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Towards a Global Gender Democracy? Rethinking Citizenship in the Context of the Globalization of Gender Relations¹

“Freedom, autonomy and the right to be different – central credos of democratic citizenship – are pitched against regulating forces of modernity and the state and subverted by discourses of ‘culture and tradition’ – of nationalism, religiosity and the family.” (Yuval-Davis/Werbner 1999: 1)

This chapter focuses on a specific aspect of the current discourse on the interconnection of demographic change, restructuring of the welfare state and gender relations in Europe²: on the globalization of gender relations³ and the meaning of citizenship. Driven by the promise of efficiency, European welfare states are restructuring their government policies. These changes concern many aspects of life and have significant effects on social rights, especially re-

1 For comments on an earlier version thanks to Heike Kahlert, Sabrina Dittus, and Sandra Schiller.

2 Here, ‘Europe’ refers to a geographic construction with varying borders throughout history; it also refers to a normative construction of citizenship, as will be discussed later in the text; moreover, and relatedly, ‘Europe’ functions here as a marker to bring universal theoretical aspirations down to their regional and temporal situatedness. European Union (EU), by contrast, refers to a clearly defined set of countries, although the number is also subject to historic change and the countries involved are not equal to the countries involved in the contract regarding the border policies of the ‘Schengen area’. Since for the different questions discussed in this paper different aspects of ‘Europe’ are relevant, I will employ these different terms and meanings, according to the issues discussed below. Although some aspects discussed here might be neither restricted to ‘Europe’ nor unique to its borders, it is for the sake of the argument (to point out some contradictions) that I focus here on this part of the world.

3 Whereas Connell (2002) means with the notion of “the globalization of gender relations” the general widening of the feminist research perspective from a rather local or national one to a more global scale, I focus here on the global interdependence and interaction of gender relations with its resulting problems and chances. He also uses “gender democracy” synonymously for gender equity, whereas I explore here problems and chances of citizenship as a democratic institution in the context of global interrelations of gender.

garding the cutback in public care services. At the same time, gender relations are changing in the sense that women, traditionally the main care providers for their relatives, now play an ever greater part in the labour market.⁴ In this context, the question regarding who will care for children and the elderly becomes increasingly important, since within the debate on demographic change in Europe the prognosis of an ageing population is addressed as a serious political problem.⁵ It is important to look at migration in this context because to a great extent female migrants from all over the world working as care providers under precarious conditions fill the gap left by these developments discussed so eagerly. I argue that these migrants seem to embody the globalization of gender relations, which appears as a consequence of the developments mentioned above. By contrast, they are, similar to care providers in earlier times, barely mentioned in these debates, rarely have access to social benefits and are seldom granted the rights of full citizens. Furthermore, I argue that these ‘cosmopolitan’⁶ care providers challenge traditional concepts of citizenship on an epistemic, normative and empirical level in far reaching ways.

Citizenship has been a contested element in debates of political philosophy and in struggles against oppression in Europe. From the very beginning of these debates and struggles, two questions have always existed: “Who should be granted citizenship?” and “What rights and duties come with citizenship?” Since the eighteenth century, nation-states with formally independent governments were constructed as the main political powers. Thus, it has been a crucial question to determine which people living on a nation-state’s territory are understood and registered as its citizens with clearly defined formal rights and duties (Küster 2007).⁷ It was during the French Revolution of 1789 when the demand for equal rights for everyone by vast numbers of women and men of all social backgrounds could no longer be ignored (Blättler 1995). However, instead of these rights being granted, this demand provoked a problematic dis-

4 Cf., for example, the chapters by Gabriele Michalitsch and Nina Berven in this book.

5 The chapters by Ute Karl and Jutta Hartmann in this book discuss a current change in the meaning of ageing from a problem of care to an economic resource for the society, which contains the danger of tabuing the fact that elderly people often lack the health conditions for ‘active ageing’.

6 I borrow this term from Maria Rerrich’s book title (cf. Rerrich 2006).

7 Küster argues that it was the struggle of the authorities with the migration of the poor in the context of the disintegration of the feudal estate system in Europe which gave the initiative for the codification of citizenship at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Küster 2007: 197-199).

course on sameness as the precondition for equal rights, which has remained vivid until today, even in feminist debates (Nagl-Docekal 2004).⁸ As I will try to show in what follows, it is this normative dimension of homogeneity which is still problematic in striving for a pluralistic understanding of European citizens and for the struggle towards a global gender democracy in times of manifold migration processes.

