Gail Wilson

Globalisation and older people : effects of markets and migration

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Gail Wilson
Department of Social Policy
London School of Economics
Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE
UK

Address for correspondence

Gail Wilson
Department of Social Policy
London School of Economics
Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE
UK

Tel. 0044 0207 955 7347
Fax 0044 0207 955 7415
email g.wilson@lse.ac.uk

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Abstract

This paper is a preliminary discussion of the material aspects of globalisation in terms of the effects on older men and women of movements of trade, capital and people round the world. While some elders have benefited, most notably where pensions and health care are well developed, the majority of older men and women are among the poor who have lost out the world over. Free trade, economic restructuring, the globalisation of finance and the upsurge in migration have all tended to affect elders badly in most parts of the world. These developments have been overseen or even dictated by intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) such as the International Monetary Foundation (IMF), the World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO) while other IGOs with less power have been limited to anti ageist exhortation. Globalisation transfers resources from the poor to the rich within countries and between them. It therefore increases social problems but at the same time diminishes the capacity of countries to make social policy. However the effects of globalisation, particularly financial globalisation, on national capacity for making social policy can be exaggerated. It is possible for political will to combat international economic orthodoxy, but such cases are the exceptions rather than the rule.

Key words: Economic restructuring, Elders, Globalisation, IGOs, Migration

To quote a recent report from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: ‘Two big global economic forces are competing for the world’s attention. On the one hand, the promise of a “new economy” underpinned by information and communication technologies is exciting policy makers, including those of the world’s poorest countries. On the other hand, growing instability and uncertainty linked to globalisation has left them deeply worried about the impact of financial shocks on growth prospects’. *UNCTAD, (2000: I).* The question to be asked is what do these global trends mean for older men and women in different parts of the world. So far despite the rapidly growing literature on globalisation as a set of ideas or concepts, older people hardly figure. This paper aims to make a beginning in linking the material aspects of globalisation, described by Held et al. (1999: 3) as ‘flows of trade, capital and people across the globe’, to the risks of later life.

Globalisation

A key characteristic of globalisation is that systems that we have been used to thinking of as separate, are meshed more and more tightly together, so that change in one is liable to affect others faster and more seriously. For the purposes of this discussion therefore, globalisation can be defined as a strengthening of the links between different social, economic and political systems. While countries have always been linked in some ways, it was much more possible in the past to think of countries and their systems of government as independent and autonomous over a wide range of policy functions. On a smaller scale, families and in Western cultures, even individuals, could be seen as to a large degree autonomous. Many of our thought processes and beliefs still assume that we function in more or less self-contained areas of daily life, even though global politics are increasingly affecting our autonomy and that of our countries. We know that ‘people today in every country are conscious of the multifarious ways in which their lives are affected by what goes on beyond the frontiers of their own state. We live in an increasingly interactive world’ (Halliday 2000: 10), but it is still difficult to integrate this knowledge into our systems of thought and understanding. In particular we need to ask how these changes are affecting older men and women who are often invisible in policy processes.

Support in later life

Only a tiny minority of elders, mostly men, can accumulate enough savings or other resources over the life course to support themselves by their own efforts and even then they are dependent on the labour of younger generations to maintain their own lack of direct productivity. Looked at in global terms, older men and women rely on collective support that can be divided into three overlapping systems (see Wilson 2001 for a more detailed discussion). The first is the collective redistribution of work. In most societies work is related to the life course and older men and women do the work expected of older people. This applies to paid and unpaid work and to work in the family or home and work outside. It continues to be the main means of support in later life wherever pensions are low, restricted to civil servants and the military, or non-existent, as in most of the world (Tracy, 1991; UN, 1991)). Some elders, men particularly, are able to continue in paid jobs, especially if they can shift to lighter work, but most are likely to be doing unpaid work such as farming, child care or housework. The second collective that helps elders survive is the family. Even in the West it usually means more than the two-generation nuclear family that dominates policy and academic discussion. In developing countries families are larger and more complex. The family operates as a site for labour, a source of shelter and material and emotional support and, in the last resort, as a provider of care (usually by women). Those who have no family must rely on the third system composed of formal collectives – charities and the collectivised provision in different types of welfare state with insurance, pensions and health care making up the main costs.

