

**LEDERHOSEN, RODEOS, AND LAPTOPS:  
COMPARISONS OF POLITICAL CULTURE IN  
OKLAHOMA AND BAVARIA IN THE AGE OF  
GLOBALIZATION**

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The globalization issue today remains complicated, generating as many questions as it does answers. This transformative phenomenon, however, contains the powerful countervailing trends of socio-economic disintegration and integration, ethnic nationalism and globalization, cultural diversity and homogenization, and the particular and the universal. Such forces are often contradictory in nature, creating economic, political, and cultural convergence and pluralism at the same time. Burning questions on the status of nation-states and even sub-national political entities in an increasingly interconnected world actually represent nothing new. Serious and thoughtful debates already had emerged as early as the first half of the nineteenth century about the rise of global economic and political trends and their impact on local and national identities. Both classical economists and classical Marxists had set the tone for various profound discussions that still resonate today. Though the current body of research regarding the globalization process is impressive, it mostly concentrates on countries' economic, political, and cultural characteristics in response to such trends. Based on both a broader perspective and a comparative approach, this study explores the distinctive sociopolitical and cultural features of the states of Oklahoma, United States, and Bavaria, Germany, in relation to the globalization phenomenon. In the context of their political ideology, constitutional setting, policies, customs, and religion, this paper examines how the conservative underpinnings of these sociopolitical features can be positioned in the debates on globalization trends and political culture. Our hypothesis holds that these

two jurisdictions or states exhibit similar cultural, economic, political and social institutions and practices, which similarly respond to the forces of globalization. In addition, both states' identities appear to remain resilient even in the face of significant global transformations. Not least of all, the findings suggest that Oklahoma can perhaps draw valuable lessons from Bavaria's own unique blending of tradition and change and reconcile them in the form of "progressive conservatism."

**The topic of globalization** has received wide attention in the social science research literature. For some, globalization means the ever-shrinking relationship between space and time often enshrined in the notion of a global village, while others emphasize the increasing exchange of information, goods, services, and cultures on a global scale, and the rise of globally integrated networks (Harvey 1989; Mittelman 1996a; Held et al. 1999; Fried 2001; Urry 2003; Friedman 2006). Time, space, and the global exchange of tangible or intangible properties constitute some of the critical dimensions that define globalization. The increasingly interconnected web of national economies engaged in trade and finance, the emergence and intensification of a global consciousness across nations, and the complex interaction among global forces, citizenship, ethnicity, and gender remain equally important to capture globalization's complex and dynamic nature (Gilpin 1987; Robertson 1992; Croucher 2004). Not least of all, the meaning of globalization is often discussed in the contexts of pursuing universal and classical liberal ideas, implementing economic development policies, and encouraging "cross-border advocacy networks and organizations [that defend] human rights, the environment, women's rights, or world peace" (Guillen 2001, 236-37).

The globalization phenomenon remains complicated from a conceptual and operational perspective. The forces of globalization can create economic standardization, but they can also contribute to cultural pluralism. Though the current body of research is impressive, it mostly concentrates on countries' economic, political, and cultural characteristics in response to globalization trends. Based on both a broader perspective and comparative approach, this study explores the distinctive sociopolitical

and cultural features of the states of Oklahoma, United States, and Bavaria, Germany, in relation to the globalization process. In the context of their political ideology, constitutional setting, policies, customs, and religion, this paper examines how the conservative underpinnings of these sociopolitical features can be positioned in the debates on globalization and political culture. After introducing the general themes of globalization and political culture, the paper describes the methodology and provides a brief background on the states of Oklahoma and Bavaria. The study concludes with an analysis and discussion of the findings. Our hypothesis holds that these two jurisdictions or states exhibit similar cultural, economic, political and social institutions and practices, which similarly respond to the forces of globalization. In addition, both states' identities appear to remain resilient even in the face of significant global transformations.

## **THEMES OF GLOBALIZATION AND POLITICAL CULTURE**

### **FRIEDRICH LIST VERSUS KARL MARX: EARLY CONSIDERATIONS**

Two prominent and visionary German intellectuals, Friedrich List (1789-1846) and Karl Marx (1818-1883), engaged in serious and thoughtful discussions as early as the first half of the nineteenth century about the rise of global economic and political trends and their impact on local and national identities. Political economist, journalist and lobbyist List considered matters of political culture in general as well as state and federal issues in both the United States and Germany. Living from the late 1820s to the early 1830s in the young republic, he observed first-hand what was taking place in American society. He soon felt the influence of Alexander Hamilton's national economic policies as well as Henry Clay's ambitious, but aborted, "American System." List came to endorse Hamilton's idea of economic nationalism, which emphasized trade protectionism and a strong domestic industrial base. For List, true economic power lay not in the ability to consume goods, but in the capacity to produce them. He opposed what he perceived to be the "cosmopolitanism" of free-trade advocates, who seemed more concerned with global affairs than their own countries.

Though promoting free trade within nation-states, List took exception with classical economists, who had viewed the individual and society as distinct entities. He believed that the nation-state, grounded as it was in a geographical region with its own unique history and culture, but as one part of the global fabric, nevertheless commanded the love and loyalty of individuals more so than the world. Instead, he considered individuals to be members of a given society or nation. In addition, he understood nation-states to represent something more than mere moral and political groupings in history; they also constituted economic associations. In his more organic view of society, economic activities and trade should adapt to particular national demands.

Significantly, List envisioned the nation-state serving as the necessary and proper intermediary between the individual and the wider world. Ideally, the nation-state functioned as an economic and political vehicle that preserved and protected people from the economic and political vicissitudes of the international arena. From this vantage point, this intermediate level of organization—between that of the individual and the world community—had up to this time received little or no emphasis in economic thought (Hirst 1965 [1909]; Smith 1970; Hetz 1975; Henderson 1983; Szporluk 1988; McCraw 1992). Significantly, he wrote in 1841 in his most famous work, *The National System of Political Economy*, that “[b]etween each individual and entire humanity . . . stands the Nation, with its special language and literature . . . origin and history . . . manners and customs, laws and institutions . . . with its separate territory; a society, which, united by a thousand ties of mind and of interests, combines itself into one independent whole” (174-75).

List held that the nation-state, which by the mid-nineteenth century was fast approaching predominance as the most innovative political institution and power-broker of its day, embodied the “highest union of individuals.” According to this view, nation-states protected not only political and cultural interests, but economic ones as well. For him, the industrialized nation-state—whereby national unity resulted from modern means—also harnessed economic capabilities and provided a catalyst to the dynamic creation of wealth.

List held, moreover, that nation-states functioned in a “community of nations.” They could therefore act as the ideal beneficent mediator between the individual and worldwide humanity, as evidenced by tariffs and trade protectionism, especially for less-developed and more vulnerable

peoples. Moreover, the national government held the right to subordinate local interests to the general or national one, thus at the same time integrating local and regional affiliations.

