

Chapter 2

The Two Anomalies

The Misconceptions of Norwegian Environmentalism

The Norwegian case of organized environmentalism consists of two interrelated anomalies. One is the state-friendly society in which the population holds a basic trust toward state institutions and in which voluntary organizations work closely with governmental bodies. This trust has led to the environmental movement, often understood elsewhere as an alternative movement, having become pragmatic and cooperating very closely with governmental bodies. This mutual cooperation between governmental bodies and voluntary organizations differs in structure and extensiveness across societal sectors, but the cooperation has been very close within the environmental field. The other anomaly is the local community perspective in which animal rights—which is a distinct feature of environmentalism in most other countries—fails to enter the Norwegian definition of environmentalism. These interrelated anomalies make the case of Norway unique within international environmentalism. As this book will show, these anomalies have a profound impact on the size, organization, ideology, work methods, and influence of the environmental movement (Parts I and III). Furthermore, the anomalies also have a great impact on the demographic characteristics, beliefs, and behavior of the organized environmentalists (Part II). Without considering these anomalies, it is not possible to understand the form and substance of Norwegian environmentalism.

If we turn to the international social science literature on Norway, as well as on Scandinavia, the understanding of the political culture being different is nowhere to be found. A consequence of this misconception is that studies of Norway and neighboring countries grasp neither the actual role of government nor the structure and role of civil society, including the role of the environmental movement.⁶ One of our aims in this study is to throw light on this misconception by relating

⁶ Here we will not discuss this misconception, but see Kuhnle and Selle (1992b) and Tranvik and Selle (2005).

our study and perspective to the Dryzek and Rootes studies of modern environmentalism that we referred to in Chapter 1 (Dryzek et al., 2003; Rootes, 2003). We will relate more extensively to the Dryzek-study because its perspective is closer to our study than the Rootes study.

The Rootes volume is an important study that concentrates on the occurrences of environmental protest reported in newspapers in the seven European Union (EU) countries (Britain, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Sweden). The study offers many interesting findings concerning the increased institutionalization of environmental protest in EU countries as well as variations on environmentalism across countries. However, the study holds that the repertoire of environmental collective action is mainly found within the structure of environmentalism itself rather than in the political culture and structure of a single political system. The repertoire of protest is more a matter of movement cultures than national culture. To a certain extent, this might, of course, be true. For instance, independent of country, protest groups against nuclear energy and animal rights are more militant than other types of environmental organization. On the other hand, there are many results that point in the direction of the importance of a country-specific political culture. For instance, the study finds the strong localism of environmental protest in Spain and Greece as part of the strong overall localism in these countries. Also, the study observes the extensive use of environmental demonstration in France, where demonstrations more generally are an important part of the repertoire of collective action. However, in general, the study argues strongly against the idea that environmental protest fits well with national stereotypes, particularly underscoring the extent of violent environmental protest in Britain and Sweden (see especially Chapter 10 of the Rootes volume).

What explains protest then is the combination of a specific movement culture that connects to political conjunctures, or opportunity structures, in the different countries. This is not the least so because protest is connected mainly to the implementation of policies (output response) rather than its formulation (input response). However, this study primarily looks at protest behavior and does not analyze how the environmental movement is structured or how it works more generally in the different countries. For instance, we find almost nothing about the extent of cooperation and how the environmental movement cooperates with governmental bodies or businesses in the different countries. Even if core aspects of environmentalism are not studied at all, one draws very general conclusions about environmentalism and how it should be studied.

In underlining that environmentalism should be mainly understood within the culture of environmentalism itself, the Rootes study also argues explicitly against the Dryzek perspective, underscoring that structural factors, political institutional arrangements foremost among them, explain little if anything of the variation (Rootes, 2003, p. 253). Without addressing or discussing all aspects of the Rootes study's view on politics and society, we do not fully share their understanding of society. Structural factors, not to speak of political institutional arrangements, always count.

Even so, at a more general level and as a next step, the study points in the direction of a need for national studies or case studies. One does not find any strong coordination of environmental activity across countries or a strong transnational influence on strategies and action in the different countries. Furthermore, the EU as an institution still plays a very subordinate role in giving direction to environmental protest. Protest mainly reflects conjuncture of national politics, but it is, in general, becoming more formalized and centralized than before, in which each and every protest action receives less support and less participation. As we will see, particularly in Part II of this volume, to some extent this also fits the Norwegian situation.

The Dryzek study, on the other hand, sees environmentalism through the lenses of national political structure and national political culture. This study tries to identify which historical features cause environmentalism to work the way it does within a particular polity and then compare results with what is observed in other countries. Even so, we argue that Dryzek's study of Norway offers little insight into the structure of Norwegian environmentalism. Specifically, we hold that the Dryzek study supports a rather common misunderstanding of Norwegian and Scandinavian politics.

The perspective of the latest Dryzek study builds upon and expands an earlier study by Dryzek (1996) in which Norway is also included. In the 1996 study, Dryzek argues that Norway is a corporatist system in which most groups, except business and labor unions, are excluded from state councils and, hence, from political power (Norway scores high on studies of European corporatism; see Chapter 9 of this volume). In the 2003 study, the Norwegian political system becomes somewhat more open and inclusive. A prime example is how the environmental organizations cooperates with, or are co-opted by, the state. Here, Norway is now defined through the concept of *expansive corporatism*. We agree in viewing the Norwegian system as open and inclusive. However, we believe that the Norwegian polity still is much more open than what the Dryzek study concludes. Furthermore, we strongly disagree with Dryzek on what this openness actually means. This difference in understanding has, as we will soon see, profound consequences for the understanding of the relationship between governmental bodies and environmental organizations. Furthermore, only looking at how the environmental organizations interact with governmental bodies and excluding the local community perspective as a defining part of Norwegian political culture give, at the end of the day, a somewhat skewed picture of Norwegian environmentalism.

Let us make clear why the Dryzek study is not helpful in our attempt to analyze Norwegian environmentalism and the state–civil society relationship more generally. In trying to grasp the structure of environmentalism in the four selected countries, the Dryzek study starts from two main dimensions: whether the state or government bodies are exclusive (i.e., opens up for a few organizations only) or inclusive (i.e., opens up for many organizations), and whether the state is active or passive when it comes to connecting new organizations to the state. Norway represents the combination of an inclusive and active state, the United States is

a passively inclusive state, Germany combines passive and exclusive states, whereas the United Kingdom is the actively exclusive one (even if having periods best characterized by actively inclusive).⁷ Whereas the United States was an environmental pioneer around 1970, Norway gradually took over and became the greenest of states. However, one might argue that Norway has not become any greener since and is not expected to become so either because the absence of strong subpolitical groups will not put pressure on this specific type of state. It is a system that in many ways has peaked when it comes to environmental modernization. Dryzek and colleagues argue that a transformation to a green state is now most likely to take place in Germany.

