Reviews


In the Americas there are both a colour line and a colour scale. A 'one-drop' colour line was drawn in the USA to differentiate blacks from whites and to create two 'racial' categories. This line used at one time to determine legal entitlements. In Brazil, instead of racial categories there has been a colour scale or, more exactly, a scale of social status, one important component of which has been an evaluation of phenotypical appearance. In this scale the negative effect of a dark skin colour can be outweighed by relatively high income, occupation, education etc. Occasionally dark-skinned persons have been barred from social clubs and the like, drawing a colour line, but this has not been representative of Brazilian society as a whole. Nor is the colour line any longer an adequate representation of relations in the USA. The population has become more diverse. While ethnic and national origin and phenotypical appearance are commonly grounds for discrimination, there is much variation from one kind of social relationship to another.

There are at least two reasons for paths to converge. Decisions taken at the beginning of a journey limit subsequent possibilities. When a government acts to resolve a problem, it embarks on a course leading to further sets of options that would not otherwise have presented themselves. The process results in what is called 'path dependence'. Two governments, acting quite independently, can find that, perhaps coincidentally, their paths come closer together. The other reason for convergence is that any traveller wants to reach a destination. Travellers who seek similar destinations find that their paths converge. So, if Brazil and the US are on converging paths, is this attributable to just two social systems, or to some more general process? Some changes are attributable to modern technology, some to the spread of the global economic order, and some to ideas about what befits a democratic society. Increased similarities between Brazil and the US might be part of a more general convergence involving Britain, France and other countries as well.

The author fails to establish that the Brazilian path and the US path have been converging. The only evidence he can adduce in support of his claim is that (i) black activists in Brazil have had some success in copying the polarising strategy of their US counterparts, and (ii) so-called 'multi-racial' organisations in some parts of the US have been able to loosen perceptions of racial identity in ways that show some resemblance to the Brazilian pattern.

In Brazil the dominant perception of the relevant variation within the population is of differences in colour. In the US it is of differences of race. The Brazilian mode is the more truthful because differences of phenotype are inescapable physical phenomena, whereas the popular US conception of race is only a social construct. G. Reginald Daniel does not agree. In his view, Brazil exemplifies a ‘ternary racial project’ and the US a ‘binary racial project’. While acknowledging that everyday social relations in Brazil conform to a colour scale in which there is a continuum of differentiation, Daniel imposes on the Brazilian data a US conception of race. He gives undue weight to the threefold classification that results from a census question inviting members of the population to describe themselves as either *branco*, *pardo* or *preto* – white, brown or black.
He does not demonstrate that there is a ternary order in daily life. Similarly, on pages 201–5, he summarises findings about the colour scale in the USA, showing how, for example, skin colour differences correlate with income and employment both within the black population and when comparing blacks and whites. He calls this 'color-ism'. Whites and blacks interact more frequently, yet the colour line is now much more than a means for whites to exploit black labour. Separation is most marked in attendance at Sunday church services and in informal housing segregation (which, of course, influences access to other services and social relationships and reinforces inequalities). Whites and blacks 'still tend to live in separate, mistrustful, unequal, and sometimes mutually downright hostile worlds' (which has no true counterpart in Brazil).

In his opening chapter on Eurocentrism, Daniel takes the conception of race embodied in Question 6 of the US Census of 2000 and reads it back into an earlier historical period. In eighteenth-and nineteenth-century Europe there was no one 'concept of race'; there were many different, rival, concepts. Since it was not singular, 'the concept' could not be 'the foundation of the Brazilian and US racial orders'. These orders had no 'foundations'. They were the products of circumstance, subsequently rationalised. Yet if this book fails in its central contention it is a noble failure. Professor Daniel has assembled a mass of interesting information on many topics, especially the varying social positions of persons of multiple ancestry. He provides a good account of the mobilisation of pressure to have social distinctiveness recorded in the national censuses and in administrative data collection in both Brazil and the USA. He raises issues worthy of extended debate.

