

## A new cultural cleavage in post-modern society

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The attitudes towards gender and homosexuality tend to be linked at the micro level (individuals), which explains the political saliency of this newly emerging cleavage. At the macro level (country), the main finding is that the value orientations towards gender and homosexuality are strongly embedded in the basic cultural or civilisation differences among countries. As developing countries modernise and enter post-modernity, they will also experience the gender cleavage, especially when they adhere to an individualistic culture. Cultural cleavages in the post-modern society, whether in rich or developing countries, can only be properly researched by the survey method. It opens up a large area for both micro and macro analyses in the social sciences.

Key-words: Value orientations; attitudes; key values; gender; homosexuality; microanalysis; macroanalysis.

JEL Classification: J-16.

### INTRODUCTION

Consider what makes news in the post-modern society: (1) A British lesbian couple married in Canada was rebuffed on July 31, 2006, by the court after they sued to have their marriage recognized for what it is — a marriage — in their home country. The judge ruled that although homosexual relationships are in no way inferior to marriage, they still must make do with the civil partnerships law, which grants all the rights and privileges of marriage without the title of “marriage;” (2) A priest who was at the centre of a furore over homosexuality in the Church of England has entered a civil partnership with his long term partner, another male priest, gay activists said on August 1. Britain introduced the partnerships for same-sex couples last December, with the same legal rights as heterosexual marriage. They are widely referred to as “gay marriages” although

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the law does not call them that. Countries take slightly different approaches to the question of public recognition and acceptance of homosexuality, the UK differing from Canada and mainland European countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Switzerland. From where comes this strong politicization of gay and lesbian issues? What has driven what used to be the politics on the fringe into central political issues in the post-modern society?

Value change is today a fundamental force behind politics and the making of new public policy. The new policies towards homosexuality would not have come about without the powerful currents of value orientations and attitudinal changes among citizens, supporting for instance women empowerment. There is, it will be shown, a basic cleavage between those who endorse the new politics of sex — the recognition of homosexuals' rights — as against those who oppose it. And this cleavage is related to the value rendered gender, i.e. the value orientation towards equality between men and women.

## SURVEY RESEARCH INTO VALUES

Using the survey, the social sciences have been able to uncover the role of attitudes in shaping politics. People form beliefs and develop values in relation to the issues in politics. When so-called mass beliefs and values change, then also the electoral results change leading to new governments and new policies. One of the most important set of attitudes in politics today concern sex in a wide sense, including gender empowerment and the status of gays' and lesbians' rights. They have rapidly moved to the forefront of politics at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not only in the economically advanced countries but also in several so-called developing countries.

Politics has responded quickly to issues concerning gender and homosexuality, endorsing the principle of gender equality strongly while reacting to demands for state recognition of homosexuality, although with much more hesitance or conflict. Could it be the case that the support for gender equality and the new emphasis upon gays' and lesbians' rights has the same source of support in society? One would be inclined to link gender equality and homosexuals' rights with the post-modern society and its culture of post-materialism, egalitarianism and individualism. Is there cross-country evidence to support this hypothesis? I dare conjecture that attitudes — for or against — in relation to the value of gender equality and the right to homosexuality would constitute a powerful set of value orientations among ordinary people, creating cleavages not only within advanced society but also among societies adhering to different civilisations.

It is often underlined in cultural approaches that sex, gender and homosexuality are socially constructed phenomena, at least with post-modernist writers (Lancaster and Di Leonardo, 1997). Some even go so far as to claim that sex is strongly culturally embedded (van den Ardweg, 1997). Although it is perhaps a safer bet to say that sex is much based upon biology including homosexuality

and lesbianism, it still remains a highly interesting question for social research to look at sex from the perspective of cultural analysis (Harvey, 1996; Corvino, 1997; McKnight, 1997; Crompton, 2003). The value orientations towards gender equality and the recognition of the rights of gays and lesbians are central in the new politics of sex, driving the new politics of sex at the base of the electorate. An exploratory analysis into the attitudes of ordinary citizens towards the politics of sex, using both micro and macro level data, may show the extent to which the central attitudes to sex are culturally embedded.

The inquiry into values has thus attempted to establish a solid foundation and has been helped enormously by increased access to attitude data. The release of huge quantities of survey data in various forms — Eurobarometers, World Values Surveys and national election surveys — has allowed social science to ask many more questions about the citizen's attitudes as well as developing elaborate new techniques for answering these questions with more refined tools of analysis. Empirical value research faces certain methodological stumbling blocks, which are not easily resolved. They include problems concerning the following questions: Is the inquiry into value orientations a value-neutral enterprise epistemologically? Is a value orientation a real entity in people's minds, as it not only describes behaviour but also causes behaviour? Are certain value orientations more important than others? If a value orientation is a micro phenomenon, then can they also be macro causes? The inquiry into value orientations tends to use quantitative methods as a response to the abundantly available data about attitudes.