At a general level, we agree on characterizing Norway as an inclusive and active state. The Norwegian environmental movement cooperates closely with governmental bodies, not the least with the Ministry of the Environment (see Chapter 3 of this volume). Several important and, in our view, correct observations are to be found in the Dryzek study; for instance, the observations that subpolitical groups are weak or absent and that the Norwegian environmental movement in a comparative perspective is small both in numbers and activism. This is even more true if one takes into account the extensive voluntary sector found in the country (Sivesind, Lorentzen, Selle, & Wollebæk, 2002). However, this organizational weakness is only true if one looks at the main or typical environmental organizations only. In Norway, one generally finds a very broad definition and understanding of environmentalism, including outdoor recreation and the preservation of cultural heritage (see Strømsnes, 2001). This is also made clear when we study what areas governmental environmental bodies are meant to cover (Bortne, Selle, & Strømsnes, 2002). Furthermore, environmental concerns also play an important role in many voluntary organizations that are not typically being considered as environmental organizations. All in all, even if environmental concern is moderate in character, it is much broader and goes deeper than can be read from the Dryzek study. The extension of environmental concern has an influence on the political space that is available to the more specific environmental organizations.

However, where we disagree with the Dryzek study is in its understanding of the relationship between state and civil society in Norway. The Dryzek study is mainly theoretically based and its general understanding of what a “good” relationship between state and civil society should look like does not work well in a Scandinavian context. Heavily influenced by a corporatist understanding of

⁷ Even if Sweden is not part of the Dryzek study, in the more general discussions in the book Sweden is placed in the same group as Germany, as a passive and exclusive state. When criticizing the Dryzek study, the Rootes study places Sweden as an actively inclusive state. Even if this is not the place to go deeply into structural differences between Sweden and Norway, we believe that here the Rootes study is closer to the truth. When it is so easy to place one and the same country in different “boxes,” the criteria for placing them are not fully specified.

Norway and a Habermas-inspired understanding of civil society, the Dryzek study seem to argue as follows: In Norway, the state is so strong that your organization depends on the state for legitimacy and finances. In this process, your organization becomes co-opted by the state and loses its autonomy. The state cultivates groups that moderate their demands in exchange for state funding and guaranteed participation in policy making. Environmental groups become arms of the state. Furthermore, because of government's extensive use of committees behind closed doors, the impact of ordinary members is weak or nonexistent. What the Dryzek study calls the case of "weak ecological modernization" is understood mainly as a top-down project without grassroots influence.

Here is not the place to go into a comprehensive discussion of the character of the modern state. However, in the Dryzek study, there is a very static and general understanding of the state as monolithic and always the dominant actor. Several studies have shown the Norwegian (and Scandinavian) state(s) as segmented and/or even more fragmented than ever (e.g., Østerud et al., 2003). What these studies show is that different governmental bodies think differently and do things differently, often accompanied with little or no communication between them. This is an indication of weak horizontal integration. The Dryzek study's monolithic understanding of the state, we argue, means that you are unable to grasp the dynamics in the relationship between civil society organizations and the state both generally and within different policy fields. The organizations are not always dominated by the state, but in some policy fields, domination happens more than in other fields. In general, in Norway, the organizational input and autonomy are stronger than the seemingly closed theoretical system and bird's-eye view of Norwegian politics that the Dryzek study uses and takes into account.

Additionally, the lack of a more general understanding of Norwegian political culture makes things worse because the local community perspective is not taken into account. Their cooptation argument starts from the view that environmentalism has a deep structure or a core that is quite radical, but that it becomes moderated by being co-opted by unfriendly state institutions. For the case of Norway, we argue the opposite. Because of the overall political culture that environmental organizations are part of and operate within, we argue that environmentalism in general is moderate from the start even if the movement has proved to be more radical in some periods than in others (see Chapter 3 of this volume). That goes both for the individual environmentalists as well as for the environmental organizations. Within this system, furthermore, the organizations are more autonomous than what the Dryzek study allows. For instance, studies have shown that governmental bodies never interfere with internal organizational processes (Selle, 1998). Such interference would be to overstep a line that has been in existence for a long time. Altogether, these are not small points because it means that we see the Norwegian political culture and not the least the state-civil society relationship as fundamentally different from that of the Dryzek study. A further implication of this difference is that we understand Norwegian environmental policy less of a top-down government project (even if that is the

case in many other policy fields). These differences in perspective seem to be so profound that we, in effect, perhaps are talking about two fundamentally different types of democracy.

Because of what is seen as a lack of organizational autonomy and political subgroups with members or grassroots having little influence in organizations and society, the Dryzek study seems to conclude that Norway lacks an active oppositional public sphere or a vibrant civil society. This Habermas-inspired understanding of the public space in combination with a monolithic understanding of the state, in which the state is always the dominant part, makes the Dryzek study conclude that Norway is a “thin” democracy. In what follows, we argue strongly against this understanding of too much state and too little civil society. Historically speaking, Norway is a “thick” democracy with a vibrant civil society. In a comparative perspective, this vibrancy becomes even more pronounced (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2004; Sivesind et al., 2002).

However, as we will return to later, particularly in Chapter 9, the transformation of the voluntary sector and of the state structure that takes place now might change the relationship between the state and civil society in fundamental ways. Perhaps one consequence of these changes could be that the perspective of the Dryzek study, even up to now being so off the mark, in the future can offer insights into the Norwegian and Scandinavian politics. However, we are far from reaching that point yet. In the meantime, let us take a closer look at the characteristics of the two anomalies that make Norwegian environmentalism unique.

An Inclusive Polity in a State-Friendly Society

The strongest political support for the active and interventionist Norwegian state has historically come from the politically broad and popular center-left. Since the late 19th century, the Norwegian state has built on popular movements and mass parties, including the strong political position of the labor movement after the Second World War. Public ownership of land, resources, and capital has been extensive, whereas the private economy has been geographically decentralized with relatively small enterprises. Through the universalized welfare arrangements and other public institutions, like the official Lutheran church with a status as a comprehensive popular church, the state has gained wide support and legitimacy. Mass parties and voluntary associations with a broad societal agenda have made a strong impact on the development of public authority. The Norwegian nation-state, as a political community, has been a framework for popular participation and social and regional redistribution.

