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What is This?
New York and London; and why so many Gujarati immigrants entered the motel industry in the United States.

Finally in Chapters Five and Six, Poros returns to her theoretical contributions to the literature and policy implications with a particular emphasis on not only focusing on “different kinds of social ties” but also arguing for a “relational approach” to the study of migration that recognizes that “social life is about processes and relations that are always changing” that affect people’s life chances.

While the book provided a refreshing look at network formation and change, I was less convinced by the author’s claim that racial discrimination did not factor into Gujarati immigrant underemployment (see pp. 94 and 117). This aspect of the argument was questionable because Poros’ interviews were focused on understanding network dynamics, and also because she studied an immigrant group with high mobility aspirations that may have not revealed how race restricted access to employment opportunities.

The book contributes to a slowly growing but vibrant body of research which recognizes that interpersonal networks alone cannot account for migration flows and the labor market incorporation of immigrants. This theoretical approach will provide migration scholars with new tools to examine the experiences of current and past immigrants. I plan to use Modern Migrations in my courses not only because it provides this new theoretical approach but also because it presents us with the experiences of new immigrant groups and will allow migration students to obtain a comparative historical approach to migration processes across ethnic groups. Finally, the book also challenges future migration scholars to consider how we can move from studying “static and fixed categories” when the author herself recognizes that “Indeed, these data are hard to come by” (p. 147).


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Police brutality, arson, accusations of terrorism and hunger strikes are common acts of violence between the state, indigenous Mapuche, and farmers in the Araucanía, in southern Chile. In the past decade, some Mapuche have forcibly occupied ancestral lands to evict farmers. Three Mapuche youths have since been killed by state forces, and two farmers killed allegedly by Mapuche activists. As I wrote this review, the Chilean state applied anti-terrorist laws to a Mapuche minor, a violation of international human rights law. Clearly violence has escalated but, as Patricia Richards shows, these are only the most recent events in a long history of Chilean dispossession and repression of Mapuche peoples. In Race and the Chilean Miracle, Richards effectively argues that the radicalization of this conflict reflects dissatisfaction with the quality of Chilean democracy, frustration with the opportunities created by neoliberal economic development, and social fragmentation due to enduring racism among Chileans. The conflict with the Mapuche thus holds a mirror up to Chilean democracy, widely celebrated as peaceful and successful, to reveal its injustices.

The first two chapters of Race and the Chilean Miracle provide a powerful intellectual and emotional guide to how Chileans and the Mapuche got to this violent impasse. Richards links historical acts of dispossession to contemporary forms of symbolic violence and epistemic privilege against the Mapuche. In 1883, the Mapuche succumbed to the Chilean state after a military campaign to “pacify” the Araucanía. The Chilean military and state killed Mapuche, manipulated them into agreements the state did not keep, expropriated their lands, and resettled survivors into small reducciones (literally, “reductions”). The state gave the conquered land to European farmers recruited to migrate to
Chile. Voided international treaties, lost land titles, and memories of violence fuel today’s conflict, though few Chileans remember it this way. Instead, Chileans erase the Mapuche from their territory and construct a fantasy of social harmony, disturbed only by agrarian reforms in the 1960s and today by a conciliatory democracy. Land gained during socialistic reforms was lost during Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship (1973–1990), so that by democratization Mapuche had about 40 percent less land than at the end of the Araucanía’s “pacification.”

Democratization introduced a host of reforms to support indigenous development. However, this seems like an increasingly inviable prospect given the environmental destruction caused by timber plantations and small-scale agriculture’s unfavorable terms of trade. Much like the farmers they wish to evict, Mapuche work on increasingly desiccated lands, with expensive agricultural inputs, to sell in unforgiving global markets. Against this background the Chilean state launched its own brand of “neoliberal multiculturalism,” a common trend across the continent to recognize indigenous groups without significantly redistributing power and resources (Chapters Three and Four). Particularly instructive is Richards’ discussion of the indio permitido (“authorized indi- an”) and insurrecto (“rebel”), where the state and local elites label Mapuche attacks on property “terrorism” to delegitimate their claims and, worse, to question the authenticity of Mapuche identity. Richards constructs a careful and nuanced narrative of how employees at state agencies and municipalities, as well as local elites, promote racist notions of the Mapuche using techniques well known to critical race scholars.

Central among these efforts is CONADI, a state agency that manages funds to help Mapuche re-purchase ancestral lands. How many Mapuche communities have benefited, how lands are selected for re-purchase, and what causes some re-purchase agreements to succeed and others to fail, are insufficiently discussed here. Richards addresses how poverty, racism, and Chile’s recent history may explain why some land disputes have become violent but not others. A lingering question is whether, and how, CONADI could operate in ways that produce a more equitable or just land distribution that reduces the turn to violence. For example, to a new reader CONADI’s land re-purchasing scheme may seem like an appropriate response to Mapuche historical claims; could an expansion of the program address Mapuche’s claims, or does CONADI bear responsibility for the escalating violence? Richards suggests land acquisition may not effectively right past wrongs, but refrains from directly evaluating CONADI’s practices.

