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BOOK REVIEWS

Cruelty as Citizenship: How Migrant Suffering Sustains White Democracy

By Cristina Beltrán. Forerunners: Ideas First. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020. 128 pp., $10 Paper.

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This is a brilliant and important book. Beltrán packs a powerful critical analysis of U.S. racialization into a short work that will hold up well for many years. The central analytic insight of the book is embedded in its title, "cruelty as citizenship." Building on Joel Olson's thesis (in *The Abolition of White Democracy,* 2004) that U.S. democracy has understood citizenship to be about superior white racial *standing*, rather than about political participation in self-governance, Beltrán suggests that the enduring meaning of white supremacy is the cruel debasement of people of color through performative public acts of superior power as well as through exclusionary social practices and structures. That is, the cruel denial of equal standing to people of color is enacted through the preserves and performances of whites-only democratic citizenship. And Beltrán argues that among the payoffs for many white citizens are the "pleasures" (p. 11) experienced by performing and witnessing cruelty toward members of despised groups. Thus, U.S. racialization, Beltrán insists, is a *political* project centered on cruelty inflicted through the exercise of white racial power.

Beltrán articulates this core argument through a well-informed historical political analysis of certain key events in U.S. political development, an analysis that integrates racialization experiences of the Indigenous and Black populations, as well as Latinx people. Drawing from an unusually wide range of political and historical scholarship, the book sketches the development of the political performance of white supremacy from the country's settler colonial founding through its expansionary logic of "manifest destiny" on both the ever-retreating frontier and its enlarging borders, concluding with an analysis of the continuation of the white supremacist politics of cruelty in the aftermath of the racial reforms of the 1960s. Following the overview Introduction, Chapter One centers on the development of a white democratic politics of racial cruelty performed through informal alliances of outlaw white settlers operating with the tacit (and sometimes explicit) support of white officials to violently dispossess and "remove" Indigenous peoples and to terrorize enslaved Black workers from the period following Bacon's Rebellion in early colonial Virginia through the enactment of Jacksonian democracy.

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Chapter Two traces a very similar political dynamic of white democratic cruelty in the conquest, annexation and racialized incorporation of nearly one-half of Mexico's territory via the U.S.–Mexican War of 1846–1848. Beltrán describes the disparagement and stigmatization of Mexicans by white American settlers and public officials before, during, and after this war of conquest. And she documents a broad spectrum of violent acts against Mexicans and (later) Mexican Americans by white settler vigilante groups (including the Texas Rangers) and public officials (including U.S. soldiers). These acts included thousands of documented cases of anti-Mexican lynching, forcible removals from property, rapes, mob attacks, and more. Beltrán cites a number of scholars to argue that, as with Indigenous peoples, U.S. settlers wanted Mexican land but not Mexican people, who were viewed as mostly unassimilable and were expected to "disappear" over time. And as with anti-Black violence, "violence against Mexicans was imprinted onto the public imaginary through the circulation of photographs and postcards showing images of torture and death" (p. 86), for the evident enjoyment of the white settlers. The settlers, in turn, viewed the acquisition of this huge territory as an enlarged opportunity to expand the scope of their "freedom" through the large-scale expansion of private property owned by white Americans. For white Americans, democratic citizenship came to mean living in a "political system characterized by equality and the rule of law *for them,* along-side the opportunity to both witness and exercise arbitrary authority over various racial populations" (p. 89).

Chapter Three turns to the post-1960s period, when "white citizens no longer enjoy the pleasure of having access to a state, and state institutions, *explicitly* committed to whiteness as standing" (p. 91), to articulate the role of anti-migrant politics as a preeminent site for the continued enactment of white citizenship as cruelty. Noting the development of a significant anti-immigrant public sphere built on the platforms of right-wing news and social media, Beltrán traces the development of anti-migrant militia groups and multiple cruelties enacted through the operations of ICE and the Border Patrol, examining the parallels between these practices and the earlier periods' interwoven coordination between the actions of white settlers and public officials toward people of color. An incisive analysis of former president Trump's MAGA rallies as public spectacles of anti-migrant cruelty is particularly insightful.

The book's conclusion interrogates the fear and hatred that lie at the heart of racialized anti-migrant discourse in contemporary racial politics. Noting that white supremacist citizenship was premised on unfettered white freedom to move into the territories of other peoples and enact violent dispossession with impunity, Beltrán describes the white fears of a "great replacement" that play a prominent role in contemporary anti-migrant discourse. Today it is the migrants who are perceived as claiming the power of unfettered mobility. Thus, Mexicans and other Latinx peoples are perceived as an invading army of *reconquista,* amplifying white citizens' sense of "losing their country," a perception that Trump exploited to great effect. The book ends with a discussion of the increased division of white Americans regarding race, with white Democrats having moved toward increased understanding and support for measures leading to greater racial equality, while many white Republicans appear to be following Trump's moves away from

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democratic norms toward an embrace of authoritarian governance as a means to maintain white supremacy.

This is a superb book that should be read carefully by all students of American politics, international migration, and democratic citizenship. My only criticism is that I think the book would have benefitted from a more fully developed explication of the *settler colonial* foundations of U.S. racial politics. That is, like Olson's seminal work on white democracy, this book rests on the notion that the U.S. is a settler colonial country but doesn't fully articulate the meaning of this assertion in a polity that has virtually erased the memory of its own foundations. Many readers, I suspect, would have benefitted from a fuller treatment.

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Immigrant Incorporation in East Asian Democracies

By Erin Aeran Chung. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020. xvii, 261 pp. $34.99 Paperback/$28.00 Ebook.

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Immigrant Incorporation in East Asian Democracies is a major contribution to the cross-national study of immigration, ethnicity, and race. Broad in scope and methods, this book offers a comparative analysis that should be read by scholars of immigration, citizenship, and multiethnic societies. The book makes three major theoretical and methodological contributions. First, Chung identifies patterns in East Asian countries—Korea, Japan, and Taiwan—that defy a crisp generalization of immigrant incorporation rooted in a distinction between ethnic identity-based citizenship and liberal democratic citizenship. Instead, she explains that *differential incorporation* has come about through civic legacies that have shaped advocacy and ultimately the policy outcomes for immigrants. Second, in addition to examining politics and policies, she assesses incorporation from the standpoint of immigrants themselves, drawing on focus groups conducted in all three countries. Third, her analysis of national policy changes over time highlights that nationality and residence-status differences, more than ethnicity, inform an approach to incorporation in these countries that favors some groups and excludes others (particularly manual workers), producing country-specific constructions of multiculturalism.

Chung challenges an ideal-typical model of exclusionary incorporation for East Asia that expects countries in the region provide "descent-based citizenship policies, difficult naturalization and permanent residency requirements, limited non-citizen rights, and no representation of foreign residents in the public sphere" (p. 14). In doing this, the author acknowledges the centrality of descent-based citizenship