As a powerful counterpart to List, but equally well-grounded in the great German intellectual and philosophical traditions of the day (Bernard 1965; Stern, ed. 1973; Iggers 1983), German economist, sociologist, historian, journalist and political revolutionary Marx comprehended early on how global economic forces could erode the nation-state's viability and sovereignty, which he regarded as a historical construct of middle-class capitalism and as a transitory, albeit a necessary, phase of the incremental, "inevitable" movement toward international socialism.

Marx long maintained that capitalism would implode in time from its own internal contradictions. During the revolutionary outbursts of 1848, he wrote that unbridled free trade and global economic trends were in fact best suited to encourage world revolution. In particular, protective tariffs on the part of nation-states, for instance, were inherently conservative and opposed to the dialectic of history. He wrote: "The Protective system . . . is conservative, while the Free Trade system works destructively. It breaks up old nationalities and carries antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie to the uttermost point. In a word, the Free Trade system hastens the Social Revolution. In this revolutionary sense alone, gentlemen, I am in favor of Free Trade" (Marx and Engels 1976, 465).

List's ideas parted with both classical liberalism and classical Marxism with respect to issues such as economic development, nation-state formation, and transitional historical stages of human development. In Marx's case, for example, the nation-state dominated by the capitalist middle-classes served as a stage or transition from the feudal to the socialist. A perceptive Marx already recognized at this time the transfer of more local loyalties to national ones, and perhaps the beginnings of transnational affiliations, even surpassing that of the Roman Catholic Church. For List, however, while the nation-state was able to unite local communities of shared heritage, the national community *remained* viable within this emerging modern global framework.

This divergence between List's and Marx's views can help contextualize the historical role of national sovereignty in this perceived era of increased globalization. Indeed, what appears to be occurring

now—i.e., the integration of nations or regions into a larger regional or even global framework—is perhaps simply a process on a much grander scale of what had happened at the local and national levels of consolidation in parts of the globe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as the case of the various German states or even the young United States. Yet local and regional identities within nation-states remain relatively intact even today, and in some cases are growing ever stronger.

In consideration of global trends, List's observations in retrospect are perhaps more salient than ever. In his ideal world, the nation-state in its various forms functioned as a mediator between the persistent reality of cultural diversity and local self-interests, on the one hand, and the growing homogenization and global transformations of the emerging modern world economy, on the other. Moreover, List's seemingly more organic cultural understandings of socio-economic forces and trends followed a less linear historical progression than Marx's more ambitious, albeit commendable, effort to construct a grand unified theory that embraced larger historical patterns and stages of human development. Both men recognized the enormous potential of the Industrial Age, to be sure, but their conclusions went their separate ways.

#### CONTEMPORARY CONSIDERATIONS

Scholar Vali Nasr (2007) perhaps best articulates this almost ethereal, but omnipresent, phenomenon of global transformation, writing that “[w]e live in an age of globalization, but also one of identity politics. It is as if our world is expanding and contracting at the same time. Diverse peoples embrace universal values, and once insular communities engage in unprecedented levels of commerce and communication with the outside world. Yet at the same time the primordial or near-primordial ties of race, language, ethnicity, and religion make their presence felt with dogged determination” (23). Some commentators, notably historian Samuel P. Huntington (1996), have predicted a “clash of civilizations” in this historical context. Certainly, given time, global integration and unity might materialize, but today it is significant that two powerful countervailing forces—socio-economic disintegration and integration, ethnic nationalism and globalization, cultural diversity and homogenization, and the particular and the universal—appear to be in play. The paradox

is that they give indications of feeding off each other and seem unlikely at this point to overwhelm the other completely.

In the legacy of List and Marx, a whole host of studies in recent decades has grappled with the increasingly apparent globalization phenomenon and its contradictions. Sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and other social scientists have shaped contemporary debates on the subject. Accordingly, as suggested and succinctly summarized by Mauro Guillen (2001), the following four major thematic questions of globalization can be identified: 1) Is globalization really happening?; 2) Does globalization produce convergence?; 3) Does globalization undermine the authority of the national states?; and 4) Is a global culture emerging? Given the complexity of globalization as an economic, political, and cultural phenomenon, and the different arguments made by the respective globalization scholars, a concise answer to the question of whether globalization is happening remains elusive. Driven by power politics, multinational corporations, and the “newfound power of individuals to collaborate and compete globally,” the world has shrunk from a size medium to a size tiny since 1492 (Friedman 2006, 10). Others discern a selective integration of certain global economic activities. According to Manuel Castells (1996), the “actual operation and structure [of the global economy] concern only segments of economic structures, countries, and regions...” (102). Similar to the broader argument made so far, evidence exists regarding political and cultural globalization, but so do the arguments that undermine it (Castells 1996; Tomlinson 1999; Cowen 2002).

As for the question of the global convergence of economics, politics, and cultures and the loss of the nation-state sovereignty within a global network, the literature suggests a mixed picture. Often those engaged in the globalization debate tend to take the phenomenon for granted without providing empirical data to support its existence and argue that it has been an uneven process that fragments or is mostly a regional phenomenon, limited to Western Europe, North America, and Japan. Convincing empirical evidence, however, supports the phenomena of increasing divergence and diversity, the survival of national governance structures, and cultural divergence as a result of or in response to globalization. The geopolitical changes since World War I, the rise of foreign policy responses to terrorist networks, and the enduring variety of economic policies pursued and customs cherished by nation-states

offer vivid manifestations of global heterogeneity (Smith 1991; Delamaide 1994; Guillen 2001; LaFeber 2002). On the other hand, the tensions created by the rise of trans-border human migrations and information-communication technologies, the spread of multinational corporations and international organizations, and the increasingly interdependent web of financial markets, question the notion of national sovereignty. All these developments permeate and undermine the regulatory power of states, thus reminding us all that we are living in an economy rather than a society (Vernon 1971; Sakamoto 1994; Cox 1996; Mittelman 1996b; Kettl 2000).

Finally, but equally relevant to the subject under consideration, is there a global culture in the making? Those who believe that a global culture is rising and that a sort of hegemonic *burger* (i.e., an urban, middle-class professional) imperialism is taking control clearly stand in the minority. Admittedly, the new information communication technologies bolster the dominance of English as the global language (Kaku 1998, 337). This observation, however, does not reflect the complex relationship between communication and culture. Based on Axelrod's adaptive cultural simulation, Michael Greig (2002) suggests that the expansion of communications promotes cultural homogeneity and, as a result of the increasing exposure to a variety of different cultural traits, sustains local cultural uniqueness at the same time. Following the argument made by Ronald Inglehart and Wayne Baker (2000) that country-specific changes in culture and values result from path-dependent rather than convergent ways, the global diffusion of consumer products and ideas through mass consumerism, cross-border migration, and the information communication technologies appear unlikely to create a deeper sense of homogeneity, but instead produce diversity, fragmentation, and a "resurgent affirmation of identities" (Cox 1996, 27).

Clifford Geertz argues that the world is "growing more global and more divided, more thoroughly interconnected and more intricately partitioned at the same time...Whatever it is that defines identity in borderless capitalism and the global village it is not deep going agreements on deep going matters, but something more like the recurrence of familiar divisions, persisting arguments, standing threats, the notion that whatever else may happen, the order of difference must be somehow maintained" (Geertz cited in Guillen 2001, 253). Acknowledging the *decentering* effects of globalization, Anthony Giddens (2000), similar to James



Mittelman (1996b), affirms that this *decentering* is contributing to the fostering of local cultures and identities in reaction to global homogenization.