This means that Norwegian—and Scandinavian—politics in a comparative perspective might be characterized by high levels of institutional centralization and state friendliness (Kuhnle & Selle, 1992b). It is, for instance, the state—

rather than markets, religious institutions, or local community associations—that has been the paramount agent of social and economic reform, most notably the development of comprehensive welfare schemes and the system of corporative economic planning, with the state as the most important participant. It is therefore tempting, especially, perhaps, for political scientists of Anglo-American origin, to conclude that in the Scandinavian countries, there is too much trust in and too much dependence on the state bureaucracy while too few checks and balances limit the scope of state power. Even if it is hard to brush off these (and similar) criticisms of “the Scandinavian exceptionalism” as misguided, they tend, nevertheless, to be informed by simple and so-called protective models of democracy (Held, 1996) by which the Dryzek study is also influenced.

According to this model, institutional centralization and state friendliness are at odds with the notion of democracy because democracy works only when power is decentralized, when citizens are legally protected from being within the reach of the “tentacles of the state,” and when everyone is free to carry out his or her own life plans as they see fit. The challenge of democracy, as viewed through the lenses of the protective model, is therefore to encroach the exercise of state power. In Norway and Scandinavia, however, the democratic challenge has been perceived rather differently. Institutional centralization is not regarded as a problem, so long as there are ways for ordinary citizens to influence the exercise of state power. State-friendliness is seen as the clearest manifestation of the democratization of centralized state power. Citizens view the state benignly because through ideological mass movements they have been thoroughly plugged into the running of the state (Tranvik & Selle, 2005; Wollebæk & Selle, 2002a). It is this social contract—high levels of institutional centralization balanced by high levels of citizen control—that is now being gradually eroded (see Chapter 9).

The history of West European states is a history of conflicts between, and integration of, different groups and classes in society. Conflict integration might be seen as consisting of four thresholds, like locks in a canal: legitimation, incorporation, representation, and executive power (Rokkan, 1970). The passing of each will gradually take a political movement closer to the pinnacle of the polity. The conflict-integrating mechanism is not a static dualism where a movement is either in or out. Rather, it can be seen as a continuous process where the movement struggles for increasing power and influence. In a comparative perspective, this process has been rather smooth in Norway. In the course of history, the power and position of the central establishment were challenged by groups that wanted to put their mark on the development of the state and the nation. Different movements, such as farmers, radical intellectuals in the cities, countercultural lay-Christian, teetotalists, linguistic movements in the periphery, and, finally, workers, were organized and mobilized to push forth the interests of the group. At the end of the day, members of a social movement might have been given the right to vote and representatives of the political wing of a social movement might have gained representation in parliament or, lo and behold, even obtained access to the executive power.

The prominence of social movements, which we believe is not fully outlined by the Dryzek study, can be considered a common feature of the Scandinavian countries.⁸ In the crucial junctions that formed the history of the modern Western European states, the roads traveled by the Scandinavian countries are astoundingly alike (see Rokkan, 1970, especially Chapter 3). Consequently, the structuring of mass politics in Norway, and hence modern Norwegian politics, is a result of mass movements' and voluntary organizations' struggle for representation and power. The people's movements have had a prominent, even mythical, place in the minds of Norwegians. Voluntary organizations have been important for the development of democracy and for the nation-building process. In the Scandinavian countries, the organizations recruited members from a *broad* social basis than in most other countries (Sivesind et al., 2002; Wollebæk & Selle, 2002b). Through the incorporation of broad member-based organizations, the national and the local political levels were linked closely. The close ties between state and local government reinforced this closeness (Tranvik & Selle, 2005).⁹

Hence, the links between state and voluntary organizations have been many and dense since the growth of a separate voluntary sector from the mid-1800s (Kuhnle & Selle, 1992b; Selle, 1999). Voluntary organizations turn to the state for cooperation, funding, and legitimacy. As a consequence, an organization that seeks influence in the political process must turn *to* the state and not *away* from it. Cooperation with the state means that the organization increases its political influence, that it increases its legitimacy among the public, and that the organization is far more likely to receive financial contributions from the state (Selle & Strømsnes, 1996; Tranvik & Selle, 2005). However, it does not follow that the organizations should be discouraged from criticizing the state. To the extent to which these organizations are watchdogs of the state, it is odd that the "watchdogs are also fed by the one they are intended to watch"

⁸ Like so much of the welfare state literature, the Dryzek study also put too much emphasis on the mobilization of the working class, enabling the entry of this organized class into the state, as the defining force behind the growth of the welfare state. However, neither the structure nor the content of the different welfare states can be understood properly if researchers are not sufficiently perceptive of the impact from other social movements too. Not the least in Norway has the broad impact from different social movements in this inclusive state been of great importance. For a broad discussion of this, see Berven and Selle (2001) and Kuhnle and Selle (1992b).

⁹ We have chosen to use the concept "voluntary organization" and "voluntary sector" in favor of concepts like the "third sector," the "independent sector," and the "nongovernmental sector." The reason for this is that the term "voluntary" "[...] tells us something about both the members in the organizations, members are not forced into membership, and about how the organizations came into being. [...] they are not forced into existence." (Kuhnle & Selle, 1992a, pp. 6–7). In addition, the concept "voluntary organization" has been used in colloquial speech in Norway in most of the 20th century (Sivesind et al., 2002).

(Tjernshaugen, 1999, p. 39, our translation). In this process, contrary to what one observes in other countries, organizations have *not* emphasized the importance of defining or pursuing a sphere autonomous or independent of the state.¹⁰ Such a sphere has been more important in most other countries, including the three countries other than Norway in the Dryzek study.

However, even if the environmental movement is heavily dependent on state for financial support if they want to keep the level of activity they have become used to, one should not overemphasize the financial dependence. The Norwegian voluntary sector is less dependent on governmental financial support than in most West European countries. In general, it is the service-producing organizations within the health and welfare field that are the most dependent, whereas cultural, leisure, and advocacy organizations get a smaller part of their overall budget from the government. In general, only 35% of the revenues of the voluntary sector in Norway comes from the public sector, compared to 55% in the EU countries (Sivesind et al., 2002). This important structural feature does not seem to fit well with the assumptions underlying the Dryzek study. The close interaction with government within the environmental field is probably easier to understand if we take into account the scientific heritage of the environmental movement in which the integration into governmental bodies was high and membership was extremely low until the end of the 1960s (see Chapter 3).

