Rethinking global care chains through the perspective of heterogenous states, discursive framings and multi-level governance

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Abstract

In investigating global and regional care chains, scholars have traditionally adopted a sociological bottom–up approach, but more attention has recently been focussed on the role of the state. Despite this new attention to states and how they condition care chains, the existing frameworks cannot grasp the complexity of potential struggles and tensions within states and at the various state levels. In outlining a broad and tentative analytical framework for exploration of the role of the state in shaping global care chains, this theoretical article combines feminist state theory, discursive policy analysis and multi-level governance theories. Paying attention to the role of the state, we focus on the framing of policy problems that are important for care chains and on potential tensions between different framings within a state and across the different state levels. We argue that these framings should be investigated in both receiving and sending states.

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Introduction

During the past decade, the theoretical concept of 'global care chains' (GCCs) has exerted a pivotal influence on the growing feminist study of migration and care. The term GCC usually refers to women from less-affluent societies who migrate to the U.S., Europe, Asia or the Middle East to take up employment as care workers for families while they leave the care of their own children, older parents or other dependents to family members or local care workers. The concept was originally defined by the American sociologist Hochschild (2001: 131) as 'a series of personal links between people across the globe based upon paid and unpaid work of caring'. Since Hochschild introduced this concept, research in the field has been characterised by a sociological bottom–up approach, often leading to neglect of the role of the state. A number of scholars have subsequently investigated GCCs in relation to the state (Gavanas 2010, 2013; Isaksen 2012; Lutz & Palenga-Möllenbeck 2012; Williams 2010, 2011, 2012; Williams & Gavanas 2008; Yeates 2009a, 2009b). In particular, the work of the British sociologist Williams (2010, 2011, 2012) has been crucial in analysing how nation-states regulate global care work. Williams (2011, 2012) compares the European welfare states as receiving societies, stressing the ways in which the three regimes – care, migration and employment – dovetail in different ways.

Inspired by Williams's approach, we address the role of the state in GCCs. However, we take the *heterogeneous state* as the point of departure. In this article, we propose a rethinking of GCCs through the analytical lens of discursive framings of policy problems and through the perspective of multi-level governance. The state does not just respond to 'problems out there' (Bacchi 2009) but also actively engages in their construction under the influence of transnational discourses (Conrad 2011; Dahl 2009). The logics that constitute the political framing of problems become important when we seek to understand the GCCs through a state perspective. Additionally, a focus on framings of policy problems and on multi-level governance draws attention to potential tensions *within* the state and *across* the different state levels, for instance, the link between the nation-state and the supranational state level. Consequently, we ask the following question: *How can discursive framings of policy problems and tensions within the state and across the levels of the state contribute to an understanding of global care chains?*

We argue, first, that in order to understand the role of the state in GCCs, the state cannot be seen as just reactive or as a 'passive' backdrop. In contrast to Williams, and inspired by Finnish and Danish political scientists Kantola and Dahl (2005) and Kantola (2006), we stress that the state actively makes choices and pursues various strategies that are not always compatible. Second, we argue that new insights can be gained if we introduce Bacchi's (2009) 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' (WPR) discursive approach. Drawing on this framework, we ask how governing takes place, for instance, within the policy fields of care, migration, employment and education.

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In implying that 'there is a problem' that needs to be solved, we are able to reveal how 'problems' are framed within a particular field and to explore the implications of tensions within and across fields. This leads to 'questioning taken-for-granted assumptions that lodge in government policies and policy proposals' (Bacchi 2009: xv). Third, we draw on the theory of multi-level governance (Bache & Flinders 2004; Marks, Hooghe & Blank 1996) in stressing potential tensions and compatibilities across the different state levels, such as among the nation-state, sub-state levels (local and regional policies) and supranational levels (e.g., European Union [EU] policies).