The fostering of local cultures, as illustrated by Ulrich Adelt's (2005) research on the development of the German music television networks MTV Germany and Viva TV, represents an outgrowth of country-specific historical developments and also constitutes an economic necessity. MTV and Viva allow for the exposure of British and American music in Germany, but they also play music that "caters to localized desires to declare a redefined German identity in ironic or nostalgic terms" (Adelt 2005, 293). Given the dynamic and hybrid nature of globalization, it is feasible for country-specific, regional, and local cultures to interact with traits of a global culture. Eventually, they may co-exist with one another relatively peacefully in the West. The relationship between globalization and Islamic culture seems to be more complicated, however. Mustapha Pasha and Ahmed Samatar (1996) discuss the Islamic world's resistance to Western modernity. Though the privileged groups in Muslim society embrace modernity quite eagerly, many others, fearful of cultural penetration and dismayed by the perceived growing human misery, reject the prospects of Western modernity (Pasha and Samatar 1996).

Political culture represents an extremely important factor in globalization, but is sometimes dismissed as a mere component of modern geopolitical studies. Political culture remains so vital and significant, because it affects so many other aspects of the state and politics. In considering how a state is ordered, how power is allocated, and who rules, one must first appreciate the local social and cultural contexts in which human beings operate. Indeed, human behavior and human psychology remain central to a successful contemplation and conceptualization of politics. In this regard, the study of political culture proves as varied and rich as the human experience itself. As a result, the study of political culture might in particular regions or jurisdictions involve the examination of many diverse factors, whether historical, religious, ethnic, or racial.

The failure to examine these factors most certainly produces an adverse effect on the findings of any serious study and consequently presents an inaccurate or incomplete analysis of the case under consideration. For example, Floyd Hunter's landmark study on the power elite in Atlanta, Georgia, reveals such a pitfall. In his 1953 study

*Community Power Structure*, Hunter employs the use of the “reputational theory of power.” In this approach, Hunter gains most of his data on those who exercised power in Atlanta based upon asking local residents to self-report and identify those individuals and groups who were perceived to be the primary power-brokers. The utility of Hunter’s work can be defended and even praised; however, many scholars level a number of criticisms against his findings, not the least of which concerns his methodological orientation with respect to the question of “who has power in Atlanta.” One primary critique highlights the inadequate consideration of the cultural and social factors at play in Atlanta, notably the city’s racial dynamics in the segregated South. Consequently, respect for and an awareness of political culture proves indispensable for proper scientific inquiry when conducting political science research.

Recognizing its importance, a number of legendary and famed scholars pay considerable attention to the issue of political culture. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963) have produced one such pioneering study. They assume that democratic states with representative institutions are democratic because of these societies’ inherently democratic values and norms. They also argue that “a democratic political system is one in which the ordinary citizen participates in political decisions, a democratic political culture should consist of a set of beliefs, attitudes, norms, perceptions and the like, that support participation” (Almond and Verba 1963, 178). For this purpose, they study five nations where they find three different manifestations of political culture, which they refer to as parochial political culture, subject political culture and participant political culture.

Another important contribution to the examination of political culture and contemporary research comes from the Dutch-American political scientist Arend Lijphart (1968). He ranks as one of the world’s leading experts on the phenomenon of consociationalism, which considers the ways in which heterogeneous societies try to maintain democracies through power-sharing among diverse groups in a given community. His work recognizes the importance of political culture in plural democratic states such as the Netherlands, where numerous ethnic, religious and cultural groups co-exist within a diminutive European state. His findings demonstrate how clearer conceptions of political culture remain essential in efforts to manage conflict and share power among

disparate groups. Tom Rice and Alexander Sumberg (2001) make another important contribution to the study of political culture by exploring “the link between civic culture and government performance in the American states.”

Daniel Elazar (1984) perhaps has written the best-known American study of political culture. In his study, *American Federalism: A View from the States*, Elazar creates a three-fold typology, within which he classifies all fifty U.S. states. His typology establishes three distinct state political cultures, categorized as the moralistic, the traditionalistic, and the individualistic. Each of these is supposed to reflect a state’s unique social, historical, religious, racial and ethnic composition. In addition, he lists various state regions, assigning each with a state political-culture designation. Most states incorporate a variety of cultures. For example, Oklahoma is classified into two categories. Elazar describes the state’s eastern portion as a solidly traditionalistic political culture, while the region west of Interstate-35 contains a mixture of the traditionalistic and individualistic political cultures.

On the whole, Elazar arrives at his typology by studying each state’s history, especially their settlement patterns. For each state, he regards the various racial, ethnic, religious and cultural profiles of settlers and their descendants. He then extrapolates and theorizes about these groups’ values, attitudes, and beliefs and how these norms would contribute to a general consensus and political culture in each state. In his view, the moralistic political culture with its emphasis on using government to achieve the public good in a Utilitarian- and Jeremy-Bentham-style approach grows out of the rationalist basis of the Yankee Northeast. Moreover, the Midwestern states’ individualistic political culture and their characteristic emphasis upon utilizing the free-market economy to order society better originate in the thrifty and no-nonsense approach of practical farmers. Finally, he describes how the Old South’s traditionalist political culture with its reliance upon elite rule and the application of deeply held religious notions guides many state policies.

Though many continue to praise Elazar’s work, many of his assumptions in recent years have come under attack. Some skepticism concerns the manner in which the nation has changed since his book’s first appearance. Critics often point out that since the early 1960s, when Elazar researched and published his findings, a number of factors and conditions have conspired to render his research on political culture less

relevant today. For example, some often raise concerns about the issue of technology, maintaining that computer innovations, namely the Internet and television, now permit a greater diffusion of knowledge and ideas, which in turn tends to make local cultures less impermeable to change. They also argue that today the values, forms of entertainment, and ideas of one section of the nation have become available in ways that were simply impossible not even two decades ago. In addition, Americans more than ever make frequent moves in the pursuit of better employment, optimal educational opportunities, and other advantages. This behavior demands that people move from the state where they were born and raised, thus making them either leave behind or bring with them the values endemic to that state's political culture. They are now migrating across the nation into entirely new political cultures, further reshaping the political landscape. As such, the argument goes that it is now less likely that distinct political state cultures could even exist as Elazar described them. Despite criticisms of Elazar, this study endeavors to demonstrate the utility and importance of political culture in understanding the present geopolitical climate in regions across the globe.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **CASE SAMPLING, DEFINITIONS, AND DATA COLLECTION**

This study applies the multiple-case-study approach in order to arrive at a more insightful understanding of the local cultures in the states of Oklahoma, United States, and Bavaria, Germany, in the context of globalization. Multiple-case evidence is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as more robust (Yin 2003). In addition, this multiple-case study seeks to illustrate the ways in which distinctive political cultures thrive despite globalization. Given the qualitative nature of this research, the case-sampling tends to be purposive rather than random (Morse 1989; Kuzel 1992). Purposive-sampling remains the preferred method, because qualitative research often deals with a limited population and "partly because social processes have a logic and a coherence that random sampling can reduce to uninterpretable sawdust" (Miles and Huberman 1994, 27).

