

Martin Luther and the Danish Welfare State

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Generally, religion has played only a minor role in comparative welfare state research. Some scholars have even termed the topic “religion-blind.”¹ During recent years, however, a smaller group of researchers have investigated the relationship between religions or denominations on the one hand and the origin and development of the welfare state on the other.² Sigrun Kahl in particular has worked with the possible impact of different Christian denominations (Calvinism, Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism) on welfare policies. She has investigated possible connections between their understandings of justification and different welfare state configurations.³ Her focus is on poor relief, and in brief she argues that “the Catholic Christian has a religious obligation to give to the poor. The Calvinist Christian has an obligation to work. The Lutheran Christian must rely on faith alone because charity and work become detached from individual salvation.”⁴ Kahl’s view is that these different tenets have been institutionalized in different welfare states by a process of transposition in which religious concepts have been channeled into a secular context.⁵ Even though the impact of religion may be hard to detect due to secularization, she argues that religion works its way into politics by shaping a country’s political tradition, and religiously-rooted ideas become part of the accepted spectrum of plausible policy options.⁶

Recent Literature

With regard to the Danish/Scandinavian welfare state in particular, a number of theses have seen the light of day in recent years. Swedish sociologist Hans L. Zetterberg⁷ (1927–2014) notes that the Reformation cut off Protestant Europe from the cult of Mary, but in their welfare development, the Protestant areas secularized and materialized her vision of a helpful hand at every turn of life, available to the fortunate and unfortunate, the articulate and inarticulate.

The most elaborate manifestation of the welfare state—the one we find in Sweden⁸—is a product of leftists in a rather secular state, often working in opposition to church officials. The welfare state may be unlikely to flourish except in a civilization in which values of neighborly love and charity have been preached for generations: yet its establishment in Scandinavia is mostly the work of a generation of atheists or lukewarm believers. It is the product of a political struggle over the distribution of income and privilege, not a gift from heaven.⁹

Zetterberg argues that the Scandinavian welfare state has emerged from a struggle between political parties and interests, but the institutional set-up can be understood only with the Christian message as the back-drop.

Danish historian Uffe Østergaard¹⁰ (1945–) argues that it seems plausible that the construction of the Nordic welfare state owes less to a distinct Nordic social structure than to the fact that the states are homogeneously Lutheran countries. Should this be correct, he adds, the consequence would be that the Social Democratic parties, regardless of what party programs and generations of party members have said, are the product of secularized Lutheranism in a national cloak rather than democratized socialism.¹¹ Although based only on secondary sources he outlines elements of the Lutheran social doctrine¹² and how it has been presented to Danes by centuries of preaching. These elements and the pietistic movements of the eighteenth century constitute, he claims, the large historical continuity within which the Nordic welfare state has to be understood. Even though the Social Democratic party has been important, it has to be seen as a continuation of the evangelical-pietistic movements within the frame of a diminished and, therefore, ethnically homogeneous national state in the wake of the 1864 war with Germany rather than as a translator of international socialism.¹³

Norwegian theologian Dag Thorkildsen (1951–) considers Østergaard's thesis as an over-simplification, but argues that Lutheranism has been one among other important factors explaining the Nordic welfare state.¹⁴ He contends that full employment and social security—the two pillars of the welfare state—correspond with basic Lutheran ideas. The objective of full employment may be seen

as a secularized coinage of Luther's emphasis on daily work as a fulfillment of God's vocation—an idea strengthened during the periods of pietism and revivalism. Social security and the objective of an equalization of incomes correspond with Luther's idea of the priesthood of all believers, forming a culture based on equality. As a third pillar in Lutheran thinking he points to the importance of marriage and the household as core societal institutions. He finds them in correspondence with the significance attributed to the family and the home by spokesmen in favor of the welfare state.¹⁵

Danish sociologist Aage Bøttger Sørensen (1941–2001) describes Luther as the ultimate father of the welfare state squarely placing the responsibility of replacing the relief provided by the Catholic church upon the state.¹⁶ Like Østergaard and Thorkildsen, Bøttger Sørensen gives great weight on the eighteenth-century combination of absolutism and Lutheran pietism as its spiritual support system. Civil society had to develop into a system supporting the state, being loyal to the state, and providing resources for the state's activities. The king, in return, was expected to take care of those in civil society being in need.

Having presented the class interest perspective as a key to understand the development of the Danish welfare state, Danish political scientist Tim Knudsen¹⁷ (1945–) turns his attention to the so-called state-centered approaches. He emphasizes the role of the church as an instrument of the state. Local clergymen were used as messengers between the state and the majority population, the peasantry. The pastors represented both God and king, and from the pulpit they preached the word of God and proclaimed the royal decrees. They were the eyes, the ears, and the voice of the king even in the most remote localities.

Referring to Michael Bregnsbo's (1962–) study on Danish sermons,¹⁸ Bøttger Sørensen similarly notes that the king used the clergy for purposes of social disciplining and control. The king was the head of the church, and the church served as an instrument for the administration and control of civil society. Pastors were obliged to announce new regulations and decrees from the central administration and to instruct their flock in the proper obedient relationship between the fatherly sovereign and his subordinate children.

The church was the direct channel from the absolute sovereign to the populace and the organization that had the most effective infrastructure when it came to implementing secular functions. It was in fact the very best instrument for the state to strengthen its power. Otherwise it would have been impossible. Local clergymen served as mediators in integrating the peasants in the developing national state. They served simultaneously to preach the gospel and to educate the people to be good citizens loyal to the king. These two factors were used to develop local administrations manned by local people, and this local self-government became decisive for uniting the top-down power of the state and the bottom-up power of the peasantry gradually changing their status into liberal farmers.

Tim Knudsen closes his analysis by underlining that it remains to be analyzed whether “the message” of the church, the Lutheran denominational teaching, has been of importance for the build-up of the modern welfare state. It is unlikely that it did not have such an influence, he claims.¹⁹ This hypothesis is the subject of this article.²⁰

The Danish Lutheran Context

If you attend a service in a Danish Evangelical-Lutheran church, the introductory prayer says: “Lord, I have come into this your house to hear what you would say to me,” and the closing prayer says: “Lord, I thank you with all my heart that you have taught me what you want me to do.”²¹ Alternatively the introductory prayer is opened by “Open our ears that we may hear your word,” whereas the closing prayer gives thanks because “I leave your house as a free human with courage to live as you have taught me.”²² These wordings show that preaching the gospel has two dimensions. The worshippers shall hear with the objective in mind that they may live in conformity with what they have been taught. There is a hearing dimension which prescribes a specific way of life, the doing dimension. The linkage between hearing and doing is the Evangelical-Lutheran social ethic. Hearing and doing is the first element of the Lutheran double-relation.

