
Readers of Imagined Communities will recall, from one of the first chapters, the importance ascribed to Jos Rizal’s novel Noli me tangere, the first significant Filipino novel. In a prelude to his famous argument about print-capitalism as a condition for nationalism, Benedict Anderson argues that this novel contributed to the creation of an abstract (‘imagined’) community of like-minded middle-class Filipinos, as well as encouraging the growth of nationalist sentiment in the then Spanish colony.

Anderson’s new book is an original development of a central idea in Imagined Communities, focusing on the late-nineteenth century situation in the Philippines and the transnational connections engaged in by Filipino intellectuals. The steamship had made fairly rapid travel and communication possible, leading to the efficient global dissemination of new books, letters and ideas; the telegraph made almost instantaneous intercontinental communication possible. Anderson mentions that in 1903, Franklin Roosevelt sent a telegram around the globe to himself, and it reached him in nine minutes.

The narrative of Under Three Flags begins with Isabelo de los Reyes, a gifted Filipino folklorist and journalist, whose accounts of traditional customs and beliefs in the archipelago were characterized by that analytical distance and generalizations about culture which are so essential for nationalism. However, the main character of the book is arguably Rizal, a restless man driven by artistic ambition and political fervour. Spending lengthy periods in Europe (chiefly Spain and Germany), Rizal was pivotal in organizing the ill-fated Filipino republican movement opposing Spanish rule, and among the transnational ties influencing him was the Cuban connection. Jos Mart’s revolutionary movement contributed in no small way to the ambitions and hopes of Filipino radicals, situated either in European exile or on the other side of the globe.

The Filipino independence movement was an elite middle-class phenomenon, while the Cuban situation was more complex. Migration from Spain (not least Catalonia) to Cuba brought new anarchist and socialist ideas to the island, which had a very substantial creole and peninsular population (unlike the Philippines, where only 3 per cent of the population spoke Spanish), and there were many other differences. However, and this is Anderson’s point, the new communication technologies, the participation of both colonies in a world economy and a dwindling Spanish empire, and the similarities of the ideas literate people were exposed to in both locations, enabled them not only to know about each other, but to communicate directly. The main sources of Under Three Flags are archival, consisting of the bulky correspondence of men like Rizal, de los Reyes, Rizal’s friend and supporter Mariano Ponce and the Filipino revolutionary Bonifacio. Their letters to friends and fellow radicals in France, Austria, Spain, Japan, China and elsewhere are multilingual, reminding the reader of a time before the advent of an ‘ugly, commercially debased “international language”’ (p. 5).

Although the protagonists of the book may be described as republican nationalists with a cosmopolitan orientation, their metropolitan supporters were largely anarchists. After the death of Marx, anarchists like Bakunin, Kropotkin and Malatesta were, for a few decades,
among the most influential European radicals. By reminding contemporary readers of the transnational impact and, not least, the cosmopolitan, anti-nationalist outlook of the anarchists, Anderson creates a series of thought-provoking parallels to our own time. Speaking of anarchist insurgents as ‘early suicide bombers’ and of the period in question as ‘early globalization’, demonstrating the importance of easy travel and fast communication for the spread of political ideas, the book implicitly posits a cosmopolitan anarchism as an alternative to exploitative global capitalism and parochial nationalism alike.

It was de los Reyes who founded the first anarchist-inspired trade union in the Philippines, Bonifacio who led the first (unsuccessful) anti-colonial rebellion. Yet, true to the project begun in Imagined Communities, the power of the imagination gets the final word in Under Three Flags. Unlike the other men, Jos Rizal is still remembered and revered as a ‘father of the Filipino nation’. His influence was not a result of his superior political talents or ideological erudition (in fact, he seems to have been largely ignorant of anarchist and socialist theory), but of his novels. While Noli me tangere described colonial Filipino society, El Filibusterismo is a visionary novel about insurrection and revolution. Inspired by events and novels from outside the archipelago, the book made it possible to envision a way out of colonial subordination. A filibuster is, in Rizal’s own words, ‘a dangerous patriot who will soon be hanged, or a preposterous fellow’.

Notwithstanding its beautiful language and original subject-matter, Under Three Flags is not an easy read. The narratives take the reader back and forth across the oceans (like the anti-colonial imagination itself); incidental details are thick on the ground, and there are numerous lengthy quotations from letters, reproduced in the original language with Anderson’s translations below. In sum, Under Three Flags is an erudite and compassionate case-study of a ‘style of imagination’ which grows out of a transnational modernity, yet transcends the limits of the nation.

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The Last “Darky” is a work of intellectual history and cultural interpretation employing as its vehicle the life of African-American stage star Egbert Austin “Bert” Williams (1874–1922). Williams was born in the Bahamas and came to the United States with his family when he was eleven. The family settled in California where Williams began performing in local shows and county fairs, sometimes impersonating ethnic groups and races other than his own, as, for example, Hawaiians. From there Williams went on to become the greatest stage comedian of any race in the U.S. from the late nineteenth century to his death, and a performer who was nearly as popular in Britain. Williams and his two partners founded, owned, and operated a large international theatrical touring company. Williams was also the first African-American to integrate Broadway when he signed on with the Ziegfeld Follies in 1910, and he was one of the first African-Americans to appear on film and to make sound recordings.

Williams mastered African-American speech patterns from different regions and classes and employed them on stage, always appearing in blackface. African-American dialects, he said, were as alien to him as Italian, and he had to study them long and hard to perfect his performances. Williams’ calling card was, therefore, masquerade; not in the most common form of minstrelsy – white performers impersonating blacks – but rather as a West Indian impersonating African-Americans. Chude-Sokei’s book is an examination of the multiple
meanings, interpretations, interconnections, and ramifications of such a performance, especially as it relates to Garveyism and the Harlem Renaissance.

Williams’ stage career coincides with the most severe and violent period of racial repression since the Civil War. This was a period of disenfranchisement and imposed segregation of social institutions in southern and border states and similar arrangements in other parts of the country, though not formalized in state and local law. The system was backed by extensive vigilante violence (lynchings et al.) as well as complicity, force, and intimidation employed by ‘law enforcement’ agencies. In such an intense climate of racial repression, there was often little space or tolerance for outspokenness and militancy on the part of minorities. Consistent with their time, Williams and his business partner chose to attack racial stereotypes obliquely even though they keenly understood that white minstrelsy was explicitly racist and promoted unreal and blanket stereotypes. The two leapt to fame when they named their act, ‘...ironically, controversially, and provocatively. ...’ (pp. 6–7), ‘The Two Real Coons’. As a black man masquerading as a white racist caricature of a black man, Williams challenged, mocked and erased that caricature. That was the intent, though Chude-Sokei acknowledges that such a delicate tightrope was open to misinterpretation, especially by white audiences.

