

# **The new generations confronting downward social mobility : France in a comparative perspective**

*Welfare regimes, social fluctuations  
and the generational gaps*

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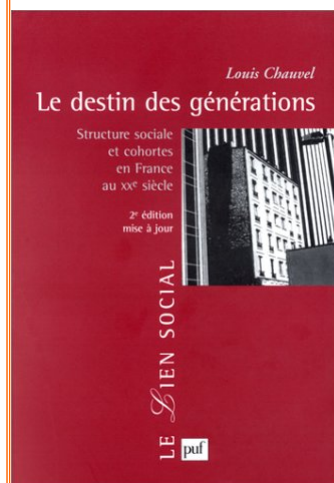
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## **Intentions**

- **Changing life chances by birth cohort  
and the “Destiny of Generations”**
- 1. The French idealtypical regime of cohort inequalities and  
downward mobile new generation**
- 2. Consequences of the destabilization of the middle classes in  
a comparative perspective**
- 3. (Conclusion) Impact on intergenerational solidarity at the  
family and the macrosocial level**

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12 oct 2006...

Louis Chauvel

*The drift  
of middle classes*

Le Seuil

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## 1- Downward mobile new generation in France

- Definitions of generations
- The Long term generational progress hypothesis
- Collective socialization and social history
- Lexis diagram and cohort lines
- Multidimensional generational fracture in France
- International hypothesis on generational brakes

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## Cultural or objective generations?...

- **Karl Mannheim and a symbolic-culturalist theory of generations**

« The contents <of consciousness> are important (sociologically speaking), not only because of their signification, but also because they melt separate individuals into one group, they have an effect of socialization». (...*dass sie die Einzelnen zur Gruppe verbinden, „sozialisierend“ wirken*) (K. Mannheim, *Das Problem der Generationen*, 1929)

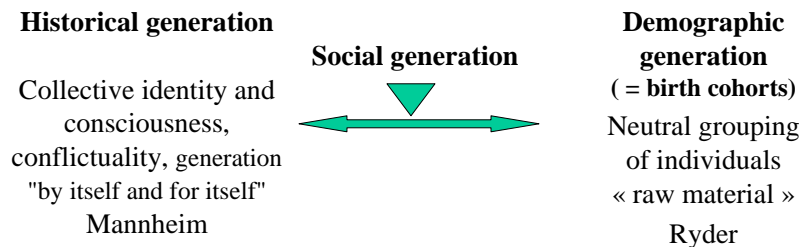
- Mannheim acknowledges also the existence of a *Generationenlage* = objective generational situations

- **QUESTION: do the conditions of entry of a cohort in adulthood have an effect on future life chances? Do they have effects of socialization?**

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## Definitions of « generation »

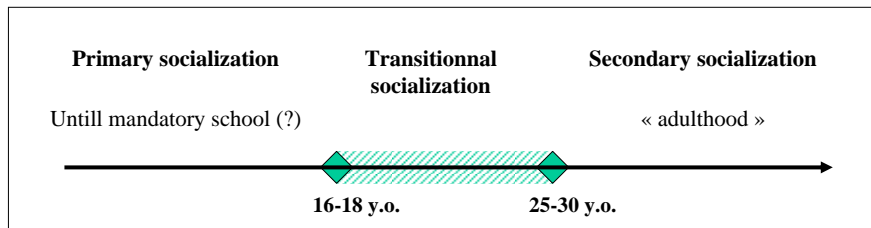
- Anglo-Saxon tradition: generation => kinship
- European tradition : three degrees of generations :



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## Socialization *versus* individual and collective history

- Life cycle and socialization
- Primary and secondary socialization
- The « transitionnal socialization »



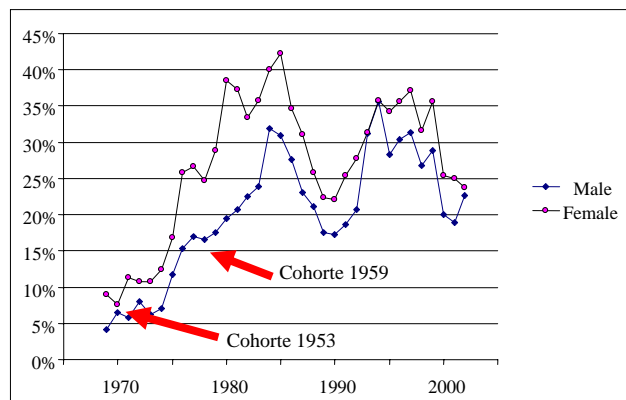
- Long term impact of the « transitionnal socialization » : « scar effect »
- History and the constitution of a *Generationengeist* and of a *Generationenlage*

