posals themselves may shift attention away from a discussion of a solid theoretical plan to a less effective political strategy.

However, it certainly challenges the appeal to urgently create a post-worker version of the Mont Pelerin Society, capable of creating a long-term ideological infrastructure at the intersection of government power, media, institutions, and think-tanks. The left is therefore called on to develop a socio-technical hegemonic culture, a ferrying technique, cultural development, and social movements aimed at a new paradigm that goes beyond the centrality of wage labour. From this point of view, we were gratified to see the appeal of Srnicek and Williams to the need to escape from a gloomy, pessimistic, and constrictive ideology, trying instead to re-balance the future on the value of beauty and to imagine a reality that goes beyond the aesthetic boundaries of reality. This approach reminds us of when, in 1978, Marcuse, in 'The Aesthetic Dimension', considered art a revolutionary activity: on the one hand as a 'denunciation of the constituted reality' and on the other hand as an 'evocation of the beautiful image of liberation'.

From the point of view of technology and technological development, the best example is provided by logistics. From a Ricardian point of view of comparative advantages, one should be able to exploit increasingly advanced logistic systems to allow production in regions where it is more functional, ecological, and rational for goods to be produced. At the same time, reality tells us that the logistical rationality of capitalist production, the 'just in time, to the point' form of production, has already begun to redefine the mode of production and it is already an instrument in the hands of capital, which has managed to appropriate and extract value from the flexibility and individualisation of production and work.

As already mentioned, while some criticisms of folk politics are presented clearly, what is beyond them is not explained as clearly. What is the pragmatic, operative difference from folk politics of a populism that is seen as '...a type of political logic by which a collection of different identities are knitted together against a common opponent and in search of a new world' (p. 151)? It seems that some differences between good populism and bad populism are a bit 'forced' and too much in the service of the reasoning that the two authors try to develop. It is not clear why Podemos and Syriza are examples of virtuous populism and to what extent it is true that they are not class movements but rather transversal to society. Where can we place the dividing line between the much-criticised folk politics and the 'organisational ecology' presented as 'a pluralism of forces, able to positively feedback on their comparative strengths' (p. 163)? How can the means of communication be used in a pervasive, radical way and, at the same time, succeed in entering the dominant narrative? How can the long-term ambition be kept separate from the tendency to over-determine phenomena that seem to defy traditional interpretations of society?

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Herbert Obinger, Klaus Petersen and Peter Starke (eds): ***Warfare and Welfare. Military Conflict and Welfare State Development in Western Countries***
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While many facets of the nation-state-welfare-state isomorphism have been explored, the role of warfare for building welfare institutions remains conspicuously un-

der-analysed. Picking up the gauntlet, Herbert Obinger, Klaus Petersen, and Peter Starke delve into the 'short- and long-term effects of mass warfare in fourteen belligerent, occupied or neutral countries from 1860 to 1960' (p. 1). The scope of the research is truly impressive. The book covers, over 15 dense chapters, the worlds of welfare from the US to Japan and from Australia to Israel and Northern Europe. Extending beyond the confines of previous studies, which mostly focus on discrete issues such as veterans' benefits [e.g. Skocpol 1995], Obinger, Petersen, and Starke seek to analyse 'the core welfare state in its entirety' (p. 7). This comprises housing, labour regulation, and the big transfer and service schemes (old-age pensions, health care, unemployment, and family benefits) (pp. 7–8). In addition, the editors propose a multi-layered analysis. On the one hand, war generates an obvious *demand* for social protection. On the other hand, warfare creates *supply-side* preconditions through increased state capacities and an enlarged institutional setting (pp. 8–10).

In what follows the case-study chapters conduct process tracing in order to unearth the effects of war on 'welfare politics' (political debates, problem-setting, concept definitions, etc.), as well as on various 'welfare sectors' (institutions, benefits, and so on; in the tradition of F.-X. Kaufmann; see also Leisering [2003]). This represents an extremely strong point because solving the dependent variable problem by unpacking the umbrella concept of the 'welfare state' makes it possible to conduct a comparative study by asking the same set of questions over the entire universe of cases (p. 7). A second clear benefit is that, on a more advanced level, this multi-layered approach achieves a finely tuned analysis of how welfare is enmeshed in all the institutionalisations of the nation-state [Clarke 2005].

The authors tread carefully in clarifying the extent of the argument; war is not argued to be a substitute for the established causal factors of welfare-state development. Rather, it is seen as deeply intertwined with the issues of political power, socio-economic structure, economic development, or institution-building (pp. 9–10). Furthermore, given that warfare is quite clearly not homogenous, the authors take war as a process (p. 10) and delineate between the different logics of the preparation, mobilisation, and post-war phases (pp. 11–23). The common denominator is set as 'mass industrialised war', occurring in the time-frame ranging from 1860 to 1960. Some of the case-studies do, however, expand the horizon of the research by looking at the effects of 'civil wars' (US) or of 'permanent military threat' (Israel). This, however, draws attention to a lingering issue: although the volume is obviously oriented around the two world wars, within the individual chapters a range of different wars are also analysed through much the same analytical lenses, despite being slightly different in nature. Quite clearly not all types of warfare could be included and dissected, but further conceptual disentangling would have been warranted in explaining, for instance, the porous boundaries between the WW2 influences in the 1950s and the emergence of new phenomena during the Cold War. Nevertheless, the book represents a significant addition to the existing literature as it offers a finely-tuned analysis that touches on welfare problem-setting during war times and on the transition from purely war-related policies to post-war welfareism.