In a later chapter Chude-Sokei examines the role of masquerade and mimicry in African-American culture and minstrelsy in South Africa and in Jamaican and Trinidadian carnival. Chude-Sokei then devotes a chapter to Williams’ most ambitious and successful theatrical production, In Dahomey. While designed and acted as comedic and farcical, Chude-Sokei discerns and examines liberatory themes of pan-Africanism and liberatory texts in the portrayal of Africans by African-Americans (a first), the ability of blacks to travel as they desired without restraint, and the presentation of blacks in unaccustomed roles as royalty, statesmen, adventurers, and businessmen, among others. In his concluding chapter, Chude-Sokei considers the work of Claude McKay and his most famous novel, Home to Harlem. McKay, a Jamaican, incorporated, more than any other figure of the Harlem Renaissance, West Indian characters, dialects, and themes in his work, and thus challenged African-American hegemony in Black America, as Garvey had done earlier. Williams, on the other hand could not give expression to his West Indian origins and could present himself only as double alienated, a black man living in white America and a West Indian living in African-American Harlem.

In addition to readers interested in Bert Williams, Chude-Sokei’s wide-ranging and sophisticated book should be considered by those interested in aspects of diaspora, subaltern studies, minstrelsy, masquerade and mimicry, American race relations, American theatre, cultural criticism, Marcus Garvey and Garveyism, West Indian/African-American relations, the Harlem Renaissance, and Claude McKay.

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Kathy Burrell, MOVING LIVES: NARRATIVES OF NATION AND MIGRATION AMONG EUROPEANS IN POST-WAR BRITAIN, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006, 212pp., £50.00 (hb).

This book focuses on the experiences of three groups who migrated to Britain in the post-war period: Poles, Greek Cypriots and Italians. Based mainly on the testimonies of fifty-two first- and second-generation migrants, it provides revealing insights into the impact of migration on the lives of European migrants who have been relatively neglected in migration studies. The book’s central concern is with national rather than ethnic identity and focuses on the development of community within Britain and continuing links with home rather than migrants’ ‘integration’ into British society. The rich narratives illustrate the varied personal
experiences of migration in relation to four overlapping themes of migration, nation, continuing transnational links and community. The interviewees are based in Leicester, where the populations of these groups are significant but small enough to form distinct city-wide communities.

The first chapter, focusing on the process of migration, demonstrates the sharp contrast between the experience of the Poles, whose migration was forced, and the other groups for whom it was voluntary, albeit within often severe constraints. Migration for the latter group was often seen as ‘ordinary’ and unremarkable, taking place within the established networks which sustained emigration from Italy and Cyprus at this period. Their stories, however, show the complexity of migratory strategies and often difficult negotiation of gendered roles. For Poles, migration itself was traumatic, often involving many years of journeying following forcible deportation and a rupture with former lives and family connections. The narratives present this period as more important in their lives than the following fifty years. These stories became an essential part of family history passed on to the next generation.

Meanings of the nation are constructed in relation to ‘others’ and the actual geographical boundaries of the imagined nation are flexible. For both Poles and Greek Cypriots, narratives of oppression and struggle against outsiders were crucial in their stories. For Poles, for whom forced migration brought estrangement from their homeland, the reconstruction of a national community in exile was particularly important. Italians were less attached to the nation: the respondents had diverse origins in Italy and their regional identities were often more important than the national, with regional dialects marking these differences. The accounts also revealed the internal others in relation to which ideas of the nation were formed. In Northern Italy, southerners have long been seen as ‘other’ and this reinforced the importance of regional identities for the respondents. Polish respondents presented Jews as being not really part of the Polish nation and none mentioned the Holocaust in their narratives of wartime oppression. For each group the celebration of national festivals has been crucial in retaining links to the nation and binding community. This tends to conflate religion and nationhood, both binding communities and excluding others. The book also demonstrates the attachment to nation in everyday life, with national food particularly important.

The respondents revealed complex emotional and practical ties with ‘home’. Cheap flights and telephone calls and emails have made much of the process of retaining these contacts easier. Burell discusses what the importance is of this ‘small scale transnationalism’, the everyday contact with home, in the lives of the respondents.

The respondents recalled the labour which went into building the community in the early days of migration, including developing the physical infrastructure of Churches and community centres, particularly important for the Polish respondents. The respondents, particularly the women, also reveal the ‘darker side’ of community. Women are less visible in the public face of the community but their greater involvement in the day to day labour which keeps the community together makes them more vulnerable subject to scrutiny and criticism for behaviour which is perceived to bring ‘shame’ or to be ‘un-Polish’. Thus communities could be a source of support but also of isolation and control.

The book, with its focus on individual experience and the every day attachments to nation makes a distinctive contribution to the developing transnational field. The vivid narratives illustrate the profound and continuing emotional costs migration can impose, which are often neglected in the more celebratory writings on transnationalism. The comparative framework generally works well but inevitably limits the exploration of particular themes. Although, for example, some second-generation migrants were interviewed, the relations between first- and second-generations deserve further discussion. With the developing interest in new Polish migration this volume provides an invaluable source, throwing light on the complexity of relations within the community.

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This is a difficult book to evaluate, not because it is an edited volume but because its identity is not clear. The blurb suggests it may be intended to be a reader while editors in the introduction seem to suggest that it is meant to be a showcase of latest Francophone scholarship on nationalism. If the former is the case, it is a curious sort of reader: it does not provide extracts of key texts, but furnishes the reader with an introductory overview of the theme each chapter covers. It feels more like a collection of extended introductory essays on various aspects of nationalism, a mini-encyclopaedia of nationalism. Moreover, if this is a reader (or a sophisticated introductory textbook), it has a major flaw: it does not use the Harvard system for references, and consequently it is tedious and cumbersome to keep track of references. This may be the contributors’ collective stance to ‘Anglo-Saxon hegemony’ or the homogenising force of globalization, but if a reader does not allow easy follow-up of references, it is of little use. On the other hand, if this is meant to be an anthology of latest thinking on nationalism by Francophone scholars, there is rather little that is particularly French/ Francophone in the volume. Many of the references are made to usual suspects (Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson, Smith, Kymlicka and others) and French great names such as Durkheim or Foucault do not appear very often. Perhaps this means that regardless of the primary language for thinking and writing, concerns about nationalism are now widely shared across the world – another possible piece of evidence of globalization, or it may just suggest that this reviewer is hopelessly caught in a nationalist worldview so much so that she looks for national distinctiveness anywhere in life.

The volume takes a thematic approach and covers theories and genesis of nationalism as well as its ‘dark’ side (populism and violence) and post-national issues such as European integration and cosmopolitanism in eleven chapters of varying quality. Among them, Alain Dieckhoff’s chapter on cultural and political nationalism, Paul Zawadzki’s on nationalism, democracy and religion, Philip Resnick’s on cosmopolitanism are sharply-focused and well-written. Dieckhoff points out that because culture is often the cheapest resource any would-be nationalists could mobilise, the distinction between political and cultural nation does not help our analysis of nationalism. Zawadzki dissects the complicated relationship between nationalism and religion by introducing democracy in the picture, and Resnick provides an accessible overview of theoretical possibilities of cosmopolitanism in today’s world. Christophe Jaffrelot’s review of nationalism literature is certainly a tour de force covering so much within a space of 50-odd pages. However, its analytical effectiveness achieved by separating theories of nation and those of nationalism is somehow undermined because the distinction between nation and state gets buried during his fast moving review. Also, Jean-Marc Ferry could have skipped the review of the evolution of nations in his chapter on European integration and concentrated on the discussions of post-national identities for a bigger effect.