Charities, faith communities and other NGOs are the main collectivities that fill some of the gaps in welfare state provision. They provide material support, care and often fellowship and emotional support for their older members or for groups of elderly residents or service users. Private care is available for the very rich, especially in nursing homes or by employing home caregivers. However most developments in the private care sector depend on government money to keep them in profit, and on well developed systems of entitlement and rationing. In developing countries where organised state welfare is limited, NGOs may be the only actors in the field. Tout (1989) explains that in parts of Latin America each city or large town prides itself in having an orphanage and an old people's home. Even if these institutions do not provide good quality care, they are likely to be in high demand because of the lack of alternatives. Convents and ashrams may function as old people's homes for some. (See for example Cohen, 1998 on Varanasi ashrams as a haven for older widows in India). International NGOs such Helpage International operate on a world wide scale but their funds and input are necessarily limited.

Trade and Economic Development

As far as the economic aspects of globalisation are concerned, the new economy is almost wholly marginal to older people. They are not expected to take part in it and its benefits do not appear to touch them. Any view of present economic impacts on elders therefore needs to a take longer perspective and to consider the ideological as well as the material aspects of economic change. The overriding post World War II aim of rich countries was to prevent a repeat of the economic collapse of the 1930s. As early as 1944 the Bretton Woods agreement set up the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to stabilise the post-war economic situation. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (to become the WTO in 1995) followed in 1947. These bodies were dominated by the US from the start (Bergesen and Lunde, 1999) and took a neoliberal approach to economic development which came to be known as the Washington Consensus (Gore, 2000). The freeing of world trade in ways that favour the rich was, and is, a continuing goal. The resulting increase in trade and reduction in the impediments to free markets, has brought great prosperity to large parts of the world and its peoples. Life expectancy has increased and continues to increase in nearly all countries outside the former Soviet Union. Productivity and income per capita have risen except in the poorest countries, which are now heavily concentrated in Africa. Welfare remains a contentious issue since government expenditure is deemed to be unproductive or worse, but most medium and high income countries have developed forms of assistance to the poor. In old age such assistance may be confined to those without families, but even limited assistance may be a better alternative than death from malnutrition or exposure. Pensions that are high enough to support independent living are not the norm except in rich countries. However where prosperity allows for decent pensions, the transformation of later life is one the most amazing phenomena of the 20^{th} century. A whole new lifestage has been opened up, based on the ability to withdraw from paid work without risking death, or becoming a burden on hard pressed family members. Pension systems are being extended in terms of coverage in Latin America and in the Pacific rim countries. The problems of private schemes in Latin America mean that universal benefits are not yet assured even in the future and large numbers of the poorer sections of the population are not making contributions (Schulz, 1993; Gillion, 1993). However in the Pacific rim countries future elders are likely to be much better off, even though today they still have limited entitlement to the newly established funded pensions schemes which have yet to build up (Kwon, 1999). Even without pensions, elders may benefit from the rising prosperity of their families, especially if they share a home with them, as most do world wide.

The problem with this cheerful scenario of rising living standards in later life is that the globalisation of trade and development have had the broad effect of transferring resources from poor to rich (nations and individuals within them) and transferring risk from rich to poor (Ghai, 1997). The process has marginalised the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that have 20% of the world's population but generate only 0.03% of the trade flows (Kwa, 1998). Free trade and the end of import and export controls can also have the effect of closing down fragile local industries and the employment that goes with them. In some cases multinationals in search of cheap labour have increased opportunities. The new economy industries <u>may</u> greatly improve employment prospects, but sports goods manufacturers such as Nike have achieved notoriety by employing children or sweated labour, and it is not clear that this type of employment generates enough surplus to improve the welfare of older family members.