The individual chapters analyse the co-constitutive relationship between agency, structure, and process in shaping modern welfare states. Although the list of contributors contains an impressive array of well-established scholars, within the modest confines of this review not all the chapters can be given their due consideration. Let me thus provide an overview of just two of the book's case studies: first, Ger-

many, one of *the* key welfare innovators and central actors in both world wars; second, Australia, a country with disproportionate participation in the two world wars and one much less frequently analysed in the welfare-state literature.

For Germany, as Starke shows in detail, the two main coordinates for analysing welfare change are their role as a defensive instrument of autocratic regimes and the immediate necessities of war (p. 36). As an early welfare innovator, Germany is a key case because it shows that 'war could make more of an impact in areas that were not yet highly developed at the time' (p. 36). Furthermore, labour mobilisation in WW1 proved to be a double-edged sword (p. 46), because while it created the preconditions for stronger state intervention in the labour market it also elevated trade unions to the level of legitimate social partners (p. 61). By contrast, the welfare state that existed in Nazi Germany does not seem to have expanded significantly during WW2 (p. 54). Rather, specific sets of benefits became embroiled in the ideological machinery of the Reich (most notably, family policy; pp. 53–54). Broadly speaking, social policy in Nazi times is difficult to disentangle from broader policy packages that are causally connected to various parts of the war effort (p. 61). The notable common ground, however, is that from a purely military point of view, Germany was the aggressor in both world wars. Factoring in the post-WW2 context, Starke concludes that the clearest links between war and welfare in Germany's history can be found vis-à-vis the fallouts and the social services that were birthed to deal with them (p. 62).

According to Lloyd and Battin, Australian welfare policies developed in a patchy and uneven way, largely mirroring the general political system, and greatly depending on the electoral success of labour, Senate obstructions, and so on (pp. 230, 236). The background against which the effects of warfare should be viewed is thus that of a 'fourth world of welfare', combining work-based welfare, a full employment policy, and means-tested targeting (p. 237). Although Australia's involvement in WW1 was quite significant (38.7% of the male population between the ages of 18 and 44; p. 241), because of the poorly institutionalised welfare state *and* a split in the Labour Party, the overall influence of WW1 was mostly one of scale (pp. 239–241). For instance, the First World War created such a costly veterans' scheme that it led to multiple attempts at a national insurance system purely based on fiscal reasoning (p. 245). By contrast, by the eve of WW2 the political context had changed quite significantly, leading to uncontested support for mobilisation (p. 253), as involvement in the war started to carry connotations that bonded class and nation (p. 250). Furthermore, wartime governments legitimised the war effort through social democratic visions that would reach above and beyond the existing wage-earner model (p. 262). The changes ushered in by WW2 thus included not simply a doubling of the public service, but also a universal income tax, the creation of a National Welfare Fund, fundamental changes in hospital and family benefits, alongside broad constitutional changes brought about through a series of referenda (pp. 249–250).

On the whole, all the contributors unearth a large degree of cross-national commonalities (pp. 429–342). Particularly around WW2, which offers better data-availability (p. 432), the overarching conclusion is quite clear. Above and beyond national contingencies, war intensity affected welfare spending across the board (pp. 434–436). In addition, depending on pre-existing legacies, warfare also influenced programme adoption, though here the data are less coherent and must be broken down by welfare areas. Yet, while the quantitative analysis in the conclusions clearly highlights the comparative effects,

there remains a lingering sense that the book reads as a collection of case studies. Perhaps one way forward would have been to offer an analysis of how war changed the global discourse on welfare (for instance, Beland and Petersen (eds) [2014] offer chapters on international organisations and international welfare discourses). Nevertheless, the book does represent a significant contribution as it establishes a very detailed conceptual map that covers existing avenues for comparison and offers clear directions for moving forward (see, for instance, the highly detailed table on pp. 11–12). Summing up, Obinger, Petersen, and Starke's co-edited volume impresses through analytical clarity, conceptual richness, and a vast research scope. In addition to contributing to a poorly explored area of welfare state history, all the chapters unearth new facets of pre-existing explanations and causal relationships. The book's dialogue with mainstream welfare-state literature send outs the strong message that there is more to welfare states than underlying social-democratic thinking.

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Paul Mason: ***Postcapitalism: A Guide to Our Future***
London 2015: Allen Lane, 368 pp.

A battle between Internet service providers such as AT&T Inc, Comcast, and Verizon Communications and database business giants as Facebook, Google, and Amazon recently ended. The US Federal Communication Committee abolished 'net neutrality', which had been implemented by the previous US Administration in 2015. This demonstrates the relevance of this book for those who are interested in diverse economies and who want to know why capitalism periodically crashes. *Postcapitalism* presents an analysis of the crisis of capitalism and a transitional project to go beyond it. In Mason's vision for the transition from neoliberal capitalism to post-capitalism, the *state* plays the fundamental role of mediator. The book ambitiously harmonises Kondratiev's long-wave theory with Marxist crisis theory and Keynes's expectation of a possible abundance society. The book centrally argues that are fifty-year cycles at the end of which there are crises that reflect the movement of capital from one productive sector to another. During these cycles, the resistance of the working class and the reduced profitability of capital in the long term motivate employers to invest in technological innovations as a solution. In this way, new productive models and new technologies set the conditions for the subsequent long-term waves.

One of Mason's main insights is to identify the Great Recession along four long cycles of industrial capitalism over a 200-year time span. He argues that the fourth long cycle took place from the late-1940s to 2008. At the end of the fourth wave, a crisis was expected to occur around the 1980s and to be replaced by the take-off of a fifth wave, like the previous cycles. However, the fourth wave was prolonged by the establishment of a 'failed experiment' (p. 87): neoliberalism. Four factors