During the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, Europeans migrated in large numbers to other parts of the world. By contrast, since the second half of the twentieth century, a significant number of people have migrated into Europe. This migration has been encouraged, organized, regulated and hindered since then in highly ambivalent and even contradictory ways by national and European policies (Metz-Göckel et al. 2008; Transnational Newsletter 2008).⁹ In the context of globalization and a multitude of migration processes, the very idea of citizenship has been contested as patriarchal and nationalist, as will be discussed in the first part of this chapter. Especially within feminist and post-colonial discourse, it has been argued that in addition to formal rights and responsibilities, belonging and participation are also key elements of democratic citizenship (Mouffe 1993; Sevenhuijsen 1998; Yuval-Davis/Werbner 1999).¹⁰ It has been argued that gender norms and welfare policies as well as gendered segregation of the labour market and gendered division of labour, for example, produce privileges and disadvantages when it comes to the real practise of citizenship. The question of belonging has thus been discussed less in the context of belonging to a homogeneously imagined (national or transnational) community but more in the context of whose issues are taken as relevant (by whom) to belong to a public agenda.

8 Nagl-Docekal argues that it is neither important nor necessary to be a woman or to identify with women in order to struggle for feminist goals like equal rights and opportunities for all genders, since this demand constitutes the basis of modern democracy (Nagl-Docekal 2004: 154).

9 Cf. especially Claudia Finotelli’s discussion of Italian and German migration policies between restrictive purposes and structural demand (Finotelli 2008); cf. also Krystyna Slany’s and Magdalena Slusarczyk’s discussion of the Polish immigration policy and (almost lacking) immigrant integration policy (Slany/Slusarczyk 2008); cf. also the discussion of ‘urgent measures concerning public security’ enacted by the Italian parliament in July 2008 in the Transnational Newsletter 2008.

10 Mouffe argues that a democratic concept of citizenship needs to connect the ideal of rights and pluralism with ideas of the public as a lived space and ethical-political issues (Mouffe 1993: 73).

In this way, I would like to relate the discourse on citizenship to questions of the globalization of gender relations. Gender relations have changed in the following way, whether as a result of the feminist movement – where the financial independence of women has been promoted as the basis for female autonomy¹¹ – or as a result of economic or demographic developments. Even in western European welfare states, women increasingly participate in the economic work force while care work is not distributed more equally in a significant way between the genders (Ernst 2005). In this context, there is a growing female migration from non-European countries as well as Central and Eastern European countries to work in private households, as care workers and for erotic services in the sex industry in all parts of the EU. The legal status of these migrants is often ‘undocumented,’ which means that they are illegalized (Lutz 2006; Rerrich 2006). At the same time, there is a growing demand for the migration of mostly male specialists of some professions into some European countries, for example technological engineers into Germany. They are offered a special political status and social benefits. I will discuss the following questions: In what way does the globalization of gender relations challenge current nationally defined concepts of citizenship? Who is welcome under which conditions and why? How could we rethink citizenship in the context of the globalization of gender relations? Can the developments mentioned above and described in more detail in the other chapters of this book, framed as demographic change, restructuring of the welfare state and gender relations, be understood as a cause or catalyst for the globalization of gender relations? Are these processes undermining or strengthening the quest for universal human rights? Can these global interconnections of gender relations lead to a global gender democracy?

In the following, I will analyze the normative implications of the idea of citizenship and relate them to the empirical plurality of genders and cultures in Europe. I will argue for an understanding of citizenship that encompasses, but also transcends, the dimension of rights and duties to make room for an understanding of citizenship as a local, national and transnational democratic practise. I will analyze the effect of normative assumptions of citizenship on

11 Although this goal has been contested and was in no way the only one nor has been financial independence discussed as the only means for it, both have been nevertheless prevailing and taken ‘seriously’ for a neo-liberal strategy in national policies to recruit women for the labour market (Möhle 2005).

the practise of citizenship for formal citizens and for those with a precarious legal status and discuss examples of the struggle for a global gender democracy. In taking the UN declaration for human rights and the idea of citizenship as a democratic practise and political measure, I will argue that striving for a global gender democracy is a promising way to deal with the globalization of gender relations. Feminist networking beyond divisions of power on both theoretical and practical levels seems to be a fruitful path.

