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Mikael Byström, Pär Frohnert, eds. *Reaching a State of Hope: Refugees, Immigrants and the Swedish Welfare State, 1930–2000.* Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2013. 368 pp. $55.95, cloth, ISBN 978-91-87351-23-5.

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Mikael Byström and Pär Frohnert have done a great service to the study of migration and refugees in the twentieth century by exposing Anglophone scholars to new work on Sweden. They have produced a substantive volume that speaks to the interests of a wide range of scholars, and addresses a number of questions. How could an extraordinarily homogeneous nation whose welfare state was called the People's Home widen its reception of outsiders when the 1930s bred refugees from political and ethnic persecution? How did it respond to wartime emergencies, and then to the exigencies of a postwar region in which former POWs, people released from prison camps, displaced persons, and refugees unwilling to return home needed shelter? What individuals and agencies were at work, and how? What can Swedish migration history reveal about the spectrum of mobility between free and coerced migration? In the prosperous postwar years, how did Sweden treat immigrant labor and political refugees as the nation became less homogeneous? How did the economic downturns of the 1970s and the 1995 entry into the European Union affect the welcome and rights of newcomers? What is the relationship between the development of the welfare state and the transformation of Sweden into a country of immigration? Sixteen researchers tackle these questions, ultimately helping us to understand Sweden's place in twentieth-century migration history--how its policies and civil organizations behaved in ways that were congruent with, and distinct from, those elsewhere.

Reaching a State of Hope began with a 2010 Stockholm academic conference, after which the editors added new essays and a series of introductions to produce an unusually coherent volume, tightly organized yet with plenty of room for individuals to flex their scholarly muscles as they draw on their research and refer to each others' essays.

Mikael Byström and Pär Frohnert's general introduction provides background on Sweden's migration history and a preview of the book's four sections. Part 1, "Perspectives on Swedish Refugee Policy, 1930-45," opens with an introduction by the

editors to this sensitive and contested area. It includes an essay by Klas Åmark of Stockholm University on refugees between 1933 and 1945 and another on Swedish attitudes toward foreigners by Karin Kvist Geverts of Uppsala University. Together these essays--albeit from distinct perspectives and bodies of evidence--focus on the evolution from Sweden's restrictive entry policies of the 1930s based on the Aliens Act of 1927 to the reception of over two hundred thousand refugees and evacuees in 1945. Although each emphasizes a different turning point, it is clear that the "moderate" anti-Semitism of the prewar period became unacceptable in public expression as the persecution of Jews heightened and Jews began to enter the country, first from neighboring Norway. Together they remind the reader of Mark Mazower's point made years ago in ***The Dark Continent***, that Nazi Germany was enormously popular in the mid- to late 1930s, so that in a sense the war was Hitler's to lose; enemies arose on European soil because they were repulsed by the Nazis' outrageous cruelty and racial obsessions.[1] These played an important role in Sweden's growing welcome of refugees that included displaced persons and concentration camp survivors after the war.

In part 2, "The Agents of Refugee Policy and Reception, 1933-50," essays with a closer focus on organizations and individuals follow the editors' introduction. The five chapters here include Pontus Rudberg of Uppsala on the politics of Jewish refugee aid and relief; Pär Frohnert of Stockholm on the solidarity of social democrats; Mikael Byström of Uppsala on the National Refugee Board, 1941-1950; Paul Levine of Uppsala on Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Hungarian Jews while serving as special envoy for Sweden in Nazi-occupied Budapest in 1944; and Malin Thor Tureby of Malmö University on Swedish Jews and Jewish survivors. Each of these displays a complex of organizations and evolving interests under fast-changing circumstances. Rudberg and Thor Tureby yield insights about the contesting attitudes and organizations within the Jewish community of Stockholm vis à vis both refugees and international aid organizations such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, some of which were rooted in long-standing traditions of aid, and also in divisions between Eastern European newcomers and assimilated Western Jews. Levine places Raoul Wallenberg's proactive heroism in Budapest in the context of supportive 1944 Swedish diplomacy. Frohnert and Byström elucidate the workings of efforts directed toward dissidents and workers by the Labor Movement Refugee Relief Committee--concerned with international solidarity among social democrats, but not with communists or other dissenters from fascism--and those of the National Refugee Board. In historical perspective, the Refugee Board provided the precedent for the shift from the early 1930s system of social assistance to the emerging postwar welfare state for refugees.

Part 3, "Refugee Policy in the Shadow of the Cold War and Sweden's Labor Shortage," leaves the war behind and moves to the prosperous postwar years. Byström and Frohnert provide the context and problematic for immigration in this time of fundamental change in yet another cogent introduction. The three essays that follow highlight the conflicted aspects of immigrant labor in the early postwar situations: Attila Lajos of Malmö explores the range of freedom and coercion in his essay on contract workers and refugees; Johan Svanberg of Stockholm analyses the narratives of ethnic encounters between newly arrived Estonian workers and unionized Swedish workers; and Cecilia Notini Burch of Stockholm tackles the question of the untrustworthy immigrant. Svanberg's revelatory exploration of industrial employees' constructions of the past draws on oral history theory regarding the creation of social memories, so that he is able to unpack today's narrative of the anti-union Estonian, the "Balt-as-Nazi," on one hand, and the Swedish union bully, on the other. The reader emerges with a picture of mutual misunderstanding between two groups who came to the postwar workplace with profoundly distinct historical

memories: neither Swedish workers nor Estonian refugees understand or remember that the two groups have much in common and are also heterogeneous. This essay has much to offer the oral historian as well as the student of immigration.