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### QUESTION :

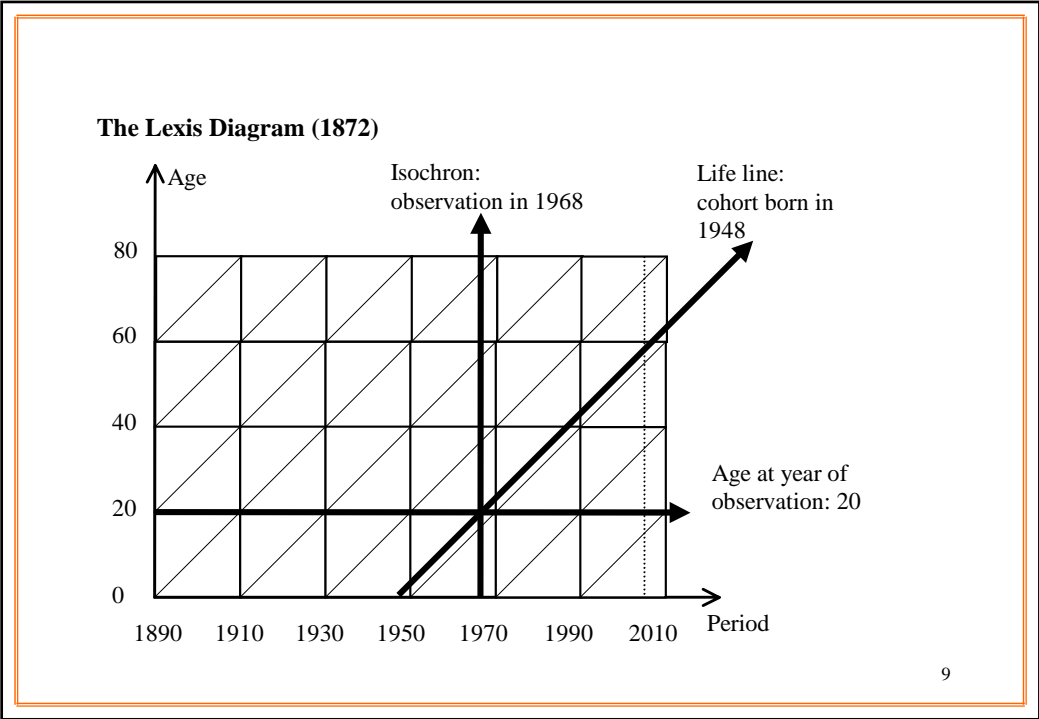
are there long term consequences of collective difficulties when entering labor market ?

**Risks of unemployment  
12 months after leaving school (%)**



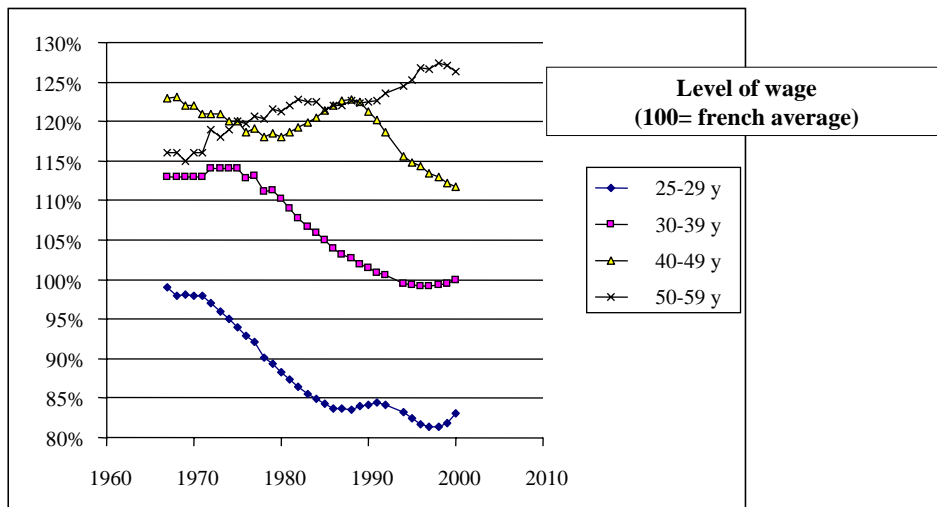
Source : Enquêtes emploi INSEE 1969-2002, archives Lasmus

