

CALL FOR PAPERS

“Borders – transborders – no borders: Problematizing the “figure of the migrant”

Deadline for submission of proposals

August 10, 2014

The journal *Transnational Social Review – A Social Work Journal* (TSR) invites proposal abstracts for the focused topic **“Borders – transborders – no borders: Problematizing the “figure of the migrant”**, guest edited by Cornelia Scheweppe and Nandita Sharma.

Research Interest of the Focused Topic

In the social sciences, social work theory and practice, politics, and everyday life, the “migrant” is the subject of much investigation: who is s/he? How many of them are they? Where do they come from? Why do they come? How do they live? How do they earn their living? How do they participate in society, etcetera, etcetera. Entire research branches, professional fields of work, political discourse and political action center on this “migrant” and her or his “migration.” However, it is seldom, if ever, asked, “what makes a person a migrant?” or “why are only some mobile people called migrants while others are not?” By not asking these questions, the social production of the figure of “the migrant” and its political, economic and social implications remain invisible and depolitized as do the ways that other identifications, such as “national citizen,” are produced in opposition to this figure of “the migrant.”

The figure of “the migrant” is closely linked to the nation state and its borders. Accordingly, along with different ideas of the nation state and its borders, people on the move, categorized as “migrants”, appear to be distinctly different from those categorized as “citizens”, increasingly referred to as its “indigenous” residents. Methodological nationalism and statism has made nation-states seem to be natural units of analysis and have viewed migration as a movement in one direction – from the source country to the receiving country – and have implicitly prescribed a model for (more or less reluctant) integration and adaptation of “migrants” in receiving countries. The concept of *transnationality*, on the other

hand, has uncovered many of the ways that people traverse a world *with* borders. Within this analytics the “migrant” becomes a “transmigrant” who moves across borders and links differently (nationalized) worlds together. A merit of the concept of transnationalization is its contribution to denaturalizing national borders in social sciences, thus showing that they are not the natural limit of people’s lives. It has opened up the analysis of how people (have to) overcome borders and are able to create life worlds not *between* but *within* multiple frames of (national) references. It also shows the constraints national borders impose on people who situate themselves in and are part of more than one nationalized society.

Recently, with the No Border Movements, a more radical approach to national borders has emerged. These movements have not only analysed how people cope with borders but have also offered a challenge to the very existence of borders. They address, among other things, how borders and controls on migration make the lives of those on the move more vulnerable and precarious. Moreover, they highlight how increasingly deadly national borders are.

In the Focused Topic, we wish to problematize the processes by which both the people who move as well as the social effects (as well as affects) of movement themselves are contained and mystified by contemporary nation-states and by the nationalisms that legitimate them. Specifically, we wish to not only address the significance of borders and the kinds of subjectivities and societies that borders produce but to challenge the social implications and violence enacted in their protection.

We invite papers which contribute to the analysis on the following topics:

- What is accomplished by turning some people into “migrants”? How has this historically been accomplished? What are contemporary manifestations of these processes? What kinds of societies are constructed in the process?
- What are the social processes that produce human mobility – particularly of certain people - as a “problem” which researchers, policy makers and activists attempt to offer “solutions” for?
- The significance of various ideological practices or hegemonic regulatory discourses (e.g. nationalism, racism, hetero-patriarchies) to the production of the figure of “the migrant.”
- The relationship between the expansion of capitalist social relations and nation-state regulations and restrictions on human mobility.
- What other figures are constructed when the figure of “the migrant” is naturalized?
- What are some of the efforts taken to repoliticize and denaturalize the figure of “the migrant”?

Requirements for Submissions

A proposal, in the form of an abstract, should be no more than 500 words in length and should address the following: background of the proposed paper; outline of content; and main discussion points.

For those proposals accepted, the deadline for submission of full articles is Sept 30, 2014. The following table contains all deadlines and the time schedule of the focused topic on **“Borders – transborders – no borders: Problematizing the “figure of the migrant””**:

August 10, 2014:	Submission of proposal abstracts
Sept 30, 2014:	Submission of full articles
Oct. 1 - Oct. 31, 2014:	Peer Review
Nov.1 - Dec. 10, 2014:	Revision of articles, if necessary
Dec. 10, 2014:	Final submission of publishable articles
March 2015:	Publication

Articles are to be up to 8,000 words in length. The authors are responsible for submitting proof-read articles. The instructions for authors are available under: <http://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?journalCode=rtsr20&page=instructions#.U6glxIRhCCg>

Contact

Inquiries and all proposals should be sent to the guest editors of the focused topic on:

Cornelia Schweppe

Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz
Institute of Education
55099 Mainz, Germany
Phone: +49-(0)6131 39-20727
e-mail: c.schweppe@uni-mainz.de

Nandita Sharma

University of Hawaii at Manoa
Department of Sociology
Saunders 247, 2424 Maile Way
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA 96822
e-mail: nsharma@hawaii.edu