

“Camus had no patience with theory and its practitioners” (161) does not get Camus off the hook, and particularly not on Zaretsky’s reading of him, as he refuses to take seriously Camus’s own claim that he was no philosopher.

Zaretsky does a reasonably good job of reciting the particulars of Camus’s conflict with other French intellectuals on the left regarding the Algerian uprising and the status of the Soviet Union, and he faithfully details Camus’s unrepentant humanism. But, again, the problem is that he is so identified with Camus’s positions that he does not critically assess them. There is much that is admirable in these positions, but they surely were not impregnable, and Zaretsky does not adequately engage their critics. With respect to Algeria, he says that even “sympathetic critics” such as Albert Memmi described Camus as a “colonizer of good will” who could not escape the dilemmas of history (128), but rather than explore this charge, Zaretsky instantly likens Camus’s plight to Montaigne’s during the religious wars, and he praises Montaigne for his “rare ability to remain above the fray” (124). Is there no possibility that there is *any* truth in Memmi’s charge? As a *pied-noir*, Camus’s desire to end the ravages of terrorism and colonialism *and* to maintain political ties between Algeria and France was natural, but this was not necessarily the most just solution, it was not tenable, and it was not like Montaigne’s position. So, too, with respect to the Soviet Union, Zaretsky does not fairly consider the criticisms of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, and he fails to make clear that they were no more loyal to the Soviet Union than Camus was loyal to the United States. In fact, they were all libertarian socialists, and their battle reflected not their theoretical commitments but the hopeless problem of political praxis at the start of the Cold War.

While discussing Camus’s fondness for the ancient Greek tragedies, Zaretsky rightly says that tragedy involves competing ethical claims, each of which is valid. The problem with this book is that Camus’s own claims are not seen in this way, but rather are seen as hovering above the fray, and this does him no honor.

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Alan Patten: *Equal Recognition: The Moral Foundations of Minority Rights*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014. Pp. xiv, 337.)

doi:10.1017/S0034670515000492

Alan Patten’s book is an important restatement and reconfiguration of the liberal case for recognition of cultural minorities. Patten’s book emerges

from his unhappiness with many of the liberal arguments that have gained so much attention over the last two decades or so. At crucial points, Patten persuasively contends their arguments become vague and unclear. Patten puts the case for recognition of cultural minority on a narrower but far sturdier footing than previous liberal arguments. Patten's book, well written, clear, and well argued, is now the best liberal case for recognition. It is also an important rethinking of the idea of liberal neutrality.

Will Kymlicka's well-known argument for cultural recognition rests on individual autonomy and the need for everyone to have a context of choice. But this argument quickly runs into trouble: either every state is obligated to support every cultural group, which is hard and probably impossible, or we need to choose which groups to support, which means that the autonomy of only some people is protected. (Further, it is not clear that supporting small cultural groups enhances or restricts individual autonomy.) Kymlicka seems to suggest that only large groups should receive state support, as he argues that people have an important attachment to what he calls a societal culture—societal cultures have social, political, and economic institutions, so they can give people a variety of options from which to choose. Yet societal cultures must be large enough to provide a wide latitude of options, leaving smaller cultures—including the indigenous peoples that originally motivated Kymlicka's argument—without much protection. As Patten notes, many liberal accounts of cultural recognition, like Kymlicka's, really devolve into protection for large, national minorities (32).

Patten, by contrast, develops an argument that is about cultural groups, whether they are large minority nations or not. Instead of focusing on context of choice, the heart of Patten's book is his argument for liberal neutrality. In chapter 4, Patten rethinks conventional views of liberal neutrality, arguing that neutrality means that the state should be neutral toward various conceptions of the good. To the extent that certain cultural practices and values are part of some people's conception of the good, the state should protect and even support these practices. The state should try to reach "fair opportunity for self-determination," which means that people ought to be able to determine their own good within certain limits (109). Conceptions of the good that reject self-determination, along with conceptions of the good that are "worthless," do not receive state support.

For Patten, liberal neutrality is a "downstream value," which means that "the state has a weighty, if defeasible, reason to be neutral between different conceptions of the good" (109). Making liberal neutrality a downstream value means there are circumstances when the state does not have to support cultural recognition—perhaps there are so many groups that it is impracticable, or perhaps a group is tiny, and its younger members are leaving, so support will do little. Patten argues that treating cultural groups fairly does not mean ensuring their survival, nor does it mean giving smaller groups more support proportionally than larger groups. Patten's argument provides a fair playing field, but does not insist that all cultures must survive.

