that contrary to conventional assumptions, 'state-centred' need not equate with 'formal', nor 'community' with 'informal'. Other factors, such as funding, influence, and sources of authority and legitimation, intervene. In summary, Findlay and Zvekic take a whole book to get as far as generating lists of assumptions and hypotheses which we should now seek to test. Producing such lists may be regarded as a small achievement, but small achievements are valuable none the less.

Taking the two UNSDRI books together, what is most apparent is that enormous labours achieved small results. Maybe this is the inevitable consequence of taking a global perspective. It is to be hoped that UNSDRI is able to use these small advances in order to show us some bigger ones in the future.

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THE SNOW-WHITE IMAGE: THE HIDDEN REALITY OF CRIME IN SWITZERLAND. By FLEMMING BALVIG, trans. KAREN LEANDER. Scandinavian Studies in Criminology, ix. (Oslo: Norwegian University Press–The Scandinavian Research Council for Criminology, 1988. 123 pp. £17.50.)

This book gives an account of what the author, a lecturer of criminology at the University of Copenhagen, learned about crime and crime control in Switzerland during his four-week stay at the University of Zurich early in 1986. This experience led him to conclude that just about everything that is commonly said about Switzerland's crime situation is wrong. Thus, his book is written as a kind of 'Anti-Clinard',[1] and it seeks to destroy Switzerland's 'snow-white image' by showing the totalitarian and racist character of that country.

According to Balvig, Switzerland does not have less crime than Denmark, Germany, or any other European country. It is the Swiss way of dealing with crime which differs. Eager to draw public attention away from anything that might challenge Switzerland's image of a problem-free society, the Swiss are, in Balvig's eyes, constantly hiding crime and other undesirable aspects of social life. Such efforts start at the police level; whenever possible, in order to keep the crime statistics low, crimes reported by citizens are not recorded. The same tendency, according to Balvig, explains the absence of statistical data on juvenile delinquency and other problematic topics. Even worse, the police exercise a kind of censorship over the media as far as crime-related news is concerned, by preventing news that is too 'bad' from finding its way into the press. And the almighty media editors are eager to play crime down wherever possible, or to attribute it to foreigners who are easy scapegoats. This climate is backed by a section in the Penal Code which, according to Balvig's translation (p. 114), makes it a crime to deliberately damage Switzerland's image in the world. Given the totalitarian character of what Balvig perceives as the Swiss way of dealing with crime, he must have been surprised that sentences are not harsh (as in South Africa), but moderate and reasonable (as in Denmark). Even this can, according to Balvig, be explained by the concern of the Swiss to keep their country's snow-white image intact: harsh sentences might contribute to a dramatization of evil, and thus challenge Switzerland's image as a crime-free society. Balvig does see this Swiss policy of ignoring crime wherever possible as having some positive side-effects, such as a rather low level of fear of crime in the cities (p. 118).

[1] The reference is to Marshall B. Clinard, *Cities with Little Crime: The Case of Switzerland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

Although Balvig's theoretical perspective may be appealing, there are certain serious inconsistencies which he does not comment on at all. For example, why do the Swiss care so much about the drug problem? Why does this problem get so much media coverage, and why is the Swiss criminal justice system so punitive in this domain? Why did the Swiss dramatize youth unrest so much during the riots of 1980 and 1981? Do these problems and events not challenge Switzerland's snow-white image much more than a few crime stories in the press? Readers will certainly discover these inconsistencies, and may consider them in assessing the value of Balvig's theoretical propositions.

Readers may be less aware, however, of the many serious distortions and misunderstandings in the presentation of facts and materials throughout the book; and if they should wish to check the original materials, they may have some difficulties in locating them since so many references are inaccurate, incomplete, or missing in the bibliography. Of course, comparative research in criminology is difficult and time-consuming, thus not a field designed for quick and easy studies. The most difficult task may be to overcome language barriers, either by learning foreign languages or by relying on hired staff and/or the views of local experts. Clinard choose the second way, and he was been severely criticized for doing so by Balvig and other scholars.[2] Balvig was thus not eager to listen to whatever Swiss experts might have been able to tell him, but unfortunately he did not care about learning Switzerland's languages either. The result is a series of misinterpretations, e.g. the one which appears on p. 114, where the reader is told that it is a crime under the Swiss Penal Code to do harm to the reputation of Switzerland. Probably Balvig refers here to section 275 of the Penal Code which criminalizes propaganda campaigns on behalf of a foreign government (read: Hitler) or a foreign political party (read: NSDAP) aimed at overthrowing Switzerland's government or at jeopardizing its independence. This section came into law during the 1930s, when the Swiss experienced such campaigns in favour of the *Anschluss*, as did the Austrians at that time . . . According to Balvig this section of the Penal Code 'probably says more than anything else about how important the Swiss self-image is to the Swiss, and about how far they are willing to go to keep it intact' (p. 114). The account he gives of that section probably says more than anything else about how seriously linguistic difficulties and ideological premisses may have distorted the presentation of facts throughout the book. Since it is impossible to point to all the inaccuracies in a review, the reader may be warned that the sections on statistics, on self-report studies, on immigration policy and the status of foreigners, on white-collar crime, and on the role played by the media are seriously flawed. Scholars who wish to educate themselves on Switzerland should not take them as a reliable source.

Balvig may probably be right in claiming that Switzerland has experienced substantial increases in crime rates over the last fifteen years. He may also be right that Switzerland's crime rate is comparable to that of Denmark, although the evidence presented is not entirely satisfactory (see below). Neither conclusion will convince the reader that the analysis conducted by Clinard in 1973 was flawed, as Balvig claims throughout the book; nor can Clinard be blamed for the increase in crime rates since 1973 (which by the way was largely a by-product of a serious drug problem that emerged during those years, and which is well documented by Balvig). Of course, one may criticize Clinard for having compared Switzerland to Sweden rather than to Denmark, but that may not be a very serious problem to scholars outside these two countries. Besides, Balvig's conclusions may probably not worry the Swiss too much either.

    [2] See for example John Baldwin's review of *Cities with Little Crime* published in the *British Journal of Criminology* 19/3 (1979), 301–2; and others quoted by Balvig (p. 107).

In fact, the snow-white image of Switzerland is not very popular among the Swiss, anyway. Unlike the United States or Canada, patriotic rhetoric is not very common in Switzerland, and the Swiss media often compare social conditions unfavourably with those of foreign countries (particularly Scandinavia). Many Swiss readers of Clinard's book felt, for example, that it gives too positive a picture of social conditions in general and crime in particular.[3] In claiming that Clinard had been a victim of what he calls the Swiss credo (p. 106), Balvig definitely is the victim of confusion between the image the Swiss have of their country and the view tourists want to have during their trips—a desire which is perfectly taken into account by the pamphlets of tourist agencies, tourist guides, and similar material. Perhaps Balvig's most serious shortcoming is to have taken the latter as an expression of the former. It certainly is significant that all that he has to say on the Swiss self-image is drawn from English-language tourist materials; he never cites Swiss documents of other sorts or speaks from direct experience. Again, linguistic barriers may have played a role in this.

Unfortunately, the premiss that the Swiss do everything to defend Switzerland's image as a crime-free society may have led Balvig to overlook some contrary evidence. For example, there are several indications that his claim that the police try to keep crime invisible is unfounded, but he fails to take them into account. In fact, the police in Switzerland may not differ very much from the police in other European countries. Like their counterparts abroad, they were eager throughout the 1970s to back their demands for increasing financial resources and manpower by statistics showing dramatically rising crime rates. They thus did not welcome Clinard's book, which presented Switzerland as a low-crime country. A few days after its publication in 1978, the Chief of police in the canton of Zurich gave a highly publicized press conference where he seriously challenged Clinard's conclusions. It is true, of course, that national data are more difficult to obtain in Switzerland than in many other countries, and it is also true that usually only the local police care about crime. However, this is no evidence that the police try to play crime down, but reflects the strong concern about federalism and horizontal sharing of power.

Finally, Balvig's claim that the Swiss police frequently do not record crimes reported by citizens is probably equally unfounded. Under the so-called legality maxim, the police have (theoretically at least) no discretion on whether to record or to drop a complaint. Police officers who fail to record a complaint without sufficient (narrowly defined) reasons are subject to prosecution under section 305 of the Penal Code.[4] Although such legal principles do not imply, of course, that every complaint will be recorded, they do not necessarily suggest that the Swiss police drop charges massively and more frequently than the police abroad. Again, Balvig does not present direct evidence of such a tendency among the Swiss police, but only some indirect indications drawn from a local victimization survey, conducted through the mail in a rural, alpine area (the canton of Uri) on a sample of 265 respondents. According to that survey,[5] about one-third of the victimizations the respondents were said to have reported to the police could not be located in the police files. Balvig takes this as evidence of his point (pp. 56–7), but there may be several more trivial reasons, such as inadequate organization of police archives, or victims' inaccurate accounts of the legal nature of the offence, the time of its occurrence, or the

[3] Interestingly, many Swiss raised questions not dissimilar to those brought forward by Baldwin in *Cities with Little Crime*.

[4] This section covers, among other things, failure to bring charges against an offender (or to record a complaint) despite a legal obligation to do so ('entrave à l'action pénale'). In 1983, the Federal Supreme Court confirmed the conviction of a police chief who had settled a dispute between a prostitute and a client informally; the Court ruled that police officers are not allowed to handle criminal matters informally, by seeking an agreement between the parties (*Recueil officiel des arrêts du Tribunal fédéral suisse*, vol. 109. iv, pp. 46–50).

[5] Heinz Stadler, *Kriminalität im Kanton Uri: Eine Opferbefragung* (Entlebuch, Switzerland: Huber, 1987).

police station at which it had been reported. In this connection, Balvig's silence about the Swiss crime survey (with 6,500 respondents) is somewhat surprising, since it yielded two results which might have been worth being considered here: first, when reporting to the police is taken into account, the survey-based estimates of crime rates (burglary, motor vehicle theft, etc.) come close to what the police data would lead one to expect; second, victimization rates (concerning burglary and robbery) seem to be considerably lower in Switzerland than in Holland, England and Wales, and Sweden. Whatever the merits of local crime surveys with small samples, it may not be reasonable to draw far-reaching conclusions from such materials; this may be particularly true in the case of the Uri survey, which seems to suggest that burglary is more frequent in that rural area than in the suburbs of American cities (within SMSAs).

Whatever the merits and shortcomings of Balvig's book, it may well become an interesting case in the study of the academic publishing business. Since its publication in Danish in 1987, it has been published in English (1988), and will soon come out in German (presumably in 1989). Three publications within three years since the author's visit to Switzerland is indeed a remarkable success. Clinard needed five years to get his book to the press, and its German version never found a publisher at all. Perhaps Balvig's book is simply more interesting, in so far as it challenges many well-established views on comparative criminology in general and on Switzerland in particular; yet the accuracy of details seems to be of little concern to publishers, at least as long as the deficiencies are not too blatant in the eyes of the expected audience. In sum, the academic publishing business seems to function along the same lines as the media world in general. However, we know from the media business that front page reports rarely become classics in any field. In contrast, Clinard's *Cities with Little Crime* has achieved something of the status of a classic over the last ten years, in the opinion of many scholars writing on the subject, and as things stand, it is likely to keep it.

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VICTIMS OF CRIME: A NEW DEAL? Edited by M. MAGUIRE and J. POINTING. (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1988. 224 + xiii pp. £25.00 hb, £9.95 pb.)

This collection of papers has a modest enough intention: 'to bring together under one cover . . . many of the diverse ideas and debates which have been going on in the fast-growing field of services and rights for victims of crime'. It does this well as far as the British literature is concerned, and it is useful to have this compendium of all the principal research authorities. The book provides a readable overview of victimology in this country, accessible to practitioners as well as academics.

The modest aims imply a missed opportunity, however. Virtually none of the entries is a really original contribution. The ideas have with one exception to my knowledge been expressed elsewhere by the same authors and are developed hardly any further. There are many loose theoretical ends represented here, but no attempt either to tie them together or to unravel them further. This is a shame, because in bringing these papers together the empirical advance of British victimology is brought directly face-to-face with its theoretical poverty. It is not that any of the authors fail to recognize this, but that none of them seems prepared to make a radical shift in their thinking to deal with the assumptions and inconsistencies of the victimological *Weltanschauung*.

The editors' introduction is a case in point. Their account of the development of the victims' movement focuses almost entirely on the growth of victim support schemes (VSS), as though