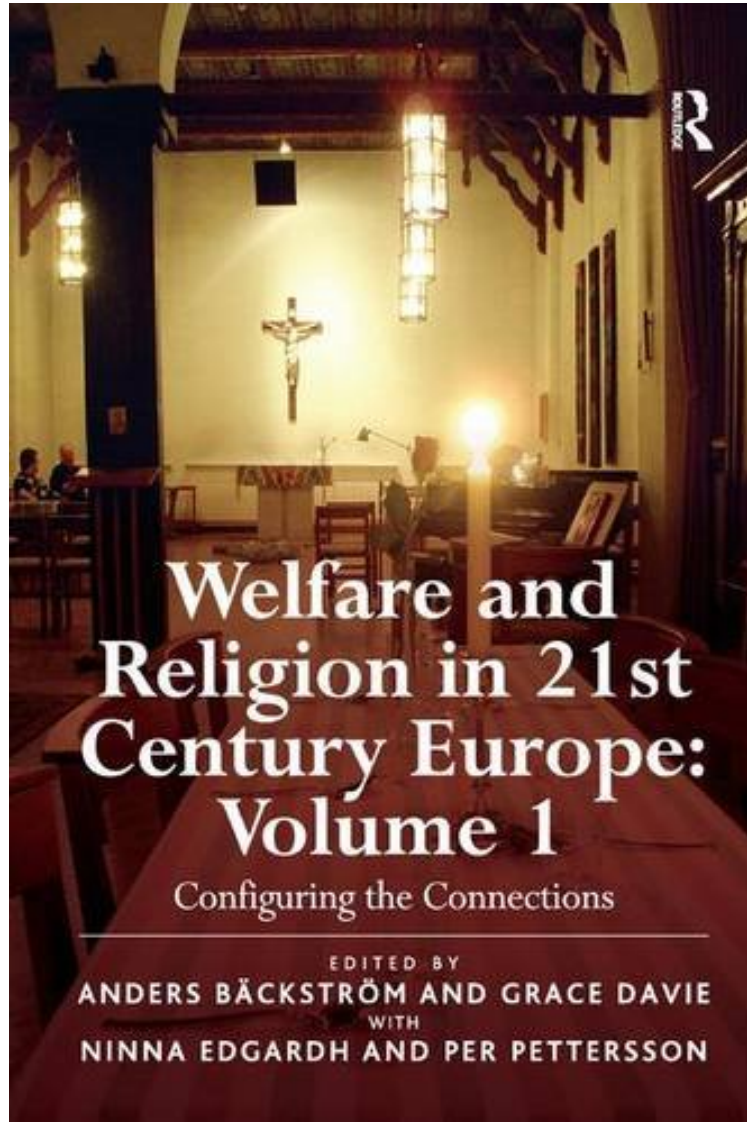


(Library ebook) Welfare and Religion in 21st Century Europe: Volume 1: Configuring the Connections

Welfare and Religion in 21st Century Europe: Volume 1: Configuring the Connections

Anders Bckstrm, Per Pettersson
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Anders Bckstrm, Per Pettersson : Welfare and Religion in 21st Century Europe: Volume 1: Configuring the Connections before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Welfare and Religion in 21st Century Europe: Volume 1: Configuring the Connections:

Historically, European churches have played a large part in the provision of welfare. Responsibility, however, has gradually shifted to the state - a shift that forms an integral part of the process of secularization and one that has been readily accepted by European populations. But what happens when the state itself begins to recede - a process that is occurring in most, if not all, European societies for a wide variety of reasons? The implications for welfare are considerable, not least for the role of the churches which begin to resume the responsibilities previously shed but in new and different ways. This book looks at the connections between religion and welfare in Europe, exploring in detail eight European societies - Finland, Norway, Sweden, England, Germany, France, Italy and Greece. The different theological traditions, different church-state relationships and different welfare regimes are all examined. The analysis is based on first hand empirical research which considers not only the changing situation on the ground, but attitudes towards this within a range of different constituencies - the churches, local government and the general public. Particular attention is paid to the significance of gender in both the process of change and in attitudes towards this. *Welfare and Religion in 21st Century Europe: Volume 1* represents comparative research at its best and highlights key policy implications for the future. A companion book, *Welfare and Religion in 21st Century Europe: Volume 2* explores thematically the changing nature of religion and welfare and the new relationships that are emerging between the religious and the secular, and between church and state in the 21st century.

'... the contributors ably show how questions of religious identity and belonging are central in understanding the welfare-religion relationship. ... The researchers forecast a greater role for religious groups in welfare provision, not only because of financial strains in most systems and aging populations, but also because of the more personal approach and cultivation of 'local knowledge' that characterize these groups. Yet, at the same time, the secularization well advanced in most of these countries means that churches are struggling to sustain their core functions, and that welfare recipients may not be very receptive to a faith-based approach.' *Religion Watch* 'In a carefully designed collaborative volume, the editors and contributors uncover a relationship between religion and welfare in Europe that is diverse, complex, and pervasively relevant.' *Journal of Contemporary Religion* '... a particularly valuable contribution...' *Journal of Social Policy* 'This well-organized project is both informative and challenging and shows that the churches still have the potential to enhance rather than diminish the lives of Europeans, even though there may well be, as there always has been, a tension between the pastoral and the prophetic.' *Theology*

About the Author
Anders Bckstrm is Professor of the Sociology of Religion, Uppsala University, Sweden; Grace Davie is Professor Emerita of Sociology, University of Exeter, UK; Ninna Edgardh is Associate Professor of Ecclesiology, Uppsala University, Sweden; Per Pettersson is Associate Professor of the Sociology of Religion, Uppsala and Karlstad Universities, Sweden. All four authors have worked together on a number of projects. These include: *From State Church to Free Folk Church* (a study of the constitutional changes in the Church of Sweden), *Welfare and Religion in a European Perspective* (the basis of this book) and *Welfare and Values in Europe* (an EU funded project). They are currently engaged in a new Linneaus Research Programme, entitled *The Impact of Religion: Challenges for Society, Law and Democracy*. This is based at Uppsala University and is funded by the Swedish Research Council.