

merly established among various racial and ethnic groups disappeared. The authors' discussions of the treatment of the African-American longshoremen by their white ethnic counterparts clearly show how prejudice and discrimination may return among groups that formerly had high levels of social solidarity. White ethnic longshoremen needed and reluctantly sought out African-Americans during the initial stages of unionization. However, after a degree of success in achieving their collective goals against the owners of shipping companies, blacks were relegated to an inferior position and denied occupational positions involving power and control by their former white ethnic union brothers.

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**Crawford Young. *Ethnic Diversity and Public Policy: A Comparative Inquiry*. (Great Britain: UNRISD, 1998). 240 pp.**

As we come to the end of the millennium, contrary to the more democratic and progressive aspirations of earlier decades, ethnicity continues to define political and social alliances in the struggle for power and survival. *Ethnic Diversity and Public Policy*, edited by Crawford Young, is a timely collection of articles which address key policies growing out of the paramount need facing nations to deal with this primordial yet potent reality. The articles follow the basic premise underscored by Young—that ethnic crises reflect “profound failures of statecraft” and that “the state remains the ineluctable locus of policy response.” Accordingly, essays in the book, drawing from experiences of many nations, deal with policy prerogatives, which are meant to foster ethnic harmony.

Some common problems that repeatedly surface in the discussions and are responsible for frustrating and often derailing policy implementation relate to the incongruence that is perceived by many between policies that uphold group concerns and those that emphasize nationhood and cultural homo-

geneity, between conflicting notions of 'human rights'—the upholding *individual* rights as opposed to *collective - communal* rights emphasized by most indigenous communities, and between advocating preferential policies for marginalized groups in an environment of general economic and political inequity.

Yash Ghai examines constitutional options such as federalism which by providing for an element of power sharing among different ethnic groups can diffuse political conflict. His analysis of the federal experiments in three contexts— liberal, Marxist and third-world shows that most often the failure of federalism to ameliorate ethnic tensions arises from the unwillingness of governments to implement genuine federal principles. K.M. de Silva discusses the utility of electoral systems in mitigating tensions in ethnically divided societies, concluding that such a system continues to be elusive. In considering the importance of implementing educational policies which recognize a plurality of histories, languages, cultures, experiences and interests, Jagdish Gundera and Crispin Jones highlight the inevitable difficulties which policy makers encounter as they try to carry out an effective intercultural education policy. In his discussion on the recent emergence of identity politics among indigenous peoples and their demands for regional and cultural autonomy, Rudolfo Stavenhagen draws attention to the paradoxical relationship such developments can have with the state's larger concern with often tumultuous efforts at nation building and subsequent attempts at cultural homogenization. Yet, as he asserts, it is these zealous assimilationist policies which hasten the decline and disappearance of indigenous groups. According to Sarah Collinson, similar concerns with nationhood, national identity, and ideology are being raised by Western European nations as they explore policies and models to deal with the compelling reality of their diversity. Laura Jenkins underscores the dilemmas and controversies that surround preferential policies for disadvantaged ethnic groups. She emphasizes that preferential policies often spark more tension than they quell; that they can entirely bypass the neediest; and can be perceived as an unsatisfactory shortcut to programs calling for real and fundamental changes which involve greater commitment in terms of time, money, and political risk.

The essays in this ambitious volume point to the extreme difficulty of evolving and instituting policies for ethnic accommodation, especially when large segments of the general population are economically and politically disadvantaged. In those rare instances when these policies have succeeded they have been accompanied by economic development. In the end the reader is left with the conviction that policies of ethnic accommodation are inadequate on their own, unless they are linked with concrete economic measures and sincere efforts which guarantee representation in a truly democratic political arena.

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**Magdalena J. Zaborowska, ed. *Other Americans, Other Americas: The Politics and Poetics of Multiculturalism*. The Dolphin Series 28, ed. Tim Caudery. (Aarhus C, Denmark, Oxford, and Oakville, CT: Aarhus University Press, 1998). 215 pp., \$19.95 paper.**

The editor of this text, Magdalene J. Zaborowska of Aarhus University, is a respected feminist specialist in ethnic American studies. In her introduction she provides readers with an admirably concise overview of the history of the multicultural movement and the current state of the recent multicultural wars over curriculum, literature, and the canon in the United States. Zaborowska chose the essays in this anthology because they focus on the multicultural reality that always has existed in the United States rather than on monolithic “essentialist representations of history and national identity” characteristic of previous American literary history. Given this focus, it is unfortunate that the displacing word “Other” appears twice in the title, thus reinforcing the traditionalist positioning of canonical white male American writers as central in the “curriculum, literature, and the canon” and that of all “Others” as peripheral.