TITLE: Post-welfare city at the margins? Immigrant precarity and the mediating third sector

in London

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INTRODUCTION

In 1980, Michael Dear proposed the 'welfare city', in which the most vulnerable populations were supported by the state and, crucially, were afforded centrally-located urban space – the epitome of which was the emergence of service-dependent ghettoes for deinstitutionalized mental patients then flocking to the inner cities of North America (Dear, 1980). Since the 2000s, there have been calls for acknowledging the emergence of a 'post-welfare city' city, characterized instead by focused entrepreneurial policies while denigrating and punishing non-producers and non-consumers (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Currently, the post-welfare city is distinguished by "a period of intensely coordinated activity to dismantle the liberal welfare state in accordance with the new ideological and political imperatives of market liberalism" (Fairbanks, 2009: 17). These new tendencies threaten to undermine the longstanding geographies of help that anchored the poor and vulnerable to the inner city in highly agglomerated support systems.

Of course, the distinction between the welfare and post-welfare city is rarely so clearcut, and in fact constitutes an important debate about the actual nature of current urban social policy, of whether cities of the Global Northhave in fact experienced a dramatic break with previous models of support in favor of punishing and displacing the poor (Mitchell, 2001), or whether there are strong continuities with the welfare city that ensure a measure of (residual) support (DeVerteuil, 2015). For those who argue that a fundamental break has occurred, evidence has been deployed to show the shift from redistribution to apparent revanchism against the poor in the name of profits and city image (MacLeod, 2011). For those who argue against the hard break, the transition to the so-called post-welfare city is never complete, given the resilient components of the previous welfare city that ensure the supportive existing alongside the punitive; as DeVerteuil (2015: 7) argued, "the post-welfare

city contains important residues from Keynesianism while simultaneously removing the taken-for-granted nature of welfare and the role of the state in its provision".

Within this debate, it is increasingly crucial to clarify the role of the third sector (also deemed the voluntary sector), given its pivotal task in managing the poor and vulnerable. This is particularly pressing at the margins of the (emerging) system, in the neglected 'in-between' and precarious components of help that are threatened by shifts in national politics, and serving stigmatized clientele. One particularly marginal component is the immigrant-serving sector (DeVerteuil, 2011a), which deals with a precarious population (especially if they are work precarious and/or lacking citizenship), set within an asymmetrical relationship with the state that makes it vulnerable to anti-immigrant backlashes and ideologically-driven austerity. Moreover, the immigrant-serving sector must respond to clients who straddle two worlds – the recipient nation as well as the sending nation in what Roy (2009) called 'extra-territorial' space – and who are engaged in precarious work with low pay, unsocial hours, no benefits, and so forth.

In this paper, I focus on the position that the immigrant-serving third sector occupies within the post-welfare city, potentially ranging from doing the state's dirty work in a punitive frame to being openly supportive of clients, to challenging the state's position vis-à-vis work precarious migrants, to somewhere in between. Despite the focus on work precarious migrants in particular, the labor market itself will not be examined, given that there is plentiful research already on how it generates material precarities among migrants (e.g. Datta et al., 2007; Martin, 2011, 2012; Coe, 2013; Lewis et al, 2015). Rather, there is a need to move precarity beyond a material condition primarily embedded in exploitative labor markets, and toward the relational experiences and identities bound up in this precarity, especially the responses of various institutional absorbers and protectors in the wake of corrosive labor practices (e.g. Martin, 2011; Ehrkamp & Nagel, 2014). In particular, the third

sector, as an institutional formation lying in tension with the state, market and informal community (DeVerteuil, 2011a), can be a potential buffer to state absence and neglect, but can also work alongside or mitigate against and challenge an overbearing state, the exact balance of which animates the focus of this paper, responding to the ontological insecurity that is at the heart of precarity (Standing, 2011).

Upon outlining the proposed roles of the third sector within the post-welfare city, I present a case study of Greater London, with 15 interviews of immigrant-serving third sector organizations across well-served Inner London boroughs (Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets) and less well-served Outer London boroughs (Brent, Hounslow). The results indicated a mixed intermediary role for third sector organizations: strong in compensating and filling the gaps from an absent state, yet rather weak in protecting against, contesting or challenging the overbearing state on behalf of their clients. More generically, the results also underlined the importance of looking beyond the labor market to appreciate the full complexities of social reproduction among precarious populations. Further, investigating the role of the third sector at the margins of post-welfare city sheds light on the shadow state and radical breaks with previous structures, versus continuity and supportive tendencies.

