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# STANCE

State-Making and the Origins of Global Order  
in the Long Nineteenth Century and Beyond

Citizenship and the forgotten emigration:  
Swedes in Denmark 1850–1914

Sara Kalm

Working Paper Series, 2020-2021:8  
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# Citizenship and the forgotten emigration: Swedes in Denmark 1850–1914

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# I Introduction

During the last decades of the 19th century, there was a sizeable emigration of poor Swedish workers to Denmark. Denmark was at the time wealthier, and industrialization was under way, which led to increased demand for labor and higher wages. In Sweden, meanwhile, intense population growth had brought about a proletarianization of the countryside, especially in the southern parts – which meant a great supply of willing labor.

Their employment insecurity and lack of previous resources made these migrants vulnerable, and Danish authorities worried that they may burden poor relief. Therefore, a law was enacted which allowed the police increased control over the immigrants, and also the power to deport all foreign poor relief applicants. Deportations skyrocketed, which led to a diplomatic crisis between Sweden and Denmark. The two countries after some time decided to cooperate in order to regulate the situation. This cooperation first concerned poor relief applicants only, but then grew into an ambitious attempt (with Norway) to streamline their respective nationality laws.<sup>1</sup>

This paper explores this historical development in some detail. It is the first draft of a chapter in a book project that I am working on. The aim of the larger book project is to investigate the linkages between mobility of the poor and the development of modern citizenship in the case of Sweden. The STANCE relevance is that this form of citizenship is a fundamental component of the modern state. In the book I hence want to explore how the mobility of the poor was connected to citizenship (and thus state formation) in the long 19th century, via the various regulations that were put in place to control and manage it.

This paper draws on previous research, but also on primary material such as legal sources and commentaries of contemporaries. The following section clarifies how the topic of this chapter fits into the structure of the book. I then provide a brief note on the general approach, which can be described as a combination of historical sociology and social history. Next, I turn to the case at hand: I begin by describing the Swedish emigration to Denmark, and then move on to the on the control efforts on part of the authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> "Nationality" is often used for the international dimension, and "citizenship" for the domestic dimension. In this paper, I use the terms interchangeably.



## Modern citizenship: the structure of the book

How does this particular paper (or, the chapter that will result from it) fit into the larger book project? I operate with a definition of “modern citizenship” that emphasizes its simultaneous internal inclusiveness and external exclusiveness (Brubaker 1992). *Internal inclusiveness* established legal equality and put people in a relationship to the state that was direct – not mediated by for instance estates. State membership became more important than corporate membership, and legal equality began through a series of reforms in the economic domain (freedom of trade, enterprise, movement) in which “all persons were formally free and equal economic actors” (ibid: 61–62). *External exclusiveness* instead had to do with separating insiders from outsiders, and to specify the rules of acquisition. It involved the need to sharply distinguish membership from residence, while previous historical eras had tended to regard them as synonymous (ibid: 64–70). Both dimensions were crucial for establishing the state as a membership organization, which in turn was an essential aspect of modern statehood (on par with the monopoly of violence and the territorial base) (see also Kalm 2019).

I make use of this two-pronged definition also to structure the book. There will be two chapters on the process towards internal inclusiveness, and then two chapters on external exclusiveness. I might add to this a final chapter on “internal exclusiveness”, devoted to how Swedish citizenship was also formulated in opposition to domestic “others”. The sequence of chapters is as follows: (1) introduction (on citizenship, the state, and the movement of the poor), (2) repealing the internal regulations on movement, especially the passport laws, (3) remaining regulations on movement – vagrancy laws, master and servant act, the concept of “legal defense”, (4) Swedish emigration to Denmark and ensuing citizenship regulations (this chapter!), (5) Swedish emigration to the USA and the need to retain “citizens” abroad, causing among other things an expansion of social welfare, and finally – perhaps – (6) the differing regulation of the movement of Roma, Jewish, and Sami populations (“internal exclusiveness”).

I should point out that the development of modern citizenship as described by the two dimensions is ideal-typical and aspirational, rather than a correct and exhaustive reflection of historical realities. Using the two dimensions to structure the book may perhaps give the impression of a teleological and progressivist account, but this is not my intention (my intention: it gives some logical coherence to the text, and is capable of capturing the most important developments). The processes occurred in a piecemeal and incomplete way, with many inconsistencies. I think this will become clear in the text, and chapters (3) and (6) are particularly clear in this regard.