Although there is not much distinctively French in the volume, at least one issue appears to emerge as a shared or common concern: the issue of civic and ethnic nation/nationalism. That this comes out as a shared concern is perhaps a reflection of where these scholars stand and what problems they face. On the whole the contributors tend to question the conventional wisdom that holds the French nation as an archetypical civic nation, and many would do it by pointing out that Renan’s conception of nationhood was in fact quite a mystical one. Because the issue is brought out often throughout the volume, Renan and Herder are probably the most frequently quoted theorists. This perhaps illustrates another aspect of this volume: there is not much new and novel here.

In addition, there are several problems with copy editing. Some chapters have both bibliography and notes, some only have notes. Pierre L. van den Bergh’s name is spelt with a capital ‘V’ and ‘D’- perhaps the contributor’s Word did it automatically, but these are just a few examples of many oversights in producing this book, which suggests the publisher’s lack of care.
Perhaps I took this book up with too much expectation. On the whole, however, it has been a disappointing read.

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Maria W. L. Chee provides a first-rate analysis of transnational families that originate from Taiwan but includes members that also permanently live in the United States. Using surveys with 162 women and semi-structured interviews with 35 men and 12 of their husbands, and data from participant observation in Southern California, she explores how nuclear families adapt to mothers and children living in one country while fathers live in another country. What is most unique about her population of interest is their class status and migration history. While labour migration has often forced families to live apart, it is almost always the wage earner (i.e. the migrant labourer) who must move away to work so that s/he may remit earnings to her/his family. Her population is unusual because while these families have in some cases moved back and forth between the U.S. and Taiwan as a unit, most often it is the mothers and children who have migrated to the U.S. while the father has returned to Taiwan to work. In other words, the wage earner is working in his country-of-origin so that he may send remittances to his migrant family. Second, while migrant labourers that have been most studied by social scientists are those who work as unskilled manual labourers, these husbands occupy high level positions as scientists or executives. The families in her sample, for the most part, comfortably occupy the middle or upper-middle class.

Chee provides a thorough review of the history of Chinese American and Taiwanese American migration to the U.S. as well as Taiwan’s tenuous political relationship with China and the arrival of Chiang-Kai Shek and the Kuomingtang (KMT). This history provided the impetus for an ethnic categorization that focuses on differences between individuals who lived in Taiwan before the KMT arrived (benshenren, literally native-born person) and those who came with or after the KMT (waishenren, literally foreign-born person).

Mothers are motivated to move with their children because of educational opportunities in the U.S.. She argues that education is the primary stratifier in Taiwan’s labour market; even among those who work in the same occupation, an individual who is more educated will earn more money than a less educated co-worker. Having an American education is a status symbol, and will allow greater socio-economic mobility for their children. These husbands, on the other hand, occupy high status positions in Taiwan – moving to the U.S. would simply cause their downward mobility. These families see their transnational status as the best way to maximize their income while providing educational opportunities for their children.

Overall, these women have adapted to living without their husbands in the U.S. Some enjoy greater autonomy and more freedom from extended family obligations (especially to mother-in-laws). Others noticed little change because they either had spent a considerable proportion of their marriage living apart or they established close ties despite the long distances. Others reported that husbands were more prone to have extramarital affairs or to maintain separate households with multiple “wives”. Overall, living in a transnational family was not easy for the women in her study.

Chee had little access to husbands, both due to their unwillingness to speak to her but also because she lived in the U.S. and most of them lived in Taiwan. I would have liked to hear more from the children and whether, for instance, they suffered from lower self-esteem or feelings of abandonment. Hence the discussions focus on the perspectives of women and not those of families. In addition, as with most qualitative studies, her sample is not generalizable.
but Chee might have said more about what analytic factors might affect the experiences of other transnational families. While Chee was very careful in the descriptions of her respondents, there was less attention to analytical questions that would illuminate future research on other groups. Certainly there are Korean American transnational families – are their experiences similar? If so, is it because of their racial status in the U.S., their similar experiences with occupation and migration, or other factors? Finally, while the sections on the history of Taiwan were interesting, it was not fully utilized in her analysis of these families. Does the character of ethnic tensions in Taiwan somehow affect these women?

Overall, I found this to be an extremely thoughtful project on a unique population. The book should be of interest to those who study Asian Americans, International Migration and Diasporic Studies, and Gender. It would be appropriate for an advanced undergraduate course or a graduate seminar.

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Andrew Wiese, Columbia-trained, now on the faculty of San Diego State University, is a young historian of American urban and social history who has written a masterpiece of sorts. *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* is a well-researched and well-written historical study that won the 2005 John G. Cawelti book prize of the American Culture Association as well as the Best Book (North American) Award from the Urban History Association. It also received honourable mention for the Robert E. Park book prize from the American Sociological Association. This tome breaks new ground by showing how the history of suburbanization based on the spatial production of race and class ought to be done.

Wiese’s *Places of Their Own* should take a prominent place on the bookshelf of specialists in the fields of race and ethnicity. Moreover, it is a pioneering work that explores a topic largely overlooked by earlier urban historians. Indeed, for many decades urbanists have ignored black suburbia and offered us little in the way of serious studies. The black suburban story has until now been told only in the popular press or in scattered community monographs. To be sure, this subject matter has in the past been largely obscured by the concentration on white middle-class suburbanites and the racial segregation of Levittown suburbs. Wiese explains that African Americans shared in the middle-class suburban dream and that their suburbanization often reinforced racial and community identity rather than adulterate it.

Wiese constructs a timeline of black suburbanization that begins in the early twentieth century. According to his analysis, these early black living spaces were more like white working-class streetcar suburbs than well-planned subdivisions. He demonstrates how African Americans bunched together at the margins of industrial suburbs or near domestic service areas. Increasingly, blacks built their own homes, cared for small gardens, and tended to some livestock and chickens. Further, most black suburbanites embraced a set of values based on traditional rural life that emphasized family, religion, and frugality.

Exploring both the emergent post-WWII black migrations and the expanding black middle class prompted Wiese to examine how these phenomena changed the contours of older black suburbs and growing urban ghettos. Furthermore, in the second half of the twentieth century many white controlled activities – FHA (Federal Housing Administration) policies, public housing programmes, housing-code enforcement, and the like – that should have promoted a better quality of life for African Americans in the nation’s cities and
advanced the growth of black suburbanization had just the opposite effect. When the civil rights movement eventually challenged these state of affairs Wiese illustrates how whites confronted urban blacks with violence and innovative forms of discrimination. The shape of black suburbanization in the South during the 1950s was distinctive. Concerted efforts by black activists in the South, however, did result in the growth of a segregated black suburbia.

Wiese continued his study of black suburbanization into the 1980s and 1990s. During this period the accelerated growth of black suburbs was so substantial that the author dubs it ‘the next Great Migration’. In this part of the book, Wiese focuses on the varieties of affluent black suburbanites and their significant social and economic gains in the post-civil rights era. He also examines the complexities of African American suburbanization as the black middle class tries to protect its class standing while at the same time dealing with growing class divisions within the national black community.