THE THIRD SECTOR AT THE MARGINS OF THE (INCOMPLETE) POST-WELFARE CITY

The sprawling, residual, permeable and largely unregulated nature of the third sector makes it difficult to pin down, likened to a "loose and baggy monster" (Kendall & Knapp, 1995). The term 'sector' also implies "that these entities, however diverse, together make up a coherent whole – a sector with its own distinct type of social form and practical logic" (Corry, 2010: 11). Third sector organizations can be conceived as "that sector of society which

encompasses formal, nonprofit distributing organizations that are both self-governing and constitutionally independent of the state" (Milligan, 2009: 165). Currently, the third sector occupies a rather important niche, frequently asked to fill in the gaps when and where state, market or community failure occurs (Trudeau & Veronis, 2009; Clifford, 2012). The third sector is a subset of a residually-defined "civil society", the "arena of un-coerced collective action around shared interested, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated" (Centre for Civil Society, 2009).

How does the third sector fit into the post-welfare city? While part of the question that this paper seeks to answer, there are some existing constructs to help guide us. The first is the shadow state concept, in which the third sector acts as a stopgap measure. In Wolch's (1990: xvi) words, the shadow state emerges as a "a para-state apparatus comprise of multiple voluntary sector organizations, administered outside of traditional democratic politics and charged with major collective service responsibilities previously shouldered by the public sector, yet remaining within the purview of state control". Within this construct, the third sector is enrolled in the state's 'dirty work' of managing unwanted and vulnerable populations, to the point where it is difficult to distinguish it from neoliberal oversight and punitiveness (DeVerteuil, 2015). In this pessimistic account, the third sector becomes what Peck and Tickell (2002: 43) called the "'little platoons' in the shape of (local) voluntary and faith-based associations in the service of neoliberal goals", part and parcel of the post-welfare city, if not its epitome.

Conversely, others perceive the third sector as more independent of the state and more explicitly supportive to clients as they struggle with an (incomplete) post-welfare city (DeVerteuil, 2015). In this construct, the sector acts as a crucial "boundary institution"

between the welfare state, market forces and precarious communities (Brandsen et al., 2005). The third sector is therefore best understood as a diverse platform that retains some of its unruly, grassroots, ethical and subversive elements balanced with more corporatist modes (Fairbanks, 2009; Corry, 2010), acting as a last-ditch measure of support for the precarious (Martin, 2010, 2011, 2012). In response to these immediate material needs, "third sector organizations maintain a critical layer of social protection that…can mean the difference between life and death" (Evans, 2011: 24), helping to structure complex "geographies of survival" (Mitchell & Heynen, 2009; DeVerteuil, 2015). Working via a sense of obligation for precarious populations, third sector spaces also function as alternative spaces of citizenship by tolerating and sustaining those excluded by neoliberalism (Trudeau 2008; Evans, 2011).

Along these lines, Trudeau and Veronis (2009) used the concept of the third sector as "translation mechanism" that actively, yet never uniformly, enacts state policy – neither 100% independent from nor 100% co-opted by the welfare state, and always in contingent and path-dependent ways. Williams et al (2012) noted how faith-based third sector organizations can revise, resist and refuse state-directed edicts. And in her study of migrant civil society organizations, Martin (2011) saw third sector organizations as crucial intermediaries, alternatives, buffers and counter-movements to unregulated markets, protecting migrant labor from their deleterious effects. Her findings also serve as a reminder that the third sector is not necessarily the pawn of the state. By their very existence, the third sector and civil society provide important cushioning and buffering that counter the excesses of the market *and* the state, thwarting the unlimited power of both.

While these opposing constructs can be used to develop a relational approach to the third sector in the post-welfare city, we need to know more about the positioning of the third sector at the margins of the putative post-welfare city itself. By 'margins', I mean the third

sector's dealings with highly maligned and powerless clients for whom the state offers only austerity and/or punishment. In this case, work precarious migrants fit quite well – they are stigmatized as job-stealers, they are difficult to organize, they are politically ignored save for high-profile bouts of disdain, they lack full citizenship and are sometimes illegal, they are geographically invisible, and their social reproduction is rarely met solely through their paltry wages, giving rise to alternate sources of support, including the third sector.

