



Call for papers

Transnational scientific conference

organised by the Association des Chercheurs des Organismes de la Formation et de l'Intervention Sociales and the Institut Régional du Travail Social of PACA-Corse, in partnership with the thematic network « norms, déviations and social reactions » of the Association Française de Sociologie

Crossed glances on " Social State ":

What kind of rationalizations, hardships and reactions of social intervention?

Thursday 8th and Friday 9th, December, 2011 in Marseille

In the public opinion, "social State " is often confused with " welfare state " which indicates a fundamental dimension of the industrialized modern States trying to regulate the strengths of the market to maintain social peace by pursuing a double objective : that of " social welfare " (insurances against risks and chances of life) and " social justice " (wealth redistribution). In practice, the social State articulates a regulation of the free-market economy with the development of human and social rights. As underlines it Bernard Degen (Historic Dictionary of Switzerland), " by supplying financial means and services, by developing the labor law, it (social State) guarantees to each, independently of its place on the market, a minimal living standard (social policy). Furthermore, it weakens the material risks in the event of an accident, of disease, old age or unemployment, so mitigating vagaries of life (Social Security). " In fact, as indicated it the organizers of an entitled conference " State and social regulation " (Matisse - University Paris 1 - CNRS) realized in 2006 at the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (Art History Institute), " the twentieth century gave rise, in most of the industrial nations, to the development of social welfare, regulations of the labor market (labor law, collective bargaining, employment policies), public utilities (with in particular the educational policies) and macroeconomic policies of support for activity and for employment. The economic and political circumstances drove these four elements to conjugate under varied forms according to countries to establish four pillars of a whole which we can indicate by the expression of "Social State "" . More exactly, in particular, Jacques Donzelot (*L'invention du social*, 1984) and more recently Bernard Billaudot (*Revue de la régulation*, janvier 2008), underline that in France and in Europe more widely, the development of

social State is an answer to the social question, that is to the fear of massive explosion of anti-capitalist proletarian revolutions at the end of the nineteenth century.

Within the industrial era, further to several episodes of economic crises, extremely murderous colonialist and nationalist wars, in a context of full employment, the phase of after Second World War until 1970s, then coincided at the height of the development of the social State. In fact, this period corresponded to the expression of a general impression that thanks to the implementation of social policies assured by the Welfare State, the " feeling of uncertainty " and the disparities declined as the social welfares developed. Now, since the beginning of 1980s, in a context of deindustrialization of the western modern societies, the massification of unemployment, the development of *précarariat* and the acceleration of the processes of economic globalization, the Welfare state (whether it is of bismarck, or beveridge inspiration, or intermediate in these two " models ") seems in crisis so freeing the return of the uncertainty of existence, the vague desires of identical folds and the implementation of security policies.

In this context, important intellectuals as Pierre Bourdieu denounce then the development of a " neo-liberal " doxa int the heart of the former historic European social States. Indeed, for Bourdieu and many of the other analysts, these societies are in the grip of a " symbolic inculcation " of the neoliberal and neo-conservative values revealed, in particular, in the everyday acceptance of the custom of terms such as " flexibility, deregulation " so tending to remind " that the neo-liberal message is a universalist message of liberation " (intervention to the general confederacy of the workers, Athens, in October, 1996). So, in the same way as the United States, the European social " model " would be collided by processes of social " involution " and of regression so reducing the State to its " police function " well described by Max Weber (monopoly of legitimizes physical violence). Effectively, towards important political, ideological, economic and sociological transformations, in numerous countries, today, the question of social State (welfare state) is the object of deep debates associated to a central question : does the globalization of the free market economy imply inevitably a decline, even a complete disintegration of collective social welfares of the citizens for the benefit of more individualistic models but more in sync with the liberal economic ideology as the development of the " workfare " the main objective of which is to make " welfare recipients " become mobile, responsible and generative of receipts ?

