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# Transnational social protection: setting the agenda

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## ABSTRACT

Social welfare has long been considered something which states provide to its citizens. Yet today 220 million people live in a country in which they do not hold citizenship. How are people on the move protected and provided for in the contemporary global context? Have institutional sources of social welfare begun to cross borders to meet the needs of individuals who live transnational lives? This introductory paper proposes a transnational social protection (TSP) research agenda designed to map the kinds of protections which exist for people on the move, determine how these protections travel across borders, and analyze variations in access to these protections. We define TSP; introduce the heuristic tool of a 'resource environment' to map and analyze variations in TSP over time, through space, and across individuals; and provide empirical examples demonstrating the centrality of TSP for scholars of states, social welfare, development, and migration.

## 1. Introduction

Imagine the following: An undocumented Mexican migrant in Denver, Colorado, unable to access the U.S. healthcare system, takes her child to the Mexican consulate in Denver to be vaccinated so she can enrol in a U.S. public school. A young German family, struggling to care for elderly grandparents given the retrenchment of state-supported welfare, hires a low-wage Filipino migrant to provide elder care in its home. The Filipino migrant in turn sends her wages back to the Philippines to protect and provide for her family in the spaces where the Filipino state's welfare programmes fall short. An Indonesian construction worker in Australia cannot access social security or public health services while in Australia although he receives the portion he was required to pay into the system when he returns home. An aging Ethiopian with permanent resident status has been working as a custodian in a U.S. university for 20 years but wants to spend his retirement year with his family in his native country. Despite paying 20 years worth of social security taxes to the U.S. government, his payments will be stopped if he moves back. Meanwhile, the Ethiopian government struggles to pay for the education of its youth and for elder care, in part because so many of its working-age citizens pay taxes to the governments where they are living rather than where they were born. As a result, transnational humanitarian NGOs are increasingly responsible for building Ethiopian schools, training teachers,

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This special volume is dedicated to the memory of Sarah Van Walsum, our dear colleague and friend, who cared deeply about the ideas and issues explored here, made valuable contributions to their elucidation, and hoped to do much more research. We carry on in her honour.

designing curriculum, and providing free education, sometimes implementing these social protections in partnership with the Ethiopian government.

These vignettes reflect just how much we live in a world on the move. More and more, people choose or are pushed into lives which cross national borders – earning livelihoods, raising their political voices, caring for family members, and saving for retirement in more than one nation-state. These migrants call many places home – the scattered sites where their dispersed family members live, where they work or study, the places they remember, and the homes they long to return to and rebuild. Increasingly, international finance and development organizations look to migrants to drive economic growth, development, and political activism in their homelands. The economic remittances they send fund health, education, and social services which sending country governments often cannot afford, and the social remittances, or the knowledge, practices, and skills which migration also introduces, transform social and economic life in positive and negative ways.

Although there is a growing body of scholarship about several aspects of transnational livelihoods, we still know very little about the questions raised by the vignettes above: When and how are people on the move protected and provided for outside the traditional framework of the nation-state? How is the social welfare of the young and the elderly in societies of origin guaranteed when people who would normally provide and fund such services migrate? And what new institutional arrangements – or forms of *transnational social protection* (TSP) – are emerging in response to these changing dynamics?

These questions are at the heart of our research agenda and the articles included in this special volume. National and global systems of social protection have undergone powerful transformations across the last several decades, yet scholars have only recently begun to identify and analyze the consequences of this fundamental reorganization for basic social welfare. We aim to help bridge this gap by bringing existing theories of welfare states, global social policy, development, and migration into line with increasingly transnational social realities, thus advancing sociological knowledge in new and important directions. Studying TSP is also necessary to identify new or widening ‘holes’ in existing systems of social protection, who is most likely to fall through them, and how individuals piece together their own transnational strategies to fill these gaps. Most importantly, studying TSP will help scholars identify which policies or strategies can most efficiently provide for and protect the wellbeing of individuals in our increasingly transnational world.

In the pages that follow, we first briefly discuss some of the relevant theories upon which we build and signal what they miss by not taking transnational factors into account. Secondly, we define what we mean by global social protection. Thirdly, we introduce the idea of a ‘resource environment’ as a heuristic tool to map and analyze variations in TSP over time, through space, and across individuals. Fourthly, we include some empirical examples to put flesh and bones on our argument. Finally, we briefly summarize the articles included in this volume which help to make our case.

## 2. What theory has missed

Mainstream migration scholarship still suffers from methodological nationalism. Because U.S. and European research continues to be overwhelmingly focused on processes of incorporation and assimilation into host countries, it generally ignores how migrants might protect and provide for themselves across borders. When we learn of transnational health or educational schemes, it is primarily from health and education researchers.

In contrast, strands of transnational migration scholarship, which take migrants’ simultaneous embeddedness in multiple societies into account, provide us with important foundations upon which to build (Glick-Schiller & Faist, 2009; Levitt, 2012; Mazzucato, 2011). Research on how families raise children and care for the elderly across borders using formal and informal networks, for example, is well underway. Much work has also focused on the transnational protection of domestic workers (Lutz, 2008; Parreñas, 2005; van Walsum, 2011). The role of hometown associations<sup>1</sup> is another well-developed thread (Lamba-Nieves, 2013). Hometown associations provide transnational social protection when they build and staff a school or a health clinic in their community of origin (Bada, 2014;

Levitt, 2001; Smith, 2005). There is also an emerging body of work on how social identities, such as race and ethnicity, are produced transnationally (Joseph, 2015; Roth, 2012). Levitt (2001), Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013), Faist (2014), and Boccagni (2014) document similar dynamics for class and inequality. These conversations which, to date, have evolved separately, must be brought into a more integrated, expanded dialogue that sees health, education, secure retirement, and social security as increasingly constructed within and beyond the nation-state.

Many of these analyses deploy a transnational social field approach which knits together allegedly separate sending and receiving country spaces into a single, sometimes seamless, and sometimes deeply fractured, social, political, and emotional imaginary. Categories such as class, inequality, and development can then be revisited and reworked by taking into account not only the ways in which they are constituted across space but also the ways in which health, education, and social security are constructed within and beyond national borders and the interactions among them.

