also allows us to control for a possible influence from sex, age, household income and political orientation. A multi classification analysis is used (Andrews et al. 1973) and the total impact from each variable and significance levels are shown in the tables. The impact is measured by a beta-coefficient that can vary between zero and one; with the former indicating the lowest and the latter the highest possible impact.

Table 5: Model for explaining resistance towards spending on improving conditions for out-group.¹ MCA-analysis. Controlled effects (beta) and level of significance

Model:	Sex	Age (six brackets) ²	Household income before tax (quintiles)	Political orientation (bourgeois or not) ³	Hostility towards living with out- group (1- 5) ⁴	Stereotype of work ethic in out-group (1-7) ⁵	N	R ²
US (I)	0.03 ^{ns}	0.13 ^{**}	0.08 ^{ns}	0.14 ^{**}	-	-	1177	0.21
US (II)	0.02 ^{ns}	0.11 ^{**}	0.07 ^{ns}	0.13 ^{**}	0.17 ^{**}	0.14 ^{**}	933	0.34
UK (I)	0.03 ^{ns}	0.06 [*]	0.20 ^{**}	0.05 ^{ns}	-	-	1034	0.22
UK (II)	0.02 ^{ns}	0.07 ^{**}	0.20 ^{**}	0.05 ^{ns}	0.28 ^{**}	0.19 ^{**}	862	0.44
SE (I)	0.11 ^{**}	0.05 ^{ns}	0.15 ^{**}	0.17 ^{**}	-	-	957	0.23
SE (II)	0.06 ^{**}	0.09 ^{ns}	0.12 ^{**}	0.11 ^{**}	0.30 ^{**}	0.33 ^{**}	953	0.56
DK (I)	0.08 ^{**}	0.07 ^{**}	0.12 ^{**}	0.19 ^{**}	-	-	1460	0.25
DK (II)	0.03 ^{**}	0.06 ^{**}	0.11 ^{**}	0.15 ^{**}	0.31 ^{**}	0.29 [*]	1441	0.54

¹ Don't knows categories move to the neutral bracket 'spending about right' (in order to avoid drop out)

² 17-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+

³ The respondents are divided into 'mainstream' bourgeois and not. What count as mainstream bourgeois is voting or having sympathy for; US: the republican party, UK: conservative, DK: 'Venstre' and 'Konservative', SE: 'Moderate samling' and 'Folkepartiet liberalerne'. Those affiliated with the nationalists parties in UK (British National Party), Sweden (Sveriges demokraterne) and Denmark (Dansk folkeparty) are not included in mainstream bourgeois.

⁴ Don't knows moved to the neutral category 3 (in order to avoid drop out)

⁵ Don't knows moved to the neutral category 3 (in order to avoid drop out)

* Statistical significant at 0.05 level, ** 0.01 level, ns not significant

In the first model for US (US I, see table 5) only the background variables are included. Sympathy for the Republican party is the strongest predictor for attitudes towards spending on improving the living conditions for the out-group (beta 0.14), which is closely followed by an age effect (beta = 0.13); Americans above 60 years are more reluctant towards spending on the out-group. There is no significant effect from household income (but the second lowest quintile seems to be less supportive) and sex (but the men seems to be less supportive). In the second model (US II) hostility towards living in a neighbourhood dominated by the out-group and the stereotype of laziness is entered into the model. As expected both perceptions have a strong and significant impact on spending attitudes (beta 0.17 and beta 0.14). This can also be seen by the fact that the explained variation increased from 0.21 to 0.34 percent (R^2). Thus, in USA there is a strong link between out-group attitudes and spending preference.

In the first UK model (UK 1) household income turns out to be the strongest predictors of attitudes towards direct public spending on the out-group (beta 0.20). This covers a linear relationship where the bottom quintile is most reluctant to spend on the out-group, the second quintile is a bit less reluctant etc. It is a classic finding that the lower strata of society (for reasons that can be theorised in different ways) are the most hostile towards out-groups. There is also a significant age effect but it is much more modest (beta 0.06) than in USA. Most interesting is probably that the base model shows that being Conservative only has a modest effect on this spending preference (0.05); it is not even statistically significant. This finding supports the initial argument that the mainstream bourgeois UK party has not played the race card (yet). In the next model (UK II) the out-group perceptions are entered and again these turn out to be strong predictors (beta 0.28 and beta 0.19) – actually stronger than in the US context. Thus, at the micro level a clear link between hostile out-group attitudes and spending preference can also be found in Britain.

