

2012

H-Diplo

H-Diplo Article Reviews

<http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/reviews/>

No. 375

Published on 20 November 2012

H-Diplo Article Review Editors: Thomas Maddux and Diane N. Labrosse

Web and Production Editor: George Fujii

Commissioned for H-Diplo by Thomas Maddux

Aryo Makko. "Sweden, Europe and the Cold War. A Reappraisal." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 14:2 (Spring 2012): 68-97. DOI: 10.1162/JCWS_a_00221.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1162/JCWS_a_00221

URL: <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/reviews/PDF/AR375.pdf>

Review by **Bo Stråth**, Helsinki University

The main argument which Aryo Makko's article sets out is that while the history of European integration and the history of the Cold War have been studied as two separate entities, they were much more interconnected than this approach indicates. Makko convincingly underpins his argument with Sweden as a case study.

Sweden's neutrality policy served during the Cold War as a demarcation to the Soviet Union and at the same time it was an instrument that prevented Sweden from being considered as belonging to the Western camp. In order to avoid the more passive foreign politics of Finland – which were dictated by the geopolitical situation closer to the Soviet shadow – Sweden developed a so-called active foreign policy with support for the Third World countries that was oriented along a North-South axis in an attempt to escape the straightjacket imposed by the East-West conflict. Sweden's cautiousness and hesitation in the prelude to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) which began in 1973 was conspicuous since it was assumed that this was basically a Soviet initiative and that on this ground there was a risk of a "Finlandization." However, it was also obvious how at the same time in the negotiations of a closer relationships with the European Communities, Sweden became more hesitant when the European Community (EC) steered towards a more federal profile (the Werner and the Davignon Plans). Given this development in the EC, there was a risk that Sweden could be seen in Moscow as being too allied with the West. Like a ship sailing between Scylla and Charybdis, in this case between the European market integration and what was believed to be a Soviet-initiated security-political scheme, the Swedish approach was to avoid getting too close to either. When it became clear that the CSCE was also promoted by the U.S., Sweden became much more actively involved.

Makko shows how close the connection between the EC and the CSCE in Swedish policy-making was around 1970. He provides new insights, with a more general potential beyond the Swedish case, concerning the European market integration and the Cold War. He also demonstrates the more long-term Swedish *Berührungsangst* with continental Europe. However, how this fear of contact emerged and how it connected to the Cold War situation is not really commented upon in the article. That would have required a somewhat longer historical perspective.

Makko refers to a “tradition of neutrality” (95) as one reason for the fear of contact. He could be more precise and more critical on this point. The fear of contact with Europe emerged in the 1930s. After World War I Swedish social democrats became true internationalists believing in the capacity of the League of Nations to guarantee world peace. At this time the political right favoured Swedish neutrality based on a strong army. There was certainly a myth in operation about Swedish neutrality since 1834. This was the year when Charles XIV John declared Sweden-Norway neutral in the escalating East-West conflict at that time between Great Britain and Russia. However, the declaration was very contextual. When a few years later in the conflict about control of the Eastern Mediterranean a *détente* emerged between Russia and Britain, Sweden did not hesitate to exploit the situation and sent a squadron to the area to ‘protect Swedish trade interests.’ In the Crimean War (1853-56) and in the Danish-Prussian conflict (1848-50 and 1863-64), the kings of the United Kingdoms of Sweden-Norway became foreign political activists aiming at military interventions. Their activism was certainly contested and at the end the governments prevented the kings from taking military action, but to talk about a long-term neutrality doctrine or tradition is wrong. After the establishment of the *Kaiserreich* in 1871 Swedish foreign policy became slowly ever more German-oriented. There was no long tradition of neutrality but a tradition of contested foreign politics. It was only against the backdrop of the escalating conflict between Stalin and Hitler in the Baltic, when the social democrats had political power, that a fast orientation towards neutrality (not to say a Scandinavian isolationism) initiated the construction of a mental demarcation between a protestant, progressive, i.e. social democratic Scandinavia and a conservative, capitalist and clerical continent. This stereotype had a great mobilizing power in the Swedish population and is still effective, as Swedish relations to Europe demonstrate.