The literature on welfare state regimes as institutions of social protection, most prominently articulated by Esping-Andersen, is also an important piece of our puzzle. Esping-Andersen (1990) divided European and North American countries into three types of welfare regimes based on their level of de-commodification (measuring reliance on the market) and de-familization (measuring reliance on the family) – what he calls the ‘peculiar public-private sector mix’ of each nation. This typology has been used to investigate the scope and patterning of specific social protections provided by states, such as Orloff’s (1993) work on how states structure protections differently for men and women. By its very nature, however, this research remains closely tied to the nation-state as a unit of analysis. It does not consider how a person might piece together a package of protections from more than one nation-state, or how nation-states might protect and provide for a population on the move.

We call on scholars to move beyond classic, state-based approaches and debates about their classification (Arts & Gelissen, 2002; Aspalter, 2011; Esping-Andersen, 1990) in order to consider how millions of individuals are embedded in transnational social fields, and how multiple state and non-state actors protect and provide for them. Much of the emerging work on new forms of social protection, while focusing on migrants, still sees individuals as living in discrete nation-state units, although it recognizes that they might be protected and provided for by a combination of sending and receiving state policies (Avato, Koettl, & Sabates-Wheeler, 2010; Gough & Wood, 2006; Holzmann, Koettl, & Chernetsky, 2005; MacAuslan & Sabates-Wheeler, 2011). Our agenda builds, in particular, on the growing body of ‘global social policy’ literature which has emerged since the 1990s. This research examines how international actors’ discourses about and practices around social policy affect national policy. Ostensibly ‘national’ welfare systems are strongly influenced by transnational, global, and sub-national actors (Deacon, 2007; Kaasch, 2013; Yeates, 2006).

Firstly, developing states, looking to capitalize on and serve their growing diasporas, are extending social protections across national borders. As our vignette above demonstrates, the Mexican government often provides healthcare services to documented and undocumented migrants at its consular offices throughout the U.S. At the same time, it benefits significantly from the individual and collective remittances these migrants send back, particularly their support of hometown associations which have become major drivers of local community development. Secondly, the strand of development scholarship concerned with non-state actors, such as humanitarian INGOs and NGOs, often ends its analysis at the national border (Banks, Hulme, & Edwards, 2015; Gaventa & Barrett, 2010; Hickey & Sen, 2015). However, many of these groups are transnational actors: their organizational structure (i.e. branch offices in more than one country), their financing (i.e. domestic NGOs often rely on international grants to fund their programming), or their activities (i.e. NGOs are often involved in transnational advocacy networks reflecting their specific cause) operate across borders (Levitt, 2012; Viterna & Robertson, 2015). As we argue below, individuals look increasingly to each of these sources of provision – sending states, receiving states, and third sector actors – in addition to purchasing social provision from the market or requesting it from family and friends, to cover their needs. Understanding development therefore requires a transnational lens regardless of whether development is measured at the level of the state or the individual.

We believe a necessary next step is to bring individuals back into this conversation by looking not only at how they use services available from two discrete nation-states but also at how bi-national, transnational, and supranational policies and programmes expand their access to care. Our concept of resource environments, introduced below, allows us to examine how states extend their protective arm into others' sovereign territory, and how a range of new and old, formal and informal actors, including markets, NGOs, and social networks, protect and provide for individuals within and beyond the nation-state. We also broaden the range of social protections considered, including some aspects of labor and education, to bring together what we see as relevant but previously isolated pieces of this conversation. Finally, we look outside the U.S. and European contexts to see how informal security regimes, which are especially common in developing countries, fill out this picture. In these contexts, where states may be weak or even absent, community and family institutions, or the forces of insecurity which disrupt them, are only indirectly bound to the logic of nation-states (Gough & Wood, 2004).

The articles in this volume further define, map, and evaluate this broader, more cohesive notion of transnational social protection. They hint at who are some of the winners and losers. We take up our task with a keen eye towards the current geopolitical moment. Throughout the global north, basic social welfare entitlements are shrinking, often replaced by an increasingly unregulated, unaffordable private market for basic services. Many people work at insecure, part-time, low-paying jobs which come with few benefits and pay too little to allow them to purchase benefits through the market. Mobility is encouraged (either for schooling, medical care, or work) for educated, high-skilled professional migrants, and is often thwarted or even criminalized for the low-skilled, giving rise to two classes of privileged and disadvantaged migrants. Countries of destination often use social protection to regulate migration by blocking access to services so that less desired migrants are encouraged to return home. By deeming them ineligible for basic services and rights, states ensure enduring social marginalization (Bommes & Geddes, 2000).

On the sending state side, the austerity and structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s (along with small taxpayer bases, poverty, corruption, fragile civil societies, and weak states) thwarted the development of comprehensive welfare states in much of the global south. Although recent decades have brought considerable advances in state-sponsored education, healthcare, and cash transfers to the poor in developing countries, many families in the global south still lack access to adequate social protections. Those who can, often supplement the state's limited health, education and social services with remittances from family living abroad. Frequently, sending states see these remittances as an especially effective way of enhancing the welfare of their most vulnerable populations (De Haas, 2005), and many states are building institutions and policies to encourage remittances and help migrants provide for their families and communities. According to Avato et al. (2010, p. 463), 'migration itself is a social protection tool for many people, especially poorer families who are able to use remittances and migration-specific income to ensure basic needs and at times build up some assets.'

### 3. Defining transnational social protection and resource environments

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) subsumes a set of variables in Table 1 under the category 'social protections.' To these, we add education in order to capture the growing number of bi-national teacher training, student retention, and reciprocal credentialing schemes being put in place. We also add, under the category of labor, the efforts of states and NGOs, such as unions, to protect worker safety and guarantee certain basic rights.