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- Multidimensional generational fractures in France**
- 1. Relative(?) socio-economic decline**
  - 2. Scar effect of social trajectory**
  - 3. Risks of downward mobility**
  - 4. Diminishing life chances in the political and cultural arena**
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### DECLINE OF EARNING LEVEL : Relative wages of 4 age groups

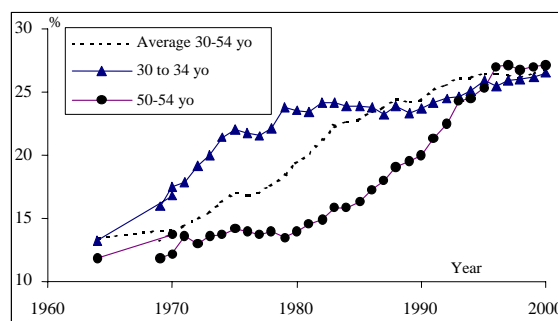


Sources : Déclarations annuelles de données sociales-INSEE

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### Progress in the occupational structure ?

#### Proportion of higher white collars for two age groups and French average

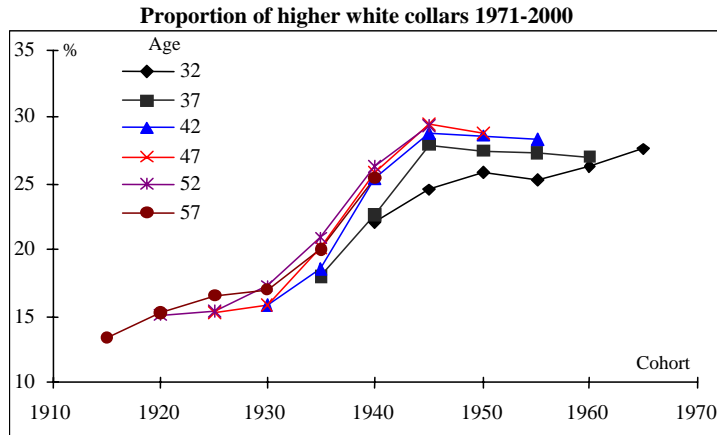


Source : Enquêtes Emploi 1969-2000 et Formation-qualification-professionnelle 1964 et 1977, INSEE ; archives LASMAS-Quételet

Note : Les jeunes salariés ont connu un quasi doublement des emplois qualifiés entre 1964 et 1980, puis un arrêt de la croissance. Le pourcentage est calculé par rapport à la classe d'âge. Sont considérés comme cadres et professions intermédiaires ceux qui exercent effectivement un emploi correspondant à cette catégorie. Jr : classe d'âge 30 à 34 ans ; Sr : classe d'âge 50 à 54 ans. Les enquêtes FQP surestiment la part des cadres chez les 50-54 ans en excluant de l'enquête les femmes définitivement en retraite de la population active.

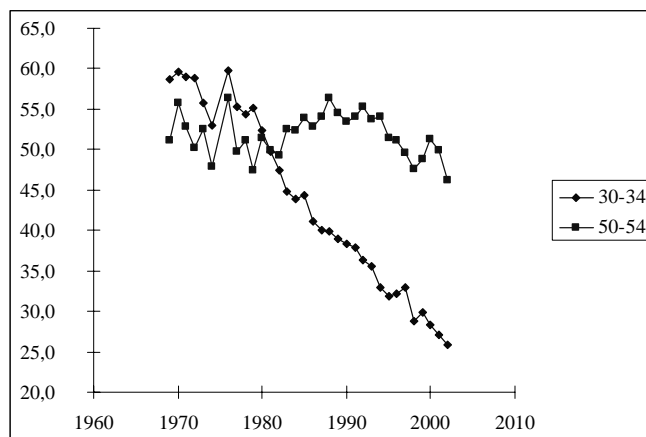
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**Scar effect**



