

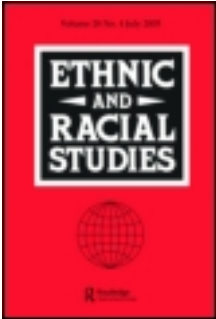
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### Book reviews

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## Book reviews

Aziz Al-Azmeh, **ISLAM AND MODERNITIES**, 3rd edition, London: Verso, 2009, xv + 234 pp., £12.99 (paper).

The past two decades have seen increasing debate about the role of Islam in contemporary societies. In the context of the study of race and ethnic relations much of the focus has been on the position of Muslim minorities within the changing cultural and political environment of Western societies. There is by now a whole range of books, edited collections and specialist journals that explore various dimensions of this question.

Al-Azmeh's book, which is now in its third edition, can be seen as an engaging and challenging contribution to the analysis of the engagement between Islam and modernity. Although much of this book was written during the 1990s and 2000s, it has a surprisingly fresh feel to it and it remains an important contribution to scholarly debate. This is partly because Al-Azmeh engages with many of the issues that are currently the subject of intense political and policy debate within both Western and Muslim societies. It is also because this edition includes some new material that helpfully brings the discussion more up to date and addresses issues of current concern.

Al-Azmeh's account seems to me to make three important contributions to the existing bodies of scholarship and research in this field. First, he provides the reader with a forceful and engaging analysis of the dangers of holding onto ahistorical notions of the West based on a kind of 'reverse orientalism' (p. 200). This is an important corrective to much of the current literature in this field, which has tended to rely on a rather uncritical reading of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in order to analyse the changing dynamics of the relationship between Islam and the West. By contrast Al-Azmeh offers us a more nuanced and historically evolving account of the relationship, and in doing so he provides some important insights into the complex historical and intellectual trends that have shaped the relationship between the West and Islam.

Second, he develops a deep critique of what he sees as fixed notions of Islam as a culture outside of historical and social contexts (p. 199). Al-Azmeh's account moves away from over-generalized ideas about the 'culture' of diverse societies and communities. This is a particularly useful element of this volume, and it provides readers with important critical perspectives on this question. In his challenge to some of the dominant contemporary accounts of Islam he also is able to guide readers through a wealth of both historical and contemporary scholarship about the evolution and development of religious, cultural and philosophical values within Islam.

Third, Al-Azmeh distances his analysis from what he sees as a kind of 'postmodern obscurantism' that relies on fashionable theoretical abstractions to analyse the role of Islam in the current political and ideological climate. This is partly because he sees such accounts as being developed on the basis of rather limited scholarship and historical knowledge of Islam and the political and social realities of Islamic societies. His own approach seems to be much more concerned with the need to redefine the terms of scholarly debate about Islam in the humanities and social sciences, and in doing so he eschews the tendency to rely on abstract theorizing that is not based on sound knowledge of the historical evidence.

This is a book that deserves a wide readership, and it is written in a style that should be of interest to both students and scholars alike. I would thoroughly recommend this book to all readers who would like to engage with and think through the complexities of the relationship between Islam and modernity. It remains an important contribution to the literature and deserves a wide readership.

© 2010, John Solomos  
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Roy L. Brooks, **RACIAL JUSTICE IN THE AGE OF OBAMA**, Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009, 232pp., \$27.95(cloth).

So what is this book about? This book is touted as a ‘nonpartisan’ (p. 1) review of modern racial justice theories. Legal scholar Roy L. Brooks examines several approaches through the ‘theory of completeness’ by which he means theories that ‘put forth an *external* and *internal* diagnosis of and prescription for the civil rights problem it seeks to address’ (p. 1). After outlining his definition of ‘civil rights’ and ‘civil rights group’ (pp. 3–10) and advancing his rather peculiar reading of race matters in contemporary America (pp. 10–13), Brooks proceeds to review four approaches to racial justice. ‘Traditionalists’ such as Denish D’Souza and Shelby Steele are chastised for discounting the ‘external race problem’ (p. 29), but are praised for their internal analysis. Brooks agrees with their claim that ‘dysfunctional and self-defeating behavior, values, and attitudes within the African-American community’ (p. 32) are a central part of the American race question.

‘Reformists,’ or authors who ‘maintain that slavery and Jim Crow have lingering effects that limit opportunities for resource development’ (p. 36), see internal dysfunctions such as ‘black nihilism’ (Cornel West) or ‘ghettoism’ (Michael E. Dyson) as intrinsically linked to racism. Brooks gives reformists high marks for their ‘completeness’ and ‘balance’ (p. 57), but ponders if they are right in the weight they assign racism. Brooks even writes, ‘Did race matter in the extraordinary education successes of Barack and Michelle Obama ...?’ (p. 58).

Brooks reviews the ‘limited separation’ and ‘critical race theory’ (the selection of authors was a bit narrow for me) and finds limitations as well as strengths in both approaches (chapters 4–5). It is in the Epilogue, titled ‘Toward the ‘Best’ Post-Civil Rights Theory’, that readers learn how much Professor Brooks has changed his views on race matters. He suggests combining elements from all theories to produce the best analysis (mainstream American social thinkers love the idea of mixing up traditions and schools as if they were doing a salad). His policy suggestions are quite limited and narrowly reformist – educational reforms, self-help programmes, tax credits to good capitalists in the entertainment industry who do not endorse racist stereotypes, and federally guaranteed loans for black businesses – and unlikely to produce a substantive change in America’s racial order of things.

This book was very disappointing for several reasons. First, Brooks argues that blacks’ problems (and this book is unnecessarily – and problematically – focused on blacks alone) are not due to ‘racism’ but to the racial inequality due to past discrimination and how this manifests itself in inequities in resources. This is not a convincing claim and does not fit what most serious researchers on discrimination, of both its old- and new-style character, have found in the last twenty years.

Second, his rather limited commentary on Obama is mostly uninformative. (On this subject, readers should consult Paul Street’s book *Barack Obama and the Future of American Politics* and chapter nine in the third edition of my *Racism without Racists*.)

Third, the racial theory informing his review is deficient. Brooks’s definitions of race, racism and discrimination are outdated, which in part explain why he believes ‘cheating’ is over (p. 11). Brooks seems to limit racism to racially overt nasty behaviour and beliefs, a stand that clearly illustrates his theoretical weaknesses. Not surprisingly, the best theoretical and substantive work on race, discrimination and prejudice by authors such as Omi and

Winant, Lawrence Bobo, Devah Pager, Bruce Western, Michael Dawson, John Powell and many, many others is not even cited in this book!