Wiese’s book is a major contribution to the scholarship of African American urban history. It will be of interest to a wide variety of specialists. His major innovation is to place black suburbanites as active agents of historical change at the centre of his research and writing. Much of the time, the book is about black upward mobility and black successes. He also deals, in a balanced way, with all America’s troubling racial problems that still persist in the twenty-first century. Places of Their Own, rich in fresh insights into the complexity that is black urban America, offers us a groundbreaking addition to the literature on American urban history in regard to ethnic and racial relations. He constructs an insightful depiction of black suburbanization based on regional variations over time. Wiese has written a book rich in suggestions that succeeds in every way and points the way towards new research.

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Eminent historian David M. Reimers provides a sweeping long-range examination of other-than-European immigrants to the United States in his latest book. Part I is a brief description of pre-1940 immigration of Blacks/Africans, Asians, and Hispanics (mostly Mexicans) to the United States, and Part II picks up the story of the immigration of different groups of Hispanics, Asians, Blacks, Middle Easterners, and Cuban and Asian refugees to the United States from 1940 to the present. There is also a list of suggested readings organized by subject and immigrant group and an index.

This book is an invaluable reference on American immigration and ethnic history. Drawing upon a wealth of secondary sources, primarily books written by historians and social scientists, Reimers offers a comprehensive account of the ‘other immigrants’ (or ‘new immigrants’, a term preferred by many scholars – see James P. Smith and Barry Edmonston, (eds.), The New Americans: Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Effects of Immigration, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1997, for example). The breadth of coverage is impressive. This is the book to turn to for accounts of Argentine immigrants to the Zambrano family’s journey from El Salvador to the U.S. The book’s two dominant themes, one, that the history of African, Asian, and Hispanic migration to the U.S. goes back a long time and two, that broad racial/ethnic labels mask the tremendous diversity of contemporary Asian, Black, and Hispanic immigrants, are described well.

However, even in a book that has so much that is praiseworthy, this reviewer would have preferred to see several things done differently. First, such an important book should have a different title. When immigrants from non-European origins are referred to as ‘Other Immigrants’ (italics added), stereotypes and ingrained attitudes about who are authentic and
therefore *real* Americans are perpetuated. Asians, Blacks, and Hispanics are ‘others’ in contrast to Whites/Europeans (‘us’). Knowing Professor Reimers work, I have no doubt that this was not his intention at all. Indeed, the author refers to an emerging multicultural U.S. society as a result of increased diversity and immigration. Still, one wishes that the book could have been about ‘New Immigrants and the Global Origins of Americans’.

Second, I would have liked an expanded explanation for choosing 1940 as the dividing line between Part I and Part II. Most scholars of the new immigration to the U.S. locate 1965 as the watershed year for large-scale immigration from non-European sources.

Third, it is disappointing that the book failed to provide an adequate discussion of implications of the new immigration for changing racial and ethnic relations in the United States. Given the central role of race and colour in the author’s description of Asian, Black, and Hispanic migrations and experiences, there are just two short paragraphs in the epilogue that refer to increased intermarriage and implications for the social construction and meaning of racial categories such as Asian, Black, Hispanic, or White in U.S. society. By raising the topic, the author acknowledges its relevance for the book’s subject, and could have referred the reader to the extensive demographic and sociological literature on intermarriage.

Fourth, the book’s strength – a comprehensive coverage of many new immigrant groups – is also a weakness. Too often, descriptions of particular groups are brief and jump from group to group without any attempt at transition (for example, Chapter 5, Central and South Americans, with descriptions of immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, etc.). At a minimum, sub-headings would be helpful to alert the reader that a different group’s migration history and experience is now being described.

Fifth, knowing Professor Reimers’ scholarship, one yearns for more analysis and interpretation, and less description and recounting of information from secondary sources.

Despite the above comments, ‘Other Immigrants’ is an excellent account of the growing and diverse population of racial and ethnic immigrants that is transforming U.S. society in profound ways. It is indeed ironic that it took a book written by a scholar from the ‘mainstream’ (that is, of White/European origin) to increase the visibility and contributions of minority groups that have been historically rendered invisible in mainstream U.S. society. As Professor Reimers pointed out in his book, there have been many books written about Africans, Asians, Hispanics, and other non-mainstream immigrants to the U.S., but these were not read widely, perhaps because sometimes, their authors were from these minority backgrounds and were not known to mainstream scholars. One hopes that as the new immigrants and their descendants establish roots in the U.S. and become part of a new more inclusive mainstream America, their scholarship will be equally known and read as this worthy book by David Reimers.

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Although the authors of this book don’t make the point, its publication comes at a time when the idea of an inclusive multicultural society, let alone a multicultural nationalism, is under media and political attack for its alleged divisiveness. This is no doubt because their book is, as the title suggests, concerned with Scotland, a part of the UK where the criticism of multiculturalism has been less strident, in part because of the very subject they are concerned with. A multicultural nationalism is indeed a difficult thing to conceive, a near oxymoron as
Hussain and Miller put it. As they ably demonstrate in the first chapter, even the more benign civic conceptions of nationhood often unconsciously hinge upon cultural and historic demarkers. But by the end they have gone some way to demonstrating that a multicultural nationalism is a political and social reality through a skilful handling of qualitative and quantative data.

The book is principally based on ethnic English and Pakistanis in Scotland. The groups are not strictly comparable in that the former appears solely settlers while the latter contains first- and second-generation immigrants. However, this doesn’t seem to matter greatly as although differences of opinion and experience are influenced by place of birth, there seems no overriding divide. As you would obviously expect, both groups have strong perceptions of Scotland but the stereotypes are jumbled. Among other things, the English are apt to emphasize Scottish bigotry yet multiculturalism (albeit in a four part British sense), while Pakistanis praise the friendliness of the Scottish people and the relatively small numbers of ethnic minorities north of the border. Such things seem to be key to the self declared desire of Asians to integrate into Scottish society. This is consistent with the contemporary character of Scottish nationalism as set out in chapters three and four. The authors show that the strength of Scottish nationalism – as measured by self identification amongst majority Scots and SNP voting – has no positive effect on Islamophobia. In fact, the reverse is just true: the stronger the national identification the less the anti-Muslim feeling. Unsurprisingly exactly the opposite is true with Anglophobia, in part validating a displacement argument that Scots have little trouble with Muslims saving their enmities for the ‘Auld Enemy’.

This said, the authors note that the jokes and harassment the minorities experience are more serious and persistent towards Muslims than the English. But despite this ethnic humour has a greater impact upon English perceptions of exclusion, attributable perhaps to their integration. The evidence suggests that the greater the level of integration – as determined by friendships, English language acquisition, choice of newspaper etc. – among Muslims, the greater the perception and experience of harassment. The English are highly integrated through these indices – hence the hurt when they are the butt of jokes, etc. From this Multicultural Nationalism develops one of its most interesting findings: that the primary identity of Pakistanis as Muslims enables a secondary territorial identity that tilts towards their inclusion as Scots in Scotland. Less surprisingly, the English tend to emphasize their Britishness, but deny the possibility that they can, or presumably want, to be Scottish. The established multicultural trajectory of Scottish nationalism has been accentuated post devolution despite the Islamophobia generated by 9/11 and because of the British invasion of Iraq. The latter saw Scottish Muslims desert Labour en masse for the SNP and now higher levels of support for independence than the population as a whole.

