

Strangers No More: Immigration and the Challenges of Integration in North America and Western Europe. By Richard Alba and Nancy Foner. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015. Pp. 336. \$35.00 (cloth); \$24.95 (paper).

Richard Alba's and Nancy Foner's book brings forward a comparative view of immigration and integration within six Western societies: Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States. The authors posit that, on the one hand, in Canada and the United States, immigration flows were always seen as part of the national (hi)story, while on the other hand, Europe is not as homogeneous as it was before, as migrant numbers are steadily growing. Within a context of rising anti-immigrant feeling on both continents and the fast ascension of European right-wing political parties, Alba and Foner argue that societal queries regarding the notion of integration across national levels and different geopolitical spaces, particularly as they relate to educational outcomes, labor market access, participation in mainstream institutions, and societal belonging, are needed. These comparisons will help us identify the factors that facilitate integration within national contexts and will make us understand where and how integration was successful. It is important to note that the book provides a particular view of American society vis-à-vis immigrants and immigration. Written in 2015, the text discusses the 2000s, which stand in sharp contrast with the current political rhetoric surrounding immigration (i.e., in terms of building walls, criminalizing legal immigrants, and banning immigration from certain countries/religions) under the newly elected Trump administration.

Chapter 1 defines *integration*, which is understood as a myriad of processes increasing immigrant populations' chances of obtaining social acceptance within the host society and life prospects similar to those of the native population. Integration seems opposed to *assimilation*, despite the conceptual overlap between the two terms. Assimilation starts from the assumption that group differences attenuate over time. Integration, however, seems to indicate greater levels of tolerance. The authors pin down two conceptual narratives as overlaid onto several models of integration. The narratives shift the onus of responsibility from the individual level (i.e., immigrant groups' access to social resources) to the societal level (i.e., the enlargement of the mainstream society beyond an "us and them" dynamic). The models of integration that Alba and Foner identify include the *na-*

tional ideological model, which refers to how the nation state positions itself vis-à-vis the immigrant (e.g., the Republican assimilationist principles in France vs. Canadian multiculturalism); *political economy regimes*, or the liberal, market-oriented system in the United States, Canada, and Britain versus the German, French, and Dutch social welfare states; *settler societies*, whereby immigration is part of nation building (i.e., North America); *American exceptionalism*, whereby the United States passes as exceptionally open to immigrants (yet this is problematic vis-à-vis its history of slavery); and *convergence*, which implies that national policies vis-à-vis immigrants, citizenship, and cultural practices are fairly similar on both continents.

Chapter 2 is somewhat jumpy. It intends to define immigrants, loosely cataloged as foreign-born residents, and to provide a brief overview of several migration streams across these societies. An analysis is missing, however, of what this differentiation of migration streams means from a transnational perspective. Immigrants constituted 13 percent of the US population in 2012 and 20 percent of the Canadian population in 2011, with both nations adding 3–6 percent yearly to their populations. In Britain, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, about 8–13 percent of the population is foreign born. Immigration is bimodal, as low-status groups hold jobs at the bottom of the economy and highly skilled migrants are placed at the top of the labor market. Not all immigrant groups are integrated in the same way, because of racial, ethnic, and religious differences and dissimilar levels of human capital. For instance, Eastern European migration flows within Europe seem less problematic than migration from Turkey and Morocco.

The post-war migration started in Western Europe with guest worker programs—in Germany by bringing in Italians and later Turks; in France and the Netherlands by importing people first from Italy, Spain, and Portugal and later from Turkey, Morocco, and Yugoslavia; and in Britain primarily by bringing in migrants from the former colonies of Jamaica and India. In the United States, the Bracero Program brought temporary foreign workers (TFW) mainly from Mexico to work in the agriculture industry; however, this stopped with the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, which lifted the discriminatory barriers on national origins and opened migration to the global South. The book makes no reference to the TFW programs existent in Canada, such as the Seasonal Agricultural Worker or the Live-in Caregiver Programs.