Our focus is on how people on the move (whether they be documented or undocumented, voluntary or forced, or permanent, short-term/seasonal, or circulating) are protected and provided for. The OECD still measures social protection nationally, despite the fact that it can be obtained from more than one nation, or from sources operating transnationally. Moreover, while the OECD emphasizes the role of states in providing social protection, our analysis includes three additional sources: social protections can be purchased privately through the *market*, obtained from *third sector actors*, or provided by *individuals' personal networks*.

**Table 1.** Categories of social protections.

Old age	Pensions, cash benefits, residential care/home help
Survivors	Pensions, cash benefits, funeral services
Incapacity	Disability pensions, paid sick leave (occupational injury and disease), cash benefits, residential care/home help
Health	Healthcare
Family	Family allowances, maternity and parental leave, early childhood education and care, cash benefits
Active labor market policies	Public employment service (PES), training, employment incentives, supported employment and rehabilitation, job creation, start up incentives; to this we add: efforts to protect worker safety and rights
Unemployment	Unemployment compensation, severance pay, early retirement
Housing	Housing assistance
Education	Knowledge and skill production, credentialing

Source: Adapted from OECD (2007).

States provide social protections through a number of institutions, operating at multiple levels of government, from supranational to subnational. Markets provide social protections like private health insurance or contracted childcare to those who can afford them. Third sector organizations, including NGOs, church groups, and labor unions, often provide low-cost protections to a defined group, including healthcare, employment training, education, housing, and more. And individual social ties include networks of family, friends, neighbours, co-workers and others upon whom an individual can call for a wide variety of supports, including housing, childcare, cash transfers, or employment opportunities.

We define ‘transnational social protection’ as the policies, programmes, people, organizations, and institutions which provide for and protect individuals in the above areas in a transnational manner. Our main focus is on social protections for voluntarily mobile individuals, but non-migrants and refugees also benefit from these policies and programmes. We include non-mobile actors who provide for and protect people who move transnationally; transnational actors who provide for and protect non-mobile individuals; and transnational actors who provide for and protect transnational individuals.

Migrants move between spaces with varying state capacity, where the scope of formal social protection may be far-reaching or quite limited. They are protected through their access to formal and informal institutions in both sending and receiving countries. For international migrants moving to strong states in the global north, residency status and citizenship strongly influences their entitlements in the host country, which may also vary considerably across different sub-national jurisdictions (Avato et al., 2010; Bossert, 1998; Holzmann et al., 2005). Individuals without legal status or residency are particularly vulnerable because their access to public institutions of social protection is especially limited.

Outside the global north, the national state and the rule of law tend to be less firmly established, and the factors determining access to social protection are different. Documented international migrants who are formally employed in China, for example, are legally obligated to become part of the Chinese social insurance system, but local governments and companies often find ways to avoid fully implementing this law. Where this occurs, some international migrants can rely on market-based alternatives such as commercial health insurance via their employer. Others remain uncovered. Because undocumented immigrants face significant difficulties finding formal sector employment they are excluded from most forms of social protection (Haugen, 2012).

We suggest that the concept of a ‘resource environment’ can help scholars map, analyze, and understand the rapidly transforming world of transnational social protections, and how access to TSP varies over time, through space, and across individuals and groups. An individual’s resource environment is constituted from a combination of all the possible protections available to them from our four potential sources (states, markets, third sector, and social networks). The cluster of protections which is ultimately available depends upon the nature of the market, the strength and capacity of sending and receiving states, the third sector organizational ecology (i.e. the number and types of organizations, what they do, and their capacity to provide) and the characteristics of individual migrants and their families. These characteristics include the migrant’s nation of origin, place of residence, and the

breadth and depth of his or her social networks, in addition to the individual's gender, race, ethnicity, religion, wealth, income, and education. An individual's resource environment may change as they move across different sub-state or state environments, as their legal or economic status changes, and as their social networks transform. Resource providers will also, undoubtedly, change over time, leaving some groups well protected and others increasingly vulnerable.

For migrants, access to formal social protection provided by state and public institutions depends largely on their legal and residency status in relation to their home and host countries. The status matrix, as illustrated in Figure 1, combines both a migrant's residence status (resident or non-resident) and citizenship status (citizen or non-citizen). In their home country, migrants will usually have citizen status – diaspora, multi-citizen, or emigrant.<sup>2</sup> In the host country, the migrant can have the status of a naturalized citizen, a permanent resident, or of an illegal or undocumented migrant. Depending on the nation, access to social protections can be based directly on citizenship or residency, or it can be based on contributions, or on a combination of both. This access is often dependent on participation in the formal labor market which in turn relies primarily on the migrant's residence status.

While the logic of coverage in receiving states tends to be administered and regulated at the national level, in many countries, particularly those with highly decentralized political systems, individuals' access and benefits vary considerably across states and regions. In the U.S. and in China, for example, sub-national and local jurisdictions have a great deal of discretion with respect to migrant coverage. Migrants' access to public systems of health insurance and healthcare provision, schooling, social welfare, and pensions largely depends on place of residence and legal status. Therefore, as we discuss more fully below, an undocumented Mexican migrant from Puebla who settles in New York City will have access to a package of resources and benefits based on what she is eligible for in her village of birth, as a resident of the state of Puebla, and as a Mexican national, as well as the services offered by New York City, New York State, and the U.S. federal government. Her resource environment will differ