One of the many strengths of the book is that one rarely has the impression that the authors have ‘bent the stick’ too far in identifying a multicultural trend in Scottish nationalism. Nevertheless, at times the stark reality of some of the data might have been underlined. For instance, it might be true that there is no correlation between nationalism and Islamophobia unlike Anglophobia. It is also true that among ‘majority Scots’ those opposed to English-Scottish marriage is tiny compared to those who would be unhappy if a relative married a Muslim. A more serious omission is recognition of the limitation of the political elite interview group whose testimony on the various issues frames, often in a very useful fashion, some of the chapters. They appear a decidedly left/liberal bunch. This obviously doesn’t invalidate their contribution, but it would have been interesting to have heard from some more conservative-minded Scots.

If these are only methodological caveats to a tight and well argued book, I have one criticism of substance to make of Multicultural Nationalism. It is that the ordinary Scottish voice, both more or less nationalist, is missing. While Hussain and Miller have successfully shown that Scottish nationalism does not have an Islamophobic cutting edge, one wonders about its civic depth. Now it would be wrong to criticise Hussain and Miller for not undertaking another research project and in its absence one should obviously not assume that once the Scottish surface is scratched an exclusive cultural nationalism will inevitably be
revealed. My concern is that a failure to acknowledge this issue is attributable to a conception of identity formation as set out in the introduction that is overly loaded towards minorities agency. The limitations it encounters in the face of the identity boundaries set by the majority is mentioned but then seemingly passed over.

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Chan Kwok-bun, **CHINESE IDENTITIES, ETHNICITY AND COSMOPOLITANISM**, Oxon, Great Britain: Routledge, 2005 (Chinese Worlds Series), xviii +166 pp., £65.00 (hb).

Immigrants can become enmeshed in transnational lives without realizing it. Chan Kwok-bun personifies this pattern. Born in 1950 while his parents were fleeing from China to Hong Kong, he later migrated to Canada to study sociology and went on to become a leading scholar of the Chinese diaspora. Chan's latest book is a distinctive blend of sociology, psychology, and philosophy. Its primary focus is on the immigrant as ‘the ultimate forerunner in the evolutionary game of cultural and civilisational transformation’ (p.139). The book analyses this issue in eight chapters, all of which are revisions of previously published journal articles and contributions to anthologies.

The chapters cover the Chinese in Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand and Canada. These locales have theoretical importance. Hong Kong has a very homogenous population in which speakers of Cantonese are predominant. The population of Singapore is 77 per cent Chinese, but from a range of Chinese dialect groups, with Hokkien and Teochew being the largest. Yet the state-sponsored ideology of cultural pluralism means that the smaller populations of Malays and Indians gain a social significance beyond their numbers. In Thailand the Chinese account for approximately 10 per cent of the population but they occupy a strategic position as a middleman minority despite being assimilated into Thai culture and society. In Canada many Chinese immigrants are professionals and entrepreneurs, although they account for only a small fraction of the total population.

The Chinese experiences in these four countries provide a ‘natural experiment’ in the formation of ethnic identity under varying structural conditions. Each chapter in the book, however, is a self-contained essay rather than a comparative case study. A concluding chapter especially written for this book would have allowed Chan to synthesize for readers his extensive knowledge of the Chinese in Asia and North America. While the book’s parts do not form a whole, there are many fascinating findings and insightful observations.

Readers of this journal will appreciate Chan's skill in juggling both primordialist and constructionist conceptions of ethnicity. Consistent with the post-modernist paradigm, he deconstructs ‘Chinese’ by noting its many and contested meanings. In Singapore, for example, there are class and generational differences in Chinese identity and the state actively shapes ethnic relations. Yet Chan also demonstrates that the Chinese almost universally cite phenotype and surname to define who is Chinese. Indeed, this notion is most prevalent among Christian converts. Chan's insight that the Chinese have a much more ascriptive definition of in-group membership than the Malays (who accept converts to Islam) suggests that ethnic groups vary in the degree to which they conceptualize ethnicity as primordial and constructed.

Chan's analysis is also on the cutting edge of research in its focus on the local meanings of ethnicity. Too often studies of ethnicity imply a single national trend for an ethnic group. Chan refutes this perspective through a fascinating analysis of religious and cultural festivals in Wang Thong, a market town in northern Thailand. The century-old procession of the goddess Caw Mae Thong Kham was originally a ritual conducted by Chinese immigrants but is now celebrated by the community as a whole. Conversely, the much less popular river boat race ceremony was revived by government officials to cement solidarity among agricultural organizations established by rural development policy. Chan thus theorizes that
an ethnic group’s integration into a host community is partly contingent on some of its traditions becoming part of local popular culture.

A final insight gained from a reading of Chan’s book is that transnationalism affects some immigrants more than others. He notes that a transnational lifestyle requires financial resources and technological skills (e.g., placing an international telephone call or using email). Gender is also a variable. Reversing the nineteenth-century pattern of Chinese male immigration, in Canada the ‘astronaut families’ of Hong Kong usually consist of a wife accompanied by a child. It is the husband who typically shuttles back and forth. These frequent flyers literally gain a cosmopolitan worldview which Chan argues increasingly defines modern migration.

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How do ethnic minority communities respond to legal cultures that are radically at odds with their own? How does the legal system in which ethnic minority communities settle (largely as a result of ‘large-scale immigration’ (p.4) manage the ‘conflicts’ that occur when two or more legal cultures clash? These delicate and controversial questions underpin Prakash Shah’s study of the impact of migration from South Asian countries, especially Bangladesh and Pakistan, on the content and structure of the UK constitution and the English legal system. In particular, Shah seeks to explore how a legal culture, which is profoundly state-centred, is challenged or weakened by the ‘quite distinct approach to the place of state law’ (p.5) characteristic of South Asian and African laws. Shah engages these questions through exploration of key instances of what he describes as ‘conflict situations between the British official legal order … and the unofficial laws of ethnic minorities …’ (p.9). A noteworthy and controversial example of such conflicts is centred on ‘the manner in which homicide specifically is perceived’ (p.73) and see generally chapter 4. Shah’s exploration of how legal disputes that stem from differentiated legal cultures are sometimes ‘silently’ managed through the ‘elasticity’ (p.8) of ethnic minority legal cultures and less subtly through the state’s ‘immigration laws, race relations laws and through ethnic minority legal studies’ (p.13) presents the reader with a complex and nuanced account of English law and as such represents a welcome addition to existing literature.

The study is arranged around eight chapters. Chapter one establishes the broad framework of the ensuing analysis and it is apparent that the author is heavily influenced by Masiji Chiba and Werner Menski’s works on comparative legal cultures. The core argument advanced here is that unless attention is paid to the ‘subjective perspective of the recipient of legal pluralism’ (p.9) in accounts of the nature of the UK constitution and English law, the impression that both remain monolithic wholes, untouched by other cultures, will remain.

The remainder of the work seeks to demonstrate the various ways in which more pluralistic notions of law come to challenge state law. Chapter 2 examines the impact of the field of ‘ethnic minority legal studies’ (p.1) in the recognition and management of conflicting legal cultures. The penultimate ‘chapter, Chapter 7 on expert evidence, complements this argument.