The activities of the WTO appear mainly to favour the better off nations. For example, competition between America-based large scale producers of bananas and the individual growers in West Indian and African co-operatives is set to be resolved in favour of the American firms and their shareholders, unless some form of protest is successful. The logic of the market is that shareholder value is deemed more important than the livelihoods of whole countries – as in West Indies and Cameroun.

Their economies will be devastated because small-scale producers can only survive if they are assisted by tariff advantages that have been outlawed by WTO rules. The economic collapse following this and other trade deals does not affect elders directly but it affects their support systems in terms of family, part time work and the ability of their countries to finance health care. The same is true of the WTO's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreements which protect patents for 20 years and can prevent LDCs from buying or developing their own seeds or drugs. At present only ten percent of global pharmaceutical research funds target diseases that affect the poorest 90 percent of the world's population and, according to its Director, the WTO intends to remedy this via TRIPS (Moore, 2001). Success may indeed improve health in developing countries and LDCs, but the outcome is far from assured. The final major problem for older people associated with the WTO is the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), 'the first ever set of multilateral, legally-enforceable rules covering international trade in services' (WTO, 2001). This will allow international competition in employment and service areas that affect women and older people, such as health and social care services, as well as a much wider range of undertakings such as and tourism, banking, cleaning and maintenance, and telecommunications.

One other damaging result of the 'market freedom' engineered by the IGO's that attempt to regulate world trade and financial markets, is that massive outflows of resources from the poorest countries are allowed or even encouraged. Some are organised by local elites in 'predator states' (Castells, 2000). Some are simply tax evasion by multi nationals who have established themselves where labour is cheap under free trade rules (Oxfam, 2000) and others are debt repayments overseen by the world financial regulators (see below). IGOs that benefit poor countries (those with world wide membership) such as the World Health Organisation, PAHO (Pan American Health Organisation), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) recognise the existence of older men and women and advocate anti ageist policies. Their input is to be welcomed but is more a matter of exhortation than material benefit.

SAPs and Economic Restructuring

The most harmful aspect of globalisation as far as older men and women are concerned, has been the growing ideological power of the belief in 'free markets' accompanied by economic restructuring or Structural Adjustment Programmes. Until the crises of the late 1990s in Asia and Russia it was possible to see economic restructuring as an inevitable and even beneficial result of the globalisation of economic activity. According to this set of beliefs, structural adjustment was simply a side effect of growing prosperity, brought about by the rapid expansion in world trade, the free movement of capital and goods, and the unification of world financial markets. It was believed that the abolition of subsidies and trade barriers was essential so that goods, especially food, could be distributed more efficiently. Greater efficiency was believed to lead to less waste and so to a better life for all.

SAPs packages have been imposed by IGOs but were/are usually supported local elites to overcome popular opposition. The packages typically included: reduced public expenditure, especially on the alleviation of poverty and social security (including pensions); a shift from progressive to regressive taxation, i.e. taxing the poor relatively more heavily than the rich; abolition or cuts in subsidies on goods that benefit the poor (especially food); and charges for public services, including health and sometimes even basic education (as in Tanzania from 1993-2002). Interest rates were typically raised and the import and export controls that supported local industry were dismantled. All this was accompanied by policies to cut and casualise employment over large parts of the formal economy and, if need be, to reduce the power of organised labour (Ghai, 1992). In these circumstances many desired social policies became impossible. Not only was revenue diverted from financing social policies such as basic education, to repaying international creditors, but any attempt to provide free or subsidised services (such as education or healthcare) could be vetoed by the IMF. Even when there was no direct veto the threat of a downgraded the credit rating for a country deemed to be wasting money on public expenditure was a major deterrent. The development of low level pension assistance (as in India) became unthinkable.