The patterns in the Swedish and Danish attitudes towards direct spending on the out-group is very similar. The strongest predictor is having sympathy for a bourgeois party (beta 0.17 in Sweden and 0.19 in Denmark). The second largest predictor is household income (beta 0.15 in Sweden and 0.12 in Denmark) and as in UK it covers a linear relationship of the lowest strata being most hostile towards spending on the out-group. The third largest predictor is sex, which in the base model is fairly strong and statistically significant both in Denmark and Sweden (beta respectively 0.11 and 0.08). When out-group perception are entered (DK II and SE II) they also turn out to be strong predictors for spending attitudes in Denmark and Sweden; they even seem to be stronger linked to spending attitudes than in UK and USA (beta 0.30, 0.33, 0.31, 0.29). Thus, asked directly about spending on the out-group this attitude is highly dependent on hostility towards the out-group of Non-Western immigrants. Furthermore, in the Swedish and Danish case entering the out-group perceptions do change the parameters in the base model. The effect from being bourgeois is lowered from 0.17 to 0.11 in Sweden and from 0.19 to 0.15 in Den-

mark, i.e. part of the original effect can be explained with the bourgeois voters having negative out-group perceptions. This is the case both in Denmark and Sweden despite the fact that the bourgeois Swedish parties have not played the race card. The effect from household income is also somewhat lowered but especially the effect from sex is influenced. In Sweden the effect from sex is reduced from 0.11 to 0.06 and in Denmark from 0.08 to 0.03. Thus, a large part of the gender effect can be explained by the fact that the Scandinavian males hold more negative out-group perceptions than the Scandinavian females. Despite interesting country variation the conclusion is so far pretty simple; on the micro-level negative out-group perceptions strongly influence public attitudes towards spending on improving the living condition of the out-group. This is the case in all four countries.

Out group perception and preference for spending on the poor

That Europeans, even Swedes, are more hostile to spend on Non-western immigrants than Americans are on blacks and a clear link between out-group attitudes and spending preference can be found in all four countries is of high theoretical relevance. However, this pattern might not be of significant political importance; after all very few policies are directly targeted at these out-groups. Typically policies are framed as general antipoverty policies. According to Gilens (1999) one of the keys to explain the American mechanisms is that Americans came to equate poverty with being black. Thus, it is crucial to analyse how out-group perceptions are linked to support for antipoverty measures in general.

In table 6 is shown the responses to the statement 'the government should spend less on benefits for the poor'. In 1987 four percent of the (non-black) Americans 'strongly agreed' in this statement and 16 percent 'agreed', i.e. 20 percent gave a negative response. 25 percent answered 'neither nor' while 43 percent 'disagreed' and 14 percent 'disagreed strongly'. Unfortunately this (voluntary) ISSP item has not been asked in the GSS in the following years. However, the GSS has a more neutral spending measure, which will be used in the statistical model at the micro level. As also shown in table 6, 12 percent of the Americans answered in 2000 that the government spends 'too much' on assistance to the poor. In 1987 this share was 10 percent, i.e. the ISSP statement pushed around 10 percentage point in the negative directions. In any case, from the general GSS spending measure we can see that 1987 was an 'average' year. The share answering 'too much' has been around 10 percent in the period from 1984 to 1993, where after it peaked at 20 percent in 1996. Then it declined to around 10 percent in the period from 2000 to 2008. Finally, table 6 also includes the Americans' attitudes towards spending on 'welfare', whereby most Americans think of the former AFDC and the current TANF program. This is the program that Americans came to hate. Even in 2000, after the harsh 1996 reform, 40 percent answer that 'too much' is spent on 'welfare'.

