Critical Dialogue

Immigration and Membership Politics in Western Europe. By Sara Wallace Goodman. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 284p. $95.00.
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— Marisa A. Abrajano, *University of California, San Diego*
— Zoltan L. Hajnal, *University of Chicago*

This book addresses a topic that could not be more timely and salient. The recent wave of approximately 350,000 Syrian, Afghani, and Eritrean immigrants who are fleeing the violence and unrest in their homelands and heading to the European Union has caused a political and humanitarian crisis. Who should be responsible for these immigrants? Germany has led the way and is expected to accept the majority of the immigrants, followed by Italy, Greece, and Hungary. With no immediate end in sight of these migration flows, EU ministers have decided that member states must share the responsibility of taking in these immigrants.

Beyond this immediate concern, however, is another question that has long-term implications and consequences for the future of Western Europe: What types of state policies exist to facilitate the civic integration of these newcomers? This question gets to the heart of *Immigration and Membership Politics in Western Europe*, which presents a rigorous and systematic analysis of the various immigration policies implemented by the EU-15 in response to varying political and social contexts. In many of these states where political parties are shaped around an anti-immigrant discourse, why do some states adopt a more restrictive civic immigration policy whereas others do not? Sara Wallace Goodman's main contention is that civic integration policies are created as part of different policy strategies to address "different problems of membership, defined by inherited citizenship policy and extant political preferences of the party in power that seeks to change or fortify these approaches. (p 6)" Goodman tests this argument using empirical analyses as well an in-depth case studies, where governments and citizenship contexts are either similar or different. What sets her work apart from the existing research is her focus on and interest in the causes of variation among civic integration policies, whereas the previous research has tended to focus its attention on the convergence of civic integration policies in Western Europe. This point of departure makes an important contribution not only to scholars studying immigration politics but also to those interested in the politics of belonging and membership, as well as legislative politics. As such, her research fills an important gap in these existing studies and paves the way for a whole host of future research inquiries.

Goodman's first task is to establish the existence of variation in the civic integration policies across the EU-15. The author does so in the second chapter by introducing readers to the Civic Integration Policy Index (CIVIX). The coding scheme she develops for this index is based on the policies adopted by a state at three different stages for an immigrant—entry, settlement/permanent residence, and citizenship. A variety of requirements exists at each stage, ranging from language certification and civic tests to taking courses. She then calculates this index for the EU-15 at two different points in time, in 1997 (before the introduction of civic integration) and the again in 2013. What she finds is a great deal of variation in the civic integration policies adopted by states over these time periods, particularly in terms of the size or volume of change. She then demonstrates how this index is externally valid with other existing measures of civic integreation (e.g., MIPEX). By developing this index, Goodman has established important ways to systematically compare civic integration policies in Western Europe over space and time. Such an index could be easily applied to other regions in the world.

Establishing these variations in civic integration policies naturally leads one to ask the reasons for them. Goodman attributes these differences to two factors—citizenship legacy and the ideological orientation of the government. She stresses the importance of existing national citizenship policy as a significant constraint on the ability of the current government in power to drastically change civic integration policy. Here, she acknowledge the role that institutions play in the policymaking process, where in some cases it can lead to change, but oftentimes proves to be quite difficult. She also emphasizes how national citizenship is anchored through membership, and as such, membership is crucial to nation-states.

Goodman deftly demonstrates the interaction between context and government orientation using paired case-study comparisons in the next three chapters. Embarking on these case studies allows her to demonstrate the main tenants of her argument, as well as to delve deeply into

these main causal mechanisms, something that quantitative analysis cannot fully address.

Chapter 4 looks at a comparison of different governments in similar citizenship contexts. The author uses the examples of Austria and Denmark to show where the context is one of a restrictive nature. Both the language and citizenship tests implemented by these two states were intended to decrease naturalization rates. In these two cases, they exemplify how civic integration policies are adopted in order to maintain the status quo of restriction. Moreover, this paired case study demonstrates that the right government is not required for civic integration policy. In the next chapter, which compares similar governments in different citizenship contexts, she looks at Germany and the UK. Here, it was both left governments that first formally adopted civic integration policies, with a large influence from the right. But because citizenship orientations served as the basis for policy change, in the result was variations in membership policy.