While the role of the third sector as a boundary institution situated between migrants and the labor market is well-established (e.g. Bhuyan, 2011; Cordero-Guzman, 2005; Martin, 2011; DeVerteuil, 2011a), we know appreciably less about how the third sector fits into the post-welfare city – is it more on the side of the shadow state, or the more independent model? The role of the urban is also crucial here - work precarious migrants are especially concentrated in global cities, where demand for their degraded labor runs high. But so fraught and unstable are conditions of work, and so weak are the measures of state support, that many migrants seek alternate support for their social reproduction, including informal communities and family and, as we shall focus on in the ensuing section, the third sector, in this case London as an (incomplete) post-welfare city.

LONDON AND THE UK CONTEXT

Since the 1990s, London has attracted increasing numbers of economic migrants – with some employed in high-end jobs, but the majority in low-end, low-skill positions (Spence, 2005; McDowell et al, 2009). At both ends, there is a sense that UK-born workers are either insufficiently trained (high-end) or insufficiently prepared for long hours of poorly-remunerated work (low-end), which in turn feeds into workforce polarization (May et al, 2007). For the high-end, certain nationalities predominate: Americans, Australians, Japanese, Northern and Western Europeans, all of whom have employment rates over 75% and a

disproportionate share of managerial positions, even when compared to UK-born residents (Spence, 2005). This is in contrast to the low-end segment, where some groups predominate (Eastern Europeans) while others suffer from employment rates below 40% (e.g. Bangladesh, Pakistan, Turkey). As Wills et al (2010: 19) summarized with regards to the low end, "while the UK's native workers have proved reluctant to take up the low-paid jobs that have been so devalued over the past 30 years, partly as a result of increased subcontracting, employers have increasingly taken on migrant workers instead".

But even within this working poor migrant population, there is considerable variation in terms of state management (McDowell et al, 2009). Citizens of the A8 accession nations (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia) have worked freely in the UK since 2004, yet non-EU citizens have been almost entirely barred as economic migrants (Spence, 2005; McDowell et al, 2009). This is particularly consequential to those economic migrants from Latin America, Africa and Asia, for whom working in London represents an important employment opportunity (Wills et al, 2010). As such, it seems that the incoming Europeans are now pushing out Global South migrants for economically-precarious jobs, just as the latter pushed out native-born BME (Black and Minority Ethnicity) in the 1990s (Datta et al, 2007). This is reflected in employment data: in 2004, BME groups had lower employment rates than British White and European migrants, while certain Global South migrant groups were more likely to be unemployed than working poor – particularly if they came as legal refugees, such as Somalis, Afghanis and Eritreans (Spence, 2005). This pressure has only been exacerbated by a new points system in April 2008 that again favored high-skilled and EU and further limited non-EU low-skill labor to virtually zero (Wills et al, 2010); this situation, however, has been thrown into doubt with the recent Brexit vote in June 2016, in which a majority (52%) of British voters signaled their

displeasure with remaining in the EU more generally, and with accepting low-skilled EU migrants more particularly.

The increasing state oversight of UK migration –with increasingly discriminatory, if not overbearing, tendencies – had its roots in the 1997-2010 New Labor government. During this period, a 'managed migration' was instituted, with emphasis on slotting and stratifying migrants to particular labor niches. According to May et al. (2007), the New Labour government sought to attract growing numbers of both highly skilled *and* low-skilled workers to Britain, with an expansion of existing temporary worker schemes. As a result, the number of people legally entering Britain to work rose considerably, with the number of work permits issued to foreign-born workers increasing from around 40 000 a year in the mid-1990s to over 200 000 a year in 2004 (Wills et al., 2010). This managed migration also introduced a strict hierarchy of classes of entry and associated privileges, ranging from the right to settle for the highly skilled, to only temporary admission with no rights to benefits for the low skilled (Lewis et al., 2015). Since 2010 and the new Coalition government, there has been a noticeable backlash against precarious migrants in the UK, in the form of policy reforms designed to drive down net migration from historical highs in the 2000s. These reforms included: closing the immigration route for highly skilled migrants to come to the UK to find employment; tightened eligibility rules for benefits (in anticipation to the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU in 2014); and more stringent rules around minimum incomes requirements for migrants and citizenship (Grove-White, 2014). All of this has occurred within a context of general unpleasantness associated with the rise of UKIP (United Kingdom Independence Party) in the run-up to the 2015 national election and arguably culminating, at least for the time being, in the June 2016 Brexit vote.

Yet the emergence of an overbearing state does not necessarily replace the longstanding and persistently absent state – absent in the sense of regulations, support and

recognition with the *labor market*, via a pervasive lack of interest in enforcing basic labor

laws. Indeed, work precarious migrants are especially concentrated in hospitality, health care,

restaurants and cleaning, industries not known for their intensive governmental oversight

(Wills et al., 2010). Compounding this is the post-2010 austerity in the UK, which has led to

cutbacks to local councils and to the third sector that caters to migrants. MacInnes et al.

