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Jeffrey Mirel. *Patriotic Pluralism: Americanization Education and European Immigrants.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010. 368 pp. $45.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-674-04638-2.

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In *Patriotic Pluralism*, Jeffrey Mirel aims to achieve two objectives: renew the scholarly work on Americanization education and sketch the long-ignored response of immigrants to policies of Americanization. In this book, Americanization education refers to any educational research or programs, with or without the consultation of immigrants, whose purpose was to instill in immigrant children and adults "proper" American values. To do so, he examines three different sets of primary sources: published works and transcripts of speeches on Americanization, programs offered by public schools to the immigrant population, and the foreign language press. In chapters 1 and 2, Mirel challenges the widely accepted consensus that programs of Americanization were a mere domestic application of cultural imperialism. This scholarly consensus has so far implied that politicians, educationalists, and intellectuals had wished to see recent immigrants to the United States give up their cultural backgrounds to fully accept and take on values shared by U.S. citizens: cleanliness, proficiency in English, loyalty to democratic principles, and participation in political life.[1] Mirel believes that this scholarly work has undermined the complexity and variety of philosophies that "educators, journalists, politicians, public intellectuals, and some prominent members of the growing immigrant communities" have engendered during the debate over Americanization education (p. 25).

In chapter 1, for instance, Mirel rejects scholars' overly simplistic binary, between individuals who believed in the racial superiority of persons of Nordic and Anglo-Saxon descent, or the "racial restrictionists," and the cultural pluralists, who argued for ethnic and racial equality (p. 6).[2] Based on a study of published works from 1890-1930, this chapter instead focuses on subtrends that Mirel identifies within the debate on Americanization education: "assimilationists," "amalgamationists," "ethnic nationalists," and "civic nationalists." Assimilationists admonished immigrants to erase their home culture and "embrace the culture of the New" (p. 25). They have been at the forefront of previous research to the point where, Mirel argues, scholars believed they were the only proponents of Americanization education. To be distinguished from assimilationists were the "cultural pluralists," who saw value in cultural diversity as long as the ultimate U.S. lifestyle and values prevailed (p. 15). Mirel often affiliates them with civic nationalists who believed that a nation should not be based on the country of birth of its citizens but on the willingness of the citizens to embrace a common political philosophy. Later in this chapter, Mirel defines the amalgamationists as being the proponents of the concept of the melting pot, i.e., that the blend of populations would result in a unique, "robust" nation (p. 33). At last, Mirel uses interchangeably ethnic nationalists with racial restrictionists. While Mirel succeeds in questioning previous scholars' imprecise understanding of discourse pushing for Americanization, his categories often overlap with each other suggesting that the diversity of discourses that he claims existed was more fluid than what he argues.

Chapter 2 examines, on the local level, how public schools implemented Americanization education in K-12 schools and adult education centers between 1890 and 1930. This chapter efficiently highlights the objectives of Americanization, and the way in which educators designed curricula to meet these goals. Mirel clearly identifies the pedagogical outcomes desired by the educators, reinforcing the Anglo-American civilization that relied on the following core pillars: loyalty to the United States and the principles of democracy, participation in local political organizations, and enlistment in the army. The chapter does not offer an innovative point of view on the topic but it powerfully describes its functioning. In particular, Mirel points out that, besides the unavoidable focus on proficiency in the English language, Americanization curricula reinforced democratic ideals through instruction in U.S. history that was focused on heroes. Moreover, Mirel shows that programs in three cities, De-

troit, Cleveland, and Chicago, evolved, in their foundations, from philosophies based on assimilation to ones based on cultural pluralism and amalgamationism.

