Favel Adrian, *The Philosophies of Integration. Immigration and the idea of citizenship in France and Britain*

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REFERENCES


1 For those who missed the first edition of the *Philosophies of Integration*, this second edition is mandatory reading, not to be overlooked for at least three reasons. The main interest of the book comes from the demonstration according to which the colossal strength of self-referential nationalisms in the two countries — what he calls the persistent insularity of Britain and the archaism of France — blocks any possible dynamics which could come from the development old Europe. Favell’s approach is interdisciplinary and he innovates by introducing new concepts in his discussion such as “path dependency” by which he means that each country is inwardly oriented and blocked from any possible adaptation or responsiveness to problems or by elaborating on older concepts such as citizenship or diversity.

2 Another strength of the book is due to a truly comparative work. The author does not simply alternate one chapter on France with one on Britain, but he constantly refers within his chapters to the similarities and divergences of the cases he examines. Although, the policy framework in France addresses problems in terms of *citoyenneté* and *intégration*, Britain addresses similar problems in terms of *race relations* and *multiculturalism*. From the start, Favell has stated clearly why he has selected those two countries: they are two old nations with comparable political traditions, colonial...
involvements and yet with distinct political responses to dilemmas posed by the integration of various post-colonial groups, particularly of Muslim origin.

3 The book offers an amazing wealth of informations drawn from a wide range of references from the best authors, part of it being critical, and from a rich empirical observation of the field.

4 Yet these three reasons justifying a mandatory reading have also their weaknesses. First, it seems to me that A. Favell who used to live and work in the U.K. tends to see the grass greener than it is on the other side of the Channel. This is hardly surprising. French scholars, including me, comparing Britain and France are frequently criticized for idealizing the U.K. What he does not elaborate enough on is how much the gap has widened between principles and practices in France to the point that important debates regularly wonder whether the French Republique is still true to its values. Controversies range from intellectuals' manifesto -"Republicans, let’s be afraid no more !"- being revived now and then to analyses on social and ethnic fractures revealing a growing ethnicization of social relations in the public space as shown by a violent soccer game between France and Algeria last september during which the national anthem was booed by young French of immigrant origin who interrupted the game when Algeria began to lose, a gesture which stunned French elites arrogantly taking credit for the success of the World Soccer Game, as an integrating operator.

5 Secondly, in his interdisciplinary approach, although Favell claims in the Preface to the second edition that he wants to reconcile the debate on integration and on public order, he misses the opportunity to do so, I think, by ignoring the ethnic tensions in derelict neighborhoods: they reveal that some categories may be socially integrated but within a paradigm of exclusion and that the shift from policies of social prevention to policies of urban safety targeting immigrant youth align French policies at the end of the 1990s on the British ones of crime control, yet less explicitly so, in rhetorical terms.

6 Last, the profusion of detailed information offered, revealing the author's great mastery of the issues here analyzed, sometimes amalgamates highbrow philosophical considerations with trivial ones (p.177) which may be irrelevant in such a book. The data relative to the numbers of immigrants (1982 for France p. 49 and 1991 for Britain) should have been updated for the second edition.

7 Having however reflected upon the criticisms addressed to the first edition of the book, A. Favell has very thoughtfully constructed this second version, inviting his readers to ponder over complex contradictions and fundamental issues within old Nation-States such as France and Britain and he has greatly succeeded in this ambitious book.

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