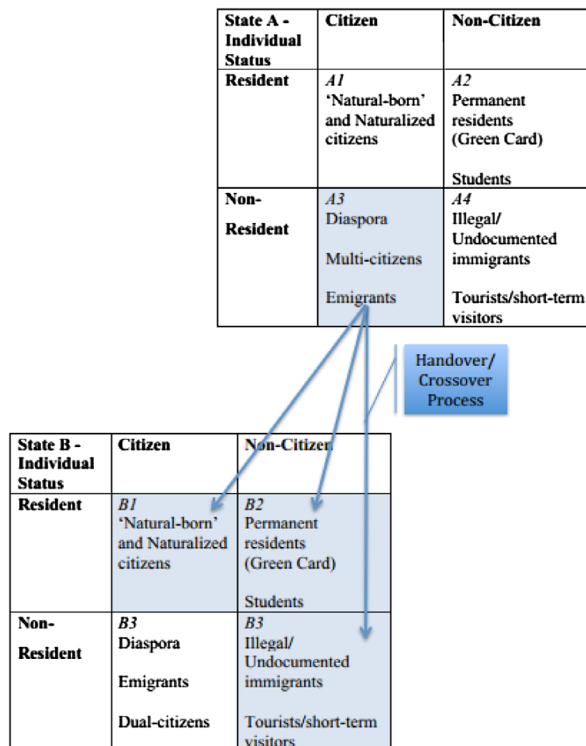


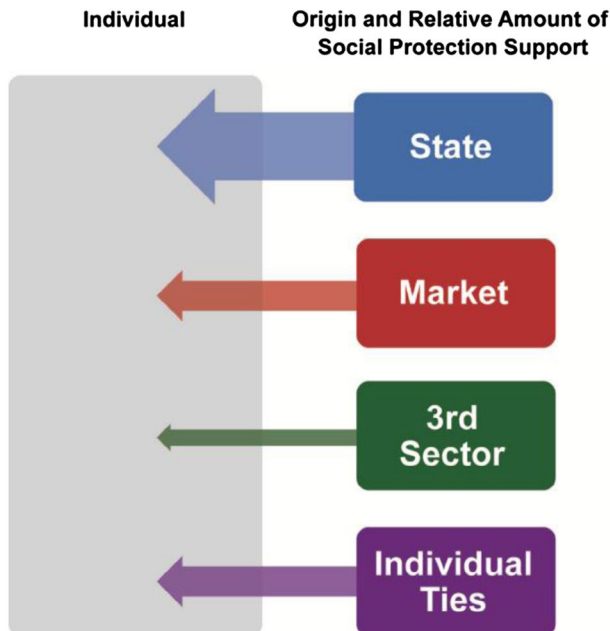
Figure 1. Status matrix.

markedly from a similarly undocumented Mexican counterpart from Zacatecas who moves to Los Angeles, because the services provided at each level of government, in each country, are not the same.

The portion of the resource environment which comes from the migrants' sending country depends on the extent to which that nation extends its social services across borders to cover citizens living outside them. For sending countries, such initiatives sometimes function as mechanisms for offsetting a 'youth drain' brought about by migration: people leave when they are young and healthy but, had they stayed, they would have contributed more to health and pension systems than they took out. Instead, when they return, they have aged and need more care.

Transnational health insurance or pension schemes can help balance the allocation of costs between sending and receiving countries. Portuguese migrants who went to Canada in the 1940s and 50s, for example, returned home with the pension contributions they accrued in Canada because of special bilateral agreements. Some bilateral social insurance agreements, such as those between Germany and South Korea and China, extend the sending country's social insurance system to the receiving country for emigrants living abroad for a limited period. Even when sending country institutions are not extended, they can still function as fall-back options for emigrants. When migrants are ineligible for benefits from the British National Health Service or the U.S. Medicare program, those who can afford to can return to their sending countries for care.

Let us now offer several illustrations to make these ideas clearer. The resource environment of a college-educated, employed Swedish citizen residing in Sweden might look something like the figure below. Figure 2 shows each of the four sources of social protection from which our hypothetical Swedish citizen could access support, with the size of the arrow reflecting the relative proportion of social protection coming from each source. This particular individual has access to a wide array of social protections from the state, including affordable childcare, paid parental leave, excellent schools, old age pensions, and so on. Given her education and employment, she is also probably in a position to buy additional protections from companies in the private market, to access benefits from third sector organizations, and to avail herself of supports provided by family and friends. Her resource



**Figure 2.** Resource environment of college-educated, employed Swedish citizen.

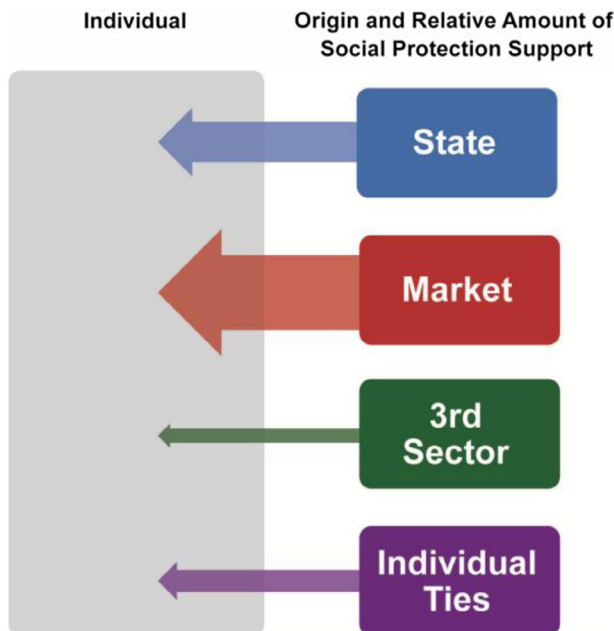
Note: As Figure 2 reveals, all four sources contribute to the creation of this individual's resource environment, although the state predominates.

environment is largely found within her nation-state, and she has little difficulty meeting her needs, even in emergency situations or medical crises.

In contrast, Figure 3 represents what the resource environment of a college-educated, employed U.S. citizen residing in the U.S. might look like. The resources available from the state have shrunk in comparison to Sweden (thus the smaller arrow), and the market becomes a bigger factor in covering needed protections, precisely because the state is a less important provider and protector than in Sweden and because this individual can afford to purchase care from the private market. This individual is also able to secure support from the third sector and from personal social ties. For example, when an elderly parent becomes ill and homebound, this person can rely on the state's Medicare program to cover health costs, she may purchase additional pharmaceutical insurance coverage from the market, and she may also access not-for-profit organizations working with the elderly to support her parents with home visits and other forms of emotional assistance.