"Conservatism" is defined as a cautious attitude to change with an emphasis on maintaining traditions, moral principles, customs, and the

social value of religion. It remains the predominant political philosophy among the peoples of the states of Oklahoma and Bavaria. Both embrace a strong ethos of conservatism and remain embedded within a federal system of government that preserves their powerful identities. Accordingly, a series of sociopolitical categories help illustrate how Oklahoma and Bavaria each preserve and promote their conservative cultures in the face of the juggernaut of globalization and greater world inter-dependence. For comparison, the sociopolitical categories include: 1) political ideology as illustrated by party dominance; 2) state constitutional provisions and policies; and 3) customs and religion. The Oklahoman and Bavarian state constitutions, along with official policy statements and statistics compiled by government and church-related institutions, serve as the major data sources.

## CASE BACKGROUND

### *Oklahoma:*

Geography and human migrations have helped shape the state of Oklahoma, a Choctaw term which literally means “land of the red man.” Today, Oklahoma is a “heartland state” that lies at a cultural intersection between the Southern Plains, the American Southwest, and the Old South. Though native peoples had lived in the general region for many centuries, tens of thousands more from the so-called “Five Civilized Tribes” from the east were forced onto this newly designated Indian Territory as a result of the tragic Trail of Tears episode of the 1830s.

The Spanish under Francisco Vasquez de Coronado had explored this region as early as the mid-sixteenth century, followed by the French two centuries later. As the United States expanded, the first permanent white settlements were established around the 1810s and 1820s. It took time for those of European extraction—especially German, English, Scots, and Irish—to establish roots in Oklahoma, however. Oklahoma assumed statehood relatively late in American national history primarily because of the presence of 38 federally recognized native tribes, each with their own distinct language, culture, and religious tradition. A contingent of African Americans also came to the region, mostly at first during the slavery period under both white and American Indian slaveholders. Oklahoma had long represented the crossroads of cultures and peoples in the heart of the evolving American nation, and the

European arrival between the 1810s and 1910s only contributed further to Oklahoma's ethnic diversity. Geographically, some observers also consider Oklahoma to be the "belt-buckle" of the so-called "Bible Belt" of Evangelical Protestant Christianity, which extends across the southeastern United States.

Shortly before the start of the twentieth century, delegations in Indian Territory finally moved to make it a U.S. state. At first, efforts arose to establish an all-Indian state called Sequoyah (after the great early-nineteenth-century Cherokee leader), but Congress rejected it. In 1907, Oklahoma became the forty-sixth U.S. state, firmly establishing it within the American federal system. Early in its history, the state of Oklahoma was recognized not just as an agricultural producer, but also as a major oil-producing center (Gibson 1981; Baird and Goble 1994). In comparison with Bavaria, however, Oklahoma remains a relatively young political entity.

*Bavaria:*

History and geography in the heart of Europe helped produce the Free State of Bavaria (*Freistaat Bayern*). Some sarcastic Germans from other regions call it "*Frei statt Bayern*," which means "free, instead of Bavaria," implying that the rest of Germany does not quite measure up to Bavaria as a nation. The Free State has not only enjoyed a time when it was an independent kingdom, but over the past century and a half it has been able to preserve and promote its cherished identity through a more conservative political culture and by receiving certain privileges within various federal arrangements. Nevertheless, the development of the modern Bavarian state has been closely tied to the historical path of Germany and the impact of outside forces.

Following the demise of the ancient Holy Roman Empire in 1806, French dictator Napoleon Bonaparte erected the Confederation of the Rhineland in its place, which consisted of Bavaria and thirty-some other smaller German states (as compared with more than 350 German states under the old empire). In 1806, Maximilian I became the first Bavarian king under this reorganization and in subsequent years Bavaria was able to expand its territory considerably. The Confederation of the Rhineland only lasted until Napoleon's fall in 1815, but the victorious powers against France in effect kept this political structure mostly intact through the creation of the German Confederation.

As Bavaria tried to solidify its political structures on the basis of a monarchy after Napoleon, a series of short-lived revolutions raged across Europe, while neighbors Austria and Prussia fought for dominance over the German Confederation. In 1866, Prussia made its move against Austria within the Confederation, quickly achieving political supremacy and erecting the Prussian-dominated North German Confederation in 1867. At this time, only four south German states, including Bavaria, remained outside of this new confederation (Treml 1997).

These four predominantly Catholic German states, however, remained tied to Protestant Prussia through the free-trade Customs Union (*Zollverein*) established in 1819 as well as by a defensive military alliance. Established in 1871, Otto von Bismarck's Second Reich constituted a unique imperial German system, a particular political structure unlike anything seen before or since. This new German Empire was in fact a federal system, where individual German states still held considerable power, although not nearly so much as Prussia. These state powers concerned culture, education, state-level armies, and taxes, for example. The states even retained their own foreign ministries, though symbolic. The legal system created in the North German Confederation in 1867 under Bismarck had been transferred to the Second Reich, lasting until 1918. The end of World War I, the outbreak of the November 1918 Revolution in Munich, and the establishment of the Weimar Republic in 1919 all signaled the end of the Bavarian monarchy and a new beginning for Germany as a whole (Berghahn 1994).

The Weimar system functioned much like Germany's current federal system, but the Nazis moved to strengthen the national government during the 1930s and 1940s. The Nazi dictatorship helped to discredit German centralism and provided subsequent arguments for reverting back to some form of German federalism. Even before the end of World War II, the United States and Great Britain deliberated over what to do with a defeated Nazi Germany. Most familiar to the West was President Franklin Roosevelt's consideration of the Morgenthau Plan, which would have partitioned Germany and have turned it into a pastoral zone with no industrial capacity in order to eliminate any future military capabilities. Roosevelt rejected this radical proposal, however. Almost forgotten, but perhaps more intriguing, though, was British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's Danubian Plan, which would have in effect recognized the longstanding regional variations within the European state system, most

notably in Germany. To prevent another aggressive Germany from ever rising again, this postwar plan called for the severing of Bavaria from the rest of Germany and attaching it to Austria and Hungary into what would constitute one of several new federations established inside the new Europe; however, this daring proposal for a new central European federation also evaporated (Hull 1948, 1234, 1298-99, 1463; Churchill 1950, 802-07). Instead, Bavaria became part of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), which emerged out of the Cold War divide in 1949. Guided by the FRG's Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*), the creation of a new constitutional order also established the basis for a unified Germany in October 1990, consisting of 16 states or *Länder*.

## FINDINGS

### POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

#### *Oklahoma:*

With the exception of its late territorial and early statehood days, which witnessed a significant groundswell of support for socialist and populist politics, Oklahoma has arguably been a traditionally conservative state. For instance, Oklahoma was at one time part of the "Blue Dogs and Bo-weevil" caucuses of the old-time solidly Democratic South. When massive party realignment occurred in the 1980s via the phenomenon of the Reagan Democrats, many Oklahomans also changed their affiliation to the Republican Party. Though Oklahoma is now perhaps more electorally competitive than it has ever been, it remains overall a politically conservative state, regardless of the party affiliation of those in power.