What does it mean to leave the service as a free human? Luther’s answer is clear and concise.²³ Justification or salvation by faith alone

sets man free to serve his fellow human beings.²⁴ The doctrine of justification means that we are pronounced righteous and are saved solely by faith in Christ, and without works.²⁵ But faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing that makes it impossible for the faithful not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether good works are to be done, but before the question is asked, it has already done them, and is constantly doing them. Whoever does not do such works is an unbeliever.²⁶

It is impossible, therefore, to separate works from faith, quite as it is impossible as to separate heat and light from fire.²⁷ For Luther the fulfillment of life was conditioned by salvation and justification in faith in Christ and this faith sets us free to serve our human fellow beings. The faithful will do everything spontaneously.²⁸ Good deeds are those that serve the neighbor's welfare and spring from faith.²⁹ Luther, therefore, distinguishes between two dimensions of human life: Passive righteousness—expressed in faith—and active righteousness—expressed in performing the deeds of God's continued creation. The one dimension refers to the relation to the Creator, whereas the other refers to the relation to all other creatures.³⁰ None of these relations can stand alone. To hear without doing is emptiness. To serve the neighbor is to serve God and to serve God is to serve the neighbor. This is the second element in the Lutheran double-relation.

Whoever wants to serve Christ in person would surely serve his neighbor as well.³¹ Taking care of the sick, poor, weak, sinning neighbor means that one finds Christ in him in his word. That is the individual dimension of loving the neighbor. But Luther simultaneously emphasized that a society cannot be founded on gospel, faith and love. Arrangements set up by the temporal authorities are necessary. Loving the neighbor, therefore, has also a collective dimension. This distinction between the individual and the collective dimension of love is the third element of the double-relation. The weight Luther attributed to the collective dimension is seen from his engagement in developing poor-ordinances in Wittenberg (1520) and Leisnig (1523) as well as from the content of the many subsequent Church-ordinances, specifically by way of Johannes Bugenhagen's work in Denmark.³² In his exposition of Psalm 82³³ Luther

compares the just society with a hospital so great that a whole land, and especially the really poor people of that land, can enjoy it. It is a heavenly and divine hospital which not only aids the really poor, widows, orphans, travelers, and other forlorn folk, but preserves rich or poor, so that no one has to become a beggar or a poor man.³⁴ In a modern welfare-state language, this would be called universality. Metaphorically speaking, a hospital mirrors his vision for a just society, perhaps a welfare state.

In all his works Luther was aware of the power of sin: the creatures' self-glorification. In his exposition of Psalm 51 he underlines that everything is curved inward, so that the individual seeks in God and all his creatures only what pleases the self.³⁵ This view has deep implications for society, for Luther's collective dimension of neighborly love. In Luther's view the world ought not and cannot be ruled according to the gospel and Christian love. Strict laws and force are necessary, because the world is evil. It accepts neither gospel nor love, but lives and acts according to its own will unless compelled by force.³⁶

In sum, we love ourselves more than all others and curve into ourselves. Self-love is the root of all injustice. The single individual absolutizes him- or herself and presumes to be in God's place. In the rejection of the general good, we are individualistic and selfish and choose only what benefits ourselves, neglecting the responsibility for and solidarity with the poor, the weak, the needy. Luther's underlying idea is *homo incurvatus in se*, man curved into himself. The viciousness of original sin has so deeply curved human nature in upon itself that it not only turns the finest gifts of God in upon itself and enjoys them, but even uses God himself to achieve these aims. It also seems to be ignorant of this very fact, that in acting so iniquitously, so perversely, and in such a depraved way, it is even seeking God for its own sake.³⁷

To be curved into oneself mirrors what Luther terms the "prudence of the flesh." Translated into a modern language, to be turned this way means that we are captives of and in ourselves—captives to our own impulses, plans, comforts, desires, passions, acquisitiveness, assertiveness, self-exaltation, self-conceit, stubbornness, will to power and so forth. We are self-opinionated and self-centered. We

reduce life to a means and material for what we want to obtain for ourselves. Basically we know fairly well what the command means and what is right; but we are not inclined to do what we know we ought to do. Human life, therefore, is a life marked by the fundamental dilemma between the command to take care of the other and human selfishness. This dilemma is the core in the following endeavor to establish a link between Lutheran thinking and the Danish welfare state—an understanding and interpretation of the welfare state partly as a result of the Lutheran legacy.

The Danish Welfare State

Comparative welfare-state research has been characterized by its strong reliance on macro-typologies of institutional configurations. Most prominently Gøsta Esping-Andersen's *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*³⁸ led to a plethora of research on the merits of fitting real welfare states across Europe and beyond into his three ideal-type categories. This "scientific industry" aside, the Danish welfare model as it was developed during the late 1950s and the 1960s did not build on the principle of quid-pro-quo. It was developed as a genuine tax-transfer model. Any linkage between financing and benefits was broken. The working population paid taxes levied on principles of taxation, and benefits were distributed on principles of social policy. There was no nexus at all between individual "contributions" and individual benefits. They were decoupled. Transfers and provision of services were unilateral by nature. All humiliating legal effects and punitive consequences connected with receiving social assistance were abolished.³⁹ Similarly, former criteria of worthiness for collecting pre-retirement or old-age pensions were eliminated and traditional insurance-like schemes were replaced by tax-transfer arrangements. There was no equivalence between tax-payments and benefits received, and there was no nexus between the single individual's right to benefits and his or her behavior in the past, the present or the future. Some people got benefits equivalent to their sacrifices. Others got more or less, and still others got "something for nothing." The aim was to bring to an end any stigma on recipients. Even though the context was different the objective

was previously well-voiced by the great Danish theologian and poet N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783–1872) who in 1839 had argued for “equal dignity in hut and palace.”⁴⁰

Contrary to most other welfare states which more or less rely on a principle of reciprocity, the hallmark of the classical Danish welfare state was the separation of payments to the collectivity along with demands on previous, actual and anticipated behavior from the rights to benefits flowing from the collectivity. The question is whether the origins and the development of this institutional design in one way or another has something to do with the Evangelical-Lutheran preaching which during hundreds of years has proclaimed that the single individual and the collectivity are responsible for taking care of all human beings so that it has possibly been embedded as part of the Danish cultural legacy.

It is frequently argued that the ethical cornerstone of the welfare state is the parable of the Good Samaritan. The parable illustrates the basic condition of human life that life is risky and that we are mutually dependent. We are each other's world and destiny, even though we imagine that we do not belong to the world of the other. There is a tension between solidarity, inter-connectedness and common destiny on the one hand and autonomy, individualism and anonymity on the other. The parable is persuasive because it reminds us of our basic condition in a deeper sense: the duty to keep the life of the other in our hand.

