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**Book reviews: Orelus Pierre W. (2011). Courageous
Voices of Immigrants and Transnationals of Color.
Counter Narratives against Discrimination in Schools
and Beyond. Peter Lang New York.162 pp.**

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displacement are considered significant and some of the 'Group of 7' identities are well illustrated in the book through case vignettes of three persons living in the UK for the few decades: Shiva (a Hindu man from India), Hanna (a Muslim Arab woman) and Jo-Anne (an African Caribbean woman). Author's analyses of the lived experiences of these persons add a lively touch to the book by illustrating some of the abstract, structural issues at the micro-level, making their dilemmas and paradoxes human and comprehensible.

On the other hand, the chapters about the training in working with multicultural and diverse clients takes the book to the meso levels by focusing on different training paradigms, especially by considering the competency framework as the framework which governs the relationship between the professional and the patient in the therapy room. The challenge for multicultural and diversity counselling and psychotherapy is to begin to incorporate the changing ideas of subjectivity and multiple identities in their practice. The practice has to transform itself, to embrace all the differences without stereotyping any of the other identities that a client may also present. In other words, such training should include aspects of race, gender, class, disability and sexual orientation. However, the reader misses inclusion of the organisatory and power aspects of the counselling relation in this part of the book. Besides, there are some repetitions in the book, which could have been avoided through a more stringent editing.

Appealing for further research in the field of mental health and diversity, the author lucidly pinpoints the limited knowledge about the psychological and mental health strategies used by ethnic minorities in dealing with racism, social and economic oppression, workplace stress and conflicts in relationships. At the same time, it is underlined that not engaging in psychotherapy research with the ethnic 'other' is not a conscious avoidance or a lack of interest in clinical matters of culturally different client. There seem to be enough tensions with the research-theory gap, the scientific-subjective dilemma of psychotherapy research and complexities surrounding suitable methodologies for examining and labeling 'psychological distress'. However, the way forward for the therapy and research is to take account of the historical, cultural and socio-political complexities of the ethnic minority persons and groups, and at the same time making sure that the issues of difference do not take on significance over and beyond their psychological meanings for the client and the therapy.

The book, on the whole, has an explicit message about considering the broad context, history and the multiple identities of the persons in the critical multicultural counselling and psychotherapy along the personal meaning. The contents are convincing, lively and thought provoking, especially the case vignettes. These vignettes and the invocation of multidisciplinary illustrations reflect the author's comprehensive empirical, practical, theoretical knowledge and a deeply human perspective. The book is recommended reading to researchers and practitioners in the field of migration, Intercultural Psychology and counselling, also in the Nordic countries.

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Orelus, Pierre W. (2011) *Courageous Voices of Immigrants and Transnationals of Color. Counter Narratives against Discrimination in Schools and Beyond*, Peter Lang: New York. 162 pp.

Discrimination, institutional and individual racism, xenophobia, prejudices, accentism and linguisticism are just a few of the topics covered in Pierre Orelus's book. Offering us an alternative format, the author describes the condition of migrants and transnationals of color² in the United States.

The book is leaned on the author's personal narrative, integrated by the narrative interviews of fifty transnationals and immigrants of color from Jordan, Algeria, Nigeria, Palestine, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Haiti, immigrated for different reason in the United States.

After a foreword by Zeus Leonardo, throughout the text – divided in seven chapters – the construction of 'otherness' and its consequences emerge through the mobilization of concepts hotly debated in academia and beyond, such as identity, home, community, memory, exile and 'color'. Some readers from countries not used to racial profiling could be shocked by the words used. However, in the frame of Anglo-Saxon scholarly tradition, Orelus aims to portray the dynamic social production of 'race' by emphasizing the relevance of the various contexts considered (school, university, the workplace, the street, public offices, etc.) and in order to reach that goal he needs to name and to articulate gender, social class, professional status, generation, religious affiliation, political views, etc.

Racialisation is a product of social relations; it is not the race that creates the racism, but the racism that creates the race. This subtle game is played out through the pages of Orelus's book. He avoids recreating a manual on racial theories and instead he exploits some of them to interpret present situations in the US, the United Kingdom and France: representative countries that share a colonial past that has strongly contributed, and still contributes, to build their wealth and their dominant position on the international scene.

Colonialism, capitalism and imperialism cause a never-ending cycle of exploitation of resources and a consequent movement of people: from commodities and raw materials to the workforce and knowledge. Orelus fits within the larger framework of post-colonial studies and paying attention to migrant status, nationality, religious beliefs, age and reasons for migration, he claims that those migrants

² 'people from formerly colonized, occupied, or currently occupied and neo-colonized countries who have immigrated to other countries, including United States. In terms of race and ethnicity, these immigrants and transnationals of color are not defined as White in the U.S. and European context, although they may well be defined as White in their country of origin. They are Brown, Black or Yellow people from different parts of the world. Transnationals and immigrants of color often move back and forth between their adopted or 'foreign' land and their native land.' (p. 1).