Many values, or better value orientations, could be identified, when response items in questionnaires are regarded as evidence or indicator of the occurrence of a value orientation. How to combine various items of response into one value orientation, and how to justify that attitudes may be combined into one and not two or more value orientations? We read from the monumental *The Impact of Values* (1995):

In addition to traditional value orientations such as authoritarianism, deference, conservatism, progressiveness, religiosity, and materialism, the last two decades or so have witnessed the rise (and sometimes already the decline) of new orientations such as post-materialism, environmentalism, post-modernism, ecologism and feminism (van Deth, 1995a: 8).

Given such a diversity of attitudes and response items, there is a need to limit the focus of new values inquiry onto certain *major* or *important* value orientations. Here, the idea of *central* or *key* values is being suggested, with the claim that there are certain central value orientations, which constitute central trends (van Deth, 1995a: 9). Central value orientations are those which explain value change in advanced industrial societies. The survey literature in the past has suggested at least three such central value orientations: materialism-postmaterialism, left-right

materialism, and religious-secular orientations (Inglehart, 1997; Norris and Inglehart, 2004). More recent value researches have added trust and individualism-egalitarianism (Warren, 1999; Wildavsky, 2004). These value orientations are central because they constitute trends in the development of the attitudes of the electorates in many countries. Let me show how these central values surface in the attitudes towards gender and homosexuality.

## VALUE ORIENTATIONS: MICRO AND MACRO

Much of the interest in empirical value inquiry resulted from the prevailing image that major changes in citizen attitudes had occurred since 1970, such as for instance the emergence of a multicultural society (Parekh, 2006). Here, I focus upon the shifts in value orientations connected with the *new politics*, reflecting the major social transition from modernity to post-modernity. Whether value orientations are regarded as accompanying macro social change or as conditioning macro events, it is still the case that there is a micro-macro problem, which must be addressed methodologically.

The four possibilities of micro-macro connections between value and behaviour include several relationships, for example: (I) Micro-micro: people who adhere to certain value orientations engage in specific forms of behaviour, e.g. voting for new politics; (II) Macro-micro: in societies characterized by a certain aggregate distribution of value orientations, individual people are affected in their behaviour, although they do not need to hold these values themselves; (III) Micro-macro: people having certain value orientations are found in societies with a specific set of aggregate characteristics, although it does not need to be the case that these people with these values actually promote these macro traits (ecological fallacy); (IV) Macro-macro: specific macro outcomes such as, e.g. economic growth tend to occur in societies where certain value orientations prevail at the aggregate level there, as perhaps dominance for individualistic value orientations.

Micro-micro relationships between values and behaviour can only be established by means of pure individual level research. Any interaction would have to consist of a correlation stating that the same individuals with a certain value orientation display certain behaviour. Macro-macro relationships could entirely bypass any such individual level interaction, as it needs only to be the case that societies with a certain configuration of values also tend to display specific outcomes, whether or not there exists a corresponding micro-micro interaction. What is questionable is the micro-macro relationship or the macro-micro relationship, because it is far from clear what causal mechanism could be at work — the risk of an ecological fallacy (Robinson, 1950; Freedman, 2001).

To find out whether values matter, one needs to test a few major models about values which argue that these values are not only central because they capture changes in values, but also that they matter for outcomes in society, the

economy, and the politics. To conclude, value orientations may be relevant in two senses:

1. They may be important for the acting individual in the sense that people with certain values tend to behave in specific ways — micro importance.
2. They may be important for society in the sense that aggregates of value orientations tend to be associated with macro outcomes — macro importance.

I will now apply these distinctions (micro-macro) above to the new field of gender and homosexuality attitudes and enquire into whether they could constitute one value orientation or cleavage linked with macro conditions or outcomes (e.g. affluence, religion). I will also enquire into the individual requisites of these new value orientations by linking them with sex, age, and education at the individual level.

## MICRO ANALYSIS

Sex becomes culturally defined through citizen attitudes towards gender and homosexuality. A central question for future research is whether these attitudes towards sex merely restate more fundamental value orientations in the post-modern society, such as post-materialism or individualism. Drawing upon the extensive survey research from many countries, one may offer some new information about attitudes towards sex, either in the form of macro data or in the form of micro data.

Two questions, one macro and the other a micro question, figure prominently in the research upon gender (Inglehart and Norris, 2003a; Norris and Inglehart, 2004), namely first: (Q1) Do countries differ in terms of gender equality? If so, why? This is a macro problem where one would wish to identify the country factors, which are conducive towards a culture of gender equality. Gender equality may be tapped through a host of social indicators and one may theorize that a number of conditions — economic, social and political — play a role for explaining why some countries are characterized by more of gender equality than others. The second question amounts to a micro problem: (Q2) Do individuals who value gender equality have a distinct set of social attitudes? This is a problem for micro research to be answered by means of surveys. The same macro and micro questions may be raised in relation to homosexuality and lesbianism. In order to derive an index of value orientation towards homosexuality, we employ a micro-based indicator in order to construct macro scores. For attitudes towards homosexuality we employ the following response item from the WVS: Please tell me whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between: homosexuality scores from 1 (=never justifiable) to 10 (=always justifiable).

