

Werner Schmidt: Antikommunism och kommunism under det korta nittonhundratalet, Nordic Academic Press, Lund 2002, 477 s.

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[*Scandinavian Journal of History* 28/2003, s. 295-6.]

Both in Norway and in Sweden the security services recently have been scrutinized by official commissions. The end of the second cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist movement paved the way for these investigations in order to review the enemy-images of the services in the light of both the actual developments and the scientific research done within the field.

In Sweden the MUST programme (Militär underättelse- och säkerhetstjänst) has now resulted in a series of books and official reports (among them the final report SOU 2002:87 with the title: Rikets säkerhet och den personliga integriteten). Werner Schmidt's book is a part of this programme. His task was to deal with the 'double identity' of the Swedish CP in the period 1943-1977 with the East-German archival findings as point of departure. But since the access to the files of the Swedish security service was very limited the programme was disabled from the outset. Schmidt's book, therefore, became something else than an official report on the structure of the enemy images of the security services.

His findings in the DDR-archives is integrated into a sweeping analysis of anti-Communism and Communism in the short twentieth century of 1914 to 1989 with special focus on Sweden. Although the line of arguing is chronological it is not a conventional textbook analysis. It has an overall level that could be termed 'Sweden as integrated in the world capitalist system'. At this level the analysis is covering the whole of the period. Connected to this level are several digressions of theoretical character concerning the understanding of core concepts. Especially a digression concerning the understanding of 'exploitation' in the rhetoric of the SKP and in Marxist theory shows the author's scholarship and writing abilities. Within this framework we find a series of detailed analyses of Swedish both anti-Communist and Communist clusters of history. These clusters do not form a continuous, chronological stream.

The general thesis of the book is: when it comes to political history of the short twentieth century and to the outlook of the security service, anti-Communism was decisive. That's why the term comes first in the title. Anti-Communism in the broad sense of a hegemonic capitalist offensive against the subaltern classes, first and foremost the working class has united elites across their splits in economic interests. This has been the case since the beginning of resistance against capitalism (Chartism, trade unionism etc.) The author sees Swedish anti-Communism as primarily designed by the alliances of the elites. Thus the outlook of the leaders of the security services were primarily designed by their hostility towards the Russian Revolution, their connections to the white side in the Finnish civil war and to the close ties with German (and even Nazi) intelligence service. He shows this very convincingly for the period 1939-1944. After the allied victory, anti-Communism shifted towards an American design. He shows that the very same people in the security service, formed by the pre-war tradition, even before the government had decided on surveillance of the Swedish CP installed collecting of intelligence. Anti-Communism is therefore not considered only a political decision-making theme, but also an institutional codex inherent in the political culture.

The chapters on Communism are drawing on the analytical results from the authors dissertation from 1996 *Kommunismens rötter I första världskrigets historiska rum. En studie kring arbetarrörelsens historiska misslyckande*. He doesn't see the national Communist parties as duplicates of the Soviet one. He primarily sees the parties as grown out of national conditions. As sections of the Comintern (and later, after its dissolution in 1943, as members of a Russian dominated

movement) they were also formed by the Soviet political culture and the needs sprung from Soviet foreign policy. Analysing the first years of the Swedish CP in his dissertation he concludes that the latter was a step backwards. In this book he characterizes Russian socialism as a historical 'marginal' socialism. The central part of the book is about the post-war era. In a chapter on 'The Short Spring of the CP' the project and the political foundation of the party is analysed and criticised. In another chapter the new evidence collected from the archives of the former DDR is used in a reconstruction of a critical period of Swedish communism, i.e. the transformation from traditional and pro-soviet Communism to an early kind of Euro-Communism under the aegis of C.H. Hermansson.

This transformation in Schmidt's optic could be interpreted as a re-finding of the path from the early period of the party's history. By severing the bonds to the Soviet Union, DDR and the other parts of the movement, the party in principle again had the opportunity to address political problems in an adequate way. But the analysis has a form given by the MUST programme. It is a critical scrutiny of the menace-image of the surveillance service. It is critical primarily along two parameters: 1) did the 'double identity' of the SKP constitute a menace to Swedish interests and 2) did the transformation of the SKP to VPK alter this picture.

It turns out that the East-German material as far as Schmidt has dug it out doesn't show any spies or even any relations between DDR and SKP of political dubious nature in relation to Swedish security. The relations are instead of economic and ideological nature: DDR used money in supporting SKP (e.g. printing machines), for cheap travels to DDR (e.g. the Baltic Week) or for ideological education. In return the DDR elite could only count on political support by a rather weak CP. What is seen as a security risk or even a menace to Swedish interests shows up as way to get cheap benefits for the party and weak support for the DDR. And in the transformation period this traffic stops altogether, but does it alter the perception of the security service? It doesn't seem so.

Both this very concrete analysis of Swedish-German Communist relations and Schmidt's analyses of problems in the Communist movement are done with great care and scholarship. I have reservations towards minor parts of the theoretical framework (e.g. the continuity of 'anti-Communism'), but I think the book is a very qualified contribution to the both the general history of Communism and to the history of Swedish Communism. We look forward to his promised biography of Hermansson.