

CALL FOR PAPERS

Changing Political Regime, Implications for Social Policy: Putting Turkey in Comparative Perspective

Humboldt Universität zu Berlin
December 12-13, 2019

We live through tumultuous times. Nationalist discourses are once again on the rise, societies are increasingly polarized and liberal democracy is under threat. These changes prompt scholars across various disciplines to explore actors, mechanisms, and conditions of global trends towards democratic backsliding. Surprisingly, implications of these simultaneous transformations for state-citizen relations have received scant attention, and so has the meaning of these changes for the provision and exercise of different types of rights been overlooked.

This workshop aims to fill this gap by shifting the focus from emotional catalysts of political regime change such as fear, resentment, and insecurity to its relationship with social policy. Strongly influenced by TH Marshall's (1950) reading of the welfare state as the culmination of the expansion of rights, most social policy research avoided exploring contexts, where synergies between civil, political and social rights do not prevail. Yet, trade-offs between these different types of rights present themselves in many parts of the world. We remember, as Michael Mann (1984) argued, that authoritarian regimes are more willing to curb civil and political rights than social rights. We also know that in many countries, it was authoritarian regimes that built the welfare state in the first place (Flora and Heidenheimer 1981, Mares and Carnes 2009). It is clear, therefore, that there is no linear relationship between political regime type and social policy expansion.

In this workshop, we plan to explore the complex interactions between social policy choices and types of political regimes around the world, with a focus on putting the case of Turkey in a comparative perspective. In particular, we aim to concentrate on the changing political sociology and/or political economy of social rights in countries that experience democratic backsliding. We welcome empirically grounded and theoretically informed papers focusing on these intricate interactions addressing the following themes:

I. Social Policy and Political Regime

- Do changes in social policy play a role in changes in the political regime (and vice versa)? If so, how? In particular, is there a connection between social policy expansion and democratic backsliding?

II. Social Policy, Social Rights and Constitutions

- Does democratic backsliding disrupt the link between social policy and social rights?
- What role do constitutional commitments to social rights have in this respect?

III. Interaction of Social, Civil and Political Rights

- What meaning do social rights have when civil and political rights are incomplete?
- How do these different types of rights interact?

- Under what conditions do we find trade-offs (or synergies) between social rights on the one hand, and civil and political rights on the other?
- How do ordinary citizens perceive social policy expansion in places that experience democratic backsliding? And what kind of implications do these perceptions have for their understanding of social rights?

The workshop will take place on 12-13 December 2019 at Humboldt University in Berlin.

Please send your title and abstract (about 300 words) to blickwechsel.workshop@gmail.com by 30 June 2019.

We will inform you on your application status by 31 July 2019.

Applications that are approved will need to send in a draft paper (about 6000-8000 words) by 30 November 2019. Each paper will be assigned a discussant.

Travel and accommodation costs of applicants will be reimbursed (up to a certain level). We are exploring avenues for publication.

Key Dates:

30 June 2019: deadline for submission of abstracts
31 July 2019: Notification of acceptance
30 November 2019: Deadline for paper submission
12/13 December 2019: Workshop in Berlin

Conveners:

Prof. Dr. Lutz Leisering, Universität Bielefeld
Prof. Dr. Silvia von Steinsdorff, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Dr. Sinem Adar, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Dr. Kerem Gabriel Öktem, Universität Bielefeld
Dr. Ertuğ Tombuş, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin