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Imagined Homes: Soviet German Immigrants in Two Cities. By Hans Werner. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2007. xi + 297 pp. Maps, tables, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95 paper.

In his *Imagined Homes*, Hans Werner compares the acculturation experience of ethnic Germans from Poland and the Soviet Union who settled in two migration waves in what at first glance seem to be very different cities: Winnipeg, Canada, and Bielefeld, Germany. A closer look, however, reveals that the two cities had much in common. Both were medium-sized urban centers that had integrated newcomers before. The mentalities of their inhabitants were shaped as much by Cold War thinking as by a capitalistic outlook.

Still, Werner shows that although the migrants who came to Winnipeg in the 1950s and to Bielefeld in the 1970s shared similar backgrounds, they settled into their host societies along largely divergent paths. While notions of citizenship, state settlement policies, and economic and housing conditions differed as much as did the cultural context in both Canada and Germany, the acculturation of migrants was shaped even more by their different perceptions of their new homes. Migrants to Winnipeg expected to be in the minority again in Canada. Those who moved to Germany somewhat prematurely expected to arrive "at home" and had to come to terms with "the contradictions of the imagined and the real."

Taking readers through the macro-level of national discourses about immigration and the micro-levels of economic and political integration as well as cultural and social adjustment, Werner shows that structural and perceptive differences led to the ironic result that the process of integration into the host society was less complicated for migrants to Winnipeg. Conflicting notions about the place of immigrants among native Germans and the ethnic German newcomers in Bielefeld, on the other hand, led to the formation of a very distinct Soviet German identity.

Werner uses a range of very interesting sources, among which his own interviews with those whose story he is telling stand out. These interviews have since been made available for research at the University of Winnipeg. Werner avoids the pitfalls of comparative historical studies by weighing each of his case studies carefully while at the same time contrasting it with the other. The result is a fascinating story of ethnic German migration that enriches our understanding of integration and acculturation processes in German and Canadian urban environments. *Imagined Homes* is highly recommended reading.

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