

nalstaaten und die Erforschung lokaler, regionaler Formen der Sozialen Arbeit einander gut ergänzen – ein Zugang, der innovativ ist und neue Quellen einbringt. Die Berücksichtigung der subjektiven Perspektive erlaubt Einblicke in die Ordnungs- und Erfahrungsstrukturen des Alltags. Die Einsicht, dass jede Erinnerung mit der Gegenwart und mit den Bedürfnissen nach einer eigenen Vergangenheit verbunden ist, und dass die Biographie jenes Feld ist, in dem Spannungen zwischen privatem und öffentlichem Gedächtnis ausgetragen werden, hätten den Interpretationsrahmen noch erweitern können.

Die Vielfalt der Themen und Zugriffsweisen und die Dynamik des behandelten Zeitraums ergeben ein höchst vielschichtiges Bild der Geschichte der Sozialen Arbeit in Osteuropa. Der Band regt zu einem detaillierten gesamteuropäischen Vergleich an. In der Gesamtschau unterstreichen die exemplarisch konkreten Beiträge eindrücklich die Relativität westlicher Modelle zur Geschichte der Wohlfahrt, die bisher die Geschichte der Sozialen Arbeit in Osteuropa nur spärlich einbezogen haben. Ein solcher – nächster – Schritt wird sicher zum Abbau von asymmetrischen Vergleichen (ein Staat oder eine Region versus „Westeuropa“) führen. Die eindrucksvolle Arbeit¹ weckt das Interesse an ähnlichen Formen der Vernetzung und Zusammenarbeit.

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Sabine Hering and Berteke Waaldijk, with Kurt Schilde and Dagmar Schulte, **Guardians of the Poor – Custodians of the Public. Welfare History in Eastern Europe 1900–1960/Helfer der Armen – Hüter der Öffentlichkeit. Die Wohlfahrtsgeschichte Osteuropas 1900–1960**, Opladen: Barbara Budrich 2007, 338 S., EUR 36,-, ISBN 978-3-938094-58-7.

The book contains comparative historical research about the development of social work and welfare policies in Eastern Europe from 1900 to 1960. It comes as a result of the

¹ Das Netzwerk vereint heute mehr als 100 WissenschaftlerInnen aus ca. 30 vor allem europäischen Staaten. Im Rahmen des Projektes (Oktober 2003–September 2005) sind drei internationale und acht nationale Konferenzen organisiert und bereits vier Sammelbände erschienen: Sabine Hering u. Berteke Waaldijk Hg., Die Geschichte der Sozialen Arbeit in Europa (1900–1960). Wichtige Pionierinnen und ihr Einfluss auf die Entwicklung internationaler Organisationen, Opladen 2002; Sabine Hering u. Berteke Waaldijk Hg., History of Social Work in Europe (1900–1960). Female Pioneers and their Influence on the Development of International Social Organizations, Opladen 2003; Kristina Popova u. Milena Angelova Hg., Obstestveno podpomagane i socialna rabota v Bulgarija. Istorija, instituzii, ideologii, imena [Öffentliche Fürsorge und Soziale Arbeit in Bulgarien. Geschichte, Institutionen, Ideologien, Namen], Blagoevgrad 2005; Pavel Romanov u. Elena Jarskaia-Smirnova Hg., Nuzda i porjadok: Istorija socialnoj rabotiji v Rossii, XX v. [Not und Ordnung: Geschichte der Sozialen Arbeit in Russland im XX. Jahrhundert], Saratov 2005. Weitere Publikationen sind angekündigt; Forschungsergebnisse auch unter <www.sweep.uni-siegen.de>.

research project “Welfare History in Eastern Europe 1900–1960”, led by Sabine Hering and Berteke Waaldijk, with the cooperation of Kurt Schilde and Dagmar Schulte; the preface is written by Walter Lorenz. The bi-lingual book describes the results of case studies about the history of social work in Eastern Europe in eight countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russia, and Slovenia. Without sufficient knowledge of the social work conditions in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, it would be impossible to write a complete history of social work in the united Europe where ‘East’ and ‘West’ no longer mean ‘communist’ and ‘capitalist’ countries. Knowledge about the history of social work in all European countries is indeed a requirement for any informed reflection on the future of a ‘social Europe’.