Strangely there was an almost messianic belief that economic benefits would follow from this approach even in the face of evidence. Consider Gylfason (1994: iii) who strongly supported the positive view but said: ‘At first the restructuring of the economy is accompanied by a collapse of output, increased unemployment and high inflation'. The World Bank agreed: ‘Transition produces winners – the young, the dynamic, the mobile, the connected – but it also imposes costs on visible and vulnerable groups, and in many countries it has been accompanied by a surge in measured poverty.’ World Bank, 1996: 5). IGO policy aimed to convert the ‘winners’ into local market coalitions, to get elite ownership of the policies, and see how ‘the “losers” might be compensated, outmanoeuvred, or side-stepped to prevent them from obstructing the implantation of the programme’ (Mkandawire and Soludo, 1999: 27). A rare ‘success’ is Uganda where GNP went up steadily after the Economic Recovery Programme of 1987. Even there debts were out of control but recycling began in 1992 and has continued under the auspices of the IMF heavily indebted poor countries programme (HIPC). The government was able to keep or implement subsidies for school fees and reduce taxes on necessities (Baffoe, 2000). Debt is still a problem and stability is not assured, but Uganda has done relatively well. In the poorest countries many elders (who are frequently invisible anyway) will die long before the economy picks up. In any case, the new prosperity, if and when it occurs, is very likely to be concentrated on those who are part of the formal labour market. It therefore excludes most older men and a virtually all older women, as well as all those families without an earner in the formal labour market. The rich, either countries or members of international elites, become richer, but most older men and women will be poorer, either relatively or absolutely.

An early crack in the orthodox approach was the concept of ‘safety netting’, led by the World Bank rather than the IMF (Barr et al. 1994; Umali-Deininger and Maguire, 1995). It indicates that some understanding of the limitations of free market economics are taking hold at international level (but see Standing, 1996 for a depressing analysis of the situation in post communist countries). The World Bank has also recognised the importance of building up social capital (Moser, 1998) or community capacity to bring about improvements. New moves to recognise the contributions of elders to social capital are increasingly becoming part of development discourse (Randel et al. , 1999; Ritchie, 2000, see also Leonard, 1999). However others have pointed out that the dislocation in family and community life, and the associated strengthening of the grey or informal economy can have perverse effects on social capital formation. Youth, for example, may see more value in criminal behaviour than in attempting to get a formal education (Rubio,1997) and the growing insecurity and lawlessness that result destabilise all generations, though elders may suffer more if they are frail.

A further problem is that in countries that have the capacity to deliver safety netting for the old, as in South East Asia and South Korea, it does not appear to have been part of the rescue packages imposed in the 90s economic crisis. In global terms there are serious doubts on whether safety netting can be delivered unless governments can function. This is as true of the benefits of globalisation as of the disadvantages. 'Market development without a functioning state is not an option… in many countries the state is still not securing the economic and social fundamentals: a foundation of lawfulness, a benign (and stable) policy environment, basic social services, and some protection of the vulnerable' World Bank, (1997: 39). As Barr (1994) points out, effective safety netting depends on the poor being manageably few, the cost being affordable, and the state having the administrative capacity to deliver social benefits. Any existing shortfall on these essentials is made much worse by structural adjustment, so the chances of disadvantaged elders getting what they need are very low in most of the countries involved.

Even in advanced countries the impact of global economic restructuring is likely to intensify. Although older men and women are better off than in the past in rich countries, many if not most still have below average incomes and are disproportionately represented among the poor. Most OECD countries are attempting to limit pension entitlements and to reduce the cost of caring for frail elders. This is although the OECD (1998; 2000) itself is remarkable for stating publicly that rising pension and care costs are affordable and that elders should be encouraged to stay in the labour market. However, the effect of economic restructuring could still be serious in large parts of Europe. In the worst case scenario, world trade competition leads to increasing concentration of businesses across Europe and large scale closures of small and medium sized firms in perpheral areas. Multi nationals relocate their businesses away from disadvantaged areas as subsidies run out, or simply to find cheaper labour and more relaxed tax and pollution regimes . Even profitable plants may be closed. High profile examples are the Renault closure at Vilvoorde in Belgium, BMW and the restructuring of Ford in UK. In all these the number of jobs lost directly and indirectly is calculated at over 5,000. The knock on effects for families, communities and local social structures are vast. The process of impoverishment may be slowed by national and supranational policies designed to protect peripheral regions from the worst effects of industrial consolidation and economic unification, but the general trend appears inevitable.