## A note on the general approach to the subject

Writing from a Danish perspective, historian Richard Willerslev referred to the Swedish migration 1850–1914 in a book entitled *The forgotten immigration* (Willerslev 1983). As is clear from the title of this paper, I believe it is equally forgotten in Sweden. Research is very scarce, people in general are not familiar with it, there are no monuments or museums commemorating it. To the extent that people in Denmark and Sweden are aware of it, we can probably thank *Pelle the Conqueror*, written by Martin Andersen Nexø and later filmed by Bille August. By way of contrast, Swedish emigration to USA is very well-known. It has been the subject of a lot of research, it is covered in school curricula, it has its own museum, and there are many widely known cultural references.

There are several possible reasons for this oblivion, but the one that I want to discuss here is the non-spectacularity of this migration. This is not a case of dramatic religious or ethnic expulsion, nor have its protagonists had to flee because of political and ideological convictions. And it does not have the cinematic qualities of the emigration to North America (“transatlantic journeys toward a new and unexplored continent”). When compared to such “heroic” movements, this migration appears almost dull and predictable, given that state building processes as well as the expansion of capitalism everywhere seem to have been accompanied by the movement of people.

But the absence of big drama does not make this migration uninteresting or inconsequential. The migration from Sweden to Denmark was part of a larger pattern of labor movements that occurred in the same era, and that included the transatlantic flows, but also the general process of urbanization. These movements were driven by, among other things, demographic change, rural unemployment and the new employment opportunities associated with industrialization. The argument, that I want to make in the book, is that these movements were of importance for the development of core state institutions, especially citizenship.

My general approach can be characterized as a combination of historical sociology and social history. Like most historical sociology, it uses history in order to understand the formation of some aspect of social and political modernity (here: citizenship) (Delanty and Isin 2003). But it does so in a social-history fashion, by giving a prominent role to “ordinary people” – the migrants – and their experiences of and participation in historical processes (Skocpol 1987).

This may have some consequences for the conceptualization of agency. Historical sociologists are, of course, well aware that not only elites are the shapers of history. Charles Tilly and others have demonstrated the often-pivotal role of popular protest and collective action among those that were on the receiving end of state building and capitalist development (Tilly, Castañeda and Wood 2020). But “migrants” are a very different kind of collective agent: non-organized, not intentionally or consciously political. Therefore, when we say that migration causes this or that – for instance the

development of citizenship – we are referring to an indirect kind of agency. Normally, it is not even recognized as a form of agency. Most accounts of migration politics focus on the sayings and doings of politicians, and see migratory movements as an externality in relation to the political process.

But some authors claim that such accounts fail to capture the full impact of migration. They argue that the movement of migrants tend to precede authorities' regulatory efforts, and also often defy them. William Walters therefore compares migration control to antivirus software – always reactive, always one step behind (Walters 2006, cf. Mezzadra 2004). Néstor Rodríguez has written the following on contemporary irregular migration (which he refers to as “autonomous migration”): “Viewing autonomous migration as a source of human agency contradicts the perception of undocumented migrants as a docile, job-happy, helpless population. Instead, from the perspective of human agency, undocumented migrants take on the role of historical actors restructuring sociospatial contours across global regions” (1996: 27).

When we look at the subject from this perspective, the emigration from Sweden to Denmark (along with other similar movements in the era) appears potentially quite consequential despite its somewhat dull first impression. We will now turn directly to it.

## II Swedish emigration to Denmark

### General context

In the nineteenth century there was a steep population increase across Europe. In Sweden, the population grew from 2,3 million to around 5 million between 1800 and 1900 (Sundbärg 1910a: 78–79). The population increase was most notable in rural areas, and particularly among the non-landowning classes, that were now diversified into many different categories (*torpare*, *backstugusittare*, *inhysesjon*, *statare*). There was not work for all of them, and many fell into abject poverty. Social declassification ensued, and starvation was commonplace, even before the failed harvests and starvation of 1867–69 (Stråth 2012: 251; Rehnberg 1953: 148).

Populations became increasingly mobile, and not only for technological reasons such as the expansion of railway and steamship traffic. In the latter half of the century, passports controls were dropped and movements were essentially set free (although, as always, there were exceptions). In 1860, Sweden decided to permit emigration, to stop controlling immigration, and to cease requiring passports for domestic travel (De Geer 1906: 206–207). This was representative for most countries in Europe (except Russia),

and the relative freedom of movement lasted well into the 20th century, until the First World War put an emphatic end to it.