High-skilled migration is discussed within a context of competing global economies. The prototype country is Canada, which prioritizes applica-

tions on points, with high scores for education, credentials, language proficiency, and pre-existing employment offers. In the United States, highly skilled migrants are admitted via the H-1B program for up to 6 years. In 2006, France created a “skills and talents” law, which grants visas for up to 3 years to assist employers with recruiting workers. Germany grants up to 5 years, mainly for migrants in technology fields.

In terms of refugees’ entries, rejection rates seem the highest in France—86 percent for 2011—followed by Germany (80 percent), the United Kingdom (65 percent), the Netherlands (55 percent), and Canada (40–45 percent). The US rate is not provided. Entries through the family reunification streams constitute about a quarter in Canada and about two-thirds in the United States. Family reunification efforts seem more generous in North America, where the United States alone allows sponsorship of relatives outside the nuclear family (i.e., adult brothers and sisters of US citizens), than in Europe, where marriage is often viewed as an irregular way of entry into the nation. Undocumented migration is the highest in the United States, with numbers of about 11.7 million in 2012, mostly from Mexico. There is a relative absence of undocumented people in Canada due to the US border, which acts as a buffer. In Europe, numbers are much lower due to tight internal controls, with the highest figures reported in Germany (around 457,000), Britain (863,000), and France (about 400,000). Chapter 2 concludes by stating that immigration regimes are similar and restrictive on both continents, with the main transatlantic difference being that Canada and the United States are more open to immigration.

Chapter 3 focuses on economic well-being. Trends of economic inequality particularly affect immigrants. Alongside women and youth, immigrants are situated at the bottom of the economic ladder and are overrepresented within the low-wage sectors and in part-time and short-contract jobs. Low-wage labor is growing in Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States. France is the exception because of the statutory minimum wage and the influence of unions in setting up wages. The price paid by France, Alba and Foner argue, is the low rate of job creation due to the state-mandated protection for employees, which is a problematic argument to a certain extent, as it trumps economic goals over those of employees. Migrants also resort to self-employment arrangements. Although small businesses may constitute an advantage over other forms of employment, many do not survive; in France, 60 percent of non-European businesses go bankrupt within 5 years. The poverty risk for immigrants is also high: about 43 percent in

United States and 40 percent in France, with the lowest risk in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (statistics are not provided).

Chapter 4 addresses immigrants' living situations. The native majority tends to have a monopoly over the best residential neighborhoods and schools. Initial immigrant neighborhoods constitute way stations, as people relocate to wealthier areas once they acquire the necessary language skills and economic resources. Social capital can constitute an advantage of immigrant communities, as it can lead to further employment and exchange of information, for example, in the sub-economy of Cubans in Miami. Some immigrant neighborhoods, or "ethnoburbs," have a high concentration of well-off immigrant families, for instance, Cupertino, California, which is home to wealthy Chinese and Indian families. Overall, immigrants are highly concentrated within urban settings. In Canada, the major cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver host more than 60 percent of all immigrants. Toronto alone constitutes the destination city for about 40 percent of all immigrants to Canada. Similarly, in the Netherlands, non-Western immigrants are concentrated within Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Hague, and Utrecht. London hosts about 40 percent of the country's foreign born. Only in Germany is the immigrant population dispersed, with Berlin, Hamburg, and Munich housing 15 percent of the immigrant population, a pattern tied with the earlier flows of guest workers settled in the former employment regions.

The index of dissimilarity, which refers to the percentage of the immigrant minority that would have to move in to match the residential distribution of the native population, is used to identify segregation. Low segregation sits under 30, while high levels go over 60. The United States has the highest index of dissimilarity; for African Americans in relation to whites, this ranges around 80 in many American cities, with the highest in Chicago and New York. In Britain, the most segregated groups are Pakistani and Bangladeshi people (61 index) and Afro-Caribbeans (37 index). The segregation index is also low in France, between 30 and 50 in Paris over the years covered in the book. The main difference in France, however, is that within the *banlieues*—the poorer suburbs similar to inner-city neighborhoods in North America—reside many working-class French, and these neighborhoods are not as impoverished as their North American counterparts. Segregation is fused with poverty in the United States, while in Europe governments are more concerned with identifying and remedying neighborhood disadvantages (i.e., France). In the Netherlands, segrega-