Table 6: Attitudes to government spending on the poor, USA (1987 and 2000), UK, Sweden and Denmark (2009). Percent

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Nor agree neither disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N (100 %)
US (1987)	14	43	25	16	4	1103
UK (2009)	14	42	27	15	3	1740
SE (2009) ¹	31	41	19	5	4	936
DK (2009) ¹	53	25	14	6	3	1427
	Too little		About right	Too much		
US (2000) Poverty	61		27	12		1153
US (2000) Welfare	18		41	40		1141

¹Level (means) significantly (0.01) above the UK and US level
Don't know excluded

The UK answers given by self-completion in 2009 to the general ISSP statement ‘the government should spend less on benefits for the poor’ very much resembles the American answers in 1987. Three percent of the Brits ‘strongly agree’ and 15 percent ‘agree’ in the statement, 27 percent answer ‘neither agree nor disagree’, while 42 percent ‘disagree’ and 14 percent ‘strongly disagree’. That Americans give face to face interviews while the British do self-completion can naturally ‘hide’ more negative answers in US and it can definitely be concluded that the levels of resistance is smaller in UK than when it picked in US in 1996. But still the UK answers indicate that the increased UK resistance towards spending on the poor (Larsen 2006:152) almost has brought them to the ‘stable’ US level. In Sweden and Denmark support for spending on the poor is above the American and British

level. In Sweden 31 percent ‘strongly disagree’ and 41 percent ‘disagree’ in the statement. In Denmark the shares were respectively 53 percent and 25 percent.

These aggregated levels indicates that attitudes to spending on anti-poverty measures primarily seem to be contingent on welfare regimes types, which is in line with previous comparative research (Larsen 2006). This could support the argument that social democratic welfare regimes are immune to wider implications of the public having negative attitudes towards Non-western immigrants. However, before drawing such conclusion we need to see whether the link really is absent at the micro level (see below). It should also be noticed that playing the race card do not seem to matter; the Danes are not more opposed to spend than are the Swedes and the Americans are not more opposed to spend than are the Brits.

At the micro level the first US model (US I) estimates preference for spending on assistance to poor. The 2000 spending preferences are used. Being Republican turns out to be the strongest predictor (beta 0.15) and it is highly significant. Age and household income are not significant. Model US II enters the out-group perceptions, which even in the American case turn out only to have a modest effect on spending preference for assistance to the poor. The effect from hostility toward living in a neighbourhood dominated by the out-group is 0.09 and significant. But the effect from laziness stereotype is only 0.06 and not significant. Thus, when asked about spending preference for assistance to poor the American attitudes are influenced by perception of blacks but the effect is moderate. This is a moderation of Gilens’s findings – not a contradiction. In order to show this, the models are replicated for the Americans spending preference towards ‘welfare’ (US III and US IV). Asked this way, model US IV shows the conventional finding that the laziness stereotype is the strongest predictor for spending preference (beta 0.14); followed by hostility towards living with the out-group (beta 0.12) and being Republican (beta 0.12). However, for our comparative purpose the most relevant baseline is the Americans attitudes to the poverty question.

**Table 7: Model for explaining resistance towards spending on poverty reduction.¹
 Added model for explaining US resistance towards spending on welfare (US III and IV). MCA-analysis, controlled effects (beta) and level of significance**