Global Finance

The major change brought about by financial globalisation is that all countries are apparently vulnerable to economic meltdown if their policies do not conform to global economic orthodoxy. The global communications revolution means that money can now move round the earth in constant flows, and at all hours of the day and night. It is outside the control of governments, financial regulators and individuals. This freedom of money to seek out the highest returns, or merely to follow the herd in panic runs on currencies, is combined with free market orthodoxy to influence social policies. Any (small) country is now at risk of capital flight or a failure to invest at all. If its policies are unorthodox (not free market) it will not be supported in times of trouble. Its world credit rating will fall (see http://www.standardandpoors.com/; http://www.moodys.com/) and investors will be scared off.

Indebtedness is the aspect of global finance that has achieved a higher profile thanks to the Jubilee 2000 campaign to write off the debts of poor countries. Debt repayments are a major global transfer from poor to rich. Debts left over from the massive unsecured lending by banks that followed the oil shock in the 1970s (surplus petro dollars had to go somewhere) cannot possibly be repaid. The countries that have been the main victims are those that rely on the export of raw materials for their foreign currency. Rich countries, hit by the high price of oil, made big efforts to alter the terms of trade back in their favour. They forced down the prices of non-petroleum raw materials and so the incomes of producer countries. Debt repayments and interest (debt servicing) rose to an average of 45% of total export earnings in sub-Saharan

Africa (excluding Nigeria) and 22% in Latin America in the 1990s (Ghai, 1992). In Chad for example debt repayments, before enforced restructuring in 1998, were meant to be 50% of the national budget (Le Monde, 3.9.98). Tanzania was paying more per head on debt servicing than its entire social expenditure on education and health (pensions of course were virtually non-existent) (Guardian, 19.2.99). Smaller countries are still subject to IMF demands for 'correct' economic policies even though there has been progress towards writing off debt. Medium sized countries, where very high levels of foreign investment were at risk were able to enforce some relief. The threatened bankruptcy and debt restructuring of Mexico in 1989 was an early indication of the problems caused by the irresponsibility of global finance and global financial players. The IMF failure to resolve the 1997 Russian and Asian crises have allowed much more criticism to surface (Pallast, 2000). As the former chief economist of the World Bank said:

'They'll say the IMF is arrogant. They'll say the IMF doesn't really listen to the developing countries it is supposed to help. They'll say the IMF is secretive and insulated from democratic accountability. They'll say the IMF's economic "remedies" often make things worse - turning slowdowns into recessions and recessions into depressions. And they'll have a point' (Stiglitz, 2000).

Other problems have also arisen for the IMF since 1997. There seems little doubt that Russian loans aimed at providing foreign credit to stabilise the economy were enriching Soviet officials and international bankers rather than to staving off economic collapse (Vulliamy,1999; Brummer and Elliott, 1999; Capella, 2000). This scandal is likely to be the tip of an iceberg, with elites in many countries using IMF credits for their own purposes. (The loans themselves rarely reach the countries named but are simply transfers of credit between banks in New York). Even within developed countries there are transfers from poor to rich as money collected from ordinary taxpayers is passed to the UN regulatory organisations in the form of national subscriptions. It is then used to enable defaulting banks in developing countries to pay back international loans. The money thus returns to the shareholders of big banks who are protected from the consequences of unwise lending. As Davies says 'this transfer from the general taxpayer to the bank shareholders almost certainly implies gains by the rich at the expense of the poor' (Davies, 1998). A similar agenda can be detected in the World Bank's recipe for pensions *Averting the Old Age Crisis* (World Bank 1994) which calls on all countries to set up privately funded pensions. The money which rapidly builds up in pension funds will have nowhere to go in many poorer countries where stock markets are not well developed, and will have to be invested on the stock exchanges of America and other rich nations (World Bank 1994: 222-3). In other words compulsory pension contributions (taxes by another name) are transferred from poor countries to the richer members of developed nations. Since older people are among the poor and rely disproportionately on support from poorer families, they are very unlikely to benefit from the globalisation of finance.

