

BOOK REVIEW

Sheila Khan, Nazir Ahmed Can, and Helena Machado, eds. *Racism and Racial Surveillance: Modernity Matters*. New York: Routledge, 2022. xiii + 222 pp. Index. \$42.36. Paper. ISBN: 9781032109022.

Despite this book's title, *Racism and Racial Surveillance*, it is the subtitle, *Modernity Matters*, from which this book first takes its cue. This volume (edited by Sheila Khan, Nazir Ahmed Can, and Helena Machado) is organized in two parts, with Part I containing the bulk of the chapters, and Part II containing only three. Part I, which the editors name "Arts, Race, Identity, and Memory," maps the contours of race and their proliferation within art and literature; these essays sketch the routes through which modernity, as a representation of artistic and cultural ideologies, is racially and biologically inflected. The chapters in this section also reflect on how the dimensions of culture, art, identity, and memory actually hold the key to understanding Western modernity's survival and its logics of racialization and racial surveillance.

In Chapter One, which focuses on the relations between literary culture and empire, Nazir Ahmed Can and Rita Chaves analyze how the notion of race is projected in literature, referencing several different literary works written by European authors. They also analyze the literary project of the Angolan writer Ruy Duarte de Carvalho, whose writing re-articulates the relevance of modernity to the logics of racism and racial surveillance. Across these varied texts, Can and Chavez elucidate the process by which the racialization and hierarchization of races crystallizes within the cultural and biological milieu; they refer to this durability and permanence of the worldview of racial hierarchization by skin color as the "schism of race." However, Carvalho notes that the racial classification system on African soil undermines this schism of race, and results in what the authors call the "seism of the other."

While the subsequent chapters in Part I continue to explore this thematic register, it is the second part of this edited volume and its pivot to the subjects of racism, technology, and crime that merit attention here, and provide an important contribution to contemporary discussions on how modernity requires race-making and racial surveillance in order to survive. As a medical anthropologist whose work examines how certain biological technologies service empire as biosurveillance applications, I found this section of the text rather compelling. In Chapter Eight, authors Sheila Khan and Helena Machado astutely identify the relationship between biological science, racism, and power, and how that triangular relationship constitutes an enduring political instrument and feature of social life. One of the elements of biology the authors examine is genes, and by focusing on forensic genetics, they observed how a growing fascination with DNA

continues overtly, “entangling governability of crime and scientific and political devices that relate genetics and race” (153). With race and racial classificatory schemes already being a permanent feature of modernity and its demands of racial maintenance, science has long been recruited to continue to produce objective and verifiable evidence of biologized racial meaning and difference via genetics.

The authors convincingly argue how science has reinforced the idea of racial and ethnic categories via forensic technologies applied in criminal justice, which represent the “matrix of Western modernity and its logic of coloniality” (154). By highlighting the instances in which empire has recruited genetics to surveil and police its Others, by the discriminatory use of DNA identification technologies on migrant and refugee populations and by policing non-white persons and collecting their DNA material (leading to the overrepresentation of non-whites in Europe’s criminal databases), the authors make plain the links between geneticization and racialization. Framing racial surveillance as a continuity of coloniality, the authors thoroughly explain how DNA is wrapped up in the geopolitics of racial belonging and nationality and immigration, despite public attempts to disentangle DNA technologies by using scientific rationality and objectivity.

In Chapter Nine, Nina Amelung extends this treatise on DNA forensic technologies to explain how they (re)produce senses of belonging and non-belonging, with forensic DNA phenotyping (FDP) deployed by states such as Germany to determine who is originally German and who is not. This, in turn, redoubles the notion that collections of genes produce racial phenotypes, and therefore, typify racial categories, and Amelung is correct to note how such endeavors conducted in states with racio-colonial histories (such as Germany) demonstrate how FDP is a technology of empire. FDP and other DNA forensic technologies perform the socio-political regulation and sorting of categorized bodies by genetic constitution and phenotypic traits, constituting a segregative biopolitics (Aslı Iğsız, *Humanism in Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange* [New York University Press, 2018]).

Finally, Filipa Quierós persuasively suggests that FDP technology reinscribes race in Europe. As police departments across Europe have relied on FDP technology in criminal investigations, with intensive operation on specific racialized populations, the use of that technology (re)produces new forms of discrimination, giving what Quierós calls a “new look” to existing forms of racial discrimination (200). This chapter complements the previous two, echoing how DNA forensic technology aids empire and modernity by instrumentalizing culturally-ingrained racist ideas of genetics and science to sort humans via policing. Overall, Part II is clearly written, and could serve as a useful teaching tool in the classroom to show how racial technologies, surveillance, and science contribute to discrimination in society.

Overall, this edited volume delivers on its intentions to trace how modernity has fueled both old and contemporary forms of racialization and racial surveillance, and how various surveillance technologies and techniques continue from the colonial demands of modernity itself. While the first seven chapters focus primarily on modernity and modernity’s processes of racialization captured in literature and art, the book’s turn to racial surveillance in the last three chapters

is instructive for readers interested in how modernity hinges on both race-making and race-watching.

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