Perceiving the state as a dynamic and changeable construction, this theoretical article considers how analysing discursive framings of policy problems, as well as the tensions and compatibilities within states and across state levels, can provide us with new insights into the conditions and challenges that migrant care workers face. Thus, the article offers new, tentatively developed analytical tools applied to the analysis of the role of the heterogeneous state in GCC, which can be applied to both the sending and the receiving states. In doing so, the article aims to open up for further theoretical discussion the question on how we can understand GCCs through the perspective of heterogeneous states.

The article starts out by considering Hochschild's original study of GCCs in the US and reviews the existing literature, the theoretical problems identified within the field and the further challenges. We subsequently introduce the three analytical perspectives mentioned earlier: feminist state theory, discursive policy analysis and multi-level governance. Before we do so, however, we briefly reflect on the combination of the three approaches. Finally, the article concludes by considering the insights obtained and the challenges for future research.

Existing Theorisation of GCC from a State Perspective

Where is the state?

The existing theorisation of GCCs has identified problems in Hochschild's original understanding, extended her framework to new fields and introduced new concepts. While several theorists have noted the neglect of the state (e.g. Williams & Gavanas 2008), others have noted the Western bias of existing literature (Raghuram 2012) and the tendency to ignore men as care workers (Bartolomei 2010; Kilkey 2010; Manalansan 2006). Some have argued for an extension of the notion of GCCs to include regional care chains, the care of elderly and the role of professional migrants such as nurses (Huang, Thang & Toyota 2012; Isaksen, Devi & Hochschild 2008; Lutz 2011; Yeates 2009a). In this review, we limit ourselves to discussions of the state, and only touch upon the other themes insofar as they are relevant to the theorisation of the state.

GCC is a network concept that has given us a more sophisticated understanding of how globalising processes are embodied and commercialised in emotional and social links between people across national borders (Hochschild 2001; Parreñas 2001, 2005). As a number of scholars (Baldassar & Merla 2014; Yeates 2010) have emphasised, the literature largely ignores the specific contexts (including the state) that form different kinds of GCC. Hochschild is essentially concerned with the relationship between the micro and the macro levels, where the everyday lives of migrant women and their families are determined by unequal global economic structures. Critics have argued that Hochschild neglects the meso level as represented

by the state (Williams 2012; Yeates 2009a). Hochschild focusses on the individual experiences of migrant care workers in a frame of global socioeconomic structures to show the negative side of globalisation. This micro perspective framed by a macro perspective reflects the empirical setting in the Hochschild study of domestic care workers in a context of US as a liberal welfare state, where the welfare state plays a relatively minor role on issues of preschool care. Despite its minor role, the state plays a role by virtue of its silence when it comes to care issue, leaving it to the market and civil society to care for the vulnerable: children, the sick, the disabled and the elderly. To address this lack in the Hochschild study, recent studies have taken the role of the state into account by calling attention to the importance of national contexts and policies related to the globalisation of care (Isaksen 2010; Kilkey, Lutz & Palenga-Möllenback 2010; Kofman 2001; Lutz 2008; Lutz 2011; Peterson 2011; Skornia 2014; Williams 2010; Williams 2012; Williams & Gavanas 2008; Yeates 2009b). We argue that the role of the state cannot be ignored. Likewise, we need a critical revision of how the state is conceptualised in the study of GCCs.

How is the state conceptualised in the study of GCCs?

In the literature on the European welfare states, the various European states are seen as having widely differing policies, and this crucially influences the forms of care provision available (Anttonen & Sipilä 1996; Bettio & Plantenga 2004; Lister et al. 2007; Pfau-Effinger 2005). A large number of comparative European studies have shown the importance of differences between welfare states for the expansion of care markets and migrant care labour (for an overview, refer Sainsbury 2014). These studies distinguish between different care models in Europe, looking at both childcare and care for the elderly (Daly 2001). Examples of models that contrast clearly with each other are the Nordic model of social care and the Mediterranean model of family care. The Nordic model involves publicly financed childcare and eldercare provided on the basis of the principle of universal rights and social citizenship. In contrast, familialism prevails in the Southern European context, implying a permanent trust in the family, with its intergenerational solidarity and its gender structure, as a provider of help and support (Saraceno & Keck 2010).