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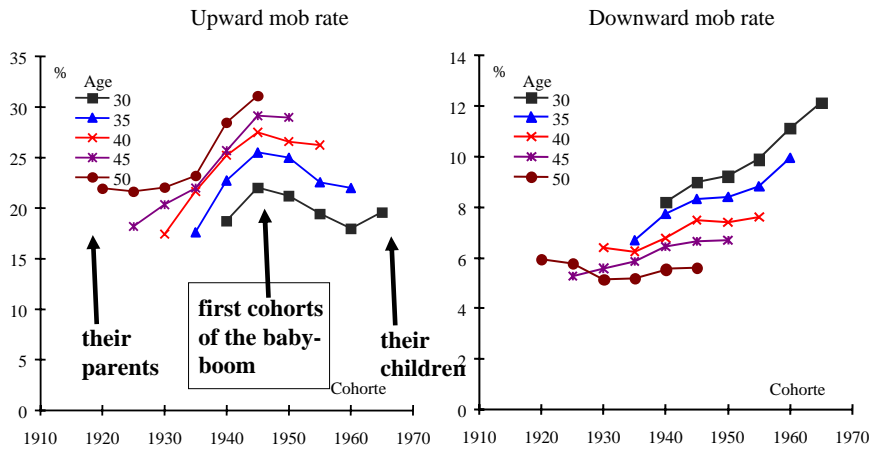
**Devalorisation of grades: decline of access to (lower+higher) service class for Baccalauréat (=validated end of secondary education) in two age groups (1969-2002)**



Source : Enquêtes *Emploi* 1969-2002, INSEE ; archives LASMAS-Quételet

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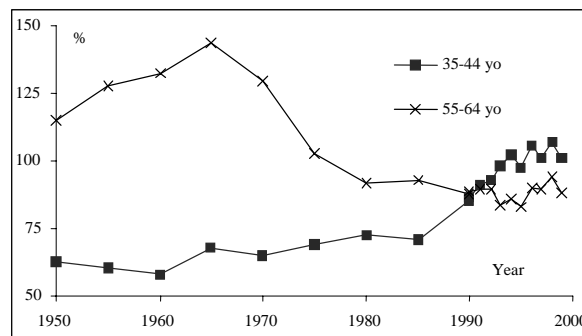
### Upward and downward mobility rate (cohort diagrams) - male population



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### A major risk of dyssocialization

Evolution of relative suicide risk for two age groups (1950 to 2000)  
(100= average national rate for 15 to 84 yo)



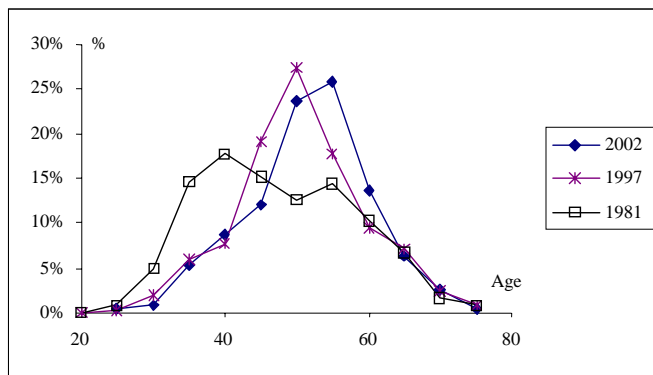
Source : Chauvel, 1997a pour 1950-1995 et Service d'Information sur les Causes Médicales de Décès (SC8 de l'INSERM) pour 1990-1999.

Note : Depuis 1985, le taux de suicide des 35-44 ans a fortement progressé, à l'inverse de celui des 55-64 ans. Population masculine.

