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Published in:
Lived Institutions as History of Experience

DOI:
[10.1007/978-3-031-38956-6_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-38956-6_1)

Published: 01/12/2023

Document Version
Final published version

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Please cite the original version:

Annola, J., Lindberg, H., & Markkola, P. (2023). Experience, Institutions, and the Lived Welfare State. In J. Annola, H. Lindberg, & P. Markkola (Eds.), *Lived Institutions as History of Experience* (pp. 1-24). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-38956-6_1

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CHAPTER 1

Experience, Institutions, and the Lived Welfare State

Johanna Annola, Hanna Lindberg, and Pirjo Markkola

INTRODUCTION

Modern people encounter a multitude of institutions throughout their life course. The centuries-long triad of “church, state, and family” has been split into several entangled institutions that structure people’s daily lives by producing, reinforcing, and sometimes preventing various social and societal experiences. However, the interaction between institutions and individuals is not a one-way process: shared experiences contribute to the formation and reformation of current and future institutions. As such, institutions should not be seen as rigid entities but rather as the outcome of mutual interaction between individuals and society.

The gradual development of the welfare state has in a conspicuous way contributed to institutional fragmentation. It has also changed the

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J. Annola et al. (eds.), *Lived Institutions as History of Experience*,
Palgrave Studies in the History of Experience,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-38956-6_1

distribution of responsibilities between the state and the family as institutions.¹ For example, while both children’s primary socialization and the care for the sick and the elderly were previously regarded as responsibilities of the family, the twentieth century marked the expansion of the welfare state into these areas, especially in Northern Europe. Municipal mother and child clinics, public daycare, and public residential homes for the elderly, among others, provide new institutional settings in which the experience of society is constituted.²

The degree to which the welfare state is present in people’s lives varies over time and space, as well as through the course of the individual’s life, but no one is unaffected by the route the welfare state takes. Through social benefits, insurance, and services, as well as education and health care and their respective branches, welfare institutions set the frames for people’s daily lives. However, as Stein Kuhnle, Per Selle, and Sven E.O. Hort, three renowned scholars of welfare policies, point out, “welfare states come in different shapes and sizes.”³ This means that the interaction between the state, civil society, local communities, and the market—not to mention their impact on people’s daily lives—is a changing phenomenon.

In this book, we study institutions that were formed first by the state in general and later by the emerging welfare states in Northern Europe. Our period of interest ranges from the late eighteenth to the twenty-first century, which allows for a view of the earlier forms of welfare provision and the multi-layered development of the welfare state⁴ without omitting some of its most blatant shortcomings. Our geographical focus is on the countries bounding the Baltic Sea: Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Poland. These regions share much common history, and the Nordic countries can also be characterized as the cradle of the internationally appealing Nordic model of welfare.

¹“Family” usually refers to a group of people bound together in kinship, marriage, or co-residence. The ways in which the boundaries of this group have been defined in different times and places have varied greatly. See, for example, Aatsinki, Annola, and Kaarninen, *Approaches to Changing Values of Upbringing*, 1, 5–7.

²For discussion on the relationship between familial responsibilities, family ties, and the development of tax-funded welfare provisions, see Reher, *Family Ties in Western Europe*; Muravyeva and Toivo, *Honor Thy Father and Mother in Sovic, Thane, and Viazzo* (eds.) *The History of European Families*.

³Kuhnle, Selle, and Hort, *Introduction*, 2.

⁴For the multi-layered historicity of the welfare state, see Kettunen and Petersen, *Introduction*, 5–7.

We explore how institutions were experienced as an outcome of interaction between the individual and society, as well as how institutions as sites of experience shaped and structured people's everyday lives. Utilizing theoretical and methodological frameworks developed within the history of experiences, the book aims to illuminate the interconnections between experience and welfare institutions and the ways in which these mutual connections are related to societal change.

HISTORY OF EXPERIENCE AND THE LIVED WELFARE STATE

In the book, we merge studies of institutions and the history of the welfare state with the history of experience. In recent years, the history of experience has gained renewed attention from historians, and the contours of a distinct yet diverse field have taken shape.⁵ The history of experience seeks to investigate the ways in which experiences are formed and articulated as a part of a collective setting and how the processes of sharing and consolidating experiences contribute to societal change.

