

**Ronald Takaki, ed. *From Different Shores: Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity in America*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987) 253 pp., \$13.95 paper.**

*From Different Shores* is surely a very welcome addition to the growing body of research and serious study of ethnicity in America. Ronald Takaki has marshalled the expertise and scholarship of the more well-known scholars in the field and has produced a book which should be useful to serious students of ethnic studies.

Ethnic studies itself is a fledgling discipline which is interdisciplinary. It combines the social sciences and humanities and even sometimes the behavioral sciences. Its own mission is the study of ethnicity and its impact upon society; therefore, it is not a very easy task to define the boundaries and parameters of ethnic studies even though ethnicity is the heart and soul of the discipline.

*From Different Shores* begins with a basic difference in a given point of view. This basic difference arises out of Takaki's view of ethnicity in America as being segregationist and exclusionist while Nathan Glazer's view of ethnicity in America is assimilationist and inclusive. Nathan Glazer begins with the proposition that in spite of the obstacles and difficulties that have beset ethnic groups in the past, there has always been an instinctive desire to accommodate people in different ethnic persuasions, and the Federal Government has over the years passed legislation culminating in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Immigration Act of 1965 making it illegal to segregate on the basis of national or racial origin. Glazer even quotes from the poem on the Statue of Liberty:

She that lifts up the mankind of the poor,  
She of the open soul and open door.  
With room about her Hearth for all Mankind!

Ronald Takaki, on the contrary, is of the opinion that ethnicity in America has followed a policy of exclusion and segregation. He comes to the conclusion that:

Due to the racially exclusionist forces and developments in American history, racial inequality and occupational stratification have come to coexist in a mutually reinforcing the dynamic structural relationship which continues to operate more powerfully than direct forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. To diminish the significance of racial oppression in America's past and to define racial inequality as a problem of prejudice and limit the solution as the outlawing of individual acts of discrimination, as does Glazer, is effectively to leave intact the very structures of racial inequality.

However, Nathan Glazer and Ronald Takaki have acknowledged a very important dimension to ethnicity in America which is the attitudes of Americans towards blacks, Chinese and Japanese and Indians from the subcontinent. These attitudes are a result of their contact with these people in their own lands long before they even arrived in the United States. This strangely enough does not hold true for those who came from the European continent; therefore, the title *From Different Shores* presupposes a condition which existed even before they arrived from

different shores.

If we consider the treatment and condition of black people in this country we perceive a historical bias the African continent has developed in the European mind. It was "The Heart of Darkness": primitive, savage, cannibalistic, and pagan. Therefore, there was justifiable cause for European nations including the United States "To bring light to them that sat in darkness" and therein lies also the tale of two ships which has now become part of the record of history of the United States and England. The ships that carried missionaries out of Boston and out of Liverpool in England could very well have been the same ships that brought back slaves to the shores of Virginia and North Carolina, the Carribean, and Liverpool.

John Hope Franklin in his book *Ethnicity in American Life: The Historical Perspective*, states that:

The presence of persons of African descent, almost from the beginning, had helped whites to define ethnicity and to establish and maintain the conditions by which it could be controlled. If their color and race, their condition of servitude, and their generally degraded position did not set them apart, the laws and customs surrounding them more than accomplished that feat. Whether in Puritan Massachusetts or cosmopolitan New York or Anglican South Carolina, the colonists declared that Negroes, slave and free, did not and could belong to the society of equal human beings. Thus, the newly arrived Crevecoeur could be as blind to the essential humanity of Negroes as the patriots who tried to keep them out of the Continental Army. They were not a part of America, these new men. And in succeeding years their presence would do more to define ethnicity than the advent of several scores of millions of Europeans.

It is for this reason that I find the absence of any serious discussion of slavery in the United States and the part it played in defining ethnicity in America a rather serious omission in the book. It may be argued that the intention of the book was not to enter into the causes and conditions of slavery in the United States. But one cannot escape the inescapable, which is that of all those who came from different shores, it is the black people who have largely helped to define ethnicity in America.

Nathan Glazer makes a very persuasive argument to prove his conviction that America has always had a heart large enough to accommodate the different races and ethnic groups who came to this country. He documents carefully the judicial and legislative measures that have been taken in order to prove his point. However much that may be true, it is also a matter of public record that in the social and cultural life of the nation there have been conscious efforts at exclusion. Randall M. Miller, in his introduction to *The Kaleidoscopic Lens: How Hollywood Views Ethnic Groups*, observes that phenomenon very early in the movie industry. The industry adopted a code of production, and the code was drafted by a Catholic priest.

Sex crimes—the necessary ingredients for box office success—were permissible provided that the film had a recognized compensating moral value. The Code insisted that "Evil and good are never to be confused throughout the presentation, and good must prevail in the end." The Code did something else. It prohibited scenes and subjects which, however distantly, suggested miscegenation as desirable, thereby building a color barrier in Hollywood's dream worlds as rigid as the color line in America's real world. By casting the issue of racial mixing in black and white

terms, the Code proclaimed an assimilationist ideal for European ethnic groups and a segregationist ideal for the "colored folks." Long after the Code's demise, this principle continued to influence the content of some major films.

Ethnicity in America will cease to have serious meaning if we attempt to blur the lines and shade the historical factors that have shaped this nation. One must agree with Takaki that outlawing individual acts of inequality should not be an alternative to correcting the structural inequalities in American society.

—Ernest A. Champion  
Bowling Green State University

**Helen Hornbeck Tanner, editor; Miklos Pinther, cartographer.**  
*Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History.* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987) xv, 224 pp., \$75.00, \$29.95 paper.

Surprising as it may be, this is the first atlas of Great Lakes Indian history. Originally, Helen Hornbeck Tanner was involved in a research assignment which caused her to collect information on Great Lakes Indians at the time of the Revolution. After finding that maps of the Great Lakes Region were erroneous or deceptive, and that Ohio maps were marked with "little known area" or "insufficient information," she carefully developed this atlas. A bibliographic essay at the end of the atlas describes the enormous research that went into mapping these ethnic groups' histories. A noteworthy variety of sources were analyzed: obvious ones such as old maps, surveyors' notes, missionary observations, journals and Indian agency documents, and ones which come less readily to mind such as captivity notes, literary works, paintings and photographs.

The book contains 33 maps and 80 engaging illustrations. The first two maps deal with the region's principal theater (the area of major changes between 1600 and 1880), and subsequent maps are organized historically, beginning with the natural vegetation found when the Europeans first arrived and ending with what Indian villages remained in 1870. The most dramatic visual information is uncovered by juxtaposing the map of the land cessions 1783-1873 with the reservations of 1783-1889. The informative discussions accompanying these maps reveal the history and make a reader want to learn more. For example, one reason Pontiac wanted to get rid of the British was that, unlike the French, they refused to give the Indians the powder and ammunition needed for hunting. Or, to take another example, by design during a 1763 war, when the Ojibwa and Sioux were playing lacrosse, a ball sent over a stockade wall allowed the Ojibwa to dash in, retrieve the ball, slay victims and capture prisoners. We are also reminded of the contrast in attitudes between the