(2011: 88) noted that the initial cutbacks in 2010 to local councils in London were part of an

overall national withdrawals amounting to over £2.1 billion, a 26% reduction. Impacts were

disproportionately on those poorer London boroughs with large migrant populations, such as

Tower Hamlets, which saw 8% of their budgets cut, or at least £35 million. These direct cuts

to council funding will invariably be passed down to third sector organizations, many of

whom are dependent on council funding (DeVerteuil, 2011b; Clifford, 2012). The shortfall in

statutory funding for the voluntary sector between 2010 and 2012 was estimated at £3.3

billion, "which cannot realistically be recouped through philanthropic donations or social

enterprise" (Milbourne, 2013: 225). As an added pressure, there have also been recent caps

placed on housing benefits, meaning that certain dependent immigrant households may now

be at risk of being evicted altogether from Inner London properties (Hamnett, 2014).

Before engaging with the results of the research, we must foreground London as a

post-welfare city. Doreen Massey underlined a certain contradiction with London's

longstanding claim to openness and generosity, products of the Keynesian era: "this is a city

at the very center of the reassertion of marketization, profit, and privatization, which yet

imagines itself (and not incorrectly) as open, as hospitable, indeed, in a certain sense, as

generous to the outside world" (Massey, 2011: 6). She reinforced the notion that London "is a

unique articulation: a place where market capitalism is in part produced and propagated, yet

where it is also still embedded in (the remains of) a social democratic settlement" (Massey,

2007: 58). In this sense, London retains a solid welfare city foundation via extensive third

sector support and social housing (over 15% of the housing stock), alongside post-welfare tendencies in the form of austerity-based cuts to housing benefits and local funding set within national anti-migrant tendencies (Wills et al, 2010; (Hamnett, 2014; DeVerteuil, 2015). The overall impacts of this combined overbearing and absent state will be studied via the third sector in those London boroughs where work precarious migrants disproportionately cluster, split into well-served boroughs in Inner London (Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets) and less well-served boroughs in Outer London (Brent, Hounslow). These boroughs also feature difficult housing situations, conflicted between being a repository for affordable housing while also under increasing pressure from gentrification and the steady erosion of social housing (MacInnes et al, 2011).

METHODS

My sample focused exclusively on third sector organizations that primarily served a migrant clientele, as it was difficult to solely target organizations dealing exclusively with the work precarious migrant clientele. Moreover, the sample was cast as exploratory rather than systematic or representative, with the aim of empirical "saturation" (Small, 2009), that is diminishing new information for each subsequent interview rather than the seeking some sort of quantitative representativeness. Following Martin (2011), I validated the 'migrant orientation' in the sample by ensuring (1) that at least 30% of the clientele are immigrants, and whose goals are to enhance their well-being (Cordero-Guzman, 2005), with (2) the explicit incorporation of "…cultural components, and a consciousness of ethnic or national-origin identity, into their mission, practices, services and programmes" (Cordero-Guzman 2005: 884), and (3) legally recognized and registered as a charity in the UK. Across Greater London, there were 1,888 organizations listed that fell into all three categories. The larger sample was then stratified by the five London boroughs of interest – using the number of

organizations per 1000 people, I found that the first three (Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets) were well-served when compared to their (large) immigrant populations, but that the last two (Brent, Hounslow) were under-served when compared to their (growing) immigrant populations. With 2011 census data, White British-born residents were in the minority in three boroughs (Brent, Newham, Tower Hamlets) and a bare majority in Hackney and Hounslow (UK, 2011). A second stratification was then performed by focusing only on third-sector organizations that provided (1) social and cultural, (2) educational, (3) employment and (4) housing services, all of which are key support services for work precarious migrants. At that point, the sample had dwindled to 227 organizations. Given the traditionally low response rates among third sector organizations (DeVerteuil, 2011b), it was perhaps no surprise that only 15 organizations were willing to interview – this may also be due to the particularly touchy subject of migration in the UK since 2010. However, these 15 interviews – done in Spring 2014 - provided a rich insight into the types of services provided, how they were funded, for which clientele, and to what ends with regards to work precarious migrants. Further, non-respondents were perhaps even more vulnerable and marginal, such that my sample understates the marginal position within the larger third sector and putative post-welfare city.

