

This book grew out of a conference in Turku in the fall 2010. The book is devoted to the contested issue of multiculturalism, focusing on the Nordic welfare states. The basic puzzle is, as Peter Kiivisto and Östen Wahlbeck (2013: 9) puts it in the introductory chapter: "... can the goals of the welfare state and those of multi culturalism coexist in harmony?".

The volume brings together researchers from a variety of fields. Sympathetically, the book is intrinsically interdisciplinary without niggling on about it. The topic is timely. Recently, prominent mainstream politicians in European countries such as Angela Merkel, Nicolas Sarkozy and David Cameron have talked about the failure, or even death of multi-culturalism. In the elections to the European parliament elections 2014, the so-called Radical Right-wing populist (RPPs) made heavy inroads in e.g. Denmark, France and Hungary, but not everywhere, so it is perhaps not a "tide" as indicated in the introduction (cf. Ibid: 8)? And there are considerable differences in terms of rhetoric and policy proposals between e. g. the United Kingdom Independence Party in Great Britain and the Golden Dawn in Greece.

In Scandinavia the countries are similar in terms of socio-political development, structure of political competition, relation between the voters and the elected representatives and the organisation of the universal welfare states. While, as the editors correctly point out, many studies on multiculturalism have tended to focus on the North American context, few studies have engaged with the Nordic states. Current demographic changes trigger us to see the relevance of focusing on the Nordic states as well. Some fractions of the public clearly appreciate and embrace the development towards increased diversity; others are much more reluctant and the fissures of public opinion showed in e. g. the recent European parliament elections.

Some chapters in the book are more theoretical, while others focus more on concrete experiences or implemented policy measures. Some chapters are explicitly or implicitly normative, while others are more descriptive. Some chapters focus on the national level, while others instead acknowledge the local arena. Some of the chapters have a comparative ambition (including Iceland or not), yet other chapters are more country specific. Some chapters focus on policies, while other contributions focus on discourse. Some chapters deal with minority rights while others focus more on the "new" immigrant populations, even if the authors tend to be sensitive enough to recognise this distinction.

The main problem I have with the volume is that the individual chapters never really talk with each other. While Ewa Morawska argues well for the need of analysing multiculturalism from below, focusing empirically on four separate localities concluding that Malmö suffers from a lack of everyday diversity compared to the other examples given in the text, Garbi Schmidt could simultaneously argue that a focus on Copenhagen, and in particular the city district of Nørrebro with its appraisal of diversity stands in sharp contrast with the anti-multiculturalism at the national level in Denmark. Also this chapter is refreshing, but as a reader you are yet curious about what makes Malmö so different in terms of everyday diversity compared to the neighbouring city of Copenhagen?

Thomas Faist, in his chapter, elaborates theoretically on the question if heterogeneity produces equalities or inequalities, rather than seeing multiculturalism as merely about recognition. But this promising starting point is not systematically followed up in the subsequent chapters.

The book begins, after the introduction, with two "framing" chapters by Faist and Morwaska, which is followed by two individual chapters on each country. It is indeed a healthy sign that the individual contributors are given much freedom to analyse the subject from their unique perspective, but what the book gains in freedom it loses in coherence. Neither the framing chapters nor the introduction really frame the rest of the book. The selection of individual chapters seems *ad-hoc* based and not systematically chosen to constitute a coherent product.

Let me finish with a few examples of lessons this book has taught me on the diverse issue of multiculturalism in the Nordic welfare states. Hugo Stokke taught me that the human rights perspective is a useful tool to study law-making dealing with two very different groups, indigenous populations and immigrant groups. Mats Wickström, writing about Sweden, led the reader into the discursive terrain when Sweden shifted from progressive assimilation into multiculturalism at the end of the 1960s and in the beginning of the 1970s, which provides the backdrop to contemporary discussion on multiculturalism. Now assimilation has become a taboo word, but for the RPP-party the Sweden Democrats. Karin Borevi taught me that multiculturalism signifies different things in terms of policy measures and rhetoric, and we need to take these differences into account before we perhaps too quickly dismiss or praise multiculturalism.

Sune Laegaard concludes that Denmark has had an anti-multiculturalist approach, between 2001 and 2011, both concerning discourse and policy. The former has begun to slacken, however, with the new Social Democratic government from 2011 and the Danish People's Party in opposition in terms of discourse, while the policies in this area remain largely intact.

Grete Brochmann and Anne Britt Djuve taught me that the Norwegian approach to multiculturalism after the 1970s is structured along three dimensions: nationhood of homogeneity, the welfare model and the imported integration ideology (from Sweden). Yngve Lithman taught me, in his contribution, to focus on the intricate relationship between the state, the nation and the person to understand similarities and differences between Sweden and Norway in their respective approaches to multiculturalism.

Pauli Saukkonen and Östen Wahlbeck both return to Kymlicka's famous distinction between the integration of immigrants and the "old" indigenous minority groups in their chapters. It is evident that the Finnish state has intended to accommodate diversity for both groups, though pursuing multiculturalism from above and thereby contributed to essentialise "them". The concluding chapter brings us back to the basic puzzle that also started this book about challenges of ethnic diversity in the Nordic welfare state. It also brings up a topic, not fully elaborated in the book, about the role of the RPP-parties in the future of multicultural inclusion. The end marks the beginning of a new fascinating journey.