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1. The culture of the welfare state: historical and theoretical arguments

**Wim van Oorschot, Michael Opielka and
Birgit Pfau-Effinger**

Some would deny that paying attention to welfare values and beliefs is contributive to our understanding of social policy. The idea that moral ideas and debates have a significant influence on the design of welfare has been equated with the idea that the party and gossip on deck determines the course of the ship (Schoor, 1984). Baldock (1999) has argued that culture, as a set of common values, norms and attitudes shared by the majority of a national population, is not a missing variable in understanding social policy. However, those who deny any significant relationship between culture and welfare policy take a lonely position. Much more often than not the opposite view is expressed in the literature. For instance it is broadly accepted that the early development of Western welfare states can be understood as resulting from, partially, industrial and economic growth (Wilensky, 1975), a power struggle between the interests of classes and risk categories (Baldwin, 1990), and a struggle between such various ideologies as conservatism, liberalism and socialism (George and Page, 1995). In addition, it is acknowledged that Catholic and Protestant religious cultures have had influence on the formation and design of European welfare states (Kersbergen, 1995), and that a political culture of neo-liberalism has been steering the restructuring of Western welfare states during the last two decennia (Bonoli et al., 2000). Many more examples could be given to illustrate that relations between culture and welfare state do exist, not only at the macro-level, but also, for instance, at the level of the interaction between service institutions and their clients (Chamberlayne and King, 2001). And not only does culture influence social policy, but the converse relationship is also argued by those, for instance, who claim that welfare benefits undermine people's work ethic and family values (Murray, 1984).

All this does not mean, however, that at present the relationship between culture and welfare state has developed into an adequately theorized, coherent field of study. Decidedly the contrary seems the case, since in recent years quite a few complaints have been expressed about the underdeveloped

state of the cultural analysis of social policy in comparison to economic and political analyses (Aaron et al., 1994; Chamberlayne et al., 1999; Schmidt, 2000; Lockhart, 2001; Clarke, 2002). Although pessimistic in tone, these recent complaints do indicate, however, that the interest in culture and welfare state is growing. Why one would otherwise be bothered? But what is more, in most cases the complaints function as preludes to theoretical and empirical studies into the various relationships between culture and welfare, which means that the field is developing.

The present book takes the increased interest in the relationship between culture and welfare state as a starting point, and aims to contribute theoretically and empirically to the field. Since the interplay between culture and welfare state takes place at various levels and in different policy fields, and because it involves the ideas and interests of a number of actors, the aim of the present book is far from that of a comprehensive and complete perspective on the issue. It is necessarily focused, for now, on a few of the most interesting areas.

As a general point of reference we opted for the welfare states as they have developed in Western Europe. Within the wider context of welfare analysis, these welfare states have been studied extensively. Particularly in studies of cultural factors they are regarded as the countries where ideological struggles and moral debates have been moulding the basic conception of the welfare state from its beginnings in the late-nineteenth century. A second focus regards the comparative perspective, which we think is particularly suited for studying relationships between welfare values and beliefs on the one hand, and welfare institutionalization and reform on the other. Both an historical and an international comparative perspective are applied in the four parts of the book, which reflect a distinction between four levels of analysis. At a first level we are interested in the historical and cultural foundations of the European welfare states, as they are reflected in the competing ideologies, and the related 'ideas of the good society' of liberalism, conservatism and socialism. The role of religious values in the development of European welfare states is also part of this level. At a second level we are interested in the question how the Western-European welfare model relates to other 'worlds of welfare culture', like those in North America, Asia and the Eastern parts of Europe. At the third level the attention shifts towards the relationships between cultural change and welfare reform within the welfare states of Western Europe, while at the fourth level, the socio-political legitimacy base of these welfare states is at issue. Thus, the chapters in the four parts of the book offer comparative and new insights into the relationships between culture and welfare, addressing some of the general basic ideas of the good society, the cultural differences between global welfare models, the relationships between culture and

welfare-policy change, and the cross-national differences and similarities in popular welfare values and beliefs.

Although informative on their own, the various contributions gain significance when put into a wider perspective on the cultural analysis of welfare. Therefore, we start by briefly discussing the academic and societal background to the increased interest in the relationship between culture and welfare state. This will help us understand that, although relatively new and still not very coherent, the cultural perspective does have a history on which it can build further. Moreover, we introduce a distinction between four levels of interplay between welfare cultures and welfare state.

BACKGROUNDS OF AN INCREASED INTEREST IN THE CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON WELFARE

The increased interest in the cultural analysis of welfare can be seen partly as one aspect of a larger ‘cultural turn’ that took place in the social sciences some years earlier, as renewed attention began to be paid to the agency of individuals within and against the structures and dominant cultures they are part of, as well as to the related idea that reality is a social construction. For another part, we believe that this growing interest stems from the welfare state crisis and increased international comparative research on topics related to it.