In her final two case studies, presented in Chapter 6, Goodman examines civic integration policy outcomes in countries where both the context of citizenship and the ideology of governments are similar. Both the experiences of Netherlands and France can be characterized with having a liberal citizenship orientation and the path of left-then-right governments with far right influence. The author shows that despite these identical contexts, different civic integration outcomes emerge to varying causal mechanisms. Netherlands practiced pillarization, which allowed religious and ideological differences to thrive by allowing each group to have its own schools, sports clubs, newspapers, and so on. This multiculturalist approach provides immigrants with the ability to retain elements of their cultural identity while feeling part of a national object. The main rationale for the Dutch to adopt this policy perspective is their thinking that these immigrants would never become permanent residents. In the case of France, Goodman asserts that while they are known for advocating a restrictive immigration policy, in practice this was not so. France, in fact, has had a tradition of assimilation, which is deeply in republicanism.

In her final empirical chapter, Goodman shifts her focus from internal policymaking to the external dimensions of civic integration: What sorts of entry requirements are adopted by each state? An important consideration to account for is supranational precedent by the EU. She discusses the increasingly important role of EU-level decision making in the immigration policy arena, and nowhere is this more evident than in the recent decision made by EU ministers to approve a plan that distributes ~120,000 refugees more evenly across the member states, despite fierce dissent from Hungary and former Soviet bloc members. This action is likely only the first that the ministers will have to take in response to the continued violence and unrest in the Middle East and Africa.

Goodman's research raises a whole host of future research inquires. First and foremost, the author herself suggests the importance of understanding how these various policies affect the immigrants. As such, a fruitful avenue for immigration scholars would be to determine how these various integration policies impact immigrants' attitudes to belonging, identity, and membership, to name just a few. Scholars could also investigate the extent to which such policies integrate immigrants politically, socially, and economically. For instance, do states with more stringent civic integration policies lead to greater levels of political participation among immigrants? Relatedly, do states that foster a strong sense of national identity lead to greater levels of political and social activism among immigrant communities? Scholars could also examine the role that public opinion plays in the policy positions adopted by political parties, as a way to determine the extent to which politicians are responding to their constituents' concerns or whether they are using immigration as a way to mobilize voters.

In light of recent events, it will be of great import to see how the states analyzed in the author's case studies evolve over time and whether they will change their civic integration policies, particularly in the case of Germany. Goodman contends that "European states are innovatively responding to diverse immigration, illustrating an overall adaptability and resilience to the nation-state in the twenty-first century" (p. 15). Let us hope that they will do so in a humanitarian and just manner.

Response to Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan Hajnal's review of *Immigration and Membership Politics in Western Europe*

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— Sara Wallace Goodman

I thank Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan Hajnal for their comprehensive review and positive assessment of my book. I will address here her chief questions: how state integration programs have fared in light of the refugee crisis and whether policies have a direct impact on integration outcomes.

The 2015 refugee crisis in Europe has already proved to be a watershed moment. Alongside spontaneous, community-led acts of generosity and charity, and the incomparable openness of German borders, it has also exposed a distressing underbelly. On this darker side, we observe governments applying religious tests for entry (Slovakia), cutting off access altogether (e.g., Hungary), and restrictive quotas (the UK), as well as myriad political consequences, like the electoral success of the Swedish Far Right.

In light of the crisis, the resilience of state civic integration programs stands out as remarkable yet unsurprising.