Fourth, like so many neoliberal commentators on race today, Brooks gives kudos to traditionalists and 'reformists' who address so-called black pathology. This position is politically dangerous even when expressed in 'sympathetic' ways, as it ends up giving cover to policy-makers who endorse draconian measures against the black masses. Most importantly, this view fails to connect the behavioural matters that concern Professor Brooks so much with the 'racial structure' of contemporary America.

Fifth, his discussion of various approaches is peculiar. For example, the 'reformists' are treated as one camp, even when 'reformists' authors have very different arguments and policy suggestions. And the discussion of this group is also weakened by Brooks's heavy reliance on the work of Joe R. Feagin as *the* tradition (and I am not sure if Professor Feagin would approve of the label 'reformist', when his work seems to fit better the 'critical race theory' tradition).

Last, his policy suggestions are not only quite limited but easy to co-opt by neoliberals and unlikely to help those of the bottom of the (racial) well attain racial justice.

I was excited about this book and expected to learn a lot about racial (in)justice in so-called post-racial America. Unfortunately, this book is neither on the subject of its title nor is the author sporting the same analytical and political lenses he used to wear.

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Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, **ETHNIC CONFLICT: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND RESPONSES**, Oxford: Polity Press, 2009, vi+232 pp., £ 16.99 (paper).

Ethnic conflicts have occurred throughout human history in a variety of forms – from small hate crimes to state-sponsored genocides – wiping out millions of innocent civilians at times. Why do ethnic conflicts associated with extreme violence happen even today? What purpose, if any, do they serve to humanity? What circumstances aggravate such brutality? When is it better to intervene? Can ethnically motivated killings be avoided in future? These are some tough questions haunting the civilized world for decades. In this book, the authors provide some compelling answers by analysing various cases of ethnic conflicts that occurred over time and across continents. The authors also theorize potential causation for ethnic conflicts with some recommendation that has the potential to minimize future conflicts before it is too late.

The book is divided into nine chapters. Chapter 1 starts with an introduction of ethnic conflict, while chapter 2 provides a summary on the scope of the book, including the definition of ethnic conflict supported by theories. Although many scholars have theorized various explanations on the cause and function of ethnic conflicts over the last few decades, the authors admit that they have not examined each and every theory thoroughly. Nonetheless, they have reviewed most of the significant contributions along the two major schools of thought – the rational choice approach involving security dilemma or economic opportunities, and the academic approach involving the realistic group theory, social identity theory, psycho-cultural theory and psychoanalytic theory.

Chapter 3 surveys ethnic conflicts related to insecurity, greed, socio-psychological motivations and international dimension including their advantages and shortcomings. Based on the theoretical analysis, the subsequent chapter 4 elaborates on how different theories can be integrated for a multi-level analysis of the conflict to explore various endogenous and exogenous factors supported by case studies from Georgia, Macedonia, Rwanda and the Philippines. The authors argue that understanding the causes and consequences of conflicts are crucial to negotiating and implementing appropriate timely solutions, and the following chapters emphasize politics and international community to mitigate conflicts. Prevention, management and settlement of conflicts are discussed in chapter 5, while chapter 6 focuses on

international intervention with cases studies from Burma, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro.

The next two chapters emphasize the practical aspects of conflict settlements, including alternatives to reduce future ethnic conflicts. In chapter 7, three major viewpoints of conflict settlement – power sharing, centripetalism and power dividing – are discussed. In chapter 8, the authors provide some alternatives to consensual conflict settlement associated with ethnic cleansing, secession, partition and genocide. In the last, chapter 9, a brief conclusion, with answers to questions raised at the beginning, is featured. The authors declare that they have given a reasonable explanation to queries pertinent to ethnic conflicts in general, but it might not be all that pleasing to readers, since extreme ethnic dislikes are often deeply rooted with diverse outcomes that range from petty crimes to murderous violence.

Violence targeting the disadvantaged inevitably occurs even today at some place. For example, animosities between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamil ethnic communities dominated the island of Sri Lanka over a quarter-century, resulting in the death of 70,000 people. Though the conflict officially ended in May 2009, when the military seized control of the last piece of land owned by the Tamil rebels, it raised global condemnation on the fate of civilians caught in the crossfire and the incarceration of 250,000 refugees for months, including allegations of abuse and murder. The question, however, is: why do some people behave so violently from others? Do we actually share with chimpanzees a gene coded with brutality and have modern armaments and organizational skills than they do? But what, then, of the majority of our fellow humans who are peaceful and avoid such evil?

Of course there is a brighter side to human nature – many people risk their lives for others, and some die while helping. Why? Simple lessons learnt in childhood, that it is the right thing to do as one human to another. If the society needs to refrain from ethnic animosities in future, the culture of violence and warfare has got to be replaced by the culture of peace and compassion. This book has done a remarkable job of synthesizing the causes of ethnic conflicts whilst bringing awareness to promote harmony in society.

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Sheila Croucher, **THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE. AMERICAN MIGRANTS IN MEXICO**, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2009, 256 pp., \$55.00 (cloth).

The study on Americans living in Mexico reverses the lens that scholarly or politically focuses on immigrants heading north across the US–Mexico border. The main argument of Sheila Croucher's book is that American 'expatriates' do engage in transnational migrant activities, and are migrants themselves, although they don't consider themselves as such. They would be comparable to Mexicans in the US, as they tend not to speak the language of the country they live in, gather for social events, have limited connexions with local population, organize politically to vote from abroad and maintain strong links with their families and country of origin. In addition, many of them would be living without proper documentation and tend to live 'ethnically', meaning in 'an American bubble'. For instance, 'Old timers regularly complain about newcomers. Full-time residents resent the seasonal arrival' (p. 71), another typical interaction noted by scholars in other migration waves.

The exercise reveals a difficulty, as few factors allow for comparison. The main weakness, fully recognized by the author, is the lack of socio-demographic data on the population studied. No survey is available, and data from US consulates and censuses are scarce. In addition, the potential impact of US migration to Mexico is much less measurable. The qualitative difference of migration flux (mostly senior, retired, privileged individuals, as presented in chapter 4) and its quantitative dissymmetry make the comparison almost impossible. The most problematic aspects are the continuous change of terminology and concept used in the book to actually determine the status of those individuals. But that is also the most challenging part of the theoretical approach:

can they be labelled as transmigrants, migrants, expatriates, exiled, immigrants, minorities, etc.? Coucher discusses the definition of expatriates by Erik Cohen 'Expatriate is, admittedly, a loose or "fuzzy" term, capturing that category of international migrants who fill the gap between the tourist, on the one hand, and the semi-permanent immigrant, on the other' (p. 21). And while she argues for the use of 'transnational migrants' for Americans in Mexico, her writings mention all among different terms, 'expats' and 'Americans living in Mexico' being the most quoted. This ambivalence shows the difficulty to identify the phenomenon.