Model:	Sex	Age (six brackets) ¹	Household Income before tax (quintiles)	Political orientation (mainstream bourgeois or not) ²	Hostility towards living with out- group (1- 5)	Stereotype of work ethic in out-group (1-7)	N	R ²
US (I)	0.02 ^{ns}	0.11 ^{ns}	0.08 ^{ns}	0.15 ^{**}	-	-	1172	0.20
US (II)	0.04 ^{ns}	0.09 ^{ns}	0.09 ^{ns}	0.13 ^{**}	0.09 [*]	0.06 ^{ns}	939	0.21
US (III)	0.00 ^{ns}	0.09 ^{ns}	0.11 ^{**}	0.12 ^{**}	-	-	1182	0.18
US (IV)	0.03 ^{ns}	0.11 [*]	0.09 ^{ns}	0.12 ^{**}	0.12 ^{**}	0.14 ^{**}	935	0.28
UK (I)	0.02 ^{ns}	0.10 ^{**}	0.17 ^{**}	0.16 ^{**}	-	-	1782	0.26
UK (II)	0.03 ^{ns}	0.16 ^{**}	0.23 ^{**}	0.14 ^{**}	0.09 ^{ns}	0.16 ^{**}	851	0.35
SE (I)	0.01 ^{ns}	0.14 ^{**}	0.06 ^{ns}	0.20 ^{**}	-	-	960	0.25
SE (II)	0.02 ^{ns}	0.13 ^{**}	0.07 ^{ns}	0.19 ^{**}	0.07 [*]	0.24 ^{**}	950	0.36
DK (I)	0.08 ^{**}	0.13 ^{**}	0.09 [*]	0.22 ^{**}	-	-	1463	0.29
DK (II)	0.06 ^{**}	0.13 ^{**}	0.09 [*]	0.21 ^{**}	0.08 ^{**}	0.10 ^{**}	1426	0.32

¹ Don't knows are moved into the neutral bracket; i.e. ether 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'spend around right'

See table 5 for specification of independent variables

* Statistical significant at 0.05 level, ** 0.01 level, ns not significant

The British base model (UK I) shows that household income (beta 0.17) and being bourgeois (beta 0.16) are the strongest predictors of attitudes towards spending on benefits for the poor. This time there is a linear relationship with the highest strata being most reluctant and the lowest strata being most supportive. There is also a U-shaped age effect with the oldest and the youngest being the most reluctant. In the next model the British out-group perceptions are entered (UK II) and they turn out to be as strongly linked to preference for spending on assistance to poor as in USA. The effect from the attitudes towards living with the out-group is 0.09 (beta), which is below the connection found on the Americans' attitude towards 'welfare' (beta 0.12) but match the connection found on Americans' attitude towards poor (0.09). However, the degree to which Brits hold the stereotype of laziness in the out-group actually has a stronger impact (beta 0.16) on spending preference than it is the case in USA (beta 0.06); even in the case when Americans are asked about 'welfare' (beta 0.14). This effect also explains why the effect from household income actually increases from UK I to UK II (from beta 0.17 to 0.23). In UK I the positive effect from household income on support for assistance to poor was suppressed by the fact that the lower strata hold more negative out-group attitudes. The age effect also increased – from 0.10 to 0.16 – which primarily seem to be caused by the mechanism that resistance towards spending on poverty among the youngest Brits (17 – 29 years) were suppressed by them having a more positive perception of the out-groups; once this is taken into account (UK II) the age effect increases. In any case the main point is that at the micro level the link between out-group perception and attitudes towards spending on antipoverty is as strong in UK as in USA, which supports the regime argument.

In the Swedish base model (SE I) being bourgeois turns out to be the strongest predictor on spending preference for assistance to poor (beta 0.20), which is followed (beta 0.14) by a significant age effect. The age effect is a U-curve where the youngest and the oldest are the most reluctant to support spending on benefits for the poor. There is now clear connection with household income and sex. In the next model (SE II) the Swedish out-group perceptions are entered and they turn out to influence the spending preferences. The impact from hostility towards living with the out-group is statistical significant but still a little below (beta 0.07) the level found in USA (beta 0.09). However, the degree to which Swedes hold the stereotype of laziness turns out to have a much stronger impact (0.24) on spending preference for poverty than it was the case in USA (beta 0.06) and UK (beta 0.16). In Sweden the effect from holding the laziness stereotype is actually stronger than the effect from being bourgeois (beta 0.19). Thus, despite Sweden having a high level of support for antipoverty reduction (see above) the data clearly indicate that Swedes are not immune to the in-group out-group mechanisms. The same is the case in Denmark.