On the one hand, the field builds on the tradition of new social history. From the 1960s onward, labor history, gender history, and other orientations of new social history answered the call for “history from below” by focusing on the history of everyday life as well as on the history of “common people” and other previously ignored groups. One of the key figures, the British historian E. P. Thompson, launched in the 1960s a thorough discussion on the experience of the working classes. For him, experience was a social fact that explained social relations and social power. In general, the new social history developed a keen interest toward the experiences of the working classes, rural poor, minorities, and women.⁶ The new social historians linked experience, social identity, and politics together and often worked alongside grassroots movements. As the US historian Laura Lee Downs argues, “[I]ndividual experiences, interpreted in light of inherited

⁵For recent contributions to the history of experience, see Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo, *Lived Religion and Gender*; Boddice and Smith, *Emotion, Sense, Experience*; Kivimäki, Suodenjoki, and Vahtikari (eds.), *Lived Nation*; Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo (eds.), *Histories of Experience*; Haapala, Harjula, and Kokko (eds.), *Experiencing Society*; *Digital Handbook of the History of Experience*, several entries.

⁶Haapala, Harjula, and Kokko, Introduction; Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*. For the German history of everyday life, see Lüdtke, *The History of Everyday Life*; Iggers, *Historiography*.

cultural tradition, formed the indispensable ground of political and revolutionary action.”⁷

However, the cultural and linguistic turns in the historical sciences questioned social historians’ attempts to reach the experiences of so-called ordinary people. Poststructuralism displayed the fundamental role of language, knowledge premises, and social relations in shaping experiences. The category of experience was soon dismissed as part of outdated social history.⁸ Gender history, in particular, was steered toward a poststructuralist understanding of experiences. In the 1980s, US historian Joan W. Scott criticized social historians’ attempts to assume an exact fit between class consciousness and experience and suggested attention be paid to discourse to understand how conceptions of class organized social experience and how representations and meanings given to material life were constructed.⁹ In her seminal article “The Evidence of Experience” (1991), Scott encouraged historians to avoid a naïve interpretation of individual experience as a reflection of social reality. Scholarly focus on the discursive construction of experiences, as suggested by Scott, was fruitful, but it did not provide the tools to deal with materiality. According to historians Rob Boddice and Mark Smith, “Scott was unable to see how to include the body and the brain, the feelings and the senses.”¹⁰

On the other hand, the history of experience builds on the tradition of *Erfahrungsgeschichte*, which was developed in Germany around the turn of the millennium. Crucial to this tradition is the analytical separation between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*. The former refers to people’s pre-discursive perception of the world, while the latter is understood as the socially shared and culturally, historically, and linguistically embedded interpretation of events.¹¹ In this book, we do not rely on the German history of experience as such, but in line with Finnish historians Ville Kivimäki, Sami Suodenjoki, and Tanja Vahtikari, we follow the German tradition’s emphasis on how culture and social relations bind experiences to “power

⁷Downs, *Writing Gender History*, 31.

⁸This has been pointed out by Laura Lee Downs, who also writes about “the individual-experience-to-social-identity link on which many narratives of social history rested.” Downs, *Writing Gender History*, 95.

⁹Scott, *Women in The Making of the English Working Class*, 88–9.

¹⁰Scott, *The Evidence of Experience*; Boddice and Smith, *Emotion, Sense, Experience*, 19.

¹¹Koselleck, *Future Past*; Kivimäki, *Sodan kokemushistoria*; Kivimäki, *Battled Nerves*; Kivimäki, Suodenjoki, and Vahtikari, *Lived Nation*, 11–12.

relations, institutions and systems of meaning.”¹² Experiences are a societal phenomenon, and the history of experience explores society.