In the first chapter, Coucher presents a detailed historical view of Americans' settlements in Ajijic and San Miguel de Allende, from 1900 onwards. Since Americans are not required to notify to the US State Department of their move abroad, numbers are only tentative estimates, with 1 million Americans residing in Mexico, counting for roughly 25 per cent of the Americans living abroad and 70 per cent of foreigners living in Mexico. Fifteen per cent of the population of San Miguel would be of American origin (out of 80,000) and 10,000 in Ajijic. Among the blurred frontier between push and pull factors, the author mentions insecure economic future in the US, affordable health care in Mexico, excellent real estate deals, weather conditions, love of the Mexican culture, wild environment, individual biographies, quality of domestic service, etc. The second chapter describes the activities led by these global 'high-tech migrants', analysing the role of 'cyber-capital' serving as social capital, and cement for transnational territory. The third chapter presents the transnational political activities, mostly focused on exercising the vote from abroad. It is regrettable that political activities in the place of settlements are not evoked, in order to measure the civic involvement of migrants in both countries. As other studies show, politicization of migrants abroad is often linked with greater participation in the host country. What's important to notice is the absence of the sending state reaching out to its migrants, an essential factor to explain political transnational migrant activities. Coucher argues that American migrants do develop 'plural forms of political belonging that extend beyond the confines of membership in a single state' (p. 134).

While the original intention is to 'reverse the lens' and to discuss the anti-immigrant sentiment and return of nativism that has developed since the 1990s in the US, the departing point (Huntington writings on Mexican immigration) is counterproductive.

On the other hand, what's successful is indeed the qualitative study in San Miguel de Allende (Guanajuato) and in the village of Ajijic/Lake Chapala (Jalisco). In-depth interviews were conducted during eight months over a three-year period with Americans living in these two sites, historically top reception places for Americans living in Mexico. The semi-structured interviews were coupled by participant observation of political and social events, and review of archives, newspapers and websites. Coucher proposes interesting sociological conclusions. For instance, she notes that 'The narratives of US migrants tend to offer regarding Mexicans and themselves reveal a sense of cultural superiority. This superiority serves both to justify and to perpetuate the social boundaries between the migrants and their hosts, and to bolster a sense of self among a population of US retirees whose identities are no longer firmly grounded in work or youth' (p. 73).

A limitation results in the categories of interviewees. None of them were of Mexican origin, when scholars tend to focus now on Americans of Mexican origin or heritage returning to retire in their homeland (p. 24). In addition, no interview deals with children of American migrants born in Mexico or brought to Mexico. Most of the interviewees were senior people, when younger Americans seem to decide migrating South in search of new job opportunities and different quality of life. Finally, and this could be the subject of future work, the reception by the local population of American migrants is only briefly mentioned (pp.183–92). In view of comparing anti-immigrant sentiment on both sides of the border, data of Mexicans' approach to Americans would have been helpful to go further than stipulating by principle the existence of a positive feeling towards migrants because of their economic contribution.

Alton Hornsby Jr, **BLACK POWER IN DIXIE: A POLITICAL HISTORY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN ATLANTA**, Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, 2009, 307pp., £20.00 (cloth).

Alton Hornsby Jr, a native of Atlanta, has been one of the deeply committed scholars of Negro history, and in this book he provides an in-depth and detailed comprehensive narrative of politics of race in a typical southern city of the United States of America. *Black Power in Dixie: A Political History of African Americans in Atlanta* is an exposition of how the subordinated Atlanta blacks were able to create an enduring struggle for political advancement and improved living condition in a very harsh and difficult environment under the cloak of Jim Crow system of segregation and well into the era of pre- and post-civil rights movement in America.

Hornsby, in this eight-chapter book outlay, depicts the manner middle-class black leadership in Atlanta was able to surmount class and gender differences to forge a continuous struggle for equal opportunity among the city's races, while successfully maintaining its mantle of racial leadership for more than a century through a dexterous combination of racial promotion and alliance with entrenched local white business and political elites in the city. The author examined the findings of previous studies on 'elite power structure' and its entrenched version in Atlanta and relates 'Black Power in Dixie' in the context of these studies on elite power structure of his local community of Atlanta, where the black race share of the population and the electorate was constantly increasing. He explains that this fact created a significant impact on black Atlanta participation in politics, which grew from being an occasional influence on general and special elections, with a handful of people elected into the City Hall, to the stage where blacks held the balance of power in the city's electoral politics. The book's provision of graphic illustrations of the struggles of African Americans in Atlanta and their interaction with the elite power structure in the city is its most significant contribution in studies of race politics in America.

Alton Hornsby in *Black Power in Dixie* asserts that the use of black power to advance African American interests in Atlanta began at the onset, following the passage of the Reconstruction Act of 1867 by Congress. The exercise of the right of franchise according to Hornsby was not deterred, notwithstanding intimidation, violence and threats from the Ku Klux Klan, which fought to frustrate black participation in Atlanta's electoral process. The resilience of black people in the midst of these threats yielded results, following increased black representation, which began to push issues that affected African American populace of the city forcefully. But the entrenched white ruling elites slowed down the momentum on black participation using legal processes, which culminated in the Georgian Supreme Court ruling that blacks were ineligible for public office. Propelled by the Civil Right Acts, Alton Hornsby explicates how black leadership in Atlanta used their grip on the black vote to demonstrate black power with significant electoral impact in elections between competing white candidates. The achievement of this feat was enhanced by the Jim Crow forced social commingling that provided the environment for the alliance between the black elite and their disadvantaged black class. The ability to deliver black vote *en bloc* became the leverage that was used by black elites to negotiate concessions that benefited the blacks directly from the white power elites in the city, one of which was the 1948 employment of eight black police officers.

The book provides an analysis of how one of the most important southern cities managed, adapted and coped with the struggle for racial justice, examining both traditional electoral politics as well as the roles of non-elected influential individuals in the community, particularly the black church and its ministers who were at the centre of black Atlanta mobilization for racial solidarity in the city.

Alton Hornsby highlights how these growing influences of the black population in the city, finally culminating in the emergence of first two black mayors of the city in the persons of Maynard Jackson and Andrew Young, symbolize ultimate black political power success.