The Cultural Turn in Social Sciences

Although the founding fathers of social science such as Emile Durkheim and Max Weber recognized the relevance of ideas and values in social life, by the 1960s a situation had developed which led anthropologist Clifford Geertz to lament the one-dimensionality of modern social theory. His point was that social theory no longer seemed to integrate symbolic interpretations that could be derived from philosophy and the humanities (Geertz, 1964). Since then the situation has changed substantially. Jeffrey Alexander could speak with good reason of an extraordinary ‘cultural turn’ in the social sciences (Alexander, 1988), by which is meant, most generally, that the cultural dimensions of ideas, meanings, discourses, and symbols became (re-)conceptualized as subjects and interpretative frameworks for the social sciences. Being nourished from different disciplines this cultural turn is by no means a uniform phenomenon. Its character, place in, and significance for social science cannot be described unambiguously. However, the cultural turn can be seen as taking form in at least four different dimensions (Reckwitz, 2000). There is the epistemological dimension, where language theory,

hermeneutics, pragmatism, and the sociology of sciences pushed forward a 'post-positivistic' concept of the production of meaning by theories themselves. This scientific revolution, as Thomas Kuhn labelled it, discovered theories as symbolic orders. The second dimension is marked by more qualitative methodological innovations such as texture analysis and ethnomethodology (Swidler, 1986). A third dimension regards new topics and research fields which go beyond the classical analysis of social structure and focus on lifestyles and symbolic practices. Research on mass media and organizational and consumer cultures, and the new research agenda of 'cultural studies' appearing in the 1980s, can be mentioned here (Grossberg et al., 1992). Fourth, there is the dimension of social theory, where the cultural turn manifests itself in the development of perspectives that try to overcome traditional controversies, such as those over micro- and macro-perspectives, the issue of agency and structure, unity or conflict, and integration or differentiation. The cultural turn in this dimension can be recognized in, for instance, the introduction and development of the phenomenological sociology of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, the French neo-structuralism of Michel Foucault, the 'practice theories' of Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens, and the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas.

Not only have theoretical advantages nurtured the 'cultural turn' in social sciences, but far-reaching social and political developments as well, especially since the breakdown of the Iron Curtain in the years after 1989 and the processes of globalization emerging since then. They frame the welfare-state debate on a cultural level. Samuel P. Huntington's famous, although disputed, prospect of a clash of civilizations in the twenty-first century can be viewed as an indicator that 'culture matters' (Harrison and Huntington, 2000). The cultural impact of religious beliefs and institutions comes to mind as a problem of diversity within – and not only between – religions (Wuthnow, 2005), or as that of 'multiple modernities' and 'multiple religions' characterized by internal pluralities (Eisenstadt, 2000). At least, the renewed interest in culture-conflicts has nurtured those research traditions in the social sciences which favour a broad comparative approach transcending the Western situation and the established focus on social-structure variables stemming from economics and politics.

The cultural turn in social theory has also affected analyses of welfare and social policy, be it with some delay. It is not that cultural factors were not studied before the cultural turn had its impact. As early as 1975, in his book *The Welfare State and Equality*, Wilensky analysed both the structural and ideological roots of public expenditure from an international comparative perspective. And the moral effects of social policies have been questioned ever since the welfare state began, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. But, what is relatively new in the analysis of social policy is the claim that a

new perspective on the cultural factor is needed to fully understand the relation between culture and welfare (see for example, Edgar and Russell, 1998; Chamberlayne et al., 1999; Ullrich, 2003; Clarke, 2004; Pfau-Effinger, 2005). Inspired by the wider cultural turn in social science, with its emphasis on agency and social construction, the claim is that 'traditional' perspectives on the cultural factor over-emphasize the unitary, static and deterministic character of culture, while, in reality, culture is constantly contested, (re-) produced and manipulated. In its weakest interpretation this claim asks for a shift towards the view that any analysis and explanation of developments in social policy and its outcomes falls short if it does not pay attention to the values of the actors involved, the meaning they give to the situation they are in, and to the symbolic codes they use and exchange. In its strongest interpretation, however, the cultural turn advocated in social-policy analysis is seen as a new, critical approach aiming at the emancipation and empowerment of vulnerable groups in society by deconstructing the reality created by elites. Typical for a cultural analysis of social policy from this perspective is that it rejects scientific analysis as a politically indifferent undertaking. Doing research, and particularly the results of it, should foster and improve the well-being and power of vulnerable groups in society. Or, as Freeman et al. (1999) describe the starting point of the cultural turn approach: 'subjects and citizens must have a voice'.

In our view the differences between the two approaches to the cultural perspective on social policy should not be exaggerated. First, because the weak interpretation of the 'cultural turn' is fully compatible with the essence of earlier approaches, which is to analyse the relationships between (outcomes of) policies and the values, norms and beliefs of the various actors involved. Second, in real life, culture is external and enforcing only to a degree, and is not a totalitarian force; it is, as well, open to manipulation, negotiation, variety and change. Thus seen, both approaches are not in competition, but complement each other. In the general framework for the analysis of culture and welfare that we present later, the two perspectives will be combined.

Welfare state Crisis and the Cultural Perspective

In addition to the cultural turn in social science, the interest in the cultural factor in relation to welfare and social policy was stimulated by the economic downturn of the 1980s. In response to the related fiscal crisis of the welfare state, the basic moral welfare question of 'who should get what, and why?' came to the fore again. Particularly, the austere 1980s saw a rise of debates on the moral aspects of poverty and welfare dependency, as well as on the moral effects of welfare.

While in America the debate concentrated on the question whether poverty is the result of a culture of poverty (Mead, 1986), a view popular among victim-blammers, or is based in the backward structural position of the poor (Wilson, 1987), a view that blames society, in Europe the focus was more on the morals and public image of the unemployed. Opinion research showed that an unfavourable image of unemployed people exists among the European public. There are not only doubts about their willingness to work, but they are also seen on average as less intelligent, responsible, and reliable (Golding and Middleton, 1982; Fridberg and Ploug, 2000). On the other hand however, studies of the unemployed themselves revealed that most such images could be regarded as myths, because the work ethic and willingness to work of the unemployed, on average, is no less than among employed people (Gallie and Alm, 2000).