Citizenship

In Europe, the idea of citizenship goes back to Aristotle, who conceptualized citizenship as the demarcation of the ‘polis’ and the household. The polis was the place where free men could gather as citizens for political participation and transcendence of bodily needs, whereas the household was understood as the place where necessary life-sustaining activities were carried out by women and slaves (Spelman 1989). This means that the idea of citizenship in Greek antiquity has been developed in correspondence with a rigid gender and class order. In following the idea of citizenship promoted by Aristotle, citizenship has been conceptualized in European political philosophy until recently as a dimension of life which belongs to the public sphere without considering relations of care or other necessities and dependencies crucial for the citizen to appear as a self-sufficient individual (Tronto 1993). The philosopher Selma Sevenhuijsen describes this view of citizenship as being consistent with neo-liberalism today

“because it corresponds to the mode of regulation which guides the restructuring of many Western welfare states at this historical juncture (...) and fits into the programme of privatization of public services and the growth of market-oriented forms of regulations” (Sevenhuijsen 1998: 130).

Sevenhuijsen criticizes this view because it implies that individuals ought to

“translate their care needs into market-oriented behaviour, thus conceiving themselves as care consumers, participating in a system of care provisions which works according to the principles of supply and demand” (Sevenhuijsen 1998: 130).

She makes clear that in such a view citizenship is deeply related to economic, social and political independence. Traditionally, this ideal of economic, social and political independence, she continues, functions as a norm of exclusion from social participation in Europe. As we will see, this ideal and its exclusive effects are highly gendered.

In contrast, democratic citizenship, as Sevenhuijsen suggests, tries to avoid this gendered ideal of economic, social and political independence as a precondition for citizenship and brings other ideals into play. Democratic citizenship assumes that people are able to judge between good and bad and can therefore be held accountable for their actions. Citizens, in this account, have to be capable of dealing with the radical alterity of human subjects by recognizing their individuality and diversity while at the same time conceiving of them as equals. In her discussion of the feminist slogan ‘the personal is political,’ Selma Sevenhuijsen rejects identity as a suitable basis for political action and promotes the idea of active citizenship:

“Here the public sphere is seen as a meeting ground where people shape identities through action and interaction, through the exchange of narratives and opinion, through deliberation and debate, and where, in so doing, they can continually revise and transcend their images of ‘self’ and ‘other’. Here identity depends more on what you do than what you are. Rather than being fixed, it remains open to change. The public sphere then enables people to act in the sense of ‘starting something anew’.” (Sevenhuijsen 1998: 14)

In the context of this paper, this means that citizenship is not restricted in its meaning to formal rights and duties. Democratic citizenship is understood here as active citizenship, as a practice. Formal rights and duties would be no more than the potential basis or starting point for the ‘real’ capacity and experience of being an active citizen. Below I will discuss if it is a necessary basis. But first it is important to investigate further the strategies of inclusion and exclusion in Europe involved in the concept of citizenship and in its practice.

Citizenship has been celebrated as a realization of human rights and the foundation of constitutional democracy in Europe. What does it mean to say that it is constructed in exclusionary ways not only in the past, but also in the present? To understand this, it is necessary to turn the focus from formal rights to real chances for social, economic and political participation and representation. In this way, we can investigate the access to citizenship in Europe and

ask how it is regulated along norms of gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, religion and education. This is the recent result of various analyses from scholars of different disciplines from all over Europe:

“Citizenship is never only a legal status; its inclusive character depends on many contexts: it has to do with cultural diversity, recognition of difference, access to professions and hierarchies on the labour market, not least in universities with traditions in political as well as visual representation, with institutional practices of openness.” (Oleksy et al. 2008: 10)

This means that the inclusive or exclusive quality of citizenship is deeply related to social hierarchies and cultural norms. This result puts into question the hope that equality on the formal level of basic rights has the programmatic power to shape reality. If formal citizens do not all have the same opportunities to experience and to practice their citizenship, we have to look more closely at the relationship between citizenship and social inequalities.

In their collaborative work *Gendering Citizenship in Western Europe. New Challenges for Citizenship Research in a Cross-National Context*, experts from different European countries address this field of study. They investigate how citizenship works in quite ambivalent ways, functioning at the same time as inclusionary promise and as exclusionary practice both for marginalized groups within nation-states and for migrants and asylum seekers moving between them. Moreover, citizenship seems to have simultaneously an emancipatory and disciplinary quality. Policies that require the search for paid work as a condition of social security rights, for example, can have emancipatory effects for some women, whereas for those who prefer to provide full-time care it has rather disciplinary qualities. In a similar way, language requirements for legal citizenship depend in their emancipatory and disciplinary dimension on the context of the educational capacities of persons addressed and the opportunities of courses (Lister et al. 2007: 11).

Therefore, the authors consider citizenship as a lived experience and believe that citizenship may be experienced by people within the same country differently, depending on factors such as age, class, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality and (dis)ability (cf. Lister et al. 2007: 2). They take ‘regime’ as a current, useful notion to compare dominant institutional patterns and policy logics of social welfare across national borders in Europe to show how different elements of citizenship are interconnected with it:

“The lived experience of gendered citizenship in any particular country is heavily influenced by the dominant gender regime as well as by the nature of the welfare and care regimes, which govern social citizenship – the nexus of rights and responsibilities underpinning individuals’ welfare, broadly understood – in particular” (Lister et al. 2007: 3).

