



Racial Revolutions: Antiracism and Indian Resurgence in Brazil

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The strength of this volume lies in the first four essays comprising the last section, "Globalization and New Challenges," where the authors finally start to incorporate global themes into the discussion. Such issues as the severe inequalities of wealth between countries and the balance of power among global economic forces begin to become problems in terms of their effects on a progressive agenda. In one of the best written and most insightful pieces, British social policy scholar Bill Jordan takes a global and historical stance in arguing that the scope of progressive economic policies is likely to increase in the first quarter of the twenty-first century, briefly yet provocatively suggesting that Central Europe may be the new breeding ground for such possibilities. Scottish urban studies scholar David Donnison points to the need to go beyond the rhetoric of both third way and communitarian approaches and attempts to recenter the debate around the realities of those excluded from the very concepts of "social justice" and the "good society" professed in both frameworks. In criticizing precisely the type of thinking contained in this volume, where contention gives way to "cooperative enquiry," and ameliorating inequalities is accomplished via "insisting on the social basis of personhood," Donnison ironically delivers an apt punch line for the book: "The language of these scholars makes it clear that when it comes to practical politics they are unlikely to lead anything more formidable than a seminar" (p. 226).

Donnison's assessment may actually be too harsh—at least these folks are making a go at formulating an intellectual agenda for the left, a project much easier to criticize than actually create. The problem with the general ideas presented here, however, is that there do not seem to be any problems. Contention is nowhere to be found in global age progressive politics, where for example "powerful transnational corporations" need not be "demonized" (p. 208). Certainly, these folks are not looking to send the masses to the barricades, yet one would think that some attention to conflict and power should be a necessary component of any political agenda. Tellingly, neither "collective action" nor "social movement" make it into the book's index, an indication of where such concepts fit into its content. As Donnison concludes in his essay, "In the global age, if exponents of

'new' politics think they can make the world a better place without upsetting powerful people, they will achieve very little" (p. 235).

Regardless of what you think about the style of politics being prescribed, such as they are, the ultimate undoing of the collection lies in the failure to conceptualize the intended audience—everyone it seems would be let down by the contents within. Social scientists (of any disciplinary stripe) will find little new academic substance with which to grapple, politicians and policymakers will find little by way of practical approaches or specific policy prescriptions, and activists will no doubt leave frustrated with the intellectual spade-work they have to work with. People interested in communitarian ideas from a theoretical perspective would do better reading Tam's or Etzioni's accounts in their original forms, and people looking for enlightenment or inspiration from a reenergized, newly globalized left will unfortunately have to keep on looking.

Racial Revolutions: Antiracism and Indian Resurgence in Brazil, by **Jonathan W. Warren**. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001. 368 pp. \$64.95 cloth. ISBN: 0-8223-2731-7. \$21.95 paper. ISBN: 0-8223-2741-4.

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With few exceptions, scholarly books on race and racism in contemporary Brazil have focused on the plight of the population of African descent. The failure of the Brazilian black movement to mobilize a mass following in the face of rampant racism and racial discrimination has been a central preoccupation of both scholars and activists concerned with promoting an antiracist agenda in Brazil. In *Racial Revolutions*, Jonathan W. Warren moves beyond an overly narrow, black and white conceptualization of Brazil's racial politics by broadening the scope of scholarly attention to consider the contemporary struggles of Brazil's self-identified Indians. Warren suggests that indigenous peoples' movements constitute perhaps the most dynamic and potentially transformative sites of antiracist contention in the field of contemporary Brazilian racial politics.

The book is organized around two central concerns. First, Warren takes on the matter of Brazil's "Indian resurgence," the rapid rise in recent years of the numbers of Brazilians who self-identify as Indian. Several observers have attributed this demographic explosion to material incentives offered by the state since 1988 to officially recognized indigenous communities. Most significantly, formal recognition of a community as "Indian" has brought with it the very real possibility of legal rights to land. Warren rejects such "racial huckster" theses, however, arguing that the decision of whether or not to identify as Indian is complicated by a host of counteracting incentives and disincentives—material, social, and personal. Warren emphasizes the significance of broad discursive shifts in the valuation of "Indianness," along with the activities of NGOs and social movement organizations, in shaping individual identity choices. He ultimately concedes that material incentives are an important driving force in Brazil's Indian resurgence. But he nicely illustrates how the potential for material incentives to trigger shifts in racial identification hinges on the influence of nonmaterial contextual factors as well.

After examining the reasons for Brazil's Indian resurgence, Warren turns to the second central concern of the book: an examination of "how non-Indians imagine Indianness and how post-traditional Indians negotiate these imaginings" (p. 32). Employing several months of ethnographic work in Eastern Brazil, and drawing on over 100 in-depth interviews, Warren describes the contrasting world views and racial common sense of Indians and non-Indians in contemporary Brazil. To a considerable extent, the informants are allowed to speak for themselves, via lengthy quotations from interviews and other sources. Warren contrasts understandings of Indianness espoused by non-Indians to those professed by those he refers to as "post-traditional Indians"—self-identified Indians who resemble non-Indian Brazilians in most if not all aspects of their daily lives and culture (language, dress, diet, employment, etc). Warren suggests that for non-Indians, those who live by the so-called "law of the white" (*lei do branco*), the category "*índio*" is generally denigrated, considered synonymous with backwardness and incompatible with modernity. According to the law of the white, some-

one who watches television, wears Western clothing, and speaks Portuguese is not an Indian. In contrast, the "law of the Indian" (*lei do índio*) places positive value on Indian identity and insists on its compatibility with a modern, "civilized" lifestyle. Moreover, while the law of the white restricts the label "Indian" to those "of the forest," that is, of "pure" indigenous ancestry, the law of the Indian recognizes that those of mixed ancestry can legitimately reclaim their Indian identity.