How to assess CONADI’s land repurchases gets to the heart of claims about neoliberal multiculturalism. Richards makes a convincing case for the lack of political and decision-making power devolved to the Mapuche, but the case against economic redistribution is more complex. The new democracy launched programs to foster Mapuche access to education, entrepreneurship and land. Each of these has drawbacks and raises ethical questions. Scholarships produce out-migration, ethno-tourism essentializes communities, and access to land has not yet led to financial independence. In terms of equity and justice, CONADI has inflated land prices, benefitting evicted farmers but not tax payers, who also complain that the Mapuche receive more social services than poor non-Mapuche. In discussing these programs, Richards shows how racial oppression and the economic system mutually constitute each other, and highlights the local idiosyncrasies of neoliberal multiculturalism. However, oftentimes in Richards’ text “neoliberal multiculturalism” precluded an analysis of these difficult questions, which are really about what economic redistribution in a capitalist economy looks like, if it is at all possible.

In the final two chapters, Richards reports on Mapuche debates over how effectively land redistribution is empowering their communities. While some Mapuche put land recovery above all, others argue land can only go so far in righting past wrongs and is not producing financially sustainable communities. Interestingly, Mapuche debates over political strategy (e.g., to prioritize political autonomy, civil rights or material redress through land) hinge on how to define “multiculturalism” and identity. These debates are particularly difficult in the midst of
Chilean racism, eager as Chileans are to construe any differences of opinion, admission of ambiguity, or alternative strategy as evidence of "inauthenticity." Understandably, Richards is exceedingly wary of providing such fodder to Chilean racists, sometimes to the detriment of her analysis. This underscores how difficult alliances between Chileans and Mapuche might be, given how far Chilean society is from recognizing its own violent, imperial history.

Richards suggests that, to recognize the violent dispossession of the Mapuche, Chileans would have to reconsider their identities as pioneers who built something out of nothing, and as victims of uncontrollable foreign forces, including colonialism, multinational companies, and ambiguous others who want to incite the Mapuche and talk about race. How these identities are reproduced across white and mestizo Chileans of different social classes, and the post-colonial aspects of Chilean identity, requires a whole other book, where concepts like Walter Mignolo’s "border thinking" may be more useful than "neoliberal multiculturalism." Richards falls somewhat short of her goal to "race" the Chilean miracle, but she raises important questions about the endurance of contradictions and falsities in Chilean identity and their impacts on the poorest. Most remarkable of all, after a painful history of repression and dispossession, Richards delivers on her promise by ending with some grounds for optimism about reconciliation between the Mapuche and Chileans.


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Over the last two decades, reality television has shifted from somewhat of a novelty to becoming one of the most popular television genres. Given its prominence, it is not surprising that more and more scholars are interested in examining the genre’s social significance. Much of the scholarly research on reality television focuses on the genre’s adverse social implications, including how reality television promotes hegemonic understandings of consumerism, gender, race, and sexuality. At the same time, scholars operating from an audience reception framework have sought to partially counter these claims by exploring the critical manner in which audiences interact with these shows. In The Makeover, Katherine Sender also examines reality television. However, Sender’s analytical orientation and methodological framework elevate this work above much of the conventional literature on this topic.

Sender specifically examines four makeover reality television programs and their avid viewers, including The Biggest Loser, Queer Eye for the Straight Guy, Starting Over, and What Not to Wear. These programs document individuals’ attempts to lose weight, bolster their mental health, or alter their lifestyle or physical appearance. Each show provides a team of experts to assist individuals with these transformations and all four shows portray such changes as vital to a healthy and happy life.

Sender is predominantly interested in how audiences use makeover shows as resources in their reflexive projects of self-making. To explore makeover shows and their fans through this lens, Sender adopts insights from many of the most prominent scholars on the modern self, including Michel Foucault, Charles Taylor, Anthony Giddens, Ulrich Beck, and Eva Illouz. This analytical orientation allows Sender to construct a research project that should be of interest to not just popular culture scholars, but sociologists in general.

Sender aptly notes in the introductory chapter that the literature’s contrasting conclusions may be partially the result of differing methodologies. Much of the critical scholarly work on reality television relies on textual analysis, which leaves the works’ conclusions prone to textual determinism. In contrast, reception studies often fail to recognize how audiences’ interpretations are at least partially influenced by overarching social structures, which may lead such works to overemphasize audiences’ level of agency. Sender seeks to resolve this dilemma by utilizing a mixed method approach, including