In Chapter 3 ‘The Incoming Tide: the disaporic challenge to the British Constitutional Order’ the author poses the question of how immigration affects’ hitherto accepted forms of governance’ (p.43) using constitutional law literature as indicative or otherwise of the impact of differing forms of governance. He argues that constitutional literature is conspicuously silent on the changes to constitutional form wrought about by immigration, (pp. 54–60, especially).
Chapter 4 ‘Criminal (In)justice in a Plural Society: South Asians and the English Law of Homicide’, argues that ‘cultural and legal conflicts’ (p.68) are brought into sharp relief in the context of English court’s adjudication on so-called honour killings, which fail to take account of differing conceptions of the nature of homicide, evident in Islamic and Hindu law.

Chapter 5 ‘Attitudes to Polygamy in English law’ is probably the best supported of all the chapters, particularly in its historical treatment of how recognition of differing forms of matrimonial arrangements in UK law were compromised, largely as a result of the exigencies of immigration control.

Chapter 6, ‘Bangladeshi legal pluralism and English Law’ essentially argues that English Law is resistant to ‘the facts of Bangladeshi legal pluralism in Britain’ (p.123) and explores how the status of women and children is negatively affected by this failure.

The final chapter ‘Who do we think we are? British Nationality in the European context’ includes some fascinating information concerning the background of the UK’s negotiations into the EEC and specifically the impact on these negotiations of the UK’s complicated immigration history.

The work is at its best in its treatment of a vast history of ethnic settlements and in its description of different legal cultures. It is less successful as a critical or theoretical analysis of these cultural divergences, and this must be attributed to the author’s neglect of a specifically critical legal literature to complement the critical anthropology with which he seems more familiar. In view of the author’s claim that the principal role of ethnic minority pedagogy is to ‘enable critical thinking about law to take place’ (p.38) the whole text is unaccountably silent on critical legal studies literature.

Overall, the author poses many an interesting question, but sadly denies himself the tools with which to adequately address these. For example, although Chapters 3 and 4 are potentially the most interesting, at the same time they are the most flawed. Chapter 3 contains some fascinating comparative material (see pp.73–77), but the ensuing application to cases decided in English courts is disappointingly thin (pp.70–87).

Ultimately, I was left somewhat puzzled as to what the author really means by legal pluralism. I was left with the feeling that for him it is something of a one-way stream, for there is little discussion of the impact of English legal culture on the Bangladeshi and Pakistani subjects whose experiences of law form the basis of the study.

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“Shakin’ Up” Race and Gender is a provocative book that provides a comparative analysis of three cultures, Puerto Rican, African American and Chicano during the 1960s and 1970s, a time period, according to Marta Sanchez that represents an evolution in literature and culture for these three cultures. Sanchez focuses on interculturalism during the time frame of 1965 to 1973 during which she identifies significant major events such as the Civil Rights Movement, the end of the Vietnam War and the beginning of Watergate that she believes influenced literary and intellectual works related to the Puerto Rican, African American and Chicano cultures that she examines. Further, she states that this time period is extremely critical as it also reflects an important turning point in the development of these three marginalized cultures and the entire United States. This insightful analysis places considerable emphasis on the fact that this book is an examination of the intercultural connections of these three cultures and not merely a multicultural approach, which provides
a culturally isolated perspective. Emphatically, she argues against the idea of cultural isolation and insists that cultures are inextricably connected by history, place, time, and out of necessity have little choice but to participate in a multiracial, multilingual and multi-ethnic society. Sanchez convincingly demonstrates that while each of these cultures is different there are intercultural similarities in their relationships to white ethnics as well as cultural imagery, cultural perceptions and biased assessments of these cultures, derived from a normative model, yet shared by these cultures.

She establishes early in her analysis that Puerto Ricans, African Americans and Chicanos are linked to white ethnics by their arrangement on a subdominant to dominant axis. Essentially, this explains why they have been racialized and defined as pathological, dysfunctional and dangerous, compared to whites who have been characterized as productive citizens in both literary narratives by novelists as well as in the intellectual discourse of individuals Sanchez describes as prominent and public intellectuals.

Sanchez uses the La Malinche trope which originates from, and is deeply rooted in, Mexican and Chicano literature and cultures which symbolizes betrayal, enslavement and cultural negotiation and is revealed through three major literary narratives published during this time, *Down These Mean Streets*, by Piri Thomas, *Manchild in the Promised Land*, by Claude Brown and *The Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo*, by Oscar Zeta Acosta. She states that these characteristics have also been attributed to African American and Puerto Rican Cultures. It should be noted that while La Malinche is the megatrope that overwhelmingly serves as the primary basis for her analysis, she also identifies other tropes that have evolved from the La Malinche trope, that also have utility in an analysis of African American and Puerto Rican Cultures. Sanchez clearly establishes her objective, using race and gender, which is to show how the acts of betrayal, treason and deceit which have been assumed to be unique to Mexican and Chicano cultures are likely to have applicability to other cultural contexts as well. This becomes evident as she examines the works of three well-known intellectuals, Octavio Paz, Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Oscar Lewis, in their writings on Chicanos, African Americans and Puerto Ricans respectively during this time period. She also identifies misogyny relative to the trope as inherent, albeit somewhat implicit, in the intellectual productions of these intellectuals relative to these cultures.

When Sanchez subjects Paz, Moynihan and Lewis’ works to detailed analyses based on the trope La Malinche it becomes apparent that each of these cultures shares an intercultural connection as they are viewed similarly in assessing the social problems that they confront. For example, women in each culture as wives and mothers are blamed for the problems encountered by their families and their culture. In each society, structural factors are not cited as the major systemic obstacles that these cultures experience, but that women, as wives and mothers, contributed significantly because of their values, behaviours and role relationships to males in their culture, to the inability of these families to overcome institutional barriers. This particular thesis is refuted by Sanchez who explains that when the maternal culpability argument is applied to African American mothers and the societal problems that their families experience there is no evidence to support this characterization of the African American family as matriarchal nor the tenet that African American women engage in behaviours that emasculate African American husbands and sons. Rather, she cogently presents examples and explications of how African American women, both mothers and grandmothers, provide information, strategies and emotional support that enable African American males, especially sons, to function effectively in African American culture and in the larger society while retaining their self esteem and their masculinity.

In conclusion, Sanchez’s comparative analysis using an intercultural approach shows the connections that exist between cultures and is restorative by reaffirming that these cultures have agency which they use in their relations with those who have a monopoly on power and wealth in the United States.
This book is a valuable contribution to the literature, and would be very useful to students, policy-makers and scholars interested in race, gender, social inequality and cultural studies.

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This volume seeks to explore the intersection between gender, race and class. It is successful in providing a general introductory text covering these issues for students entering undergraduate study. Its concise and broad content make it a useful text to accompany the teaching of generic sociological courses. It is clear that the authors had their teaching needs in mind when writing the book. The book, however, would not be suitable for upper level teaching as it does not cover the issues in sufficient depth. For teachers and students at this level it would be frustratingly limited. Gender, race, and class are, of course, basic ingredients of most social scientists’ repertoires. While connections among these dimensions are routinely emphasized in separate works their analytical connections are rarely the main focus of text books. As such a book like that reviewed here is significant because it highlights connections between several dimensions of the social world rather than focusing on just one. The authors wish to draw attention to questions of commonalities as well as differences which surround these issues. Accordingly, the volume is organized to explore both these themes, the first related to connections between gender, race, and class and the second to the simultaneous importance of exploring commonalities and differences.

