



The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State

By Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Paerregaard

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The question of integration has become an important concern as many societies are experiencing a growing influx of people from abroad. But what does integration really mean? What does it take for a person to be integrated in a society? Through a number of ethnographic case studies, this book explores varying meanings and practices of integration in Denmark. This welfare society, characterized by a liberal life style and strong notions of social equality, is experiencing an upsurge of nationalist sentiment. The authors show that integration is not just a neutral term referring to the incorporation of newcomers into society. It is, more fundamentally, an ideologically loaded concept revolving around the redefining of notions of community and welfare in a society undergoing rapid social and economic changes in the face of globalization. The ethnographic analyses are authored by anthropologists who wish to engage, as scholars and citizens living and working in Denmark, in one of the most contentious issues of our time. The Danish perspectives on integration are discussed from a broader international perspective in three epilogues by non-Danish anthropologists.

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About the Author

Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Paerregaard teach at the Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. They have done extensive research on migration and published numerous articles and books on migration related issues in European and the Americas.

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