The moral questions that came to the fore due to the new scarcity were not confined to the actual or alleged behaviour and character of the poor and unemployed. More generally, the criticism arose that the welfare state created social problems instead of helping to solve them, by undermining its own constituting virtues of responsibility, solidarity and community spirit. In the literature quite a few alleged demoralizing effects of social policies have been discussed and listed: that citizens have developed a calculative and careless attitude towards benefits, leading to abuse and misuse; that they have lost their sense of mutual responsibility and social commitments, leading to an erosion of civil society and the family; and that they are mainly preoccupied with their social rights while systematically neglecting the obligations that go with them (Murray, 1984; Mead, 1986; Wolfe, 1989). In the light of empirical evidence however most of this critique has been shown to be highly normative and based on theoretical reasoning, anecdotal evidence and ad hoc interpretations. It is shown, for instance, that in Europe unemployment benefits do not corrupt the work ethic (Gallie and Alm, 2000) nor inhibit unemployed people from looking for a job or accepting one if offered (Atkinson, 1989; Barr, 1992); social expenditures targeted at elderly people do not undermine intra-family and inter-generational solidarity feelings and behaviour (Attias-Donfut and Arber, 2000); voluntary work is not less present in well-developed welfare states than in others, but to the contrary (Rothstein, 2001); family cohesion and fertility rates do not drop because of active family policies (Opielka, 1997; Strohmeier, 2002); and a European comparative analysis of people's trust in welfare-state institutions, civic morality and social networks has confirmed that these aspects of social capital are positively – not negatively – related to welfare state comprehensiveness and levels of spending (Oorschot and Arts, 2005).

More recently, a new idea of a possible welfare crisis has been formulated, not related to economic and fiscal problems this time, but to the problems

that go with the increasing cultural diversity of European welfare states due to the increasing influx of migrants. Again, cultural factors are seen as a possible danger. Although from a demographic perspective some point to the positive effects of larger numbers of immigrants in European countries (Brochmann and Hammar, 1999), there seems to be a rather dominant concern that, in the longer run, immigration seriously threatens the sustainability of the European social model and its national varieties. American scholars, who draw a parallel with the American situation, articulate strong warnings in this respect. If in European countries, they argue, immigrants come to be the largest group of welfare users, and become the subject of negative stereotypes and related perceptions of undeservingness – already the case of African-American and Hispanic people in America – then the societal legitimacy of welfare arrangements as a whole may diminish quickly and the welfare state may weaken (Freeman, 1986; Alesina and Angeletos, 2002). The empirical question however – whether it is true that cultural diversity leads to less welfare support and spending – is not yet completely answered. Empirical studies do suggest that there is a negative relation between diversity and welfare spending if one compares countries on a global scale, including countries of South America and Asia (Alesina and Glaeser, 2004). And there is also a negative relationship within the group of American states (Hero and Tolbert, 1996). However, within the group of European countries there is no relation at all. Thus far, empirical evidence seems to suggest that the European social model is able to cope with cultural diversity, due, in particular, to the influence of social-democratic politics (Swank and Betz, 2003; Taylor-Gooby, 2005).

International Comparison

At the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries, the economic crisis and resulting poverty and unemployment was only one of the phenomena most European welfare states faced. Other common problems are the ageing of populations, changing gender patterns and the increasing female labour-market participation, low birth rates, the decreasing participation of older workers, increasing global competition, the flexibilization of labour markets, etc. (Sainsbury, 2001). These common processes and experiences induced governments, international organizations like the ILO and OECD, and not least, the EU, to commission international comparative research on common problems, countries' welfare policies and practices, and their outcomes. This increase in comparative research has contributed considerably to the awareness that cultural factors may be significant to understand differences and trends in social policy. It has shown that cultural factors operate at the level of policy elites, as for

instance when in the 1990s, at the EU level, the earlier focus on poverty as the major welfare problem, under French influence shifted towards that of social exclusion (Room, 1997); or, by the fact that neo-liberal ideas have come to dominate much elite thinking on the future of the European welfare states (Bonoli et al., 2000). But cultural factors have also been shown to play a role at the level of citizens, where for instance differences in the amount of parental leave taken has been found to be less determined by variations in types of schemes, than by differences in motherhood culture, which is especially strong in the Netherlands and Germany compared to that in the Nordic countries (Den Dulk et al., 1999; Pfau-Effinger, 2004). In other words, increased international comparison has thrown light on culture as a missing variable for understanding the preferences and behaviour of welfare actors.

International comparison and sensitivity for cultural factors has increased not only in consequence of growing policy demand. The methodological possibilities for comparing cultures in Europe was extended significantly by several new national and comparative surveys from the 1980s onwards, while Esping-Andersen's comparative regime approach stimulated the search for cultural factors as explanations for differences in welfare state design.

As for the surveys, there are the European Values Survey (EVS), the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), the International Social Justice Project (ISJP), the Eurobarometer surveys, and most recently, the European Social Survey (ESS). What these surveys have shown principally is that the values, attitudes and preferences of the European public basically approve of the comprehensive character of European welfare states. Contrary to what theories of the legitimacy crisis of the welfare state had predicted, there is widespread support for welfare all over Europe (Pierson, 1991; Ferrera, 1993; Pettersen, 1995). Even more relevant here, however, is that most crisis theories have assumed that welfare support is basically class related, reflecting the perceived personal interests of respondents. The assumption was that the middle and higher classes would oppose welfare, because, as taxpayers they have to pay for it and suspect that they will get little in return. Putting these theories to the test, however, national- and European-wide surveys showed that people's support for welfare is based on a mixture of personal and group interests on the one hand, and on valued principles on the other hand, regarding issues such as social equality, social justice, solidarity, mutual obligation, collective responsibility, etc. (Pettersen, 1995; Bowles and Gintis, 2000; Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003).