Poverty and unemployment were important *push* factors, and the openness policies were *enabling*. But had there not been any *pull* forces in the countries of destination, emigration would probably have been very limited. But there were many such migrant-attracting factors present, mainly employment and/or the chance to own land. Between 1830 and 1910, nearly 1,2 million people emigrated from Sweden. The overwhelming majority – almost 950.000 people – headed for North America. Denmark was the number two destination (around 83.000), followed by Norway (66.000) and Germany (27.000) (Sundbärg 1910b: 55).<sup>2</sup>

## Working in Denmark

The number of emigrants from Sweden to Denmark is particularly hard to appraise, and the above number (83.000) is most likely a gross understatement. Official numbers only cover those that had requested a certificate for moving (*flyttintyg*) from their parish, and had their names removed from the parish register. But for Denmark, all that was needed was a work certificate (*arbetsintyg*) from the priest, and many chose this simpler option. Much of this movement was seasonal, and migrants who did not plan to permanently change domicile did not register their move. Also, many went back and forth a number of times, and then re-used their work certificates instead of requesting new ones (Rehnberg 1953: 153).

Swedish immigration to Denmark took off in the 1840s, peaked in the 1870s and 1880s, and ebbed out at the turn of the century, when domestic industrialization and agricultural developments provided employment for many (Willerslev 1983: 22). Denmark had also suffered the consequences of the European-wide population boom, but poverty was never as intense as in Sweden – partly because of the larger share of land-owning farmers (ibid: 35). Denmark was in several ways ahead of Sweden at the time. The per capita national income was about the double. Agriculture was modernizing and industrialization had begun – and with it came largescale infrastructural project, such as railways and the expansion of ports (ibid: 45). The fortification of Copenhagen and the construction of houses and entire towns also required manpower in brickyards and construction sites. Swedish men worked in all these places, as well as in agriculture. The women, for their part, worked as milkmaids

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<sup>2</sup> These numbers are probably greatly underestimating the real flows (Sundbärg 1910b: 54).

and in the sugar beet fields of Lolland-Falster, but also as servants and in the textile industries in the towns (ibid: 96–121; Bloch and Bro 2000: 20–21).<sup>3</sup>

The Swedish emigrants were almost exclusively from the impoverished southern parts of the country, from rural areas in the counties of Malmöhus, Kristianstad, Halland, Göteborg/Bohus, Blekinge, Kronoberg and Jönköping. They were present across Denmark, but most densely in Själland, Bornholm, and Lolland-Falster (Sundbärg 1910b: 74).<sup>4</sup> The majority were 18–40 years of age and unmarried (Zip Sane 2000: 46). Men dominated, although official statistics had it that women were more numerous. The reason for this is probably that seasonal workers were not included (as stated above), and that women were more conscientious when it came to request moving certificates (Willerslev 1983: 60; Sundbärg 1910b).

Swedish emigration was dominated by unskilled laborers, and their social belonging was with the underclass in Denmark (Bloch and Bro 2000: 25; Zip Sane 2000: 46). Many took to Denmark because they could not afford the ticket to go to USA. They could raise their income quite considerably by moving, which sometimes enabled them to travel to America, or at least Germany, at a later stage. For example, wages in Copenhagen exceeded southern Swedish wages by 33%–100% (Bloch and Bro 2000: 20). In rural labor, an agricultural worker in Kronoberg county earned 1,19–1,24 Swedish kronor per day, but could get 2,50–3 kronor per day in a Danish brickyard or large farm. Food was often included, and it was generally of better quality than in Sweden (Willerslev 1983: 46). The wage rise was perhaps even more noticeable for women. In Sweden, women rural workers only made about 1/3 of men's wages, while in Denmark it reached 70% (ibid: 39). A household maid could earn 8–14

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<sup>3</sup> Denmark did not only receive migrants from Sweden, but also from (especially) Poland and Germany. The share of immigrants of the Danish population was 3,1–3,4 % 1881–1921. Not so much, perhaps, but much more than Sweden where immigrants were much below 1 % (Hammar 1964: 17). Denmark was also a sender of emigrants: more than 280,000 emigrated 1868–1914, mainly to the USA (Zip Sane 2000: 140–157). Most of these emigrants were from the Danish regions to which Swedes tended to immigrate. Therefore, Richard Willerslev (1983) has argued that Swedish immigration to a large extent replaced Danish emigrant labor.