Alton Hornsby concludes in this book that the success of black political power in Atlanta did not in real terms translate into measurable economic power for the African American community in the city.

In all, the book *Black Power in Dixie* should be of immense interest to academics and students of history interested in Negro studies and politics of race in America and the interested public at large.

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Amal Jamal, **THE ARAB PUBLIC SPHERE IN ISRAEL: MEDIA SPACE AND CULTURAL RESISTANCE**, Bloomington, IN, and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009, 182 pp., \$24.95 (paper).

This book is the first of a kind: it focuses on the development of Arab media in Israel where Arabs (about 18 per cent of the population) constitute a national minority (conceptualized by the author as a 'homeland minority'). This minority sees itself a part of the wider Palestinian people that, as a whole, is a longstanding contender to the Jewish State. The author defines the field of his study a 'counterhegemonic space' where highly significant changes are taking place since the early 1980s. This space emerged with the withdrawing of Arabs from the Israeli public sphere in reaction to the latter's lack of attention for their problems and their growing awareness of the possibilities of developing a public sphere of their own.

Once created, this space allows Arabs living in Israel to overcome the limitations imposed by the state: from a captive minority exposed to state-controlled media, it has become an active player enjoying a wide range of institutional, political and private channels and outlets. Globalization is also a factor here, as it offers Israel's Arabs the opportunity of enjoying all major media available in the Arab world and beyond. It has definitely wiped out the monopolistic control of the Israeli state in the area of media and connected this public to cultural, social and political values that respond to its aspirations.

However, Israel's Arabs remain aware of the fact that they live in Israel. By no means do they ignore the local media which convey to them essential pieces of information. They are also attached to their Israeli citizenship which offers non-negligible benefits. Hence, the author speaks here of a twofold consciousness pointing out that Israeliness is viewed by Arabs in strictly instrumental terms, while Palestinianness and Arabness describe their emotional identities. This claim is sustained by two pieces of research conducted by the author – one that investigated a general sample and another that took place in elite milieus.

Arabs, it is Jamal's contention, resist the oppressive influence of the state thanks to that public sphere by taking profit of the moderate liberal regime. The author underlines the role of the Communist Party which was a pioneer in this enterprise until its example was followed by many others. This sphere amplified and solidified this public's identification with the Palestinian cause. One expression among many, the leaders of the Arab minority have established solid political bridges with the Palestinian forces in the outside and the Arab world up to the point that Israel's Arab are now convinced to be culturally and politically a genuine part of the general Palestinian entity. In this context, however, Israel's Arabs pay great attention to remaining within safe limits in order to avoid endangering the gains they enjoy as Israeli citizens.

This book is a contribution to the knowledge of the condition of Israel's Arab minority. It shows how far the Arab minority – or at least its public figures, including, in this respect, the author himself – has definitely taken sides with the Palestinian cause against the Israeli State – without overlooking the opportunities embedded in its present-day condition. This twofold consciousness, in the author's terms – but which might also be described as 'double standard' – has created an authentic Arab sphere that has developed within Israel, through cultural disengagement from the dominant culture.

This book is important because it brings up data regarding an area that is little documented. However, some serious doubts can be raised regarding the soundness of the argument in given respects. What has basically helped Arabs to develop a public sphere of their own, and does not receive all its importance from the author, is the fact that Israel is a democracy and that people are entitled to launch newspapers or radio channels and express in them the widest range of ideas – including denying the legitimacy of the Jewish State. Moreover, Arabic is an official language, since Israel's creation and Arabic media have always existed and enjoyed entire legitimacy. Hence, there are feeble grounds to assert that Arabs 'struggled' to create a public sphere of their own.

Moreover, the claim that Arabs in Israel illustrate cultural disengagement *vis-à-vis* the dominant culture is not entirely endorsed by numerous sources. Jamal himself reminds us that Arabs have become bilingual and that most are confident in Hebrew. However, he does not elaborate on the cultural consequences of this fact that are expressed in patterns of behaviour, philosophy of life, gender relations and many other forms – not to mention the numerous Hebrew terms now found in Arabs' daily vernacular. Many other examples can be given of this evolution without gainsaying in any manner that the Israeli–Palestinian conflict pushes Israel's Arabs to fundamentally identify with the Palestinian cause. What we have here, actually, is that Israel's Arabs tend to illustrate cultural convergence toward the Jewish population and, conjunctively, identity divergence.

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Patrick Manning, **THE AFRICAN DIASPORA: A HISTORY THROUGH CULTURE**, New York: Columbia University Press, 2009, xxii + 394 pp., £19.95 (cloth).

The study of the African diasporic experience has been an important facet of the growing literature on global diasporas over the past few decades. We have seen a wide range of scholarly monographs that have paid particular attention to the experiences of specific sections of the African diaspora in the Americas, Europe and other parts of the globe. Much of this research has helped to redefine the history of the African diasporic experience and to uncover the evolution of context between Africa and other parts of the globe over the past six centuries and more.

It is in this wider scholarly context that we should see Patrick Manning's masterly overview of the history of the African diaspora in the period since 1400. Manning has an established reputation as an authority on the history of slavery in Africa and the evolution of the institutions of slavery. In this new book he is able to draw on this body of scholarly research to produce a book that can be seen as a new benchmark in the study of the African diaspora. It is less a narrow work based on a specific body of scholarly research than an overview of a whole field of scholarly research and debate. Indeed part of the appeal of this book is that Manning his analysis to a particular geographical environment and his insistence on seeing the global context in which the African diaspora has been configured over the past few centuries.

Manning is particularly insightful in the early part of this book in exploring connections within Africa and between Africa and the world before 1600. There are fascinating insights in this part of the book about the connections, both economic and cultural, between Africa and other parts of the world before the period of transatlantic slavery. As Manning himself puts it, the story he has to tell 'is a complex tale of cultural development, enslavement, colonization, struggles for liberation, and construction of modern society and identity' (p. 1). It is also a difficult story to tell, given the history of dehumanization, violence and resistance that are part of the experiences of the African diaspora over the period covered by this volume. But it has to be said that Manning's account of these processes is both fascinating and founded on a wealth of original research and a clear analytical framework.