Finally, an important stimulus for paying attention to cultural factors was given by the 'ideal-typical' welfare-regime approach of Esping-Andersen (1990). His typology of liberal, conservative-corporatist and

social democratic welfare states is well known, but it is important to note that it basically assumes that each type has a different ideological, or cultural base. Underlying the liberal welfare state are values of personal responsibility and freedom, a related reluctance to accept state intervention, and market-led social organization. Conservatism, with its emphasis on society as an organic whole cherishing hierarchical group relations and professional, communal and family bonds in particular, underlies the type of the conservative-corporatist welfare state. And social-democratic values of social equality, labour-market participation and mutual responsibility are those underlying the social democratic welfare state.

This explicit linking of broader ideological perspectives to welfare state types has introduced a line of debate and research which further emphasizes the role of the cultural factor. Thus we have seen amendments to Esping-Andersen's theory of the role of Christian-democratic ideas and values in the development of European welfare states (Kersbergen, 1995; Hornsby-Smith, 1999), where Manow distinguishes even between Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinistic influences (Manow, 2002). And there has developed a rather large literature on the cultural particularities of non-Western welfare states, be they Asian or Confucian (Goodman and Peng, 1996; Walker and Wong, 2005), Arabic or Islamic (Clark, 2004; Heyneman, 2004), or African (Olivier and Mpedi, 2002).

CULTURE AND WELFARE STATE FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

As stated in the first section the interplay between culture and welfare state takes place at various levels, in different institutional contexts and policy fields, and it involves the ideas and interests of a number of actors. Due to this complexity, the aim of the present book cannot and will not be to offer a comprehensive and complete picture. Given the developmental state of the cultural perspective on welfare, we have opted to focus exclusively on the core relationships, such as the interplay between welfare cultures and welfare-state policies.

What does 'culture' mean in this context, and what does it not mean? In the early anthropology of the nineteenth century, culture was used in order to define the total societal and symbolic order of 'traditional' band societies. Still today it is sometimes common for researchers in social sciences to include into their definition of 'culture' the habits, language, artefacts and so on of a society and to use it therefore as another term for 'tradition' or 'society' (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1963; Smelser, 1992). However, it turned out that such a comprehensive concept was not very fruitful for

empirical research and was therefore later substituted by more specific concepts, also in anthropological research (Wimmer, 2005).

In more specific approaches it is common to define 'culture' as the ideational part of society, including cultural values, models and stocks of knowledge. 'Culture' is in different ways seen as related to the social system. Those authors who are more based on a 'materialist' tradition, such as Marx, Durkheim and in part Bourdieu, treat culture mainly as a reflection of the social system and as something that is dominated by and derived from the social system. In this perspective, the independent analysis of cultural development does not make sense. Those thinkers who emphasize 'idealistic thinking', on the other hand, such as Parsons, Sorokin und Lévi-Strauss, argue that culture determines via symbolic orientations and socialization the action and social structures. Such theories are often based on the assumption that a cultural consensus in society exists – what Margaret Archer has called 'The myth of cultural integration' (Archer, 1996). In such a view, an independent analysis of the development of action seems to be unnecessary. We argue that such theories are more or less problematic for analyses of the relationship of welfare state and culture, for they overestimate or underestimate the role of culture and leave little space to analyse the dynamics of the cultural system and its interrelation with action and social structures (Pfau-Effinger, 2004; Wimmer, 2005).

Giddens in his theory of the 'duality of structure' (Giddens, 1986) and Baumann (1998) in his approach to 'culture as practice' tried to avoid these problems in that they did not give culture priority over the social system or the other way round. However, they conceptualize the relationship as an inseparable mingling of culture and social structures in which both levels constitute each other. Therefore, there is no space left for empirical analysis of the relationship of both.

Another strand of theories is based on the work of Max Weber (1972, 1981), Shmuel Eisenstadt (2000), Jeffrey Alexander (1988, 1990), Margaret Archer (1996, 2000) and Rainer Lepsius (1990, 1995). In this type of theory, culture and the social system are seen as interrelated and at the same time relatively autonomous. Neither level is seen as having a dominant influence over the other. Accordingly it is possible to analyse the mutual influences and the dynamics of change in the relationship of culture on one hand, action and social structures on the other (Alexander, 1990; Archer, 1996; Pfau-Effinger, 2004). The concept of 'culture' used in this book relates to this strand of theories.

This approach is in principle related to the macro and meso level of society. However, it is also possible to establish a link with the micro level. In this respect, it matches with constructivist, micro-social approaches in which cultural values and models are seen as cultural constructions which

are the immediate result of social interaction (Grossberg et al., 1992). The approach that we are introducing here and that was developed by Pfau-Effinger (2005) is however more comprehensive, compared with such constructivist approaches, in that it links the short-term effects of social interaction at the micro level with the more enduring cultural values and models at the macro level of society. The concept of 'welfare culture' on which our approach in this volume is based relates to the relevant collective meanings in a given society surrounding the welfare state, and to the way the welfare state is embedded in society. The welfare culture comprises doctrines, values, and ideals in relation to the welfare state and thus defines the ideational environment to which the relevant social actors, the institutions of the welfare state and concrete policy measures refer (see Pfau-Effinger, 2005). Welfare culture is not necessarily ordered and logically consistent. According to this approach it is important to assume that collective constructions of meaning are produced and reproduced by the social practices of social actors. Through conflicts, negotiation processes and discourses between social actors, welfare cultures can also change. Various groups in society may have their specific perceptions of the actual or preferred welfare culture, and welfare cultures may contain ambiguous and even contradicting elements. The cultural values and ideals that predominate in welfare cultures do tend to restrict the spectrum of possible policies of a welfare state. This is why, for instance, studying welfare cultures at the national level may contribute to understanding policy differences between national welfare states. Not only the basic values of a welfare culture, but also the degree of coherence of the cultural basis of a welfare arrangement may vary in the context of time and space. Note however, as Pfau-Effinger (2004, 2005) argues, that welfare culture does not simply exert a determining influence on politics, or vice versa. Instead, their mutual, dialectical impact is influenced and modified by the interaction of institutional and structural factors in the respective 'societal context'.