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## Desequilibrium in political representation

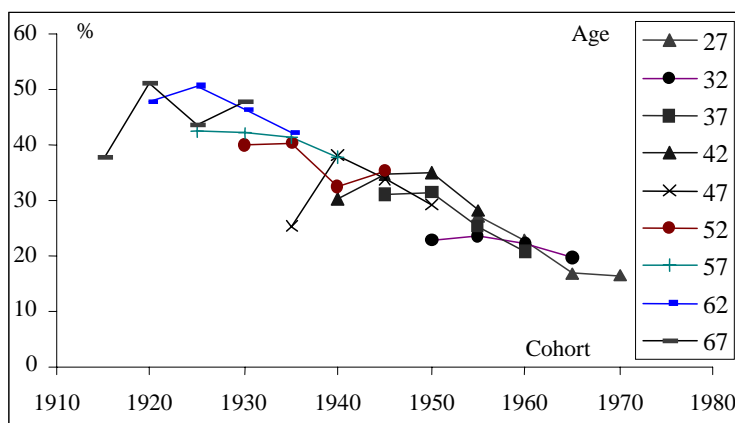
Age distribution of French *Députés* (National Parliament) 1981-1997-2002



Source : *Trombinoscopes* de l'Assemblée Nationale.

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## Daily newspaper reading ( %) (diagramme cohortal)



Note : answer « everyday » to the question : « about how often do you read the news in daily newspapers »

Source : Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-1999, MZES-ZUMA-ZEUS ; données fournies par la BDSP-Grenoble..

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## **2- The role of the welfare regime in the intra/inter cohort inequalities**

- **Hypothesis on the French idealtypical situation**
- **The cohorts dynamics of welfare regime**
- **Intra and inter cohort inequalities in UK France Denmark**
- **The corporatist unsustainable regime**

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### **A comparison of fluctuations ?**

#### **1. French specificity?**

*Homogeneity*

*Centralization*

*Excesses (and backlashes...)*

#### **2. A universal evolution in « post industrialized countries » facing slow growth?**

#### **3. Role of history / role of welfare models (Esping-Andersen)**

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### Interpreting the French case:

- **Esping-Andersen Typology of Welfare states:**  
France = “corporatist-conservative” « welfare mix », stabilization of social relations  
Protection of insiders (protected male workers) against outsiders
- **In case of economic brake :**  
« Insiderisation » of insiders, already in the stable labor force  
and « outsiderisation » of new entrants
- **In France, young people can wait ... decades**  
Increasing poverty rates for young people, stable intracohort inequalities  
(after taxes and welfare reallocations)
- **Are other intergenerational compromise possible ?**

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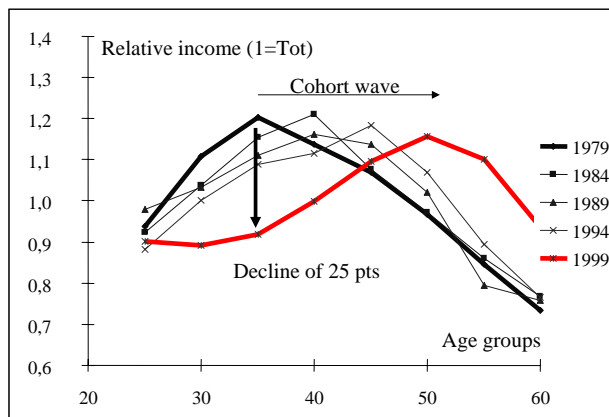
### Three modalities Esping-Andersen Typology of Welfare states :

- **Conservative model (Continental Europe) : FRANCE**  
Preservation of (old) social equilibria, with social insurance excluding unemployed => strong intercohort inequalities and less intracohort inequalities
- **Liberal model : (Anglo-saxon world) : UK**  
Market as a central institution, residual welfare state against market failures  
HL0 : more intracohort inequalities  
HL1 : less intercohort inequality (competition between generations)
- **« Social-democrat » Model (Nordic Europe) : DENMARK**  
Citizenship and broad participation to discussions and bargaining around social reforms between social groups (gender, generations, etc.) for a long-term development  
HD0 : less intracohort inequalities  
HD1 : residual intercohort inequalities (compromise between generations)

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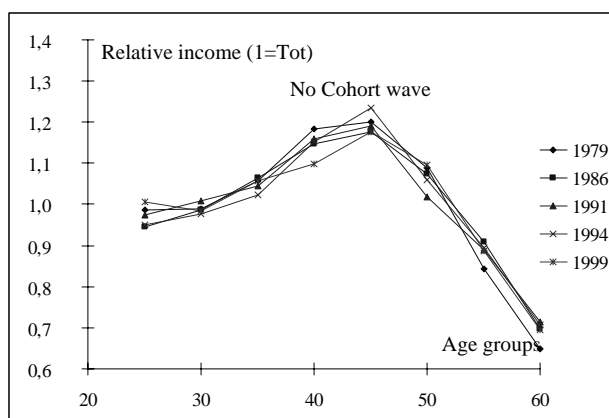
### France wave of intercohort inequalities

after tax and transfer median income (by consumption units)