From this starting point he is able to move on to analyse in some detail the processes that have shaped the African diaspora in the period since 1400. Manning is able to show in some

detail that slavery became the dominant element in Africa's relationship to the world economy after 1600. He outlines the variety of ways in which the trade in slaves helped to shape definitions of race and racial hierarchies. He defines the history of the African diaspora since 1600 around the following chronology: 1600–1800, Survival; 1800–1900, Emancipation; 1900–1960, Citizenship; 1960–2000, Equality. The core chapters of this volume cover these periods of the history in some detail, and I found all of them both informative and imaginative in their reworking of the past four centuries of experience. Perhaps the most interesting part of the book for me can be found in chapter 3, which focuses on the issue of enslavement and survival. In some ways this covers well-known issues, but Manning's account is particularly informative. This is not to say that the other core chapters in this volume are any less interesting, and I found all of them to be full of little bits of detail that highlight the complexities of the African diasporic experience.

This is a book that will serve as a useful resource for both students and teachers alike. It is written in a style that is accessible and informative at the same time, and it invites readers to explore issues in more depth through the detailed references to scholarly research that the author helpfully provides. The final part of the volume has some important insights about the future of the African diaspora. It is a welcome addition to scholarly debate and a major benchmark in research on the African diaspora.

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Anna Pegler-Gordon, **IN SIGHT OF AMERICA: PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF US IMMIGRATION POLICY**, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009, xx+319 pp., \$60.00 (cloth).

Anna Pegler-Gordon poses a double-edged question in this book. She asks how photography became a tool, indeed a weapon, in the campaign to regulate and restrict immigrants and immigrant rights, at the same time that she addresses the ways in which America's very first effort at restriction and photographing, that involving Chinese immigrants, became the model which came to dominate all of immigration policy. In the case of the first part of her question, Pegler-Gordon charts the triangulated relationship between Chinese men and women, both those seeking to come into the United States and those already residing there, the relatively new technology of photography, and American policy-makers, in the main bent on keeping the Chinese out of the United States. As to the second part of this scholarly undertaking, the author, while admitting the very different relationship between European immigrants, photography and the state, as opposed to that directed at the Chinese, still contends that over time they experienced the same scrutinizing, regulation and restriction. How the government, through photography, as well as the judicial and legislative process, interacted with the Chinese, set the terms for the ultimate passage of the 1924 legislation which ended the long tradition of numerically unrestricted European immigration to the United States.

This book as such makes a particular kind of source, not just a tool for conducting research but an analytic factor in and of itself. In a series of chapters that move from the Chinese experience to that of European immigrants, and then one dealing with Mexicans at their border, Pegler-Gordon links photography, immigration, the process of racial formation and the evolution of policy. The book's analytic strength emerges in the earliest chapters as it explores the ways in which restrictionists pinned great hope on photographs as weapons in their campaign to weed out the Chinese and how the Chinese used the same technology to evade the restrictions. It does not offer as rich, detailed or nuanced an analysis of the situation of European immigrants.

Pegler-Gordon does not make a particularly compelling case to prove her assertion that the case of the Chinese provided the model by which to think of the evolution of policy toward European immigrants. This section represents the book's greatest area of weakness.

Ellis Island and the other immigration received stations which welcomed European immigrants served as gateways into America, with relatively few – about 2–3 per cent – sent back for some reason or another. This continued even after restriction *vis-à-vis* the lucky few who fell under the countries' quotas and got visas. They too received a welcome. Even those being sent back enjoyed relatively comfortable accommodations and respectful treatment, actually demonstrated in the photographs included here. Angel Island, the Chinese point of entry, functioned as a quasi-prison, and it operated on the fundamental assumption that no Chinese person who entered it should be allowed into the United States. Pegler-Gordon likewise fails to put the 1910s and 1920s, when policies towards European immigration began to shift, in global terms. When the United States in the era of World War I began to insist that potential immigrants from Europe needed to provide photographs embossed on their passports, it followed a pattern being set throughout Europe and the western world. Similarly in that period governments around the world adopted serious immigration restriction, making the United States little different from Canada, Argentina, Australia, Brazil. France did so a bit later in the 1930s, while Britain had passed its Aliens Act at the beginning of the century. As such it becomes difficult to accept the contention of this book that the exclusion of the Chinese provided the background for the eventual restrictions placed on European immigration and that photography played a key role in shaping that profound change.

Ironically, given Pegler-Gordon's justified emphasis on photography as having a role in and of itself in causing change, we learn nearly nothing in this book about the history or technology of photography. Did the movement to exclude the Chinese which swept through California, and then the United States as a whole, leading to the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Geary Act, several other pieces of legislation, as well as a slew of judicial decisions that coincide with major changes in photography? Pegler-Gordon states emphatically that when Congress initiated its mandate that Chinese women and men, whether seeking admission to the United States or already living there, needed to be photographed, they entered into the same category of prisoners, the only other large scale group of Americans subjected to forced photography. She would have been well served to also think of the case of Civil War soldiers who also, according to some scholars, all had their pictures taken. How does that case of mass photographing change the valence to Pegler-Gordon's book?

Finally, *In Sight of America* loses much by its highly repetitive prose, often presented in the passive voice. It makes claims as to immigrant reaction without having access to any primary source in the immigrants' own language, or better, languages, with at times reference to others' translations, never a substitute for the historian's own engagement with the source material. Gordon-Pegler spends excessive amounts of time pointing out the sins of previous scholars, who she claims did not give photography its due as more than a tool, as an active agent itself in the restrictive process.

Despite these concerns Anna Pegler-Gordon has in fact enriched the field of immigration history with this book, by pointing out and demonstrating the transformative role of visual, particularly photographic, culture, but she need not have spent so much energy deprecating others for not having made the same, important, analytic link between immigration and photography.

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Nando Sigona and Nidhi Trehan (eds), **ROMANI POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE. POVERTY, ETHNIC MOBILIZATION AND THE NEOLIBERAL ORDER**, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009, xxii+309 pp., £55.00 (cloth).

Nando Sigona and Nidhi Trehan's edited volume is a multidisciplinary collection of thirteen essays focusing on different aspects of Romani social and political life in contemporary Europe. The main *fil rouge* of the study is the question of whether the enlarged European

space is capable of providing EU and national institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with structural conditions, i.e. social, economic and political, that would take into account needs of its Romani citizens, enabling the latter to influence the current situation. In fact, the standpoint of the work is an analysis of contemporary neoliberal policies and discourses, which are mirrored in the fact that 'Romani communities comprise a "Third World" in Europe today and that a majority of Roma living in Central Eastern Europe believe their living conditions were better in the past' (p. 4). Accordingly, one of the editors' main goals is to 'provide a critical overview on the emergence and consolidation of a pan-European space for Romani political participation and mobilization in the contest of broader socio-economic and political trends in Europe' (p. 293).