In this book the interplay between welfare cultures and welfare-state policies will be discussed from historical and international comparative perspectives, which will be applied to four levels of analysis: the ideological ideas of the good society; welfare models and cultures; welfare state change in relation to cultural factors; and the popular legitimacy of welfare. Each level is elaborated upon in a separate part of the book.

Part 1: Cultural Foundations of the Welfare State: Ideas of the Good Society

From a historically comparative perspective a central question about the cultural foundation of welfare states regards the influence that competing ideas

of 'the good society' have had on welfare state formation, especially in Western Europe where the modern welfare state had its cradle. Ideas of 'the good society' stem from more or less coherent value-structures that are embedded in wider ideologies, which in a European context typically include liberalism, conservatism and socialism. It is common knowledge that many characteristics of the welfare states in Europe nowadays can be traced back to the relative influence each of these ideologies have exerted in the political struggles that have led to the well-known variations within the European social model. To a degree, these are based on dominant conceptions of either one of the three ideologies, but to be sure, mixtures of them have always existed. As in recent times, 'social-liberalism', a guiding concept in the reframing of the British welfare state under New Labour; or, 'neo-conservatism', a fusion of liberal and conservative ideas guiding the US welfare reforms of the 1980s under Ronald Reagan. It is also known that in the historical process of European welfare-state formation, the 'outer-worldly'-oriented ideologies have always been challenged by the 'inner-worldly'-oriented religious value-systems of varieties of Christianity, notably Protestantism and Catholicism. However, questions remain as to the degree to which central values like 'freedom', 'equality', 'solidarity' and the like are exclusively typical for any of the ideologies, and if not, what then are the basic differences between the different ideas of 'the good society'. A further important question is whether, and to what degree the traditional 'inner-worldly' orientations have a religious, Christian, background themselves, and how this compares to non-Western religious and welfare contexts.

Regarding liberalism, Julia O'Connor and Gillian Robinson argue that the tenets of liberal thinking have influenced the development of all Western welfare states, irrespective of their usual regime categorization. On the other hand, its influence has never been without competition from other intellectual streams. Despite the dominance of neo-liberal thinking at present, this is as true today as it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century where contemporary welfare has its roots. In their contribution O'Connor and Robinson examine the distinction between classical and social liberalism and discuss the liberal conception of citizenship and the implications of the ideology of 'neo-liberalism' for welfare state restructuring. They especially point to ambiguities in the uses and meanings of the concept of liberalism, for instance how a failure to distinguish between, on the one hand, political liberalism (O'Connor and Robinson speak of 'social', 'new' or 'reform' liberalism) with its emphasis on individualism, moral egalitarianism, universalism and most of all citizenship rights, as the core elements of welfare states, and on the other hand, economic liberalism with its emphasis on free-market exchange and capitalist modes of production and property (or possessive) rights, easily leads to

confusion about liberalism's cultural message for welfare-state development. Another ambiguity of liberalism they point to is that in practice, liberalism is mainly focused on the economic and political citizenship rights of the 'white male possessive individual', thereby historically excluding groups like women, the poor, and ethnic minorities. Finally, they argue that the discourse on globalization is strongly marked by neo-liberal thinking, but they show that contradictions in modern discourses, such as the British 'New Deal' policies – in particular the abundant 'workfare' policies – are less problems of liberalism itself than conflicts between liberal ideas of freedom and (neo-) conservative and sometime social democratic notions of responsibility and duty.

The contribution of Steinar Stjernø on the basic values of social democracy also shows ambiguity and overlap with other ideologies. In an historical study of social democratic party platforms and programmes throughout Europe, Stjernø demonstrates that European social democratic parties of today have adopted a common language based on what they see as social democratic values, notably freedom, justice, equality, and above all, solidarity. However, what Stjernø's study shows is that these basic values have been contested by similar values from competing political camps and philosophies, like liberalism and conservatism. One example is the 'negative' conception of freedom in the 'old' liberalism, whereas the labour-movement conception always emphasized freedom through collectively organized social rights. Another example is the history of the controversial concept of equality. Stjernø shows that equality of outcome never was a clearly-held basic value in social democracy because equality was closely linked to a concept of social justice, which over time came to stand for less redistribution and more inequality. From a sociological point of view the changing foundation of the basic value of solidarity has been most striking. Its boundaries have been broadened, from meaning, at first, the fellow industrial worker, to a universalistic and sometimes vague inclusion of 'almost anyone who is less privileged or underprivileged'. As did O'Connor and Robinson, Stjernø points out that, usually, there has been a rather loose and ambiguous coupling of basic values and practical politics: Just like 'freedom', the concept of 'solidarity' may be implemented in many different, and not rarely, even in contradictory ways.