The Danish theologian and philosopher Knud E. Løgstrup (1905–1981) coined an ethic that might be seen as an interpretation of the Danish welfare state.⁴¹ And his arguments are not far from a Lutheran social ethic. Løgstrup has two points of departure. The first is the parable of the Good Samaritan in order to set the frame for a secularized version of Christian ethic. The second is his tenet that life itself implies that we are basically interdependent. All individuals' lives are connected to the lives of the fellow citizens. Thus, we have power in relation to one another, but that power is crossed by the commandment to love the neighbor, or in Luther's terminology: to do the works of love in particular with respect to the dependent, the vulnerable, the weak, the poor and so forth. The ethical demand, therefore, is that you are obliged to take care of that part of the

other's life that is conditioned by the mutual dependency. This is a secular coinage of the command. Løgstrup considers this ethical demand as simultaneously "natural" and yet also contrary to nature. It is natural because it flows from the interdependencies being a hallmark of human life, but it is contrary to nature because it is at variance with the fallen human condition. Luther would have said that it contradicted the curved-in human nature, which precisely was his argument why society could not be built and the world not ruled according to the gospel, faith and Christian love.

But how can power and ethics be reconciled? Many would maintain that politics, power and ethics have little in common. Some social scientists argue that economic and political problems are too complicated to let decisions be governed by ethical views. In their view ethical arguments more or less serve only to camouflage selfish interests. Some theologians tend to argue—contrary to Luther's view—that politics refers to collective arrangements whereas ethics belongs to the realm of the direct encounter face-to-face. Can ethical views be transferred from the face-to-face relation into the collective order? Is it possible to move from the singular to the universal? Is it possible to carry over characteristics from ethical-existential towards ethical-political choices? If love is related to the immediate encounter face-to-face, how can love be related to the welfare state—a genuine collective societal order? How can love assume a political dimension? The answer is that this is possible if the radical command to love is adapted into an idea being applicable to societal use.

Jesus' preaching is almost always concerned with face-to-face relations. The subject of the parable of the Good Samaritan is the relation between the wounded man, the priest, and the Levite as well as the relation between the Samaritan and the man who had fallen into the hands of the robbers. Face-to-face relations when it came to the Samaritan, who took care of the needy, showed benevolence and accomplished love. Let us now imagine that the Samaritan on his continued travel down towards Jericho and back to Jerusalem gets angry with the robbers. He learns that many lonely travelers have been subject to robbery, and he thinks that this has to come to an end. Having returned back to Jerusalem he tries to raise public opinion with the aim in mind of putting pressure on the authorities

in order to have them to provide more police and control in the dangerous area. In this endeavor he is not serving as the Good Samaritan but as a Political Samaritan. He is not accomplishing love. His concerns have turned to a political idea which can only result in practice by political decision-making.

Even though a political initiative does not require love, and even though there may be no immediate costs or sacrifices involved, there are reasons to see such political initiatives and personal acts of love as related, because they are both relying on a third concept, which might be termed a reversal of roles—closely related to Luther's frequent use of the golden rule. Role reversal is based on imagination in the sense that one empathetically places oneself in another's position and imagines what would be appreciated in the other's place; then one does to the other precisely that. Individually, you take care of the other in the manner you would have appreciated if you had been in that situation. Moving from Luther's individual dimension of loving one's neighbor to the general idea—Luther's collective dimension of loving one's neighbor—maintains the role reversal, but the implied works are different. Whereas the one has to do with face-to-face relations, the subject of the broader idea is the societal order. Motivated by loving one's neighbor, the Political Samaritan desires to influence the societal order, but he is not actually loving an individual neighbor.

If the Political Samaritan succeeds in influencing public opinion, and if public opinion is strong enough to govern the decisions of the authorities, the result might be more police and control along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. If love of one's neighbor is turned into this idea, it means that it has been adapted to become socially applicable. The golden rule used as a political idea means that the social order is organized so that people behave as if they loved their neighbor—an idea similar to Luther's use of the hospital as a metaphorical illustration of the just society. This may be the way towards a solution to the basic dilemma between the command to take care of the other on the one hand and human selfishness (incurvedness) on the other. Our pre-understanding of equity, good, and evil, and our human reason may let us conceive the obligation to take care of the other as a necessity for our lives in inter-dependence and

togetherness. If spontaneity fails it must be replaced by obligations. Obligations secured by laws and regulations may serve as if we loved each other. With loving one's neighbor adapted into a political idea, no one achieves personal love, but we are all compelled to behave as if we did.

Despite our pre-understanding of good and evil, right and wrong, we will spare no effort to gain individual advantages. We are tempted to deviate from the straight and narrow path. But we know that we have the option to bind ourselves to the mast as Ulysses did, when he had to pass the island of the Sirens.⁴² By collective decisions we bind ourselves to achieve ends that might otherwise be attainable only with difficulty, if at all. The temptation to behave only selfishly is counteracted by collective subjection to a set of rules. This was why Luther argued in favor of poor-ordinances in Wittenberg, Leisnig, as well as in all the subsequent church-ordinances. Based on these ideas, the Danish welfare state may be interpreted as an "as if" institution, as a surrogate for love of the neighbor or as institutionalized love.

To a large extent Løgstrup argues in conformity with Luther. Personal love has a parallel in the individual dimension and the societal idea has its parallel in the collective dimension in Luther's exposition of neighborly love. He also argues parallel to Luther when he stresses that even if the other has done nothing to me, I am obliged to give him what he needs. Maybe the other has never been in a position making it possible for him or her to do something to my advantage. Maybe the person concerned will never come into such a position, but in such a case the idea of role reversal is effective. You have to be generous towards others in whose position you might have been and who would be expected to act generously towards you, if you had been in their position and they had been in yours. Expecting reciprocity does not help. Those who are in need are those who are unable to reciprocate in the present, and it is highly uncertain whether they will be able to reciprocate in the future. Løgstrup argues it forcefully: "To let the importance of the single human being depend on his or her contribution to the common good is inhumane. In that case the contempt of the weak becomes decisive for the order of society. To let the contribution to

the common good be a determinant of the value of the single individual neglects human rights and human dignity.”⁴³ Like Luther he argues that the welfare state’s “something for nothing” is a parallel to receiving “grace for nothing.” Now some might think that an interpretation of the welfare state in a normative sense as a surrogate for love of the neighbor appears a bit romantic and unrealistic. Does it in a secularized world make sense to see society as a hospital in the Lutheran sense, as a society built on loving one’s neighbor? To see the welfare state as institutionalized love presupposes that love of the neighbor in Luther’s sense has a correspondence in reality. That correspondence, however, may be found by applying the concept of secularized religion. Secularized religion—in some way related to the concept of civil religion—is the result of a process by which hitherto religiously-based doctrines and concepts are turned into ethics and embedded into secularized values. Disengaged from their theological foundation, these ideas become part and parcel of the cultural mindset. Since the Social Democratic Party has been the driving political force in developing the welfare Danish state it is interesting to investigate the secularized religion of that party.