<sup>4</sup> Quite similarly, the Swedes that took to Norway also came from neighboring counties (Dal, Värmland, Älfsborg, Göteborg/Bohus, and to some extent Norrbotten). These counties were among the poorest and most miserable in Sweden, while the Norwegian counties they bordered were in Norwegian comparison among the most prosperous. This visible difference precipitated migration: “Det visar sig otvifelaktigt för många en bättre, en mer kultiverad värld, så fort en svensk från dessa trakter kommer ett stycke inom norska gränsen ... I Norge har man vackra gårdar, präktiga skolhus – det sticker af mot det torftiga I Värmlands och Dals skogsbygder utmed gränsen. *Detta förhållande* torde ... hafva danat den psykologiska grunden till det ganska allmänna, för många svenskar och de flesta norrmän gemensamma omdömet, att Sverige i jämförelse med Norge är ett uselt, fattigt och efterblifvet land” (Sundbärg 1910b: 64, *translation will follow*).

kronor per month, while a textile factory job paid 7–12 kronor per week, and the sugar fields paid around 100 kronor for 6 months (Adelborg 1890b: 41–44).

The contact between worker and employer was established in different ways. Sometimes, the worker arrived spontaneously, sometimes the employer himself went to Sweden in order to recruit workers directly. But many employment contracts were transmitted by middlemen, employment agents (Danish: *fæstemænd*).<sup>5</sup> This was a profitable business, so more and more actors became involved. In 1880s Gothenburg, there were five agent offices, and only one of them in 1882 secured 500–600 workers, most of whom were women. Unscrupulous behavior was not uncommon among the agents. They often recruited children under 18, although such labor was outlawed in Denmark. Quite a few were criminals and brothel hosts, whose recruits often did not know what awaited them (Adelborg 1890a: 8–9; Willerslev 1983: 72–74). In 1884, the Swedish authorities decided that only Swedish agents could operate on Swedish territory, and they needed formal authorization. Danish employers often bypassed this regulation by letting their seasonal workers recruit new workers for the coming season upon return. They usually earned 5 kronor for each recruited worker. This seems to have been most prevalent in women’s agricultural labor, where such non-authorized “agents” were referred to as *fæstepiger* (Adelborg 1890a: 6).

The labor that the Swedes carried out was often tough and demanding, and the conditions quite harsh. Women sugar beet workers worked from 5.30 am to 7 pm. They used a short-shafted hoe which meant they had to work in a bended position, causing various back problems (see below). They worked in burning sun and pouring rain, and since there were as a rule no fireplaces where they lived, they often had to sleep in wet clothes, with obvious health consequences (Adelborg 1890b; Willerslev 1983: 118–120). For men, the most demanding job seems to have been the brick yards, which contemporaries often described as “slave-like”. Part of the wages was retained by the employer to ensure that the worker did not leave before the end of the contract. The workers were also required to spend their earnings in the brick yard store (Willerslev 1983: 116–117).

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<sup>5</sup> This is an example of an advertisement marketing middleman services to German employers: ”Svenskt tjänstfolk utbjudes av undertecknad till ärade tyska herrskaper, nämligen stora drängar till 37 ½ rthr preussiskt courant för år, halvdrängar till 30 d:o, gossar till 15 à 20 d:o, stora pigor till 22 ½ d:o, halvpigor till 15 à 18 d:o. Passagerare-avgiften är för vardera av ovannämnda personer 11 ½ rthr pr. crt. De kvinnor, som i havande tillstånd hitkomma från Sverige, återsändas på min bekostnad och erhålles en annan piga i stället. Varje uppdrag utföres prompt och anskaffas endast dugligt och brukbart folk. — Morihof vid Liibeck. H. VOSS, Boskaps handlare.” (Hyltén-Cavalliusföreningens årsbok 1937: 21, quoted in Rehnberg 1953: 154–155, *translation will follow*).



Sugar beet girls (*roepiger*) in Funen (*Fyn*), 1913. The foreman is supervising the all-female workforce. The laborers in the picture are Polish, as there are no remaining photos of Swedish *roepiger* (according to Willerslev 1983).