In their analysis of the impact of conservatism on the modern welfare state Kees van Kersbergen and Monique Kremer take a slightly different route than the first two contributions discussed. They try to explain why conservatism succeeded in establishing the continental welfare states as 'conservative, preserving projects' and argue that it was realism, pragmatism and, unexpectedly, the very absence of an idea of 'a good society' or utopia which made conservative welfare policies so successful. With

authoritarianism, paternalism, an organic view of politics and society, corporatism and familialism as central values, conservative social thinking aims at the preservation of a natural state. Although critical of state intervention, conservative thinking approves of it, as far as it is necessary to preserve what has been proven to be good. Social policy should not try to alter basic facts of human nature and culture, but should take into account, and reproduce, natural differences between genders, classes, etc. Two case studies of the formation of childcare policies in Flanders, with its intergenerational extended families, and in the Netherlands, with its gender care-sharing nuclear families, show how conservative thinking influences practical policies. These policies differ in substance, but are similar in that they both aim at preserving the natural order of family life. The influence of conservatism on welfare formation was especially strong in the continental European welfare states where it aspired importantly to prevent fundamental changes in the social order as advocated by other competing ideologies in their utopian ideas of 'the good society'.

Michael Opielka broadens the debate into the sphere of the religious. The main questions he addresses are whether Christian foundations of the welfare state exist; whether in a global comparative perspective other religious traditions exist that are relevant for social policies; and how important the influence of religions is compared to that of political value-orientations. His analysis of the body of research on the subject, ordered along analytical lines inspired by 'new institutionalism', leads him to argue that behind elaborated political and ideological values one always finds a realm of religious values. In the European context these values have been both Christian and Humanist, whereby the latter obtained a proto-religious character, especially in the Marxist tradition, but Opielka also shows that Christian values have likewise clearly influenced American social policy. After this first step, Opielka introduces a comparative typology of world religions, including their typical welfare values. In Opielka's view, welfare cultures are both political and religious symbolizations which bind this-worldly and other-worldly experiences through institutions and practices.

Part 2: Worlds of Welfare Culture

Although the modern welfare state had its cradle in Western Europe, today the European type of welfare state is only one in a world where economic and political developments have created conditions for welfare state formation elsewhere. An interesting question from our cultural perspective is whether, and to what degree there are basic differences between the welfare cultures of welfare states in Western Europe and those outside it. If there

are different worlds of welfare culture, then what are their particular cultural differences, how fundamental and consistent are they, and how are they related to differences in welfare approaches and arrangements? The chapters in this part of the book address questions like these with regard to three different non-Western-European welfare states: the North-American welfare state, the post-socialist welfare states of Central and Eastern Europe, and the Asian welfare states of Japan and South Korea.

A cultural comparison of the American welfare state with a selection of European welfare states is the explicit aim of the contribution by Robert Walker, who distinguishes three levels of welfare culture: the federal/EU level, the level of states/nations, and the level of public opinion. Comparing policy statements and documents, he finds at the first level that America and Europe clearly differ in terms of beliefs, norms and welfare institutions. American welfare culture expounds the work ethic, economic success, individualism, individual opportunity, and liberal notions of self-help. Provision is limited, frequently means-tested and often viewed as a brake on economic progress. In Europe, comprehensive welfare provision is believed to be an integral component of economic progress. The core values of social citizenship and social cohesion are expressed as political goals and pursued actively by governments, often with the constructive engagement of employers and trade unions. However, within these two general models, there are differences in the welfare cultures within America and Europe at the level of states and nations, which is demonstrated by an analysis of reforms of cash benefits in America, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Germany.

Although all the reforms were inspired by the same OECD 1994 Job Study proposing the extension of personal responsibility in the welfare systems (OECD, 1994), the way ideas were put into practice differed remarkably in function of differences in welfare cultures. Using data from the World Values Survey, Walker finds – at the level of public opinion – that the differences in national welfare cultures in Europe and North America, albeit comparatively weak, are broadly replicated by public opinion. It would therefore appear from opinion polls that national welfare cultures largely reflect the values held by electorates.

The issue of welfare culture has been raised in recent years explicitly with regard to the situation in the post-socialist societies in Central and Eastern Europe. In her contribution Zsuzsa Ferge takes a position against the common accusation that the populations of these countries, after the political transformation, represent a type of citizen that was created by the totalitarian socialist governments. According to that argument, this '*Homo Sovieticus*' is characterized, among other things, by a learned helplessness conducive to total reliance on the (welfare) state. Ferge argues that this idea

is misleading, as the socialist state did not create substantial changes in the welfare orientations of citizens. Instead, the roots of the welfare-cultural orientation of the citizens of the post-socialist states lie much deeper in history, having started to develop long before World War II, as in the Western-European welfare states. Using comparative public-opinion data she shows that in the recent decade in Central and East-European countries the orientation towards social protection is in line with the orientations of people in Western Europe. The appeal to equality and public responsibility may be somewhat greater in East-Central European countries, but between-country variation is significant in both blocs, and basic values are rather similar in the East and the West of Europe.

In the East Asian societies, welfare state policies are a relatively new phenomenon. The interesting question is here, in how far these welfare states follow their own development path, based on specific, notably Confucian, cultural and religious values, or, in how far they are in a process of convergence towards Western-type welfare states. In her chapter Ito Peng starts by pointing out that, although certain features of East-Asian welfare systems – such as the lack of state provision for family and personal social services, and policy emphasis on the elderly rather than on children – do appear to cohere with some tenets of Confucian principles, these features are, on closer examination, by no means unique to East Asia. They can be found, for instance, in Southern-European welfare states too. With this in mind, she analyses recent welfare reforms in East Asia since the 1990s, and asks, in how far these were based on changes in the cultural basis of social policies. For her two cases, Japan and South Korea, she shows how the cultural underpinnings of social policy shifted, from an approach that saw social welfare as a subsidiary aspect of the developing state towards one that sees it as a new source of labour-market activation and demographic rejuvenation under post-industrial social conditions. This ideational shift especially has led to the introduction of women-friendly family policies and social care arrangements, which means a clear departure from the traditional Asian welfare path. From Peng's chapter we learn that, in the field of family policy, but also more broadly, in terms of general approaches to welfare, a convergence towards the Continental and Nordic European welfare states is taking place.