Because these institutional patterns and policy logics define the way persons are enabled or obliged as citizens within certain national borders, the authors speak of various forms of regime, welfare, care, gender, citizenship and migration, which constitute formal citizenship (cf. Lister et al. 2007: 4).

With this diversification and contextualization of citizenship, the authors strive for a theoretical positioning within and beyond the feminist criticism of traditional philosophical approaches on citizenship as liberalism and communitarianism. In criticizing the ‘false universalism’ of both of these traditional approaches for perpetuating inequalities, they conceptualize citizenship as something that is not static but develops in response to individual and collective practises of persons through political and civil society associations (Lister et al. 2007: 10). Furthermore, they relate the critique on the gendered domestic division of labour and the status accorded to unpaid care work to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Although they consider that global care dynamics point to the notion of a global or cosmopolitan citizenship, on the conceptual level the authors do not follow this path any further (Lister et al. 2007: 8, 173).¹²

On the empirical level, however, the study provides for an in-depth analysis into the policies of the European Union that frame citizenship within and at its borders. Through the *Charter of Fundamental Rights*, which was adopted in 2000, the European Commission encouraged citizenship practice in informal cross-EU networks. This is an interesting move, since the legislation concerning the legal requirements for acquiring citizenship is still a rather national affair and varies widely throughout the countries of the EU. The length of residency necessary to gain nationality, for example, varies from five to ten years and language requirements do not exist everywhere (Lister et al. 2007: 81-84). But the logic and dynamics of migration, multiculturalism and gender also differ. Recent debates about forced and arranged marriages and the headscarf, or hijab, and the divergent ‘solutions’ in national policies,

¹² For a discussion of cosmopolitanism see Mouffe (2005) and Nagl-Docekal (2005).

for example, bring into play contradictory attitudes about the relation between European norms of modernity and risks and rights of cultural and religious diversity as well as individual rights to express one’s uniqueness or anti-normative resistance (Lister et al. 2007: 90-100). The authors show that cultural practices and their meaning are always subject to change within local and national contexts. Moreover, although migrant women live under different pressures, young women often successfully navigate between majority norms and their own family culture, between claims of gender equality and rights to cultural respect:

“On the whole, European states’ reaction has been to revert to a model of integration based on greater assimilation into the nation state and its cultural ‘traditions’ and less to an embrace of a multicultural, post-nationalist society [...]. However, even this shift is not quite so determined because, at the same time, the very development of supranational governance sets in motion a notion of citizenship that exists beyond the nation state, even though it is still territorialised within the walls of ‘Fortress Europe’.” (Lister et al. 2007: 90)

I agree with the authors that it is precisely this tension and the emerging fluid space between overdetermined national ideas of citizenship and envisioned transnational one’s, whether inside or outside the ‘Fortress Europe’, which seems to provide for – although precarious – chances for new democratic practices of citizenship. Yet, as I will show with the following example from Slovenia, normative ideas of homogeneous European citizens combined with a lack of a positive attitude towards alterity can hinder those who are considered not to match the norm, to make use of this emerging fluid space and participate in public discourses.

The concept of ‘lived citizenship’ (Lister 2007) not only allows us to discuss unequal access to social rights and normative barriers to the experience of citizenship within one country and between different states in the EU. It also allows us to discuss the ambivalences and tensions of young women and men stretching from belonging to the Slovenian nation to understanding themselves as European citizens. Along these lines, Daniela Gronold aims to trace cultural inscriptions within citizenship requirements:

“Since European nation states mainly base their imagination of identity on homogeneity, newcomers who do not fit into the ‘compulsory normality’ of a state have trouble obtaining citizenship.” (Gronold 2008: 38)

At the same time, the European citizen is constructed not as a diverse subject with manifold cultural affiliations and various political belongings, but around so fluid but powerful values as the secular, modern, progressive, democratic and capitalist. Therefore, the self-perception of people from the new member-states is deeply influenced by these values. As a consequence, new exclusions arise and old ones are hardened in Slovenia, as Gronold delineates:

“The interviews show how the feelings of belonging to Europe support the idea that a ‘normal’ Slovenian citizen is Christian, non-Roma, non-Islamic and does not belong to the Balkans” (Gronold 2008: 51).