The advantage of the micro-based index on homosexuality is that it allows for both macro and micro enquiries into the sources of such value orientations.

At the micro-level we employ this item as the measure of orientation towards homosexuality, and at the macro-level the average scores for each country represented in the surveys will be used as an index on orientation towards homosexuality. Figure 1 shows the distribution in the entire sample of respondents in all countries concerning the orientation towards homosexuality. It is obvious that a majority of the respondents take a strong standing against homosexuality, but there is a small minority around 10% that find homosexuality always justifiable.

There is a distinctive change in attitudes over time. Whereas in both the USA and in Northern Ireland in the early 1980s around 1 in 100 found homosexuality always justifiable, this proportion had increased to around 1 in 8 in year 2000. A similar trend is also discernable in countries like the Netherlands and Sweden where the proportions in 1980 were around 1 of 4 to 5 to be 1 of 2 in year 2000.

Figure 1: attitude towards the justifiability of homosexuality (percentages)

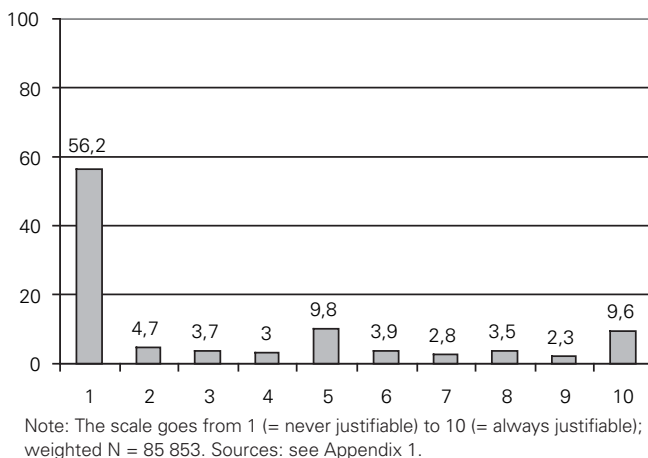


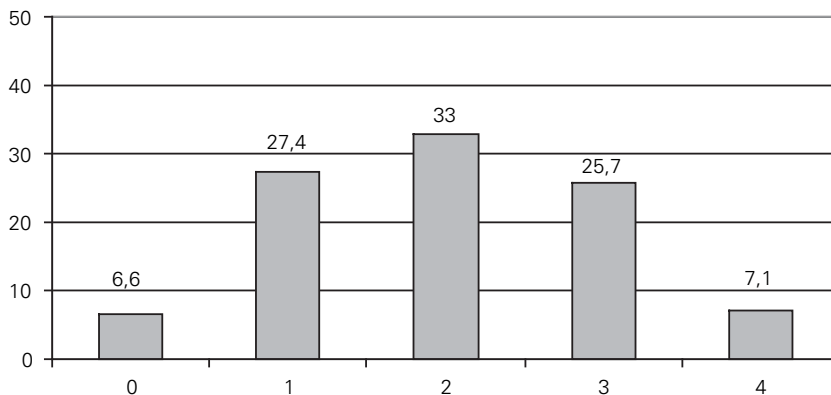
Figure 1 indicates that the support for homosexuality has a clear structure in advanced societies. A majority seems to be clearly negative, whereas the strongly positive minority tends to be rather small, or roughly 10 per cent of the population. The orientations towards the normative basis of homosexuality tend to be highly skewed towards a negative majority, but there is a considerable minority, which holds the opposite view.

Let me now make an explorative enquire into how gender attitudes relate to the attitude towards homosexuality. I will use a micro-derived index on gender equality, based on aggregated attitudes on gender issues, available from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> wave of the World Values Studies (Inglehart *et al.* 2000 and 2004) (Gender Equality Index; GEQ).<sup>1</sup> Figure 2 gives the size of the groups with different

<sup>1</sup> The items employed for constructing the index are the following ones: [1] On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do (strongly disagree); [2] When jobs are scarce, men should have

orientations towards gender equality based on the factors scores arrived at, drawing upon the entire sample from all the countries within the VWS 4<sup>th</sup> wave. Since the values in the figure builds on the standardised factor scores, we have a normal distribution. However, behind this distribution there is a variation on the various items constituting the Gender Equality Index.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 2: opinions on Gender Equality (GEQ) (percentages)



Note: The GEQ index has been rescaled in the following way: 0 = lowest thru -1,5; 1 = -1,5 thru -0,5; 2 = -0,5 thru 0,5; 3 = 0,5 thru 1,5; and 4 = 1,5 thru highest; weighted N = 46 564.

\*Sources: see Appendix 1.

