

Editor's Note

Greetings!

In this issue of *Perspectives* we bring you two sets of stimulating contributions. The first set contains essays drawn from the three plenary sessions at the 17th Europeanists conference in April 2010, held in Montreal. The first two essays, by CES Chair Cathie Jo Martin and Axel van den Berg, are based on their commentaries in the plenary, *The Past and Future of Social Solidarity*. Martin's essay poses the question of why some societies are more equitable and solidaristic than others. Her answer lies in the structure of associations and how they shape employers' preferences for social policies, as well as the state's role in supporting these associations. She believes the current crisis will likely strengthen the divergence between solidaristic/coordinated economies and liberal market economies. Axel van den Berg starts from the observation that western welfare states have proved remarkably robust and resilient in the face of numerous challenges and repeated predictions of its demise over several decades. He explores the literature behind some of the key factors that might explain this resilience, including continued public support for the welfare state and its economic benefits. The next two essays, by Peter Hall and Michèle Lamont, are based on the plenary, *Successful Societies*, which was inspired by the eponymous book *Successful Societies: How Institutions and Culture Affect Health* (Cambridge University Press, 2009). The two essays together present fascinating insights into this project which explored the social conditions for societal success, understood not simply by measures of economic growth but broader indicators of human health and life satisfaction. The overarching argument of the project roots satisfaction – and thus success – in a broad distribution “across the population of capabilities for coping with the life challenges that all people face” (Hall, this volume). The final essay, by Sophie Meunier, summarizes the discussion from the plenary, *Do Transatlantic Relations Still Matter?* True to the academic spirit, two panelists – Peter Baldwin and Jeffrey Kopstein – answered largely in the negative, while the two others – François Delattre and Andrew Moravcsik – answered in the affirmative.

The second set of contributions in this volume consists of research reports from CES pre-dissertation fellowship recipients. These reports provide intriguing early results on a range of fascinating projects by rising young scholars. Elizabeth Hanauer, from New York University, reports on her project, “Collective Identity Formation in the French Classroom: The Discourse and Incorporation of Immigration History.” Katie Jarvis, from University of Wisconsin-Madison, reports on her project on the Dames des Halles during the French Revolution. Alexandra Lohse, from American University, tells us about her research on the reactions of “ordinary Germans” to the experience of total war between 1943 and 1945. Ceren Ozgul, from CUNY Graduate Center informs us of her project on the history and meaning of individual conversion from Islam to Christianity in Turkey. Chloe Thurston, from University of California, Berkeley, writes about her research on how European states have managed the growth of non-standard forms of employment since the 1970s. Finally, Tara Tubb informs us of her project, “Mastering the Stasi Past: State and Societal Approaches to Working through the East German Past in Unified Germany.”

Altogether these contributions convey a picture of many key questions about Europe which today occupy scholars across disciplines. We hope you enjoy them as much as we did.

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