The development of relations between voluntary organizations and the Norwegian state is often one of rather tight integration. To better understand the structure of this relationship, let us take a brief look at the health and welfare sector in which the voluntary organizations have been particularly strong. In this sector, voluntary organizations cooperated closely with the state in the period between the two world wars. These organizations were almost *sine qua non* for turning health into a public issue (Berven & Selle, 2001; Kuhnle & Selle, 1992a, 1992b). The voluntary health organizations' strategy was to cooperate constructively with the public authorities and to press them to take public responsibility. This development was characterized by harmony (rather than conflict), consensus (rather than ideological disagreement), cooperation and division of labor (rather than isolation and segmentation), and, hence, by mutual dependence (rather than one-sidedness in the economy, in work resources, and in legitimization) (Klausen & Selle, 1995). Because of the early organization of health as a public issue, its concurrence with economic growth, and its importance to the population at large, health and welfare have become the most integrated issue in the highly developed welfare state. As environmental concerns became politically important from the late 1970s and early 1980s, something quite similar happened to this policy field. However, the role of the voluntary organizations was even more important for the development of the welfare state than for the development of the environmental

¹⁰ However, from the late 1990s we do see a gradual development in this direction (Sivesind et al., 2002).

field.¹¹ However, the structure of cooperation is part of a long tradition. Historically speaking, in this country it is the way of doing things.

The integrated participation between voluntary organizations and the state has two implications. Because of public financing and government backing, state proximity might be necessary for organizational survival. The advantage for the organizations is increased influence over policy, efficiency, and legitimacy. State proximity is not the problem but the *solution* for an organization whose interest is more than sheer survival. However, because the voluntary organizations are being tied to the state, there is also a price to pay, such as responsibility, some loss of autonomy, less ideological purity, and that the organization also has to take into account the demands from the state, not only those from its members. Taken together, this might create a dilemma for the organization, because evidently “benefits seem to be inextricably bound together with costs” (Olsen, 1983, pp. 157–158). However, as we will see, not only the environmental organizations but also the rest of the voluntary sector and the population at large see the benefits as greater than the costs. It is not something into which the organizations are forced.

The intimate relationship between state and organizations violates a liberal understanding of the tripartite, power-balanced relationship among state, market, and civil society. Within this perspective, voluntary organizations have to be autonomous whereby they constitute the core of a free and independent civil society (i.e., the protective model of which the perspective of the Dryzek study is a part) (Held, 1996).¹² The German philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1987) argued that society in general can be divided into two large spheres. The system world sphere consists of the political system (the state) and the economic system (the market). The life world sphere is the civil society. This thought is further developed in Cohen and Arato (1992), in which the civil society is a sphere for social interaction between the state and the market. According to them (and many others), it is especially important that actors in the civil society can influence the political sphere without being integrated into political and administrative bodies, thus making the civil society, *and* the organizations, autonomous (Bratland, 1995, p. 19; Tranvik & Selle, 2003). It is evident that the Norwegian case fails to meet Cohen and Arato’s criteria. However, that does not at all mean that, in a comparative perspective, we are talking about a “thin democracy” as the Dryzek study does. As comparative studies show, Norway has one of the most extensive and dynamic civil society there is (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2004; Sivesind et al.,

¹¹ This might in part be explained not only by the tremendous strength of the voluntary sector in this field (Kuhnle & Selle, 1992a) but, following the argument of the Dryzek study, also by the fact that the welfare state is a state imperative while environmentalism so far is not. That is why the Dryzek study argues that there is still no green state, even if expecting the modern state to develop in that direction.

¹² This theoretical tradition dates back to Tocqueville, Locke, and Mill. See also Nisbet (1962) and Berger and Neuhaus (1977). For a critique of this theory, see Salamon (1987) and Tranvik and Selle (2003).

2002). The historically important role of civil society in many ways constitutes Norwegian democracy, which is a system that is especially open to civil society input from democratically built organizations with strong local branches. The Dryzek study, we believe, fails to include this important feature.

The intricate ties among state, market, and organizations affect political decision-making. Changes in the Norwegian society, and in the rest of Scandinavia, are mostly the result of what is referred to as “considered reforms,” in which a large number of different organizations are involved in the not uncommonly protracted and open hearing processes.¹³ However, in their study of the reform processes in Sweden, Brunsson and Olsen question the freedom of choice of the reformists, stating that “reforms are difficult to decide upon, to execute, to get the desired effect of, and to learn from” (1990, p. 13). One can spot the failure of many reforms in the necessity of reforming the reforms (Brunsson & Olsen, 1990, p. 255). One possible reason for the alleged limited power of the reformists is that when all of the powerful interest groups are participating in the decision-making process, the result is perhaps not what is best for the reform itself, but, rather, what is best for a compromise among the actors in this pragmatic political culture. The broad understanding of environmentalism within the Norwegian political culture gives room also for organizations that are not strictly environmental. This has a further moderating effect on environmental policies.

If we place voluntarism in a comparative perspective, Norwegian voluntarism is characterized by a high degree of membership but with an extensive share of passive members (Dekker & van den Broek, 1998, p. 28). Norway, Sweden, and The Netherlands have a very high level of voluntary affiliations and memberships (Sivesind et al., 2002; Wollebæk, Selle, & Lorentzen, 2000, p. 27). Almost three-quarters of the general Norwegian population between 16 and 85 years of age is member of at least one voluntary organization. Each person is, on average, a member in approximately two voluntary organizations. Among members only, the average number of memberships is 2.4 (Wollebæk et al., 2000, p. 52).¹⁴ It is within this context of an extensive voluntary sector that it becomes interesting that the environmental organizations have such low membership figures (see Chapter 3). In general, due to the prominence of voluntary organizations, citizens often consider it important to be a member. As for the organizations themselves,

¹³ An example of openness and state–organization linkage is found when the Ministry of Agriculture permits NOAH—for animal rights, one of the most radical environmental organizations in Norway, the opportunity to inject the organization’s view into the state’s policy on animals (Martinsen, 1996). Another example is the radical Norwegian women’s shelter movement, which managed to make its cause a public issue. The organization has been able to cooperate closely with state authorities without compromising its leftist ideology (Morken & Selle, 1994).

¹⁴ This number is probably too low, as respondents tend to forget memberships in broad associations such as the Norwegian Automobile Association (800,000 members), the Norwegian Air Ambulance Association (410,000 members), and housing cooperatives (Wollebæk et al., 2000, p. 41).

many members make an organization more legitimate because it can claim to represent large groups in the society. High membership figures make it easier for the environmental organizations to cooperate with the state, at least up to the mid-1980s, when a new generation of organizations emerged. In addition, membership figures are often used to determine the amount of state financial support (Bortne et al., 2002). However, because of low membership figures, environmental organizations become dependent on governmental financial support and, particularly, project support, of which governmental bodies have a direct interest in the outcome. A consequence might be that the organizations look more for governmental project money than for new members in securing the organization financially. This transformation of modern politics might, to a certain extent, explain the low membership figures.