A number of recent studies have addressed the dynamics between European welfare states and transnational family care arrangements (Deneva 2012; Isaksen 2012; Kilkey & Merla 2013; Yeates 2009a). The European literature on migration and care describes the free movement within the EU, which has created new mobility patterns and regional care chains from the East to the North and from former Eastern European states to Southern Europe (Deneva 2012; Isaksen 2011, 2012). Moreover, this literature addresses the cases of both professional nurses and nurse assistants employed in the public healthcare services (Gavanas 2013; Seeberg 2012; Yeates 2009a) and of 'unskilled' domestic workers employed by families as live-in or live-out care workers (Isaksen 2011; Lutz 2011; Peterson 2016).

Recently, European global care studies have paid particular attention to 'intersecting regimes', a concept that was originally introduced by Williams and Gavanas (2008) and Williams (2010, 2011). This concept focusses on how care, migration and employment regimes interact and shape migrant care work in different contexts. Williams's idea has inspired a growing body of literature (Da Roit & Weicht 2013; Hooren 2012; Skornia 2014). For instance, Hooren's (2012) three-country study indicates that a familialistic care regime induces a migrant-in-the-family care model, that a liberal care regime leads to a 'migrant in the market' model of employment and that a social democratic care regime creates no particular demand for

migrant care workers. By focussing on regimes, Williams (2010: 390) addresses the role of the state in an attempt to shed light on the dynamics of how migrant care workers function as part of an unequal global division of reproductive labour that involves clusters of policies at the nation-state level. At the same time, Williams suggests that the definition of a regime points beyond policies: a regime is seen as a 'cluster of relevant policies as well as practices, discourses, social relations and forms of contestation' (Williams 2011: 50). She provides specific definitions of the three regimes, namely, care, migration and employment (Williams 2011: 50–51). Applying the concept of regime, Williams (2011) compares the ways in which different receiving states condition and enable migrant care work and GCCs. Variation is understood as emerging in the ways in which the three regimes intersect within a country. The focus is on how regimes interact and dovetail within a given nation-state and on comparing states on the basis of how regimes construct models of migrant care work. Despite variations among the European welfare states, Williams (2012: 373) argues that there is a convergence across Europe: the welfare states tend to reduce their social expenditures and then involve migrant care workers who are positioned by the receiving nation-state in exploitable and vulnerable situations, regardless of the employment environment, the form of care work and the variety of employers. The focus on how the three regimes of care, migration and employment dovetail in the receiving welfare states demonstrates how the exploitation of labour migrants and the care drain from less-affluent nation-states to richer nation-states are effectively legalised and normalised. The consequence is an unequal distribution of care responsibilities across the globe (Williams 2011: 55ff.). Williams's argument implies that despite differences in their institutional set-ups, the various European states pursue policies that are based on similar discourses and that act in uniform and homogeneous ways to guarantee care and enable social reproduction.

We welcome the focus on intersecting regimes as it draws attention to the importance of various regimes in the state and their relations with each other. In analysing care, migration and employment regimes, the analysis produces fruitful insights into how the state positions migrants and their families in vulnerable positions in receiving societies. However, some critical points need to be raised. First, the state appears to be treated as homogeneous in Williams's work when the three regimes tend to 'fit' in a mutual understanding of the needs of social reproduction. However, the state cannot be assumed to embody any a priori strategies, for instance, keeping the costs of care down. Rather than assuming that the state is a unitary entity with a clear unilateral strategy, a more empirically grounded understanding of the way policies affect regional and GCC is necessary. For this, attention to the concept of the heterogeneous state can be productive. Second, while Williams's concept of regime appears to be an all-encompassing concept, the links to methodological issues are vague. Additionally, her analytical approach does not account for the struggles between different discourses in a policy field or across different policy fields. Third, the analysis of intersecting regimes remains at the nation-state level and focusses on the receiving countries. Hence, apart from neglecting the role of the state in the sending countries, the approach excludes the sub-national and the supranational level of governance.