A series of background questions were asked, relating to (1) the type of services provided, the clientele, and funding; (2) the relationship to the geographic area and community; and (3) specific relationship to work precarious migrants. If at all possible, the focus was on interviewing longstanding members of the organization, especially executive directors who would have a wide understanding of both day-to-day operations and long-term goals and strategies. For the Inner London boroughs, five were in Tower Hamlets, four in Newham and one in Hackney; for the Outer London boroughs, three were in Brent and two in Hounslow, as Table 1 shows below.

Table 1: Sampled of Immigrant-serving Third Sector Organizations

An interesting divergence emerged almost immediately: many of the Inner London organizations had London-wide vocations and clientele, rather than the intensely local ones in Outer London. This speaks to the sense that boroughs like Tower Hamlets and Newham are traditional migrant destinations and have, over more than 100 years, becomes crucibles for immigrant rights and experiences, platforms for both survival and the call for social justice (DeVerteuil, 2011a). Conversely, Brent and Hounslow organizations were founded more recently, smaller and were less well-connected to the broader London migrant experience. For all but three organizations, the clientele was 100% migrant (first- or second-generation); while some focused exclusively on one particular group (e.g. Lebanese, Caribbean, Chinese), others were pan-ethnic and more likely to be vocal on matters of migration policy. The size of the typical organization was quite small – fewer than twenty volunteers – and most of the funding was directly from the local council, although several of the Outer London organizations had no governmental funding at all. When compared to the 18,958 registered third sector organizations in Greater London in 2013, my sampled organization was on average smaller, more marginal and less government-funded (DeVerteuil, 2015: 63).

RESULTS

What did the results show in terms of clarifying the third sector's role at the margins of the post-welfare city? Two key themes that emerged from the sample: (1) the need to 'fill the gaps' of an absent state, and so connecting to more supportive tendencies; and (2) the relatively muted contestation to the overbearing state, and so connecting to more shadow state tendencies. The following material will expand upon these themes, of how they were articulated by the different organizations. But before beginning on the first theme, it is

worthwhile underlining some commonalities across the entire sample- namely that clientele precarity was pervasive. For Newham1, which provided recreational and educational support services for local migrants as well as refugees and asylum seekers, the precarious conditions were palpable:

"What I have seen with my students is very, very occasional work…they are, the majority, in fact all of the South Americans are cleaners. They must have, I don't know how they actually got their jobs but they must have registered with agencies that will call them up…on occasions when there is work available. Some of my older students have actually worked on building sites, but very occasionally, maybe a day here or there. So it's *extremely* precarious…"

While not the focus of this paper, there was an unequivocal relationship between legal precarity and work precarity, with the former exacerbating the latter. A refugee and asylum-seeker organization (Tower Hamlets3) described their clientele as follows:

"And in terms of where people live, a large number of people who come to us are actually homeless, so will be sleeping with friends, staying with friends or in emergency accommodation of one kind or another, or in sheds, or temporary accommodation, shanty town type accommodation in London. Income levels, some people working in exploitative work on low pay. Some on benefits, not very many, but some on benefits. But a majority, a large number…are on no recourse to public funds."

The pervasive precarity among migrants creates demand for services that are primarily (and sometimes only) provided by the third sector, yet this gap-filling is not in isolation – it can link to more supportive or sinister motivations among the third sector, as the next main sections seek to explore and clarify.

The absent state and the third sector

The results suggested that the longstanding neglect of the state vis-à-vis work precarious migrants had generated gap-filling activities among the third sector, but that this situation had been compounded by recent austerity that had placed more demands compounded by fewer resources. The gap-filling activities situate the third sector in a distinctly buffering and mitigating roles (Martin, 2011), aligning more with the supportive tendencies and boundary-spanning work of the third sector in the post-welfare city, in the way of a 'translation mechanism' outlined by Trudeau and Veronis (2009).

As a first example, Newham3, a resource centre for African and Afro-Caribbean populations, many of which depend on low-paying employment, attended to the many 'gaps' that have to be filled on an everyday basis *without* access to state-funded benefits: "One is housing which we've already talked about which is they need a place to lay their head, some of them end up staying with people they know and that creates problems with overcrowding in housing. There are too many people under one roof. Also…financing for them is a big problem. Job Seekers Allowance is not enough for them to take care of themselves. If they are looking for jobs they need money to transport themselves to areas further from home so they might have an interview and not necessarily have the money to go that far, so were the jobs are available is too far from where they live. Even if they've got one and it's not very well paid, to transport themselves from where they then live so sometimes it's just working to use the money for transport so you'd say no to that job".