In the third chapter, Mirel makes a strong scholarly contribution to the history of education. Here, he discusses immigrants' responses to Americanization education in the same time period, 1890-1930. He cites the foreign language newspapers that, although translated into English, had remained unused by scholars. The author convincingly argues that immigrants used their publications to discuss Americanization education. In his study, Mirel highlights the little agency that immigrants had in spite of unequal power relationships. As a result, Mirel shows the way in which the editors adjusted the principles and means of Americanization education to fit their cultures and advertised the tweaked final product to their respective communities. It also highlights the relevance of immigrants' newspapers in displaying immigrant communities' responses and accentuates the extent to which the immigrant press, as a whole, promoted cultural integration in the United States. In this chapter, Mirel gets to the core of his research, introducing his interpretation of the concept of "patriotic pluralism" that he says Chicago demonstrated the best. Mimicking the term "cultural pluralism," which referred to individuals who assimilated into U.S. culture while keeping their own cultural values, Mirel defines patriotic pluralism as the possibility for immigrants to feel allegiance to more than one nation. Across the three cities' immigrant presses, Mirel observes that the foreign language press pushed for cultural pluralism as a way to promote a cultural heritage among immigrants. Simultaneously, these presses published extensive narratives featuring how U.S. heroes rightfully challenged unfair government and past generations of Americans, ultimately demonstrating how foreigners had contributed to the construction of the nation. Moreover, as Mirel underlines, the immigrant press provided the immigrant communities with organs that enabled them to participate in local political decisions by not only encouraging voting but also indicating what way to vote.

In the fourth chapter, Mirel examines the immediate post-Progressive Era: 1930-50. He aims to identify the way in which the Depression and recent European outbursts of fascism shaped Americanization education in the United States. He identifies the resurgence of ethnic nationalism (that he calls, this time, "nativism") which had been toned down at the end of the Progressive Era. He reminds readers that the general atmosphere of suspicion toward immigrants whose country of origin had transgressed U.S. principles of democracy caused substantial waves of naturalization. Mirel sees the nativist trend being balanced by an intercultural campaign launched by immigrants. Mirel observes that immigrants often culturally affiliated themselves with the contemporary government of their country of origin (like Italians with Benito Mussolini's regime). He highlights the immigrants' resistance to social and cultural pressures in U.S. media as he points out the case in which editors denounced discrimination against immigrants in popular culture. While underlining the resurgence of ethnic nationalism, Mirel argues that immigrants and educators renegotiated the focus of Americanization education to an intercultural perspective: immigrant cultures were no more denied as they provided society with "cultural gifts."[3]

Overall, *Patriotic Pluralism* revives the scholarly work on Americanization education by featuring voices from the immigrant communities. It also rightfully calls out the oversimplification of the nature of assimilationism in previous scholarly studies. Yet Mirel's study lacks consistency and precision, especially his concepts of "ethnic nationalism," "nativism," and "racial restrictionism." If there is a nuance between these terms, the author did not explicitly convey it. Mirel's book is ambitious as it has four distinct missions: rethinking Americanization education in the context of patriotic allegiance, rethinking Americanization in the larger debate of ethnic and civic nationalism, featuring the local applications of Americanization education, and identifying the nature of immigrants' responses to Americanization programs. It is regrettable that as a consequence, the chapters seem disconnected from one another.

Notes

[1]. Jane Addams and Lillian D. Wald, *Twenty Years at Hull-House* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935); Helene Silverberg, *Gender and American Social Science: The Formative Years* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Charlene Haddock Siegfried, "Socializing Democracy: Jane Addams and John Dewey," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 29, no. 2 (1999): 207-230; Jonathan Zimmerman, "Ethnics against Ethnicity: European Immigrants and Foreign-Language Instruction, 1890-1940," *Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (2002): 1383-1404; and Jonathan Hansen, "True American: Progressive Era Intellectuals and the Problem of Liberal Nationalism," in *Americanism: New Perspectives on the History of an Ideal*, ed. Michael Kazin and Joseph A. McCartin (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 73-89.

[2]. Peter Levine, *Ellis Island to Ebbetts Field* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); David B. Tyack, *The*

One Best System: A History of American Urban Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974); Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1958* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961); Lawrence A. Cremin, *Public Education* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); and Mark Krug, *The Melting of the Ethnics: Education of the Immigrants, 1880-1914* (Bloomington: Phi Delta Kappa, 1976).

[3]. Diana Selig, *Americans All: The Cultural Gifts Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008).

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