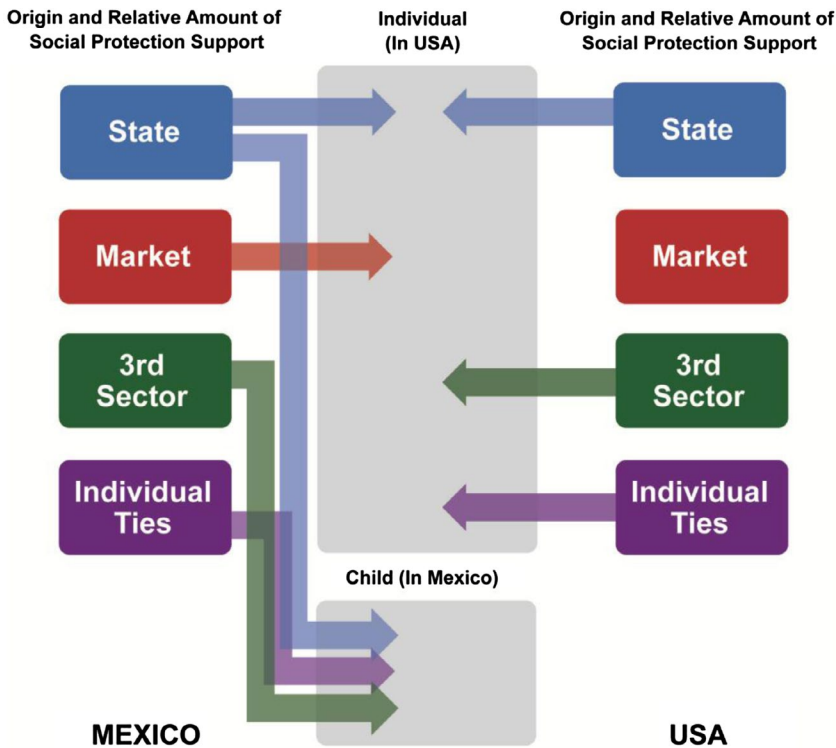
If we were next to imagine the resource environment of a U.S. citizen living below the poverty line, her resource environment would again differ. In this case, the state would offer additional (means-tested) social protections, while the market would offer fewer; if she were unable to purchase care from the market, the size of this arrow would be negligible or non-existent. Instead, she would most likely rely on social protections provided by third sector actors (humanitarian NGOs, food banks, charitable organizations, etc.) and on informal social support from social networks of friends, family members, neighbours, and co-workers.

What motivates this research agenda is that, more and more, each of the four sources of protection which constitute resource environments cross borders. Let us imagine that the hypothetical person in Figure 4 is a Mexican citizen who currently lives in Los Angeles without documentation from the U.S. government. She works in the informal economy, cleaning houses and preparing traditional Mexican foods to sell to Mexican construction workers at their work sites. Because of her undocumented status, she has no access to social protection provided by the U.S. federal government, nor does she make enough money to purchase protections from the U.S. market.



**Figure 3.** Resource environment of a college-educated, employed U.S. citizen.

Note: In contrast to Figure 2, this individual purchases most of her social protection from the market.



**Figure 4.** Resource environment of a primary-educated, undocumented, Mexican migrant living in California and working in the informal sector.

Note: Figure 4 reveals a resource environment created from the intersection between sending and receiving country sources.

California, however, along with Hawaii, Washington, New York, and Minnesota, offers public benefits to ‘non-qualified’ (as determined by federal law) immigrants (Fortuny & Chaudry, 2011). It stands out as the U.S. state which has moved most aggressively to extend publicly funded health coverage to immigrants with and without documents. Therefore, our hypothetical individual can apply for Covered California, a publicly subsidized, state-backed healthcare program. Although undocumented immigrants are technically ineligible for this program, the application process may determine that they are eligible for Medi-Cal, the state healthcare program for low-income residents.<sup>3</sup> Medi-Cal coverage for undocumented immigrants is not comprehensive. It is generally limited to pre-natal care, emergency services, and long-term care services (see Dobbs & Levitt, this volume).

Our hypothetical subject can also access some social protections from the Mexican government. The Mexican government created the *Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior* (IME or Institute of Mexicans Abroad) to serve emigrants. Migrants are eligible for an array of civic, health, education, and financial services from the Mexican state through its programmes. Moreover, if she returns to Mexico when she retires, she will also be insured by the *Seguro Popular* [Popular Insurance] system in Mexico (although she cannot access these supports while living in the U.S.). Our migrant has also purchased a form of social protection from the Mexican market; she invested in a property in her home community where she will live when she retires.

Nevertheless, most of this migrant’s social protection in the U.S. is derived not from states or markets but from social ties and third sector support. Her California church has a food pantry which she accesses when work is hard to find and she does not have money for meals. She also takes free English classes offered by a migrant-support NGO operating in her Los Angeles neighbourhood. And she relies heavily on family and friends in Los Angeles to provide temporary housing, credit, and job

references. Meanwhile, her son lives in Mexico, and she relies on social ties in Mexico (specifically to her mother) to raise him in her absence. Her child's social protections are also increasingly transnational, even though he has never left his home village. He relies on the Mexican state for healthcare and market-based supports paid for by remittances from his mother. Moreover, the child benefits from an early-education intervention program provided by a local Mexican not-for-profit organization but funded by a grant from the Netherlands.

Three things stand out in Figure 4. Firstly, rather than having most of her needs provided by one, nationally-bound source (e.g. like the state in Figure 2 or the market in Figure 3), this woman must piece together social protection for herself and her family from a large number of *disparate, informal, and transnational* sources. Secondly, none of the possible social protection sources from which she draws can on its own cover her major social protection needs, as indicated by the relative thinness of each arrow. Thirdly, the largely transnational sources on which this migrant relies are in no way contractually guaranteed, and thus are relatively unreliable and ephemeral. Whereas laws contractually obligate states to provide for citizens, and whereas market forces ensure that most purchased protections will be provided, there is no such security for those who rely primarily on social ties and third sector organizations, each of which can withdraw their resources at any time and without recourse for the migrant and her transnational family.