In response, the organization provided a panoply of services, including afterschool clubs, lunch clubs, hot-desking, support for public transportation and housing advice, with very few strings attached. All 15 organizations noted the drop in statutory funding since 2010 – with three losing their funding entirely (in Brent and Housnlow) and were now entirely self-funded, and two relying primarily on renting out their premises. The absence of the state in

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providing for work precarious migrants was especially glaring for under-served communities (Hackney1 and Tower Hamlets3 respectively), in terms of the impossibility of accessing the otherwise reasonably generous welfare state for UK citizens:

"I think it's the newer communities that are really facing a challenge, particularly Eastern European communities. There are specific organizations that do support them, there's the Eastern European Advice Centre, but they are few and far between and direct support in terms of letting people know about their rights and entitlements, linking people up to other people in the community who have come recently and therefore may have networks to employment opportunities…are sparse". Hackney1

The lack of appropriate institutional support is compounded by persistent state inaction that borders on the neglectful and the unjust:

"…it's more about immigration rules and regulation. It's about inefficiency and inter-bureaucracy, it's about legal aid – access to justice is a really crucial part of it. I would say the biggest thing that impacts is the total inefficiency and incompetence of the Home Office so you could resolve somebody's case quite quickly if their case was resolved by the Home Office. If they had access to legal aid we could resolve those cases quite quickly. I think the no recourse to public funds component of immigration regulation is poisonous and that creates a lot of difficulties for our caseworkers". Tower Hamlets3

These quotes speak to the translating of byzantine state policies according to a consistently supportive approach. In effect, the third sector provided no-strings, stopgap support for these bereft of the full entitlements of citizenship. Yet set within persistent state inaction emerges the larger context of austerity in the wake of the 2010 Coalition government, in which third sector organizations must now increasingly operate:

"It used to be [that] most of our money came in from the local council, and from trusts and foundations by applying for grants…then the council stopped giving grants and introduced

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contracts and as a result, our income from the council dropped quite substantially, so now the biggest income for us is from our self-generated income, followed by grants from trusts and foundations and then the contracts we have from Newham council…" (Newham1)

Funding cuts means more time devoted to applying for funding as well as responding to the emerging imperatives of austerity. This has also meant that those who work for the third sector are themselves feeling precarious:

"It is external factors making the job more difficult. It's funding, it's having to do – when the Government came into power, I remember one of the things that was said is that we all have to volunteer and you know, I really cannot go to the bank and say to the bank 'I volunteered this week', I've got to pay my mortgage and I find it's getting more and more difficult to see how, they are saying we're getting out of a recession so from that point of view it is external, the funding isn't there and you're expected to do more work for less money. You're expected to put in longer hours, unsociable hours. You know, it comes a point where you have to think to yourself, what's this all about?" Hounslow2

In response to austerity, there has been a drive towards more intensive alliances to fill the gaps, which works better in well-served boroughs than poorly-served ones. Tower Hamlets4, an English-language skills provided, mentioned the need to work with other third sector organizations in their immediate area:

"We're a member of the community alliance London Citizens so we're a dues-paying member…which means we're connected to that organisation in Southwark which is where a lot of our activities are, a lot of our work is around Elephant and Castle and Camberwell so we're then very well connected to another 12 organisations who are connected to that alliance, and we do join up to do the political work with them –campaign on issues like housing and child destitution at the moment and that's with an array of organisations from schools to faith organisations to charities. And then we're quite well connected to other

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campaigning organisations like Work on Work Fair and briefly in the past Migrant - Justice for Migrants or something like that, and Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants, where we did some campaigning together on changes to immigration laws".

In the face of an absent (and increasingly austere) state, the third sector performed as a 'translation mechanism', providing last-ditch support for under-served migrant communities and smoothing the jagged edges of policy shifts and downward pressure to do more with less. Yet absence and austerity are increasingly accompanied by a more overbearing set of state policies designed to denigrate and punish the work precarious migrant – the management of which is the subject of the next section.