Some research has contributed to a rethinking of the regime concept, paying attention to the different and interconnected levels of the state and of social processes. Wrede and Näre (2013) focus attention on Nordic care work regimes and introduce the concept of 'glocalisation'. They argue that transformations within the Nordic care regime can be captured precisely through the lens of glocalisation. This implies that global socioeconomic processes shape local care regimes in different ways. From a slightly different perspective, Kilkey and Merla (2013) adopt a bottom–up perspective to offer an analytical framework for understanding how institutions contextualise care arrangement in transnational families. Moreover, they innovatively break with 'methodological nationalism' by bringing in 'space', thus stressing both that governance goes beyond the nation-state and that the local, national and transnational levels are interconnected. Similar to Kilkey and Merla (2013: 9), we find multi-level governance highly relevant.

Shifts in the study of GCCs

Studies of GCCs have expanded the theoretical framework to include the role of the state, and forms of care other than pre-school care have also been included. These studies have also introduced the notion of citizenship to account for the rights of EU citizens migrating within the EU. At the same time, European scholars' new approach to GCC has also displayed a bias by failing to address the question of how non-EU sending states influence GCCs. Typically, studies of GCCs have examined the receiving states. In recent years, however, studies on care chains in Asia have paid attention to the sending states. In particular, care studies that address the situation in Asia have revised Hochschild's approach differently from GCC studies that address the European context. The Asian studies pay attention to how the sending states encourage a care drain by exporting professional care labour (Masselink and Lee 2010; Yeates 2009b). They also address the way in which local contexts matter in the sending societies (Guevarra 2006; Huang, Thang & Toyota 2012; Raghuram 2012).

The Irish social policy scholar Yeates (2009a) has developed a sophisticated and complex network model that incorporates various GCCs in different types of institutional settings and that encompasses both the sending state and the receiving state. Yeates's model demonstrates how the type of care work plays a crucial role in the analysis of the public and private actors that affect the care chain – and how. Her model is based on action network theory, and the analysis draws upon interviews with professional migrant nurses working in institutionalised care settings rather than in private homes. Yeates's approach to GCC calls attention to an array of actors, including state as well as non-state actors such as recruitment agencies, religious institutions and labour unions. Thus, the model stresses that care chains are formed by the interaction of multiple actors. Yeates's network model offers tools for analysing heterogeneous institutions and the ways in which complex institutional practices form GCCs. In line with Yeates's model, Stenum (2010) emphasises the transnational perspective by including the receiving and sending societies in her analysis of the state migration management of au pairs. However, in contrast to Yeates and Stenum, we propose an approach that understands GCCs through the perspective of the heterogeneous state by paying attention to the discursive framings of policy problems and to multi-level governance. Thus, we put public policies into fore when analysing GCC, whereas Yeates's and Stenum's analytical approaches centre on the subjects that provide care.

A growing body of literature focusses on the sending society in professional global care work, investigating, for instance, how nursing schools contribute to the migration industry. This body of literature (Guevarra 2006; Masselink & Lee 2010; Ortiga 2014; Walton-Roberts 2012, 2016) demonstrates how sending nation-states and both state and non-state actors have turned healthcare education into a commercialised enterprise that produces workers for a global healthcare market. Nursing schools adjust their educational

programmes to benefit the healthcare needs of wealthy societies, while the needs in the sending societies are assigned a lower priority. We recognise the importance of analysing non-state actors but cannot do so in the space available in this article.

GCC is a travelling concept. It has travelled beyond its first application and is now applied to studies in Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The above-mentioned studies have emphasised the importance of the societal context, the state actors and the non-state actors in the sending countries. They have also stressed the necessity of the following: including regional care chains in Europe and Asia, addressing care professionals in care chains and being attentive to differences in citizen status for migrants in the EU. Drawing on these insights, we go on to specify how we combine three different theorisations into a tentative analytical framework.