The author argues that exclusive public discourses and practices contribute to the expectation that marginalized people live with their identities in private and individual isolation and are thus prevented from political agency with other people, and thus from ‘lived citizenship’.

In the struggle for a concept of citizenship in Europe, which values diversity and plurality, it seems important to not only ascertain diversity in EU policies and regulations. Beyond that, it seems necessary to contest the production of norms of homogeneity for ideal European citizens. Yet, to decipher norms is not easy because they are not necessarily explicit like laws or rules but instead operate within social practices as implicit standards of normalization (Butler 2004: 41).¹³ Thus, to overcome homogeneity as the norm for European citizens would break radically with those strands of European knowledge production that related material differences of a person’s body, wealth or income and cultural differences of a person’s education, religion, nationality or tradition to a strictly hierarchical value system. This holds for both public discourse and practices, since we have seen that these dimensions are deeply inter-related. This might open paths to enable everyone to live a ‘lived citizenship’ in Europe. To celebrate the heterogeneity and plurality of genders and cultures, which have always been an empirical reality in Europe, not only on the same legal ground but also on the basis of an equal material condition, would realize those ideas on citizenship which have thus far been classified as utopian.¹⁴

13 As Butler describes it: “Norms may or may not be explicit, and when they operate as the normalizing principle in social practice, they usually remain implicit, difficult to read, discernible most clearly and dramatically in the effects that they produce” (Butler 2004: 41).

14 Maria do Mar Castro Varela investigates the utopias of female migrants as visions of critical members of a democratic society (Castro Varela 2007).

Globalization

At the beginning of the second wave of the international women’s movement in the 1970s, the universality of gender hierarchies was a main ideological point of departure in the mobilization against gender hierarchies in Europe. In arguing against the discrimination of all women and in promoting slogans as ‘we all have the same (hi)story’, the idea was to unify – and strengthen – the worldwide struggle against the oppression of women in all countries. Since then, it has become evident that although ‘man’ signified and still signifies the privileged gender position in most of the social and political settings in this world, gender privileges and gender hierarchies differ widely throughout the globe.

In terms of areas and topics relevant for discrimination, of the relations of other aspects of social hierarchies, as well as of the dimension of difference constructed between genders, many different stories are told. For example, exclusive binary and dichotomous gender orders are much more fundamental in Christian and Muslim cultures than in cultures inspired by Buddhism, Hinduism and shamanism. Moreover, it has been shown that gender relations are not only interconnected with other social privileges, but that, most importantly, gender relations are interconnected internationally through manifold histories of class struggles, of colonization, de-colonization, post- and neo-colonialism. It is because of these connections that privileges and discrimination cannot be understood in absolute terms but need to be investigated as complex relations of power. Therefore, gender hierarchies are neither universal nor constructed independently from each other on a national, regional or local level, but are highly interrelated on a global dimension and in many ways. This becomes evident when we take into account the power relations intertwined in the situation of the ‘cosmopolitan’ care providers in Europe today.

Transnational interconnections of gender relations have been articulated from the start of the movement, but have nevertheless only very slowly begun to enter dominant debates of feminist research and politics in Europe. In this sense, it is important to study how gender relations are interrelated on a global dimension in order to understand the different stakes of various actors involved in the global “politics of reality” (Frye 1983: 155). Thus, I do not use the term ‘the globalization of gender relations’ to mean that the worldwide interconnection of gender relations is something rather new or that it has just recently come into existence. Instead, I wish to employ this term to refer to the

power relations involved in epistemic politics as a necessary process that can make visible, with a widened epistemic horizon, those who are too many and too near to be ignored any longer. To explain this, it is helpful to point out the difference between the concept of universality and the concept of globalization. Universality is of crucial importance and epistemic power in philosophy. For example, to argue for human rights on a universal basis has been very important since the Enlightenment as a power of rationality within conflicts between governments of nation-states and their citizens as well as the citizens of other nation-states. Yet, the idea of the universal human has been criticized for its orientation on a masculinist and Eurocentric ideal of the citizen. Moreover, universality has also been criticized for ignoring the historical, social and cultural situatedness of empirical realities. To counter this criticism, others have argued that to focus on the rational plausibility of the universality of human rights as the basis of citizenship represents the very aim to overcome empirical power relations on a programmatic level.