The overbearing state and the third sector

The results here suggested that the recently interventionist and overbearing nature of state policies vis-à-vis migrants, particularly since 2010, had produced consternation but not much more from the third sector – and certainly no overt contestation. Given its asymmetrical and fragmented nature (DeVerteuil, 2015), the third sector could not actively contest or challenge the increasingly anti-immigrant (and anti-poor) policies of the post-2010 Coalition government which included not just welfare support but also larger issues around citizenship and belonging. The third sector thus emerged as a component of the subservient shadow state, but not necessarily enrolled in punitive policies. The lack of contestation was more out of reluctance and being too busy responding to everyday needs than it was with a lack of awareness and will. Indeed, the post-2010 impacts have been negative, sowing fear among not just work precarious migrants but the organizations that serve them:

"Yes I think the UK Home Office information, the way in which they conduct raids and intimidate employees and employers, I think is going to create an atmosphere which is going to make employees more fearful and therefore less likely to challenge an unscrupulous

employer. I think the whole precarious way in which people have to live as a result of inefficiencies of the Home Office means that people are very vulnerable and I think a large unspoken issue really is the issue of inefficiency and the bureaucracy because if people have status then they have rights. Without the status they don't have rights. We've had people in the country, say from the age of 14, I am thinking of somebody in particular, they come at 14, they reach 18, at the age of 18 they wait 11 years and still haven't heard from the Home Office for the result of their immigration application. They've spent 18 years, yeah I'm sure getting bits of odd jobs here bits of odd jobs there, otherwise all they have is a bed and a voucher. Now that is creating the atmosphere where somebody is going to be led into very, very poor work…". Tower Hamlets3

Given the increasingly punitive tendencies of state migration policy, clients would rather deal directly and exclusively with the third sector (a sector that does not judge them) than the mainstream welfare system. The following quote from a third sector educational center heavily reliant on user fees (Newham1) illustrates how the Jobcentre, the national employment center for those on benefits, has become synonymous with a shadow state extension of a more overbearing and vigilant state:

"One of the things that I do get very concerned about is the Jobcentre taking our students, especially those who don't have any literacy in their own language, taking them away from our classes to put them in their own English classes when our students are settled and they're very happy and they're learning and they take them away simply to, well I don't want to get too political, but I think they need to tick boxes. Because when they are taken away from where they are comfortable and feel happy and they're learning, to go somewhere where no one can really relate to that then it's quite something. The other thing is some of the students do have to sign various Home Office points every two weeks and they have to miss classes for that, but there's nothing we can do about this…because they have had to become so much

stricter now. No one is allowed to miss their sign-in session…so there's very little we can do. Our students are almost frightened by the Jobcentre, the various agencies that are supposed to be helping them specifically they are there to help, they are quite intimidating and quite frightening places for some of them". Newham1

In contrast to Jobcentre, the third sector organization quoted above is more than gap-filling – it presents a friendlier, more palatable face to state-sanctioned austerity and abandonment, but not obviously engaged in punitive oversight in concert with the state. More to the point, it obscures and deflects the worst impacts; but at the same time, without this support, the most vulnerable would surely suffer. The increasing prevalence of 'no recourse to public funds' was placing greater pressure on third sector organizations as well, with noticeable impacts upon clientele need:

"The welfare reforms have massively impacted the communities. I think there's been a real increase in destitution amongst many communities so in terms of lots more emergency based support emerging, in terms of emergency housing and so forth, so it has really negatively impacted some of the more well-established communities let alone the newer ones that have come through". Hackney1

The resources to provide this protection are never quite enough and only worsening in an age of austerity, as this quote illustrates quite clearly:

"Well, I mean, how many people are there and how do you resolve. We need a bank of solicitors, we need a whole set of accommodation units, it's just – there is absolutely no way that the infrastructure of the third sector is anything like that. But the infrastructure of the third sector militates against the issues and we are just one of the very few people who are tackling the problems head on. So, the problems are huge and not being faced by anybody". Tower Hamlets3

Faced with an overbearing state and an increasingly vulnerable clientele, most organizations 'made do' with *bricolage* and short-term strategies, but did not create a "zone of contestation" (Corry, 2010) between hegemonic state demands and shadow state tendencies, and the counter-hegemonic desire for fuller, legally-recognized and overall better lives for work precarious migrants, with specific services to cater to them. There was not a single protest among the 15 organizations, no instances where third sector organizations sought to directly challenge not only austerity but also the overbearing interventions into the daily lives of work precarious migrants, such as workplace raids and threat of deportation. I will the discussion around this state of affairs in terms of the post-welfare city in the next section.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results indicated a decidedly intermediary and mediating role for third sector organizations: strong in compensating and filling the gaps from an absent state, yet little material to suggest that they were contesting or challenging overbearing and punitive migration policies on behalf of their clients. More specifically, the results suggested that the third sector reacts to (and sometimes anticipates) various state approaches to work precarious migrants in at least two ways. The first is that when faced with absence, the third sector provides a strong, stabilizing presence, but when faced with an overbearing state, the third sector is generally unable to challenge its edicts, aspersions and cutbacks. Just the same, the sector provides a (quiet) platform of solidarity that subverts the relentlessly anti-immigrant rhetoric of the past six years in the UK, a demonization that will only rise with Brexit. There was no doubt that third sector organizations performed what Martin (2011) called 'buffering', that is mitigating the negative impacts of precarious work. In this respect, third sector

organizations where about what Li (2010) called 'make live': protection rather than dispossession.