After the editors' introduction and the foreword by Etienne Balibar, who articulates his reading of the work in the threefold problematic issue of exclusion, racialization and *de facto* statelessness of Roma, the study is divided into two main parts. The first part explores the Romani political space in Europe and the second part focuses on national and local political contexts. The first three essays of the first part examine the prevalence of a neoliberal (in Nidhi Trehan's contribution), mostly ethnicized (in Will Guy's), and de-personified (according to Katrin Simhandl) understanding of Romani social life at the basis of European-level policies and mainstream discourses addressing Roma. In the following chapter Jud Nirenberg outlines the history of Romani political life, stressing the twofold disjuncture between the European Union (EU) and Council of Europe (CoE) on the one hand and Romani political bodies on the other, and between 'mainstream' and 'grassroots' Romani leaders. By analysing the case of forced sterilization of Romani women, Angéla Kóczé discusses the gender unbalance of power within Romani political culture.

Of particular relevance in the first part is a conversation between Romani Hungarian MEP Viktória Mohácsi and Nidhi Trehan, which is a first-hand critical view by the MEP on the standpoints of EU policies concerning Romani Europeans. According to Mohácsi, prior to having funds and programmes targeted to social inclusion, 'the most important thing is to have a directive which can be forced upon [which is legally binding for] Member States' (p. 127). Indeed, an in-depth view by Romani activists, politicians and scholars on pan-European issues beyond the East–West divide, covering both supranational and national political contexts, appears as one of the major contributions of this book, which remarkably positions itself at the intersections between the study of ethnopolitics and social exclusion.

The second part is comprised of six chapters, each of them focusing on one national context. Iulius Rostas discusses at length the relative lack of an effective political culture amongst the various Romani political bodies in Romania; Martin Marusak and Leo Singer analyse the ways in which Slovakian Roma mobilized against a neoliberal reform of the welfare state. Kosovan activists Avdula (Dai) Mustafa and Gazmen Saljevic discuss with Nando Sigona the predicaments that the newly emerged human rights discourse poses on Romani activism in Kosovo, pointing at the failures of the international governance. Miguel Laparra and Almudena Macias consider the negative implications of the lack of relationships between *Gitanos* and Romani migrants from Romania on the strengthening of a pan-European Romani voice; Jo Richardson and Andrew Ryder shed light on public hostility and media derogatory campaign on Roma in contemporary Britain and assess the effectiveness of New Labour's policies on sites provision for Gypsies and Travellers. Finally, Nando Sigona comparatively examines public discourses and political practices involving Roma in four Italian cities upon recent local elections, discussing the emergence of local-level Romani political leaders.

An original element of this study is that it provides an overview of Romani political life contextualized in the wider framework of the imposition of a post-1989 hegemonic neoliberal order. A perhaps even more original ingredient is that it poses us Europeans crucial questions of exclusion and belonging in ways that are at the same time *close* to Romani political realities and *distant* from paternalism and victimization *vis-à-vis* Roma, therefore soliciting answers which would stem from Romani political subjectivities, with their limits and potentials. Notwithstanding such an intent, the book does not include advice to policy-makers and NGO activists. Providing advice would have appeared well coupled with the

accent on the vividly felt need to 'set a dialogue between (predominantly silent) Romani interlocutors today and their other European counterparts' (p. 294).

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Iyiola Solanke, **MAKING ANTI-RACIAL DISCRIMINATION LAW: A COMPARATIVE HISTORY OF SOCIAL ACTION AND ANTI-RACIAL DISCRIMINATION LAW**, London and New York: Routledge, 2009, xxxii+224 pp., £70.00 (cloth).

The first British race relations acts were enacted in the 1960s, while similar legal provisions for racial discrimination in Germany only evolved into a comprehensive framework in 2006, as a result of European Union (EU) legislation. What determined the different timing and nature of the state response to racism and discrimination in these two countries? Iyiola Solanke's answer focuses on three repertoires of 'social action' – confrontation with anti-social extreme right-wing movements, research and investigation, and lobbying.

At a time when studies on European antidiscrimination law and policy are burgeoning, the author adopts a sociological-legal perspective – rather innovative within European scholarship – to review the history of race relations in Britain and Germany through the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The book is organized following the typologies of 'racial violence' and social action proposed by the author. Chapter 1 introduces the origins of the presence of communities of colour and the first measures regulating their insertion in the respective European colonial powers. The following chapters present the rise of anti-social movements and the uneven evolution of civil antidiscrimination law and criminal antiracist and anti-hatred provisions in Britain and Germany. Chapter 2 proposes a conceptualization of racial violence which justifies the criminal and civil law focus of the study. In particular, the author dismisses the usual distinction between legislation on racial hatred, on the one side, and direct and indirect discrimination, on the other side, adopting P.J. Williams's argument that such a differentiation endures a 'fatal rationalisation suggesting that a prejudiced society is preferable to a violent society' (Williams 1991, p. 61). Thus, Solanke introduces a matrix of racial violence where private and institutional racial violence is deployed in overt and covert forms. State responses to these forms of racial violence are summarized in chapters 3 and 4, which demonstrate that confrontation with anti-social movements set the agenda for measures against racial violence in Britain and at the EU level.

The second part of the book illustrates how investigation and lobbying helped to define the contents of legal reforms in the British and European cases, but failed to do so in Germany. In chapter 5 the author contends that research and, in particular, the collection of ethnic data may be critical to the appraisal, understanding and proper redress of racial violence. This is only possible where public authorities apprehend demographic change responsibly, in particular by privileging a multiculturalist rather than an assimilationist policy approach and increasing the feeling of belonging of minority communities. Also, in the case of lobbying, the author illustrates how policy content was successfully influenced by reform activists operating in a British arena characterized by a 'pluralist structure of political opportunities', rather than in the German corporatist system. The last two chapters address two more exogenous factors – the influence of the media and supranational institutions – on the definition of racial antidiscrimination law.

*Making Anti-racial Discrimination Law* is based on an extremely rich variety of sources – particularly for the British case – from archival materials to interviews and innumerable references to literature. It has, furthermore, the important merit of being one of the few comparative inquiries into race relations involving Germany. The sociological-legal approach allows the author to broaden the understanding of social action and take into account factors

frequently underestimated – such as scientific investigation and media influence – which help to explain the wide time lag and the substantial differences in policy responses to racial discrimination in Britain, Germany and at the EU level.