The Danish model shows that being bourgeois is the strongest predictor of spending preference for assistance to poor (beta 0.22). The Danish model also shows an age effect (beta 0.13, with the youngest and oldest being the most hostile towards antipoverty spend-

ing) and a household income effect (beta 0.09, with especially the top quintile being against spending for the poor). When entering the Danish out-group perceptions (DK II) they also turn out to have a significant effect on spending preference for assistance to poor. The effect from hostility toward living with the out-group (beta 0.08) matches the effects found in US (beta 0.09), UK (beta 0.09) and Sweden (beta 0.07). The effect from laziness stereotype is above the American level (beta 0.06) but below the British (beta 0.16) and Swedish level (beta 0.24). Thus, despite the high level of support for antipoverty spending the Danish data also show that the public is not immune to the basic in-group out-group mechanisms. The next question is whether out-group attitudes even have the strength to influence attitudes towards the very principle of economic redistribution.

Out-group perception and support for general redistribution

Table 6 shows country levels of the public attitudes towards general redistribution. It is measured by the ISSP statement 'It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and people with low incomes'. As expected the Americans indicate the largest resistance to the very principle of redistribution. 17 percent of the Americans 'strongly disagree' and 27 percent 'disagree' that it is the responsibility of the government to redistribute. 8 percent 'strongly agree', 23 percent 'agree', and 25 percent 'neither agree nor disagree'. In UK, Sweden, and Denmark the resistance is more modest and actually UK respondents seem to be as supportive for redistribution as the Swedish. 18 percent of the Brits 'strongly agree' and 41 percent 'agree' in the statement. In Sweden the shares are respectively 20 percent and 37 percent. In UK 15 percent 'disagree' and only 4 percent 'strongly disagree' in the statement – compared to respectively 13 percent and 7 percent in Sweden. Finally, Denmark actually has a fairly large share answering 'strongly disagree', 16 percent, but at least compared to USA there is also a sizeable share that 'strongly agree' (24 percent) and 'agree' (29 percent). Thus, Denmark has the most polarized public on this issue.

The aggregated levels suggest that in terms of resistance towards general redistribution the Americans are truly unique. And despite differences in welfare regime type and the strategically use of the race card, the three European countries seem to be immune to this kind of American principle resistance towards redistribution. However, as we shall see from the micro level analysis (below) this is not a matter of in-group out-group mechanisms being stronger in USA than in UK, Sweden, and Denmark.

Table 8: Attitude towards general redistribution. USA (2000), UK, Sweden and Denmark (2009). Percent

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N (100%)
US	8	23	25	27	17	1992
UK ¹	18	41	21	15	4	1757
SE ¹	20	37	23	13	7	937
DK ¹	24	29	14	16	16	1410

¹Levels (means) significantly (0.01) below US level
Don't know excluded

The American base model (US I) shows that household income is the strongest predictor (beta 0.22) for resistance towards redistribution. It covers a linear effect of higher quintiles being more reluctant. The second strongest predictor is being Republican (beta 0.20). There is also a smaller but significant effect from sex (males being more opposed) and age (the older generation being more and more opposed). The Americans' out-group perceptions, entered in model US II, do seem to have an impact on public support for general redistribution. The effect from hostility towards living with the out-group is modest (beta 0.05) and not significant but the laziness stereotype does have an effect (beta 0.10). It is not a very strong effect and does not change the base model much. There is still a strong independent effect from household income (beta 0.21) and political orientation (0.20). Thus, when accounting for the differences in Americans opposition towards general redistribution one should start with household income and political orientation and add laziness stereotype as a possible third explanation. But the latter is not the driver of the American attitudes.

Table 9: Model for explaining resistance towards general redistribution.¹ MCA-analysis, controlled effects (beta) and level of significance