A glance at the state of research in European welfare history at the beginning of the 21st century shows that the research level within the different countries differs widely. The most serious deficits in this field however can be discovered in Eastern Europe. The research situation here is particularly difficult because social welfare traditions had been interrupted in the 1940s. The interest in the history of social work in Western Europe was not shared by the East European countries. The issue was not regarded as a relevant area of research there. This is why studies in this field, which appeared in the 1990s, have to be considered as opening a new field of research.

The major questions addressed in “Guardians of the Poor – Custodians of the Public. Welfare History in Eastern Europe 1900–1960” concern the development of the basic political and legal conditions; identifying clienteles and their most important problems; the development of socio-political and theoretical ideas of social welfare, as well as groups, and organizations responsible for initiating social work; and finally major themes prevailing in the respective practice of social work.

The comparative work in social welfare history is important because the historians and social scientists deal with a topic that by definition contains elements which transcend the national context: social welfare requires descriptions of need, poverty, and disadvantage that cannot be framed as national issues. These phenomena are described in the discourse of humanity: human rights, common human needs, and love of your fellow man. One of the most important results of research project ‘History of Social Work in Eastern Europe’ is that ideas and practices of the social welfare and social work have been developed in cooperation. Many of the trends and developments that have been revealed and described for the first time were part of international or trans-national movements. They were inspired by international ideologies, they were organized in international cooperation, and they followed areas other than domestic examples.

The dynamics in social assistance, social security, and social services in Eastern Europe took place in contexts where the nation state was not self-evident. Both, supra- and sub-national alternative ways to social welfare have been discovered as the case studies make clear. This does not only shed new light on the way social workers developed their relationship to different political regimes and authorities in Eastern Europe. It also puts the well-known histories of welfare states in a distinctly new perspective. The

diversity of the histories of social work in different countries in Eastern Europe suggests that both local and international pathways towards social welfare may constitute more typical examples than the national histories of the rise of welfare states in western liberal democracies. Many welfare initiatives in these histories were organized on local or regional basis. They were run by private denominational, national or ethnic associations that remained strictly separate from the frequently hostile state authorities. Often social work was planned and carried out by ethnic or religious groups as a specific effort to protect and help minority communities.

At the same time, many of the initiatives in the field of social welfare were the direct result of the international movements and developments. The struggle of women for active participation in the public sphere was unmistakably an international phenomenon, as was the development of professional education and the interaction between medical and social care. The histories of social work in Eastern Europe demonstrate that the rise of professional social work cannot be understood within the frame of national history.

The results of the eight national studies make it convincingly clear that explanation of the advancement of professional social work as a middle class reaction to industrial poverty is too limited. Schools of social work, pioneers and systematic professionalisation can also be found in countries that did not feel the impact of industrialization in the 19th century. It developed in states where middle classes were extremely small in comparison to those in Western Europe. One of the 'alternative' explanations for the rise of social work as a professional identity offered by the Eastern European researchers points in the direction of gender and gendered definitions of the public sphere.

With the results of the research in Eastern Europe new conclusions are available and make clear that social work is neither just an extension of a repressive state, nor can it be seen as exclusively belonging to liberal democracies. Over 60 years of different forms of social work have been developed under widely varying political conditions. The authors draw the conclusion that their studies of social work in eight different countries provide readers with a wealth of knowledge about how social workers have functioned in different political regimes, ranging from liberal and democratic to authoritarian, from communist to nationalist and fascist. Furthermore they can explain the tensions that every form of social work is subjected to: the accountability towards the organization that provides social welfare and on the other hand the accountability towards the clients, the people who require protection and support. The analysis reveal that the differences of the welfare systems were not only caused by political conditions, but also influenced by a variety of religious and cultural factors resulting in specific characteristics which went beyond political borders and led to links hardly noticed up to now.

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