

inefficiencies she sees in Britain's increasing reliance on restrictive asylum policy and urges a reversal, arguing that the only way to ensure that refugees are really protected would be if there were no immigration control. She concludes: "It is time for the idea of international migration to be rescued, and enshrined in international declarations as a normal and natural human right" (p. 151).

One important issue she refuses to discuss is the distinction between refugees and immigrants. "I do not accept the moral distinction between political refugees and those who cross frontiers in search of work" she states flatly on the book's opening page without explanation or elaboration. Yet this is precisely the crux of the controversy in Europe, with governments arguing that while they want to continue granting asylum to refugees, the vast majority of those seeking asylum today are not refugees but are immigrants who abuse the asylum process with illegitimate claims. This charge is vehemently denied by those, like Hayter, who believe Europe is becoming a fortress and turning its back on people who deserve protection. Her position of not wanting to draw distinctions between refugees and immigrants is certainly a tenable one, but one I would have liked to see fleshed out because it is so central to the controversy.

This is a well-researched (if not well-documented) book written by a passionate activist for primarily a non-academic audience that misses (or chooses to ignore) much of the complexity that makes asylum in Europe such an interesting and vexing issue. While racism certainly informs the debate over asylum, it strikes me as unfair to tar all those who argue for tighter asylum policies as racists; the many Social Democrats in Germany who supported tightening asylum in 1993 went through great pains to challenge this uncharitable view. In my own research, I found that supporters of tighter asylum policies often argue that such policies

would effectively fight asylum abuse, combat racism, and carry out the will of citizens. Opponents of tighter asylum tended to argue the reverse: tighter asylum policies were ineffective ways to fight abuse and merely pandered to racist pressures from citizens and thus violated democratic principles. These contradictory arguments raise nagging questions: Can tighter asylum policies effectively fight abuse or does the problem lie elsewhere? Do tighter asylum policies reassure citizens and reduce their reliance on cater to the existing racism and justify it? Should policymakers follow the will of the people or to lead it? These difficult questions can pull well-intentioned asylum policies in opposite directions.

If you are familiar with the issue of asylum in Europe (especially in Britain) in the 1990s, you will find this book somewhat predictable and repetitive. If you are new to the field, this is a good beginning, for getting a one-sided taste of the hard-hitting, emotional, and at times oversimplified nature of the debate between those arguing for and against tighter asylum policies.

Alien Policy in Belgium, 1840-1940: The Creation of Guest Workers, Refugees and the Legal Alien. By Frank Caestecker. New York: Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000. Pp. 130.

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History of immigration remains a relatively underdeveloped field of research in Belgium. When Anne Morelli published her *Histoire des étrangers et de l'immigration en Belgique de la préhistoire à nos jours* back in 1993 (Bruxelles, Editions Vie Ouvrière), it was the first relevant piece of collective history work to be published in the country. Frank Caestecker was already present in the collection of articles with a piece on refugees before World War II. This is to say that the

author is not only a pioneer but also one of the leading figures of history of migration in Belgium.

The reading of the present book leads to the conclusion that Caestecker's reputation is well deserved. In this abridged version of his Ph.D. thesis written at the European University Institute of Florence (Italy), Caestecker examines carefully the changes in what he calls aliens policy over a century, between 1840 and 1940. As a good historian, he implicitly claims that it is impossible to understand the current immigration policy in Belgium without traveling back to its genesis about 10 years after the birth of the young Belgian state. Based on empirical work in virtually all the archives having some information regarding immigration policy in the period under scrutiny, Caestecker provides an accurate and detailed study of the changes in immigration and asylum policies over a century. His care for an exhaustive and detailed account is certainly a positive point but it can at the same time be a weakness. As a matter of fact, the reader easily gets lost in the quantity of information and details that form an important part of the book.

The nine chapters follow a precise chronological order. In the first two chapters, Caestecker outlines the alien policy in nineteenth century Belgium. Chapters 3 to 5 deal mainly with the 1920s. During that period, immigration was crucial for industrial development but immigration policy remained almost completely unchanged even though it was severely challenged by different interest groups. Chapter 6 studies the period between 1929 and 1932 in which a gradual move towards a more restrictive immigration is observed. The last three chapters cover the period between 1932 and 1940. Each chapter is introduced by an overview of the major political and socio-economic features of the period and concluded by a summary of the main results. Through-

out the book, the author also makes a link between immigration policy and policies towards Belgian migrants abroad.

The result is highly impressive in terms of the quantity and the quality of the information processed and also in terms of the accuracy of the writing. From a social scientist's point of view, however, some qualifications are to be made. First, this reconstruction *a posteriori* gives perhaps more consistency to alien policy in Belgium than it actually had in the period studied. But the same observation could be made about today's immigration policy. When Caestecker writes about 1990-2010 immigration policy, he will probably find lines of consistency that for social scientists do not appear today. Second, it still needs to be proven that it is crucial to go back so far in history in order to understand current changes in immigration policy. One could claim that the process of European integration that started in 1956, the process of decolonization, and the changes in global politics after 1989 are at least as important as what happened between 1840 and 1940 to understand the development of Belgium's immigration policy. Third, is it not problematic to use today's social science concepts to write about the past? Caestecker reads sociology and political science and he never questions the use he makes of concepts forged to analyze the current situation that are projected onto the past. Is there not a risk of providing a somewhat biased image of yesterday?

Despite these qualifications, the book really fills a gap in the literature on immigration in Belgium. It should be read as a perfect illustration of the insight of history in understanding immigration policy.

Military Migration and State Formation: The British Military Community in Seventeenth-Century Sweden. By Mary Elizabeth Ailes. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. Pp. 192. \$50.00.