Much of the citizens' trust and the organizations' trust in the state are accumulated in the process by which next to any group can be consulted in the state's decision-making processes. The continuous conjunction between an inclusive polity and a state-friendly society yields a special structure by which the polity and the society grow even closer in an intricate net. The relationship between the two has, up to now, been based on mutual confidence and trust. This, however, does not at all exclude the possibility of disagreement. We are not in a heaven of harmony and, as we show in Chapter 3, periods of rather deep conflict have occurred. However, with the introduction of New Public Management ideas and tools in the public sector, we might now see a change from a trusting relationship to increased governmental control. These ideas and tools emphasize cost-effectiveness and "contracting" at the cost of trust. This is a process that might gradually transform the political culture itself.

Evidence of Norway being a state-friendly society in Europe can be found in the level and rank of its citizens' trust in institutions and in social capital in general (Wollebæk & Selle, 2002b). The European "Beliefs in Government" study shows that Norwegians' trust in political institutions (i.e., the armed forces, the education system, the legal system, the police, the parliament, and the civil service) were highest both in 1982 and in 1990. Seventy-six percent and 68% of the respondents had either "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in these institutions in 1982 and 1990, respectively. In Britain, for instance, the figures were 64% and 58%, respectively. Norwegians ranked second only to Ireland on trust in more private institutions (i.e., the church, the press, the trade unions, and major companies). On a generalized trust score, Norway ranked number one at both points in time (Listhaug & Wiberg, 1995). More recent and comparative studies show that trust is still high despite a weak decline in some of the measures (Listhaug, 2005; see also Chapter 8 of this volume).

This discussion suggests that state-friendliness consists of two dimensions. *Dependency* on the state varies according to what extent the state is able to control the organization's finances and whether organizational legitimacy depends on the state. *Proximity* varies according to the scope, frequency, and easiness of communication and contact between the organization and the state (Kuhnle & Selle, 1992a). In the Norwegian case, most voluntary organizations that are both close

to and dependent on the state are not necessarily dominated by the state. As we will discuss in the next chapter, the state and environmental organizations have, for a long period of time, moved closer to one another. This does not imply, however, that the state penetrates the organizations and takes control over their internal life, as implied by the Dryzek study. Norwegian voluntary organizations have a long tradition of internal organizational autonomy that is also a defining part of their self-understanding (Selle, 1998). Due to the close relationship between the state and organizations, the state is also influenced by the organizations. With the exception of foreign aid, in no other field is that more true today than within the environmental field, in which we have had rather professionalized and scientifically based organizations working in close cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and other governmental bodies (Bortne et al., 2002). However, as the environmental policy era becomes increasingly mature and institutionalized, perhaps the role of the environmental organizations becomes more one of implementing public policies at the cost of influencing the decision-making itself (Tranvik & Selle, 2005).

This cohabitation between the state and civil society, deeply embedded in the political culture, is a more sophisticated relationship than one of state domination only. Without the organizations, governmental environmental policies would have been less extensive and structured differently and the role of environmental thinking a less important part of the public discourse. Within another type of state, the organizational form, ideology, and repertoire of collective action of the environmental movement would have looked different too. That is why we so strongly argue for the understanding of the dynamics of the relationship between state actors and civil society organizations. However, in the case of Norwegian environmentalism, this relationship takes place within an important policy field in which the local communities are of particular importance.

The Local Community Perspective

Roughly two-thirds of Norway is mountainous and some 50,000 islands lie off its much-indented fjord-frequent coastline. The country combines a vast wilderness with a sparse population. For centuries, in a land with an often inhospitable climate, the inhabitants made a living where land could be cultivated, game could be hunted, and fish could be caught. Traditionally, rural inhabitants have balanced between fighting against the seasonal wild forces of nature and harvesting from nature. This way of living developed strong ties to nature and nourished the national ideal of the local self-reliant community. In this view, nature must be husbanded and not exploited because life in local communities never easily permitted families to leave one place to move to another unsettled place. A rational harvest of nature is not only acceptable, it is the only viable relationship between humans and nature.

Norway had been a strong and unified nation-state in the Middle Ages. Later, under Danish rule, it suffered—tongue in cheek—a 400-year eclipse. The so-called

suffering entailed that Norwegian farmers retained their freedom and independence on family-owned farms and experienced less repressive taxation compared with farmers and peasants in continental Europe. Norway never had farmland sufficient to support a landed aristocracy or strong and wealthy urban elites. Because the cities were considered infected by Danish and aristocratic values, the roots of the nation's independence in the early 1800s were sought in the Norwegian countryside, which had never been suppressed by feudalism. Due to the historical weakness of Norwegian urban elites, the Norwegian periphery was never strongly subjected to the cities.

The free Norwegian farmers not only bridged the independence in 1814 with the strong Norwegian nation-state in the Middle Ages, they also accorded the peripheral rural areas a high degree of legitimacy.¹⁵ In a sense, independent Norwegian farmers fueled a certain antiurban sentiment and tension in the Norwegian society. Cities have been regarded with considerable skepticism. Urban movements have never gained any kind of momentum against the rural periphery, and it is first during the 1990s that we can see the contours of a more specific urban policy. On the contrary, "opposition to central authority became a fundamental theme in Norwegian politics" (Rokkan, 1967, p. 368). Indeed, the center-periphery conflict is constituent for Norwegian politics, along with the left-right and the cultural/religious cleavages (Flora, 1999; Rokkan, 1967, 1970; Tranvik & Selle, 2003; Østerud et al., 2003). Even within a rather centralized unitary state and contrary to what the Dryzek study implies, this means that a strong grassroot-based and politicized civil society has received input from below. This has contributed to a strong cross-level integration.¹⁶ However, when we look closer at the environmental movement, a somewhat paradoxical situation emerges. Compared to the voluntary sector in general, the environmental organizations have been more centralized and more professionalized and maintained a weaker organizational base at the local level. Even so, a strong cognitive or ideological orientation toward the local level still exists (see also Chapters 3 and 5).

Today, Norway has a population of 4.5 million people. It has a density of 13 people per square kilometer, which is among the lowest in Europe.¹⁷ Many small communities are found at the bottom of remote fjords and on remote islands. Comparatively, Norway is still more of a rural country than most European

¹⁵ It is interesting to note that in a country almost without farmland, farmers are held in high regard in contrast to fishermen, who have been held in somewhat lower regard despite oceans that never have been in short supply (see also Sørensen, 1998).