Model:	Sex	Age (six brackets) ¹	Household Income before tax (quintiles)	Political orientation (mainstream bourgeois or not) ²	Hostility towards living with out- group (1-5)	Stereotype of work ethic in out-group (1-7)	N	R ²
US (I)	0.07**	0.07**	0.22**	0.20**	-	-	2029	0.34
US (II)	0.06**	0.06 ^{ns}	0.21**	0.20**	0.05 ^{ns}	0.10**	1638	0.35
UK (I)	0.03**	0.03 ^{ns}	0.22**	0.21**	-	-	1782	0.33
UK (II)	0.02 ^{ns}	0.07 ^{ns}	0.22**	0.20**	0.10**	0.10 ^{ns}	853	0.36
SE (I)	0.11**	0.08 ^{ns}	0.30**	0.27**	-	-	957	0.47
SE (II)	0.11**	0.09 ^{ns}	0.31**	0.26**	0.08**	0.09 ^{ns}	947	0.48
DK (I)	0.09**	0.06**	0.11**	0.36**	-	-	1459	0.42
DK (II)	0.08**	0.05**	0.12**	0.35**	0.07**	0.05 ^{ns}	1423	0.43

¹ Don't knows moved to neutral category 'neither agree nor disagree'
See table 5 for specification of independent variables
* Statistical significant at 0.05 level, ** 0.01 level, ns not significant

The British base model is very similar to the American. Household income is the strongest predictor (beta 0.22, a linier effect of higher quintiles being more opposed) and political

orientation is the second strongest predictor (beta 0.21). In the base model the effects from sex and age are low and not significant. The next model (UK II) shows that the British out-group perceptions do have an impact on support for general redistribution. The effect from perceptions of laziness is as strong as in USA (beta 0.10) – though it is not statistical significant due to fewer respondents in UK (but with level 0.07 it is very close at being significant). Furthermore, the effect from hostility towards living with the out-group has stronger impact on attitudes toward redistribution in UK (0.10) than in USA (0.05); and in contrast to USA the effect is statistical significant. As in USA the out-group perceptions do not change the effects in the base model much. Household income and political orientation remain the strongest predictors. But negative out-group perceptions is a third explanation, which actually seem as relevant in UK – if not more relevant in UK – as in USA.

The Swedish base model also resembles the American. Household income (beta 0.30) is the strongest predictor, which is followed by being bourgeois (beta 0.27). There is also a significant effect from sex (beta 0.11 males being more opposed) while the age effect turn insignificant. The next model shows that the Swedish out-group perception (SE II) can also be linked to attitudes towards redistribution. The effects are a bit weaker than in UK. The effect from laziness perception is 0.09 (compared to 0.10 in USA and UK) and it is not statistical significant (significance level 0.13). However, the effect from hostility towards living with the out-group is significant. The effect (beta 0.08) is above the effect in US (beta 0.05) and a little below the British effect (beta 0.10). The out-group perceptions do not change the base models much but we can conclude that the Swedish attitudes towards general redistribution are as strongly influenced by out-group perceptions as the American.

Finally the Danish base model shows that being bourgeois is the strongest predictor for attitudes to general redistribution (beta 0.36). Household income also has a significant impact though it is weaker than in the other countries (beta 0.11); for some reason it is only the Danish top quintile that show strong opposition towards general redistribution. There is also a significant gender effect (males being opposed) and age effect (especially those above 70 years showing opposition). The next model (DK II) shows that there also is a link between out-group perceptions and attitudes towards redistribution in Denmark though it seems a bit weaker than in Sweden and Britain. The effect from the laziness stereotype (beta 0.05) is below the effect in Sweden (0.09), UK (0.10) and USA (0.10). There is still a significant effect from hostility towards living with the out-group (beta 0.07); it is above the American effect (beta 0.05) but below the British (beta 0.10) and Swedish (beta 0.08) effects. Again the conclusion is that the in terms of effect on support for general redistribution the in-group out-group mechanisms are as relevant in Denmark as in USA.

Conclusion

The presented data primarily support the argument that there is a lesson to be learned from the American experience. The data support the argument that Non-western immigrants entering the European countries are perceived as negatively and stereotypically as the blacks in USA; at least as long as we can measure American attitudes back in the GSS. Asked directly Brits, Swedish and Danes feel less shared identity with Non-western immigrants than (non-black) Americans do with blacks. Brits, Swedes and Danes are more opposed to live in a neighbourhood where half of the neighbours belong to the out-group. Finally Brits, Swedes and Danes were almost as likely to perceive the out-group as lazy, which often is argued to be an American speciality.