Figure 2 shows that there is a difference at the individual level between those expressing more gender positive orientations (3 + 4) and those who are hesitant or express negative gender orientations (0 + 1). This finding indicates the existence

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more right to a job than women (strongly disagree); [3] A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl (strongly disagree); [4] A woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled (strongly disagree); [5] If a woman wants to have a child as a single parent but she doesn't want to have a stable relationship with a man, do you approve or disapprove? (strongly approve) (cf. Inglehart and Norris, 2003b: 69). The variables have been recoded so that a positive value stands for gender equality, and then a factor analysis has been employed to arrive at a gender equality index; the same procedure has been applied for the 3<sup>rd</sup> (1995-97) and 4<sup>th</sup> (1999-2002) waves of the VWS. Since the scores for the two periods strongly co-vary, predicted scores based on the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave will be used as the country scores in the forthcoming analysis — the fourth macro-level index.

<sup>2</sup> For three of the items there is a plurality having “gender negative” opinions ([1,4,5]) whereas for the other two items the opinions could be classified as “gender positive” ([2,3]). The most positive gender opinion is expressed for the item [3] on the importance of university for a boy where the balance for those disagreeing over those agreeing is 52%; the most negative gender opinion can be noted for the item [4] on the needs for fulfilment for a woman where the balance is 26% in favour of those meaning that children are needed. Over time we can find slightly more “gender positive” attitudes; on the need for fulfilment for a woman [4] those having a “positive” attitude goes up from 82.2 (1981) to 85.0 (2000) in USA, 89.5 to 93.2 in the Netherlands; on the right for men to have jobs the positive attitude has changed from 71.1 (1990) to 81.9 (2000) in the USA and 69.9 (1990) to 83.7 (2000) in the Netherlands. Attitudes are changing over time, but the major variation in opinion on gender equality is to be found across countries.

of a cleavage in advanced societies between a clearly negative group of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the citizens and a strongly positive group of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the citizens. Now, how are attitudes towards homosexuality related to attitudes towards gender?

From Figure 1, we know that the general citizen is negative towards homosexuality. The micro sources of an evaluation of homosexuality are found in Table 1. The higher the scores are, the more positive the orientations towards homosexuality are. At the micro level we may establish that women, young, well-educated and high income is conducive to less negative orientations towards, homosexuality. The highest eta score we find for education, whereas age and gender display lower correlations.

Table 1: Correlations (eta): attitudes towards homosexuals and gender, age, education, and income (WVS 4<sup>th</sup> wave 1999-2002)

Gender		Age		Education		Income	
Group	Homosex.	Group	Homosex.	Group	Homosex.	Group	Homosex
Male	3.07	15-29 yrs	3.51	Lower	2.77	Lower	2.85
Female	3.48	30-49 yrs	3.36	Middle	3.37	Middle	3.21
		50 + yrs	2.94	Upper	4.05	Upper	3.60
Eta	.066	Eta	.072	Eta	.149	Eta	.097
N	85822	N	85649	N	85324	N	74844

Sources: see Appendix 1

We may expect that culture, or value orientations, culture matters for orientations towards homosexuality - see Table 2. In addition to traditional and post-materialist orientations, gender equality orientation (GEQ) is here entered as a predictor.

Table 2: Regression: attitudes to homosexuals and value orientations, gender, age, education, and income (WVS 4<sup>th</sup> wave 1999-2002)

Independent variables	Regression coefficient	t-stat
Traditional/secular rational	1.149	73.90
Gender Equality orientation (GEQ)	.748	52.98
Post-materialist	.530	24.24
Gender	.097	3.64
Age	-.067	-3.98
Education	-.048	-2.51
Income	.039	2.26
Constant	2.146	25.90
R square	.310	
N	30289	

Sources: see Appendix 1



Culture matters, as a gender positive orientation, is conducive to a positive attitude towards homosexuality, and this goes together with more secular and more post-materialist orientations. The control variables entered capturing age, gender, education, and income has little impact on attitudes towards homosexuality. What matters are thus cultural factors when they are expressed as value orientations or attitudes?

Similarly, one may research attitudes towards gender equality by means of data from surveys. This would give a micro foundation to the macro analysis of gender inequality. In the World Value Surveys a number of questions were asked about attitudes towards gender, where the responses have employed for the construction of an index covering the individual attitude towards gender equality. Let us first see whether sex itself is related to gender attitudes. Table 3 has information about sex and gender attitude. At the individual level we employ the gender equality index (GEQ) constructed from five items of the World Values Survey. Let us first establish how the gender equality orientation is associated with gender, age, education, and income see Table 3.

Table 3: correlations (eta): gender value orientations (GEO) and gender, age, education, and income (WVS 4<sup>th</sup> wave 1999-2002)

Gender		Age		Education		Income	
Group	GEQ score	Group	GEQ score	Group	GEQ score	Group	GEQ score
Male	-.165	15-29 yrs	.052	Lower	-.292	Lower	-.160
Female	.165	30-49 yrs	-.011	Middle	.151	Middle	.035
		50 + yrs	-.056	Upper	.288	Upper	.127
Eta	.165	Eta	.042	Eta	.245	Eta	.120
N	46542	N	46515	N	46204	N	42146

Sources: see Appendix 1

Based on the 4<sup>th</sup> wave of the VWS, it appears that education and sex correlate more with gender orientations than what is the case for income and age. Women are more positive towards gender equality than is the case for men, and higher education is conducive to gender positive orientations. Younger people and people with higher incomes are also more gender positive than older people and people with low incomes. Now, wath do value orientations may have upon gender orientations? The gender orientation index (GEQ) will be the dependent variable, whereas different value orientations are captured by the survival/self-expression values, traditional/secular rational values and post-materialist orientations. The regression model estimated also includes the variables used in the previous correlation analysis: gender, age, education, and income — see Table 4.