There is a special irony. When he was in the first grade at school, Reginald Daniel was puzzled that the colour line should be drawn so as to deny intermediate shades. 'When you mix brown and white you get tan', he insisted. He was like the little boy in Hans Christian Anderson's story of the emperor's new clothes. Since first grade he has done much to demonstrate the perversity of the 'one-drop' rule. Unfortunately, distracted by identity politics, he has missed the opportunity to show that the US assumption that humans belong in racial categories corresponds to the imaginary costume woven by the roguish tailors in Anderson's story.

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Pietro Saitta
Economie del sospetto: Le comunità maghrebine in Centro e Sud Italia e gli italiani


Saitta focuses on work, on the reasonable assumption that the tenor of immigrant integration will reveal itself most clearly on the job. Virtually all foreign-born adults are employed, and it is at work especially that they learn the language, encounter the Italian system and engage with Italians in productive activity. Adopting an ethnographic approach, Saitta settles in two cities and observes interactions, visits workplaces, interviews Italian workers and managers and gets to know Moroccans and Tunisians.

The two sites offer a compelling contrast between the Italian South and the Centre-North, respectively. Agriculture and fishing dominate the economy of the Sicilian city of Mazara del Vallo, and its political culture is characterised by patronage and mafia. Tunisians, who make up the majority of a long-established foreign community, struggle to get by and are neglected by an inattentive local administration. By contrast, Urbino, in the Marche, has only recently become an immigrant destination, particularly for Moroccans. Foreigners easily find the documented employment essential to legal residence in the area's many factories; their housing and other needs are the subject of initiatives on the part of an active centre-left administration. By contrast, Urbino, in the Marche, has only recently become an immigrant destination, particularly for Moroccans. Foreigners easily find the documented employment essential to legal residence in the area's many factories; their housing and other needs are the subject of initiatives on the part of an active centre-left administration. By contrast, Urbino, in the Marche, has only recently become an immigrant destination, particularly for Moroccans. Foreigners easily find the documented employment essential to legal residence in the area's many factories; their housing and other needs are the subject of initiatives on the part of an active centre-left administration. By contrast, Urbino, in the Marche, has only recently become an immigrant destination, particularly for Moroccans. Foreigners easily find the documented employment essential to legal residence in the area's many factories; their housing and other needs are the subject of initiatives on the part of an active centre-left administration.
trade labour or cash for the contracts needed for legal residence. Some Tunisians have secured legal employment in the fishing fleet but are unable to engage in meaningful interaction with Italian co-workers owing to conditions aboard the vessels. Italians describe Tunisians as bad workers, while Tunisians bristle at the imperious attitude of Italians. The residential clustering of Tunisians in the old city or casbah also gives rise among Sicilians to negative stereotypes about foreigners, even as it impedes the daily interaction that could promote intercultural understanding. Despite these conditions, few Tunisians leave Sicily. They are able to get by through the sharing of food, housing and information celebrated as Islamic practice—even though there exists suspicion between the established foreigners and recent arrivals.

While immigrants in Urbino easily obtain employment, here, too, mutual suspicion characterises immigrant–Italian interactions. Moroccans and others complain that they are given lower status than their qualifications and experience merit, while Italian managers and workers describe foreigners as lacking professionalism. Uneasy relations are exemplified in the competing interpretations of employers’ occasionally paying overtime in cash. Foreigners view this as an attempt to cheat them out of benefits while Italians accept that employers need to reduce their tax burden to keep the enterprise afloat. Many Moroccans reside in Ponte Armellina, outside Urbino and, as in Sicily, this residential clustering inhibits interactions between foreigners and Italians and feeds into the image, prevalent among Italians, of foreigners as vaguely threatening. Here, too, suspicion reigns within the immigrant ranks. Among Moroccans, for instance, the avowedly Muslim family men of Ponte Armellina contrast with the single young men pursuing an Italian lifestyle.

In Saïtta’s estimation, neither city offers a viable model for meaningful integration. Tunisians in Mazara have simply taken the place of impoverished Sicilian peasants, while Moroccans in Urbino have joined the lower ranks of the working class. This suggests that the second generation will grow dissatisfied in the face of generalised discrimination and limited prospects for advancement. The future promises an unsettling integration if politicians continue to treat immigration as an economic issue to be managed according to short-term trends.