Social Democratic Secularized Religion

Even before the Social Democrats were established as a party (in 1871), one of its predecessors, Frederik Dreier (1827–1853), noted that “we” are not Christians and we consider the Christian teaching as definitely rejected by science, but we do respect the genuine humanity contained in the Christian morality. Our proposals aim a gradual and peaceful transformation of the world and life so that we may realize the loving and fraternal living together that Christ preached, whereas it is presently only hollow words spoken on Sundays.⁴⁴

In his opinion, the teaching of the life to come had strongly harmed the genuinely humane. The true goal was only to be achieved by energetic interests for real life’s reform. This is an early example of an atheist’s acceptance of the teaching of Christ as an element of secularized religion.

The prominent Social Democratic social policy theoretician and practical politician, Minister of Social Affairs K.K. Steincke (1880–1963), who spiritually as well as in practice was the father of the great social reform adopted in 1933, saw the idea of solidarity as organized in international socialism and the idea of loving the neighbor represented by the teaching of Christ—even though not of his Church—as two sides of the same coin. Without Christianity in the world there would not have been any socialism. In the struggle against capitalism and materialism there is a deep common interest between the real Christians and socialists, he argued. If the labor movement, therefore, would win the political power and the support of the majority, it had to come to an understanding of the importance of the basic religious and ethical values for the individual as well as for the population as a whole.⁴⁵ For good reasons Steincke did not know the concept of a welfare state, but he developed a parallel between solidarity and love of the neighbor. Love of the neighbor, solidarity, and socialism served as synonyms. As a young man he had also argued that humanity, a real understanding of love to the fellow human being, and serious, thorough common efforts to make the life of each other as good as possible is what life is all about.⁴⁶

The theologian Hal Koch (1904–1963), who was married to a minister of the church, the Social Democrat Bodil Koch (1903–1972), was strongly engaged in popular education. People had to be educated so that they would be willing to engage themselves in the development of society, to achieve understanding of society, and to strengthen their individual character. Education of the citizenship was a precondition for a democratic society. After the occupation Koch decided to leave his professorship in theology at the University of Copenhagen in order to establish and to chair the folk high school Krogerup. In his inauguration he praised what he termed “societal man” as a contrast to the private, “incurved” man only interested in his own occupation, his own business, his own house and family, his own comfort. If many behaved like “private men” it was a threat towards society.⁴⁷ This is a clear expression of Luther’s basic dilemma.

In a similar manner, the leading Social Democrat, later Minister of Foreign Affairs, K.B. Andersen (1914–1984), noted that if we in the name of individualism emphasize personal drift, competitive mentality, competition, and selfishness as driving societal forces we have to give up the dream of moving beyond the existing society with its anxiety and insecurity. If we do not have the courage to make commonality, solidarity, and will to cooperation into decisive motives, we have no hope of building a society with another structure than the existing one.⁴⁸ This statement as well as Hal Koch's complies with Lutheran thinking, as so well summarized by Sean Doherty: "Self-interest is always wrong. Luther eschews all syntheses of self-love and neighbor-love. One must exist wholly for one's neighbor's benefit. Thus one's handling of worldly goods is wholly configured as an opportunity to serve others rather than make a profit. Even earning a living is to be done so one can benefit others."⁴⁹ The welfare state's view of humanity saw the single individual as a member of a collective working for a just, equal, and solidary society founded on institutions stretched beyond selfish interests. The implicit assumption was that all individuals observed the rules of the game and that the institutions were used in correspondence with their intention. No one misused the system to obtain benefits for which he or she was not entitled or had a real need for. No one evaded his or her obligations to contribute and to work. The good intentions of the legal-decision makers were met with obedience and respect. The welfare state's order of being, therefore, assumed an optimistic view different from Luther's view of humanity "curved in on itself."

The then Social Democratic party secretary, later Minister of Defense, Kjeld Olesen (1932–) quoted the Conservative MP Aage Hastrup (1919–1993) for the view that Social Democrats saw people as they ought to be, whereas in the conservative view people were considered as they were, for good or evil. Olesen thought that the human mentality already had changed thanks to politicians relying in their decisions on people as they ought to be.⁵⁰ Thus, two views of humanity were on a collision course. The Social Democratic view considered human life as marked by dependency and interaction—life placed in a context larger than the single individual, a life in

which humans were extricated from being curved in on themselves. The assumptions with respect to human motivations and agency were that those who devised, those who administered, and those who delivered the services of the welfare state did work benevolently in the public interest. The taxpayers were expected to pay their taxes either because of enlightened self-interest, because of empathy with the recipients, or because they saw tax payment as part of their civic responsibility. Recipients were considered passive, that is, satisfied with their benefits in cash or in kind. Julian Le Grand (1945–) described the welfare state as one designed to be financed and operated by knights for the benefit of pawns.⁵¹ The assumption is that everyone obeys the rules and makes use of the system in compliance with its intent. In other words, a system relying on the principle of “something for nothing” has to assume its members to show modesty, generosity and willingness to work. This, in fact, is a true Lutheran triad.

For the leading Social Democratic MP Ralph Lysholt Hansen (1916–1990), the welfare state was a society based on love of the neighbor and brotherly attitudes.⁵² For many Social Democrats, love of the neighbor was the subject of a cultural transposition in Sigrun Kahl’s sense which relieved it from the Lutheran view of humanity set free to do works of love for fellow human beings. In a godless argument, God was reduced to be identical with the command to love the neighbor as the basis for a teaching of welfare, making loving the neighbor synonymous with equality, community, solidarity, security, universality, compassion and mercy.

The transposition from a faith-based doctrine into a cultural value is evident in the arguments of Erling Olsen (1927–2011), Minister of Housing, Minister of Justice, professor of economics and finally Chairman of the Danish Parliament. He saw the welfare state as based on a feeling of all human beings’ belonging together and carrying a mutual responsibility for each other. Social Democrats had been a popular movement aiming at realizing the basic principles of Christianity, even though many of the active members were atheists. “Our godless Christianity has no Savior. We must save ourselves and this can only be done by controlling ourselves and behaving like genuine Christians.”⁵³ For Olsen the transposition

of the Christian command to love the neighbor into a collective, culturally-based demand was one of the “megatrends” that had changed the Social Democratic Party from a class party into an idea party. Not even Social Democrats had been fully de-Christianized, but some had become godless and that was quite another thing, he argued. No Dane could shake off thousands of years of Christian preaching. Christianity had marked most of the impressions of life; and our concepts of right and wrong, good and evil are thoroughly Christian concepts.