When, after World War II the contours of a Swedish welfare model emerged through the compromise on the active labour market politics, (i. e. structural rationalization for productivity increases through wage increases in the low-pay sectors, supported by government organization of retraining for new jobs for those made redundant through the rationalizations), the Swedish social democratic government was keen to protect the model against what they saw, rightly or wrongly, as the threat of European market integration without a social dimension. Prime Minister Tage Erlander’s speech at the metal workers’ congress in August, 1961 is a case in point. While Erlander talked about neutrality as the reason for not following Britain in the negotiations over membership with the EC, he actually meant welfare. Makko mentions the speech, but could have

developed his discussion more, in particular the welfare concern, the domestic political dimension rather than the foreign political one. The government had worked since 1956 (and earlier) for a Nordic customs union as an alternative to the emerging EC. What at the end came out of this attempt was the European free Trade Association (EFTA). (Makko improperly refers (79) to these Nordic customs union negotiations at the end of the 1950s as Nordek, a term which should rather be reserved for the negotiations of 1968-71).

The Nordek negotiations began in 1968 on a Danish initiative with the obvious aim of using a Nordic economic union as a bridge to the EC. The tense international situation around 1970 intensified Nordic cooperation since it was a common denominator in the North, but like all fruitful political concepts it invited both agreement and disagreement. Without agreement there is no shared framework of communication, without disagreement there is no politics. All four governments (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) agreed that Nordic cooperation was a good thing, but when it came to giving political substance to the term the disagreements became considerable and at the end too big. When the Danish link to Europe became clear, Finland caused the plan to collapse based on its own security political interests. As Makko convincingly states (86), the Nordic balance depended on the stability of the overall East-West constellation. On this point he refers to Erik Magnusson's recent dissertation *Den egna vägen* 'which argues that neutrality was used as a pretext and that self-determination was the real reason for the eschewal of full EC membership when the Nordek plan collapsed. However, the question here is what "self-determination" really means in a world ever more entangled in international relations? Self-determination is an illusion as much as neutrality is a pretext. There might be a *belief* in self-determination that plays a certain role. However, the real concern was the safeguarding of the welfare state in a situation where the social democrats were increasingly exposed to social protest. There was a public fear that the welfare state was at risk in the European market economy that was heading towards new stages of integration. The government was, of course, fully aware of this opinion and took it into consideration.

The Swedish concern about social welfare can be seen as a part of a more general pattern where the European left never has shown any real interest in developing European solidarity and a social dimension as a supplement to economic market integration, but has preferred to defend the social achievements in their respective national frameworks, what Alan Milward called "the European rescue of the nation state."² The relevance of this fact in the framework of Makko's article is that it would be crucial not only to consider the connection between the European market integration and the Cold War but also between domestic social politics and foreign politics.

¹ Erik Magnusson, *Den egna vägen. Sverige och den europeiska integrationen 1961-1971*. Uppsala Studies in Economic History 88 (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2009).

² Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation State* (London: Routledge, 1992).

Makko is convincing in his continuous argument throughout the article that Swedish relations with the EC and the CSCE must be seen as interrelated. One can situate the Swedish dilemma around 1970 not only against the backdrop of domestic social protests and political radicalization, but also in the wider international framework shaped by Willy Brandt's new Eastern politics, which was accompanied by a new approach to the EC that was paid less attention to. Brandt worked hard but in vain for a more federal Europe with a monetary *and* a financial union (the Werner Plan) as his target. He needed stronger ties with the EC for domestic and foreign political legitimacy in the Eastern move. Brandt brought momentum to European integration and the Cold War after De Gaulle's sterile Europe-from-the-Atlantic-to-Ural rhetoric. These dynamics meant both new opportunities and new risks when Prime Minister Olof Palme tried to define Sweden's foreign political situation in the context of a changing domestic political scene.

Aryo Makko has written a well-argued and article that offers a new interpretation of Sweden as a case with a more general bearing and theoretical potential. My argument, however, is that it would be important to take the analysis one step further and involve also the domestic political scene and Swedish concern about the welfare model.

Bo Stråth is Finnish Academy Distinguished Professor of Nordic, European and World History at Helsinki University. His research field is the modernity of Europe and the world in a long historical perspective. A special interest is the post-1945 European integration. He is co-directing two research projects at Helsinki University: "Europe 1815-1914" and "Conceptual Histories of the World and Global Translations: The Euro-Asian and an African Semantics of the Social and the Economic". Among his many publications is *The Political History of European Integration. The Hypocrisy of Democracy-Through-Market* (2010) co-authored with Hagen Schulz-Forberg.

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