Chapter 1 explores the commonalities and Chancer and Watkins elaborate a conceptual vocabulary that is used throughout the book for the dual goals just mentioned. Here the authors present five ideas that have proved extremely useful in their experience of teaching a course focusing on these issues, and which arise again and again, in the study of gender, race, and class in the United States and abroad. These are 1) determinism/essentialism versus social constructionism, 2) universalism versus cultural relativism/historical specificity, 3) reductionism/autonomy versus complexity, 4) Chancer’s A/B/C analytical framework, 5) identity versus coalition politics. Then, in the remaining chapters, they continue to aim at fulfilling these two objectives. The first half of each of these chapters introduces the study of gender, race, and class respectively by providing what they hope are practical overviews of extant theories. How can gender be defined and understood? What are the various ways of defining and discussing race? Finally, what are the main intellectual frameworks that have been used in the study of class?

But the second half of each chapter attempts to go further. In the chapter on gender, for example, after reviewing three ways of defining this area of study, the authors proceed with the question ‘What has been left out of this picture?’ Here the authors’ objective is to exemplify, as clearly as possible, problems bequeathed and benefits created when taking race into account as a way of rendering our understanding of gender more complex and multi-dimensional. Similarly, in chapter 3’s discussion of race, they turn to complexities that arise when introducing issues of gender and class into the study of race as a social/sociological category. Last but not least, after chapter 4’s discussion of various paradigms of class, they look at the consequences of ignoring (and the greater richness resultant from introducing) considerations of race and gender.

Chapter 5 is aimed at bringing together the material previously discussed and looks at ongoing debates within each area. For instance, we discuss feminist debates over sex and sexuality that have dealt with race and class secondarily. This concluding chapter attempts to show where serious analytic omissions can arise from approaches that prioritize gender, race, or class rather than treating their separate contributions more synthetically. This chapter also
examines well known case-studies – for instance, Bourgois’s ethnography of drug dealing in East Harlem entitled *In Search of Respect* – that have consciously sought to incorporate gender, race, and class perspectives. What are the intellectual advantages of a more multidimensional sociological sensibility, and have attempts at such incorporation worked? Chapter 5 also broaches, by way of conclusion, questions of social theory, to which this book intends to contribute. These questions include the extent to which this subject matter may have the potential for shedding light on deeper questions of why and how human beings come to discriminate particularly on the basis of gender, race and class, with often terrible consequences, in the first place.

It should be noted, as the authors themselves acknowledge, that nearly all the examples used in this text are US based, these being the instances and literature with which the authors are most familiar. However, their hope is that the analytical perspectives and tools presented in the book can be usefully applied to a variety of other national and/or international contexts.

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Race, ethnicity and nationality, the greatest challenges of humankind, became repeatedly the focus of various social disciplines including sociology, anthropology and politics. Yet, until recently, philosophical investigations of them would be marginalized – a neglect not entirely unconnected to the lack of sensitivity or coherence characterizing philosophical engagement with them over the last few centuries. Jorge J.E. Gracia, SUNY Distinguished Professor in the Department of Philosophy at SUNY-Buffalo, departs in this book on a systematic theorisation of them, both on metaphysical and epistemological levels. Convinced that philosophy ‘functions as a watchdog of other branches of human learning’ (xvi), Gracia decides to rid of the specificity of ‘race’, ‘ethnicity’ and ‘nationality’, and study them as concepts in need of disentanglement. His theoretical inspiration derives from Anthony Appiah’s *Color Conscious* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1996) for race, Angelo Corlett’s *Race, Ethnicity and Reparations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2003) and W.E.B. DuBois’ *The World and Africa* (New York: Kraus-Thomas Organisation 1976) for ethnicity, and David Miller’s *On Nationality* (Oxford: Clarendon 1995) for nationality.

Chapter 1 presents in detail the main arguments that can be made against the use of these concepts: epistemic, factual, moral, political and pragmatic. But Gracia disputes their abolition, as their use enables both an understanding of the past and a ‘charting of the future’ (p. 18). Chapter 2 lays the conceptual foundations for a distinction of race, ethnicity and nationality. Here Gracia debates the reasons that lead to the blurring of analytical distinctions in academic, public and political discourse. This opens up opportunities for an individual examination of the concepts in the next three chapters. After exploring a number of criteria for ethnic classification in the process of understanding ethnicity, such as culture, language and self-identification (chapter 3), he moves on to present what he calls the ‘familial-historical view’. Following van den Berghe’s contention that ethnic groups are an extension of kinship bonds, Gracia concludes that ‘the unity of an ethnos is similar to that of a family’ (p. 49). *Like* families, ethnic groups are not homogenous but their bonding is sustained because they are historically related ‘like a father is to a daughter’ (p. 50). This approach, largely based on a metaphor, is debatable: associations of kinship with ethnic belonging and identification have been mobilized in public discourse in different political contexts, promoting practices of discrimination and exclusion.
Although Gracia claims that he does not believe in the purity of ethnic groups, he appears to replicate a contentious political argument. He commences his analysis of ‘race’ (chapter 4) with a similar argument, explaining that on this occasion two conditions need to be satisfied for racial belonging: first, members of a racial group must be linked by descent to other members of the group and second, each member of the group must have at least one genetically transmitted and perspicuous feature associated with the group. According to this formula, races are different from ethne because the latter do not depend on descent connections. Again, Gracia’s take on ‘race’ does not entirely escape established racial definitions that originate in political discourse. His analysis is predominantly concerned with phenotypic classifications of human beings, sidestepping the fact that racial classifications themselves are the product of past and present geopolitical dynamics. Gracia’s ‘common-bundle view’ of race generates a lot of confusion: when he discusses the practice of ‘passing’ (as black, white), he overlooks the social pressures involved in the process. According to his formula, if one ‘passes’ as a member of a race, then ‘in fact one is a member of that race, insofar as one is linked by descent to some members of that race and […] shares in some of the perspicuous features that are generally considered to characterise the race’. (p. 91). This clashes with his statement that he does not believe in biological conceptions of race, since this is precisely what he reproduces in his analysis. Chapter 5 on nationality presents a more comprehensive argument: nations are political entities tied by a system of laws, not simply rules of belonging. This is called ‘the political view’, and is inspired by Miller’s work. Of course this is a thesis that has been voiced by Ernest Renan first, but Gracia engages very little with Renan’s work (p. 113). Other theorists of nationalism (e.g. Anthony Smith, Ernst Gellner, Ellie Kedourie, John Breuilly) become footnotes, although they mirror his analysis. The final chapter revisits and recapitulates previous chapters, recognizing the importance of an ethical engagement in the analysis of race, ethnicity and nationality as dangerous socio-political forces.

This is an innovative, though flawed, study of three much-debated concepts. Perhaps Gracia’s commitment to early Wittgensteinian analytical philosophy, which dictates the study of pure ‘concepts’ in sterilised academic environments, disagrees with established socio-historical approaches that respect context – often called upon, but rarely respected in this book. Read with caution, the volume may inspire further work on these contentious fields of social inquiry.