Furthermore, the history of experience is closely connected to the history of emotions and the senses. Recent decades have seen an upsurge in historical studies of emotions, focusing on the ways in which emotions are socially and culturally shared and reproduced in different historical contexts. Emotions tie communities together, but their forms and the ways emotions are emphasized vary over time and space. Like the history of emotions, the history of the senses has also studied the changing historical meanings of different senses and how these have formed our understanding of the world.¹³ Both emotions and senses are intimately intertwined with experience and are integral parts of how people form socially shared experiences.

Thus, the history of experience intersects with social history, gender history, cultural history, the history of emotions, and the history of senses. It draws on these fields both theoretically and conceptually, but to an increasing degree with a framework of its own, merging constructivist understandings of experiences with explorations of emotional and sensory corporeality.

The Finnish historians Sari Katajala-Peltomaa and Raisa Maria Toivo have suggested that the concept “experience” can be understood on three levels. First, experience happens to people as part of their social reality. Second, experience marks a cultural process to give meaning to what happens and to explain it. Third, experience is used as a category to analyze the first two levels. Experience can thus be interpreted as an ongoing social, contextual, and situational process. It is the task of the historian to analyze how past experiences have been “produced, shared, controlled, appropriated, approved of or discarded.”¹⁴

How, then, can the history of experience approach benefit welfare state research? The established welfare state research often highlights the agency of nation states or concentrates on ideological and structural comparisons of different welfare models and regimes.¹⁵ Recently, a growing body of

¹² Kivimäki, Suodenjoki, and Vahtikari, *Lived Nation*, 12.

¹³ For the history of the senses, see, for example, Boddice and Smith, *Emotion, Sense, Experience*; Smith, *Sensing the Past*.

¹⁴ Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo, *Lived Religion and Gender*, 11–13.

¹⁵ The most notable starting point for intensive scholarly debates on welfare regimes was Gøsta Esping-Andersen’s *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* in 1990. Kettunen and Petersen, Introduction, 2–3.

scholarly research has questioned the focus on the national welfare state and underlined transnational and global phenomena.¹⁶ As Finnish historian Pauli Kettunen suggests, transnational history can function as a Foucauldian history of the present—that is, be concerned with discursive and non-discursive practices that are seen as given or natural.¹⁷ One way of problematizing these “taken-for-granted” practices and making them visible is the history of experience approach in which careful analysis of encounters between people and institutions are examined. As experience as an analytical concept has the potential to bridge the gap between macro-level changes and micro-level quotidian life, our approach provides a topical way of looking at the welfare state.

In the book, we use the concept of the “lived welfare state” as an umbrella term to capture and analyze the presence of the welfare state in people’s daily lives. We suggest that welfare states materialize through the ways in which people experience welfare benefits, social care, social services, and the institutions that provide—or are expected to provide—all this. As individuals share their subjective experiences of the welfare state through textual, corporeal, and material communication with each other, these experiences gradually become common knowledge and collective practices. In the long run, the shared practices develop into policies, norms, ideologies, and different types of institutions. These in turn reshape subjective experiences of the welfare state.¹⁸ Hence, the welfare state is constructed, maintained, challenged, and reformed through experiences.

The importance of everyday experiences is also embedded in terms that are often used to describe the Nordic welfare states, in particular. Those terms are trust, solidarity, equality, and reciprocity. This implies that the relationship between an individual and the society that provides welfare—or fails to provide welfare—plays a crucial role in the construction and adaptation of the welfare state.

Welfare state building was introduced as a breakaway from earlier poverty policies. However, the lived welfare state approach is not limited to the period of twentieth-century established welfare states but also calls for analyses of earlier time periods. We believe that *longue durée* analyses

¹⁶For example, Kildal and Kuhnle (eds.), *Normative Foundations*; Morgan, *Working Mothers and the Welfare State*; Kettunen and Petersen (eds.), *Beyond Welfare State Models*; Kessler-Harris and Vaudagna (eds.), *Democracy and the Welfare State*; Kuhnle, Selle, and Hort (eds.), *Globalizing Welfare*.

¹⁷Kettunen, Introduction, 4; Kettunen, The concept of society, 156–7.