A Tentative Framework: Combining Different Theorisations

In the following, we introduce three theoretical perspectives that will help us to develop theoretical and analytical tools to rethink GCCs through the perspective of heterogeneous states, by drawing attention to discursive framings and multi-level governance. The first approach is inspired by the feminist state theory; drawing on the concept of the heterogeneous state, it sees the state as an ensemble of both compatibilities and tensions. The second is the discursive policy approach outlined by Bacchi (2009). These first two approaches are grounded in post-structuralism, whereas the third approach is grounded in social constructivism and considers the state at not just one level but as being involved in multi-level governance. In addition to differing in terms of their philosophy of science, the three theorisations also differ in relation to their context of applicability. Whereas Bacchi's approach and the feminist state theory are clearly designed for general applicability but mostly draw upon theorisations and examples from Western democracies, multi-level theorising has largely but not exclusively focussed on the EU context.

When combining different theorisations, we need to be cautious about which concepts are taken from where and whether they fit into a joint analytical strategy. From the feminist state theory (Brown 1992; Dahl 2017; Kantola & Dahl 2005), we have adopted notions of the state as an ensemble of the different parts of the state and its heterogeneous character. Considering Bacchi's (2009) theory, we are inspired by her idea of 'the unproblematic' (silence) representation of political problems and solutions. Both the proponents of feminist state theory and Bacchi stress the role of *discourses*. From the theory of multi-level governance, we take *levels of governance* and the idea of *different degrees of authority* assigned to different kinds of discourses at different levels. It might seem that the multi-level governance approach is at odds with discourse analysis as the former distinguishes between different kinds of authority. However, even Foucault argued that there are privileged discursive sites (Prado 1995: 36), with discourses from these sites attaining a particular authority. The key concepts are introduced in the following sections. In particular, we suggest that our analytical approach is useful for examining tensions and compatibilities within a policy field, between different policy fields, and across different levels of governance.

The Heterogeneous State

The state cannot exclusively be treated as a backdrop or context, nor can it be seen as merely reactive, given that public policies actively shape regional CCs and GCCs. To develop the approach focussing on discursive framings of policy problems as well as the tensions and compatibilities in different policy fields, we first need to discuss the notion of the state itself. Here, we wish to highlight the usefulness of Kantola and Dahl's (2005) account of the heterogeneous state, as they emphasise its changeable, heterogeneous and differentiated nature. This is the point of departure for how we propose to rethink GCCs through a state perspective. In particular, we stress the tensions and compatibilities that might arise between different policies, levels and functions. A view of the state as discursively heterogeneous helps us to identify potentially different and contrasting logics and framings within it. State intervention involves a variety of institutions, policy processes and discursive practices, which, in turn, can have various effects. The American political theorist Brown (1992: 12) views the state as a 'significantly unbounded terrain of powers and techniques, an ensemble of discourses, rules, and practices, cohabiting in limited, tension-ridden, often contradictory relation with one another'. In a similar vein, the Australian sociologists Pringle and Watson (2004: 205) conceive of the state not as an actor or object, but rather as a plurality of arenas and discourses. Inspired by this, we see an arena of discourses as a site of contestation where policy problems are defined. The outcomes of particular policies not only depend on the limits established by structures but also on the discursive struggles that define and constitute the state within a certain time frame (Pringle and Watson 2004: 213). As Yeates (2009a: 66) stresses, national policies are not just a context; they are also 'part of the chain itself'. In other words, the state can have both enabling and restraining effects on migrant care workers, depending upon how policies on, for instance, migration, care work, employment and education are framed. We argue that the discursive framings of policy problems ground the practices and social relations that constitute the care chains. We focus on how compatibilities and tensions are established through different discursive framings of policy problems that do not necessarily 'fit, comply with each other or strive in the same direction'.