#### *Bavaria:*

Before and since the founding of the FRG, Bavaria has stood as a bastion of political conservatism. Organized in 1946, the conservative Christian Social Union (CSU), the sister party of the center-right Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU), has dominated state politics. Despite the fierce electoral competition among the CSU, the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Liberal Party (FDP), the Bavarian Party (BP), and the League of Expellees and Disenfranchised (BHE) between 1950 and 1962, the CSU generally managed to gain a clear majority in



the Bavarian State Parliament. With the demise of the BP and the BHE by the 1960s and their subsequent inability to gain any seats in the State Parliament, the CSU turned into the dominant party in Bavaria. Within the context of Bavaria's economic transformation from a mostly agrarian to an industrialized state, the SPD, as the CSU's major competitor in local, state and national politics, achieved its best electoral result in 1966 at 35.8 percent, while the CSU received 48.1 percent. Neither the electoral success of the SPD or the short-lived rise of the radical National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) during the minor recession of 1966 undermined the CSU's hegemonic position. Except for the most recent state election in September 2008, the conservative CSU has continued to garner more than fifty percent of the electorate and, as such, not only has advanced to the status of an all-Bavarian party, but has consistently been able to form the government under the leadership of a state premier (Zofka 1994).

## STATE CONSTITUTIONS AND POLICIES

### *Oklahoma:*

As for its genesis and philosophical orientation, the Oklahoma State Constitution first drafted in 1907 follows the so-called positive law tradition. That is, a state's constitution acts as that state's fundamental law. This philosophy, however, also stresses the formation of a state constitution that tends to include many lengthy and often times excessive details and provisions in artificial and unnecessary ways. Containing such trivial matters as "establishing the flash point for kerosene at 115 degrees for the purpose of illumination," the Oklahoma State Constitution represents one of the longest and most exhaustive of all state constitutions in the country.

The primary motivation of this approach is to create a constitution that tends to restrain legislative power by rendering swift lawmaking less likely and more difficult. This tendency in turn tends to benefit local political and economic elites, who often seek to maintain the status quo. In this way, we can discern a link to Elazar's notion of traditional political culture, which he himself identifies as evident in eastern Oklahoma.

Thus, by design, the state constitution can be viewed as a document that further encourages conservative government. Yet what can be said of the substance of its specific provisions? A number of interesting points

appear evident here. First, the Oklahoma State Constitution contains a provision in Article 13-Section 7, which states that “the legislature shall provide for the teaching of the elements of agriculture, horticulture, stock feeding and domestic science in the common schools of the state.” In this way, the constitution helps promote, protect and perpetuate a particular industry within the state.

Another constitutional provision concerns the issue of same-sex marriage. Emboldened by the passage of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and in response to the efforts of advocacy groups who might attempt to overturn DOMA and thus move to induce the federal courts to require states to recognize the validity of other states’ same-sex marriage laws, the Oklahoma State Legislature amended the state constitution with respect to the issue of same-sex marriage in order to reflect a traditional view of marriage. Article 2-Section 35 defines marriage as a union of one man and one woman and denies the legitimacy and recognition in Oklahoma of same-sex marriage licenses from other jurisdictions. This provision, however, goes even a step further by declaring it to be a misdemeanor for anyone knowingly issuing a marriage license to a same-sex couple.

In addition, Article 2-Section 26 establishes a rather conservative view toward gun ownership, wherein the constitution states that citizens may bear arms “in defense of his home, person or property or in aid of the civil power.” In this sense, the Oklahoma State Constitution harkens back to the original idea behind the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, whereby citizens might themselves constitute the state militia.

Another manifestation of the constitution’s adherence to populist conservative values in the face of outside pressure concerns Oklahoma’s application of the death penalty. While it ranks around twenty-eighth in population, the state is consistently ranked third in the nation for the total number of executions performed in the United States each year, just trailing Texas and Virginia in that order. According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Death Penalty Information Center, Oklahoma also executes .0235 inmates per 10,000 of its state citizens. Consequently, Oklahoma claims the highest execution rate of any U.S. state per capita. Besides the numbers, perhaps one of the most striking manifestations of Oklahoma’s prolific use of the death penalty pertains to the passage of a law that made repeat child rapists eligible for capital punishment. In

recent years, this policy reached a climactic moment, when Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating, a Roman Catholic, was actually petitioned by none less than Pope John Paul II for clemency regarding an impending Oklahoma state execution. Keating, though respectful, stated his firm conviction that clemency should not be granted in this case, and thus the state performed the execution.

Perhaps the most evident of the Oklahoma State Legislature's more recent conservative actions concerns the passage of House Bill 1804 in 2007. Some describe this bill as the most restrictive piece of legislation ever crafted at the state level dealing with illegal immigration and illegal immigrants. Among its many provisions include penalties for those hiring and knowingly transporting illegal aliens, as well as denying public services such as education to illegal aliens. Such legislation is not out-of-line with the thinking or design of the Oklahoma State Constitution, however. For instance, Article 22-Section 1 effectively prohibits illegal aliens from owning property in Oklahoma and provides for the legislature to pass laws specifically dealing with aliens and property ownership.

Perhaps, then, Oklahoma is responding to various trends and issues arising from external stimuli. Consider the issue of the state's extensive use of the death penalty. What accounts for this phenomenon? It concerns the nexus between the state's local political culture and traditions coupled in part with its reaction to national trends and globalization. Government-sanctioned executions took place prior to statehood in 1907. But why does the state not only maintain this practice, but continue to make prolific use of it? The reasons concern the type of retributive justice system the state has created, which is, of course, largely a product of the more Protestant-influenced views of crime and punishment. Drawing much from a Baptist-influenced, predominantly Old Testament reading of the proper balance between justice and forgiveness, denominations such as the Southern Baptist tend to support more punitive and harsh legal codes than do, for example, the modern Catholic Church.

This religious worldview is coupled with the prevailing sentiment that "outsiders" and "activists" such as Bianca Jagger, Susan Sarandon, and other non-Oklahoman "interlopers" (whether visiting the state in person or via global media outlets) might pressure the legislature to end the death penalty and thereby overturn the popular will of Oklahomans (Jagger, 1999). For many state residents, an "outsider" or "interloper" could just as easily include anyone coming from other parts of the country

or from abroad. This concern tends to cause people to resist change that they regard as alien to and coming from outside their sphere of control. Celebrities such as Jagger and Sarandon tend to support the legal notion of “norming,” whereby nations abandon their own traditional legal codes in favor of agreed-upon international norms and legal standards in the name of pursuing a form of universal human rights. Many Oklahomans are prone to view this trend as not contributing to human rights so much as it does to a loss of sovereignty and control over their own desires and interests.