Research on social protection needs to examine not only the number and size of an individual's arrows over time and in relation to others; it also needs to unpack the contents of the arrows themselves. Let's return to the example of the poorly educated undocumented Mexican from Zacatecas living in Los Angeles and compare her this time to a similarly poorly educated, undocumented Mexican immigrant from Puebla living in Wyoming. As we already noted, their resource environments will differ because of the very different U.S. and Mexican federal, state, and city-level government benefits provided to immigrants and non-migrants. But they will also differ because the third sector might be much more plentiful, varied, and well established in Los Angeles than in Wyoming. The strength of the labor market in each locale will also be different such that varying numbers and types of employers will be more or less amenable to hiring undocumented workers and to offering them benefits. Finally, because individual migrants would be more visible in Wyoming (due to their overall fewer numbers), it may be especially difficult for undocumented migrants in Wyoming to access resources even when they are available (Schmalzbauer, 2014).

Importantly, undocumented migrants are not the only ones facing increasingly fragmented and increasingly transnational resource environments. Documented individuals with financial means are also more and more likely to cross borders to seek social protection. For example, German families who cannot access or afford care for the elderly in Germany may send their aging parents to a care facility in Eastern Europe, where costs are lower, or they may hire a Filipino or Eastern European immigrant to provide low-cost care in their homes. Meanwhile, newly industrializing countries like China, India, and Kuwait now give many of their citizens stipends to study in U.S. or European universities, requiring these students to piece together a package of transnational social protections while abroad.

In sum, our concept of a resource environment helps capture the complexity of social protections in an increasingly transnational world. Although most individuals access social protections from the same four sources (state, market, third sector, and social ties), the package of protections which results varies dramatically over time, through space, and across individuals. On the one hand, the content and size of each arrow varies widely, independently of which individual is trying to access those resources because, for example, the Swedish state offers more protections than the U.S. state. On the other hand, the social protections available to any person are strongly influenced by his or her individual characteristics – education, skills, resources, legal status, country of origin, country of residence, place of residence within a country, social networks, and so on. Our goal is to uncover the patterns in individuals' resource environments, to make clear how they change over space and time, to develop methods for measuring their size and substance, and to identify patterns of exclusion – what kinds of people get left out and what kinds of services are they excluded from?

## 4. Transnational social protection: sectoral illustrations

In the following section, we include just three examples from the range of practices we believe should be understood and studied as transnational social protection: senior care, education, and labor. We stress once again that not all aspects of the processes we describe function across borders. That is, it is useful to distinguish between the different dimensions of ‘transnational social protectors’ and to compare how they work in relation to each other. Just as Levitt (2001) found that transnational political parties (i.e. their structures, goals, financing, leadership, and strategies) did not always produce transnational political results (i.e. that they had a greater impact on Dominican politics than on U.S. politics), so some transnationally organized and funded institutions of transnational social protection protect and provide in one place. Therefore, we must assess how organizations are structured, led, and financed in relation to where they deliver their services and where their greatest impact is felt. We find several examples of policies and programmes where structures and financing are organized across borders but the services which are delivered and the impact of these efforts are not.

### 4.1. labor

Since so many people move to find work, it is not surprising that transnational schemes have been put in place to protect migrant workers, who are often more vulnerable to economic and physical abuse than workers with citizenship. In some cases, extending transnational social protections to workers gives rise to new legal statuses which broaden existing protections to include new categories of migrants. For instance, New Zealand’s Recognized Seasonal Employers Scheme started in 2006 to offset shortages in the horticulture and viticulture industries by bringing in temporary workers but also by curbing ‘labor and immigration violations through the expansion of regular labor migration avenues’ (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2014). More than 100 New Zealand firms registered with this program which hires 8000 workers from Pacific Island countries annually. As documented migrants, seasonal workers entering New Zealand even for a few short months are entitled to regular work protections including minimum wage, paid public holidays, sick leave, workplace safety training, and accident compensation. Not surprisingly, in the first year of the program, ‘administrative complexity’ in the rural areas where workers were located resulted in routine violations of workers’ rights, especially around unpaid or delayed wages and the reporting of accidents. Employees also had little recourse against employers who misrepresented working conditions, living accommodation, and even earnings (Maclellan, 2008). Nonetheless, the Recognized Seasonal Employers Scheme is promoted by the ILO as a ‘good practice model’ since it allows seasonal migrants to work legally, with some basic level of protection, and it balances the interests of the three key stakeholders – employers, migrants, and government.

In cases where labor migrants are not afforded sufficient social and legal protections in host countries, sending countries often step in. Saudi Arabia is particularly notorious for failing to extend basic rights and services to the more than 1.5 million migrant domestic workers, largely from Asia, who work within its borders. Domestic workers are subject to harsh and often violent treatment by their employers, who control their passports and prevent them from communicating with the outside world. When accused of crimes, domestic workers enter a hostile legal environment where they may not have access to translators or basic legal services even if they face execution (Human Rights Watch, 2008). Such circumstances led Indonesia to institute an extreme measure of social protection for its citizens: a total ban on migration to Saudi Arabia to perform domestic labor. The ban was lifted in 2014 following the successful negotiation of an agreement between the Indonesian and Saudi governments which guarantees Indonesian domestic workers the right to monthly pay, time off, the ability to communicate with their families, and to retain their passports (‘Indonesian Maids’, 2014).

While the Filipino government does not prohibit its citizens from leaving, it is also one of the governments most actively involved with its citizens abroad through the efforts of private, public and third sector actors. This is important because workers are one of the country’s biggest ‘exports’ and the

government relies heavily on the remittances they send home. The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration is responsible for processing workers' contracts and pre-deployment checks, as well as for licensing, regulating, and monitoring private recruitment agencies. Because demand is so high, thousands of licenced and unlicensed recruitment agencies are also active in the market. The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration is responsible for migrants and their non-migrant family members once they leave the country, providing programmes and services to permanent emigrants. Taken together, this package of services is one of the most comprehensive in Asia, extending from pre-departure to return and reintegration (Asis, 2006).