Discursive Framings of Policy Problems

A number of feminist studies in political science (Bacchi 2009; Dahl, 2000, 2017; Kantola and Squires 2004; Lombardo and Forest 2012; Peterson 2011; Spanger 2011) pay attention to the systems of meaning and language within policy and politics, arguing that there are no objective social and political problems 'out there', but that such problems are created in the process of policy formation. To understand the struggle between different representations of a problem, Bacchi (2009) draws on the work of Michel Foucault to develop a methodological toolkit for critical discourse analysis. This approach aims to reveal the logics underpinning policies and practices through a WPR methodology. Bacchi scrutinises 'taken-for-granted assumptions that lodge in government policies and policy proposals' (2009: xv). She pays attention to how policy problems and proposed solutions are produced through discourse. Thus, Bacchi (2009: 35) focusses on discourse as limiting 'what is it possible to think, write or speak'.

In her comprehensive toolbox for a discursive policy analysis, Bacchi suggests that the researcher consider six questions. We have delimited our framework to three of her questions: 1) What is the 'problem' represented to be in a specific policy? 2) What presuppositions underlie this representation of the problem? 3) What is left unproblematic? (ibid. 19). These questions help us to problematise the idea that states are internally consistent and

are smoothly compatible, as there might be several competing representations of any problem. Applying Bacchi's approach, we can set out to investigate how problems are represented in the policy fields deemed important by Williams's analysis of intersecting regimes. Then, we investigate the presuppositions and (the unproblematic) silences upon which the given problem representation is based, and we describe them.[1] We argue that multiple – and possibly competing – discourses establish a policy field. When it focusses on the state, the European literature on care chains predominantly refers to the receiving state. The analytical framework that we propose can also be applied for the analysis of the role of the sending states. As pointed out earlier, sending states play a crucial role in shaping migrant care work and care chains. When care migration is regulated by the state, this occurs through political discourses and normative constructions of care, which ground the basis for (re)negotiations of care obligations and commitments. By the same token, both receiving and sending states may construct different kinds of problems in the policy fields of care, migration and employment, creating tensions *within* and *across* the fields. There is no a priori logic determining whether the different problem constructions will be compatible or will be in tension with one another. Following from this, we cannot a priori assume that policies converge in a unified state strategy to promote migrant care work.

The implications of the analysis of discursive framings of policy problems are clear. The state is not a homogeneous agent but can be internally split within a policy field. Further, the state constructs different policy problems in the different policy fields of care, migration and employment. The relationships between the articulated policy problems cannot be assumed to form a consistent strategy. The framing of a policy problem is the result from a struggle, and it must be examined by empirical inquiry, which implies an in-depth analysis of policy texts. Tensions can be described as frictions or uneasiness between different discourses. For example, there might be a tension between the framing of policy problems in the fields of care and migration, for instance, between defining the number of migrants in a country as a problem on the one hand and constructing hiring migrant workers as a solution to the care deficit on the other. Another aspect of the analytical approach is to look at the way in which the state neglects a problem or phenomenon that exists in the social world; when a problem is not recognised, silencing is taking place (Bacchi 2009; Dahl 2012). Moreover, discourses provide certain subject positions at a given time and in a given context while marginalising others. Policy discourses crucially shape the lives of migrant care workers and their families in different ways. For example, public policies promote and legitimise certain forms of care, (re)producing normative ideas about who should do what kind of care, under what conditions and with what rights.

We will here briefly explain how we could approach an empirical case. In Williams's study on converging variations of migrant care work in Europe (Williams 2012; Williams & Gavanas 2008), she takes Spain as an example of how the childcare regime and the migration regime dovetail. She underlines that Spain combines a subsidy for working mothers - to help them buy in childcare - with an immigration policy that involves quotas for domestic/care workers, hence promoting the strategy of employing migrant domestic workers for childcare. Williams's analysis draws upon interview material to show the influence of regimes on social practices, particularly on migrant care work.

