

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP:

“Translating Welfare and Migration Policies in Canada and Germany – Transatlantic and Transnational Perspectives in Social Work”

17 to 19 October 2013

Frankfurt am Main, Germany (tbc)

Rationale:

In political and scientific debates on migration, Canada and Germany have often been presented as model cases of fundamentally different approaches used by nation-states to deal with immigration. Canada is typically highlighted for its multicultural policy and portrayed as a welcoming nation, whereas perspectives on Germany have focused particularly on its exclusionary guest worker policy, pointing to the long-term negative effects on social cohesion and economic prosperity. This kind of contrast can be helpful to accentuate certain features of nation-state policies and their historical development, e.g. through a focus on immigration in a settler society as against an ethnic nation (Bauder, 2012). Classical comparative studies of national policy models and developments carry the risk of remaining trapped within the limitations of methodological nationalism. In addition, many contributions in the field reduce the issue of migration to a question of immigration and integration into a presumed political community and national-territorial entity with clearly policed borders. However, a simultaneous bidirectional perspective becomes relevant when focusing on the interrelatedness of welfare and migration policies in the context of increasing transnationalization and globalization.

Generally, in the post WW II era welfare was constructed as a field of social policy taking place within the imagined nation-state container (Clarke, 2005; Ferrera, 2005). Thus, welfare represented an important element of the idea of (national) social citizenship based primarily on a (white) male breadwinner model (Procacci, 2010). “Immigration” as a field of inquiry sat at the margins of social policy: if there was any link, the challenge was primarily a question of if/how far migrants should become part of this national system, and how fast this should happen. Apart from this, discussions did not generally reflect the interrelatedness of migration and welfare (Sabates-Wheeler & Waite, 2003).

More recently, in an era of intensified globalization and transnationalization the “old” modes of welfare regulation have started to change crucially (Deacon, 2007; Yeates, 2007; Castles & Davidson, 2000), while all of this generates “spillover” effects on the future of social work (Chambon, Schröer & Schweppe 2012; Lightman, 2012; Negi & Furman, 2010). Academic debates on the new welfare mix, on altered welfare production and on new governance in highly developed countries have been ongoing throughout the last two to three decades, but they still remain largely bogged down by institutional and nation-state-centered views (Faist, 2007).

To widen this perspective, more open approaches directed towards social protection arrangements and practices take into account multiple forms of (legal) organizations below, beyond and across the level of the nation state (Smith, 2012; de Jong, 2005; Benda-Beckmann, F.v. & Benda-Beckmann, K.v., 1994). In this context, highly dynamic and mixed social security mechanisms have especially been nurtured in the fields

of migration studies and transnational studies, which therefore represent a cutting-edge perspective for the discussion on the future of welfare.

For example, today both in Germany and Canada, the organization and regulation of care for young children and frail older people within welfare state systems increasingly display transnational characteristics, shaped by global political economy. While feminist scholars in particular have discussed both care giving and care receiving as central elements of social citizenship ("care-as-citizenship") since the 1970s (Leira 2010; Lister, 2010; 2007), it can be argued provocatively that current forms of care provision facilitated through live-in caregiver programs (Carens, 2008; Bernhard, Landolt & Goldring 2009), or transnational care agencies (Krawietz, 2010) are moving towards a model of "care-without-citizenship". Furthermore, in both countries, there is a growing trend for older people to at least partially move out of national-territorial welfare arrangements and institutions through repeated or enduring migration beyond state borders. Thus they become part of other national forms of welfare provision – whether in Florida, Spain or Thailand – or even of transnationalized business ventures. Reflections on the impacts of changes in care policies – such as the precarious status of migrant care workers, issues regarding the quality of services or mixed forms of care provision – continue in general to retain the national framework as an unquestioned given.

In a broader perspective, changes in migration policy – and in welfare policy – have been theorized and researched with regard to their impacts on citizenship, especially by researchers viewing social rights as a dependent variable of status within a national framework. Thus, both the negotiation of citizenship, especially for migrants with precarious status (Goldring, Berinstein & Bernhard 2009; Basok 2004), and the lived citizenship (Isin 2008) reflected in the experiences of migrants, frontline workers or public agents are becoming important areas of interest. Only a small number of researchers make a strong link between changes in citizenship and welfare regulation on the one hand and migration on the other, taking into account their simultaneous interrelatedness to a number of processes on multiple scales (Çaglar & Glick Schiller, 2011; Bauböck & Guiraudon, 2009; Varsanyi 2006; Desforges, Jones & Woods, 2005). This complex perspective is yet to be explored, although some encouraging work has already been done. For example, it has been argued that citizenship – in the sense of rights that are also granted to non-citizens (i.e. denizens and margizens) – has become broadened relatively through a number of transnational and global processes, e.g. on the UN or EU level (Baganha, 2010; Ferrera, 2005). At the same time such rights have become "thinner" for all residents of any nation state and successful outcomes depend even more upon individual efforts for integration in the wake of welfare cuts and activation policies (Bommes, 2011). This has a double negative effect, especially for migrants at the bottom end of the social ladder, as for them the citizenship offered is even more partial, provisional and precarious (Stasiulis & Bakan, 2003: 14).

