

cities: Veitvet in Oslo, Fjell in Drammen, Møhlenpris in Bergen and, finally, Saupstad in Trondheim. The book focuses on whether “traditional” Norwegian associations (Chapter 3), migrant organizations (Chapter 4) and congregations (Chapter 5) contribute to processes of local level integration as part of civil society. The work is based on social capital analyses (e.g. Putnam 2000, 2007; Woolcock 1998) of interview material, field notes, and policy documents (Chapters 1-2), and provides an applied approach to social scientific studies of “grassroots” community building, civil society, and multiculturalism in Norway.

### Applied science contribution to studies of “grassroots” community building in multicultural Norway

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Guro Ødegård, Jill Loga, Kari Steen-Johnsen & Bodil Ravneberg: Felleskap og forskjellighet. Integrasjon og nettverksbygging i flerkulturelle lokalsamfund. Abstrakt Forlag, 2014, 200 pp. ISBN 978-82-7935-355-3.

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This volume addresses formation of “grassroots” integration platforms in and through civil society in multicultural communities in four Norwegian

The analytical lens that guides the study centres on the concept of social capital as developed by Robert Putnam. Important sub-concepts are those of *bonding* and *bridging*. Bonding social capital is constituted by an “internal” network based on the building of social ties along ethnic, religious, linguistic, national (etc.) lines. In contrast, bridging social capital is comprised of “external” networks based on the building of social ties across heterogeneous peoples and groups. Creating and upholding bridging social capital is an important integration measure since it can contrib-

ute significantly to building social cohesion in, and create belonging through, local communities, and, eventually, to a higher degree make ethnic minorities become part of national majority society's main institutions. As a supplement to Putnam's concepts, *linking* social capital is introduced and analytically applied in the book. Linking social capital highlights institutional trust or trusting ties among individuals and between groups in diverse positions of authority and power. In line with the authors' system-critical perspective to local authorities' ability to implement community integration policies linking social capital is analytically employed to analyse and evaluate ties created between state and civil society and between other dichotomous but interacting entities such as the public and private sector, state and market, rich and poor.

The experienced authors – two sociologist and two political scientists – are well established Norwegian researchers who meticulously explore the possibilities for and barriers to incorporation of ethnic minorities into local community arenas such as volunteer based associations (the volume's examples are mainly drawn from NGOs and sports associations in which ethnic

minorities are often underrepresented), migrant organizations, and congregations. This volunteer-driven part of civil society stands at the very heart of Norwegian society and other Scandinavian democratic institutions and functions as a supplement to Nordic welfare states' foci on integration through employment. The authors understand integration as rights, options and representation and as equality among the ethnic minority and majority populations. Ødegård, Loga, Steen-Johnsen and Ravneberg point to mechanisms such as enhancing ethnic minority participation in civil society, which can help facilitate competence in participation-as-democracy, cultural understanding, and network building between and beyond the minority/majority divide. Thus civil society and its institutions constitute, the authors convincingly argue, an important prospective arena for integration of ethnic minorities.

The volume is a thorough and accessible piece of work and it offers close readings of the empirical material in a carefully formulated style. *Felleskap og forskjellighet* is, however, true to its applied science scope, a study that applies research concepts based on previous research rather than formulat-

ing new ones and at times the volume unfortunately lacks critical distance to politicized notions such as "honour based violence" and "ghettoes" (pp. 24, 85, 95). The strong focus on Norwegian communities is aptly explained, but the perspective sometimes operates too narrowly within a national frame, and perhaps empirical fieldwork comparisons to other Scandinavian cities could have identified civil society mechanisms specific to Norway more cogently. Particular regional differences within the surrounding Norwegian majority society are never explored and particularities to fieldwork sites do not seem to have been an explicit part of the community selection process. As such, the impact of Sørlandet, The Bible Belt of Norway, on local community building, civil society, and multiculturalism is eluded just like Norway, without any further deliberations, is characterized as a secular society. Although this of course holds true in terms of the country's state-church divide, it is a truth with modifications in cultural terms, first and foremost because of the highly religious landscape of Sørlandet but also in comparison to the dissimilar religious mentality in other parts of Norway and in other Scandinavian cities such as Copenhagen, Aarhus, Stockholm, and Uppsala.

The closing section of *Felleskap og forskjellighet* (Chapter 7) summarizes the analytical findings in five concluding segments, some of which will come as no surprise to a great deal of the practitioners to which the volume is explicitly addressed. Among such hardly surprising results are, for example, the conclusion that the lack of individual resources can prevent civil society integration from occurring. More interesting and thought-provoking is the analytical outcome of the study's system-critical perspective and, consequently, emphasis on the barriers circumscribing the incorporation of ethnic minorities into "traditional" volunteer-based associations: NGOs and sports associations often carry with them structural obstacles to ethnic minority participation, since recruitment strategies are frequently limited to reducing effects of lack of individual resources. Chapter 6 on public policy, voluntariness, and integration explores and discusses exactly this finding in detail. This is the volume's most enthusiastic and interesting chapter, as it presents practice-informed examples and considerations as well as theory-driven reflections on system-conditioned barriers to the ways in which local policies are devised and managed.