Part 3: Cultural Change and Welfare Reform

The economic, social and demographic changes that present challenges to contemporary welfare states, as well as the ways in which welfare states react to them by means of welfare reform, are much-debated issues (for an overview see for example, Sainsbury, 2001). European welfare states in

particular, are the subject of study here, because of their comparatively high levels of social expenditure, which raise questions of sustainability in an era of globalization. Up till now, however, the relationships between cultural changes or challenges and welfare reform have hardly been studied. Most generally, it can be assumed that a welfare arrangement can be firmly established and coherent, to the degree that its cultural foundations are anchored as norms in the institutions of the welfare system, and guide social actors' behaviour more or less uniformly. However, welfare cultures themselves may change in terms of substance and/or coherence, as well as may do elements in the wider socio-cultural context. Both may alter and erode the cultural and social integration of a welfare arrangement, as a result of which the constellation may change character and be transformed (see also Pfau-Effinger, 2005). However true this may be in a general sense little is known about the specific conditions under which such change can happen. The aim of the chapters in this part of the book is to contribute to such knowledge.

Starting with an extended theoretical discussion of the question whether, and under what circumstances, cultural change can be a cause of 'path-breaking' change, Birgit Pfau-Effinger in her chapter analyses empirically how in Germany and Austria changes in family values have led to related reforms and path departure in family policies, while this has not been the case in Switzerland, despite the fact that family values did change among the Swiss population in the same way, and despite large similarities in the work and care patterns among the three populations. The explanation suggested by Pfau-Effinger is that in Switzerland, in contrast to Germany and Austria, there is a competing element in the overall welfare culture, which includes strong liberal values, according to which the welfare state is not responsible for supporting the realization of a new family model. Hence, there has been no family policy reform in Switzerland. The general lesson is that cultural changes may cause path-breaks in welfare state development, and thus break through mechanisms of 'increasing returns' which are often seen as causal for a path-dependent welfare reform (e.g. Pierson, 2001). However, the impact of a specific cultural change not only depends on the relative strength of such mechanisms, but also on other cultural elements in the welfare arrangement.

Using the concept of 'activation culture' as an example, Bjørn Hvinden demonstrates that the welfare values of policy elites are by no means stable over time, and their impact on actual reform may depend on the degree to which they deviate from the values of other social actors. His example also shows that such impact may vary also with the degree to which policy elites themselves are dedicated to their values. Hvinden starts with pointing out that 'activation culture' is not a uniform and unambiguous concept, not

even in the Nordic welfare states, where the value of activation has been recognized from the early days of welfare state development. His discussion of the way in which activation values and policies have developed over time in the Norwegian welfare state shows that after a period of relative relaxation, from the late 1980s onwards, the Norwegian policy elites gained new interest in activation and subsequently introduced related reforms of benefit and re-insertion practices. However, the real impact of the revival of activation values among the policy elites depends on how the reforms are received by other actors. According to Hvinden the revival appears to have resonated reasonably well with shifts in the work culture of the implementing agencies, while it remains more of an open question whether corporate cultures have become more accommodating in the recruitment and retention of marginal sections of the labour force. The prospects for people at the margins of the labour market – except for lone parents – stand in stark contrast to the substantial escalation of activation efforts. Hvinden concludes his chapter with a plea for research that adopts a longer time perspective than usually applied in comparative and cross-national welfare research, in order to be able to assess the relationships between (changes in) welfare cultures and their impact on welfare policies.

The cultural change which John Clarke and Janet Fink address in their chapter is of a rather fundamental nature, since it regards changes in the images of national identity and citizenship, which images, in Europe, traditionally seemed closely linked to the borders of national welfare states. In fact, national models of welfare were shared by most western societies in the twentieth century, resting on an assumed unity of people, place and political institutions. Recently, however, different tendencies have come together to undermine or destabilize this territorial and national view of the welfare state and its citizens. These include the greater internationalization or globalization of economic processes; the rise of supra-national political institutions (such as the European Union); the associated growth in significance of regional or sub-national levels of governance; and, of course, the increased movement of people across national borders. Clearly, the disruption of relations between people, places and policies induce welfare states to reform. Clarke and Fink see such reforms basically as attempts to institutionalize new alignments of welfare, state and nation. These attempts range from corporate neo-liberalism seeking to 'liberate' people from the confines of 'old' systems and states; through resurgent nationalisms; to efforts to articulate a 'European' identity, located in a 'European social model' that would provide an alternative to the anti-welfarist and anti-statist drive of corporate neo-liberalism. With illustrations from the United Kingdom, they stress that in this process, welfare policies construct and reconstruct the 'people', as well as the populations

in different ways. This is not without risks for those families whose national identity and citizenship claims are most provisional. For instance, the emphasis on 'vulnerable groups' and 'hard-working families' in New Labour's modernizing agenda does not acknowledge the diversity of family practices at the beginning of the twenty-first century, nor does it address their implications for welfare. This means that some groups are marginalized or policed by welfare practices that fail to acknowledge the differential effects of class, religion, ethnicity or sexuality.