Saïtta’s book, particularly the two long chapters on Mazara and Urbino, has much to recommend it. He constructs a well-rounded portrait of immigrant life and immigrant–Italian interactions, and his depiction of mutual suspicion as a recurrent theme rings true. He presents a lively portrait of the unpredictable course of ethnographic fieldwork. And his selection of two very different sites underscores how local labour markets, culture and politics shape the newcomer experience.

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This edited volume brings together three very contemporary and controversial topics in social research in Europe — multiculturalism, Muslims and citizenship — and analyses the relationships between them. The multiculturalism–citizenship debate is familiar but far from mature in migration and policy literature. The current work brings Muslim groups into the dynamic, as a so-called ‘exemplary problem case’, examining the ways in which Muslim claims and issues are integrated and accommodated in the multiculturalism agendas of the countries under study. Using the integration of Muslim groups as a case can help to steer the debate out of the doldrums of cultural relativity and into the tougher questions of the nature of social justice when ethnocultural diversity needs to be incorporated into the common civic space.

This book approaches the problematic from the perspectives of political thought, sociology, social policy and other branches of social science, allowing readers across disciplines to conceptualise multiculturalism/citizenship issues more comprehensively. The discourse revolves around the question of how cultural (including religious) difference can be organised in the public and institutional space, once the concept of justice is
developed to incorporate ethnocultural difference as a fundamental facet.

As an entity the book can be seen as a composite multiple case study. It comprises seven country studies: five Northern European states (Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France and Germany) and two in Southern Europe (Spain and Italy). The initial chapter provides a conceptual and national policy map for the empirical and contextual material in the body of volume. Modood and Kastoryano discuss secularism and the accommodation of Muslims in Europe in Chapter 9. Islam is invariably held to conflict with the values of secularism, and the separation of church and state. Bhikhu Parekh discusses theoretical and macro policy considerations raised by the empirical material, and elaborates on the policy and practice implications.

One of Modood's central points is that inclusion in a political community can be defined not in terms of accepting the rules of the existing polity and its hallowed public–private boundary lines, but as the opposite. The public space can be understood as contested and created through ongoing discursive contestation and political struggles. Integration makes progress through the process of discursive engagement, as previously marginal and subordinate groups begin to assert themselves confidently in the public space.

Mouritsen explores the Danish socio-historical context and how cultural and religious diversity might be perceived as a threat to civic values in a country cherishing an image of itself as a spearhead of human rights, liberty and equality. Discourse moves into a confrontational phase when exotic aliens emerge as 'would-be equal citizens'. Bousetta and Jacobs make the important point that the principles of multiculturalism can often be found to be manifest in policy and practice in different instances, even when these principles are not formally articulated. The idea of multicultural citizenship is not entirely novel but has been used before as an accepted logic underlying some of the existing arrangements for accommodating new groups.

Several of the chapters seek to demystify incidents that have been part of the chain of events serving to bring integration issues of Muslim groups to the fore in Europe. Kastoryano states that the headscarf issue in France has led to a re-evaluation of the principle of secularism—a pillar of its social cohesion. The headscarf issue exposed the tensions which existed between national institutions and immigrant Muslim populations and provoked a kind of power relationship between the 'law of the Republican state' and the Qur'an, or between what could be termed a type of 'society's law' and the 'community law'.

From a longitudinal perspective, the marginal position of Muslims in their societies of settlement indicates serious fault lines in integration processes. The case discussions in the book unpack the imperative of developing a vision of organising diversity and recognising difference in the public space. Religious difference and its insertion into society, together with the implication for the value of secularism, constitute a challenge that is fundamental to the multicultural citizenship project.

I appreciate the conceptual clarity at which this book aims, especially in a field in which the terminology and discourse areas being built and synthesised from different disciplinary sources. The rich range of disciplinary contributions is indeed an advantage. However, academic vigilance is required to maintain the validity of constructs that come to be regarded as generic to the field. For scholars pursuing deeper understanding of the salient issues in multicultural citizenship, and the interplay of national, political and socio-cultural factors that are shaping the course of Muslim groups' integration into European societies, this book is recommended as valuable and essential reading.