Irrespective of how one phrases the ideas of contemporary democratic socialists, they mirror a secularization and collectivization of the Christian command of loving the neighbor. For Erling Olsen, socialism simply meant the command understood secularly and as a collective command.⁵⁴ Other contemporary Social Democratic politicians have voiced similar views. Minister of Industry and Growth Henrik Sass Larsen (1966–) identifies solidarity with love of the neighbor.⁵⁵ The same identification is made by MP Jan Petersen (1958–) who adds that love of the neighbor is of basic importance for the order of society and the way people live.⁵⁶ Similarly, former Minister of Energy and EU-Commissioner Poul Nielson (1943–) equates democratic socialism with organized love of the neighbor and describes it as the core of the welfare society.⁵⁷ The former chairman of the Social Democrats Svend Auken (1943–2009) did not need any transposition as he was a member of the Vartov congregation.⁵⁸ In a New Year sermon broadcast by Denmark’s Radio, Auken in a genuine Lutheran manner emphasized faith and grace as setting man free to serve his neighbor. Faith and grace caused a surplus of love and a rich life together with other human beings. And he stressed Christian values of importance to societal life: mercy, support of the poor and weak, solidarity with the marginalized, skepticism concerning greed and selfishness, obligations towards foreigners, responsibility for nature and environment, and a solid social order as a precondition for justice.⁵⁹ Auken obviously deviated from the other Social Democrats mentioned because of his explicit Lutheran view. For the others, love of the neighbor was not an offspring from faith, but part of the Christian legacy being transposed

into culture by treating works of love synonymously with humanity, solidarity, mercy and so forth.

This section shows that love of the neighbor is not only an ethical command making sense in a normative religious context. It also has a correspondence in the political world. The command seems to be embedded in Social Democratic thinking. It has become part and parcel of a cultural legacy or a secularized religion.

Luther and the Welfare State

The key basis of the welfare state is neither in the sketched normative view nor in the Social Democratic secularized religion of righteousness in faith and its corollaries. The normative view is secular by nature and the secularized religion is explicitly godless. Thus, the welfare state is definitely not “a child of Luther,” as Bøttger Sørensen has argued. This does not, however, rule out that hundreds of years of preaching works of love have been the basis for the transposition of faith-based notions into the cultural-value system. The first principle upon which the welfare state is founded is that the life of the single individual is entangled with the lives of all other individuals. That is a basic mutual dependency. Life itself, therefore, dictates a responsibility for taking care of the other, a view governing the normative theory as well as the secularized religion. The corresponding element in Luther’s teaching is the sacramental community. Partaking in the sacrament is, Luther argued, meaningless if it does not change us so that we seek community with others. Selfishness must retreat before common solutions of social problems. Self-seeking love must retreat before altruistic, un-selfish love in community with all fellow human beings. Those seeking community with God are obliged to seek community with all others. In all his or her works the Christian has to serve and benefit others. Community means our basic dependence on others.⁶⁰

The second basic principle of the Danish welfare state is the idea of “something for nothing,” namely, the decoupling of former, present and future behavior as well as contributory payments from the right to benefits. Luther argues that we, similar to neighbors in

distress and in need of our works, have ourselves been in distress in relation to God and in need of God's grace.⁶¹ As God in Christ has helped us without any quid-pro-quo relation we are obliged to help the neighbor. Christians should devote all their works to the welfare of others, since each has such abundant riches in his faith that all his other works and his whole life are a surplus with which he can voluntarily serve and do well to his neighbor.⁶² Christians will do nothing in this life except what is necessary, profitable, and salutary to the neighbor, since they through faith have an abundance of all good things in Christ.⁶³ Pushing it to its logical conclusion, Luther's point is that love of the neighbor gives something for nothing similar to God's grace given to us for nothing.

The Lutheran correspondence to the idea of role reversal is Luther's frequent use of the golden rule as voiced by Matthew: "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them" (Matt. 7:12). Placed in vocation and position the individual is by faith set free to do the loving works that his vocation demands. In vocation we do works benefiting others as we act as God's co-workers in the continuing creation, the aim being to serve the neighbor and to promote the general good. The individual's everyday life teaches him or her to act towards the neighbor in the same way as she or he would like to be treated had they been in the neighbor's place.⁶⁴ This is the very idea of role reversal.

A fourth basic element in understanding the Danish welfare state is the importance or value of all individuals irrespective of their place in society. That is the overriding value of "equal dignity in hut and palace." Other related views are universalism, egalitarianism, and the emphasis given to the family. Universalism means that everybody is covered by social provisions. Thus, access to benefits and services is based on citizenship. Egalitarianism means that people in principle consider each other as equal citizens irrespective of their social status.

When it comes to family, the Social Democrat Lena Vedel-Petersen (1920–1976)—in commenting on the new (1961) Social Democratic party program—saw the welfare state as the joy and happiness of good family life and the implied obligations transferred

to the societal level. The welfare state mirrored a community relying on respect for the single human being—not only respect for the strong ones. The idea of the welfare state was the idea of solidarity so that no one with or without his or her own responsibility perished or had to live a life in misery.⁶⁵ The parallels in Luther's teaching is first the equality of all because we are all created in God's image and second the equality of status following from the idea of the general priesthood.⁶⁶ These relations to God seem in Danish cultural thinking to be transferred to the relation between individual and state. It is also worth emphasizing Luther's description of the good prince or authority as a good father of the country. That is a family metaphor. When the good prince was seen as the father of the country, the corollary was an understanding of the subjects as a family with the prince as the head of the house. Let it be added also that the Lutheran emphasis on the household as the key estate of society, and marriage as the best way of life, complies with the importance of family and home in the welfare state. It was not accidental that the Swedes years ago talked about the welfare state as *Folkehjemmet* [the home of the people].

The very idea of the welfare state as the surrogate of loving the neighbor has as a fifth point a parallel in Luther's vision of the good society as a country-wide hospital. Both images mirror the thought of the good society as an "as-if-institution." Both images mirror a secular service for the neighbor within God's creation. The later bishop in Copenhagen W. Westergaard-Madsen (1907–1995), who had sympathy for the Social Democratic party, wrote that the welfare state was God's societal order for the people.⁶⁷

A sixth point is concerned with the view on work versus idleness. Even in the condition of innocence—prior to the fall—humanity was created to work, not to idleness. The yardstick for the value of the work was whether it was done in serving faith—not whether it yielded a return. It was not about gains, returns, productivity, and profit. The Lutheran concept of work includes also satisfaction with worldly goods which are a gift of God. There is no bridge, therefore, between this and the dawn of early capitalism. Work is a service to God, because it represents a service to the commonality and the

neighbor as part of God's continued Creation. Idleness was the road of the devil, and persons unwilling to work were not to receive a helping hand. Everyone had to work. We were born to work as the birds were born to fly.⁶⁸ Only illness, childhood, and old age were acceptable reasons for not working. The fruits of work were God's gift and were not to be attributed to the working man himself. That would lead only to greediness. Work was to be seen in close connection with the obligation to love the neighbor and with God's vocation.