Table 4: Regression: gender value orientations (GEO) and value orientations, gender, age, education, and income (WVS 4<sup>th</sup> wave 1999-2002)

Independent variables	Regression coefficient	t-stat
Survival/self-expression	. 331	58.18
Traditional/secular rational	. 319	53.79
Gender	. 380	37.08
Age	-. 031	-4.46
Education	. 128	17.21
Income	. 022	3.34
Constant	-. 554	-19.24
R square	. 227	
N	30289	

Sources: see Appendix 1

Value orientations of self-expression and secular rational values go together with gender equality orientations. This is also the case for post-materialism, but to a lesser extent. It is also striking that gender and education matters more than age and income when analysing these value orientations at the individual level. The interesting, but not surprising, finding is thus that cultural factors, expressed as value orientations, matter the most for explaining the variation in orientations towards gender at the micro-level. Thus, the analysis of value orientations is a MUST for understanding the electorate in the post-modern societies (Newton and Kaase, 1995; Inglehart and Weizel, 2005).

## MACRO PERSPECTIVE

I start with the macro question of probing into a few determinants of the country variation in gender equality. In the literature there is a number of macro indicators upon gender development — see *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around The World* (2003) by R. Inglehart and P. Norris. To measure gender at country level, we employ four indicators: the gender-related development index (GDI), the gender empowerment measure (GEM), female representation in parliament (WOMEN), and gender equality orientations (GEO).<sup>3</sup> One may consider them all as gender equality indices, which take into account the rights of women from an economic or political point of view, measuring the

<sup>3</sup> (a) Gender-related development index (GDI) as it has been developed by the UNDP team producing the annual Human Development Report — from 1995 it contains the GDI. Briefly GDI measures the relative position of females to males with respect to life expectancy, education, and standard of living;

position of women in general or the position of women among the elites. These indices all indicate considerable country variation, which calls for an enquiry into the macro factors, which are conducive to gender differences.

The different measures on gender equality tend to go together. Figure 3 shows the relation between GEM and GDI, while Figure 4 indicates how the WVS-index (GEQ) relates to the GEM. When gender is measured by means of macro-based indices, then one arrives at a picture of considerable cross-national variation — see Figure 3.

Figure 3: Gender development (GDI) and gender empowerment (GEM) ( $r = .856$ ;  $N = 47$ )

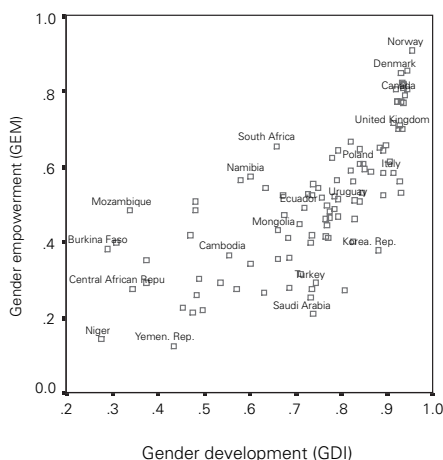
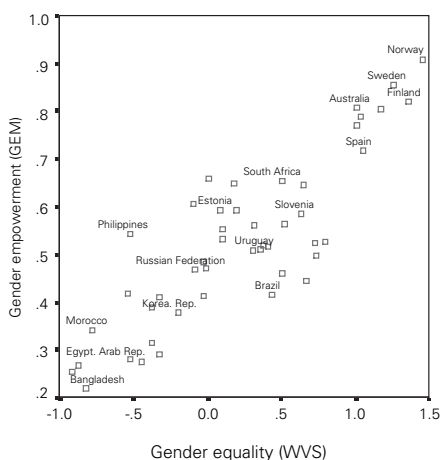


Figure 4: Gender equality (GEQ) and gender empowerment (GEM) ( $r = .725$ ;  $N = 102$ )



Sources: see Appendix 2

GEM and GDI take into account a number of aspects of the position of women in society. These two indices show a coherent country variation that expresses the overall development of the status of women in society: the more of gender development, the more of women empowerment. Gender equality appears to have the highest scores among the Scandinavian welfare states, whereas lower scores are to be found among countries in Africa and in the Middle East, with medium scores for Latin America.