¹⁸Haapala, Harjula, and Kokko, Introduction.

allow for a more complex or comprehensive view of welfare and the welfare state. First, such analyses reveal the changing interfaces between welfare, poverty, disability, illness, discrimination, modernization, and citizenship. Second, *longue durée* analyses show how the concepts, practices, and institutions of modern welfare states may still carry the experienced legacy of previous welfare policies. Although the focus of this volume lies in the Nordic countries, lived institutions are not limited to Nordic welfare policies. This is exemplified by one of our contributions, which explores an institution for disabled war veterans on the Polish-Ukrainian borderland in Lviv. The chapter helps us to problematize further the multi-faceted nature of encounters between individuals and institutions. As Pauli Kettunen argues, “a comparative historical study would benefit from also including those Eastern European agrarian societies that were politically shaped through the collapse or modification of the European empires during and after the First World War.”¹⁹

In the early 2000s and 2010s, reflections on the lived welfare state were few—with the exception of scholarly interest in the cultural history of the welfare state.²⁰ In recent years, scholars have to a growing extent paid attention to the experience of welfare or the lack thereof. In Nordic historiography in particular, there has been a flux of analyses of the everyday experiences of both the providers and the recipients of social care,²¹ the entanglements between lived religion and lived welfare,²² the interfaces of lived nation and lived welfare,²³ the relationship between medicine and the

¹⁹ Kettunen, The concept of society, 144. See Oksana Vynnyk’s chapter in this volume.

²⁰ van Oorschot, Opielka, and Pfau-Effinger (eds.), *Culture and Welfare State*; Béland and Petersen (eds.), *Analysing Social Policy Concepts*; Bude, Generation; the publications of a major British research project *The Cultural History of the NHS*.

²¹ Grønæk Jensen, “*At åbne skuffen*”; Lottrup Rasmussen, *De fattiges ret*; Annola, Eletty laitoshoito; Harjula, Eletty sosiaalityö; Harjula, Framing the Client’s Agency; Settle, *Probation and Policing of the Private Sphere*; Annola, Kackerlackor i säsen?

²² Kuuliala, The Religious Experience of Ill Health; Annola, To the Undiscovered Country; Annola and Miettinen, Piety and Prayers.

²³ Kaarninen, Red Orphans’ Fatherland; Markkola and Östman, Guardians of the Land?; Lindberg, National Belonging Through Signed and Spoken Languages; Hakosalo, The Ill(s) of the Nation; Vahtikari, Finns Start Life Safe.

experience of modern illness,²⁴ and the diversity of welfare concepts and cultures.²⁵

New scholarly openings to the lived welfare state have also emerged in the wake of state inquiries into the abuse and neglect of children in institutional child welfare. Such inquiries have been conducted in more than twenty countries, including the Nordic countries, and a similar one has also taken place regarding care facilities for people with disabilities in Denmark. In some cases they have been followed by political redress processes.²⁶ The inquiries and research based on them have broadened our understanding of the relationship between welfare policies and the ways in which welfare was experienced by individuals who were subjected to institutional “care.” Moreover, the redress processes have provided a new perspective to the ways in which the history of experiences is interpreted and politicized in/by the contemporary welfare states.²⁷

Yet another recent contribution to the history of the lived welfare state has been provided by the edited volume *Experiencing Society and the Lived Welfare State*.²⁸ By exploring the expectations the welfare state met—or failed to meet—and the response it received in people’s everyday lives, the volume concentrates on the relationship between the individual and society. In doing so, the book discusses the ways in which the rights and responsibilities in relation to welfare were constructed and how the ideals of equality, belonging, and trust emerged, took shape, or failed in people’s everyday lives around the world. With its broader scope, *Experiencing Society* can be seen as a companion publication to *Lived Institutions*, in which we turn our gaze to institutions as laboratories to unravel the relationship between structures, spaces, practices, and the experiences thereof.

²⁴Tuohela, *The Ordeal of the Soul*, 219–29; Tuohela, *Sammanbrott och tillfrisknanden*, 77–102; Tuohela et al., *Sielun ja mielen sairaus*, 195–232; Boddice and Hitzer, *Emotion and Experience in the History of Medicine*; Parhi, *No Coming Back to Sick Society*; Parhi, *Sensitive, Indifferent, Labile*.