However, the fragmentation of the account along the sociological categories defined by the author makes it sometimes difficult for the reader to follow the progress of the legal response in the politics under review. It is furthermore particularly regrettable that a study published in 2009 and which spans across forty years of legislation stops in 2005 without mentioning the final adoption of the German General Equal Treatment Act of 2006 and the EU Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia of 2008. Also, while merging antiracist and antidiscrimination law in a single analytical category (the legal response to racial violence) may well explain legal reform in the British case, the application of this typology to German and EU law seems more problematic and of less concrete use.

It must also be noted that this first edition contains an unacceptable number of typos, although this of course is due to poor editorship. Nevertheless, Iyiola Solanke's monograph should certainly be praised for addressing and answering in a convincing way a difficult question about the uneven development of racial antidiscrimination law in Europe.

### Reference

P. J. WILLIAMS 1991 *The Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

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Jon Stratton, **JEW, RACE AND POPULAR MUSIC**, Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009, x+227 pp., £30.00 (cloth).

This book is a major contribution to the theorization of race in popular music and to contemporary Jewish studies. It examines eight fascinating case studies, ranging from the Ziegfeld Follies to Bob Dylan to Def Jam records, showing how Jews have been positioned in the racial landscape of the Anglophone world in the last century.

The book significantly extends a small but impressive body of literature on this topic, including the work of Michael Rogin, Jeffrey Melnick and Michael Billig, but departs from them in three key ways. In its sophisticated theoretical framework, it foregrounds the complex intersection of racialization with gender and sexuality. It moves beyond a focus on the US to take in other national contexts, thus contributing to a new modality of the comparative which is essential in ethnic and racial studies. And it shifts the emphasis from the visual and verbal regimes of signification in popular music to that of sound itself.

The first chapter examines torch singers, the female vocalists of the post-World War I period who sang African-American-derived music in the period when blackface minstrelsy was declining as the American racial order was reconfigured. Stratton's argument is that Jewish singers like Sophie Tucker, Fanny Brice and Libby Holman occupied a specific position between blackness and whiteness in American culture and were thus able to use African-American vocal techniques, known as 'coon shouting', to bring an emotional intensity to their music for white consumption, techniques whose blackness simultaneously emphasized the singers' non-blackness and their marginality from whiteness, as well as disrupting dominant gendered assumptions of the period.

In this chapter, as in later chapters about female singers who inherited some of the traditions of torch singing – Barbara Streisand, Bette Midler and Janis Joplin, who revived the torch singing tradition in the 1960s and 1970s, Australia's Renée Geyer, and Britain's

Helen Shapiro, Dusty Springfield and Amy Winehouse – we can see both Stratton's emphasis on gender and sexuality but also his methodological foregrounding of the sonic.

Many popular music studies, especially those which explore race and ethnicity, come from a cultural studies disciplinary background which derives its methodologies from literary and semiotic analysis, and hence has emphasized the visual (e.g. record covers) or the verbal (e.g. lyrics) at the expense of what makes music distinctive, sound itself. Because race is primarily a scopic regime, this work has been fruitful, but attention to the sound itself significantly enriches the analysis – as in Les Back's account of White Power music which shows how this genre whitens its very sound by eliminating specific cords.

To be sure, Stratton does explore the visual (e.g. the semiotics of Helen Shapiro and Amy Winehouse's beehive hairstyles, or of the excessive voluptuousness of the figure of the 'Jewess' as embodied by Sophie Tucker or Renée Geyer) and the verbal (e.g. the complex genealogy of the lyrics of the Beastie Boys' 'Cooky Puss' which reference, via Malcolm McLaren, a minstrel and older folk heritage). However, his account of the vocal techniques by which we can hear race in music stands out.

The chronological and geographic sweep of the book – it explores a period bracketed by Mamie Smith singing 'Crazy Blues' in the *Maid in Harlem* review in 1919 and Amy Winehouse appearing on BBC television's *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* in 2007, and has case studies sited in the US, UK and Australia – is ambitious but effective. It enables a subtle analysis of the differences between different moments and different national traditions, thus avoiding both the essentialism of early accounts and the US-centrism of much of the emerging critical Jewish cultural studies. For instance, it explains the shift from the Brill Building moment of the late 1950s and early 1960s, when songwriters like Leiber and Stoller articulated the suburbanizing and assimilationist aspirations of US Jewry in a period when they achieved a conditional acceptance in mainstream America, to the blues revival of the later 1960s, when artists like Mike Bloomfield articulated the failure of this aspirational shift, turning to 'authentic' black music to attempt both an 'insider' connection with an older America and an 'outsider' rebellion against their parents' assimilationism.

Similarly, the chapters on Geyer and Marcia Hines in Australia and on Shapiro and Winehouse in Britain show how different national traditions – the White Australia Policy, and the Britain's 'tolerant' but exclusive monocultural Christian Englishness, have meant that Jews have been positioned in ways significantly different from those in the US.

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Tritia Toyota, **ENVISIONING AMERICA: NEW CHINESE AMERICANS AND THE POLITICS OF BELONGING**, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010, 242 pp., £22.50 (paper).

For many, 'political activism' and 'Asian Americans' are words that often are not located side by side. For those of us who do think of these terms hand in hand, we often think of US-born Asian Americans and not first generation immigrants and naturalized citizens. Tritia Toyota's book, *Envisioning America: New Chinese Americans and the Politics of Belonging*, refreshingly challenges this myth of the politically inactive and uninvolved Asian American.

Toyota's ethnographic study of Chinese American political engagement in southern California details how naturalized Chinese Americans become active participants in civic and political life. Incorporating in-depth interviews with 100 US-born and foreign-born Chinese Americans as well as observations of local community organizations and political rituals, Toyota finds that while naturalized Chinese Americans may have the social and economic capital to become accepted in the United States, full incorporation is limited by a mainstream society which continues to paint Asians as 'forever foreigners' combined with an



established local Asian-American community which is not comfortable with the economic successes and transnational connections common among the first generation.