¹⁶ With the transformation of the voluntary sector now going on, these features are weakened. The grassroot influence is, in general, weaker and the voluntary sector has become less political in character (Tranvik & Selle, 2003; Wollebæk & Selle, 2002a).

¹⁷ For example, the figure for Sweden is 19, 104 for France, 118 for Denmark, 217 for Germany, and 238 for the United Kingdom (Castello-Cortes, 1994).

countries even if the proportion of people living in so-called urban areas is 75%.¹⁸ However, one should keep in mind that “urban” in a Norwegian setting does not really mean urban living similar to what you find in large parts of the European continent. More than 77% of the 434 Norwegian municipalities have less than 10,000 inhabitants. Only nine municipalities have more than 50,000 inhabitants, their total population of 1.3 million inhabitants being equal to the total population of the 337 smallest municipalities.¹⁹ The largest Norwegian cities are rather small in a European context. The capital, Oslo, has approximately 500,000 inhabitants (with an addition of 1.5 million inhabitants in the wider southeastern region). The second, third, and fourth largest cities range between 222,000 and 103,000 inhabitants.

With a large territory and a dispersed population, small and medium-size cities in Norway often find themselves as asphalt islands in a rural sea. As a consequence, city dwellers often find the travelling distance between city life and untouched nature comfortably short. Nature is found immediately outside the city limits. In addition, a late but incomplete urbanization has resulted in a high degree of city residents being able to recount close ancestors whose lives or outcomes are or have been based on farms. Three out of four urban (i.e., cities, suburbs, and towns) residents report that they, their parents, or their grandparents have lived on a farm (see also Chapter 7).²⁰ One consequence of the frequency of these rural roots is that, cognitively, nature’s primary basis of livelihood is difficult to uproot. In addition, city dwellers often take advantage of recreation in nature. This accounts for the alleged puzzle that city residents still can hold a genuine rural and local orientation.

Man’s adaptation to living in rugged nature and the egalitarian and rural roots of national identity provide the foundations for what we call *the local community perspective*, the essence of which is *the protection of humans in nature* (see Kvaløy Setreng, 1996, and Chapter 7 of this volume). The local community perspective, which in combination with the state-friendly society constitutes a central part of Norwegian political culture, has a number of corollaries.

Modern Norwegian environmentalism has always been oriented toward local communities and even more so than many other types of voluntary organization (see Chapter 5). Large parts of the Norwegian environmental movement, especially the organizations that emerged at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, have their roots in “Norwegian populism.” The term was coined in 1966 by the social anthropologist Ottar Brox, whose political thinking strongly influenced the regional development program of the Socialist People’s

¹⁸ Again, the figure for France is 74, 84 for Sweden, 86 for Germany, 87 for Denmark, and 89 for the United Kingdom (Castello-Cortes, 1994).

¹⁹ These numbers have shown a remarkable stability (SSB, 1975, 1985, 1995).

²⁰ Source: Survey of Environmentalism.

Party (the predecessor of the present Socialist Left Party) (Gundersen, 1996; Sætra, 1973). In the analysis of what was claimed to be a failed development in northern Norway, Brox (1966) advocated that the only way out of this economic impasse was found in a small-scale local orientation. A populist, Brox claimed, must understand the society in the northern region as a merger of local communities, which, in turn, consist of a merger of families. Thus, in order to develop this northern region economically, one must start with economic development in the local communities, which, in turn, implies maximizing the economic possibilities for each family. Hartvig Sætra, a self-declared populist, linked the populist alternative more strongly to environmentalism than did Brox. The hope for the future in the populist alternative is only found in the return to the local community and the local economy (Sætra, 1973).²¹ The close link between populism and environmentalism in Norway is also observed by Andrew Jamison, who, in his comparison of environmentalism in the Scandinavian countries, stated that “in the Norwegian case the environmental engagement has been followed by a down to earth populism” (Jamison, 1980, pp. 108–109, our translation).

The cognitive orientation toward what is local has traditionally been relatively strong within most environmental organizations, as it is in the voluntary sector in general.²² Not only do we find a strong emphasis on what is local also in voluntary organizations mainly working at the national level, but institutionally, we also see another important structural feature that explains the strength and continuity of the local community perspective. There is a strong tradition of local democracy where municipalities have retained autonomy from the state on important matters. Despite this tradition, local autonomy has decreased over the last 20 years.

Notwithstanding being a unitary state, the Norwegian system of government must be characterized as relatively decentralized. The municipal level is providing many of the most important welfare services and local governments have traditionally held the power to adjust national welfare schemes to the local conditions. In addition, the Norwegian Municipality Act of 1837 for a long time held a special position in the collective Norwegian consciousness. In the peripheries, it established and institutionalized local self-rule through democratic elections. This self-rule has so far not been a smokescreen. It was not a smoke-screen where local communities simply implemented public policies that had been decided at the top of the political food chain. This local autonomy is not only important for the survival of the local community perspective but also for the survival of the state-friendly society. Government is not something distant. It remains close to the inhabitants because it actually takes care of tasks that are

²¹ Illustratively, the cover of Sætra's book depicts a farmer with a plough.

²² Although local orientation is common within voluntary organizations in general (Wollebæk et al., 2000), it is our impression that the local orientation is both stronger and more ideological within the environmental sector (Selle, 1998; Tranvik & Selle, 2003).

important for our daily life (welfare, education, social security, etc.).²³ This political arrangement implies that a possible weakening of the local community perspective and of local government might, in the long run, have consequences also for the amount of state-friendliness.

The local orientation has been prominently present in the organization *The Future in Our Hands*. Steinar Lem, an information officer of the organization, identified the term “being local” as highly honorable in Norwegian environmentalism (Lem, 1996). However, he also warned against being too local, thus becoming too small and insignificant. To act on their local ideals, *Nature and Youth*’s experiment with “democratic decentralization” led to them abolishing the central level of their organization at the end of the 1960s, only later to admit that the attempt was fruitless (Persen & Ranum, 1997). We find this local orientation within most of the other organizations too (Strømsnes, 2001).