²⁵Edling (ed.), *The Changing Meanings*.

²⁶Sköld and Markkola, *History of Child Welfare*; Wright, Swain, and Sköld, *The Age of Inquiry, Honoring the Truth, Barnehem og specialskoler under luppen*; SOU 2009:99; SOU 2011:61; Rytter, *Godhavnsrapporten*; Kragh et al., *Anbragt i historien*; Hytönen et al., *Lastensuojelun sijaishuollon epäkohdat*; Petersen et al., *Historisk udredning*.

²⁷Swain, *Institutionalized Childhood*; Sköld and Swain (eds.), *Apologies and the Legacy of Abuse*; Vehkalahti, *Dusting the Archives*; Lundy, *Paradoxes and Challenges*; Malinen, Markkola, and Hytönen, *Conducting Commissioned Research*; Malinen, “Eleven Old Boys Crying Out for Revenge.”

²⁸Haapala, Harjula, and Kokko (eds.), *Experiencing Society*.

INSTITUTIONS

According to the French philosopher Michel Foucault, the seventeenth century saw the “Great Confinement” of deviant individuals—the poor, the unemployed, prostitutes, criminals, and the insane—in different institutions to protect societal order in Western societies. Foucault suggests that the power that underpinned the prevailing order took the form of the constant surveillance of the inmates and the discipline imposed on them. The ultimate goal of the institution was to make its inmates “docile bodies”—that is, individuals who controlled themselves through self-imposed conformity to contemporary norms.²⁹

Another classic in the field of institutional studies is the US sociologist Erving Goffman, who coined the term “total institution.” Total institutions exist for care and punishment alike. In such institutions, similarly situated individuals live for longer or shorter periods, restricted by the regulations of the institution, isolated from the world outside. Goffman suggests that the totalistic features include, among others, a sharp division between residents and staff, incompatibility with the basic work–payment structure, a mismatch with family life, and the breakdown of barriers that normally separate the places of sleep, play, and work. However, as Goffman notes, not all features are shared by all total institutions.³⁰

Although scholarly outputs that look at historical institutions from below are not so numerous, the book at hand is not the first attempt at discussing everyday life in institutions or seeking out the voices of the inmates or the recipients of welfare provisions. For example, in Britain and the United States, scholars have traced the experiences of workhouse inmates and patients in hospitals and mental hospitals, as well as inmates and residents in other institutions.³¹ In the Nordic countries, there are studies that shed light on the lives of inmates and residents in different institutions in the past, often by exploring their letters and other so-called egodocuments.³² The most comprehensive Nordic work in this field so far is the edited volume *Inspärrad* (Locked-in), published by Swedish scholars

²⁹ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*.

³⁰ Goffman, *Asylums*.

³¹ Lane, “The Doctor Scolds Me”; Beveridge, *Life in the Asylum*; Kleinman, *The Illness Narratives*; Green, *Pauper Protests*; Tomkins, *Workhouse Medical Care*; Humphries, *Care and Cruelty in the Workhouse*; Hamlett, *At Home in the Institution*.

³² For example, Ahlbeck, *Diagnostisering och disciplinering*; Engwall, “*Asociala och imbesilla*”; Wallman-Svensson, *Bonapojkarnas brev*; Tuohela, *Huhtikuun tekstit*; Vehkalahti, *Constructing Reformatory Identity*; Jönsson, *Berättelser från insidan*; Tuohela et al., *Sielun ja mielen sairaus*.

in 2016.³³ In their empirical essays, the contributors offer glimpses of the ways in which the inmates in mental hospitals, sanatoria, prisons, reformatory schools, and alcohol rehabilitation clinics understood their situation and their surroundings between 1850 and 1992.