tion is moderate. The postcolonial groups of Surinamese and Antilleans have an index of about 30 in Amsterdam, while the guest worker groups of Moroccans and Turks have an index of about 40. Rates are also low because 40 percent of all housing in the Netherlands is public housing, which is difficult for immigrants to access (many native Dutch people live in public housing and generally the waitlists are long). In Germany, the index for Berlin sat at about 30 and for Frankfurt at about 27 in the late 1990s.

Chapter 5 discusses issues related to race. It provides a brief history of colonization in the United States and Canada, and it emphasizes the legacies of slavery in Europe, where France, the Netherlands, and Britain enslaved many Africans on Caribbean and South American plantations. The authors posit that the identity of European whiteness is not dependent on a direct internal comparison with a racialized population, mainly because the racialized populations were in the colonies abroad and not within the nation. Yet Europeans are not color blind. For instance, the immigrants from Africa, south of Maghreb, or from Guadalupe and Martinique feel like foreigners in France. Across the pond, however, race is color-coded and is used as a categorical variable within the academic, public, and political debates. In the United States, demographic census data is coded around race. Canada's official statistics tend to record visible minority status. In Europe, the association of racial classifications with the Holocaust had delegitimized their use within the public policy rhetoric. In France, the construct of racism is used to criticize beliefs; however, collecting data on race as a category is seen as divisive. In the United States, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 gave African Americans the right to political participation and access without discrimination to education, employment, and housing. Recent affirmative action policies for hiring minorities have somewhat led to racial integration, particularly for the second generation. And while racial barriers still exist, the authors argue that institutional efforts aim toward diversity, although such efforts might not resonate with the current state of immigration discourse in Donald Trump's America. Britain and Canada have also developed proactive laws to reduce racial discrimination. According to the migrant integration policy index, the scores on anti-discrimination policy are much higher in Canada (89), the United States (89), and the United Kingdom (86) than in France (77), the Netherlands (68), and Germany (48). However, the United States has the highest rates of incarceration, five to eight times greater than those of Canada and Western Europe, for those of African

decent. The racism in the United States also extends to Native American groups, as well as to Mexicans and Puerto Ricans.

Chapter 6 discusses immigrant religion, which is seen to demarcate the boundary between the native majority and “the other.” Immigrant religion poses problems for integration, particularly in continental Europe and to a lesser extent in Canada and the United States. Although an anti-Islam sentiment exists on both continents, in Europe this gets closer to cultural racism. Strengthened by populist parties, it widely propagates the fear of Islamization. In essentializing culture and religion, Islam is seen as contrary to all liberal values sustained by European states (i.e., Muslim practices of arranged marriages and honor killings are seen to contradict secular values, which is also why the headscarf debate in France is grounded on the principle of *laïcité*, or secularism). About 51 percent of Dutch people, 47 percent of Germans, 34 percent of French people, and 14 percent of British people view Muslims unfavorably. In the United States, immigrant religious beliefs have a more positive light (or at least they seemed this way to the authors at the time of writing in 2015). Although cases of discrimination against Muslims do happen, especially after September 11, the authors argue that religiosity is highly accepted through the process of Americanization; it becomes the pathway to acculturation in American society. In Europe, national identity was always blended with Christianity, and Catholicism was privileged over other religions. Americans, by contrast, are more religious and their institutions and constitutional principles are more tolerant of non-Christian values. Canadians are less secular than Europeans but less religious than Americans—in 2003, 28 percent of Canadians versus 60 percent of Americans identified their religion as very important. European reminiscences exist in Quebec; the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s reduced the power of the Catholic Church and imposed a secular nationalism (while the veil debates echo those in France).