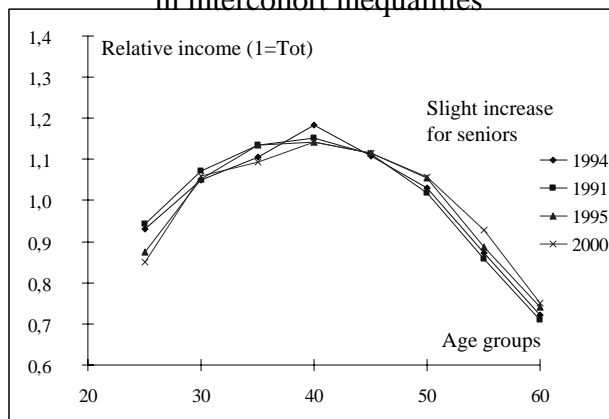
Source : The Luxembourg Income Study database : <http://www.lisproject.org> and French Family expenditure surveys-INSEE 2000 for France 1999-2000 (data archives : Maurice Halbwachs Center).

### UK stability in intercohort inequalities



Note : Income is after tax and social transfers, by consumption unit in the household  
Source : Luxembourg income study (British Family Expenditure Surveys)

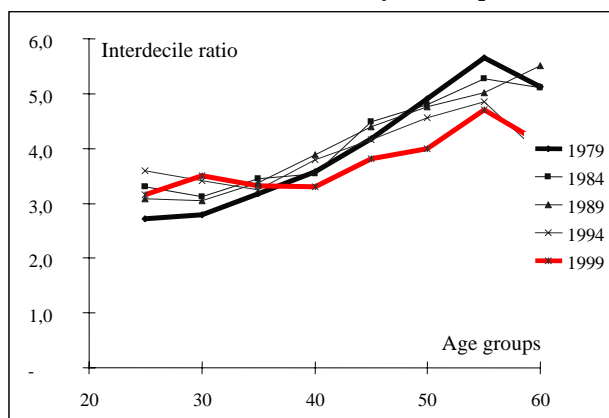
### Denmark unclear increase in intercohort inequalities



Note : Income is after tax and social transfers, by consumption unit in the household  
Source : Luxembourg income study (DK Income tax surveys)

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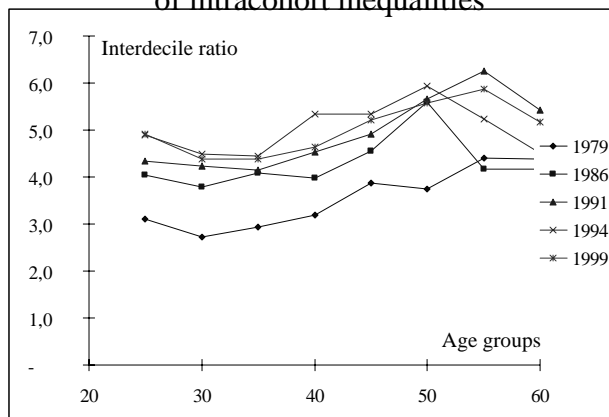
### France decline in senior intracohort inequalities and increase for juniors after tax and transfer incomes (by consumption units)



Source : The Luxembourg Income Study database : <http://www.lisproject.org>  
and French Family expenditure surveys-INSEE 2000 for France 1999-2000  
(archives : Maurice Halbwachs Center).