A consequence of the local community perspective is that nature does not become a museum of unused or unspoiled nature. Rather, it is a territory designed for the benefit of human beings. For instance, the defiant Norwegian views on whaling must be understood in both a historical context and a local context (see Chapter 7).²⁴ The support for small-scale, local-community-based whaling, and seal hunting too, is based on an organic way of life in which the local community is linked to nature through its use of the resources conferred by nature. Thus, the supportive and mainstream Norwegian opinions of whaling and sealing should be understood as protection of Norwegian local communities as well as a rational harvest of nature. One can also view Norwegian whaling as a symbol of independence and self-determination. It is difficult for the central government to bypass the local government in these matters. True, as a country, Norway does not depend on whaling. However, there are still small communities where whaling makes an important contribution to the local economy.

Another consequence of the local community perspective is found at the level of national policy on predators. Norwegian predators include the wolf, bear, lynx, and wolverine.²⁵ During the summertime, many farmers in the southeastern parts of the country allow their herds of sheep to graze in unfenced parts of nature. Unsurprisingly, here the sheep are easy prey.²⁶ Because the predators seriously interfere with the livelihood of farmers, it is maintained that the predators should be killed or, alternatively, especially the wolf, be firmly relocated in neighboring

²³ For an interesting discussion of the role of central and local government in these important matters, see Strandberg, 2006.

²⁴ Norwegian whaling was a large industrial business in the Antarctic area from the beginning of the 20th century. Such whaling is significantly different from whaling based in or strongly linked to local communities.

²⁵ In the mid-1990s, the quantities of these animals were estimated to be 20–40 wolves, 26–55 bears, approximately 600 lynxes, and 130–190 wolverines (Knutsen, Aasetre, & Sagør, 1998, p. 64; Miljøstatus, 1999).

²⁶ The Sami population in the northern part of Norway has had the same problem concerning their reindeers.

Sweden, where there is even more unpopulated wilderness. Wildlife preservationists argue, however, that predators should not in any way be removed from their natural habitat and that it is the responsibility of the farmers to keep their sheep away from predators, who only follow their natural instinct.

In the winter of 2001, the then minister of the environment, Siri Bjerke, ordered hunters to track down and kill 15 wolves in Norway. The hunters had a field day because they were permitted to use helicopters during the hunt.²⁷ The justification behind this policy was to protect farmers' livelihood in nature and, furthermore, to secure local influence on the local decision-making process. There have been strong conflicts between central and local governmental bodies in these matters. Whereas the central level seeks to balance the interests of wildlife and local communities, the local government argues for having the right to decide itself, almost always deciding to the benefit of the farmers. Environmental organizations, except for the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), have been very passive in these matters. This passivity would have been difficult to understand had it not been for the local community perspective. We cannot always decide whether this passivity stems from not really being interested in the predators or whether it is better explained by being afraid of coming into conflict with local interests. For example, Nature and Youth has had considerable cooperation with the Smallholder Union. All in all, there has been deeper conflicts within different governmental bodies than between the state and the environmental organizations.

Also, when it comes to the development of watercourses, we do see the importance of the local community perspective. The development of watercourses entails an industrial and a local part. Technological development in the beginning of the 1900s made large-scale industry dependent on hydroelectric power. Alternatively, large-scale industry became possible once one understood how to generate hydroelectricity.²⁸ In this process, large dams were built and waterfalls and rivers diminished to trickles or altogether disappeared into pipelines. However, the development of watercourses also led to an intense electrification of the country. Some municipalities and local entrepreneurs benefited immensely from this, as did small-scale industry and the general public (Sejersted, 1993, p. 177). Some of the wealthiest (per capita) municipalities in Norway are those whose revenues mainly stem from production of hydroelectricity. Because ownership, due to the foresightedness of national politicians, at least over time was returned to local municipalities, money has remained in the local community.²⁹

²⁷ The government-authorized wolf hunt reached the airwaves of CNN and other international television channels and did not really give Norway the kind of publicity that it had anticipated.

²⁸ This was also linked to the production of fertilizers in part explored by the Norwegian pioneers Christian Birkeland and Samuel Eyde and that led to the establishment of Norsk Hydro 1905.

²⁹ Some of this industry has received state subsidies, and not all said municipalities have become wealthy.

Finally and perhaps also most conspicuously and strongly related to the above discussion, the Norwegian brand of environmentalism, contrary to environmentalism in most other countries, excludes animal rights. The Rootes study also finds that animal rights is not always fully integrated into the overall environmental movement, especially in Britain. However, this partial absence stems mainly from the lack of coordinated action across different environmental fields. In the Norwegian case, exclusion of animal rights from environmentalism takes place on a more general and profound level. Most of the time when people think of environmentalism, animal rights are cognitively not included in the concept (see Chapters 5 and 7). With the exception of the organization NOAH—for animal rights and partly Greenpeace, both of which are part of our study, the official policy of the other 10 environmental organizations in our study is that protection of animals is not part of the definition of environmentalism. This result emerges quite clearly from our interviews with the organizational elites too.³⁰

The absence of animal rights can, in part, be explained by the more overall pragmatic political culture and the rather weak urbanized understanding of nature within that culture. The reason for this being so, we believe, is that the local community perspective within Norwegian environmentalism entails that the protection of nature include the protection of human beings in close relations to nature. The protection of humans in nature is at least as important as the protection of nature itself. Thus, there is *not* a dichotomy between urbanity and humans on one side, and nature and animals on the other. The dichotomy distinguishes between, on the one hand, an urban life and, on the other hand, a local life in close relations to nature. This is the essence of the local community perspective in Norwegian environmentalism.

Two Anomalies Make a Unique Case

The state-friendly society makes the Scandinavian countries distinct compared to other countries. The local community perspective makes Norway distinct compared to other Scandinavian countries. We argue that the conjunction and interaction of these two anomalies, not the least through a tradition of strong local government, has made the Norwegian case of organized environmentalism unique in an international context.

The state-friendly society has moved Norwegian environmental organizations closer to the state structure and, to some extent, made the organizations dependent on the state. However, it has also moved the state closer to the organizations. Norwegian environmental organizations are relatively weak when defined in terms

³⁰ There is also a more moderate animal protection organization in Norway: the Norwegian Federation for Animal Protection, founded in 1859. This organization can, however, not be considered an environmental organization (see Bortne, Grendstad, Selle, & Strømsnes, 2001). See also the discussion on animal welfare in Chapter 7.

of membership numbers and local branches. This is very different from the picture within other parts of the voluntary sector in which single organizations can have several hundred thousand members.³¹ Even so, the environmental organizations really matter. They have been an important part in a process that has transformed the political language and strongly influenced how governmental bodies operate within this important policy field. Whatever the policy area today, environmental concerns have to be taken into account.