It is through his discussion of the law of the Indian that Warren links his consideration of the contrasting world views and racial common sense of Indians and non-Indians back to the issue of Brazil's Indian resurgence. According to Warren, the rapid growth of Brazil's self-identified Indian population suggests the growing resonance of the counter-hegemonic racial common sense of the *lei do índio*. Individuals of mixed ancestry who accept this world view can choose to identify with their indigenous roots (whether real or imagined); in so doing, collectively, they challenge Brazil's hegemonic racial ideology of white superiority.

Warren's analysis emphasizes the antiracist potential of Brazil's Indian resurgence. His interviews and ethnographic observations reveal, however, that if the movement's discourse is antiracist, it is also deeply racist. Not just anyone can legitimately claim to be Indian in contemporary Brazil. Official recognition hinges on the credibility of claims to indigenous descent. And these claims must stand up not only to the rigorous standards of state-contracted experts (the anthropologists), but also to the sometimes even more demanding standards of those Indian communities that already enjoy official recognition. Warren documents tensions among post-traditional Indians over the relative authenticity of various communities making claims on the state; in some instances, these tensions have resulted in violent conflict.

By policing the boundaries of Indianness, already recognized Indians may hope to sway the rising tide of popular opinion that tends to see post-traditional Indians as "racial hucksters"—ordinary Brazilians who don indigenous clothing and learn a traditional dance in order to exact material gain from the state. However, tensions within Brazil's indigenous peoples' movement over who can rightly identify as Indian point to a significant inter-

nal constraint on the continued growth of Brazil's Indian resurgence. Violent conflicts between self-identified Indians over the authenticity of claimed racial lineage suggest that the racialist foundations of the movement's discourse could undermine its antiracist potential.

The two central concerns of *Racial Revolutions*—explaining shifts in racial self-identification, on the one hand, and describing the conflicting racial common sense of members of different racial groups, on the other—are both compelling. But they stand in uneasy relationship to one another within the covers of this book. Each invokes a different set of analytical presumptions and postures on the part of the author. A recurrent tension runs throughout the narrative between two very different analytical stances. Explaining shifts in racial identification demands analytical agnosticism regarding individuals' true racial identities; it is the politics of racial classification and identification, and the mechanisms of boundary construction, that are the central analytical focus. For the most part, though not entirely, this is the analytical position taken by Warren in the first part of the book. Describing the differing world views and racial common sense of members of different racial groups, in contrast, demands a presumption of a stable, identifiable boundary demarcating group membership (whatever criteria are used to make the determination). In order to describe the contrasting racial common sense of Indians and non-Indians in contemporary Brazil, Warren necessarily makes judgments as to who speaks for one group and who speaks for the other. Identities and boundaries that appear imminently fluid, permeable, and political in the first part of Warren's analysis appear, implicitly at least, easily recognizable, relatively fixed, even natural at other points in the narrative. The slippage from an agnostic analytical stance to a much more positioned one at various points in the narrative is somewhat distracting, but ultimately it does not detract much from this informative and thought-provoking study. Warren's *Racial Revolutions* illuminates an understudied domain of contemporary Brazilian racial politics, making an important contribution to the literature on race in Brazil and to the more general comparative literature in this field.

Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe, by **Roger D. Petersen**. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 321 pp. \$59.95 cloth. ISBN: 0-521-77000-9.

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Roger Petersen's comparative analysis of rebellion against different types of repressive regimes provides a model for balancing theory and case materials in pursuit of a question. By analyzing cases from Eastern Europe in a theoretically driven manner, Petersen also provides a valuable corrective to the collective action literature that has often assumed the political conditions that are found in Western parliamentary democracies such as freedom of association and an independent press.

The book's theoretical framework rests on an analysis of mechanisms, or intermediate level causal processes that link individual actions and broader social and political outcomes, inspired in part by the work of Jon Elster. Petersen seeks to bridge the rational choice and the sociological literature on collective action with insights into how rebellion is formed and maintained. Rather than a single act, he analyzes rebellion as a process that may be characterized as a continuum of roles from cooperation to neutrality to armed insurrection. He distinguishes between triggering mechanisms that move individuals toward unorganized as well as organized rebellion and sustaining mechanisms that prevent individuals from leaving rebellious organizations.

Petersen analyzes potential rebels as part of the communities in which they live and within the historical frameworks of meaning that orient their behavior. He focuses on community norms such as unconditional reciprocity, honor, and conformity that mediate between individual actions and national and international levels of analysis. By analyzing the structural location of potential rebels within their communities, Petersen builds on the insights of network analyses of scholars like Gould, Marwell, and Oliver to explain variation across contexts over time. While maintaining the rational choice framework, the book analyzes irrational and emotional mech-