Toyota poses two research questions. Who are the new politically active Chinese Americans, and what are they interested in achieving, politically? She addresses answers to these questions through longitudinal narratives and grounds these in a history of Chinese American and Asian American political engagement beginning in the 1960s to the present. Chapter 1 details who naturalized Chinese American political activists are in terms of country of origin, attitudes and identity regarding race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status and history of political involvement. Chapter 2 discusses some of the history surrounding pan-Asian American political involvement, focusing on the how Asian Americans from the 1960s onward engaged with imperial discourses to construct their political identities and agendas. Chapter 3 delves into the political attitudes and outlook of newer Asian immigrants to the United States, post-1965 and the passage of the Hart-Cellar Act. Toyota argues that while America for naturalized and native-born Chinese Americans have a similar vision of the possibilities of belonging and achievement in the United States, naturalized Chinese Americans' history with a more pronounced nation-state mentality impacts how they craft their political strategies in the United States in a very different way than the native-born. Chapter 4 details how naturalized activists, particularly in the 1980s, formed new identities as U.S. citizens, unexpectedly impacted by their experiences with racial marginalization and discrimination. In turn, these experiences catalyzed a distinct type of collective action, rooted in ethnically-specific mobilization efforts which relied on transnational networks. In chapter 5, Toyota explores the collective work of naturalized and native-born activists. While disagreement between these two groups may be common, their overall goal of achieving representation is the same, rooted in similar experiences in the US as racialized citizens. Finally, chapters 6 and 7 delve into issues regarding the future of Chinese American political activism. Toyota appropriately questions the possibility of embracing a pan-Asian American political identity and the possibility of an absence of political involvement for members of this community and subsequent generations.

Indeed, Tritia Toyota has contributed a much-needed piece of scholarship on political involvement within the Asian American community. *Envisioning America* is a well-researched, in-depth study of political life for a specific Asian ethnic group in southern California. Obviously, it would be interesting for Toyota and other scholars to follow-up with comparative studies of political involvement for other Asian ethnic groups in the United States. Might we see similar dynamics and histories for Korean Americans, Indian Americans, Vietnamese Americans, etc.? What might these experiences tell us about ethnically specific experiences in the United States around race and racial marginalization? Might these narratives challenge the appropriateness of a 'pan-Asian American' experience and identity? Toyota has certainly paved the way for future studies of political involvement and identity among Asian Americans.

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Takeyuki Tsuda (ed), **DIASPORIC HOMECOMINGS: ETHNIC RETURN MIGRATION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009, vi+363pp., \$65 (cloth).

This innovative and engaging collection provides a comparative ethnographic overview of diasporic peoples who return to their ethnic homelands. The cases provide an in-depth understanding of what catalyses return migration and migrants' ethnic and socio-cultural experiences in the host societies. The contributors move beyond economic arguments to address the transnational ethnic, cultural and socio-political conflicts that shape returnees' experiences. As macro-structural aspects (e.g. legal regimes, preferential immigration and

citizenship policies) are key contextual factors addressed throughout the book, the pieces offer thoughtful qualitative examinations that illustrate how peoples' ethnonational identities are reconfigured through migration. The book engages with the transnational migration literature in three major ways. Most insightfully, the contributors explore how initial ethnic inclusion of the returned migrants on the basis of race shifts to a more prominent exclusion on the basis of culture. Secondly, ethnic-return migrants become part of transnational communities that tie both receiving and sending societies. However, as allegiances to multiple nation-states emerge, the negative experiences resulting from this encounter, might also exacerbate the lack of social and political incorporation and foster the resurgence of ethnic nationalism among diasporic peoples. Thirdly, these studies contribute to the literature by adopting a broader definition based on distinctions between victim, economic and colonial diasporas. As first and second generations 'regroup' in their ethnic homeland, the politics of cultural difference reproduces a map of diversity in which ethnicity and race are contested and shaped by the legal, economic and socio-cultural realities of migration.

The articles in part 1 examine the economic and political causes of ethnic return migration as they relate to people's and governmental preferences. Tsuda argues that while economic pressures initiate migration, it is the transnational ethnic connections that determine return migrants' destination. Similarly, ethnicity plays a role in how states define their ethnic institutional preferences. Contributions by J. Skrentny, S. Chan, J.E. Fox and D. Kim show how discrimination percolates through state's immigration policies as they grant preferential treatment to co-ethnic foreigners through special visas and access to citizenship. These preferences respond to different motivations across varying institutional environments. As Asian countries opt for preferential policies motivated by economic development, the European states' motivations are more 'irrational' and result from an 'expressive' nationalism aimed at protecting historically persecuted co-ethnics. Moreover, C. Joppke and Z. Rosenhek show how ethnic-return migration policies influence the continued efforts of nation-state building in Israel but not to the same degree in Germany, where currently a more civic modality of nationhood and belonging prevails. The comparative pieces in this section provide some of the theoretical frameworks of reference to which the subsequent case studies speak.

Sections 2 and 3 present cases from Europe and East Asia respectively. The pieces by A. Klekowski von Koppenfels on *Aussiedler* (Germany returnees from Eastern Europe), D. Cook-Martin and A. Viladrich on Argetinians of Spanish descent to Spain, C. Hedberg's on Finland Swedes to Sweden and J.E. Fox's piece on ethnic Hungarians from Romania to Hungary, all illustrate profound disillusionment as migrants expectations for a warm reception are not met. Instead, they face highly competitive and segmented labour markets (Spain), changes in governmental policy regimes (Germany), and a complex politics of linguistic marginalization (Sweden), leading to an erosion of the nation-state paradigm or multiple national allegiances (Hungary). As these bifurcations affect everyday practices, L. Remennick's study of Russian Jews in Israel illustrates how their relative incorporation to the Israeli labour market is coupled with the desire to keep being Russian in their quotidian practices. Among the East Asian cases explored, both T. Tsuda's article on the *Nikkeijin* (Japanese descendants born and living abroad) and A. Takenaka's piece examining Japanese-Peruvians illustrate how Japanese ethnic origin influences social status differentials among returnees as well as the overall ethnic homecoming experiences. Thus, perceptions of different *Nikkeijin* are marked by the relative global prestige of their home countries and manifested in racial hierarchies meaningful to migrants themselves. The case of the *joseonjok* (ethnic return migration of the Korean Chinese) in C. Song's piece illustrates the notion that diasporic returns are not an ethnic regrouping but rather foster the emergence of ethnic minorities based on ideas of cultural differences and alienation that ultimately strengthen ideas of deterritorialized nationalism expressed among diasporic return migrants. Finally, N. Kim's piece convincingly shows how South Korean returnee migrants are caught between a double gaze of racial scrutiny and see themselves as both

culturally Korean and American but not completely either, thus experiencing considerable displacement and exclusion.

The contributors to this important book offer an actor-centred approach without overlooking larger structural determinants. As return migrants settle in new homelands and create transnational communities, new forms of social and political membership challenge fixed borders and allegiances. While this book lays important groundwork for studies of return migration, future researchers may build on these efforts to address how and whether these experiences act as liberalizing forces.

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