Burch and Lajos take on distinct postwar arrivals. Burch investigates the definition and treatment of untrustworthy newcomers from Soviet-controlled areas as the Cold War developed; the mistrust of Russians, Balts, and Ingrian Finns was defined at the time by visa admissions and residency restrictions. Here the personal files of the National Alien Commission reveal a hierarchy of residency restrictions that are reminiscent of the Soviet Union's limiting of access to its most desirable cities. Like Svanberg, Lajos draws on interviews in his exploration of postwar newcomers; he focuses on the evolution of Hungarian workers from contract laborers to refugees after 1949. Postwar Sweden needed labor in forestry and agriculture, and so it assigned these newcomers to particular jobs and locations with no choice but to work in these areas until years after the confirmation of their refugee status. The result, writes Lajos, is a permanently alienated immigrant community, as exploitable as the Central European laborers at the turn of the twentieth century studied by Lars Olsson. Together the essays of this section elucidate how the costs of the Cold War for immigrants yield traces in state archives and the lived experience of postwar newcomers.

Part 4, "Discourses and Practice, 1960-2000," explores immigration to Sweden as the origins and ethnicity of newcomers became considerably more diverse. Byström and Frohnert's introduction elucidates the tensions between the Trade Union Confederation and newcomers, elaborated by Jesper Johansson of Linnaeus University writing on adaptation as the price of labor solidarity and Zeki Yalcin on the Trade Union Confederation and refugees in 1973-1982; Christina Johansson of Malmö rounds out this section with her essay on Swedish self-image. With an emphasis on different decades of the postwar era, Jesper Johansson and Yalcin alike draw on the archives of the Trade Union Confederation, tracing responses to the Europe-wide shift from the labor immigration of the 1950s and 1960s to family reunification and the arrival of refugees. Christina Johansson's essay is congruent with the findings of Jesper Johansson and Yalcin. She emphasizes, on one hand, the self-image of Sweden as a welcoming and protective nation, with a "tradition of openness," as the prime minister said in 2010 (p. 270), and on the other hand, the ways in which the raising of barriers to foreigners springs not simply from economic downturns but also from cultural attitudes articulated in high places. Like Yalcin, she notes that the most urgent encouragement for refugees to repatriate was directed not at the Chileans who arrived after the coup of 1973, but rather at the Somalians and Bosnians, both Muslim populations whose countries were torn by war. Nonetheless, this fair-minded essay also emphasizes the great numbers of people allowed to make lives in safety in Sweden. Students of postwar migration will find many commonalities here with other nations.

The final section of this volume, "International Perspectives and Conclusions," widens the lenses through which the reader views Sweden with offerings from three non-Nordic specialists. Legal scholar Louise London analyzes the policy agenda in her discussion of Britain, 1933-48. Georg Kreis of the University of Basil analyzes post-1945 refugee policy from the perspective of policy before that year for Switzerland. These two essays treating the nation that took in so many wartime refugees, Britain, and the one that famously closed its borders in 1942, Switzerland, offer a good counterpoint to one another, but not because one is perceived as generous and the other less so. Rather, the essays contrast in tone and approach. While London makes the case from the outset that refugee policy is "*on* refugees, not *for* them" (p. 293) and follows this through a delineation of self-interested restrictions on wartime entries, Kreis demonstrates sympathy for the Swiss fears that

helping others meant "endangering themselves: their jobs their homes, their food supplies, their clothing, their domestic security, their so-called 'national character'" (p. 314). While London plumbs the consequences of perceiving Jews as a problematic element in society, Kreis pursues four ways that the Swiss make use of wartime experience, interrogating the uses to which history is put (or ignored).

Frank Caestecker of the University of Ghent offers a masterful conclusion that interrogates the entire volume. This summary statement does not do justice to Caestecker's history of Sweden, immigrants, and refugees. He indicates the ways that Sweden's immigration history is unique--including its balancing acts of neutrality in the two wars that shaped the twentieth century, unusual ethnic homogeneity into the 1930s, and recruitment of East European labor well into the Cold War. Yet bringing Sweden into the migration history of the twentieth century not only takes it beyond Nordic boundaries, but also enables the scholar to understand that broader history more fully in a century marked by wars, universal refugee crises, intense labor migration, shifts of movement with seismic economic downturns, seekers of asylum, and, in the end, more ethnically diverse Europeans. Ultimately, Caestecker suggests that Sweden's ability to organize its immigrant population was extraordinary. Nonetheless, the reader can see the ways in which this nation has also participated in the tide of more general migration trends that include discomfiting truths about its history.

Note

[1]. Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 138-181.

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