The aspects of everyday life in prisons, detention centers, and other places of incarceration have also been tackled by carceral geographers and other scholars of prison space.³⁴ By focusing on the ways in which prisoners resist the disciplinary practices, use different tactics to protect their autonomy, and create their personal spaces in “carceral TimeSpace,” these scholars have revealed the changing relationship between prison policies and prison practices. Moreover, researchers have analyzed prison soundscapes and other sensory engagements with carceral spaces.³⁵ However, as many of these works only deal with present-day institutions, there is a need for historical analyses of carceral and other institutional spaces. Institutions have usually undergone major constructional and ideological reforms during their life span and therefore carry “living memories” as a part of their present-day structure.³⁶ Historical analyses increase our knowledge of past societies and help us understand present institutions.

In *Lived Institutions*, we explore prisons, workhouses, residential schools, hospitals, shelters for single mothers, and care facilities for people with disabilities—in other words, institutions that Goffman labeled as “total.” In addition to these walled institutions, the contributions to the book discuss welfare provisions and other societal institutions that provide welfare, such as voluntary organizations and families. The chapters also touch upon the entanglements between different institutions: for example, Johanna Annola maps nineteenth-century Finnish female prisoners’ experiences between state-managed prisons and a private shelter, while Marie Meier discusses the tension between the institutional care of mental

³³ Nilsson and Vallström (eds.), *Inspärrad*.

³⁴ For a brief overview of the scholarly discussion on institutional geographies in general, see Repo, *Confined to Space*, 23–6.

³⁵ Ogborn, *Discipline, Government and Law*; Philo, *Accumulating Populations*; Baer, *Visual Imprints on the Prison Landscape*; Dirsuweit, *Bodies, State Discipline and the Performance of Gender*; Fiddler, *The Penal Palimpsest*; Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*; Wener, *The Environmental Psychology of Prisons and Jails*; Conlon, *Hungering for Freedom*; Crewe, Warr, Bennett, and Smith, *The Emotional Geography of Prison Life*; Hemsworth, *Carceral Acoustemologies*; Moran, *Carceral Geography*; Rowe, “Tactics,” *Agency and Power*; Turner and Knight (eds.), *The Prison Cell*.

³⁶ Morin and Moran, Introduction; Hamlett, *At Home in the Institution*.

health patients and families as sites of mental illness in post-Second World War Denmark. As shown by Riikka Suominen in her chapter on an institution for single mothers, non-governmental welfare institutions were in some cases born out of the perceived neglect of the state.

By analyzing a wide range of institutions, we show, first, how different selections of totalistic features applied in different institutions produced varying experiences of lived welfare (or the lack thereof) and how the inmates/residents used specific coping methods to adapt to the life in a specific institution. At the same time, the essays imply that the residents' need to express and exercise their autonomy has remained more or less the same throughout centuries, as demonstrated by Emilie Luther Valentin's essay on eighteenth-century Danish prison workhouses, Oksana Vynnyk's contribution on a disabled veterans' home in interwar Poland, Heini Hakosalo's chapter on twentieth-century Finnish tuberculosis sanatoria, and Klaus Petersen and Sarah Smed's contribution on institutions for people with intellectual disabilities in twentieth-century Denmark. These and the other chapter in this book demonstrate very clearly that "existing in the exercises of power does not mean existing without a choice."³⁷

Second, we show the ways in which those institutions that did not entail day-to-day contact, such as grants and benefits given to families, were nevertheless present in people's everyday lives on a regular basis. Here, too, we see Foucauldian biopower in action. As Minna Harjula shows in her chapter on Finnish family benefits, the development of welfare provisions rested on presumptions of the lived conditions of the citizens and aimed at promoting a particular set of norms. However, it is not our intention to concentrate solely on institutional structures but rather on the interaction between an institution and individuals who lived within its sphere of influence. This is crystallized in Heikki Kokko's chapter on the local-level reception of the Finnish poor relief reform of 1852 and in Mervi Kaarninen's chapter on the so-called Red Widows' experiences of poor relief in interwar Finland.

Third, we show how individual experiences of institutions have been publicly disseminated and used in policymaking. Hanna Lindberg shows in her chapter how experiences were utilized in public debates surrounding the role of residential schools for deaf people. In their chapter, Johanna Sköld, Bengt Sandin, and Johanna Schiratzki discuss care-leavers who had been victims of historical institutional child abuse and the ways in which

³⁷ Wisniewski, Foucault and Public Autonomy, 424.

their experiences were considered in the Swedish state's financial redress scheme.

