

WORKSHOP

MIGRANTS, ENTITLEMENTS AND WELFARE, 1500-2000: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Dates: 6-7 September 2010

Location: Paleis der Academiën, Hertogstraat 1, 1000 Brussels – Ockegemzaal

Organizers: Steve King (University of Leicester) & Anne Winter (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

Conference Statement

Many social and economic historians have by now demonstrated the great importance of poor relief for the history of early modern and industrial Europe. As an increasing proportion of the European population became dependent on wage labour between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries, poor relief arrangements became an ever more vital resource to cover periods of unemployment or to complement low wages. With poor relief a critical element in the survival strategies of the labouring poor, it played a crucial role in, among other things, the functioning of labour markets, the nature of social relations, and cultural conceptions of entitlement. While poor relief became an ever more vital resource, relief arrangements remained an essentially local matter until the twentieth century, to which access was mediated by some form of belonging to the local community. While criteria of belonging could be of an implicit or explicit nature, they became the subject of increasing codification in many European regions from the sixteenth century onwards. As growing mobility confounded senses of spatial belonging and increasing proletarianization boosted relief expenditures, the common purpose of these codification efforts was to lawfully determine who could and who could not benefit from provisions for the poor. In some areas, codification went beyond local protectionism by outlining universal criteria that defined a person's settlement, i.e. the local entity considered responsible to provide assistance in time of need. In other areas, the distinction between insiders and outsiders remained largely implicit, or was codified only in certain cities or villages. In most cases, the associated policy options of local authorities towards newcomers could range from forced deportation over toleration to subsidization, with various degrees of discretion.

By mediating access to local provisions, conceptions of belonging determined the extent to which migrants could or not participate in relief arrangements when away from home. Given the central importance of relief in the life and labour-cycles of the European poor, the nature of these spatial relief entitlements constituted an important factor in decisions to migrate, to remain put, to settle or to return home, while also moulding cultural conceptions of insiders and outsiders. For local authorities, from their side, migrants' access – or not – to relief represented a device by which the influx and settlement of newcomers could to a certain extent be discouraged or stimulated. Therefore, the ways in which definitions of local belonging shaped the spatial dimensions of poor relief entitlements in early modern and early industrial Europe, had important implications for migration behaviour, the scope of social interactions, conceptions of identity and community, and the allocation of labour, and by extension on social, economic, political and cultural life as a whole.

So far, most research on the spatial dimensions of poor relief entitlements and their broader implications in the early modern and industrial period has focused on England and Wales, where the Elizabethan Poor Laws of 1598-1601 and the Settlement Law of 1662 laid the basis for the most elaborate normative framework on the matter in the whole of Europe. Implicit and sometimes explicit in most of these studies is a strong sense of English particularity concerning relief and settlement practice in the early modern period. While it was the only European country to put in place such a national, uniform legislative framework on these matters in the pre-industrial period, several continental regions had relief and settlement practices which showed many resemblances to those in England and Wales at different points in time. The idea behind this workshop is that a systematic incorporation of continental legislation and practice in the settlement law debate would enhance both our understanding of the particularities and generalities of the English/Welsh case, and of the social, economic, cultural and political implications of different spatial definitions of relief entitlements.

The purpose of this workshop is therefore to bring together research on the economic, social, political and cultural interactions between migration and relief entitlements in different regions of early modern and industrial Europe, in order to broaden our comparative insight in the origins and implications of diverging conceptions of belonging. The focus is thereby not limited to codifications in the form of national legislation on settlement (*settlement, Heimatrecht, domicile de secours, onderstandswoonst*), but also extends to more fuzzy or implicit definitions of belonging that were sometimes conceived on a strictly local or ad-hoc basis and which led to the exclusion or inclusion of certain categories of migrants. While one aspect of comparison focuses on differences between countries, regions, or cities, another objective is to explore the changes in the conceptions of local belonging over time, in particular in relation to long-term transformations such as state formation and political centralization, industrialization, and urbanization.

Registration

Registration fee (including lunches): 25 Euros (10 Euros for students)

Please send an e-mail with your name and affiliation details to hilde.mattens@vub.ac.be before September 1st 2010 and settle the appropriate registration fee via bank transfer to:

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Account No: 001-0686455-62

IBAN: BE51 0010 6864 5562

BIC: GEBA BE BB

Please mention **CONI284/HISTINK60** and your name

Credits

This workshop is organized with the financial support of the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO-Vlaanderen), the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts (KVAB), the Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine, and the University of Oxford Brookes, and takes place in the context of the FWO Research Network (WOG) "Labour, labour relations and labour markets in Western Europe, 1500-2000"

PROGRAMME

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 6TH 2010

9.30: Arrival & coffee

9.50: Welcome (Steve King & Anne Winter)

10.00-12.00: Settlement in perspective (chair: Hugo Soly, Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

David Feldman (Birkbeck college, London): *The Law of Settlement in seventeenth-century England*

Marco Van Leeuwen (Universiteit Utrecht): *Migrants' entitlements to poor relief in the Netherlands, 16th-20th centuries*

Leo Lucassen (Universiteit Leiden): *Cities, states and migration control in Western Europe, 1550-2010: Comparing then and now*

12.00-13.00: Lunch

13.00-15.00: Migration and labour markets (chair: Steve King)

Steve Hindle (University of Warwick): *Settlement policy and the demand for labour in an industrializing parish: Chilvers Coton (Warwickshire), c.1670-1725*

Thijs Lambrecht (Universiteit Gent): *Agrarian capitalism, labour organization and poor relief in the North Sea Area during the long eighteenth century*

Sylvia Hahn (Universität Salzburg): *Labour migration and settlement rights in Austria, 18th-19th centuries*

15.00-15.20: Coffee break

15.20-16.40: Migration and urbanization (chair: Steve King)

Leonard Schwarz (University of Birmingham) & Jeremy Boulton (University of Newcastle): *The examined poor in Georgian London: the "super parish" and the poor migrant*

Anne Winter (Vrije Universiteit Brussel): *Expelled or subsidized? Migrants' entitlements to relief in Belgian cities, 1750-1900*

16.40: Coffee & close

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 7TH 2010

9.00: Arrival & coffee

9.30-10.50 Citizenship and identity (chair: Hilde Greefs, University of Antwerp)

Anne-Lise Head (Université de Genève): *Citizenship and nevertheless not belonging: the difficulties of entitlement to relief in Switzerland (c. 1550-1960)*

Andreas Gestrich (German Historical Institute London): *Settlement, identity and the assertion of rights to relief in the German Rhine Provinces*

10.50-11.10: Coffee break

11.10-12.30: Assistance and control (chair: Hilde Greefs, University of Antwerp)

Steve King (University of Leicester): *Poor relief, settlement and the surveillance of belonging in England and Scandinavia, 1780s to 1840s*

Paul-André Rosental (Sciences Po and Ined, Paris), *Attracting, mistreating and protecting foreign labour migrants in interwar France*

12.30-13.30: Lunch

13.30-14.50: Family and belonging (chair: Anne Winter)

Elizabeth Hurren (Oxford Brookes University): *Strategies for undermining the settled and 'belonging' poor in late nineteenth century England and France*

Jane Humphries (All Souls College, University of Oxford): *Marriage, belonging and the poor migrant from autobiographies*

14.50-15.10: Coffee break

15.10-16.10: Closing discussion

Chairs: Joanna Innes (Somerville College, University of Oxford) & Peter Solar (Vesalius College, Vrije Universiteit Brussel)