

space within the factory impedes “immediate and visceral confrontation with the work of industrialized killing” (p. 84), he does not ask: What specifically constitutes an “immediate and visceral” experience, and what roles might language and sociocultural positionality play in the constitution of such experience as morally or politically significant? Pachirat’s conclusions would have carried even more theoretically innovative heft had he engaged Elias on these questions more critically and in conversation with others who have conceptualized rigorously the ethical and political dynamics of “the visceral register,” such as William Connolly (*Why I Am Not a Secularist*, 1999) or Theodor Adorno (*Negative Dialectics*, 1973). Similarly, Pachirat borrows effectively from Michel Foucault’s theory of disciplinary surveillance to explain how techniques to make the unseen visible generate domination; yet he does not comment on the friction between a Foucauldian notion of discursively constituted subjectivity and the many suggestions in this book, such as in generic references to “the realities of killing” (p. 84), that a prediscursive human experience of animality in the throes of death is possible.

Despite these lacunae in the analysis, however, *Every Twelve Seconds* achieves much that is vitally important. It demonstrates in compelling fashion that intellectually vigorous political inquiry can be richly empirical without bowing to the positivist prejudices of mainstream social science. Above all, the book casts a blood-spattered gauntlet at the feet of political and critical theorists of many stripes, daring us to think and write from concrete sociopolitical sites in all their physically brutal, morally anesthetizing, and just plain uncomfortable complexity.

Enduring Injustice. By Jeff Spinner-Halev. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. 246p. \$95.00 cloth, \$27.99 paper.
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— Melissa Nobles, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

Jeff Spinner-Halev’s book is a major and most welcome contribution to a growing theoretical literature on historical injustices. Most scholars focus on the “facts” on the ground: Who gains and loses in political contests over recognition and rectification of historical wrongdoing? Scholars have paid far less attention to the normative dimensions of this contestation. Addressing historical injustices, in theory and in practice, requires explicit and deep normative reflection. Scholars and the public recognize that much human suffering in the world has deep historical roots. But we are poorly equipped to think about how and why this past relates to our present politics. *Enduring Injustice* provides us the needed theoretical road map.

According to Spinner-Halev, the extant literature argues that the mere revelation of historical injustices will itself lead to remedy. On this view, the prospects for remedy depend on the dispelling of ignorance and the revival of

memory: “Once a political community remembers, it will be moved to do something about it” (p. 5). He judges this claim inadequate, in both theory and practice. Theoretically, it does not provide a compelling enough reason for liberals to care about injustices and history. And in practice, it leads to advocacy of symbolic efforts, such as apologies, which, the author argues, are ill-suited to remedy largely because they require sincerity and are transitory in nature, “a moment in time” (p. 106). Instead, he offers acknowledgment, which, he contends, is separate from and not a subset of apology, in contradistinction to scholarship that usually treats apology and acknowledgment as synonyms.

Arguably, liberal theory has been less attentive to historical injustices for good reasons. First, theorists must determine which historical injustices to care about, given their ubiquity. Spinner-Halev argues that we must care about the historical injustices that persist today. This persistence leads him to describe these injustices as *enduring*. *Enduring injustices*, in turn, stem from *radical injustices*, such as “exile,” “cultural dispossession,” and “pervasive discrimination” (p. 7). Second, and more importantly, theorists must determine *why* we should care about historical wrongs. After all, liberals hold that attending to justice today takes priority over all other efforts because we are most concerned about our present and future. Spinner-Halev agrees with this fundamental claim by insisting that the very persistence into the present is what distinguishes injustices that merit our attention from those that do not. However, where liberalism largely ignores the historical origins of persistent injustices, he does not. These origins matter, he argues, because they explain both the persistence of said injustices and the difficulties that liberal theorists and practitioners face in their attempts to eradicate them.

Liberalism’s failures are partly due to confidence and optimism about its ability to address injustices. Its confidence is derived from basic commitments to the protection of individual rights, limited government, law, fairness, and moral equality of persons. Its optimism is based in the presumption that with “technological progress will come moral progress” (p. 42) such that individual rights will be protected, moral equality of persons will be affirmed, and material advancements will be widely distributed. Progress, as Spinner-Halev writes, is paradoxical for liberals. The successes of liberal societies amplify their failures. The exceptions to progress are viewed as “injustices,” because although societies progressed, this progression has been incomplete: “Once the idea of progress is shown to be partially flawed, the exceptions come forth as injustices” (p. 50).

There is another related problem, however, which the author identifies as “liberal imperialism.” What if human progress has been made at the *expense* of others? Here, it is not merely that groups were excluded or incompletely

included, but rather it is the nature of their inclusion that is the problem. Liberal ideas and practices of “civilization” and “uplift” have often bred deep resentment and mistrust.