Migration

Globalisation has been accompanied by changes in the nature and changes in the numbers of people migrating (Wilson, 2000). First, the volume of migration has increased as the rapidly expanding labour markets of oil rich states and NICs sucked in economic migrants. Second there has been a shift in the world demand for women's work at the expense of men's work (Campani 1995) and this has resulted in a rapid rise women's migration – both as individuals and as members of families. Then, international disasters and the growth of separatist movements have increased the numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. All these changes have implications for support in later life as families are fragmented and entire communities lose their mid-life cohorts. The sudden rise in women's migration has implications for family life in countries of destination and in countries of origin. Gender relations shift together with intergenerational relations.

As Castles and Miller (1998) point out, economic migrants have usually been seen as temporary by the countries that receive them, but they have always stayed on. Now that rising numbers of economic migrants have been joined by very large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers, countries and individual regions are faced with questions of what to do about migrants. Some may be perceived as so-called 'problem free minorities' (e.g. Asian migrants in the US, see Markides and Miranda, 1998), while others will be automatically stereotyped as problems. Economic downturn greatly increases any difficulties being experienced by migrant groups and racism in employment, housing, health and education becomes more marked. Elders may be called on to look after grandchildren while the middle generation takes paid work, or they may find that overstressed families can no longer support them adequately. Their pensions are likely to be low or non existent depending on their work history and the social provisions in the country of migration. Casualisation of the labour force associated with structural adjustment, combined with the disappearance of jobs for untrained workers can result in the growth of workless households among migrant groups. Mainstream health and social services are proving very slow to adapt to the needs of older migrant men and women who may not speak the language of dominance and who may distrust government bureaucracies. In most countries it appears that the problems of 'foreigners' are going to be left to small NGOs. In the NICs where resources will not be so tight, governments or their agents have to decide how far they wish to support the quality of life and the citizenship rights of older migrants.

In contrast to economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are recognised as a social problem in virtually all countries. Even highly developed countries can experience difficulty accommodating large numbers of refugees. In developing countries the effect can be catastrophic and international aid is rarely adequate. Migration is also two edged. While remittances may support whole communities, as for example in parts of Southern Africa, at the same time the outflow of migrants unbalances the social structure. Elders may be bringing up the children of working migrants or Aids victims. These children may have been sent back to poverty stricken communities where each extra mouth to feed is a potential burden. Surviving elders may be farming poor land that is beyond their strength, or they may have to migrate unsupported to the growing mega cities to scrape a living in slums and shanty towns.

However, one benefit of globalisation is that it allows migrant groups to maintain their own culture and opens new cultural roles for older migrants if they or their children have been able to benefit from migration as very many do (Wilson et al, 1999). Globalisation of communications allows diaspora to maintain contact through phone, satellite TV, and cheap travel as never before and elders can live entirely within their own cultures if they wish. Problems with citizenship rights remain very widespread however. In countries such as Malaysia where Malays are constitutionally privileged over citizens of Chinese or Indian origin, or in Germany or Switzerland where migrants are unable to vote, integration is not an option. Even where there are no constitutional barriers to citizenship for migrants, they may still experience wide ranging discrimination.