As mentioned earlier, the concept of experience can be used as a bridge between societal structures and individual lives. The contributors to *Lived Institutions* are not so much choosing between the ideologies behind the emergence and management of different institutions *and* empirical examples of lives led within the sphere of these institutions; they are interested in *both* of them. Moreover, the chapters shed light on the different positioning of institutions vis-à-vis individuals. Experiences were not only related to lived institutions but also to imagined, future, and remembered institutions. We ask what kind of ideologies, practices, encounters, performances, spatial settings, soundscapes, language, and embodied sensory elements were present in different institutions and how individuals responded to the same. How do socio-cultural patterns of experiencing institutional contexts vary across time and space? How are experiences of lived institutions and lived institutional care—including accounts of imagined and remembered institutions—related to societal change?

In our attempt to answer these questions, we employ a broad variety of theoretical concepts. We discuss “space” and “place,” as well as the concepts of “carceral TimeSpace” and “carceral layers.”³⁸ Our chapters also aim at applying and developing the term “scene of experience,” coined by Minna Harjula and Heikki Kokko,³⁹ by offering concrete examples of multi-layered experiences within institutional settings. In order to tackle the interaction between individuals, institutional settings, and society at large, we use concepts such as “tactics,” “navigation,” “strategy,” and “cultural script.” Shared experiences, the process of sharing experiences, and the extent of sharedness are discussed by utilizing concepts such as “collective experience”, “emotional community”, and “community of experience.”⁴⁰

³⁸The term was coined by Finnish carceral geographer Virve Repo, see Repo, Carceral layers in a geropsychiatric unit in Finland, 187–201; Repo, *Confined to Space*.

³⁹Scene of experience is a key concept developed by Minna Harjula and Heikki Kokko. Within HEX, they have developed the theoretical and methodological concepts of the social history of experience since 2018. Harjula and Kokko, *The Scene of Experience*. See also Kokko and Harjula, *Social History of Experiences*.

⁴⁰For the community of experience, see Kivimäki, Malinen, and Vuolanto, *Communities of Experience*.

THE CURRENT VOLUME

In this volume, we explore the entanglements between institutions, welfare, and experience through twelve chapters divided into four parts. In Part I, “Encounters with Institutions,” the chapters examine how institutions were entered, lived, and remembered. With the late eighteenth century as a starting point, the part begins with Chap. 2 by *Emilie Luther Valentin*, in which she explores how the inmates of a Danish prison workhouse navigated their experiences within the institution. In her chapter, Luther Valentin studies what it meant to be imprisoned by studying the physical experiences of imprisonment as well as the practices of coercion employed by the prison workhouse authorities. Focusing on three specific cases, which have left a broad set of sources, the chapter illuminates different experiences and tactics used by the inmates.

Chapter 3 by *Johanna Annola* also deals with experiences of incarceration. Annola studies Finnish female inmates’ experiences of prison by analyzing letters they wrote in the 1880s to the early 1900s. Although prisoners did not always describe their lives in detail, their experiences of carceral TimeSpace are embedded in their letters in the choice of cultural scripts. As the letters were written in prison but addressed to a private Christian shelter for women, they also reveal entanglements between the present institution and the absent institution. These entanglements hint at the accumulation of carceral layers and the institutional burden in the minds and bodies of the writers.

The tension between future, present, and past institutions is also at the center of Chap. 4 by *Riikka Suominen*. Suominen studies the Helsinki Mother and Child Home, a non-governmental institution established in 1942 for unmarried women. She analyzes the postwar encounters between the shelter and single mothers, who were mainly working-class women. By focusing on the process of becoming a resident in the shelter, Suominen examines how experiences of single motherhood were constructed on the ideal, sociomaterial, and individual levels.

Part II of the volume, “Lived Social Citizenship,” focuses on the ways in which poor relief, benefits, and pensions formed experiences and the citizens’ place in society. In Chap. 5, *Heikki Kokko* explores the societal significance of the 1852 poor relief reform in Finland by analyzing local readers’ letters to newspapers. Kokko shows how the poor relief reform was experienced on the local level and how it generated changes in the individual-society relationship. Finland is used as a case study to examine

how early social citizenship was formulated in a modernizing society via the interplay between local and transnational levels of society.