If anything, the distinction between insiders and outsiders is more pronounced than ever, as is the understanding that states could play (and perhaps need) a greater role in facilitating integration. Yet in balancing pragmatism with varying domestic politics, integration policy adaptation has not been uniform. In Germany, for example, every refugee has access to government-paid integration courses, thus stretching its resources to accommodate its unprecedented intake. In addition to language classes, which simultaneously teach refugees about their rights and obligations, there is also a new, free handbook for refugee integration. Migrants even have access to free German language classes abroad, such as the Goethe Institutes in Istanbul. By contrast, the Dutch cabinet rejected the notion of offering language lessons to new arrivals, suggesting such a policy as "undesirable" in that it creates incorrect "expectations" about their rights (Tweede Kamer, Parliamentary Briefing No. 2073, 2015–2016). Laws requiring integration "kick in" as soon as refugee status is granted, though the government no longer funds it and information to access it is not readily available to refugees. Finally, in states most resistant to refugee intake, we have seen little change in integration approaches. In fact, this large flow has led to restriction in other areas, such as British Prime Minister David Cameron's sudden suggestion that migrants on spousal visas may have to leave if they fail to improve their English proficiency.

Given that state integration programs encouraging labor market and social mobility are more in demand than ever, more research needs to be done on the tangible effects of language and civic education. More than a decade has passed since these material conditions for status have been introduced, and so there should be sufficient data to assess policy effectiveness. The looming question however—a central one addressed in my book—is how effectiveness is defined. Is the goal migration control? Employment? Commitment to liberal-democratic values? Some of the first studies on this question show that requirements do indeed yield meaningful results for new immigrants, but less so for immigrants farther along in the integration process. Whatever their goal, state integration programs will only grow in time as European nation-states struggle to define "who belongs" while they undergo massive demographic transformation.

White Backlash: Immigration, Race, and American Politics. By Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan L. Hajnal. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015. 256p. $29.95
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— Sara Wallace Goodman, *University of California, Irvine*

As the United States embarks upon another Presidential campaign season, we—once again—see immigration featured as a significant issue in the Republican primaries. Birthright citizenship, "anchor babies," criminality, fingerprinting, and "secure borders" are all popular rallying-cries for candidates courting a conservative electorate weary of immigrant-related diversity and change. In fact, one might suggest that immigration is more pervasive as a GOP talking point than ever before.

The prevalence and tone of this "xenoskepticism" is not incidental, as Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan Hajnal argue in their book, *White Backlash*. The authors begin with a simple claim: "Partisan patterns, electoral decisions, and policy preferences of native white Americans are changing in response to immigration's imprint" (p. 2). In other words, immigration matters not merely as a vague phenomenon affecting the general political climate but—crucially—exerts direct influence on partisan preferences. Their argument, in brief, is that "immigration and the Latino population do impact whites' core political calculus" (p. 4), whereby immigration plays a role in whites becoming more Republican (p. 92).

This argument strikes me as provocative in two respects. First, and foremost, it acts on an assumption that white voting behavior is implicitly racialized and unique (in the lack of comparison of the "white population" to the voting behavior to other Americans, e.g., Asian Americans, which may also be behaviorally-susceptible to immigration). Second, it pushes against the sizable literature on the "immobility of partisanship," suggesting that immigration is an issue important enough to accelerate the white voter along a path already inclined toward Republicanism, in spite of the inherent strictures of a two-party system.

Given the potential controversy, Abrajano and Hanjal present a straight-forward research design to support their claim. In Chapter 1, they present a simple theory "to explain how large-scale immigration can result in core political shifts in the white population" (p. 28). This theory of immigration backlash has three components: 1) the *sheer size and racial diversity* of Latino immigration; 2) "an on-going and often-repeated *threat narrative* that links the United States' immigrant and Latino populations to a host of pernicious fiscal, social, and cultural consequences" (p. 5); and, 3) the fact that this threat narrative takes on clear *partisan implications*, where differences between Democrats and Republicans have become starker over time, particularly in terms of racial composition. The authors then present two causal mechanisms to account for *how* immigration impacts white Americans. The first is demographic change, "essentially [a story] of racial threat" (p. 47). This mechanism is direct and geographically-based, whereby concerns about immigration grow in response to a physically-changing immigrant context. The second mechanism is the media, in which individuals are exposed to information that indirectly influences partisan choice. Their accounts of these two mechanisms both get at the same idea; the mechanism means that *real qua geographic* threats impact partisan attachment while the second allows

for *perception* to play a meaningful role in defining one's sense of threat and, ultimately, one's political calculus.