Despite these efforts, excessive placement fees, not paying or withholding wages, and deplorable or dangerous working conditions are still all too common, particularly among women. In response, the Philippines was also the first Asian nation to pass a law to 'establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress' (Migrant Workers, 1995). Some of its provisions include: (1) only sending workers to countries where certain basic standards are met; (2) assisting overseas Filipinos with their legal problems; (3) providing advisory/information, repatriation, and reintegration services; and (4) protecting 'the dignity and fundamental rights and freedoms of the Filipino abroad (Asis, 2006)."

NGOs and INGOS are also active in the fields of workers' rights. In 2012, strikes by foreign workers in Singapore over unacceptable living conditions led to the creation of the Dormitory Association of Singapore. It works to improve the welfare of the more than one million migrants working in the construction, shipping, manufacturing, and service industries in Singapore and sets minimum standards for their living accommodation (<http://foreignworkerdormitory.com/>).

## 4.2. Education

Transnational social protection in education often develops in response to large migrant populations who emigrate from one country and settle in another. While both countries have their own domestic education systems, bilateral, cooperative research and education activities often take shape. These become increasingly institutionalized, through partnerships between ministries and publicly funded actors. Take the example of the three million people of Turkish origin living in Germany. In higher education, several joint programmes are run through the German Research Foundation and the German Academic Exchange program. A public German–Turkish University is under construction in the city of Istanbul. Three public Goethe Institutes in Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir provide basic German language education. Moreover, there have been several high-level inter-governmental discussions about coordinating teacher training between the two countries. In 2008, Prime Minister Erdogan offered to send teachers to Germany to provide Turkish language instruction to German educators. Chancellor Merkel and the German government, however, chose to emphasize German-language education, preferring to train people of Turkish origin to become teachers in the German school system and to teach in German (Ministerium für Bildung und Forschung, n.d.).

The Gülen Movement is an INGO which runs an extensive educational system across borders. Fethullah Gülen, a Sufi Muslim cleric currently living in exile in Pennsylvania, founded this transnational organization. The movement runs 1000 schools in 163 countries worldwide (Ebaugh, 2010; Sunier, 2014) and several private universities. In Germany alone, there are 20 private schools associated with the Gülen Movement as well as 300 institutes for private teaching and coaching. These aim to improve Turkish pupils' access to higher education. Instruction takes place in German, as the school organizers, like the German government, are sceptical about Turkish language education. Although these schools are primarily funded by school fees and philanthropic contributions, they sometimes receive support from German local governments (Rasche, 2013; Schlötzer, 2014; Vitzthum, 2008).

Other examples of education provided across borders arise more spontaneously, in response to particular needs. When an influx of Mexican migrants arrived in Aurora, Illinois, city officials began recruiting teachers from Mexico in the late 1990s to meet the migrants' linguistic and cultural needs. During the 1990s, New York City school teachers travelled to the Dominican Republic each summer

to learn more about the context from which so many of their students came. Along the U.S.–Mexican border, where families have intermarried for generations, pupils who reside in Mexico but who have U.S. passports or Green Cards cross the border each day to attend public schools in Texas, California, Arizona, and New Mexico (Layton, 2013). In response to the many Brazilian immigrants living in the area, Cambridge College in Massachusetts created a program allowing students to study in Brazil or Boston to complete a degree which is valid in both places. A program mounted by the IME (Institute for Mexicans in the Exterior) provides teaching materials to adult education programmes in California so that Mexicans on both sides of the border can follow the same high-school curriculum (Sabates-Wheeler & Feldman, 2011). In these examples, students, teachers, materials, and educational programming and funding are organized across borders; there are cases in which credentials are valid on both sides as well.

These efforts do not stop at primary and secondary school education. The High-Level Forum on Higher Education, Innovation, and Research, for instance, between the U.S. and Mexican governments will encourage broader access to quality post-secondary education for traditionally underserved demographic groups, especially in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. It will also expand educational exchanges, increase joint research on education and learning, and share best practices in higher education and innovation. (US Department of State, 2013)

Joint and double degree programmes are burgeoning sites for the internationalization of higher education. Such efforts are important instances of transnational social protection because they provide graduates with credentials and training which are valid in both places.

### 4.3. Senior care

Due to its rapid demographic transition, the high cost of labor, and labor shortages, Germany has become a leader in outsourcing care for the elderly. Even though long-term care insurance has been mandatory in Germany since 1995, it is still too expensive for many families. Therefore, caring for the elderly in the long-term care facilities of neighboring countries with lower labor costs, such as Poland, Slovakia or the Czech Republic, is a more attractive option. In 2012, about 7000 German pensioners were living in facilities abroad. Countries like Spain and Thailand are also becoming increasingly popular destinations (Connolly, 2012; Deutsche Rentner, 2014; Schölgens, 2013).

In the 2000s, private companies developed transnational models for long-term care, most commonly in Eastern Europe and South East Asia. For example, companies from Germany and other ‘Western’ European countries began to build new senior care homes across their national borders, particularly in the Visegrád nations (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia). The senior care facilities built in the Visegrád offer German-language services for German or Austrian nationals at lower rates than these individuals could find in their home nations. Local senior care companies, seeing an economic opportunity, moved increasingly into this high-end sector. They sometimes renovated old care facilities with support from the European Union and then marketed them toward these lucrative foreign clientele.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, the Visegrád nations experienced an increased demand for senior care from their own citizens, as labor migration and the demographic transition undermined the traditional, family-based model of senior care, and as available senior care homes targeting foreigners were increasingly priced out of their reach. Since Visegrad citizens now frequently not afford their local senior care homes, firms have begun developing transnational senior care approaches of their own. Specifically, they are building senior care facilities for their citizens in bordering nations where labor is cheaper, such as the Ukraine. In sum, the underfinanced German care sector facilitates the import of net-payers into its social security system (young immigrants who come to Germany to provide elder care), and the export of net-users (the elderly) into the neighboring Visegrád states’ facilities. The Visegrád states increasingly provide care for the relatively wealthy seniors of their Western neighbours, while exporting their own senior citizens to homes across their Eastern borders. Public debate about these issues has been highly emotional, with one German

social rights organization calling the export of the elderly a ‘deportation’ (Cohen, 2015; Connolly, 2012; ‘Deutsche Rentner’, 2014).