Globalization, by contrast, emphasizes the empirical dimension of a worldwide process. The concept describes mostly recent developments since the late twentieth century, sometimes even by ignoring long-term interrelations of historical processes. Since globalization stands for economic, political, social, and cultural processes, it can shed light on power relations and can show the politics of location in different contexts. For example, the lack of respect for human rights concerning the working conditions in transnational enterprises in free trade zones can be described as part of the globalization process as well as the struggle for those rights. On the other side, migration processes into Europe have been described as the danger that Europe would become ‘overloaded’ by too many foreigners and therefore migration ought to be restricted.¹⁵ Nevertheless, global changes bring power relations into play, as new actors emerge in Europe and struggle for survival, for sovereignty and citizenship, as we will see in what follows. In this context, it is interesting to have a closer look at the interconnection of gender arrangements in Europe and migration from many different parts of the world to Europe. As I showed in the previous section, on a formal level, citizenship is still a privilege to be

¹⁵ It is in this context that meanwhile 25 European states (not corresponding with the members of the EU) signed the so called Schengen agreement between 1985-2007, which created an area without inner borders but spot check controls and strengthened border controls with non-member states.

entitled by a sovereign government of a nation-state. But – as I will show in the next part – on the level of social rights and opportunities for participation in the social and political settings of a state, it is an issue debated and decided more and more on a local and transnational or global level.

Global care and erotic services

As Selma Sevenhuijsen pointed out:

“ [by] defining care as domestic labour feminists made it clear that necessary care could just as well be provided on a professional basis and that it was high time that men finally fulfilled their duties in that respect” (Sevenhuijsen 1998: 5).

Yet, many European gender arrangements are emancipatory to the point that even within affluent heterosexual couples, professional women take part in the labour market to a significant degree and an increasingly small number of women struggle even successfully for career options and compete with their male colleagues. But these gender arrangements are not emancipatory to the dimension that men, male members of households or male partners do not take a significant share in care work and household labour. As Joan Tronto illustrates this ambiguity:

“The use of nannies allows upper middle-class women and men to benefit from feminist changes without having to surrender the privilege of the traditional patriarchal family. The hired household worker is an employee, but she is mainly treated as if she were a wife. Nannies can be imposed upon as if they were members of the family, and that imposition often proves to be abusive” (Tronto 2002: 47).

Hence, it is migrants from all over the world who provide important services for these ‘emancipatory’ gender arrangements in Europe, often without legalized political status. Migrants without a legal status are at double risk: First, they are vulnerable to exploitation in so far as they are not protected by any law or institution that would guarantee the respect of their personhood or fair wages. Second, they risk to be caught and sent back the long way they came – often from countries where survival has become difficult and economic prosperity almost impossible, precisely because of global economic and political

power relations. On the other side, the global mobility of workers has become a fundamental column of the European welfare states. For the national economies in Europe, migrants have become an important reservoir of cheap labour that is easy to mobilize through private agencies in times of need. The mobility of workers serve not only to secure the new more or less emancipatory gender arrangements of the European middle class in providing crucial services of cleaning and caring in private households mostly as illegal employments (Lutz 2005; Rerrich 2006). Moreover, migrants also feed the social security systems of European welfare states through legal employment in sectors with unattractive working conditions and meagre wages.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), globally almost half of all labour migrants are women. Furthermore, 80 to 90 percent of all refugees worldwide are women and children. Women migrate because of political, economic, social, and individual reasons. The gendered nature of the labour market forces most women to work only in certain jobs: Many have to sell their bodies or their reproductive capacities. These jobs are rarely recognized as professions, are poorly paid and are not socially valued. Examples include work in the informal and unregulated sectors of prostitution, domestic work, the entertainment industry, and 'marriage' (Joo-Schauen/Najafi 2002: 224).

Jae-Soon Joo-Schauen and Behshid Najafis show that in this context the importance of counselling organizations is evident. They themselves belong to a working group against international sexual and racial exploitation in Germany (AGISRA). This agency supports victims of trafficking in women and sexual and racial discrimination as well as women who have been coerced into prostitution or marriage and they advise women in asylum matters. They consider their work as successful to the extent that public awareness of the problems has increased and more support is available for victims. Yet, they emphasize that there is still no guarantee for government protection and respect of human rights:

“To offer economic, social and work opportunities for women in the countries of origin and legal migration opportunities to the destination countries still requires our continued effort. We demand the implementation of human rights standards for migrant women.” (Joo-Schauen/Najafi 2002: 234)

In this context of the globalization of gender relations in Europe, the follow-

ing questions arise: What does it mean that human rights standards are not implemented for migrant women? Since the UN human rights declaration of 1949 was signed by every European country, must not every European state guarantee them for every human being living on its territory? If this is not the case, on which basis are human rights promoted by the EU vis-à-vis countries like the People's Republic of China or the Russian Federation? Is it possible that migrants, especially from outside of the EU, can be treated and conceptualized so differently from European citizens that this problem does not occur as a contradiction to the consciousness of EU authorities? Who is responsible for shaping this political reality?