Minorities are almost everywhere assumed to provide greater to support for their elders than the indigenous population, but this assumption is very often incorrect. Family disruption following migration, smaller family networks and above all, the disadvantaged position of migrants in most social hierarchies, means that even the most well meaning family can find it hard to look after its older members if they no longer make a direct or indirect economic contribution. In addition, gender relations are changing rapidly: international television is beamed across the world and shows different roles for women; the demand for women's labour grows and increasing numbers women migrate and free themselves of some cultural constraints. Leaders of migrant groups are typically conservative and may see women as cultural markers (Yuval Davies, 1997). They may resist services to support elders and oppose Western liberatory discourses in the interests of cultural difference. This is rarely helpful to the quality of later life, though often supported by elders themselves.

Conclusions

It is not to be expected that the complex and many facetted set of phenomena that make up globalisation would have a simple or even a consistently negative effect on older people. There have been benefits especially for those who can get good pensions and health care. However a ‘free’ market that is rigged in favour of the developed world is one very big disadvantage facing elders in countries of Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America. This was pointed out by Neysmith and Edwardh as long ago as 1984 but if they were writing today when globalisation and the power of the WTO has progressed so greatly, they would surely note that free trade has brought disadvantages to elders over a much wider area.

Economic restructuring transfers from the poor to the rich within countries as well as between them. Since older people, women, migrants, children and people with disabilities are all over represented among the poor, globalisation has the effect of increasing insecurity, and with it the range and intensity of problems that can afflict older men and women. At the same time the economic orthodoxy of the 'free market' reduces the capacity of countries to cope with social problems. 'The net result of these changes in power relations, ideological discourse and institutional effectiveness has been to tilt the balance greatly against social programmes' (Ghai, 1997: 8). In the national sphere public spending is restricted, and at a personal level, families are increasingly placed under strain.

Social policies are no longer made by nations alone. Global regulatory organisations (IMF, World Bank and WTO) are making social policies either directly, as in the conditions laid down for structural adjustment by the IMF, or indirectly by stressing the necessity for neo liberal financial orthodoxy (Mishra, 1999; Deacon, 1997). It would be a mistake however to think that structural adjustment was only a problem for developing countries. Older men and women are being left behind in declining rural areas and in inner cities, and virtually all OECD states have policies to cut the cost of pensions and the care of older people. Governments increasingly 'proclaim the virtues of a deregulated market, self-help, family responsibility and voluntary effort. But in an increasingly fragmented society it is extremely hazardous to rely on those institutions for individual well-being' (Parker, 1998: 176).

Globalisation does not inevitably mean the triumph of inequality and individualisation over collective action, and the effects of globalisation, particularly financial globalisation, on national capacity for making social policy can be exaggerated (see Wiess, 1997 among others). It is possible for political will to combat international economic orthodoxy, but such cases are the exceptions rather than the rule. Sri Lanka and Kerala are most often cited (Casinader, 2000; Parayil, 2000) When harmful effects are identified as needing remedies rather than as inevitable, progress is possible. So Dahrendorf writing on developments in OECD countries says 'the dual effect [of economic globalisation] is the destruction of important features of community life and a growing sense of personal insecurity for many' (Darhendorf, 1996: 29). His view is echoed by Parker (1998), 'The uncertainty of the market, the fragility of the family and the fading of local communities – vital sources of economic security and social welfare – mean greater opportunities for government if the entitlements and opportunities of citizenship are to be assured for older people (Parker, 1998: 176). In advanced democracies pensioners have proved able to unite in defence of pensions, if over nothing else. European welfare states have been able to resist destruction. In the NICs demand for pensions is rising and family care is increasingly seen as desirable rather than the only option. These countries have a tradition of government intervention that differs from the European but is in opposition to orthodox neo liberalism. The developing countries and LDCs still have relatively small older populations but they are slowly being incorporated into development by IGOs (WHO, PAHO, UNFPA) and INGOs (HelpAge International) and may conceivably be able to maintain respect and limited citizenship for elders despite their relative invisibility.

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