These European dynamics reflect broader global trends as baby-boomers around the world reach pension age and increasingly need long-term care. Singapore is also outsourcing elder care to Malaysia where private investors are exploring underdeveloped markets (Shobert, 2013). Similarly, U.S. senior citizens increasingly move to Mexico to retire, where the costs of living and long-term care are much lower than in the U.S. While Medicare benefits are not accessible outside of the U.S., there are increasing demands that the program be extended across borders (Paxson, 2012).

## 5. Looking forward

In today’s world, more than 220 million people live in a country where they do not hold citizenship. This is almost ten times larger than the entire population of Australia, and six times larger than the entire population of Canada. At current growth rates, the population of this ‘nation’ of immigrants will soon surpass that of the United States, constituting the fifth largest ‘nation’ on earth (Iyer, 2013).

That more and more people live aspects of their lives across borders runs parallel to the increasing cross-border movements of markets, political organizations, firms, churches, labor unions, and humanitarian organizations. Even national governments carry out what we once thought of as national-level activities transnationally. Yet despite these pockets of institutional change, the provision of social protection, and the policy-making which undergirds it, remains largely confined to the nation. As a result, many migrants must turn to non-state systems of transnational social protection to piece together coverage to meet their basic needs. To date, we know little about which protections exist, which protections travel across borders, who can access them, who is left out, and the new inequalities of access produced by these dynamics. We do not know enough about the hidden costs of providing and accessing transnational social protections.

These developments may foreshadow fundamental changes in how and where we exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship – a basic shift in the way many aspects of social life, and the institutions which undergird it, are organized. We have suggested an ambitious framework to help map them. Before briefly summarizing the contributions to this volume which begin to attempt this mapping, we propose a set of additional questions that must also be considered to produce a more complete picture. While future research on TSP must unpack variations across types of mobility and in the levels and sources from which resource environments are constructed, it must also do the hard work of identifying the patterns uniting these cases – of identifying types and clusters of resource environments which are replicated across space and time. In addition to understanding what happens to particular types and groups of individuals (i.e. how and where they access services, in formal and informal settings, what actually happens as opposed to what the official policy says should happen, how family, community, and other institutions filter individual access, etc.), we must also look at:

- (1) *Institutions* – What new kinds of institutional arrangements, from what sectors (public, market, NGO, formal/informal), and in what combinations give rise to functional, effective resource environments? What is the relationship between these institutions and existing providers? Do they replace, complement or compete with each other? What kinds of new hierarchies arise as a result?
- (2) *Sectors* – When we look at how people provide for their health, education, or old-age security, how do these sectors compare? Do resource environments function in the same way? Do they interact with, compete, or enhance one another? How must our outcome measures be redefined given the increasing transnationalization of social protection?
- (3) *Ideology and Ontology* – How do these dynamics challenge our understanding of social welfare and democracy? How do the words and categories we use now obscure new developments, and what kinds of new language and categories do we need to capture the actual organization of social experience? Ultimately, what does this imply for the social contract

between citizen and state and for the actual rights, responsibilities, institutions and spaces of participatory citizenship?

The articles in this volume begin to address these unknowns. Thomas Faist's paper, which follows, also offers a comprehensive framework for understanding transnational social protection. According to Faist, the recent transformation of social protection from national programmes to transnational 'assemblages' not only reinforces existing lines of inequality, but also creates and legitimates powerful new systems of inequality which are deeply consequential for individuals and social organization.

The next two papers provide important theoretical and methodological addendums to our concept of resource environments. Ruxandra Paul demonstrates that states extend social protections across borders for migrants not as a means of protecting persons, but rather as a means of protecting labourers. She concludes that the TSP agenda must include analyses of economic integration and supranational markets among the essential sources of transnational social protection. Additionally, Erica Dobbs and Peggy Levitt compare critical cases in the U.S. and Spain to demonstrate how sub-national government – i.e. state and local governments – can mediate national policies affecting immigrants' access to healthcare. Their work confirms the importance of analyzing sub-national variations in TSP.

Finally, our volume concludes with three case studies which investigate how states and migrants are creatively piecing together 'packages' of social protection to meet new social realities. Amiya Bhatia and Jacqueline Bhaba describe a new program in India which gives all Indian residents unique identification numbers and links these to their biometric data. This Aadhaar card promises to decrease corruption and increase inclusion in social protection schemas, but, as Bhatia and Bhaba discuss, it remains to be seen how the program will progress from registration to service delivery or what the consequences for surveillance and privacy will be (see also Sarkar, 2014). Using the case of Ghanaian migrants in the Netherlands, Dankyi, Mazzucato, and Manuh show how family members 'back home' constitute a central aspect of migrants' resource environments because they raise migrants' children in their absence. Kathleen Sexsmith examines the remarkably constrained resource environments faced by Central Americans working on isolated, rural dairy farms in upstate New York. These labourers, although central to the dairy economy, are forced to rely more on the goodwill of employers than local health clinics to survive the dangerous work they perform daily. Such examples demonstrate the remarkable range of transformations taking place in institutions and practices around the world and the large numbers of people who are still left out.

## Notes

1. These are organizations of migrants from the same community of origin who now live among their own communities abroad and who work to maintain social ties and send material resources back to their home community.
2. We thank Chris Lilyblad and Alvaro Lima for their contributions to the ideas developed in this section.
3. Undocumented immigrants are eligible for Medi-Cal, and legal non-citizen residents do not have to meet the five-year eligibility requirements required for federal benefits programmes.
4. Such facilities include the 'Sonnenhaus' in Senec, Slovakia, and the 'Gemütlichkeit' in Galanta, Slovakia.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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