Did globalization processes, changes in European gender norms and special welfare policies make it possible for 'domestic' care workers to become as affordable on a regular basis to professional European women as 'exotic' sex workers to professional European men? Maria Rerrich quotes a Swiss study in which migrant women from different parts of the world combined cleaning, babysitting and sex work to make a living (Rerrich 2006: 18).¹⁶ It is interesting to note that, for the affluent European 'emancipatory' gender arrangement, the identities and bodies of migrant women incorporate both of these seemingly contradictory and exclusionary terms: the domestic and the exotic. As household workers, migrant women are confronted with trustful housework and care relations and even confidential aspects of the private life of their mostly female employers. As sex workers, they are confronted with the bodies, fantasies and erotic projections about insight or virtuosity, subordination or servility by their mostly male clients. This points to the curious fact that the concept of the 'domestic' interrelates here in a special way with the concept of the 'exotic' within the construction of the migrant woman as a service provider in Europe.¹⁷

In her programmatic article *Precarius labor et stuporum corporis. Prekarität und die bezahlte sexuelle Dienstleistung*, Luzenir Caixeta discusses paid sexual service in the context of informal care work and household labour within changing work opportunities through globalization. She points to the

16 Krystyna Slany and Magdalena Slusarczyk note in their study on migration to Poland that about 40 percent of the women involved in street sex work were migrants (Slany/Slusarczyk 2008: 293-294).

17 It would be interesting to investigate how this connection of the 'domestic' and the 'exotic' relates to the no less precarious pair of notions of colonial times 'civilization' and 'wilderness' as metaphors for the erotic (Ernst 2009).

enormous capacity of the global sex-industry to generate incomes in the context of global migration and tourism:

“The lifestyle in developed countries creates the need for leisure time and vacation, with a tendency towards locations of amusement and the exotic where exchanges on emotional and sexual levels are sought.” (Caixeta 2005: 1)

She problematizes the fact that sex work is a highly stigmatized area of work, especially when one realizes that in Austria, for example, 90 percent of sex workers are migrants with a special visa for three months to work only as a ‘show dancer’ at a registered establishment of the sex-industry. As they come with a short-term vision, it is often difficult to mobilize them to struggle for better work conditions in Austria or Europe. However, Caixeta shows not only in her article but also with her long-term engagement in the organization MAIZ¹⁸ that exactly this is possible. To understand this, we must take a closer look at the relation of human rights and citizenship.

Global gender democracy?

To explore the idea of a global gender democracy, I draw on the discussion at the international women’s university (*ifu*) in Germany in the year 2000. In their programmatic article *Feminist and Migrant Networking in a Globalising World. Migration, Gender and Globalization*, Ilse Lenz and Helen Schwenken define globalization as

“an ensemble of interlinked processes with possibly open results characterized by increasing economic, political, social and ecological interdependence, increasing global communication and mobility and increasing influence of new actors – especially supranational organisations, transnational enterprises and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) or NGOs” (Lenz/Schwenken 2002: 157).

The authors identify steps made in the direction of a global gender democracy by the UN *Fourth World Conference on Women* in Beijing, People’s Republic of China in 1995:

18 MAIZ is the abbreviation for: Autonomes Zentrum von und für Migrantinnen (Autonomous Centre of and for Migrant Women), www.maiz.at.

“The Beijing conference resulted in a declaration which established basic norms for and steps to achieve gender equality in a process of international negotiating between governments and feminists from very different regions and approaches. Its goals of empowerment and autonomy including the body and sexuality, equality in work and society, development and structural change, peace and non-violence (including in personal relationships) and political participation, can be seen as a feminist formula for global gender democracy.” (Lenz/Schwenken 2002: 161)

I would like to take the plea for global gender democracy seriously and ask whether the authors envision it as something to be realized independently within each state or whether they argue that global interconnections of gender relations would transcend the present national world order in the end. Lenz and Schwenken argue that to realize a global gender democracy, political agency is important not only on the level of the United Nations or the European Union, but also locally. As they understand globalization as processes of interplay in a multilevel system, they emphasize the importance and the opportunities of the feminist migrant organizing on a local level, for example through counselling agencies. There, the authors discuss to which dimension feminist migrant networks open up transnational spaces and build bridges between the local and the global level. They describe an example where it was through networking and political mobilization on the local, national and international level that feminist migrant groups in Germany succeeded in 1997 in changing a national law which regulates the amount of years obligatory for foreign spouses to be married to their German partner before obtaining independent legal status (the number of years was cut in half). As a result, the authors illustrate their understanding of state regulations “as the outcome of social negotiations by state governments, interest groups (as enterprises and other organizations) and social movements” (Lenz/Schwenken 2002: 162).