(b) Gender empowerment measure (GEM) was also first presented in 1995 and it is a composite index on gender inequality in relation to “economic participation and decision-making, political participation, and decision-making and power over economic resources” (UNDP, 2004: 270); (c) Female representation in parliament measured as the percentage of women in parliament (second chamber if a bicameral system) (WOMEN) these three measures will refer to data for the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, i.e. around 2000 to 2004; (d) A fourth macro-level index measuring gender equality orientations (GEQ) will also be employed, and it is based on the micro-level data stemming from the World Values Surveys described above.

The micro based index upon gender equality (GEQ), taken from survey data in the WVS, may now be related to the macro-based indices. Interestingly, the macro variation derived from micro data is strongly correlated with the variation in gender empowerment (GEM), a macro-based index — see Figure 4 for the correlation at country level. Thus, societies where gender equality is strongly endorsed among citizen attitudes, are more or less the same societies where a strong development towards gender empowerment has taken place. At the macro-level it is evident that gender differentiates between countries, whether gender is measured by macro-based indices or attitudinal data as used in a micro-based index. What country attributes could be linked with these striking country differences in gender development and gender value orientations? Gender equality tends to go together with major economic and cultural factors, differentiating the countries of the world.

Figures 5 and 6 show the association between economic modernisation on the one hand, and gender position (GEM) and gender value orientations (GEQ) on the other hand. Economic modernity is captured by the GDP per capita measure. When comparing the two figures, it is obvious that the association between economic affluence (GDP) and gender value orientations (GEQ) is somewhat weaker than the association between GDP and gender position (GEM). Actual gender empowerment, as well as positive gender equality orientations, tend to occur more prominently in countries qualified as affluent and modernised.

Figure 5: GDP and GEM  
( $R = .725$ ;  $N = 103$ )

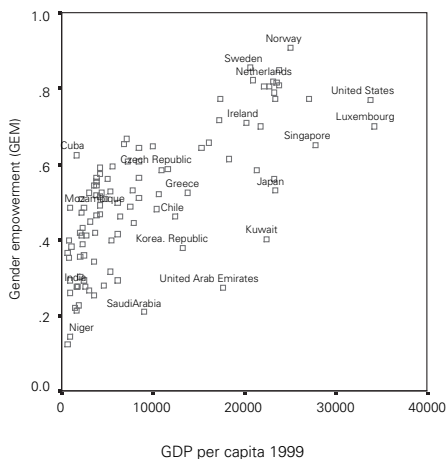
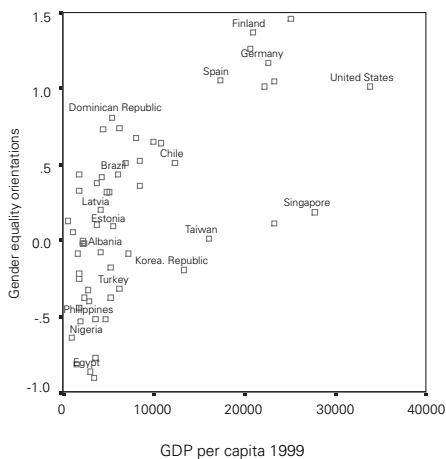


Figure 6: GDP and Gender Equality (GEQ)  
( $r = .651$ ;  $N = 57$ )



Sources: see Appendix 2

Accounting for the links established in Figures 5 and 6, one may argue that gender equality is partly driven by the efficiency requirements of a modern economy. But the spread of gender values would also be conditioned by cultural

factors, one may be inclined to argue. Table 5 looks at the cultural links of gender equality, containing the evidence of the test of a number of cultural hypotheses about gender inequalities, such as religion, historical legacies, and family system. One would expect that Protestant countries support gender equality, whereas Muslim countries would support gender inequality. Countries with an Iberian (Spain and Portugal and their former colonies) legacy would support gender inequality more than countries with a different cultural tradition. Countries with a collectivist family system would render less support to gender equality than countries with an individualist family structure, all other things equal.

Exploring cultural factors that matter for gender inequality, Table 5 reports on a few correlations linking gender equality with Protestantism, Islam Iberian cultural legacy, and a collectivist family system. The correlation matrix suggests that countries with Protestantism tend to be associated with higher scores on gender equality whereas countries with a high proportion of Muslims tend to score lower on gender equality. Type of family system (collectivism - individualism) also covaries strongly with gender equality, while an Iberian colonial legacy *per se* does not tend to correlate with gender inequality.

Table 5: gender equality and cultural factors - Pearson's correlation (macro)

Cultural factors	Correlation	GEM	WOMEN	GDI	GEQ
Protestantism (LN)	R	.493	.344	.002	.597
	Sig	.000	.000	.978	.000
	N	103	144	137	57
Islam (LN)	R	-.591	-.368	-.369	-.620
	Sig	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	103	144	137	57
Iberian legacy	R	.106	.187	.150	.398
	Sig	.308	.031	.093	.003
	N	94	132	127	52
Family system (Todd)	R	.714	.364	.772	.679
	Sig	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	103	144	138	57

Sources: see Appendix 2

The findings in Table 5 confirm the often-repeated argument that gender equality has strong cultural sources, especially religion and the family (individualism – collectivism). Figure 7 and 8 substantiate these cultural relationships between two of the major world religions and gender. The scores on gender equality are higher among the bigger part of Protestant believers, whereas a strong presence of Islam tends to be associated with lower levels of gender empowerment.

