the nation remains fundamental to contemporary understandings and structures of kinship, even for families that are transnational or interracial in composition.

Although Leinaweaver makes productive use of the term “national substance” to shed light on various dynamics surrounding international adoption and migration, the concept itself is not particularly novel. Scholars of nationalism and immigration have written extensively on the pervasiveness of essentialized understandings of national identity and the manner in which nationalism serves as an “ideology of difference” – a term that Leinaweaver uses at several points in the book. It is therefore not surprising that substantialist notions of national belonging inform the perspectives and actions of adoptive parents and labor migrants, as well as the legal frameworks that regulate adoption and migration. Nor is it surprising that adoptee and migrant youth with similar phenotypic traits face comparable stereotypes and discrimination, especially in a country like Spain where foreign immigration is a relatively new phenomenon.

Leinaweaver’s contribution lies more in her rich and detailed analysis of the parallel themes that emerge in the lives of adoptive and migrant parents, despite their highly distinctive socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Her discussion of how adoptive and migrant parents feel an almost ethical calling to imbue their children with a cultural upbringing suitable to their national background is particularly revealing. Equally insightful are her observations of how experiences of adoption and migration spark engagement in new forms of sociality and activism that are deeply transnational while at the same time being firmly grounded in substantialist understandings of the nation.

In conclusion, Adoptive Migration is a valuable study that adds nuance to current understandings of international adoption and transnational migration. Leinaweaver’s findings are valuable not only for academics, but also for policymakers and professionals. Given the deeply personal and engaging life stories that she relates over the course of the book, Adoptive Migration also holds interest for a more general readership.

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Dilma Rousseff’s historic victory in the 2010 presidential election depended on sweeping the Brazilian northeast. She triumphed in a region habitually de-
scribed by its impoverishment, natural calamities, and a longstanding regard for violence as the basis of authority. Repeated ad nauseam about the northeast in general, and its sertão, or hinterlands, in particular, these attributes have acquired a timeless and inherent quality. What, then, can Dilma’s resounding electoral performance suggest about the changing codes of public life in the northeast?

Analysts seeking to explain this seeming paradox, of a progressive woman thriving amid Brazil’s quintessentially “machista” northeast, must read Martha Santos’s fine-grained study of power and masculinity in the nineteenth century, for it illuminates, precisely, a longer history of changing gender formations and their influences on state formation, social mobility, and popular culture. Notably, Cleansing also underscores the fact that poor women have long exercised influential roles in local economies and social structures.

This is the rare book that succeeds in blending political-economy approaches and cultural theory. It is really not more one than the other, as Santos’s nuanced perspective on masculine identity constructions rests on situating this process in relation to the surrounding political and economic developments. The meanings ascribed to the practices of masculinity change over the nineteenth century part and parcel along with ongoing structural transformations. The author’s specific focus is on free poor men in the sertão, the racially-mixed, whose prospects for achieving stability and an honorable reputation emerge from their interactions with the state, the landed elite, and poor, mixed-race women.

The book spans Brazil’s “second empire,” ranging from the 1840s through to the end of the 1880s. Santos’s research delineated the mid-1860s as a key turning point in the articulation of male affirmations. The cotton economy of the interior slowed considerably with the end of the US Civil War in 1865; small landholders left their homes in order to seek work; they also dealt with the expanding pressures of impressment caused by the Paraguayan War (1864-70); and the devastating effects of the Great Drought of the late 1870s effectively culminated in a series of structural changes that undermined the relative economic autonomy that sertanejos had enjoyed during the mid-nineteenth century.

These changes clearly influenced the interrelationship between honor, masculinity, and violence in the sertão. Men’s separation from their families spelled the end of an honor code based on “possession of resources such as land, animals, and slaves, or on the militant defense of such patrimony” (151). The changing gender order implied that a man’s worth “was contingent on his capacity to exercise physical force, regardless of its objective” (187). Santos convincingly establishes this turn, both in its material and discursive dimensions. The author draws on verses from popular poetry and from police records and court cases to demonstrate how sertanejos “constituted themselves and were constituted by others as ‘naturally’ or inherently violent” (213). Perceptibly, Santos sheds
new light on the making of this “naturalizing discourse.” It “concealed the mechanisms, including the process of state formation itself” behind the deep association linking sertanejo’s honor and violence (213).

From female popular poetry and criminal cases featuring violence against women, Santos reckons with how poor men’s sense of empowerment changed in the late nineteenth century as poor women fulfilled their family’s economic responsibilities. If poor women increasingly “earned their livelihoods independent of men, and moved about the backlands on their own,” as Santos suggests, they also encountered a new form of public patriarchy that “establish[ed] limits to female autonomy and initiative” (165). For one, unattached women dealt with the hard reality of being “unprotected.” It was a vulnerability affirmed in popular poetry and also reinforced within the judicial system. Legal statutes, for example, such as the category of rape, were narrowly interpreted in the 1830 Imperial Criminal Code so as to apply only to women protected by men, meaning young and “honest” women. Unattached women, Santos’s elucidates, “could not prosecute their rapists under this crime” (178). The judicial system, then, reaffirmed men’s “rights to practice gendered violence,” and became makers of normative sertanejo femininity (185). The court cases, nevertheless, convey women’s attempts to enforce their autonomy: 75 percent of the 32 cases that Santos consulted began with the words “at the request of the aggrieved women” (175).

The author concludes the study with an interest in how the resurgence of banditry in the late nineteenth century found wide expression in poetry and literature, and consequently, further inscribed the ideals of violence, honor, and masculinity in the popular imaginary. The glorification of bandits’ defiance of state authority “emphasized bravery, courage, and mastery in the use of weapons as the measures of a man” (208). Interestingly, the author notes that state authorities also contributed to the propagation of this discourse, attributing their own inability to stem banditry to sertanejos’ “natural tendencies” towards violence (211).

Overall, this book tackles the problem of masculinity from a variety of perspectives, and it forces us to reassess the workings of power relations in the sertão as historically contingent. This is no small achievement considering the deep-seated stereotypes that have influenced the state’s presence in the region. Santos’s presentation of an economically stable sertão in the mid-nineteenth century offers a relevant point of reference for thinking about the more recent economic dynamism of the Brazilian northeast and its possible effects on the recreation of gender and political sensibilities in our own time.

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