The Swedish immigrants provided a very flexible and cheap pool of labor for Danish employers. They could be temporarily recruited in economic upswings, and then easily be laid off. Employers also used them as strike breakers, thus staving off protests of the nascent labor movement. This inflow of labor also kept wages from rising. These laborers were not a heavy burden for society's economic resources, since (especially after 1875) they were directly deported when they required poor relief or hospital care (Willerslev 1983: 67, 185–188). (We will get back to these deportations below).

## Swedish critique

The emigration to Denmark was criticized by Swedish media, politicians, official authorities, and civil society. The major public inquiry into emigration (*Emigrationsutredningen*) summarized the opinions on the Danish emigration as “unanimously unfavorable” (Sundbärg 1910b: 78). There were many reasons for this negative assessment. One was that the Swedish workers had been treated reprehensibly, both by *fæstemænd* and employers. Working conditions were detrimental to both body and soul, and the male workers were exposed to assaults, bad food, illnesses, cheap schnapps, and sexual temptations (ibid: 85). When they returned, they were way to careless with money and spent their earnings quickly instead of saving (ibid).

There was a great concern with how women's morale was affected by emigration. The Swedish bourgeois women's association *Fredrika Bremer-Förbundet* therefore assigned Gertrud Adelborg with the task of investigating the matter. The reports of her travels in the south of Sweden are important sources of information, but also quite telling in the attitude towards these women (Adelborg 1890a, 1890b). Adelborg was appalled by what she heard and saw. Innocent girls were lured into immoral ways of life. Some of them ended up in prostitution, many more were drawn into worldly pleasures and brief sexual encounters in their far-away workplaces. If they only went for one season, Adelborg found, there is usually no harm done, and they returned almost as decent as when they left. The danger came with repeated seasonal migration. Employers were not sufficiently careful to separate men and women. The worst that could happen, and that very often did happen, was to "marry Polish" and become pregnant with an illegitimate child (see table below). But aside from this major disaster were many other fatal consequences, reported Adelborg. (Here, it seems possible that what she describes could – from a different perspective – be considered signs of felt freedom and autonomy): The women could become sick with what the Danes called *pyntesygen* (decoration disease) and upon return behave vainly and insist on dressing in ways not consistent with their place in society. They would use necklaces and bracelets, and wear clothes made from thin factory-made textiles instead of homespun wool. In Denmark, they got tired of only working, and begin to long for various pleasures, that they still requested when they returned to Sweden. Upon return, they often had a hard time becoming accepted as their manners have changed. Many were loud, swearing and drinking schnapps with men. Even those that were not fully that depraved did no longer fit into their home community. Their higher demands and pretensions, and their many new ideas, made them "unusable" (1890b: 45). To counteract the negative moral impact, a "bible woman" called Margareta Johnson was recruited by Crown Princess Louise to do missionary work among Swedish emigrant women in Copenhagen from 1886 onwards (Rehnberg 1953: 86–87).



\*) Nedanstående tabell visar:

- 1) antalet åren 1884—1888 inom församlingen födda barn;
- 2) under samma tid födda oäkta barn;
- 3) huru många af dessa senare kunna anses härstamma från Danmark;

		Antal åren 1884—1888 födda barn	Deraf oäkta	Af de oäkta an- ses här- stamma från Dan- mark	Eller i % af samtli- ga oäkta
Småland . . . . .	Wirestad	660	36	17	48 %
	Nöbbeled	317	15	4	27 %
	Ö. Thorsås	223	9	2	22 %
	Linneryd	545	28	4	14 %
	Södra Sandsjö	504	39	9	23 %
	Tingsås	485	29	10	34 %
Blekinge . . . . .	Markaryd	526	26	3	12 %
	Eringsboda	532	64	0	0 %
	Öljehult	303	21	3	14 %
	Karlshamn	887	92	3	3 %
Skåne . . . . .	Ronneby	1611	164	10	6 %
	Hjersås	202	21	0	0 %
	Knisslinge	125	8	0	0 %

\*\*\*) Se svensk Författningssamling N:o 35 för år 1888.

This table was based on the information collected by Gertrud Adelborg. It shows (1) how many children that were born 1884–1888 in named parishes in southern Sweden, (2) how many of these that were illegitimate, (3) how many of the illegitimates that probably were of Danish descent, and (4) the percentage of the suspected Danish-descendants of all illegitimates (*source*: Adelborg 1890b: 48).

