critique, and question accepted truths constructed by institutions of power. Embedded witnessing revises our notions of truth "as emerging from within contested networks of power rather than from outside of them" (147). Perera-Rajasingham calls for a rethinking of the parameters of human rights narratives that have traditionally been accepted by non-profit and state-established organizations of the Global North. Whereas organizations like the United Nations have emphasized the impartiality (and thus outsider status) of witnesses, Perera-Rajasingham argues that the experiences of embedded witnesses are an equally viable and more intimate way of understanding human rights abuses.

Perera-Rajasingham's work is a necessary recontextualization of the Sri Lankan civil war within structures of colonialism and global capitalism. While the text at times fails to fully explain its theoretical backing—for example, it lacks a robust discussion of assemblage theory—the book brilliantly analyzes various ethnographic fictions and state-produced narratives to show how the Sri Lankan state and the LTTE, through neoliberal policies and internationally funded and oriented structures, created and maintained ethnic divisions between Sinhalese and Tamil people to justify war. Because this book brings together various interdisciplinary subjects like global economic policy, literature, and human rights studies, it could be useful to scholars studying such varying topics as South Asian politics, postcolonial capitalism, South Asian literature, and ethnographic methodology.

Sinduja Sathiyaseelan

Andrea Medovarski. *Settling Down and Settling Up: The Second Generation in Black Canadian and Black British Women's Writing*. U of Toronto P, 2019. Pp. 208. CAD $37.50.

Andrea Medovarski's *Settling Down and Settling Up: The Second Generation in Black Canadian and Black British Women's Writing* offers a compelling analysis of the depiction of second-generation citizens in Black Canadian and Black British women's fiction. Through a series of nuanced readings of the work of Dionne Brand, Tessa McWatt, Zadie Smith, Esi Edugyan, and Andrea Levy, Medovarski traces the manner in which second-generation citizens "'settle up' with the nation, to *remake* citizenship on other, more ethical or more

inclusive terms" (15; emphasis in original). Her readings complicate conceptions of the relationship between race, citizenship, nation, and diaspora by focusing not on the generation that arrives but on the second generation that "envision[s] alternative spaces from which citizens can make ethical demands of nations in the interest of looking towards different futures, new heterogeneities, and other possibilities" (168). Medovarski's reading offers a compelling reappraisal of ideas of diaspora and nation by comparing these two distinct literary traditions.

Settling Down begins with a description of the state of critical discourse "[i]n the early 1990s" (3) and the book is decidedly a product of those debates and that time both in its methods and citational practices. The strength of such an approach is that it enables Medovarski to foreground the disruptive potential of diaspora; this is particularly important given the recent slide in the term's critical currency within Canadian studies. Yet the weakness of such an approach is that the book is oddly non-conversant with more recent scholarship. With the exception of a handful of citations, the bulk of the text's references predate 2006. A great deal has happened in Canadian studies, Black studies, and diaspora studies in the subsequent fourteen years. Indeed, given the transformation in discourses of migrancy, diaspora, and citizenship in the past decade, Medovarski's book misses an important opportunity to intervene in more contemporary discussions.

Furthermore, Medovarski does not precisely articulate her position in relation to her critical precursors. It is never entirely clear *how* Medovarski places Avtar Brah's diaspora space in dialogue with Édouard Glissant's poetics of relation or Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic. Her argument that "'diaspora space' . . . is 'inhabited' not only by diasporic subjects but equally by those who are constructed and represented as 'indigenous'" (5) is provocative yet underdeveloped. Indeed, given George Elliott Clarke's argument that Canada is marginalized within Gilroy's Black Atlantic, as well as Clarke's own controversial claims concerning Africadian Indigeneity, it is surprising that Medovarsksi never cites or draws on his work. Similarly, her conclusion raises Sylvia Wynter's concept of the "counter-novel" (168) without fully articulating how each of the novels she studies engages in counter-hegemonic practices.

