

REVIEW OF THE MONOGRAPH

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Victoiria V. Tevlina. *From Russia to Norway and to its North. Real and Potential Migration. Children, Adults, Families*. 2015. Arkhangelsk: IPP “Pravda Severa”.

The monograph is written by Doctor of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Barents Institute (Norway), University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway, and Professor at the Northern Arctic Federal University (Arkhangelsk, Russia). This book has been published in English with support from Spare Bank Nord-Norge Gave Fond and the Norwegian Barents Secretariat.

The view of Professor Tevlina on the problem of migration is, in our opinion, of particular interest, because the author is a living example of academic migration, who for a number of years has been working as a researcher in Norway, has been carrying out continuous sociological and historical research of various social problems (both in Norway and Russia) and knows the specifics of migration from the inside, in the diversity of its inherent challenges and risks. As Prof. Tevlina said, “the significant factor for this work was her acquaintance with the families of Russians living in Norway for many years. Moreover, the knowledge of the Russian language also allowed her to use this resource in open conversations with people and to analyze, what has been happening with the Russian immigration in general and child

immigration, in particular, especially in the northern part of Norway”.

The composition of the book consists of eight chapters, reflecting the general methodology of the problem from which the author starts, and materials of experimental part of the study, in which qualitative and quantitative methods were used, including analysis of statistical data and interviews with different categories of migrants.

In the first chapters of the book the author represents different studies on the welfare of children and families of immigrants from Russia in various European countries. Various conceptions and theories of child and family immigration such as assimilation theory, the theory of multiculturalism, the theory of hybridity and the theory of different types of integration are reflected in the second chapter of the monograph.

Separate chapters are devoted to the northernmost part of Norway, which borders on Russia, where almost half of the Russians who have emigrated to Norway, live. Special attention is paid to the welfare, social-psychological self-esteem of Russian children, who have settled far from their native soil in most cases

because their mothers brought them there. As the author has mentioned, “the largest group of children brought by their parents from Russia to the North of Norway, lives in Sor-Varanger in Kirkenes, then in Alta and in Hammerfest, i.e. the northernmost province of Norway-Finnmark. Moreover, the Sor-Varanger municipality closest to the border of Russia, today has the highest proportion of Russian immigrants among the total number of immigrants from non-European Union countries”.

In the book are also reproduced the views of Russian immigrant-parents on the well-being of their children and their own situation as parents. The author of the book regards parents who were not the main focus of the study “as an opportunity to learn more about the position of children, family and plans for the future”. Thanks to that more complete and objective analysis of the children’s welfare level, as well as of the whole family, is given. Readers can also find an analysis of political, economic and social foundations of Russian immigration to Norway at the turn of 20–21 centuries, information about the potential emigration of Russian northerners from the European north of the Russian Federation, which is geographically close to the Norwegian-Russian border.

It seems that in today’s profound migratory crisis experienced by the countries of the European Union and Norway, this monography is of particular relevance, presenting a palette of live voices of immigrants from Russia, in whose biographical histories the concept of dialogue between cultures becomes very real. Integration in the new socio-cultural environment, adaptation at the level of micro and macro-society is much less painful, in conditions of the living connection with the culture of the native country, which is enriched by elements of another culture – the culture of the host countries for migrants.

The monograph of Victoria Tevlina reflecting the migration processes in the North as a multifactor socio-cultural phenomenon with a highly integrative character is undoubtedly of interest to historians, sociologists, social anthropologists, economists, educators, experts in social work, as well as all those interested in the problems of migration in the European North. The book of V. Tevlina “From Russia to Norway and to its North” sounds like a kind of invitation to the dialogue with a potential reader, able to understand the depth and ambiguity of the phenomenon of modern migration.