Figure 7: Protestantism and gender equality (GEQ) ( $r = .597$ ;  $N = 57$ )

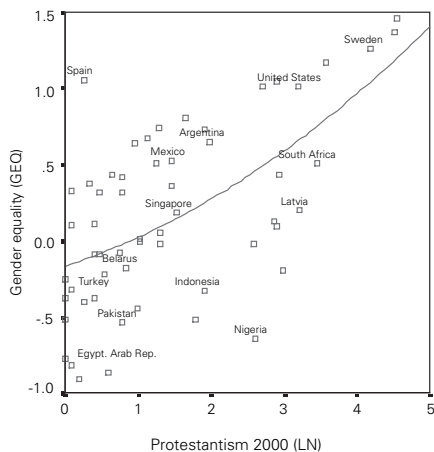
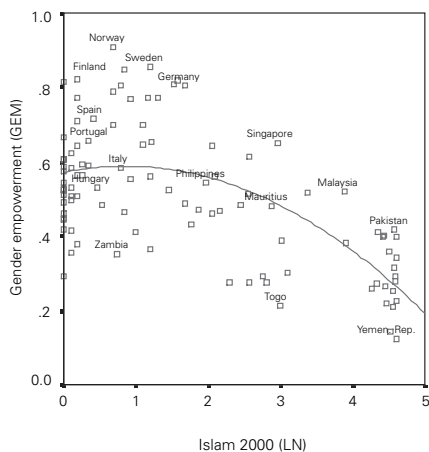


Figure 8: Islam and Gender empowerment (GEM) ( $r = -.591$ ;  $N = 103$ )



Sources: see Appendix 2

Gender inequalities tend to be great in developing countries reflecting a low level of economic development, but the traditional status of women, as reinforced by religion and the family system, also matters. Just as individuals differ in their support for homosexuality, so societies differ in their acceptance of homosexuality. At issue is here which impact that cultural factors and economic modernisation have on the cross-national variation in orientations towards homosexuality. Let us first look at the relation between cultural factors and attitudes towards homosexuality at the macro level, as they are expressed in the correlation analysis displayed in Table 6. The cultural factors included here are religion, colonial legacies, as well as family systems. The correlation coefficients indicate a similar pattern as when analysing gender equality orientations: less negative attitudes in countries where Protestantism is dominating, whereas a dominance of Islam is associated with more negative attitudes. Cultural factors seem to be associated with the orientation towards homosexuality also at the macro level.

Table 6: Attitudes to homosexuals and cultural factors - Pearson's correlation

Cultural factors	Correlation	Attitudes to homosexuals
Protestantism (LN)	R	.475
	Sig	.000
	N	77
Islam (LN)	R	-.484
	Sig	.000
	N	77
Iberian legacy	R	.109
	Sig	.371
	N	69
Family system (Todd)	R	.762
	Sig	.000
	N	77

Sources: see Appendix 2

At the macro level it seems quite obvious that favourable attitudes towards homosexuality go together with various expressions of individualistic culture. An Iberian legacy is NOT a major obstacle towards a positive attitude towards gender equality or public recognition of gays' and lesbians' rights.

## CONCLUSION

Sex may be looked upon as a new major cleavage in the post-modern society. Sex and politics have become intertwined in a few highly salient issues pertaining to the basic attitudes towards gender and homosexuality, as well as to their recognition in law and politics (Blasius, 1994). Figures 9 and 10 display how attitudes towards homosexuality correlate with gender equality orientations (GEQ) and the human development index (HDI) at the macro level. Positive orientations towards gender equality goes hand in hand with less negative attitudes towards homosexuality, and these sets of attitudes are to be found in countries with a high level of human development. Thus, both these value orientations — gender and homosexuality — are strongly supported in societies with a high level of economic modernisation. In advanced societies, the attitude towards gender equality and the attitude towards acceptance of gays and lesbians are so strongly connected that one may speak of a new major value orientation. The relevance of this new cleavage for public policy is already apparent in the politics of sex legislation and of judicial interpretation.