Exploratory as they are, the results contribute to the resurgence of interest in the shadow state within the immigrant-serving sector (e.g. Trudeau and Veronis, 2009), but also suggest how the UK shadow state at the margins might be more like the American one, where the third sector is more a substitute for the welfare state rather than meeting modest unmet needs. As previously mentioned, there were few instances of what Martin (2011) referred to as contestation (e.g. directly challenging agents and policies implicated in causing, or perpetuating, precarious work) and the creation of alternatives. Rather, the organizations were engaged in the 'politics of invisibility' (Ehrkamp & Nagel, 2014), providing sanctuary and spaces of sustenance but not necessarily calling for transformation. Just the same, precarity did not lead to atomization among the migrants – rather, there was a certain level of solidarity via the platform of the third sector. This relates to work by both Datta et al (2007) and Bhuyan (2011), who both understand that migrants, faced with difficult odds, tend to adopt short-term tactics rather than long-term strategies, usually oriented to providing quick solutions rather than deep transformation. So it was the same for the third sector, which asserted social rights and membership for work precarious migrants that were in conflict with neoliberal values of citizenship, sustained their everyday existence through spaces of sanctuary, but lacked the power (or the will) to effect profound transformations in the way they are treated by the state and the larger population (see also DeVerteuil, 2003). Returning to the margins and building from a modest sample of organizations, the third sector is a mediating institution enduringly supportive of clients, yet this support can be to the advantage of the (shadow) state; the third sector at the margins rarely challenges the state, but equally rarely drifts into the punitive.

Now that the role of the third sector at the margins of the post-welfare city has been clarified, more needs to be made about the unevenness at the margins – both in terms of provision and geography. For the former, the sense that the post-welfare city is itself precarious, always bumping up against the residuals of the welfare city, lends credence to the idea that the post-welfare city is uneven. Returning to the debate I presented earlier, I clearly side with the continuity of previous welfare structures and strong residuals, rather than a fundamental break and a clearcut version of the post-welfare city. Moreover, there was something very *geographically uneven* about this continuity – organizations in the more established immigrant boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets in Inner London were more likely to represent a continuation of previous structures from the welfare city than those in the less established Brent and Hounslow in Outer London. In those boroughs, organizations were more focused on everyday survival, both their own and of their clientele. It would seem that the longstanding concentration of immigrants *and* services in Inner London sustained a more viable 'absorber' of an absent state and perhaps partial 'contester' of an overbearing one. In other words, some boroughs proved more amenable to this specific translation of state (non) policy than others. In so doing, this paper recasts the margins as more than just dealing with stigmatized clientele – it also signals a potentially useful, though ambiguous, *political* position for the third sector to occupy vis-à-vis the welfare state and precarious immigrants, but one that is less evident when teamed with geographically marginal locations.

Future research ought to focus on this urban/suburban gap. Indeed, prosperous cities at the top of the urban hierarchy – such as Paris, Sydney, New York and especially London – are experiencing a dramatic renewal of the urban core and the subsequent displacement of poor people, including work precarious migrants, out to the suburbs (and beyond). This displacement has important consequences for how work precarious migrants access services

such as health, shelter and food, many of which are now provided by third sector organizations and most of which remain concentrated in the inner core (see DeVerteuil, 2015 on London, Los Angeles and Sydney). Future research should raise the issue of a possible mismatch within the London context, of over-supplied yet gentrified inner-cities versus under-served, increasingly precarious suburbs. A second avenue for future research could well build on the implicit focus on agency among the third sector in the post-welfare city where the state no longer holds a monopoly on services – that it may act as a 'street level bureaucracy' (Lipsky, 1980) in the translation of state policy on the ground. This recasting moves beyond the usual roles and motivations of the third sector – abeyance, care, sustenance (DeVerteuil, 2013) – to open up new avenues for considering the third sector as a self-interested and crucial arbiter of scarce goods for which demand is unlimited.

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