

farmers in the Appalachian Mountains of western Pennsylvania who had very little currency. The final chapter considers why American development theory yielded mixed results in efforts to pull Appalachia out of poverty. Stoll maintains throughout his book that stages of development are speculative fictions. By examining the ways agrarians interpreted and thrived and how they suffered

at the by the imposition of markets and other so-called forces of modernity, Stoll helps us to reevaluate development imaginaries and uncover the complexity of people and their interactions with place. Stoll reminds us that our conceptions, the imaginaries that imbue our views of place are not simply mental exercises but can alter places in quite drastic and tangible ways.

Rethinking International Skilled Migration.

Micheline Van Riemsdijk and Quingfang Wang (eds.). Routledge, London and New York, 2017. Xxii+311 pp.; tables, diags., notes, and index. \$170 hardback; \$57 e-book (ISBN: 978-1-138-91872-6 hardback; 978-1-315-68831-2 e-book)

CHRISTIAN SELLAR

University of Mississippi

This book is the outcome of three paper sessions held in 2014 at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers, in Tampa, Florida. Overall, it is one of the best edited collection I've recently read. Thematically, it deepens our knowledge of a less investigated area in migration studies, i.e. the mobility of students and highly skilled professionals. In so doing, it dispels assumptions surrounding "privileged" status of skilled migrants by tying together work on the personal experiences of migrants with aggregate analyses at the urban and regional scale. Tying the chapters together, this book provides a clearly argued theoretical contribution to the field. Individual chapters are consistently well written, in an accessible language appropriate for a wide audience that includes scholars, graduate and advanced undergraduate students, policy makers, and the migrants themselves.

Theoretically, the book outlines a "four points research agenda" (page 8) for international skilled migration literature. First, it connects the personal characteristics of migrants—gender, race, stage in lifecycle and others—with the migration experience in ways that are specific to place. Second, it provides a "multiscalar and interactive perspective on the impacts of highly skilled migration," (page 9). In so doing, it investigates the socioeconomic and cultural processes linking migrants with their (sending and receiving) places. Third, it invites further analyses of migration in second and third tier cities. Fourth and finally, it discusses the effects of the knowledge and skills that migrants bring to workplaces, cities and regions. Taken together, these four items bridge migration studies with traditional concerns in economic geography—especially the flows of knowledge and innovation between urban and regional economies—by

embodying well investigated processes in the global knowledge economy within the experiences of skilled migrants and their impacts on cities and regions. In a nutshell, the book sheds new light on the “relationship between place, space, and international migration” (page 3).

The book develops its research agenda in three separate sections: “international students’ migration,” “transforming cities, transforming lives,” and transnational lives and return migration.” The first section discusses the factors shaping students’ mobility, job search after graduation, and the transition from students to skilled workers. This section emphasizes students’ embeddedness in larger geopolitical processes and place specific policies (page 10). The second section discusses the mutual influences between immigrants and their workplaces, as well as the cities and regions they live in. This section alternates the viewpoints of the immigrants with those of firms’ managers and urban and regional policy makers. The third section focuses on the seldom investigated issue of return migration, which has risen of importance thanks to new talent attraction policies in middle income and developing countries. A concluding chapter ties together the various contributions and theoretical insights.

The three thematic sections plus conclusion categorize the content of sixteen chapters. Individual contributions are very well written in a style that combines academic rigor with easy access for multiple audiences. Methodologically, most of the chapters are based on fieldwork and in-depth interviews or questionnaires, and online surveys with migrants and policy makers. The extent and depth of fieldwork varies, consistently with the career stages of the authors, ranging from recent Master

of Arts graduates to senior leaders in the field. Within individual chapters, the four points of the research agenda overlap in individual chapters across the thematic areas, contributing to the coherence of the whole book.

Although each chapter speaks to multiple points of the book’s research agenda, specific contributions highlight some items more than others. For example, the intersection between personal characteristics of migrants, their experiences, and place is particularly visible in Heike Alberts’ analysis of international students’ migration decisions (Chapter 3, page 36–53). This study identifies important commonalities, but also place-specific distinctions among students, at both end of the migration spectrum: first, the decision to move to the US to pursue a degree; and second, where to pursue a career after graduation. In so doing, this study argues that “broader understanding can only be reached when we can separate the factors that matter for all migrants from those that are specific to particular countries or regions” (page 51).

Discussions on the impact of migration on second and third tier cities provide the strongest argument against the notion of skilled immigrants as “privileged group” that is not exposed to discrimination. In particular, Jorg Ploger discusses the role of housing in the settlement of high skilled migrants in Dortmund, Germany (Chapter 9, page 154–74). He shows that the difficult access to housing contradicts the assumption of easier integration due to high status (page 168). In the next chapter, Micheline Van Riemsdijk explores city branding in two Norwegian hubs for the oil and gas industry (page 173–193). In so doing, she shows that government initiatives aimed at attracting and retaining

foreign-born skilled migrants reproduce a gendered and racialized view of the “good migrant” (page 174). A different take on the challenges of integration is provided by Wang, Tang and Li discussion of Chinese scholars returning after pursuing a PhD abroad (Chapter 14, page 149–167). These returnees found employment in a high-ranking domestic university, which attracted them by offering high salaries and a dedicated US-style tenure-track system. However, they faced serious challenges, including difficult relationships with local colleagues, due to professional practices in academia, the university goal to achieve “world class” status, and China’s national and regional development policies.

In the concluding chapter (16, pages 293–302), Harald Bauder places this book in a larger body of work on migration theoretically grounded in Bourdieu’s notion of capital and social field, outlining opportunities for future research. These include comparative studies that connects economic, social, political and cultural aspects of skilled migration. In turn, these comparisons will enable investigating the links between skilled migration

and development. Finally, skilled migration studies should pay close attention to scale, in order to avoid falling in the trap of methodological nationalism, as most of mainstream discourses on brain-drain.

Overall, the book could have achieved even more coherence by framing its theoretical contribution through Bourdieu’s notion of capital and social field more clearly since the introduction. First and foremost, capital and field are useful terms of reference to tie together the empirical findings of the various chapters. Second, in connection with a more explicit attention to Bourdieu, I would have expected an up-front focus on policies, given that several chapters emphasize how visa and development policies can alter the possibilities to develop and circulate human and social capital. Besides these, the book has very few weaknesses and many strengths. The introduction makes a strong case for writing on skilled migration and ties together the contributions in a theoretically meaningful way, the quality of the individual chapters is generally high, and the style is accessible to multiple audiences. This is a must read for a wide audience interested in migration issues.