An interesting source of information is the county governors' reports (*Kungl. Maj:ts Befällningshafvandes femårsberättelser*) that were delivered every five years to the national government. They were an important source for the collection of statistics, through which the Swedish state increased its "information capacity" (Brambor et al 2020). Of particular relevance to the current topic are the reports on "population", which describes population characteristics (including migration) both quantitatively and qualitatively. For instance, in county Kronoberg's report for 1871–1875, the parish priest Kronblad of Linneryd is quoted:

Det jemförelsevisstora antalet oäkta barn har sin grund ... dels och synnerligast I de årliga allt talrikare utvandringarna till Danmark och Tyskland, hvilka en stor del af ortens ogifta, arbetssökande qvinnor företaga. Dessa utvandringar utöfva ett ytterst skadligt inflytande på ortens lösare kvinnliga befolkning i allmänhet. Vanligen återvända dessa qvinnor i hafvande tillstånd och äro ofta förderfvade både till kropp och själ. Dessa kvinnliga vikingatåg hota sålunda att blifva en allt rikare flödande källa till spridande af sedligt förderf och till tunga för fattigvårdssamhället (p. 8–9, *translation will come*).

The final sentence in the above quote takes us to the last point of critique to be recounted here. The Swedish authorities were very upset that the end result of Swedish emigration would be increased costs for poor relief. This was linked to the Danish deportation practices that from 1875 permitted the police to deport any foreigner that requested poor relief or that came in need of hospital care (more on the 1875 law below). The worries of Swedish authorities were in part humanitarian, since there were many cases where Swedish citizens were deported although they had spent decades in Denmark, and all their family was there. But the worries were also economic in character: Denmark, it was argued, profited from the labor power provided by people in their best age, and then threw them out when they became old and sick, at which point local Swedish poor relief authorities had to pay the bill.

### III Regulations

We saw above (section on “Modern citizenship: structure of the book”) that the process towards external exclusiveness was one of two crucial dimensions of modern citizenship, and had to do with the need to separate citizens from foreigners. Frank Caestecker explains that this was not a major concern in the 18th century and beginning of the 19th, when the state was quite indifferent towards citizens and foreigners alike. There was not much effort in keeping the two apart when the state did not have much obligations to either of them, but mainly turned to them for extraction (taxes, labor, military service). But when the state took on increasing responsibilities for the welfare of their populations, the need to tell belongers from non-belongers became pressing (Caestecker 2003: 131–132).

I want to add a specification to Caestecker’s account: It was not just the state’s increased welfare obligations that made the need to separate citizens from foreigners paramount. The mobility of people (in combination with this) was what really made this need pressing. In particular, the movement of poor people, who threatened (or were perceived to threaten) to burden publicly financed welfare, was what incentivized the move towards external exclusiveness (cf. Brubaker 1992).

The process of external exclusiveness, as precipitated by the mobility of the poor, seems to have contained three different elements (at least). The first is that, as part of this process, authorities developed new ways of identifying foreigners, and to rid the territory from them if needed. Secondly, it was also crucial to find (legal) ways of clearly separating citizenship from residence, and to make the latter dependent on the former rather than the other way around as previously. Lastly, it also became imperative to specify criteria for citizenship acquisition, at birth and through naturalization later in life. It is telling that many countries across Europe codified rules for citizenship in this same period. We will now see how this occurred in the context of Swedish immigration to Denmark. The first element was established in the law of 1875 and the common

declaration (*fællesdeklaration*) of 1888, the second and third in the nationality legislation that the two countries developed together with Norway.

## Fremmedloven (Foreigner act) of 1875

Denmark established freedom of movement in 1862, after which foreign subjects as a rule could enter and move about in the country freely.<sup>6</sup> The great number of migrants that arrived from the mid-nineteenth century onwards (Swedes, but also Poles and Germans), however, made authorities re-consider the general openness. The attorney-general argued that it was important to ensure that foreigners did not get unlimited access to poor relief. Other motives were to secure public order, and to prevent the inflow of foreign “scum” (Willerslev 1983: 151–152). These motives should be understood as part and parcel of the then ongoing efforts to criminalize vagrancy and begging – by citizens as well as foreigners (Vedsted-Hansen 1987: 192).