This is why Dag Thorkildsen considers the welfare state's objective of full employment as a secularization of the Lutheran view of daily work as the fulfilment of God's vocation. This might be right, but it has to be added that it was also an important objective of the welfare state to weaken the individuals' dependence on the labor market's cash nexus. The introduction of genuine social rights loosened the workers' pure commodity status, so that a person could maintain his livelihood without reliance on the market. The welfare state, therefore, had a Janus-face. The full employment objective complied with Lutheran thinking, but de-commodification as Esping-Andersen terms it did not.

This leads us to a couple of hallmarks of the Danish welfare state that deviate from Lutheran thinking. For Luther the support of the poor had to focus on the deserving poor, namely, old people, sick people, and other people in need not caused by themselves. Others should be exposed to discipline and sanctions. The idea of abolishing all elements of worth and the punitive legal effects of collecting benefits was outside the conceptual world of Luther and his time. It is interesting to note that the "church people" in the heated debate on the welfare state in the mid-1950s were skeptical when it came to eliminating the distinction between deserving and undeserving need, self-inflicted needs and needs brought up by no fault of one's own. The idea of unconditional social rights was unfamiliar to Luther and met with criticism among "church people" who saw a contradiction between the gift as an obligation of benefactors and the rights of beneficiaries characterizing the welfare state. They saw a problem when the benefactors' generosity was replaced by beneficiaries' legal claims on society.

The Erosion of the Welfare State

Even though there are many similarities between Lutheran thinking and the ideas underlying the welfare state, we have to acknowledge one basic difference. Luther lived in a feudal society governed by an authority and subjects, whereas the welfare state is established and developed in a democratic society in which the individual's vocation and estate includes his or her status as fellow countryman and member of the electorate. Whereas Luther's days were characterized by strong authority patterns and religiously-based norms of behavior, we are living in a less authoritarian society and behavioral norms are weakened by growing individualism. The welfare state is not a construction established top-down by an authority, but a result of many political decisions, a result of democracy's expansion under otherwise economic liberal principles. The political forces have promoted other results than those following from the free play of market forces. Politicians, administrators, net tax-payers and net-recipients are all involved in the same game.

If it is correct that the welfare state can be understood as an "as-if" institution in which people have voluntarily bound themselves to the mast, it must be recognized that there is a risk too. It can happen that the preferences of persons involved will change over time in such a way that current preferences can become inconsistent with the previous ones. Even though the normative understanding of the welfare state was built on the idea that people in order to restrain their selfishness should decide in favor of developing an arrangement as a surrogate for love of the neighbor, it is the same people who live in the "new" system and are exposed to new incentives. It may be argued, therefore, that they could develop a demanding mentality, a tendency to shirk their obligations and a weakened willingness to work. One might talk about the self-destructive forces of the welfare state.⁶⁹

If benefits are considered as unearned income, that is, payments or services that result from meeting criteria defined by a rule, the stage is set for so-called rent-seeking.⁷⁰ "Rents" in this case are payments for the possession of the right to the certain societal benefits, which in the case of welfare means a maneuver oriented toward obtaining

the right to receive the benefit. In former days the incentive to such manipulation was weakened by using insurance mechanisms, by worthiness criteria, by legal effects in the wake of receiving support, but these preventive measures are precisely what were abolished by the classical welfare state. If there is no loss in rights from collecting benefits, no insurance schemes to be excluded from and very little, if any, stigmatization, there are strong incentives for abuse of the system. Obviously, “rent-seeking” was one reason why the welfare state in the early 1970s ended up in a legitimacy crisis, and why since the late 1980s it has been eroding with regard to basic principles and replaced with thinking representative of the so-called competitive state.⁷¹ Perhaps this simply substantiates Luther’s view so frequently expressed that the world ought not and cannot be ruled according to the gospel and Christian love. Strict laws, sword, and force are necessary, because in the world evil lives and acts according to its own will unless compelled by force. If only love were applied, everyone would eat, drink, and live at ease at someone else’s expense, and no one would work.⁷² When it comes to the welfare state, it is a matter of taste whether one ascribes this Lutheran assertion to humanity as curved in on itself or to “rent-seeking” abuses. The movement towards the competitive state may strengthen the Lutheran view in the sense that even an “as-if” world cannot be built on Christian love.

Conclusion

Based on the views of this paper and thorough work on the origins of the Danish welfare state,⁷³ it is tempting to agree with the Danish economist Niels Kærgaard (1942–) in his conclusion following an analysis of the relation between religion and welfare state in Denmark.⁷⁴ He concludes that it is difficult to decide whether the Danish welfare state has to be understood as a result of Lutheran preaching, activities of the Social Democratic party, the societal homogeneity, humanistic attitudes, provident politicians or some combination. The indirect Lutheran influence is hard to determine. Obviously, one cannot argue for a direct mono-causal

link between Luther and the welfare state. The welfare state is not a child of Luther as Böttger Sørensen argued, but Zetterberg is correct in maintaining that a welfare state like the Danish one most likely would not flourish if it had not been in a civilization where values of neighborly love and charity had been preached for generations. Similarly Tim Knudsen is right in expecting several hundred years of Evangelical-Lutheran preaching to have had an impact at the societal level. Lutheran preaching is the back drop of the welfare state, not its sole cause.

NOTES

1. Sigrun Kahl, "The Religious Roots of Modern Poverty Policy: Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed Protestant Traditions Compared," *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 46, no. 1 (2005), 91–126; 93; Josef Hien, "The Return of Religion? The Paradox of Faith-Based Welfare Provision in a Secular Age," Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung, Köln, *MPIfG Discussion Paper* 14/9; iii; http://www.mpifg.de/pu/mpifg_dp/dp14-9.pdf (retrieved 3. February 2017).

2. For a brief overview of this research, see Klaus Petersen and Jørn Henrik Petersen, "The Good, the Bad, or the Godless Society? Danish 'Church People' and the Modern Welfare State," *Church History* 82, no. 4 (2013): 904–940.

3. Sigrun Kahl, "Religious Doctrine and Poor Relief: A Different Causal Pathway," in *Religion, Class Coalitions, and Welfare States*, eds. Kees van Kersbergen and Philip Manow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 267–296; Sigrun Kahl, *The Religious Foundations of the Welfare State: Poverty Regimes, Unemployment, and Welfare-to-Work in Europe and the United States*. Unpublished dissertation (Berlin: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin 2006).

4. Kahl 2009, 289.

5. Kahl 2006, 73.

6. Kahl 2009, 267.

7. Hans L. Zetterberg, "The Nordic Enigma," *Dædalus* 113, no. 1 (1984): 75–92.

8. Aage Böttger Sørensen, "On Kings, Pietism and Rent-Seeking in Scandinavian Welfare States," *Acta Sociologica*, vol. 41, no. 4 (1998), 363–375. The author argues (correctly) that the modern Danish welfare state is the most developed of the Scandinavian welfare states, but to students of welfare states outside Scandinavia, the main example is usually taken to be Sweden. This situation, he adds, reflects Swedish success in the academic tourist market and that Swedish scholars have been better connected to the outside world.