The authors then begin to deploy their vast arsenal of data and empirical tests to support their claim of partisan shift. In Chapter 2, they establish a "close connection between attitudes on immigration and partisanship" (p. 68), in which negative attitudes (particularly on undocumented migrants) correlate with Republican partisanship. Sensitive to concerns of reverse causality, the authors assess immigration's impact on party identification over time in a series of tests. In Chapter 3, the authors move to an analysis of the link between immigration attitudes and voting. In it, they conclude that "even among those who claim ties to the Democratic Party, views of undocumented immigrants are moderately related to vote choice" (p. 102). Specifically, "white Americans' feelings toward Latinos can be a central component in their electoral calculations" (p. 103), looking at presidential, gubernatorial and congressional voting. Significantly, they do not forward the argument that immigration was singularly-decisive in voter shift but rather the more modest claim that "immigration performs an important part in this shift" (p. 110).

Chapters 4 and 5 delve into causal mechanisms, identifying the role geographic context and the media play in the immigration backlash story. In Chapter 4, the authors probe the effects of context by looking at state-and local-level data to probe effects on immigrant-related policy preferences among whites. They find that white Americans in states with a heavy concentration of Latinos (looking at both stock and rate change) are "more likely to favor conservative and punitive policies, identify with the Republican Party, and support Republican candidates" (p. 150). In Chapter 5, the authors examine immigration stories in *The New York Times* over a thirty-year period, using content analysis to illustrate: 1) coverage as largely negative; and 2) how Latino framing predicts shifts in macropartisanship. Abrajano and Hajnal conclude that media is the "primary mechanism driving the public's reaction to immigration," maintaining also that "media coverage can lead to measurable shifts on one of the most immovable political identities" (p. 156).

Finally, Chapter 6 goes beyond partisan choice to explore the policy backlash of immigration. The authors add a new element to their aforementioned theory, specifying that "the pattern of immigration backlash should only hold until the Latino population becomes large enough to mobilize to effect policy change on its own" (p. 185). This mobilizing condition inserts a democratic agency for the Latino immigrant population, and becomes part of the analysis for what effect immigrant context has on immigrant-related policy. The findings presented here are insightful, but the late presentation of this theoretical axiom, as well as the investigation into an adjacent research question (policy output instead of political behavior of whites) distracts from both the organization and central argument of the book.

As any provocative work should do, the book raises as many questions as it provides answers. Abrajano and Hajnal adroitly navigate through this inevitability by running a considerable amount of robustness checks, addressing alternative theories with due diligence, and exercising appropriate caution when it comes to the limitations of existing data and the language of interpreting their findings. Despite this careful approach, there are inevitably a few issues worth considering.

I wonder whether this theory of immigration backlash is really a theory as opposed to a parsimonious explanation of the U.S. case. My question, of course, reflects a normative bias among most comparativists that the United States is not *sui generis,* as well as a methodological predilection that theories be "testable" in cases other than those used to derive it. At the very least, a historical comparison would be appropriate to establish external validity. From a comparative perspective, the question of whether a diverse population impacts native politics and policy is not novel. There is an abundance of research on European politics, for example, that shows a direct impact of immigration on partisan preferences, including but not limited to far-right parties, as well as policies as seen in the phenomenon of welfare chauvinism. What makes the United States unique in this respect is the two-party system and the inevitable contrasts and polarity between Democratic and Republican policy positions. In Europe, parties on the left and the right traditionally differ in terms of *immigration* policy but sit much closer together (often times in coalition-necessitating consensus) over questions of *immigrant integration* and social policy. I think more institutional considerations would not only help in précising the theory, but also in generalizing it.

