

Contested concepts in migration studies

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Concepts are essential tools that help to better comprehend the world around us. They shape our understanding of empirical realities as well as public policies and politics. Concepts are key to understanding different dimensions and aspects of migration and post-migration processes. Different concepts and conceptual frameworks developed and used in migration studies interact and often contrast with one another. Conceptual clarity is, therefore, essential. *Contested Concepts in Migration Studies* is an informative and compelling volume enriching and sharpening our conceptual thinking on migration and related phenomena. It is a significant contribution to the scholarly field, filling a substantial gap in migration and diversity research through addressing conceptual issues from different normative, theoretical, empirical, and methodological angles, relating them to the ongoing public, political, and policy debates. In doing so, it brings greater clarity and comprehension regarding concepts that have been used at discursive and policy levels.

Consisting of fifteen essays by distinguished scholars in migration and diversity research, the volume demonstrates how concepts are articulated and used in media, politics, and public policy circles and how they influence public opinion. One of the main contributions of the volume relates to its ability to show that concepts can hardly be understood or developed in a vacuum. In other words, concepts are relational to the extent that, for example, Zapata-Barrero (Chapter 3: 48) argues, the concept of cohesion is 'a cross-road concept, a concept system', that is, 'its meaning can only be grasped under its systematic functions, putting into contact several conceptual nodes.' Contributions in different chapters, therefore, both show the interconnectedness of the concepts in migration studies and enable and encourage us to develop a comparative perspective. Indeed, the volume presents a type of conceptual map, linking essential analytical vehicles in migration and diversity research that help to better grasp the scholarly field, policy developments, and empirical realities.

Each essay in this collection is an original research contribution, not simply a descriptive summary of the state-of-the-art, highlighting key analytical insights within the broader field of migration and why they are contested. Chapters are organized alphabetically, starting with 'border'; Chapter 1 (by Bastian Vollmer) shows how continuing flows of people across different territories put *borders* at the centre of the debates and make them contested (15). Christian Joppke, in Chapter 2, focuses on the transformation of *citizenship* both at empirical and conceptual levels, arguing that citizenship has long been 'conditional and contracted'; that is, it has been considered as something to be earned, not simply an individual right as claimed by liberals (36-37). Chapter 3 underlines that 'idealized homogenous national past' informs the debates on *cohesion* in the face of post-migration diversity, resulting in misleading concerns about migration (50). Zapata-Barrero fosters intercultural citizenship as a bottom-up approach and project to balance the diversity-cohesion nexus. Chapter 4 (by Erik Fossum and Epsen D.H. Olsen) emphasizes the importance of *cosmopolitanism*, understood as 'the universal rights of the individual' regardless of membership to a political community, for the autonomy of the individual (70). Patrick Simon, in Chapter 5, clarifies how powerful and operational is the concept of *discrimination*, which helps to uncover the structure of disadvantage taking place in different forms and shapes.

In Chapter 6, Dirk Jacobs argues that *diversity* is a central concept often framed based on different objectives and its usefulness, proving that it is 'highly contextualized and intrinsically linked to power struggles.' (106-107). Edward Telles, in Chapter 7, uncovers the ways in which the state shapes immigrant *identities*, e.g. through determining the legal status of people, creating ethnic categories, and framing and implementing migration and integration policies. Adrian Favell, in Chapter 8,

provides a highly critical view of the concept of *integration*, contending that the French understanding of integration, which is strongly related to turning colonial subjects into good citizens through linking integration and citizenship and disregarding racial difference, has become the dominant approach (136). In Chapter 9, Fethi Mansouri discusses how *interculturalism* has become an alternative rhetoric and conceptual framework (*vis-à-vis* multiculturalism), conceived to be providing 'a better calibrated policies for managing diversity.' (151). In Chapter 10, Rainer Baubock discusses the concept of *mobility* ('freedom of movement across and within borders') *vis-à-vis* migration ('a specific type of movement' across 'territorial borders') (168), concluding that both are complimentary concepts providing different views on human movement.

Keith Banting, in Chapter 11, writes that *multiculturalism* is both a matter of intense political debates and a subject matter of conceptual perplexity. He convincingly argues that 'multiculturalism policies' have proven 'quite compatible with other strategies that are based on respect for difference', they neither 'generate social segmentation' nor 'erode social cohesion.' (183). Anna Triandafyllidou, in Chapter 12, focuses on *nationalism*. After emphasizing the necessity of reconsidering the conventional theories of nationalism, which have become obsolete, she makes a case for a benign form of nationalism namely plural nationalism, which is defined as an 'open form' of nationalism acknowledging diversity and mobility (207). In Chapter 13, Tariq Modood examines the concept of *secularism* and demonstrates how post-migration religious diversity has pushed West European democracies to re-visit long-settled arrangements of state-religion relations. Modood promotes a multiculturalized form of secularism as the most promising basis to address the multicultural challenge (224). After providing a brief genealogy of the concept of *tolerance*, Patrick Loobuyck, in Chapter 14, argues that insofar as the modern liberal state is ideally designed as a neutral organization making no value judgements, it can no longer be an agent of toleration; instead, toleration 'is primarily a virtue that citizens must practice among themselves.' (238). However, it is rightly argued, as the idea of state neutrality is almost impossible in practice, minority cultural rights and reasonable accommodation substitute the idea of state toleration (238). In the final chapter, Riva Kastoryano explores the concept of *transnationalism* as a key conceptual theme standing at the intersection of border, migration, integration, citizenship, nationhood, belonging, and identity (244-245). She contends that transnational communities demonstrate a new configuration of nationalism (alias transnational nationalism) that is non-territorial.

All the chapters collected in this volume generate informative and balanced analyses of some of the most fundamental concepts used in migration studies. Two criticisms, however, can be noted. The first relates to the concepts selected. Some of the most relevant and timely concepts, such as antiracism, Islamophobia, and solidarity, are left out. The inclusion of these would have further enhanced the value of this volume. Antiracism, for instance, has become a hot topic since the 2020 antiracism protests and has attracted significant public, political, and academic attention, often leading to competing and conflicting views and understandings. The second relates to sub-concepts, as it were, that occasionally become more relevant or topical than the concept itself. For instance, sub-concepts of transnationalism such as transnational migration and transmigrant are no less important or relevant. Specifically, the concept of transnational Islam, omitted in Chapter 15, is of critical importance since poor comprehension of the concept has led to undesired policy approaches concerning Muslim integration into western countries (e.g. 'war on terror', the 'Prevent'), not to mention constant negative publicity and vilification of Muslim transnational engagements.

Overall, *Contested Concepts in Migration Studies* is a significant contribution to the field and an essential book that students, scholars, and policy-makers interested in migration and diversity would like to keep it on their desks to consult.