Chapter 7 sheds light on immigrants’ political participation, in terms of electoral processes and outcomes, which are seen as cumulative indicators of integration and symbolically reflective of power, prestige, recognition, and influence. Alba and Foner argue that citizenship and the malleability of state-supported citizenship regimes are the prerequisites for political participation and electoral representation. The United States and Canada provide unconditional forms of citizenship at birth (i.e., *jus soli*) for the second generation. While Western Europe moved from initial forms of *jus sanguinis* (i.e., citizenship inherited from parents) to forms of *jus soli*, these

tend to be conditional. Germany provides *jus soli* for the second generation if at least one parent lived in Germany for a minimum of 8 years, Great Britain provides *jus soli* if one parent is a citizen or a permanent resident, and in France and the Netherlands there is a conditional acquisition of citizenship at 18 years of age (but unconditional for the third generation) if the claimant is a resident since birth. Germany is the least accepting; those outside the European Union acquiring German citizenship need to renounce their prior citizenship. Political representation is defined as the degree to which electoral seats reflect population shares, with the limitation that descriptive representation is different than the substantive, decision-making one. The degree of representation tends to be higher at the local and regional political levels. Canada and Great Britain have higher levels, while France has limited representation, particularly in Marseille and Paris. There are low levels of immigrant representation at the national level; however, these are higher in Canada than in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Chapter 8 focuses on educating the second generation. The labor market depends on the future of low-status immigrant children; however, schools reproduce inequalities, and subsequent standardization practices (i.e., the German *Abitur*, a standardized college entrance exam) may disadvantage immigrant children. American and Canadian systems do not have national qualifying exams; hence, entry to postsecondary levels is much easier. Alba and Foner fail to mention, however, that Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores are needed for graduate-level entry in most US schools. France has the highest standardized system—students need to pass the *baccalauréat* at the end of high school for university entry. Germany has an extreme case of early stratification, where students are prepared for three unequal study streams: *Hauptschule* (apprenticeships), *Realschule* (skilled occupations), and *Gymnasium* (university). The Dutch system is similar to the German one, while that of Great Britain is also tracked, yet the tracking age is higher. In terms of academic skills, the second generation lags in most countries except Canada (partially due to the selective points system). The worst differences are recorded in Germany, the country with the most stratified educational system. Reading and math scores are worse in the United States, but this is mainly because of a very unequal system that polarizes rich versus poor schools.

Chapter 9 discusses understandings of identity and their materialization in mixed social relationships. American and Canadian identities con-

tain different cultural ethnicities under their parabolas, for as long as they add to Americanness and Canadianess: “Americans are comfortable with hyphenated identities. You can be American and ‘ethnic’ at the same time. . . . Being Canadian and ethnic is also normal and accepted” (200). By contrast, Germany promotes ethnonational labels like *Deutsch-Türken* (German Turks), France has an assimilationist model whereby immigrants must become and feel French, and people in the Netherlands call their non-Western immigrants *allochtones*, in contrast with the native *autochtones*. Britain is closer to Canada and the United States in terms of cultural assimilation, although the Muslim population does not necessarily fit within Britishness. Intermarriages seem most common in Canada; in the United States, race constitutes a barrier for mixing, particularly for African Americans. European countries have the lowest intermarriage rates for Muslims. Overall, the rates of intermarriages increase from generation to generation.

Chapter 10 insists on the take-away message that the West is changing. All Western societies have large groups of immigrants, and diversity is generally enriched on both continents. Among the disadvantaged immigrant groups are Turks in Germany, North Africans in France, and Mexicans in the United States. Immigrant-origin minorities are underrepresented in legislatures, and economic disadvantages for immigrants and their children are the greatest in the United States due to high inequality rates, strong market principles, and weak state intervention in housing policies. Overall, the settler societies of the United States and Canada accept higher numbers of permanent immigrants, although Canada cannot be lumped together with the United States because of its selective points system. In Canada, immigrants still fare low on employment outcomes in comparison with the native population; however, their children do very well in school, at par with the native population. This is why, to remedy the situation of low-income immigrant groups, Alba and Foner propose the development of selective immigration policies, a strategy which in fact would benefit the host societies while depleting home societies of local talents (i.e., brain drain).