The same observation could be applied to the same-sex marriage ban that Oklahoma passed in 2004. This law responded to the widespread belief, whether real or imagined, that “outsiders” might seek to provoke a test case in federal court that would allow a same-sex couple from another state to force recognition of their out-of-state marriage under the full faith and credit clause of the U.S. Constitution. Quite remarkable about this state constitutional amendment is that it was adopted in 2004, eight years after Congress had passed DOMA. For some reason, state officials and their citizens still felt compelled to expand clarification and to codify further their positions on this matter. What accounts for these actions in Oklahoma? Again, it is at least partly attributable to the confluence of the notion of “outside” forces perhaps trying to change established beliefs coupled with a conservative state political culture that does not generally favor such an abrupt change from established practice.

A parallel example is found in the passage of House Bill 1804 concerning illegal immigration. A statewide perception was building that the federal government was unwilling to take seriously the issue of illegal immigration. On the contrary, many began to view the federal government as complicit in the problem. As such, key legislative leaders like Randy Terrill began pushing with overwhelming public support for the bill’s passage. In a recent online blog, Terrill (2008) states that “[t]hose critics [of HB1804] miss the point. The illegal immigration debate is about a whole lot more than just economics. It’s about fundamental principles and values: respect for the rule of law, upholding our state and national sovereignty, basic human dignity and the immorality of exploiting cheap illegal-alien slave labor, and protecting taxpayers from waste, fraud and abuse.” Such political support is not to be couched so glibly as perhaps because of xenophobic reasons, but rather because of the pervading

belief that globalization is undermining U.S. and Oklahoma state sovereignty. The passage of House Bill 1804 demonstrates the efficacy and salience of these fears, again whether real or imagined, that exogenous forces are at work and undermining Oklahomans' ability to control their own destiny.

*Bavaria:*

The U.S. Military Occupation Governor of Germany, General Lucius D. Clay, understood the concrete policy implications of democratization after World War II, despite his initial hard line policies regarding demilitarization, denazification, and deindustrialization. He also emerged as one of the leaders calling for both elections and the creation of a state constitution in what later would become the Free State of Bavaria. Following French resistance to the establishment of a democratic autonomous German government as specified by the 1945 Potsdam Agreement, the United States, increasingly focusing on its occupation zones, established three administrative units, including today's Bavaria. With the purpose to create a state government and a sense of democratic legitimacy, Clay asked the Bavarian government, then under the state premiership of Wilhelm Hoegner, to prepare for a Bavarian constitutional assembly. Dominated by the conservative CSU, the assembly overcame several inter- and intra-party conflicts regarding the status and structure of the Bavarian state government within a future federal system. Eventually, the final product reflected "Bavarian particularism" and, as such, "was more conservative than that of the other U.S. zone Länder" (Hudson 2004, 140-41). Final approval of the State or Land Constitution by both the United States military government and the Bavarian people between October and December 1946 signaled the official adoption of the Bavarian State Constitution (Gunlicks 1998; Hudson 2004; Fait 2006).

The Bavarian Land Constitution, similar to those for the Rhineland-Palatinate and the Saarland, was "influenced strongly by Christian thought in reaction to the value-neutral Weimar Constitution and the total disregard of Christian principles by the Nazi regime" (Gunlicks 1998, 111). Consisting of more than 180 articles, which, like the U.S. Constitution, are divided into sections, the Bavarian State Constitution is considerably longer than any of the fifteen other state constitutions. It begins with a basic description of the local administrative units and government structures and continues with the enumeration of civil

liberties, political rights, and social rights. In addition, the Bavarian Constitution devotes a substantial part of its provisions to the meanings and roles of marriage, family, and children. Guided by traditional values, Article 124 stipulates that marriage and family are “the natural and moral basis of human society and shall enjoy the particular protection of the State.” Other articles, especially 125 and 126, stress similar conservative themes. For example, children are considered the “most valuable possession,” while the “maintenance of the purity of the family” and the parents’ “paramount duty to bring up their children in soundness of body, mind and spirit” represent additional priorities to direct family life.

The underlying provisions regarding the goals and functions of schools and education also adhere to conservative values. According to Article 131, schools are obligated to instill spirit and character into their pupils. In conjunction with the character-building function of education, the “paramount educational goals are reverence for God, respect for religious persuasion and the dignity of man, self-control, the recognition of and readiness to undertake responsibility, helpfulness, receptiveness to everything which is beautiful, good and true...” At the same time, the Bavarian Constitution, among others, also emphasizes respect for democracy, love for country, and the instruction of family-related and moral subject matters. Article 131 states that “children shall be educated in the spirit of democracy [and] to love the Bavarian homeland.” Schools are also mandated to teach infant care, the upbringing of children and housekeeping. Finally, Article 137 stipulates that instruction on the fundamentals of morality must be provided to those pupils who do not participate in religious instruction.

The important role families play in the social fabric remains a cornerstone of the CSU’s party platform and also guides policy discussions. According to the party platform, “marriage and family is under the special protection of the state. Through the family, fundamental moral principles are transferred from generation to generation. The family is the fundamental link among people and the foundation of nation and state” (CSU Party Platform 2008a). Guided by this confession, Bavarian premiers, including Edmund Stoiber, a Roman Catholic, and Günther Beckstein, the first-ever Protestant Bavarian premier, have promoted traditional family values accordingly. In a widely publicized speech in 2006, Stoiber called for a broader debate in Germany regarding the social value of family and children. Moreover, he urged policymakers at

the federal level to implement policies aimed at increasing the desire for children among young Germans (Stoiber 2006).

Following Stoiber's strong convictions regarding families in society, the current Bavarian premier, Beckstein, also promotes family-friendly policies. Speaking before the spring 2008 Bavarian Catholic Diocese Convention, Beckstein stressed the fundamental meaning of family for society and a "Christian policy that shall always value the prominent significance of family and promote it accordingly" (Beckstein 2008). Additionally, recent policies implemented in Bavaria provide financial support for families with children, coupled with the promotion of kindergartens.

Besides pro-family attitudes, Bavarian policymakers, especially Stoiber, have consistently voiced their conservative opinions regarding immigrants, calling for policies that would force foreigners living in Germany to integrate and adopt the country's *Leitkultur* (leading or dominant culture). As with family policies, the CSU party program devotes considerable attention to the integration of foreigners into German society. Stressing that the integration of foreigners requires tolerance and effort, while also acknowledging the freedom of religion and rule of law in Germany, the CSU argues that immigrants have the "duty to integrate" into society (CSU Party Platform 2008b). Recently, the Bavarian Secretary of the Interior, Joachim Herrmann, has reiterated these sentiments before the 2008 Islam Conference in Berlin. Given the prevailing values of freedom, equality, democracy, and the rule of law in Germany, Muslims who want to be part of German society must recognize its *Leitkultur* "without if and but" (Herrmann 2008).