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Although the title -and its host series- suggest otherwise, this book is not the type of flag-waving polemical tome that often populates discussions about legitimacy and the European Union. Its aims are more modest. However its achievements are in many ways more substantial because the work is philosophically informative but grounded in a real world understanding. This is no mean achievement. Those wishing for descriptions of EU and nation-state institutional arrangements should look elsewhere, and let’s face it, are not short of options.

Weale starts out from the concept of citizenship which allows fresh insight. The evolution of citizenship from within nations is depicted as an expansion of meaningfully achieved and realized rights, socially, in the Marshallian sense, and beyond. Multi-levelled EU governance unquestionably provides a unique political framework that is part of the brave new world of politics transformed by globalizing forces, but also leaves us with a nation-state, that seems to mean less than before, but often remains the most authoritative political force. This is where
we are situated and is the political world for which Weale evaluates ‘democratic citizenship’. Put simply (p.138): ‘What might the rise of the system of EU governance mean for the goods of democratic citizenship?’

Rather than ‘we must become Europeans’ or ‘we must be cosmopolitans’ or any of the weak-minded and empty rallying calls for ‘transforming our citizenship’ muted in the academy to solve the EU’s deficits, Weale turns the question around. He examines the nature of citizenship, substantially, to assess the democratic potential of the political world in Europe today, not as it should be according to academic preference, but as it is. This is the harder, but actually the more relevant and valuable field of inquiry.

By answering a question, Weale takes the focus on the EU’s political legitimacy, away from the surface of failed referendums, to a deeper consideration of what the EU actually does, and doesn’t do, and what it potentially can do, politically, that impacts on the lives of its citizens. This requires a depth of knowledge, historically, and specifically on EU politics and policy-making, that grounds and informs the inquiry. It is a major intellectual achievement built through the distillation of a leading scholar’s knowledge into a precise thesis. Whether one agrees or disagrees, this original contribution can certainly not be ignored.

Weale’s take on Europe and citizenship has a very British flavour. It is realist, builds from the nation-state upwards, and follows T.H. Marshall’s footprints. It exposes the EU’s political limitations with a reasoned critique rather than scepticism, though the EU fails most of its exams. A key flaw is a deficit in representing interests that arises from a lack of party competition, or an equivalent to the function of party competition at the national level. Thus, Hix’s assertion that party behaviour operating along ideological rather than national lines in the European Parliament makes it ‘legitimate politics in the making’ is exposed as wishful thinking beyond plausibility. For Weale (p.140): ‘From the point of view of citizens, strengthening parliament is not the same as strengthening democratic input, when the line of connection between voters and legislators is a long one. However much parties in the European Parliament vote along ideological rather than national lines, they do not perform the governance-populace linkage function that parties at the national level perform.’ In addition, Weale considers the mushrooming Brussels’ NGO and lobby group sector to be incapable of rectifying this deficit for representing interests (p140-1): ‘we should think of the Commission and other policy makers in the European Union as being particularly prone to outside influence, with no guarantee that the interests in question are impartial.’ This is quite an indictment from someone with a deep understanding of environmental politics, often seen as an EU’s ‘success story’.

Weale stops short of drawing a road map for resolving the EU’s limitations. This is in keeping with the restrained argumentation, but such speculation would surely have added something. All these processes must be leading somewhere. Surely exposing shortfalls in the EU’s political mechanisms ought to hold a clue of how to address them? Weale offers a ‘happy end’ to Europe’s problem by invoking human will (p.144): ‘people can make more of their future than circumstances suggest.’ However, without direction, this ‘will’ is somewhat blind. Nonetheless, this is a tour de force to be recommended to all with scholarly interests in citizenship and Europe.

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‘A man who leaves home sets up the impossibility of his return’, the old saying goes. Or does he? This is the question that this volume sets out to develop and answer – the premise being
that, whereas outward-bound journeys have spawned a vast scholarship, their homeward counterparts have been slow in attracting our attention. The literature on return migration is still relatively scant, and tends to de-problematise the notion of ‘home’ and the practice of homecoming, as straightforward and quasi-natural. We know a lot on integration and very little on re-integration.

Homecomings seeks to redress the balance, using ethnographic materials from various migrant groups spanning four continents. The book would have benefited from a stronger Introduction. As it is, the editors embark on a whirlwind tour of the literature on migration (190 references for less than 20 pages of writing) and quite forget to portray in any sustained way what is so particular about their book. We learn of the many assumptions and notions to be challenged but it is up to us to decipher the outcome. The haze of rhizomes, roots, flux, flows and such chic, makes some sections of the two Introductory chapters feel turgid and pointless – a shame really, because the rest of the book contains much that is useful.

The case-study chapters in fact make for healthy reading, consisting as they do of a wealth of solid ethnography and a very tolerable level of fashionable hot air. Four of the ten studies deal with the Jewish diaspora – even though they make it amply clear that, as I have said elsewhere, diasporic communities are not homogenising entities but rather groups that manage to draw boundaries (in this case Jewishness) around a heterogeneous reality.

I shall limit myself to outlining the more profitable themes. Though hardly surprising given the breadth of ‘transnational’ theories of migration, we learn that leaving home and returning are not events in a chronological sequence. Homecoming is often an ongoing project and one plagued at every turn with practical and other difficulties. The more convoluted the outward route, the more problematic eventual alignments with a homeland become-as Ruth Behar puts it, ‘where was I to place myself as a Cuban-American Jew of mixed Ashkenazi-Sephardic heritage?’ (206). This often requires symbolic reconstructions of community (and, hopefully, locality), as in the case of black Hebrews who sought to settle in Israel, and who ‘worked hard at interpreting the texts of the Bible, heeding the quaint expressions of their elders, and exploring historical sources to establish their identity as the children of Israel’ (Fran Markowitz 193).

Much of the book’s contents can be located within the anthropology (and especially sociology, given that the latter has often worked within the framework of national ‘host’ societies) of integration and assimilation, simply by adding the prefix ‘re-’. The range of complexities return migrants encounter in homecoming reads like a list of usual suspects. ‘Returnee-stayee social relations’, for instance, or skin colour and notions of race – as Lisa Anteby-Yemini tells us, ‘since [Falashas] have found themselves for the first time as a black minority in a “white” society, it is their encounter with new racial categories that is becoming a major theme in the integration process of the Ethiopian immigrants in Israel’ (157). Per se, this and the many similar arguments found in this volume are somewhat trite. Within the context of a book on homecomings, however, they gain a fresh vigour and serve convincingly to problematise the notion of ‘home’.

Spatially, the trajectories of return criss-cross with the ever-shifting ones of nation-states. A recurrent theme of the book is the continued relevance of the nation-state and the practices of citizenship in patterning experiences of homecoming. This brings us of course to history and events. Thirty years ago Pierre Bourdieu reminded us that the time factor is crucial to understand the intricacies of gift-exchange. Possibly the most telling sub-text of the various contributions is the idea that journeys and imaginings belong in time as well as space, and that our analyses must factor in both categories if they are to make sense.

In sum, Homecomings constitutes a welcome addition to the social-scientific literature on migration, making it clear that even if leaving one’s home may not quite set up the impossibility of return, it certainly complicates matters.

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