Both Germany and Canada have histories of enlightened social policies, though recent years have witnessed dramatic pullbacks (Raithelhuber, 2012). With regard to a number of issues in the fields of welfare and migration in particular, it seems that Canada is taking up ideas and approaches well known in German history, some of which look rather non-progressive (e.g. the expanded "guest worker" or temporary migrant programmes or the "safe country" policy for asylum claimants), whilst others seem to head in the opposite direction, leading to a partial updating of existing policies. However, in other respects it appears that both countries are adjusting their policies in quite a similar direction. All of this contributes

to a reframing and translation of political issues based on a background of established socio-historical patterns, leading to new policies and regulations with yet unexplored consequences.

The organizers of this transatlantic workshop start from the assumption that a transnational outlook based on the examples of Canada and Germany is important in order to better understand the changes, the challenges, and the desire of nation-states to regulate social policy and migration. We state that for an enhanced understanding of the interrelatedness of welfare and migration policies two things are crucial:

- First, it is important to address the developments within the corresponding nation states through a more open perspective that is sensitive to what has been called “methodological nationalism” (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002; Amelina, Nergiz, Faist & Glick Schiller, 2012). Therefore, a critical simultaneous bidirectional perspective based on transnationalism can help to denaturalize our established conceptual and analytical equipment. It is only if we take into account the various dynamics on a local, regional, national, transnational and global level that we can fully comprehend the inner logic of reforms in the area of welfare and migration policy within the nation state.
- Second, at the same time we have to link welfare and migration policy, particularly incorporating the latter into the broad focus of social policy. Hence, the immense welfare reforms in the wake of growing global economic competition and the related public funding cutbacks in both countries have to be analyzed in close relationship to migration and integration policies (Bommes, 2011: 225). Following Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman, “the combination of pressures on welfare expenditure and growing inequalities between migrant and indigenous populations requires an exploration of the interaction of migration with welfare systems, and how, in this context, social protection for migrants can be achieved.” (Sabates-Wheeler & Feldman, 2011: 15)

Workshop profile:

The invitation-only workshop brings together in Germany scholars from Canada, Germany and beyond who are highly experienced in the field of migration, citizenship, welfare and social policy to discuss the abovementioned issues. The international workshop will be organized jointly by the Universities of Hildesheim and Mainz and will be financed mainly through funds provided by the German Research Foundation. The two-day meeting (18 and 19 October 2013) in Frankfurt am Main (to be confirmed) with a fairly small number of contributors (up to 15 people) and some other participants will allow for intensive discussions and personal networking. As a sort of warm-up program, site visits to NGOs and public agencies working in the field of migration and welfare will be organized in the context of a one-day trip prior to the conference (17 October 2013). Therefore, people should arrive one day earlier, i.e. on October 16. The working language is English.

The meeting is part of the activities of the International Research Cluster “Transnational Social Support” (www.tss.uni-mainz.de), a cooperative venture by researchers at six universities around the globe responding to the challenges of the increasing impact of transnational developments and structures upon social work and related fields. Thus, the workshop continues discussions from the “International Workshop: Reimagining Social Policy towards Transnational Social Support” held on 11 and 12 October 2012 at York University, Toronto, Canada. In addition, the meeting is part of the training programme for the members of the Research Training Group “Transnational Social Support” (www.transnationalsupport.de) at the

Universities of Hildesheim and Mainz, Germany, whose members (doctoral students, post-docs and professors) will also participate.

It is planned that the various invited contributions to the workshop as well as its overall results will be published on an internationally renowned platform (e.g. as an anthology or special edition of a journal). Therefore, contributors are expected to present their input based on a first draft of a full paper, which has to be handed in some weeks after the workshop.

Planning Committee:

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Ernie Lightman, PhD, Professor Emeritus Professor at the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto, Canada.

Wolfgang Schröer, PhD, Professor for Social Pedagogy at the University of Hildesheim, Germany, and Speaker of the Research Training Group "Transnational Social Support".

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