A key factor here is that the state responds relatively quickly to demands of environmental organizations. The environmental organizations in the 1960s represented a new issue on which they quickly won public support. Thus, the state co-opted this issue rather fast, not the least because of the state's openness and the impact from civil society. The result is that the organizations, despite their weakness as membership organizations and their lack of ability to generate most of their finances on their own, have obtained political influence. Furthermore, it is very important to keep in mind that environmental issues and thinking did not only influence the state structure as such. Environmental issues and environmental considerations seeped into other voluntary organizations of the civil society more generally (e.g., welfare, culture, and leisure). However, because the other Scandinavian countries also have state-friendly societies with a strong voluntary sector, there must be something else that operates in Norway.

The Norwegian state is relatively new by European standards. Its final independence was obtained in 1905 after half a millennium under Danish (1397–1814) and Swedish (1814–1905) rule. It is a country without aristocracy, where cities are weak and small and where the national myth upholds individual independence, local community self-reliance, and egalitarianism. Norway, without a feudal tradition, has never fostered local elites strong enough to menace the state. No local elites have been able to veto policies and political aims. The state has never used its police or military forces to repress its citizens or hold them at gunpoint.³² The level of societal violence is low and police, by default, carry out their duties unarmed. Citizens have for long trusted the state as a problem-solver and welfare-provider. Taken together, this has led to the growth of a strong and highly legitimate state in close contact with its citizens (see Chapter 8).

References to anything local are often used rhetorically to invoke what basic characteristics of Norwegian politics are and to identify roots of genuine Norwegian values. For example, in the heated debates on Norwegian membership in the European Community in 1972 and in the European Union in 1994, antagonists heralded Norwegian local government as a counterpoint to the ossified and opaque bureaucracy in Brussels. The battle cry was: "It is a long way to Oslo, but the road is even longer to Brussels." Studies of the two referendums on Europe showed that the more peripheral the area, the stronger the no vote. This local

³¹ For further discussions on this discrepancy, see Selle (2000), Sivesind et al. (2002), as well as Wollebæk and Selle (2002a).

³² There are minor exceptions—for instance, the Menstad confrontation in 1931.

perspective is accompanied by a large trust in the state institutions coupled with large discretionary powers in local politics.

The structure of the voluntary sector in Norway highlights the link between state-friendliness and a local orientation. To a very large extent, the same organizations have offices both at the central level as well as at the local level. Norway, to a lesser extent than most countries, developed a kind of dual organizational society (Wollebæk & Selle, 2002a). This lack of a dual organizational society entailed that members who were active at the local level of the organization had fairly unobstructed access to the central level of the organization.³³ The organizational elites, who were negotiating with the state, was, from the perspective of the local members, one of them. This structure was strengthened by the historically close relationship between central and local governments in a system of comprehensive local autonomy. The role of representative government and representative democracy has been very strong in Norwegian politics. Altogether, this is a system in which the combination of civil society and state relations operates very differently from what can be understood on the basis of the Dryzek study.³⁴ Furthermore, an emphasis on different environmental cultures—as the Rootes study does—would not have taken us very far in understanding the uniqueness of and the operation of Norwegian environmentalism.

Because of the state-friendliness and the local community orientation, the environmental movement continued to be pragmatic and moderate and does not hesitate to work closely with governmental bodies. When the organizations are in conflict with governmental bodies, which is not at all that uncommon, it does not seem to have any long-term consequences for the integration between government and organizations. With few exceptions, this way of life resulted in a rather moderate and nonfundamental type of environmental organization. As we will discuss in Part II, this is also strongly reflected in the attitudes and behaviors of the organizations' members. Hardly any of the environmental organizations developed a distinct green ideology. Also, none of the broad environmental organizations include animal liberation as part of environmentalism (see Chapter 7). Today, the Norwegian environmental movement is a rather pragmatic one. The local community orientation simply keeps this tendency in place. The local orientation is an essential part of the political culture in a political system that lacks

³³ For an interesting analysis on how the American voluntary sector also started out as rather integrative across geography, but later became much more dual with less grassroots influence on what is going on at the central level, see Skocpol (2003). This is a development with much in common with what has happened to the Norwegian voluntary sector over the last 20 years.

³⁴ In the Dryzek study, as in so many other studies of the state, you can get the impression that government is almost equal with state bureaucracy. The role of representative government and of the Parliament is played down. Both in general, and particularly in a Scandinavian context, we see no plausible arguments for such a view. For discussions on these points, see Tranvik and Selle (2005) as well as the final report from the "Power and Democracy" research project in Norway (Østerud et al., 2003).

strong subpolitical groups of any type (i.e., groups that for ideological reasons are unconnected to the government). Were the Norwegian society to have such groups at all, they would most likely be found within the religious rather than within the environmental field (Wollebæk et al., 2000). However, the political culture, so to speak, of state-friendliness and local community commitment entails a political system in which a vibrant civil society can be found.

State-friendliness also entails an open polity in which a green party failed to gain electoral success (see Chapter 8). This is partly due to the existing political parties being successful in preempting the environmental issue. However, the failure of a green party is also due to the openness of the polity in which political protests can enter the political system outside of party organizations. Political protest can enter the system through other civil society organizations that often have extensive contact directly with the public bureaucracy. As we have shown elsewhere (Bortne et al., 2002), this type of contact is very common.

Few Norwegian environmental organizations really look beyond national borders. Their orientation has a national and local focus. Only to a limited degree do they have contact with similar organizations in other countries. Although some organizations do move beyond and establish themselves outside of national borders, their move is not considered necessary for the environmental cause.³⁵ This is somewhat surprising when one considers that the environment as such knows no national borders and that most types of pollution, for instance, must be addressed more as an international than a national problem. This intranational position, we think, is a consequence of the organizations being locally oriented and perceiving the state as a friend. This intranational orientation is something other than the Rootes study's emphasis that so much of environmental protest behavior in Europe is national in character and related to political conjunctures in each and every country. In the Norwegian setting, we are talking about a strong cognitive or ideological orientation in which the mental energy is put mainly toward what is within your own borders. Let this be our frame of reference when we later in this book look at who the environmentalists are and how they think and behave.

³⁵ An exception is The Bellona Foundation, which opened offices in the United States, Brussels, and St. Petersburg. Because of government support, The Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature, Nature and Youth and Bellona are also present in north Russia. The international commitment is tempered by the fact that the pollution in north Russia can also severely affect Norway. Both WWF and Greenpeace are international organizations whose disproportionally weak representation in Norway is also a case in point. The Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature is the Norwegian member of Friends of the Earth. However, this has no strong influence on how the organization operates (Bortne et al., 2001; Strømsnes, 2001).

Unique Environmentalism

A Comparative Perspective

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