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The ideas and arguments presented in this book are based on published work from 1996 to 2006. They sometimes caused offence in Norway, where they were not understood and were strongly contested. Gullestad now presents them in
English in a form that is revised to draw out parallels between Norway and the rest of Europe—or even the world. It seems likely that they might still cause offence in most countries if they were presented in the popular press. This is because the book deals with, among other aspects of racism and national identity, the emotional block that makes it virtually impossible for individuals belonging to majority Western cultures to acknowledge their own racism. As Gullestad points out, racism is often seen as confined to members of far-right political parties, and not part of the culture of ordinary ‘decent’ people. Most members of visible ethnic-minority groups could provide convincing evidence to contest this view, but they are silenced or marginalised by dominant cultural assumptions.

Norwegian society can be analysed as a limiting case of whiteness. Norway is not simply white, but is also a society that sees itself as ‘innocent of colonialism’ and therefore as having no history of racism or racist oppression. Attempts to raise issues of racial discrimination and oppression are thus seen as unbalanced or even ungrateful, and largely ignored. Gullestad presents another distinctive feature of Norwegian culture: the historical emphasis on equality as sameness. With growing individualisation, this can be seen as morphing into difference within culturally defined limits, with skin colour still an unbridgeable marker of difference. However these specific aspects of Norwegian national culture do not weaken the main insights of the book.

Gullestad’s life’s work up to 2006 was to take a scientific (anthropological) look at her own society, while acknowledging the problems and blind spots that this may entail. In this book she uses that viewpoint to unpack the commonsense, invisible and taken-for-granted aspects of Norwegian culture that serve to construct a Norwegian national identity that leads to racism. This involves her in an analysis of the complicated relations between globalisation, historical imaginations, individualisation, migration, national, local and community politics, media, family and racism. Her arguments are too complex to summarise in a short review. She develops different themes using a method that combines theoretical argument with ethnographic interpretation of material from a range of research projects, media events and personal histories (life writing). The approach is rigorous and admits that the interpretations and conclusions are necessarily insecure and contestable.

In terms of the title, ‘social actors construct racial and national boundaries . . . drawing on everyday experiences in the home and the neighbourhood . . . Both everyday practices and well-established historical themes function as “plausibility structures” for imagining the categories of race, gender, culture and nation, with a focus on boundaries of belonging and exclusion’. Plausible might even be replaced by ‘acceptable’.

Chapter 2 deals specifically with individualisation, linking it to globalisation and new ways of bringing up children. Chapter 3 argues that political theory needs to include insights from ethnography if it is to understand changes in values and meanings. Chapter 4 focuses on boundaries, and children’s lives in the context of national identity and relations between Norway and the EU. Chapter 5 considers ‘imagined communities’ and their relation to family and childhood. Later chapters are based around specific media and academic debates. All but the first and last chapters are revisions to previous publications.

In Chapter 10 (first published 2003) Gullestad presents the term ‘sleeper’, an agent who lives unrecognised for many years in an alien country before being activated to spy or sabotage. She uses the term metaphorically ‘as a methodological tool for viewing the cultural analysis of majority–minority relations in Europe from a new angle’. Thus, just as members of a majority group share common cultural experiences and taken-for-granted assumptions with the racists in their group, so members of minority groups share experiences and cultural understandings that allow them to relate to extremists and even to terrorists. The sleepers here are the ethno-nationalist identity that is hidden in the assumptions of Norwegian non-racism, for whites, and the possibility of a return to cultural ‘roots’ for migrants or descendents of migrants who are apparently integrated into the majority culture.
The arguments in this book are wide-ranging and the evidence cited goes way beyond the confines of anthropology as normally understood. Few will agree with everything, but that simply makes the book more interesting and more challenging. It is a pity it is not more widely available, but libraries should buy it as a stimulating contribution to migration theory.

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