Figure 9: Gender equality orientations (GEO) and attitudes to homosexuality ( $r=.78$ ;  $N=56$ )

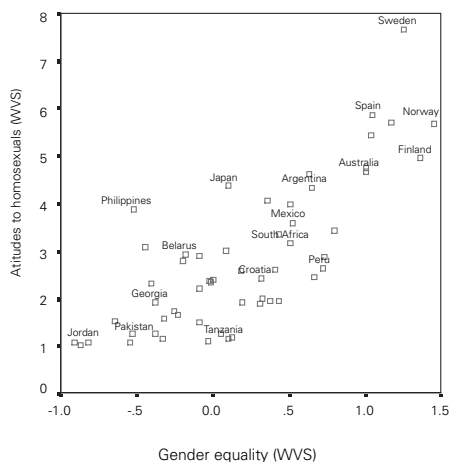
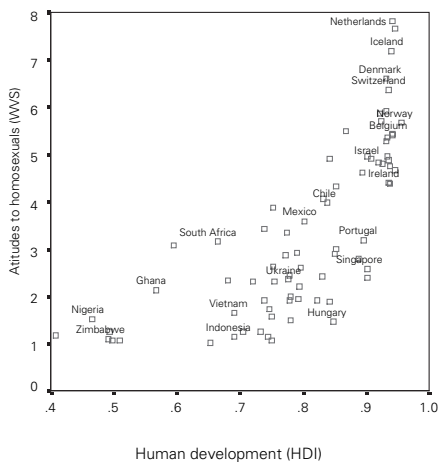


Figure 10: human development and attitudes to homosexuality ( $r= .74$  ;  $N=76$ )



Sources: See Appendix 2

The politics of gender, as well as that of homosexuality, receives more and more attention in the advanced societies with a post-modern culture (Connel, 2002). Rayside presented his analysis of the politics of achieving gay and lesbian equality under the title *On the Fringe* (1998), which hardly is an appropriate term for the centrality of questions of gender and sex in politics. In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century the politics of sex is no longer merely a marginal phenomenon in neither Europe nor the US or Brazil. Undoubtedly several developments account for the emergence and saliency of the politics of sex, including rights, citizenship, and political and social theory. Yet, in order to understand the force of the support for new politics of gender and homosexuality, one must enquire into the value orientations that support the new public policies and changes in law that have resulted in so much political fight (Adam, Duyvendak, and Krouwel, 1998).

Without the firm support of large groups in the electorate the new politics of sex would not achieve such a high saliency. Survey data can be employed to map the attitudes, which render gender equality and the rights of homosexuals a high value with ensuring political consequences for the making of law. This support for the new politics of women, gays and lesbians is to be found in mass political attitudes. Attitudes towards gender and homosexuality are connected at the micro level. And their occurrence on the macro level is strongly embedded in major cultural aspects of society. It is evident that cultural factors have an impact on the formation on value orientations, and this impact is visible both at the micro and the macro level.



## APPENDIX 1: Micro-level data

Abbreviation	Description	Variables in Inglehart <i>et al.</i> 2004
AGE	Age group; recoded as: 15-29 = 1, 30-49 = 2, 50+ = 3	V225 (x003r2)
EDUCATION	Educational level; recoded as: lower = 1, middle = 2, upper = 3	V226 (x025r)
GENDER	Gender as a dummy variable: male = 1, female = 2	V223 (x001)
GEQ	Gender equality orientation index achieved thru applying a factor analysis on five items	V78 (c001(recoded)), V110(d019(recoded)), V112(d023(recoded)), V118(d059), V119(d060)
HOMOSEXUALS	Justifiability of homosexuality going from never (=1) to always (=10)	V208(f118)
INCOME	Income level; recoded as: lower = 1, middle = 2, upper = 3	V236(x047r)
Post-materialist orientation	Post-materialism orientation index based on four items	y002
Survival/self-expression orientation	Index measuring survival vs. self-expression values; see Inglehart and Baker (2000: 24) for the construction of the index	survself
Traditional/secular rational orientation	Index measuring traditional vs. secular-rational values; see Inglehart and Baker (2000: 24) for the construction of the index	tradrat5

## APPENDIX 2: Macro-level data

Abbreviation	Description	Sources
Family system	Classification of countries as belonging to family types according to degree of individualism where the absolute nuclear family scores high and the African family system score low	Based on Todd (1983)
GDI	Gender-related development index; based on estimations for different number of years	UNDP (2000-2004)
GDP 1999	GDP per capita expressed as PPP in US\$	CIA (2000)
GEM	Gender empowerment measure; based on estimates for different number of years	UNDP (2000-2004)
GEQ	Gender equality index; aggregated to the national level, based on both the 3 <sup>rd</sup> and the 4 <sup>th</sup> waves of WVS	Inglehart <i>et al.</i> (2000, 2004)
HDI	Human development index; based on estimates for different number of years	UNDP (2000-2004)
HOMOSEXUALS	Attitudes to homosexuals aggregated to the national level, based on both 3 <sup>rd</sup> and the 4 <sup>th</sup> waves of WVS	Inglehart <i>et al.</i> (2000, 2004)
Iberian legacy	Legacy of Iberian colonial rule as a dummy variable where 1 = Iberian legacy, 0 = no such legacy	Based on de Blij (1996, pp. 496-97)
Islam (LN)	Percentage of the population estimated to adhere to the Muslim creed around 2000; natural logarithm	Barrett <i>et al.</i> (2001)
Protestantism (LN)	Percentage of the population estimated to adhere to the Protestant creed around 2000; natural logarithm	Barrett <i>et al.</i> (2001)
WOMEN	Female parliamentary representation in the Second Chamber around 2000	IPU (2005)

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