In contrast, we argue that in order to understand the ways in which the state shapes the positions of migrant care workers, we need to analyse the actual policies in place and the discursive

framings of policy problems in different fields. The fact that there exists a subsidy for working mothers, or a care allowance for home-based eldercare, does not in itself mean that the state actively and intentionally promotes migrant care work. It becomes necessary to consider how the actual policy is framed. In the case of Spain, eldercare is framed as a problem of the family's capacity to care for their elderly, and the solutions involve social services as well as a care allowance for family care. Domestic workers do not fit into the definitions of care established by the law, and hence their role in the Spanish eldercare system is silenced. At the same time, looking into the policy field of employment, there has recently been a reform of the policy on domestic service, which has reframed domestic work towards real work and strengthened the rights of domestic workers, including live-in workers. However, the dimension of eldercare in the domestic service sector is ignored within this policy field too. A focus on tensions can draw attention to the implications of recognising domestic workers as workers, while at the same time rendering their care work invisible. One example of the consequences of the framing of domestic workers as workers but not caregivers is that being responsible for and taking care of an older person with, for instance, dementia is categorised as equally (un)qualified work such as ironing or cleaning for able-bodied adults. This, in turn, has material effects as the valuation of the work is linked to economic remuneration (Peterson 2015, 2016). Hence, by taking a closer look at policy fields such as care and employment, we can find different framings and tensions, with implications for the positions of migrant care workers and GCCs more generally.

A Multi-Level Governance Perspective

The third perspective in our theoretical framework is multi-level governance, which can be helpful in identifying different levels of discourses and explaining the potential tensions across various levels of governance that are involved in shaping GCCs in sending and receiving societies. Since the 1990s, an increasing number of scholars have addressed the EU as a system of 'multilevel governance', a concept that draws attention to how national governments share and contest responsibility and authority with other actors, both supranational and sub-national (Bache & Flinders 2004). Our aim here is *not* to describe the way in which the EU system of governance works. Instead, we emphasise the various levels of governance and the potential tensions within and between these levels. Although we recognise the importance of non-governmental actors (as noted earlier) and informal networks (*cf.* Yeates's approach), we focus upon the different levels of governance in terms of sub-state (local), the nation-state and supra-state levels. Policies regarding care, migration, employment, education, etc. are formulated – and operate – at different state levels. We are inspired by the branch of multi-level governance theory that stresses the role of discourses and contested competencies (Lombardo & Forest 2012), as it is consistent with our framework. This multi-level governance perspective is in line with our understanding of the state as a heterogeneous entity. By paying attention to discursive framings and tensions between discourses *at different state levels*, we can open up for a more complex analysis of migrant care work and GCCs.

Formal institutions such as laws and regulations lend authority to discourses; they officially confirm particular ways to categorise and ascribe rights and duties to different social groups, creating hierarchies of needs, rights and obligations (Brodin 2005). In the case of the EU policy, the authority differs in relation to the various

Table 1. Analytical framework: providing an example of an empirical overview of policy problematisations

Policy fields / State levels	Care		Migration		Employment		Education	
Philippines Denmark	Sending state	Receiving state	Sending state	Receiving state	Sending state	Receiving state	Sending state	Receiving state
Supra-state *EU, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)*	Health care deficit	Deficit of care and health professionals	New internal labour mobility policy for selected professions (including health care workers)	Developing a joint migration policy		Ensuring free mobility within the EU		Absent and differing educational systems in care and health
Nation-state *DEN PHI*	Health care deficit; care drain within families	Deficit of care and health professionals	Former emigration policy that supports overseas labour migration	Differentiate between migrants	Poor salary within health care	Authorization of care and health professionals from abroad	Marketisation of nursing schools; prioritising a global healthcare	
Sub-state *The Capital Region of Denmark; Copenhagen municipality*	Health care deficit Care drain wihtin families	Inadequate integration of foreign health and care professionals		Ensuring the match of qualifications in health and care	Poor salary wiithin health care	Clash between different kinds of work cultures	Marketisation of nursing schools; prioritising a global healthcare	Insufficient language proficiency of migrant professionals