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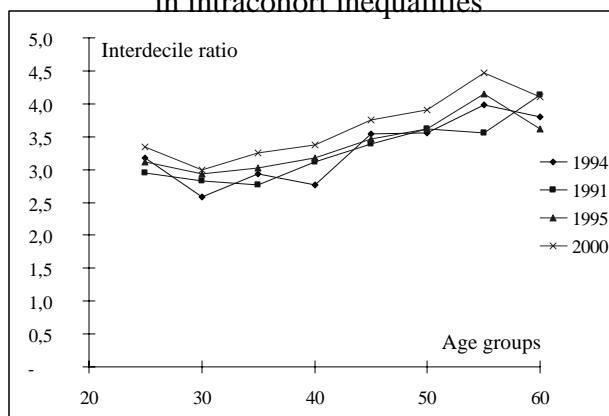
### UK clear increase of intracohort inequalities



Note : Income is after tax and social transfers, by consumption unit in the household  
Source : Luxembourg income study (British Family Expenditure Surveys)

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### Denmark light increase in intracohort inequalities



Note : Income is after tax and social transfers, by consumption unit in the household  
Source : Luxembourg income study (DK Income tax surveys)

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● **Three great models of evolution :**

- Continental and Mediterranean Europe (+ Japon) : protection of *insiders* against *outsiders* (*new generations are facing major difficulties*)
- United States and anglo-saxon countries : the new generations, in the average, face difficulties, but higher inequalities imply a divergence between lowest and highest income groups and social classes
- Northern Europe : Closer to a universalistic egalitarian equilibrium between age groups, genders and social classes (lower intra- and inter- cohort inequalities)

● **(Long Range Hypotheses) Emerging countries :**

- in fast growth countries (China, Taiwan ?, India, Central-Easter Europe) : new opportunities for newer cohorts, and higher inter- and intra-cohort inequalities to the benefit to young university graduates
- in stagnation countries (Argentina, Northern Africa) : intergenerational inequalities and generational destabilization (inflation of diplomas and declining return to education)

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## **Conclusion: Synthesis and 2 main consequences**

- **Life chances are clearly differentiated by birth cohorts**
- **The new generations face welfare retrenchments that the seniors do not want for themselves**
- **This implicates strong handicaps for human development**
  
- **At the macrosocial level : is the welfare regime of public sector based middle classes sustainable? (no)**
- **Are family intergenerational solidarity (=“family supports”) about to solve these problems (in general : no)**

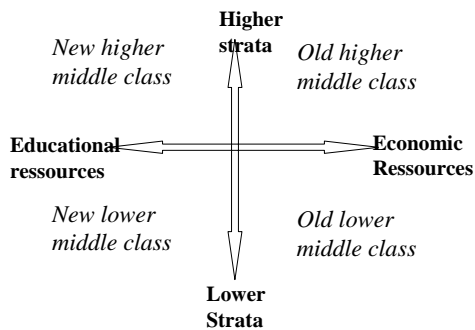
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## Back to a schmollerian definition

Schmoller G., 1897, *Was verstehen wir unter dem Mittelstande? Hat er im 19. Jahrhundert zu oder abgenommen?*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht.

Against the Marxist theory of absolute pauperization :

=> Late Nineteenth century and the expansion of large state and private technical, managerial and expertise bureaucracies – supported and institutionalized by increasing social rights – foster the constitution of a culturally educated and economically comfortable “*neu mittelstand*”

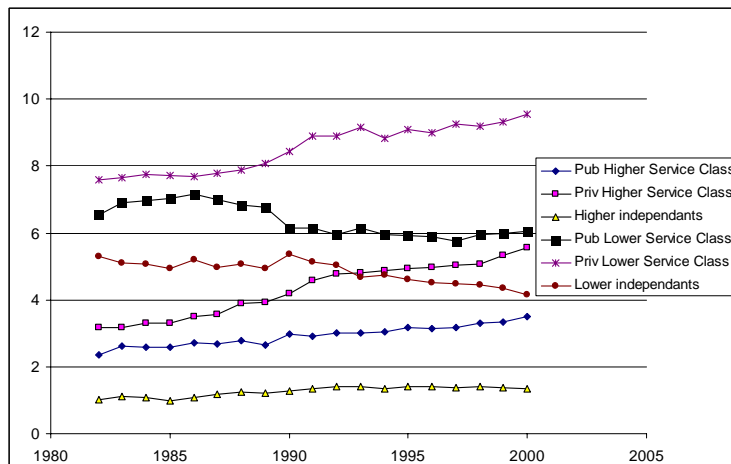


=> The state is not simply an equalitarian ruler, a provider of decommodified resources, it is also a specific employer

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## The middle class dynamics and Welfare state expansions and retrenchments

The demography of the middle classes (% of the total population, 20 to 59 year old)



Sources : Enquêtes emploi 1982-2002 INSEE, Lasmas Iresco/ Institut Quételet (Each year, N=70.000).