Part 4: Popular Welfare Values and Beliefs

The socio-political legitimacy of the European type of extended welfare state was questioned immediately when the numbers of benefit claimants surged in the economic crisis of the early 1980s. Since then, the question of who should actually be entitled to what form and degree of social protection, and on what grounds, has been central to the European debate on welfare reform. Because, as Steffen Mau (2005: 78) puts it so nicely, 'the chain of legitimation reaches back to the single citizen', from the 1980s onwards popular welfare cultures have been studied in quite some detail. In the end the socio-political legitimacy base of welfare policies and reforms depends on the values, beliefs, attitudes, and resulting preferences that European citizens have regarding the various aspects of the choices to be made in relation to social protection provision. With help of European-wide surveys it has been shown that popular welfare cultures in the main resonate with the comprehensive character of European welfare states, which means the latter have never witnessed a fundamental legitimacy crisis. But apart from this, many studies have focused on the co-variances between popular ideas and specific social policy arrangements in detail, in order to gain insights in the societal legitimacy of these arrangements. The contributions in this part of the book each contribute in new ways to the knowledge of popular European welfare cultures.

The contribution by John Gelissen fits into a tradition of studies on public preferences for welfare intervention by the state, and newly introduces characteristics of the region people live in as possible determinants of people's scope-of-government beliefs. In his chapter he links up with the new trend towards multi-level analyses, but gives some good reasons why regional cultural and structural aspects could add to the explanation, alongside characteristics of the respondents themselves and the countries and welfare states they live in. His analysis of Eurobarometer data leads him to conclude that the societal legitimacy of welfare state intervention depends most strongly on individual characteristics (e.g. lower levels of legitimacy, not surprisingly, among people with higher incomes, higher

educational level, and right-wing political orientation), but also on regional and national characteristics. In particular, people living in regions with a higher average level of education and more left-wing orientation, and people living in poorer regions, with more long-term unemployment, are more in favour of state intervention. In a 'Europe of the Regions', specific regional welfare cultures appear to exist which have an impact on the socio-political legitimacy of national welfare policies.

Whereas Gelissen's chapter asks one central question regarding welfare-state legitimacy – what role the public sees for the state to play in the area of social protection – the contribution of Wim van Oorschot focuses on the other central question regarding the public's view on who should get what, and why. He takes as a starting point the fact that in all welfare states social protection is unequally divided: it is more easily accessible, more generous, longer-lasting, and involves fewer obligations for some groups than for others. It is assumed that such differential treatment partly reflects the impact of popular deservingness perceptions on policy-makers' rationing decisions. Using data from the European Values Survey 1999/2000, the chapter examines the European public perceptions of the relative deservingness of needy groups. In a first step it finds that all the 23 European countries studied share a culture in which elderly, sick and disabled people are seen as the most deserving, while immigrants are seen as the least deserving. The position of unemployed people is situated between these. In a second step the chapter adds new research to the field by looking specifically into the degree to which people are selective, i.e., why some people see larger differences between how deserving vulnerable groups are, and others less. In other words, who are selectivists, and who are universalists? The findings show that in the total sample of Europeans, older, less educated, politically rightist people and those expressing less trust and stronger anti-welfare sentiments are more selective. Particularly strong were the effects of attitudes towards immigrants: the more prejudiced people are against immigrants, the more selective they are regarding the rationing of welfare.

The contribution by Lück and Hofäcker is highly significant in the context of current concerns about family formation and its relation to work and welfare arrangements (see for example, Esping-Andersen, 2002). In many European countries low birth rates are a matter of concern with a view to the future sustainability of welfare provisions. Apparently, the overall increased labour-market participation of women is not matched adequately with structures that allow them to combine motherhood and economic self-sufficiency. The question, important in this context, about what factors shape women's attitudes towards work and care is analysed by Lück and Hofäcker on the basis of data from various rounds of the

International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). Their analysis focuses on the degree to which women support the male breadwinner model, and stands out as one in which, in a systematic way, the influence is measured by structural and cultural factors, at both individual and national levels. What they find is that work- and care-related attitudes of women have been highly dynamic in the last two decades. Apart from Eastern European countries, support for a male-breadwinner idea among women has markedly decreased in Europe, and remained on a low level in Scandinavian countries. Another central finding is that the institutional arrangements of the country women live in matters for their gender-related attitudes. Women in countries that have introduced new and more equally-paid jobs in the service sector reveal a higher rejection of the male breadwinner idea. Similarly, women in countries that have substantially invested in family-vs.-employment resolution policies such as early childcare are found to be more antipathetic to a traditional division of labour. However, women in countries with a tradition of long paid leave arrangements show less aversion towards the male breadwinner model. Especially in the previously male-breadwinner-oriented Central and Southern European countries there is a trend towards more gender equality, despite the fact that in many of these countries structural conditions have remained largely breadwinner-oriented. This 'temporal lag' between structural and cultural conditions may be an obstacle to raising birth rates in future.

With these four parts, we hope that the book may contribute to the further development of the cultural perspective on the welfare state and its development. We have seen that there are various reasons why this perspective has gained attention in the recent past, and one of the general conclusions that this book may lead to is that in the foreseeable future this attention will not dwindle away. Processes of Europeanization and globalization will continue to evolve and raise questions regarding the role of welfare cultures in facilitating or hindering policy options of national governments. Value shifts that have taken place, like shifts from an emphasis on collective to personal responsibility, or shifts in family values and related ideas on gender differences in work-care responsibilities, have not come to an end in (all of the) European welfare states, and will have a continuous impact on policy development. Although there seems to be a European convergence in that activation and freedom of choice have become central concepts in the mind maps of most policy-makers, there are still large differences in ideational approaches to the understanding of and production of social welfare. For these reasons we are confident that the present book will not be the last one in the category addressing welfare-culture relationships. We are looking forward to further contributions to this highly interesting field.

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