9. Hans L. Zetterberg 1984, 89–90.

10. Uffe Østergaard, "The Geopolitics of Nordic Identity," in *The Cultural Construction of Norden*, eds. Øystein Sørensen and Bo Stråth (Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oxford, Boston: Scandinavian University Press, 1997), 25–71. See also Uffe Østergaard, "Lutheranismen, danskheden og velfærdsstaten" [Lutheranism, Danish nationality and the welfare state], in *13 historier om den danske velfærdsstat*, ed. Klaus Petersen (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2003), 27–46; Uffe Østergaard, "Lutheranismen og den universelle velfærdsstat"

[Lutheranism and the universal welfare state], in *Velfærdsstat og Kirke*, (eds.) Jens H. Schjørring and Jens Torkild Bak (Copenhagen: Anis, 2005), 147–184.

11. Uffe Østergaard 1997, 69.

12. Uffe Østergaard 2005, 160–166.

13. Following the 1864 war with Germany, Denmark lost the duchys Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg. The country was reduced in a territorial sense and with respect to the number of inhabitants.

14. Dag Thorkildsen, “Religious Identity and Nordic Identity,” in *The Cultural Construction of Norden*, 138–160.

15. Thorkildsen 1997, 159.

16. Aage Bøttger Sørensen 1998, 367.

17. Tim Knudsen, “Tilblivelsen af den universalistiske velfærdsstat” [The origins of the universalistic welfare state], *Den nordiske protestantisme og velfærdsstaten*, ed. Tim Knudsen (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2000), 20–64.

18. Michael Bregnsbo, “Clerical attitudes towards society in the age of revolution: Points of views on government, freedom, equality and human rights in Danish sermons, 1775–1800,” *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. 16, no. 1–2 (1991), 1–25.

19. Tim Knudsen 2000, 63.

20. For an investigation of the development of the Danish welfare state, see *Dansk Velfærdshistorie* vol. 1–6 [Danish Welfare History, vol. 1–6], eds. Jørn Henrik Petersen, Klaus Petersen and Niels Finn Christiansen (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2010–2014).

21. *Liturgy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark*, http://www.lutheranchurch.dk/fileadmin/files/nyhedsbilleder/Liturgi_-_engelsk.pdf.

22. This version was worded by Anne Sophie Seidelin and adopted by many churches in 1992.

23. Only a small part of the Evangelical-Lutheran social ethics is presented here. On Luther himself, see Carter Lindberg’s several studies from *Beyond Charity* (Fortress, 1993) to “Luther on a Market Economy,” *Lutheran Quarterly* 30 (2016): 373–92 and essays in *The Forgiven Luther* (Lutheran University Press, 2016). For an in-depth analysis of the relation between Luther’s thinking and the development of the welfare state and its following gradual conversion into a so-called competitive state, see Jørn Henrik Petersen, *Fra Luther til konkurrencestaten* [From Luther towards the competitive state] (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2016).

24. Berndt Hamm, “Martin Luther’s Revolutionary Theology of Pure Gift without Reciprocation,” *Lutheran Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (2015), 125–161. See also Bo Kristian Holm, *Gabe und Geben bei Luther* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006).

25. Martin Luther, “Lectures on Galatians, Chapters 1–4” 1535, in *Luther’s Works*, American Edition, eds. Pelikan and Lehmann (Saint Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia and Fortress, 1955ff.); vol. 2. (Hereafter cited as LW.) *Luthers Werke*, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, ed. J.F.K. Knaake et al. (Weimar: Böhlau 1883ff.); vol. 40.I. (Hereafter cited WA.) When English translations are available, titles are given in English. When references are to the Weimar edition only, they are given in German.

26. Martin Luther 1522, “Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans,” LW 35:365–80; WA, DB, (Weimar Edition, Deutsche Bibel) 7:2–27.

27. LW 35:370-71; WA, DB, 7:9-11.
28. Martin Luther (1523), *Sermon am Himmelfahrtstag* [Sermon on Ascension Day], WA 12:555-565, 559.20-27.
29. Martin Luther (1520), "Treatise on good works," LW 44:15-114, 23; WA 6:202-276, 205.13.
30. Robert Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness; Reflections on his Two-dimensional Definition of Humanity at the Heart of his Theology," *Lutheran Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (1999), 449-466; see Martin Luther (1519), Two Kinds of Righteousness, LW 31:297-306; WA 2:143-152.
31. Martin Luther (1527), "Whether one may flee from a deadly plague," LW 119-138; 130-31; WA 23:339-379, 363.9-21.
32. Martin Luther (1523), "Ordinance of a common chest," LW 45:159-176; WA 12:1-31. For Bugenhagen, see now *Johannes Bugenhagen, Selected Writings*, edited by Kurt K. Hendel (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015).
33. Martin Luther (1530), "Psalm 82," LW 13:39-72; 51-58; WA 31/1:183-218.
34. LW 13:53; WA 31/1:200-201.
35. Martin Luther, (1532), *Psalmus LI* [Psalm 51], WA 40/2:313-470, 325.6-8.
36. Martin Luther (1524), "Trade and Usury," LW 25:231-310; WA 15:293-313, 306.28-36.
37. Martin Luther (1515), "Lectures on Romans, Glosses and Scholia," LW 25:291; WA 56:304.23-30.
38. Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).
39. In 1799, a relatively modern organization of social support was implemented in Copenhagen followed by regulations for the rest of the country in 1803. When tax payers acquired more political power during the nineteenth century these systems were made more punitive and stigmatizing and toward the middle of the century those receiving public assistance were denied the right to enter marriage without permission, required to pay back their assistance and had no right to vote. To some extent these and others stigmatizing and punitive measures were effective until the development of the classical welfare state in the 1950s.
40. The phrase appears in the first strophe of *A simple, cheerful active life on earth* translated into English by John Irons in *Easter flower! What would you here?* Selected and edited by Anne-Marie Mai and Jørn Henrik Petersen, translated by John Irons in cooperation with Klaus Høeck (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2014); 55.
41. Knud E. Løgstrup, "Etiiske begreber og problemer" [Ethical concepts and problems], in Gustaf Wingren, ed., *Etik og kristen tro* [Ethics and Christian Faith], (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1971), 205-86.
42. For a thorough development of this metaphor, see Jon Elster, *Ulysses and the Sirens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
43. K.E. Løgstrup, "Livsytning og idé" [Life manifestation and idea], in K.E. Løgstrup, *System og Symbol* [System and Symbol], (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1982), 118-132; 127.
44. Frederik Dreier, "Forord" [Preface], *Samfundets Reform, Et Ugeskrift* nr. 1 [The Reform of Society, a Weekly] (Copenhagen: J.D. Quist, 1853), 1-24; 11. For an analysis of Dreier's thinking, see Niels Finn Christiansen, Hanne Nørregaard Posselt, Pernille Stenner

and Morten Thing, *Frederik Dreier og samfundets reform* [Frederik Dreier and the Reform of Society] (Copenhagen:Tiderne Skifter, 2003).