Note : Higher independents are self-employed professionals, managers of private companies with 10 employees or more; Lower independents are self-employed craftsmen and tradesmen. Pub is for public status wage earners in public or national companies, public hospitals or in local government administrations. Private is for wage earners in private contracts.

## Which is the gap between real positions and candidates ?

- We consider 4 occupational groups : Higher service class with public long term contract, higher service class with private contract (+rest), the same for lower service class.
- In 1982, we estimate the probability of membership to these 4 occupational groups (+ rest) by education, gender, social origin (polytomic logistic reg.) for two age groups (30-34 and 50-54 age groups)
- We estimate from 1983 to 2000 the probabilities of theoretical membership (“candidates” given education, gender, social origin) (=> higher level of education = multiplication of candidates)

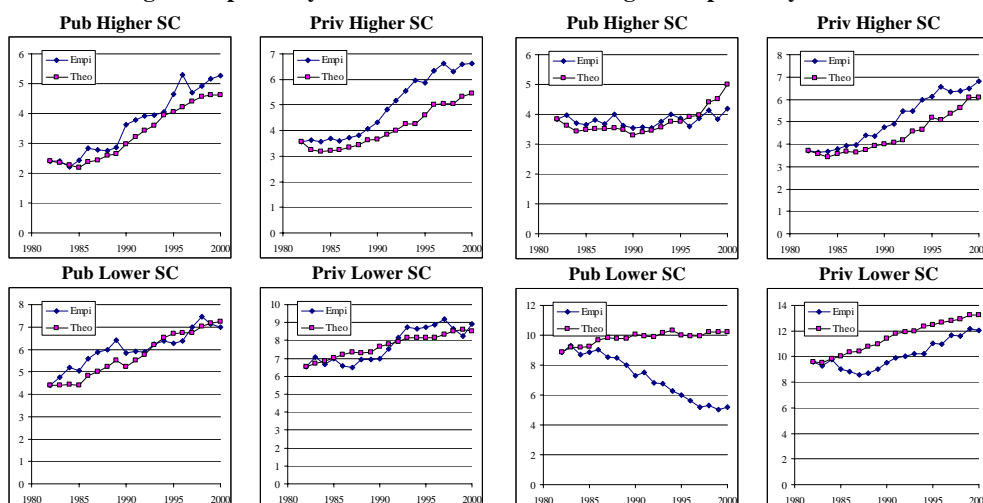
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## Empirical and theoretical % in different occupational groups

Evolution of different social groups in % (SC=Service class EGP style)

Age Group 50-55 year old

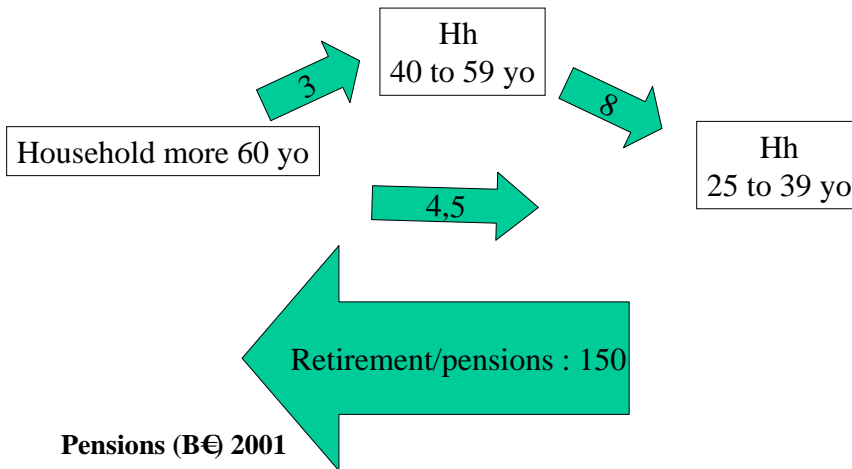
Age Group 30-35 year old



Sources : Enquêtes emploi 1982-2002 INSEE, Lamas Iresco/ Institut Quételet.

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## ANNEXE 2 : Family economic support to children (Billion € 2001)



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Attias-Donfut C. (dir.), 1995, *Les solidarités entre les générations*, Paris, Nathan.

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