About the social intervention, in his book on the rise of the uncertainties, Robert Castel (2009) already has, partially, answered this interrogation. He showed, indeed, that in a mode of development of the social State corresponds a mode of development of social work. So, of the period of the post-war until the middle of the 1970s, " classic " social work would have worked as an auxiliary of integration of the social State. In this perspective, within the liberal globalization, the dynamics " social work / social State " does not work anymore. Henceforth, the difficulties which experienced social work would be bound at first to the questioning of social State. For his part, Jacques Donzelot also underlines that, from now on, social workers join a said dynamics of " social of competition " (Spirit, 2008). In other words, numerous social workers are ordered to implement " policies of activation " for " socially disadvantaged persons ". Consequently, in front of difficulties that they have to think of the social transformations and of the sense of their action, some social workers tend then to personalize the causes of the problems met by their users, withdraw on missions of social control and raising of moral standards of the behaviors, and especially, are in the grip of the political and institutional instrumentalizations. In fact, social workers have to face a paradox : we ask them to promote social integration of their users (political end) by acting at the individual level (psycho-relational treatment), while very often, the persons whom they try to help are in trouble because they undergo socioeconomic radical transformations, not because they are " suffering individuals " affected by psychological problems

(Mansion, 2009). In these conditions, as raised it François Dubet, social interventions risk to strengthen the standard of internality which drives the individuals to interiorize the idea that they would be the first ones responsible for their difficulties, independently of their social condition (*Le déclin de l'institution*, 2002)

■ Objectives of the conference

The ambition of this conference is analytical at first, it cannot thus be a simple indictment of the transformations of social State which we would consider inevitably regressive. Indeed, this conference is also based on the conviction that it is possible to articulate intervention, social transformations and gratitude of individuals "subjects" (Touraine, Khosrokhavar, *La recherche de soi. Dialogue sur le sujet*, 2000) to coproduce societies organizing strong social welfares, wealth redistribution and emancipation of free citizens. We privilege a double approach which questions social intervention towards the system and towards the actor. It is a question on one hand, to specify how takes place the "rationalisation" of social intervention, and on the other hand, to understand better the challenges and reactions of social workers in a context of transformations of social State on a national and international scale.

When we live important economic, financial, political and ecological turnovers on the international scene (world financial crisis, shaking of the national models of integration, falls of authoritarian diets in countries of the South, new migrations and international mobilities), how can we then think and organize new social models in a global perspective within which social workers could act ? Indeed, certain analysts of political sciences underline that in West, we attend the "managerialization" of social State " to make more effective, otherwise more efficient, the agents of State " (Congress AFSP 2011 - ST 20). How can social intervention spread in a political and economic environment defending, in particular, the thesis " less State, better State "? In other words, it is to questioned the foundations and the effects of the new forms of governance within the political, bureaucratic, administrative, associative organizations which think, organize and produce the contemporary social State. More exactly, it is to questioned the new approaches of frame and management of social intervention : payment based on the performance of the agents, empowerment of the social actors and the users, contractualization, organizational and budgetary rationalization, evaluations by objectives, etc.

We will try to answer these questioning : according to the variety of the national socio-historic and economic realities, while we attend good in a reorganization, even in certain cases, in particular in countries having a low tradition in solidarity state organization, in a definition of the forms of production and management of the social State on a local, regional, national and international scale : what types of hardships do social workers have to face ? What kind of action capacities, individual and collective resources do they mobilize (professional and/or militant networks, educational innovations, ethical and ethical references, professional and/or academic qualifications, etc.) for surmounting these challenges ? Are social workers irreparably forced to become rationalization technicians in the service of strictly management logics or can they become pioneers in the service of progressive political and social projects including economic constraints, but also linked to specific ethical requirements of the social field?

This call for papers, voluntarily wide and transverse, proposes an international opening. It is addressed professional scientists and PhD students in social sciences. Nevertheless, this conference can also concern practitioners and trainers on social field who would like to value the results of original projects of research in which they would have participated. Indeed, the propositions of communication leaning on results of empirical research will be privileged. Besides, we wish to develop a comparative transnational approach of the transformations of social intervention. In practice, the definitive themes of the sessions of the conference will be defined on the basis of the reserved propositions of communication.

- 1 - The summaries of the propositions of communication will have to indicate: name, first name, e-mail address and institution of one or several author (s). They will not exceed 1500 signs (included spaces), must be drafted in French or in English and will have to reach at the latest on September 15th, 2011, under size Word, to claire.lebailbonnard@ids.fr.
- 2 - The opinions of the selection committee will be send to the authors at the end of September, 2011. The complete texts of the reserved propositions will not have to exceed 35000 signs (included spaces, notes and bibliographies) and must be send at the latest on October 30th, 2011.
- 3 - Following the conference, the best articles selected by the scientific committee will be the object of a publication.

Steering committee :

Manuel Boucher (ACOFIS, RT3 AFS, LERS-IDS)
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