The result was the “Foreigner Act” of 1875 (*Lov om Tilsynet med Fremmede og Reisende m.m.*). This was Denmark’s first Alien’s Act, but it was just as much about relief and public order, Jens Vedsted-Hansen has argued. According to him, alien legislation and poor relief legislation historically must be understood together, since the two areas were connected through regulation. Moreover, “the poverty relief problem can contribute to explaining the content and development of alien legislation proper” (Vedsted-Hansen 1987: 187, *my translation*).

The Foreigner Act increased police power to control movements. Foreigners that did not have funds to support themselves, nor a secured employment, were to be turned down at the border. So were all foreign vagrants, musicians, magicians, and people showing animals (§ 1). All foreigners (with some exceptions) were required to carry an *opholdsbog*, which they were required to show to the police for signature, in all the localities they passed through. For each five-year period between 1875 and 1900, between 3,300 and 5,900 Swedes were equipped with *opholdsbog* (Sundbärg 1910b: 77). Foreigners could be deported for longer-term unemployment (8 weeks), vagrancy and begging, and lack of resources to support themselves (Willerslev 1983: 152–153). But one category of foreigners was protected from such deportation, namely those that had obtained entitlement to support (*forsørgelsesret*). This was regulated in poverty legislation: until 1892, the entitlement to support was attained after five years’

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<sup>6</sup> The exception were foreign journeymen who were controlled at the border and who could be deported if they were unemployed for more than four days. They were therefore required to carry a wanderer’s book (*vandrerbog*), which was controlled and signed by the police in the towns where they arrived (Willerslev 1983: 150).

continuous residence in a certain municipality. The conditions were the same for Danish citizens as for foreigners in this respect (although Danish citizens could not be deported from the country) (Vedsted-Hansen 1987: 192–193). Hence, a destitute Swedish citizen could only be sent home if she had not obtained entitlement to support in a specific Danish locality. This seems, however, to have been the most common situation.

Poor relief authorities reported to the police when they encountered a foreigner without entitlement to support, and it was then the police that carried out the deportation. Concerning the poor relief authorities' actions in this area, Willerslev has written that "humane considerations restricted their behavior to a very limited extent" (1983: 153, *my translation*). For example, A man who arrived in Denmark at the age of five was deported with his family thirty years later. Poor relief authorities also requested that the police deport a widow of 84 years, who had been in need of medicines and hospital care. A recurrent accusation was that Swedish women intentionally became pregnant in Denmark, only for the purpose of obtaining poor relief (*ibid*: 153–154).

## Common declaration (Fællesdeklarationen) 1888

Swedish authorities became increasingly upset about Denmark's deportation practices. They were particularly discontent about the deportation of people who for some reason (age, illness, childbirth etc.) were no longer able to work, who would then burden Swedish local poor relief. Moreover, the Danish police would not notify Swedish authorities in advance, instead the destitute people would turn up without warning in Swedish ports (mostly in Malmö, neighboring city to Copenhagen). In 1881/90 around 4000 Swedes were deported from Denmark (Willerslev 1983). Malmöhus county provided them with a sum of money so that they could continue traveling to their home localities, which the localities later had to refund (Sundbärg 1910b: 79).

The deportations caused many conflicts between Swedish and Danish authorities. In 1888 they reached an agreement on how to treat each other's citizens who required poor relief (*Deklarationer udvekslede med Sverige om Behandlingen af Undersaatter fra det ene Rige, der paa det andet Riges Omraade falde Fattigvæsenet til Byrde* 1888). The declaration established that the countries would treat each other's poor relief claimants as their own until deportation, and that deportations were always to be preceded by a request to the home municipalities (§ 1–3), who for their part were required to agree to receive the person. The most significant provision was the twelve-year rule, which said that the home locality was not required to receive an emigrant who after the age of 21 had spent more than twelve years in the other country (§ 5). The implication was that the previous regulation on entitlement to support, and hence to protection against deportation, after five years was abolished.

Controversies between the two countries continued nevertheless. A main issue of contention was how to interpret the twelve-year rule. Poor relief authorities in Denmark wanted to rid the country of destitute Swedes who had previously been protected from deportation by the entitlement to support that set in after five years of residence. They thereby disregarded § 7: that the provisions of the Common declaration were not to be applied in retrospect. Another conflict concerned a specific case. Denmark deported two shoemakers because they lacked means of provision, although at least one of them did have a steady employment. This caused a diplomatic crisis, and the Swedish Second Chamber of Parliament requested that the Swedish legation in Copenhagen be closed down. At the end of a series of complications and negotiations, the Danes agreed to not deport Swedes that before the 1888 declaration had acquired entitlement to support in Denmark (Willerslev 1983: 160–163). The diplomatic crisis was resolved, but conflicts nevertheless continued.