45. K.K. Steincke, "Ungdommen og Samfundsudviklingen" [Youth Folks and the Development of Society], *Socialdemokraten* [The Social Democrat, Danish daily], December 4th and 5th, 1929.

46. K.K. Steincke, *Almisser eller Rettigheder, En populær Kritik af vort Forsørgelsesvæsen og Hjelpekassystemet* [Alms or Rights, A popular Critique of our System of Social Provision], (Copenhagen and Kristiania: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1912); 14.

47. Hal Koch, "Ved Krogerup Højskoles Indvielse" [By the establishment of the folk high school Krogerup], *Højskolebladet* [Weekly of the folk high schools] 1946 nr. 49, 573–76.

48. K.B. Andersen, "Folkeoplysning og Samfund" [General education and Society], in Jens Otto Krag (ed.), *Tidshverv og Samfundsorden* [Epoch and the order of Society], Copenhagen: Fremad, 1954), 127–144; 131.

49. Sean Doherty, *Theology and Economic Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); 67.

50. *Verdens Gang* [The Course of the World, a Social Democratic monthly], 1964, 77.

51. Julian Le Grand, *Motivation, Agency and Public Policy. Of Knights & Knaves, Pawns & Queens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 5–7.

52. Ralph Lysholt Hansen, "Velfærdsstaten er det bedste udtryk for næstekærlighed og menneskelighed" [The welfare state mirrors love of the neighbor and brotherly attitudes], *Ny Dag* Nakskov [New Day, Nakskov, a Social Democratic daily], November 12, 1956.

53. Erling Olsen, "Den disciplinerede Keynes" [The disciplined Keynes], *Økonomi og Politik* [Economics and Politics] vol. 57, no. 1, (1983) 34–45; 35.

54. Erling Olsen, "Socialisme er næstekærlighed" [Socialism means love of the neighbor], *Politiken* [Danish daily], April 6, 1991. See also Erling Olsen, "Socius betyder fælle" [Socius means fellow], *socialdemokraten* [a Social Democratic journal], 1995, no. 2, 2–3; Erling Olsen, "Jul i Over- og Under-Danmark" [Christmas in over- and under-Denmark], *Politiken* [a Danish daily], December 24, 1995. One may wonder why Olsen gives so much emphasis to love of the neighbor as a collective demand, which it actually is in a Lutheran interpretation. The reason is that Danish church life during the twentieth century was dominated by the so-called Tidehverv-movement ["time-recruiting Epoch"] that interpreted love of the neighbor as love of those nearest of all.

55. Henrik Sass Larsen, "Venstrepopulismen: populært i nuet, men ubrugeligt i længden" [Left populism: currently popular, but useless over time], *Magasinet Politik* [a Social Democratic journal], April 23, 2014.

56. Jan Petersen, 2009, "Gæsteprædiken i Ørum kirke" [Preaching as a guest in the Church of Ørum], http://s-dialog.dk/A-Jan+Petersen-G%C3%A6stepr%C3%A6diken-i-%C3%98rum-Kirke-tirsdag-den-24-marts-2009_default.aspx?site=janpetersen&func=article.view&id=260995 (retrieved 3. February 2017).

57. Poul Nielson, "Danskernes mentalitet, ikke globaliseringen, truer vores fremtid" [The mentality of the Danes rather than globalization threatens our future], *Information* [a Danish daily] August 7, 2012.

58. A congregation formed by the voluntary union of a certain number of members of the Established Church, the congregation of Vartov is affiliated with the theological thinking of N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783–1872).

59. Svend Auken, "I er jordens salt og verdens lys" [Ye are the salt of the Earth and the Light of the World], *Politiken* [Danish daily], January 7, 2005.

60. See Martin Luther (1519), “The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods,” LW 35:45–74; WA 2:742–758.

61. See Martin Luther (1520), “Freedom of a Christian,” LW 31:333–377; WA 7:12–39.

62. LW 31:365–366; WA 7:34–35.

63. LW 31:367; WA 7:35:9–12.

64. Martin Luther (1532), “Wochenpredigt über Matth, 5–7” [Weekly Sermon on Matt, 5–7], WA 32:299–555, 495.29–496.1–2.

65. Lena Vedel Petersen, “Ansvaret for medmenneskets frihed” [Responsibility for the neighbor’s freedom], in K.B. Andersen et al (eds.), *Idé og hverdag* (Copenhagen, 1961): 77.

66. On the general priesthood, see Martin Luther (1520), “To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate,” LW 44:115–218; WA 404–469.

67. W. Westergaard Madsen, “Frivillighedens betydning i den moderne stat” [The importance of voluntariness in the modern state], *Det københavnske Kirkefunds Årbog* [Yearbook of the Copenhagen Church Foundation] 1955–56, 25–31; 25.

68. On Luther’s general view of work, see Martin Luther (1525), “Ein Predigt vom Ehestand,” WA 17/1:12–29, in particular 22–23. The comparison with the birds appears on 23.37–40, but was used by Luther as early as 1518, see Martin Luther (1518), “Decam praecepta Wittenbergensi praedicata populo, Praeceptum septimum,” WA 1: 499–505, 505.20–21.

69. Jørn Henrik Petersen, *Pligt & Ret, Ret & Pligt. Refleksioner over den socialdemokratiske idéarv*, [Obligations & Rights, Rights & Obligations. Reflections on the Social Democratic ideational legacy], (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2014), chapter 9.

70. Aage Böttger Sørensen, “On Kings, Pietism and Rent-Seeking in Scandinavian Welfare States,” *Acta Sociologica*, vol. 41, no.4 (1998), 363–375.

71. It is outside the scope of this paper to analyze the changes that have and are taking place, not to say investigating these changes from the Evangelical-Lutheran perspective.

72. Martin Luther (1524), “Trade and Usury,” LW 45:231–271, 264; WA 15:293–313, 306.28–36.

73. See *Dansk Velfærdshistorie* vol. 1–6 [Danish Welfare History, vol. 1–6], eds. Jørn Henrik Petersen, Klaus Petersen and Niels Finn Christiansen (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2010–2014), in particular vols. 4–6 covering the period from 1956 to the present.

74. Niels Kærgaard, “Religion und Wohlfahrtsstaatlichkeit in Dänemark,” in *Religion und Wohlfahrtsstaatlichkeit in Europa*, eds. Karl Gabriel, Hans Richard Reuter, Andreas Kurchat & Stefan Leibold, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 57–92.