Kymlicka says that people are attached to their “societal culture,” but says almost nothing about why this is the case. Patten’s alternative, the social-lineage account, argues that a “distinct culture is the relation that people share when, and to the extent that, they have shared with one another subjection to a set of formative conditions that are distinct from the formative conditions that are imposed on others” (51). What this means is that a cultural group is a group of people that have been socialized by a distinctive set of practices and institutions. Language is often (though not necessarily always) part of a cultural identity, since it is a “major socializing practice” (61). Being socialized by the same set of practices explains why people have an attachment to their culture.

If some cultures will fade, why try to provide state support to any of them? Patten’s answer is that certain identity-related conceptions of the good deserve recognition, when possible. Patten is concerned here with identity-related preferences, which have two main characteristics. First, the preference is informed by the “fact that the preference holder identifies with a particular group or community and values that identification to at least some degree” (158). Second, the “preference matters to the preference holder in a special way” (158). It would be a serious setback for people who hold this preference if the state treated their preference unfavorably or ignored it. While not necessarily limited to these categories, identity-related conceptions of the good include language, holidays, and boundaries and jurisdictions (159–60). And indeed, chapters 7 and 8 look at language-rights and secession (while chapter 8 applies the arguments to immigrants and national minorities).

Yet the move from culture to identity is not fully developed by Patten. The book is ostensibly about culture—the word “culture” appears in the titles of the first three chapters; the preface begins by explaining why a book about cultural diversity is needed, though the subtitle of the book says “minority rights.” Minority groups need not be cultural groups, of course, but can, for example, be religious groups. Accounts of multiculturalism often elide religion and culture, and we see the same elision in Patten’s account. When he argues for the importance of identity he says: “Our ultimate concern is with how the state ought to relate to minority cultural communities *or groups*” (158; my emphasis). When Patten discusses holidays as being important to people’s conception of the good, religion arises, almost interchangeably with culture: “Very often important holidays and days of rest are made to coincide with the important days of worship of one or more religious groups, sometimes with days that have a special significance for a culture” (159). More to the point, Patten argues that religion and culture have the same status when it comes to liberal neutrality: “Neutrality of treatment is thus especially robust when it applies to aspects of conceptions of the good that involve religion and conscience, culture, family, sexuality, artistic endeavor and other goods that are likely to seem nonnegotiable to the individual” (136).

Yet ultimately Patten differentiates religion from culture, arguing that religion is simply more important to people than culture (287), which is why a political community can expect immigrants to compromise on maintaining some cultural practices or even their language if the cost of maintaining them is too high, but not on their religion: "In general, liberals think that religion is potentially so important to people that they ought to enjoy core religious liberties even at considerable cost to others. By contrast... the claim that the liberal principle of neutrality supports a fairly robust set of cultural and linguistic rights is not yet an all-things-considered judgment" (287).

Religious identities are apparently more important than cultural identities, but why? One could imagine several possible explanations: religion is a matter of conscience and so is more central to people's conception of the good; perhaps religion is more readily privatized, at least in part, than cultural identities. There are, of course, other reasons why liberals might elevate religious belief over cultural identity. That Patten does not do much to differentiate the two is a missed opportunity, but not a fatal flaw of the book. The book is simply superb in so many ways, and after reading it, you will have a much richer understanding of liberalism and of the idea of recognition.

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James R. Otteson: *The End of Socialism*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. xiv, 224.)

doi:10.1017/S0034670515000509

In January 2015 Oxfam published a report showing that the wealth share of the richest one percent of people in the world will, on current trends, exceed fifty percent by 2016 (Oxfam Issue Briefing, *Wealth: Having It All and Wanting More*, 2015). Many people will react to such statistics with anger or concern, calling for urgent action to reverse such massive injustice through global and national redistribution. James Otteson sees things very differently, for his fear is that growing inequality may lead people to doubt that neoliberal capitalism is the best of all possible systems. He therefore seeks to assuage any such anxiety by a reassurance that, until 1800, the average income of all human beings was only at the level that the World Bank now defines as extreme poverty. Furthermore, it was, he maintains, capitalism that brought about "the only considered and sustained means ever discovered to alleviate poverty" and its performance has been "nothing less than