Though conservative and Christian principles support the constitutional setting and guide family and immigration policies in Bavaria, other developments clearly illustrate the progressive side of conservatism. As an integral part of *Mittleuropa* (Europe's Heartland), which economist Delamaide designates as a "superregion" of the European continent because of its highly industrialized nature, Bavaria is home to major international corporations, including the Bavarian Motor Works (BMW), Siemens and Allianz. Moreover, following Stoiber's "lederhosen and laptop" approach that emphasizes a blending of tradition and high-tech modernity, Bavaria has continued to defend traditional values and to spearhead innovative policies in the technology arena, a stance similar to the Irish economic "miracle" observed in the 1990s. Since the 1960s,

the Bavarian state government has consistently developed and dramatically changed its research infrastructure. It supports numerous universities, several Max Planck Institutes, and institutes of the Fraunhofer Society, while also investing approximately fifteen percent of its state budget in technology infrastructure. Bavaria, under the Stoiber administration, has initiated a far-reaching technology program designed to make the state fit for the globalized high-tech future in numerous areas, including biotechnology, aerospace, satellite navigation, sensor technology, and nanotechnology (Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Transport and Technology 2008).

## CUSTOMS AND RELIGION

### *Oklahoma:*

In Oklahoma, the sport of football is king. The bedlam experienced between the University of Oklahoma Sooners (OU) and the Oklahoma State Cowboys (OSU) literally divides the state into camps of orange and black against crimson and cream. Stadium crowds at OU games often exceed 80,000. On crisp fall Friday nights, football fans must attend games early, or else they will not be able to find a good parking spot at the local high school even just to watch the least important game that carries no playoff implications. The sport of football contains special meaning for those who have participated in it and constitutes an important cultural phenomenon to the point that sometimes it even appears to be a leadership prerequisite for holding political office. For instance, J. C. Watts served both in the Oklahoma Corporation Commission and as a U.S. Congressman for the Fourth Congressional District, and Jack Mildren in 1990 served as the state's Lieutenant-Governor. Both politicians had played as OU quarterbacks. Thus, in many respects, perhaps leadership in the form of football and politics appears related in Oklahoma.

However, if the sport of football reigns supreme in Oklahoma, it appears that the co-regent or heir-apparent to the throne could be rodeo. Few pastimes capture the spirit and zest of the southern plains state and its colorful history like the rodeo. The names of famous Oklahomans such as Will Rogers and Jim Shoulders attest to this fact. One of the best manifestations of rodeo's elevated status in the state is the Oklahoma State Prison Rodeo. Held every summer at the state penitentiary in



McAlester, the rodeo is considered to be “among the last of its kind, is that most incongruous kind of American pageantry, a mix of Main Street piousness and patriotism, and unabashed Coliseum-style brutality” (Schwartzman 2005, 2). This statement refers to the essence of the meaning of the prison rodeo, which in some ways skews the reality of the prisoners’ actual situation. Though it involves a carnival-like atmosphere complete with enthusiastic fans in a Western-style setting, the event involves “the worst of the worst” in Oklahoma’s criminal justice system. The prison should be the time and place for punishment and rehabilitation. Instead, the event becomes a time to forget the cold hard realities of prison life. Ironically, despite the fact that the rodeo takes place behind prison walls, the spectacle provides inmates with a brief psychological escape from the confines of their incarceration.

The aforementioned remark also encapsulates the rodeo’s expression of the state’s political culture by integrating the use of a well-respected Western sporting event with the notion of crime and punishment. The sentiment expressed here is that even “the worst of the worst” can and should participate in this ritual of local culture. Participation represents something more than a simple *Schadenfreude*, as the Bavarians would say, and it offers something more than a base desire to witness the carnage of man versus beast. It embodies a much deeper manifestation of meaning than the event itself. One of the best examples of this sense of community occurs with the “grand entry,” when rodeo participants carry the American and Oklahoma State flags with deep honor and respect into the arena before an audience of removed hats and bowed heads of convicts and free citizens alike (Schwartzman 2005, 2). Combine this scene with Christian prayers and supplications to the Almighty for the protection of contestants, and the rodeo provides all with an officially state-sanctioned spectacle of Oklahoma’s socially conservative culture.

The willingness to maintain the prison rodeo is related to the perception of the forces of globalization. Though many animal-rights groups tend to oppose rodeo in general and regard it as degrading and inhumane to animals in general, they also often attack what they perceive to be “state-sanctioned” animal cruelty. In this sense, many opponents of the Oklahoma State Prison Rodeo tend to behave as such because of their opposition to the state itself sanctioning this type of behavior. They argue that it is improper for a state government to lend its stature and

authority to such cruel activity. Meanwhile, rodeo proponents claim that it is more than a simple athletic event. Rather, they intimate that the rodeo celebrates Oklahoma's culture, one which "outsiders" judge unfairly. These "outsiders," they claim, do not understand the nature of the state and its citizens. Consequently, opposition to the rodeo tends to draw the ire and suspicion of many traditional Oklahomans, who fear that non-Oklahomans might impose "norming" on the state, thereby introducing a foreign set of values upon it. At the heart of this confrontation lies a resistance to national and global trends.

Religion also plays a crucial political role in Oklahoma, and it is manifested in a number of ways and is empirically demonstrable. For example, the state's religious composition is significant. According to a study in 2000 conducted by Glen-Mary Research Center of Nashville, Tennessee, the total number of Southern Baptist congregations in Oklahoma reaches 1,578. In other words, nearly 25 percent of all Oklahomans are Southern Baptists in the sense of full-time and confirmed members. This number does not include church visitors, underage children, and others.

Clearly, Southern Baptists by far surpass the membership of any of the other denominations and religious faiths in Oklahoma. Why is this factor significant, and what is its connection to Oklahoma politics? The answer lies in the nature and teachings of the Southern Baptists themselves. By their very essence, Southern Baptists embody a missionary church and people. Their religious outreach originates in their interpretation of the "Great Commission," whereby they believe that Jesus commanded his followers to go out and preach the Gospel to all people in all the nations. Thus, they are not likely to keep their beliefs to themselves. Rather, they often seek to transform the things that they see as either antithetical or anathema to the Gospel.

The Southern Baptists' efforts appear in stark contrast to less missionary-based faiths such as the so-called "hard-shelled" Baptists, who adhere to a more Calvinist streak and tend to believe that all people are the products of divine election and predetermined fates. As such, missionary efforts and political involvement carry less priority. The Southern Baptists, however, support the publication of *The Baptist Messenger of Oklahoma*, which contains articles on issues of faith and inspirational stories. It also encourages members to be aware of and involved in an assortment of conservative causes, ranging from pro-life legislative measures in the state legislature to judges' rulings on home-schooling issues.

Thus, arguably the Southern Baptists appear to be one of the most politically, socially and economically conservative of Protestant denominations. Since this group claims the greatest total number of adherents in the state, combined with a belief in the need to be active on many fronts, it is not difficult to measure religion's impact on Oklahoma politics.