## Cooperation on nationality law

Swedish authorities were also upset about another aspect of Danish deportation practices, which resulted from Danish nationality laws. If a Swedish emigrant woman married a Danish citizen, she did not automatically acquire his nationality. Therefore, in case of divorce or death of the husband, if the woman later turned to the poor relief authorities she and her children would be deported (Willerslev 1983: 164).

It became clear that the lack of coordination between nationality laws was a problem, given the existing laws on poor relief and repatriation, that in turn had been put in place as a reaction to the increased cross-border movements of the poor. The two countries began to cooperate on the matter, and a provisional draft was produced (*Forelobig udkast til en saa vidt muligt ensartet Lovgivning for Danmark og Sverige angaaende Erhvervelse of Fortabelse af Statsborgerret*, 1888). Norway was invited to participate in the common endeavor, and a commission with representatives from the three countries was appointed (Ersbøll 2015: 8). The members were, from Sweden: circuit judge (häradshövding) P. Isberg – who replaced justice of the supreme court (justitieråd) C. G. Hammarskjöld, –from Norway: professor B. H. von Munthe af Morgenstjerne and legation councilor (legationsråd) A. Huitfeldt, from Denmark: expeditionsskreterare J. H. Ahnfeldt and professor J. H. Deuntzer<sup>7</sup> (Thyselius 1896: 513). The commission presented their draft in 1890: Draft Law on Acquisition and Loss of Citizenship (Danish: *Lov om Erhvervelse og Tab af Statsborgerret*).

In Norway, it did not lead to further legal consequences since their nationality law had been reformed in 1888. But in Sweden and Denmark it resulted in new legislation,

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<sup>7</sup> Deuntzer was later prime minister of Denmark (1901–1905).

in 1894 and 1898, respectively. (The three countries continued cooperating on nationality legislation throughout the 20th century (Ersbøll 2015, 2006; Midtbøen et al 2018). In Sweden, it was approved without any debate in the two chambers of parliament. It did not change in any major way already existing practices, but for the first time laid down important principles in law. Most important was the *ius sanguinis* (lineage) principle (Lokrantz Bernitz 2013: 2–3). In Denmark, it was more consequential and “novel”. In the motives of the draft law, it was pointed out that Denmark thus far used the territorial rather than the lineage principle for assigning nationality. This distinguished Denmark from other European states, and this complicated all countries’ overriding goal of ensuring that each individual only had *one* nationality (*Lag om förvärvande...* : 18). Another common practice, which Denmark did not share, was that a foreign woman automatically gets naturalized upon marriage with a citizen (ibid: 21). In these respects, Danish nationality law was adapted to Nordic (and wider European) practices in 1898. From then on, *ius sanguinis* was the guiding principle. For children born in wedlock, the father’s nationality was decisive, while for those born outside of wedlock, it was the mother’s. Women would upon marriage automatically get their husbands’ nationality. Those who acquired another citizenship would lose the former. But Danish (as well as Norwegian and Swedish) citizens who had lost their nationality would be able to re-acquire it if their renounced the current one and took up residence for a specified number of years (Ersbøll 2006: 113–114).

## IV Concluding thoughts and plans for developing the study

This paper has introduced the topic of Swedish emigration to Denmark in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and its ensuing regulations. My ambition has been to show how the inflow of poor migrants was linked to the development of citizenship legislation, through various regulations that aimed at restrict foreigner’s access to poor relief. (The same seems to have been true of pensions and medical attention, although I have not written much about that in this version of the text). This way, the movement of the poor is related to the process of external exclusion, which is a core dimension of modern citizenship. More specifically, there are three elements to this process: developing new ways of identifying foreigners, in order to be able to rid the territory from them if needed; clearly separating citizenship from residence, and make the latter dependent on the former rather than the other way around as formerly; and specify criteria for citizenship acquisition, at birth and through naturalization later in life. The above analysis of the Swedish-Danish case has been quite clear on the first and last aspect but a little less on the middle one. In the book project, I intend to look more closely into all these aspects. An important task will be to clarify the precise meaning

of, and consequences of, Denmark's two categories of nationals: *infødsret* and *statsborgerskab* before and after the citizenship law reform in 1898.

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