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have experienced discrimination. In this respect, he is interested in doing away with the significance of physical appearance, focusing just color; but the book expands on this, touching on religious belief, and offers us some fragments of Muslim Arab experiences in the US and France.

Moreover, the author focuses on linguisticism as a form of imperialism. Dominant standardized English bases its power on a widespread paternalistic ideology, which engenders unequal power relations between other languages and their native speakers. Orelus shows how language, as a non-neutral significant factor, combined with color, can produce a separation between native and non-native and restrict the possibility of equal interaction and social mobility.

He goes some way to establish doubt as to whether it is by neglect or design that there is an urban and socio-economic model of premature death implemented by capitalist countries through ghettoizing poor migrants in isolated areas where, among other, more well known problems, such as alcoholism, drug abuse, prostitution, violence, etc. exist. This idea is taken up in the afterword by Richard Delgado, which focuses on the paradoxes of immigration – ‘we need and fear immigrants’ and ‘immigrants need and fear us’ (p.139)–and on the present second generations.

Experiencing and reporting a series of acts of discrimination taking place in disparate spheres, a number of questions arise in migrant minds. What does it mean to be a citizen of a State? Does a migrant have to compromise his identity to live in a country? If citizenship and home do not always correspond, what is home? Home might well be the place where one feels comfortable; so, where is home for transnational migrants divided between at least two countries, the one of origin and the one of migration?

Migration literature widely discusses this issue. However, the construction of ‘otherness’ goes on and its consequences become more and more serious, creating uprooted and psychologically weak individuals. This unease has its origin in transnationals’ ‘double absence’ (Sayad 1999): not fully accepted and realized in the new country of migration, they are no more at home in the country of origin. Orelus suggests solving this paradoxical ubiquity by creating a ‘third cultural and communal space’ (p. 64), but this means running the risk of reproducing the dominant alienation in a closed new community. Instead, he leans towards the idea of exile by choice, or by obligation, depending on the reasons for migration, as the mental condition of migrants and transnationals, being ‘out of place in nearly every way’ (Said 1999:231).

There is a distorted idea of the ‘other’ – created, invented, perceived and fixed by colonial discourse – or a real lack of knowledge of their world, in which media, politics and the economy perpetrate a form of ‘symbolic violence’ that it is no longer possible to ignore. Blacks, Latinos, Arabs, Muslims and homosexuals are targeted and disqualified in some way and by virtue of that they are systematically subjected to direct verbal or sordid indirect violence. In the United States, as elsewhere in the world, the symptoms become visible. Who will be next?

Orelus’ book reiterates the urgent need to act through a flexible strategy. He clarifies that his position is not to generalize or dichotomize the reality: bad and good, black and white. Certainly, migrants and transnationals have enjoyed opportunities to improve their life, which they probably could never have had in their countries of origin; but, in exchange, they have faced difficulties that they had never imagined facing in these so-called democratized countries.

Racial question is a social question (Fassin 2009:15) and critical pedagogy is the most efficient answer. It represents a philosophy of education based on a collective process that involves a pervasive dialogical learning approach and aimed to give an alternative to oppressed people. Following this, only dialogue makes it possible to overcome this impasse that imprisons migrants and transnationals. In order to break the chains of the global dependence, action needs to come from mutual knowledge and keeping in mind Edward Said’s warning: each age and society re-creates its ‘Others’ (Said 2003:332). In this context, migrants have a central role ‘to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well’ (p. 104). So, the author leaves the reader with an oxymoron, coming from his autobiography: sadness as the impulsion not to give up the fight.

The critical educational approach shapes the book’s format; Orelus clarifies from the beginning that his position is not completely neutral, but it should be situated in its own context avoiding misrepresentations³. However, the reader could remark that Orelus’s book suffers from a slight methodological weakness. The author tends to present the issue in a simplified manner and to repeat the same concept, instead of offering to the reader additional elements in order to have a complete detailed panorama of the issue described and a multiple point of view.

Except for this, Orelus’s readable book fulfills its objective announced in its introduction: to be a useful instrument for teachers, students, specialized educators and general readers. Simply written and based on real anecdotes the text helps us to reconcile racial theories and economic-political issues with the real experiences of people. Extracts of the narratives contained in the book – some of them in the form of poetry introducing each chapter and some of them presented as long *récits* – could be used as qualitative supports for post-colonial studies, for sociology and for sociolinguistics classes.

Moreover, the book questions us once again about the position of the researcher and what actually is objectivity and neutrality in social science. Certainly, objectivity is strictness in methodology. However – ‘there is no choice between “engaged” and “neutral” ways of doing sociology. A non-committal sociology is an impossibility’ (Bauman 2000:216).

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³ ‘I hope this book will not be misused to generalize and romanticize the heart-felt stories included in it. Each story shared in this book needs to be understood in its context [...]. I must warn the reader my narrative as a multilingual immigrant of color is not intended to generalize about the experience of other immigrants of colour living in the West.’ (p. 6-7)

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