This means that for the mostly female migrants concerned they were able to participate in a political process envisioned as an ideal of democracy, some of them maybe even before they were granted formal citizenship, some of them maybe even illegalized. For the meaning of citizenship, this example shows that formal citizenship is neither a necessary precondition nor a guarantee for citizenship experienced and practised as lived citizenship in Lister’s sense or as democratic citizenship in Mouffe’s and Sevenhuijsen’s sense. If one considers political participation to be the struggle for one’s rights in public and the feeling of belonging to be a sense of community of peers and of

acknowledgement by others as a being worth being, then it seems that political participation is not limited to formal citizens.

But the authors also show difficulties on the way to global gender democracy. When migrant and women's groups aimed to lobby for a more comprehensive understanding of discrimination related to gender and race at the UN *World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Intolerance* in Durban, South Africa in 2001 by including undocumented migrants in the final documents in order to improve the situation of refugee and migrant women, it was strongly opposed by most migrant receiving countries. In my opinion, this shows that although feminist migrant organizations get the opportunity to raise their voice on the global level of democratic representation at the United Nations Conferences (in contrast to national institutions), power relations seem to still be played out in rather traditional ways. This means that the privileges of the ones are closely related to the discrimination of the others.

Conclusion

This exploration on the different dimensions of citizenship and human rights in the context of the globalization of gender relations leads to the following conclusions. Formal citizenship of a nation-state, especially of one of the countries pertaining to the European Union, is still an important goal to struggle for because it promises legal protection from violence and exploitation and access to many life sustaining benefits. Sometimes it even seems to be a precondition for the protection against human rights violations. This is a problem since the UN human rights declaration considers every human being – with or without citizenship of a country – worth respecting and protecting. This is a crucial point because, within the globalization of gender relations, migrants from all over the world come to Europe, some by personal choice and in hopes of a better life, some driven by wars and economic catastrophes, some under the personal pressure of their families or even by direct coercion. They often come on precarious journeys. Since the legal roads to migration are becoming more and more narrow or even being closed off by EU authorities, many migrants are illegalized once they reach the Schengen area. Migrants, especially women from throughout the world, provide crucial services in the informal economic sectors of care and erotic services. In the socio-political and psy-

chological dimension, they sustain the fragile 'emancipatory' gender arrangements in Europe. In the economic dimension, they provide cheap labour in the context of the privatization of health and care services within the restructuring of the European welfare system.

On the normative level, however, this situation leads to enormous problems since the self-conception of Europe as a human rights advocate is deeply undermined, if at the core of its socio-political and economic system, persons who fulfil important intimate demands for domestic and exotic services for European citizens are not safe from human rights violations.

The examples and theoretical explorations of this paper, however, point to an interesting shift in the meaning of citizenship and the protagonists of this new meaning: It has become evident that beyond formal rights and duties citizenship is something that is lived, experienced and practised in public by courageous individuals who have the social capacity to organize themselves with peers and argue for their rights and freedom within and beyond national borders and thereby act towards a global gender democracy. Does this mean that the protagonists of the global gender democracy are the migrants, these mostly female care providers from all over the world? This question certainly requires further investigation. But to understand citizenship as a democratic practice, it is important to realize that we can learn from empirical realities where citizenship is practised through networking and by overcoming the local, national and transnational barriers installed in favour of an idea of European homogeneity. This democratic citizenship can be practised – and lived – beyond formalized institutional practises (as voting) and traditional institutions of power (as political parties) which might be intertwined too tightly with the interests of global financial markets, which benefit only a few.

In this way, we can see that it is possible to overcome the normative aspect of citizenship in Europe, which forces people to practise their citizenship along prescriptions of state authorities. Since democratic citizenship cannot be all about the obedience of norms and laws and rules in favour of those in power. Rather, it is in processes where hegemonic power structures are questioned and contested in order to overcome relations of oppression and domination that citizenship unfolds its democratic dimension. This means that at the core of the idea and practise of democratic citizenship the possibility exists that the public and the state are shaped by every person living on its territory in a creative and self-conscious way with equal rights and equal access but infinite alterity. Therefore, citizenship theory needs to reflect the empirical

context of the globalization of gender relations in order to encourage and empower everyone to participate in discussions about how to shape global reality, not only those who are affluent enough to have wives at home and service personnel – like in Greek antiquity.

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Reframing Demographic Change in Europe

Perspectives
on Gender and Welfare State
Transformations

edited by

Heike Kahlert and Waltraud Ernst

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