Spinner-Halev argues that liberal efforts at justice have failed for three general reasons. First, efforts at restitution and/or redistribution (e.g., of land) are impossible and, in any event, incomplete because said historical injustices are moral and not only material failings. Second, there are often limits to the effectiveness of liberal toleration in blunting deeply rooted discrimination and intolerance. Third, the aforementioned resentment and mistrust, where “some enduring injustices are in part a failure of liberal practice” (p. 74), undermine liberal justice.

Of these three reasons, I find the author’s discussion of mistrust the most compelling line of argument. That is because a major consequence of mistrust is the erosion of the legitimacy of liberal states, contributing to a “partial legitimacy.” That is, when a liberal state does not treat a group of its citizenry with equal regard by repeatedly denying their rights, then the legitimacy of that state’s rule is “doubtful,” over that group at least (p. 134). The state’s moral authority is diminished, precisely because of the evident hypocrisy. How can a liberal state profess commitments of equal regard and rights for its citizens, deny these same rights to certain groups, and expect to be seen as legitimate? Why should liberal prescriptions be followed or believed? Spinner-Halev maintains that liberal theorists have not taken the idea of partial legitimacy seriously enough, and I think he is right.

The consequences of partial legitimacy are quite far-reaching in how, for example, we think about “group autonomy” as a remedy for enduring injustices. Liberal theorists have rightly worried about the ways that liberal states should address issues of group autonomy while still upholding the individual rights of group members. Spinner-Halev advises that whatever formulations liberal theorists and practitioners devise must take into account liberalism’s diminished legitimacy. Liberal states often face strong headwinds of mistrust and resentment in their attempts to reform legal membership rules in indigenous groups so that the individual rights of women members are protected. This resistance is due, in part, to the deep history of radical injustices and the whiff of hypocrisy that surrounds reform efforts. Reform is possible, the author assures us, and some liberal principles may be upheld, but not all. He offers a vision, in his words, of a “chastened” but perhaps more realistic liberal justice.

In the end, Spinner-Halev offers “hope,” rather than confident assurances of progress. Hope requires liberal political communities to make serious and ongoing attempts to understand and sympathize with their fellow community members who are also its victims. This hope is derived from “acknowledgment” of a minority group’s narratives and histories, which are distinct from, but overlap with, the majority group’s narratives. The central point, he main-

tains, is not simply “to acknowledge enduring injustices . . . for a better present and future,” but rather to acknowledge that enduring injustices are rooted in the past, and in order to repair them, we need to better understand their past (p. 208). It is this nuanced distinction that Spinner-Halev draws between his view of acknowledgment as a process and acts of historical revelation, which do not necessarily prompt either moral reflection or action. Acknowledgment is a series of active efforts to correct our present, not passive and solemn glances back to our past.

Enduring Injustice is perceptive, provocative, and terrifically engaging. It skillfully brings history and historical injustices in from the margins by arguing persuasively why and how history matters to the central concerns of liberal theory and practice.

The Color of Citizenship: Race, Modernity and Latin American/Hispanic Political Thought. By Diego A. von

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— Joshua Simon, *New School for Social Research*

Diego A. von Vacano begins his interesting new book by observing that race, though clearly and deeply relevant to politics, has not been satisfactorily understood by European and American political theorists. Thus, he turns to Latin American political thought, whence he derives a concept of race that serves as both a more cogent description of reality and a more attractive framework for normative analysis. In the process, he leads us through Spanish American intellectual history, providing introductions to four influential figures: Bartolomé de Las Casas, Simón Bolívar, Laureano Vallenilla Lanz, and José Vasconcelos. Both the theoretical and historical contributions of *The Color of Citizenship* are valuable, as is its innovative comparative approach.

Latin America, von Vacano argues, has furnished a uniquely fertile setting for thinking about race. He isolates among the region’s several conceptions of race a “synthetic paradigm”: “a mode of thinking about the phenomenon of race and its tributaries in a way that eludes fixed, rigid notions” in favor of “those which are mixed and fluid” (p. 16). The synthetic paradigm differs from both the “domination paradigm” prominent in European thought, which arranges different races in a hierarchy topped by Europeans, and the “dualistic paradigm” predominant in Anglo-American thought, which even in its more egalitarian versions focuses on the binary of white and nonwhite. Von Vacano’s paradigm is “synthetic” in several senses. Substantively, it positions racial mixture as the norm and treats race as artificial or illusory, a social construction rather than a biological fact. Methodologically, it incorporates a Hegelian account of the historical development of racial thinking, with