Indeed, the book gestures toward but does not entirely engage with a number of important critical debates. This is particularly evident in the comparative frame of Medovarski's analysis: more work needs to be done to specify the distinction between British and Canadian conceptions of citizenship and the two countries' strategies of managing difference. She refers to the "Canadian Multiculturalism Act" and the "British Race Relations Act" as

two policies that "largely . . . discipline and contain 'others'" (25). This is certainly true, but there are substantial differences between the two documents, their legislative enactment, and the means by which local communities have resisted that management. Blackness and migrancy have been depicted, in literary and public discourse alike, very differently in Canada and Britain; a more nuanced analysis of the two political environments in which the writers under discussion operate is needed.

These limitations aside, however, one of *Settling Down*'s strengths is its sustained and impressive attention to literary works. In contrast with some contemporary literary scholarship, which skims poetry and prose as mere evidence for sweeping theoretical arguments, Medovarski attends to literary complexity. Her first-rate readings allow broader observations about race, citizenship, and the nation to emerge from her acts of interpretation. This is fine criticism that enables her to offer valuable insights, such as her claim that the images of rot and decay in Edugyan's work create "an intertextual dialogue with Ghanian writer Ayi Kwei Armah" (134). Similarly, her analysis of the unfinished dimension of McWatt's *Out of My Skin* (1998) opens the novel up to exciting new interpretations, and her reading of Smith's *White Teeth* (2000) in the context of its popular reception helps contextualize the text within the broader discourses of reading and citizenship. Still, questions remain concerning some of Medovarski's interpretations. Her decision to focus solely on Brand's *What We All Long For* (2005) comes at the expense of a more complex analysis that might have also considered the multi-generational *At the Full and Change of the Moon* (1999) or Brand's impressive poetic work. Brand's *thirsty* (2002) and her recent *Love Enough* (2014) include second-generation characters that would have complicated Medovarski's analysis. Similarly, her work also neglects the import of French in Canada, particularly as it is depicted in McWatt's *Out of My Skin*. Yet these are less criticisms of Medovarski's argument and more areas where her ideas could be taken up further.

Settling Down and Settling Up offers an important collection of readings that enriches our understanding of these texts and the relationship between literature and the concept of the nation in Canada and Britain. Yet Medovarski's work is not always attentive to how the terms and texts of nation, race, and citizenship have changed in recent years. Discussions of the recent upheavals in the field of Canadian literature, the ascendancy of Indigenous voices in Canada (who trouble all notions of "settling"), and post-Brexit British conceptions of race are just some of the recent developments that might complicate Medovarski's analysis. Yet, despite these limitations, Medovarski offers insightful criticism, and her focus on second-generation

figures maps new territory in diasporic and national imaginaries; this book is, therefore, a welcome contribution to the field.

Paul Barrett

Works Cited

Clarke, George Elliott. *Odyssey's Home: Mapping African-Canadian Literature*. U of Toronto P, 2002.

Leela Gandhi. *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*. Columbia UP, 2019. Second edition, Pp. x, 275. US $26.00.

Twenty-one years ago, Columbia University Press published the first edition of Leela Gandhi's *Postcolonial Theory*, when postcolonial studies was, in her words, "the domain of a handful of thinkers. It was very much an emergent field" (ix).[1] In this sense, the publication of the book was timely and much needed; indeed, it was released at a time when no such introductory book was available. Since then postcolonial theory has gained tremendous momentum and become a major critical discourse in literary and cultural studies, although it has faced ongoing constructive challenges from such critics as Gayatri Spivak, Timothy Brennan, Dennis Porter, and Lidan Lin ("Legacy"). When Edward Said published *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), two of his most influential works, his goal was to get Western academics to think about European colonial and postcolonial history from the nineteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century and this history's lingering impact on the contemporary Western world and its former colonies. Drawing on Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony, for example, Said argues in *Orientalism* that nineteenth-century European colonialism should be read not only as a historical phenomenon but as a metaphor for racism and oppression in general.

When we look back at the trajectory of postcolonial studies, we see that Said and his fellow cultural critics have clearly achieved their goals. Not only is postcolonial theory a major critical discourse but, because of the global dimension of colonialism and postcolonialism, postcolonial studies has joined internationally oriented fields such as international studies, global studies, and transnational studies. In the present, when imperialistic behavior prevails no less than it used to in some quarters of the world (although carried out in different ways), the second edition of Gandhi's book, with its substantial