Harper, Marjory; Constantine, Stephen: *Migration and Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2010. ISBN: 9780199250936; 380 S.

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This book marks something of a landmark in surveys of migration within the British Empire. There has been no shortage of empire migration histories in recent years, and the main volumes in the Oxford History of the British Empire series have all included chapters on migration and settlement. But these two accomplished migration historians have produced something quite new in depth and breadth with a survey focused on the intricate relationship between migration and empire (and later commonwealth), from 1815 to the end of empire in the 1960s.

The book invites comparison with other ambitious surveys, notably Eric Richards' masterly study of 400 years of emigration from the British Isles since 1600, Britannia's Children.[1] The differences are instructive. Richards charted the course of the long British Diaspora, for which the Empire was one driving force. Harper and Constantine, within a shorter time frame, probe interconnected ways in which various migration flows, including those from beyond imperial territories, were linked by the dynamics of empire. Hence, although the first four chapters cover the most familiar British settlement destinations of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and 'Africa South of the Sahara', the subsequent thematic chapters traverse some relatively new ground. While 'Immigration and the Heart of Empire' covers some well known material on immigration into Britain, especially in the postwar period, and the substance of chapters on female and child migrants and 'returners' will be known to many, the chapters on 'Non White Migrants and Settlers' and 'The Emigration Business' add important material and perspectives which enhance the whole. We are accustomed now to seeing the history of British settlement migration juxtaposed with mass immigration into Britain, but here we have a density of coexisting varieties of migration within, across and beyond empire borders. To name just a few, Melanesian plantation workers to Queensland, Indian indentured workers to the Caribbean and Fiji, black African labourers transported to mines in southern Africa and Chinese workers journeying across the Empire, crossed paths with waves of white Britons heading for new opportunities in colonies of settlement.

This is not simply a story of diversity, but rather of a hierarchy of migration, overwhelmingly racial, which forms the core of the book's analysis. We are accustomed now to seeking evidence of agency in the careers of European migrants, but what of non Europeans? The bulk of them, the authors note, 'occupied the lower level in a dual labour market, a concept that has been found useful in analyzing their experiences' (p.5). Those indentured labourers sought to improve their own conditions, but 'were recruited and managed by white Europeans whose own terms and rewards of employment were distinctively higher and privileged. In fact, the two streams of empire migration did not just conveniently coincide but were deliberately so engineered and structurally related' (p. 5). This was informed by a hangover of the era of slavery, buttressed by white settler desires for cheap Asian, African and Pacific island labour. But from the middle of the nineteenth century it clashed with racist values in white settler societies, which endured up to the later twentieth century and prompted policies of racial exclusion at odds with the official imperial policy of inclusion; not all imperial power, it is clear, emanated from the metropole. The resulting tensions undermined cherished images of 'the united imperial family' (p. 178), yet at the same time the divisions and inequities nourished a sense of distinctive identities through language, culture and religion, among indentured labourers and free migrants, white and non European. It is here that the authors are able to provide glimpses of migrant agency regardless of origin and status.

If the imperial hierarchy of migration provides the organizing and analytical principle it is one which the authors wear lightly, for

[1] Eric Richards, Britannia's Children. Emigration from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland since 1600, London 2004.

there is so much else. They are alert to the big picture narrative of imperial influence on the globe, the economic, social and cultural transformation of much of the world outside Europe, and particularly the conversion of huge territories into spheres of primary production which mostly served the metropole. Refreshingly, this is done without any hint of the triumphalism which so often accompanies such discussions, and with an eye on the profound disruption to displaced indigenous populations. Economic transformation was accompanied by loftier imperial ambitions and the politics of empire migration easily translated into forms of social engineering, another connecting thread. The convicts sent to Australia, the child migrant schemes to settlement colonies, the shipments of single female servants and spinster ladies, Indian indentured labourers, the Jamaicans recruited to work on London Transport and the 'ten pound poms' sent to Australia from 1947, most with public or philanthropic subsidies, resulted from a sustained politically inspired set of social engineering aspirations. Alongside strategies for cheap labour, these might derive from desires to exclude undesirable immigrants, whether on grounds of race, gender, age, class or skill, but by the late nineteenth century notions of 'imperial mission' brought other considerations like the rescue of British women and children for higher imperial duties abroad (pp. 268, 343). The concept of 'social engineering' in migration studies is hardly new, common particularly among Australian immigration historians.[2] But in this book it illuminates the authors' insistence on the overriding role of politics and power in the management and direction of empire migration.

The relatively short period covered by this survey belies its basis in a quite staggering scope and depth of research. For each distinct chapter the mastery of secondary literature is exhaustive and deployment of primary material instructive. As befits a survey of the field it provides a bedrock of contextual demographic and statistical data, but this never makes for heavy reading, enlivened as it is by engaging qualitative material. At times it is a struggle to keep up with the leaps back and forth in each chapter between colonial and post 1940s migration themes, but this is a minor and unavoidable challenge for readers given the brief. For this reviewer the greatest treat is the persistent use of migrant voices to sustain the analysis. This is now routine in most migration histories, whether derived from letters, diaries, oral testimony or similar, but it is no easy task to use these sources effectively in large survey texts beyond the customary token gesture. A fine example is the optimistic tone, indeed agency, of some Indians in southern Africa, for example an Indian storekeeper in Durban who spent ten years in indentured service but thought all his countrymen could do well. 'All the Indians here are comfortably placed, and it chiefly depends upon their own behaviour whether they are happy or not.' (p. 162) There were, of course, different voices which build up a complex picture. The book is a model for survey texts, innovative in its own right; it should be indispensable for teachers, students and scholars for years to come.

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[2] James Jupp, Immigration, Melbourne 1998.