That said, the United States is also unique in terms of how immigrants are perceived, and this raises a concern about what immigrant-related questions are actually tapping into. The authors readily admit that most categories of immigrants are "muddled together in the minds of many white Americans—especially since the majority of white Americans think that [sic] most Latinos are undocumented" (pp. 124–5). Given that, is it not possible that this may not be a story of "racial threat" but one where immigration may also or equally be about issues of illegality, security, law, and order? If (as established in Chapter 2) a "partisan transformation of white America" (p. 83) toward Republicanism is already taking place, then how do we know its immigration is accelerating the change and not the underlying issue of legality? Complementing survey data with interview work or experiments probing voting motivation could help untangle this problem. The authors begin to probe this by comparing trigger groups, but do not extend the investigation into unpacking the white baseline. Whites are treated homogenously, an issue the authors address

directly but have no strategy for resolving beyond acknowledgement (p. 150). What precludes other groups undertaking the macropartisan shift from acting on threat and media cues, e.g., Asian-Americans, Jewish Americans, or even second-generation Americans? What is it about whiteness? Does anything, in principle, exclude these groups from having similar concerns about legality and other immigrant-associated policies and concerns? The lack of comparisons leaves this an open question.

At the same time, *White Backlash* represents a bold and challenging contribution to the study of immigration and its impact on contemporary politics and policymaking. It adds serious and sobering findings to the dialogue on race and ethnic politics, which we can only hope will be ameliorated in time.

Response to Sara Wallace Goodman's review of *White Backlash: Immigration, Race, and American Politics*

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— Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan Hajnal

We are thankful to Sara Wallace Goodman for putting forward a clear, concise, and comprehensive overview of *White Backlash*. We could not have done a better job illuminating the core themes and contributions of the book. We would, however, also like to respond to some of the questions she raised about the project and the larger phenomenon of immigrant backlash.

Goodman rightly wonders whether the rightward-leaning political backlash against recent immigrants in the American context represents a unique pattern that requires its own distinct explanation or whether it can be fruitfully compared with hostile responses to immigrants in other countries. We whole heartedly agree that this is not a case of American exceptionalism. Waves of backlash against immigrants have been well documented in the European context by Rafaela Dancygier (*Immigration and Conflict in Europe*, 2010), Daniel Tichenor (*Dividing Lines*, 2002) and others. More recently, scholars such as Claire Adida (*Immigration Exclusion and Insecurity in Africa*, 2014) and David Fitzgerald and David Cook-Martin (*Culling the Masses*, 2014) have also examined the political repercussions of South-to-South immigration and have found both similar patterns and distinct responses. It is also worth noting that we do not even have to go outside of the American context to identify constructive cases for comparison. As we note in our book, American "history provides plenty of evidence to suggest that immigration can fundamentally alter the nation's politics" (p. 6).

We mention these different kinds of comparisons in passing in the book, but we agree with Goodman that we could have done much more to incorporate this work and to think more deeply about how our theory of immigrant backlash does or does not apply to these different cases. Future research would be well served by drawing out those parallels in greater detail. A critical next step in stemming the anti-immigrant tide would be to try to understand how and when immigrant backlashes have flared up in other contexts and, perhaps even more importantly, when and why they have receded.

Goodman also raises an important question about what exactly it is that is driving the backlash in the American case. Is it a story of racial threat or is it more fundamentally about issues of illegality, security, and law, and order? Even now after considerable reflection, we do not have a clear answer. In American politics, the two themes of race and illegality have been so closely intertwined since at least the 1960s that it is extraordinarily difficult to disentangle the two. We suspect instead that in the mind of the typical American voter, the concepts are typically irreversibly muddled together. Today, when most Americans think of an immigrant, the [inaccurate] picture they often conjure up is of an undocumented Latino. It is possible, as Goodman suggests, that more in-depth interviews or experiments could pull out one core motivation. Factor analysis or some other novel empirical technique might tell us whether race or illegality has slightly more predictive power. But we are skeptical of the value of this kind of endeavor. If proponents of the backlash continue to conflate and entangle race and illegality, it matters little which factor predicts more in a regression model.

Finally, what of other racial and ethnic groups? As Goodman perceptively notes, there is nothing that precludes African Americans, Asian Americans, and other minority groups from contributing to the backlash on immigration. Although we believe that the backlash will be and is, in fact, most pronounced among white Americans, we agree that it is unlikely to be confined to white Americans. Given the growing diversity of the nation, understanding how racial and ethnic minorities react to immigration will be an increasingly critical question for the partisan balance of power in American politics. Future researchers would do well to expand the focus to these other groups.