The data also shows that it is not only in USA one can find a significant relationship between hostile out-group attitudes and opposition to welfare policies. In all four countries the strongest predictor of direct public spending on the out-group was hostility towards the out-group. And the link was actually stronger in UK, Denmark, and Sweden than in USA. In all four countries one could also find a connection between perceptions of the out-group and attitudes towards spending on the poor. Here the link at the micro level was at least as strong in UK, Sweden and Denmark as in USA. As expected the link between out-group perceptions and support for the general principle of redistribution is weaker. But in all four countries a significant effect could be found. And again the link was as strong in UK, Denmark and Sweden as in USA. The conclusion is that the very basic in-group out-group mechanisms that influence American public attitudes are resembled in Europe; even in Sweden.

However, turning to the aggregated level the data did indicate some regime effects. The Swedes and Danes were less hostile than Brits to spend directly on the out-group. The Swedes and Danes were also less hostile than British and Americans to spend on the poor in general, while there seem to be no regime effect behind the general principle of redistribution. But the regime effects are not caused by out-group perceptions not influencing the welfare attitudes of Swedes and Danes. The micro level analyses show that the link was as strong as in US and UK. This is supported by the finding that in terms of hostility towards living with the out-group and even in terms of perceiving the out-group as lazy Danes and Swedes hold as negative attitudes as Brits and Americans.

The argument about the relationship between out-group perception and attitudes towards the welfare state being contingent on bourgeois political elites playing the race card received almost no support in our data material. The Brits and Swedes, which have been exposed to bourgeois political elites that downplay the ethnic issues and promote the notion of multiculturalism, do not feel more shared identity with the out-group than Danes and Americans. The Brits and Swedes are not less inclined than Danes to perceive the out-group as being lazy. Nor are the causal links between out-group perceptions and welfare

attitudes weaker in Britain and Sweden. The conclusion is that the bourgeois political elites actually have little control of these public attitudes (though they might be in control of their implications, see below). To put it in popular terms both the British and Swedish public seem to be able to make link between out-groups and welfare policies without the help from political elites.

These findings should not lead to the conclusion that there is nothing unique about the American case; to some extent all countries are unique. Our data do show that Americans are a bit more inclined to perceive the out-group as lazy and much more inclined to discard the general principle of redistribution. And both these propositions probably have unique historical roots. However, the important finding is that contemporary Americans do not seem to have attitudes towards blacks, which are so harsh, that they cannot be compared to the Europeans' perceptions of Non-western immigrants. If one is to speak of uniqueness in this respect, it would be that due to historical reasons Americans have actually developed a unique tolerance for the black out-group. This finding is naturally open to the criticism that Americans might not mean what they say. A large amount of American research have demonstrated that behind survey statements of tolerance one can still find (sometimes subconscious) hostility towards blacks (e.g. Gilens, Sniderman & Kuklinski. 1998). This research effort should not be discarded and it naturally questions the validity of using American survey responses as a baseline. We do not have comparative studies in this field, e.g. using the list experiment, which can tell us whether the bias due to strong norms of antiracism is stronger in USA than in Britain, Sweden and Denmark. However, even if it is the case, one simple counter argument is that many Non-western immigrants would probably be happy if Brits, Swedes and Danes were equipped with stronger norms of anti-racism, i.e. the argument is that such norms besides having an influence on survey statements often also have real consequences.

Finally, it should be noticed that the article refrains from discussing the further implications of these public opinions. From the finding that strong in-group out-group mechanisms are present in UK, Sweden, and Denmark one cannot infer that these countries will end up with the residual American welfare state. Most of the European health care, pension, childcare and unemployment schemes are largely unaffected by the increased ethnic heterogeneity. The most likely result is that the public attitudes underpin a process of 'dualisation' or 'welfare chauvinism' where benefits and services continue to be developed for the in-group and start to be retrenched for the out-group of Non-western immigrants; this process is already emerging. The Swedish and British cases show that politicians have little control of these attitudes but naturally European politicians have the option not to follow the public in this matter. That might work for a period but it is hard to imagine that some political entrepreneurs – at some point in time - will not be tempted to pursue a popular issue.

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