A vertical reading: Each column reflects the state level at the various levels of the state.
A horizontal reading: the various potentially relevant policy fields at any given state level.

policy fields. With its complex system of multi-level governance, the EU handles legislation and formulates solutions to perceived political problems (Kelstrup, Martinsen & Wind 2008). Hence, in policy fields such as care, migration and employment, the authoritative role of the sub-state (local/regional level) and the supra-state (e.g. the EU) differs across the fields. Further, policies are formulated and implemented at various levels. For instance, the EU has developed a common European immigration policy (refer the Dublin enactments), which is interpreted and put into practice by its member-states both at a sub-national level and a national level.

Table 1 Analytical framework: offers an overview of what kind of policy levels and policy fields can be involved in the shaping of migrant care work and GCCs. Moreover, the table includes both the sending and the receiving states. Thus, the table illustrates how our theoretical insights can be applied to the analysis of how the heterogeneous states shape GCCs. The tentative analytical approach pays attention to relations between the policy fields and state levels. We are not arguing that all the levels and policy fields must be included in an empirical analysis. The point is that the

analysis of the ways in which the state shapes GCCs must take the complexity into account and carefully consider the selection of policy fields and levels of governance. No causality is implied in the table.

Reading the table vertically and horizontally allows an analysis of discursive framings and tensions:
− *Within* a policy field (e.g. the column of the policy field of care)
− *Between* policy fields at any state level (e.g. between the policy fields of care and education)
− *Across* state levels of the receiving and the sending states

By posing three of Bacchi's questions in each table cell, we open up an avenue for research into the ways in which the state internally frames care, employment and migration as a problem and whether there is convergence and/or tensions between discourses at the sub-, national and supranational levels and across the policy fields. The questions are as follows: (1) What is the policy problem represented to be? (2) What presuppositions underlie this representation of the problem? And (3) What is left unproblematic? Each box indicates the policy problem definitions and solutions. The various articulated

policy problem definitions may supply or collide with each other, depending on the particular situation. Both the selected policy fields and the state levels can vary in accordance with the empirical context.

Conclusion

Hochschilds's theory of GCCs has drawn attention to the indirect and often negative consequences of globalising processes on social bonds, on emotions and on gendered, ethnic and class-based inequalities. Her theory has also given rise to a wealth of research in the US, Europe, and the global South, in particular, in Asia. However, her theory has 'blind spots' regarding the role of the state. European scholars have redeveloped her theoretical framework by including the state but focussing on the receiving states. While we welcome this development, we argue that a more complex view of the state is needed and that both the sending and the receiving states are involved in shaping GCCs. We also need to refine our understanding of the state to address the question of how the state discursively conditions GCCs through how policy problems and solutions are represented. Paying attention to the state as a heterogeneous entity enables us to investigate not only what policies and regulations are adopted and implemented but also how they are framed and legitimised.

Our tentative analytical approach combines the feminist state theory, discursive policy analysis and multi-level governance. Using Bacchi's methodology, we stress that the representation of both policy problems and solutions has an impact on the way in which policy fields of, for instance, care, employment, migration and education shape migrant care work and GCCs. Adopting a feminist post-structuralist approach, we stress that given the heterogeneous nature of the state, we have to look for tensions *within* and *between* policy fields – as well as *across* – different state levels.

To conclude, a challenge for future research is to pursue more studies that examine how public policies are constituted and how discursive framings of policy problems affect the lives of migrant care workers. Furthermore, research should take into account that receiving and sending states are parts of multi-level governance. This will improve our understanding of the complex and dynamic role of the heterogeneous state in conditioning GCCs.

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Notes

1. To study silences and methodological tools for theoretical reasons, please consult Dahl (2012) and Dahl (2017).

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