Overall, this book is a dry read. It is excessively general, it contains a lot of repetitive information, and it addresses everything and nothing at the same time. The comparative analyses are undeveloped. Who does not know that Europe is more secular than America, that immigration is part of the settler model within North America, that the Muslim is the new Jew, as

Slavoj Žižek would say (since the media is full of anti-Muslim news and editorials), that most immigrants tend to settle in cities and not in the country, and that intermarriages are common for children of immigrants? Although topical information from different societies is summarized and presented, it is unclear what such comparative summaries are actually adding to the conceptual or analytical discussion on integration. More so, the book starts from a set of a priori norms, principles, and assumptions, taken *sine qua non* to guide integration. It discusses challenges in controlling migration, yet it starts from the uncontested assumption that control and management are fundamental principles in addressing processes of migration. It states that integration provides tolerance without contesting the assumption of tolerance, which implies that there is one dominant sovereign that needs to tolerate the deviant other. It discusses immigration in terms of its influence on Western societies without primarily focusing on the well-being of the migrants; hence, the assumption that migration is unidirectional, aimed to mainly achieve the betterment of the host society. There is the tacit assumption of an individualized responsibility for the lack of integration, for instance, in stating that Turkish women have a disadvantage in the German labor market because they are not economically active, it implies an individualized cultural fault for their unemployment. Immigration processes are seen to consequentially stem from free choice. In stating that immigrants have the choice to return home, yet they prefer to settle in the host (read as “better”) society, Alba and Foner ignore that it might not be as easy to return. Some may escape war, some may have debts to pay, and some may fear re-acculturation struggles after years spent away.

Several other arguments are loosely and simplistically defined. Insisting on cliché examples of immigrant cuisine (Germany’s Turkish *döner kebab*) as prototypes for a multicultural society, the book says very little vis-à-vis the multicultural structures of power within a society. Immigrants are initially defined as the foreign born, yet the book makes many references to the children of immigrants, the so-called second generation, without providing a rationale as to why those born *de facto* within host societies are seen to have similar belongings. Race, ethnicity, and immigrant-ness are unsystematically conflated: for Canada, electoral data is presented under the variable of “visible minorities,” for the United Kingdom under the “non-whites” label (yet it is unclear if the third generation is representative of those called immigrants or just racialized nationals), and for Germany

and France under “all from immigrant background and their children,” for the Netherlands it is all of “non-Western” origins, and for the United States Hispanics are synonymized with immigrants.

The symbolic relations of power within Europe, in terms of internal migration, are also overlooked. For instance, Alba and Foner argue that the post-Soviet bloc migration is more accepted in Europe in comparison with the non-European Union flows; however, they overlook the mobility restrictions on Eastern European workers. While they do make references to the transitional curbs placed by most European Union states on the A8 entries (i.e., the eight countries that joined the Union during the 2004 enlargement: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia), they do not mention the labor curbs imposed by France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom on the A2 entries (Romania and Bulgaria). They refer to Britain as the exception for not enforcing restrictions on A8 nationals; however, Britain imposed labor controls on the A2 entries until 2014.

The book also presents the North American situation as far better than it actually is. It paradoxically refers to the United States as having a “generous immigration policy” (26), when the United States has the highest numbers of undocumented people—30 percent of all migrants. This positive interpretation of immigration policy in the United States may seem particularly out of step with the real circumstances in light of the discussions regarding immigration bans and increased border controls that emerged in US political rhetoric just after the book’s publication in 2015. In relation to Canada, the book does not mention the exploitative guest worker programs in terms of lack of rights, government-related benefits, and workplace safety measures.

Despite such limitations, the book provides numerous empirical examples, which could be of use to anyone interested in drafting a strong background or literature review piece on immigration-related issues, either comparatively across these six societies or singularly within any and each of them.

Raluca Bejan
University of Toronto