*Bavaria:*

One Munich resident told visiting scholar John Ardagh (1995) not too many years ago that "I feel Bavarian first, European second, and German third." A senior Bavarian official explained to him as well that "Yes, we have had to give up our formal sovereignty since Bismarck's day, but we are still in many ways masters of our own destiny" (33). Part of that mastery of destiny is reflected by Bavarians continuing to practice their customs. The traditional costumes collectively known as *Tracht* and centuries-old folk music and dialect songs remain staples of many special occasions. *Dirndls* and *Lederhosen*, the traditional *Tracht* for females and males respectively, provide the essential clothing during the *Maibaum* or Maypole celebration—a celebration that goes back to the Middle Ages. The Landshuter Wedding, a detailed re-enactment of the wedding of George the Wealthy in 1475, and the Oberammergau Passion Play, a religious play that dates back to 1633, also embrace Bavarian traditional customs that have survived devastating plagues and wars and continue to thrive in the midst of globalization (Roth 1998). With the purpose to "transform the nationalistic upsurge in the wake of French revolutionary wars into a tool to bolster a faltering monarchy," the Munich *Oktoberfest*, initiated by Maximilian I in honor of Crown Prince Ludwig's marriage to Princess Therese of Saxony-Hildburghausen in 1810, and the official endorsement of native *Tracht* by Maximilian II more than thirty years later, represent cultural artifacts of great significance (Bendix 1998, 133).

There is also a strong cultural connection to foods among Europeans (Toke 2004). This practice certainly holds true for Bavaria, which since the 1990s has pursued policies aimed at cataloguing and registering many of its traditional foods with the European Commission. With the support of the Bavarian Ministry of Agriculture and other experts, Michale Besch, a professor at the Technical University of Munich, has developed an extensive database of more than two hundred Bavarian food specialties

in order to retrieve and disseminate information easily about their origin, meaning, preparation and culinary tradition. Moreover, based on Directive 510/2006/EU, formerly known as Directive 2081/92/EEC, numerous Bavarian specialties, including a variety of beers, cheeses, sausages, and pastries, are now protected by law (Sutor and Jack 2007).

Religion remains an important factor in the Free State as well. As one observer of Bavaria noted, the “region’s religion, like its beer, is simply a way of life. In Traunstein [the native home of Pope Benedict XVI], in fact, as in much of Bavaria, the local church is steps away from the town biergarten, and many parishioners visit both in succession on Sundays” (Perry 2005, 35). A closer examination of the distribution of church membership at the federal in comparison to state levels clearly substantiates religion’s important function in Bavaria. By the end of 2005, 25.4 million Germans belonged to the Evangelical Church (i.e., Lutheran), while 25.9 million were members of the Roman Catholic Church (Evangelische Kirche Deutschland 2007). This almost equal distribution at the national level vanishes at the state level, however. The Evangelical Church generally dominates the eastern part of Germany, but the western part, especially the states of Saarland and Bavaria, are home to most of Germany’s Catholics. According to statistics provided by the Evangelical Church of Germany and the Catholic German Bishop Conference, 21.3 percent and 57.2 percent of the Bavarian population are members of the Evangelical and Catholic Churches respectively.

Given the Catholic domination of Bavaria, the conservative CSU as the political powerhouse takes its cue from the pulpit. Numerous associations, directly or indirectly associated with the Catholic Church, also try to influence Bavaria’s current sociopolitical debate. Operating throughout Germany with branch headquarters in the Bavarian city of Nuremberg and other centers across Germany, the Association of Catholics in Business and Administration (ACBA) seeks to shape major international and domestic issues on the policy agenda. Recently, the Bavarian ACBA, in concert with the Central Committee of the German Catholics, has called upon the Secretary of the Interior, Wolfgang Schäuble, to grant Christian refugees from Iraq asylum in Germany (Verband der Katholiken in Wirtschaft und Verwaltung 2008a). Domestic issues remain equally important to the Bavarian ACBA. Criticizing Ula Schmidth, the Secretary of Health, for her attack on “Catholic Welfare”

(*Caritas*), the ACBA urged policymakers and church-related organizations to promote adequate care for the elderly (Verband der Katholiken in Wirtschaft und Verwaltung 2008b).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Conservative political cultures might in fact preserve uniqueness and diversity in the global age, thus conserving or holding onto something, even behaving as almost the opposite of what is generally assumed about them today. It is equally true that some of the most ardent multiculturalists or diversity proponents favoring globalization at times are unwittingly endorsing homogenization and integration to the detriment of tradition and variety.

The traditional (classical) liberal or today's conservative warm embrace of unrestricted free trade and universal value systems might also actually contribute to the undermining of traditional systems of government and culture. Modern-day conservatives who hold power or influence also might demand within certain parameters the integration of minorities or outsiders into the leading or dominant society, while multiculturalists or diversity advocates might seek to stem the tide of this perceived leveling of identities within such political systems.

Intentionally or not, both conservatives and non-conservatives, however defined, seem to serve as countervailing forces, as a check on each other. Like examining two sides of the same coin or the shifting sands on a beach, it is perhaps more prudent to claim that an even higher level in the blurring of distinctions, motivations, and actions on this fluid political spectrum and nexus of human behavior is taking place. Of course, the grand paradox remains that what used to be mostly localized or sectional antagonisms within emerging nation-states among dominant and subordinate groups is now occurring simultaneously to an even greater degree at regional and transnational or global levels as well.

On this matter of tradition and change in the age of globalization, the findings offer new tantalizing perspectives specifically for Oklahoma, whose history is much younger than Bavaria's. In particular, Bavaria as such has proved quite capable of adopting innovations and new technologies on its own terms without necessarily diluting its own political identity and traditions in the globalization era. Since the turn of the last

century, Oklahoma has transitioned itself over the years to a more populist conservative identity. Oklahoma can perhaps draw valuable lessons from Bavaria's own unique blending of tradition and change and reconcile them in the form of "progressive conservatism."

Certainly not every law, custom or tradition pursued in Oklahoma or Bavaria today is directly attributable to a reaction to outside forces. Yet continuity and change might co-exist. For instance, consider the growth of gaming in Oklahoma. Only a few short years ago, the idea of a lottery and expanded gambling in such a conservative state would have been incomprehensible. Today, however, the state is becoming friendlier to such interests. This tendency proves that as such Oklahoma is not immune to external forces and can adapt to new trends and ideas. Of course, it is also important to recognize the federal government's impact in this regard with the passage of relevant legislation that helped pave the way for some changes, such as the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, which in most cases has required the states to negotiate compacts with tribes for gaming purposes. The change in Indian Country has thus transformed the general public's view toward gaming in general.

Burning questions about the place of nation-states and even sub-national or regional political entities in an increasingly interconnected world actually represent nothing new, as evidenced by List and Marx more than a century and a half ago. The last great shift in world history began in 1492, when the West Europeans served as the unwitting catalyst that helped bind together long separated continents and civilizations. This truly global process has only accelerated and deepened with the advent of the Second Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions after the eighteenth century, touching both Bavaria and Oklahoma in myriad ways. This study's comparison of political culture between both states highlights the need for scholars from an interdisciplinary perspective to examine more closely the durability and persistence of particular identities despite powerful global forces.

It is quite "American" to resist outside changes and to let the states express their own individuality. For Bavarians, the longstanding ritual has been to preserve all things "Bavarian" and more recently to project this unique identity to the community of nations. In view of the recent ascent of Euroskepticism and other general trends challenging transnational or global identities, both cases reveal these fundamental truths: political culture does matter, and globalization is powerful, but

both have their limits. The pressing issue of political culture in the era of globalization demands further investigation.

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