Minna Harjula in Chap. 6 studies the formation of lived social citizenship in Finland by examining the emerging institution of social benefits: the maternity benefit for pregnant women (1938), the family benefit for large low-income families (1943), and the child benefit for all children (1948). By approaching the encounters between families and local authorities as scenes of experience, this chapter exposes the multi-layered historicity of the lived welfare state.

In the last chapter (Chap. 7) of the part, *Mervi Kaarninen* focuses on the widows of the Red soldiers, who had fought on the losing side in the Finnish Civil War of 1918. By utilizing emotional community and collective experience as her theoretical concepts, Kaarninen studies encounters between the widows and the nascent social welfare institutions in early twentieth-century Finland. She shows how these encounters formed the widows' social citizenship and how experiences of humiliation over time were replaced by feelings of confidence as the widow's position in society changed.

In Part III of the book, "Experiencing Institutional Spaces," the chapters focus on the experiences institutional spaces have generated. Chap. 8 by *Oksana Vynnyk* examines experiences of disability in interwar Poland by focusing on the Lviv Disabled Veteran's Home. Situated in the city of Lviv, the veteran's home was a part of urban life and reflected the changing political and social relations of the region. By utilizing vast archival sources, Vynnyk analyzes the interplay between various discourses constructed by the disabled veterans as well as military and civilian authorities, which together formed the Lviv institution and determined injured soldiers' experiences of disability.

In Chap. 9, *Heini Hakosalo* analyzes sanatoria patients' experiences of space in twentieth-century Finland. Utilizing mainly a thematic writing competition organized by the Lung Patients' Union and the Finnish Literature Society in 1971, Hakosalo focuses on how patients interacted with the sanatorium building. Hakosalo uses the distinction between space and place as introduced by Michel De Certeau in order to analyze meanings, emotions, and social relations connected to the sanatoria building.

Klaus Petersen and *Sarah Smed* in Chap. 10 study experiences of institutionalization in the Danish Special Care Sector in 1933–1980. Through interviews as well as systematic and comprehensive archival studies, the authors explore how people with intellectual disabilities experienced life

and changing policy paradigms in the institutions. The contribution is based on research that was conducted for a government-initiated historical report on (mis)treatment within Danish institutions for disabled groups. It gives a unique insight not only into the institutions but also into the voices and experiences of the institutionalized group.

The chapters of Part IV of the book, “Dealing with Institutional Experiences,” discuss different ways in which experiences have been either silenced or publicly recognized and debated. In Chap. 11, *Hanna Lindberg* studies the role of residential schools for deaf children in the 1930s and 1980s and the manner in which experience was utilized in the public debates over these residential schools. The chapter focuses on the case of the school for the deaf in Borgå, Finland, which was intended for the Finland-Swedish minority. Lindberg shows how the experiences and expectations of an institution that was repeatedly under public debate exposed changes within deaf education and the position of the Finland-Swedes during the twentieth century.

Chapter 12 by *Marie Meier*, on the other hand, explores processes of silencing by focusing on the entanglements of family secrecy and changing experiences of mental illness in Denmark from the mid-twentieth century onward. Drawing on oral history interviews, Meier proposes a contextual understanding of experiences of mental afflictions. In the chapter, family secrecy surrounding mental illness in the twentieth century is exposed through three cases, which highlight the different ways in which mental illness was dealt with within families.

The dynamics between silencing and recognition is the focus of Chap. 13 by *Johanna Sköld*, *Bengt Sandin*, and *Johanna Schiratzki*. Sköld et al. discuss the ways in which experiences of abuse and violence within welfare institutions have been treated in the Swedish state’s financial redress scheme for child abuse in past out-of-home care. The authors show how the redress scheme’s aim shifted from acknowledging past sufferings to limiting what type of abuse the state could be deemed responsible for. For many former victims, this process led to a renewed experience of abuse.

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