

Nafisa Yeasmin, Waliul Hasanat, Jan Brzozowski, and Stefan Kirchner, eds. *Immigration in the Circumpolar North: Integration and Resilience* (London: Routledge, 2021)

The social inclusion of immigrants into local communities has been extensively studied in the Social Sciences. Since the mid-1990s, the sociology of migration has shifted from economic and demographic issues towards central sociological questions such as “how societies negotiate membership and boundaries in the face of globalization” (Kasinitz, 2012: 583). Most theories on the sociology of migration are based on research in urban places but there is an increasing interest in migration to rural areas (Marrow, 2011).

This new edited volume by Yeasmin, Hasanat, Brzozowski, and Kirchner is a noteworthy contribution to migration studies as it addresses the experiences of migrants in the Arctic, “the most sparsely populated world region” (Brzozowski, 2020: 163). The anthology brings together 10 articles on migration in the Arctic. Five of these case studies are based on research in Finland, one on research in Iceland, one on Canada, and three of these case studies are transnational studies. The book is divided into five chapters: An introduction written by the authors, a chapter on *Youth Perspectives in the Arctic*, a chapter looks on *Family and Diversity Challenges*, a chapter on *Human Rights and Indigenous Communities in the Arctic*, and a chapter on *Migration and Development Issues in the Arctic*.

The comparative approach is one of the strengths of this anthology. The case studies collected provide valuable and diverse approaches to migration to the Arctic, sometimes presenting contradictory results. For example, a comparison of the findings of El Hariri, Gunnþórsdóttir, and Meckl (2020) and Adams (2020) shows that immigrants in Iceland are critical towards the educational system but immigrants in Finland perceive the Finnish educational system positively. These findings show once more that the “Circumpolar North” is not a monolithic place where migrants have similar or even identical experience.

The editors of this book emphasize resilience and integration as the key themes of their publication. They understand community resilience as “a readiness to react in a positive and constructive way to social and economic transformation, but at the same time being able to preserve local cultural and social values and systems” (Yeasmin et al, 2020: 2). One of the limitations of this anthology is that the terms integration and resilience could have been challenged more. Both concepts are debated as they imply an expectation towards people to behave in certain ways, e.g. to integrate or to be resilient, without necessarily discussing structural inequalities that might hinder these people in complying to these expectations. In fact, one of the contributors to the anthology states that “There are strong critiques of this idea of resilience, tying it into the offloaded responsibility and entrepreneurialism of neo-liberalism” (Merhar, 2020: 134).

Despite these small limitations, this anthology overall tells a very interesting and valuable story about migration to the Arctic. In my opinion, this book provides an answer to a

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question which is not raised by the authors themselves, namely “What can we learn from the Arctic about theories of migration and integration?” One of the key findings emerging is the significance of place. This is particularly striking in the fourth chapter where Merhar writes that “the north (or maybe smaller communities in general exist as a protective factor against the alienation that the child welfare system provides through placement bouncing, as youth get to remain closer and connected to their cultural and spatial communities of childhood and adolescence” (Merhar, 2020: 135). Similarly, Kirchner discusses the dangers of cold temperatures for forced migrants from a law perspective. These statements shows that social inclusion is grounded in preconditions of places.

Another strength is that the anthology contains implications for theory building in the sociology of migration, e.g. the theory of superdiversity. Yeasmin and Uusiautti (2020) add to this theory which has been developed by the US-American sociologist Vertovec in 2007 (Vertoved, 2007). The authors reflect on the meaning of superdiversity for migration to rural areas in the Circumpolar North, finding that the concept of superdiversity theory can also be applied to places with a comparatively low in-migration rate. As mentioned above, theories on migration to rural places are underdeveloped and findings such as the one of Yeasmin and Uusiautti are thus important contributions to the field.

I will be assigning this book to my students when teaching about migration as it addresses aspects that have previously been understudied. It does so by closely observing and learning from the preconditions of places - in this case the Circumpolar North.

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