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# Review of How Immigrants Impact Their Homelands by Susan Eva Eckstein and Adil Najam (eds.).

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incentives for larger or smaller numbers of children. Demographers, depicted as seeking a role for norms and culture in influencing childbearing, and even a place for contraceptive knowledge, are allowed only a minor part of the variance. The core benchmark model is set out initially: an overlapping-generations general equilibrium growth model with households, differentiated by parental education, determining their respective quantity–quality tradeoffs in childbearing decisions and hence, in aggregate, the size and human capital distribution of the next generation. Consequences for future inequality, growth, and education are spelled out. (Changes in inequality derive from parents' joint decisions on family size and private investment in education.) The basic model yields the familiar Beckerian fertility transition, as more parents opt for child quality. Later chapters set up variants of the model to explore general issues in educational and environmental policy. The analysis is at a high level of formality with no concessions to the less technically attuned reader. Sustainability, for example, is defined by existence of an intertemporal equilibrium with positive population and resources. Somewhat remarkably for this genre, however, de la Croix periodically takes pains to bring the discussion down to earth by introducing real-world data and demonstrating how his modeling serves to illuminate them. Thus his model-based predictions that higher income inequality yields lower overall spending on public schools, a higher share of private schooling, and lower average fertility is illustrated with US state-level and international time-series data. Realism is perhaps stretched in the book's final chapter, which gives a formal account of the casual (flippant) suggestion by Kenneth Boulding in the 1960s for solving overpopulation by setting up marketable rights to procreate. A parallel scheme proposed here would deal with too-low fertility through a market in penalties for not having children, or having fewer than a specified number. David de la Croix is professor of economics at Louvain.—G.McN.

SUSAN EVA ECKSTEIN AND ADIL NAJAM (EDS.)

*How Immigrants Impact Their Homelands*

Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013. 261 p. \$65.00; \$23.95 (pbk.).

The story of the “impact” made by a country's emigrants has most often been told in terms of their effect on places of destination: East Coast US cities being swamped by a million Irish fleeing the Potato Famine in 1840s, to take an early example. By focusing on emigrants' impact on their places of origin, Eckstein and Najam have compiled a completely different set of migration stories: one example being China's post-1978 “economic miracle” largely being funded by emigrants who fled China and Mao during the late 1940s and 1950s (Chapter 3). The editors chose country experts who could “highlight the range of economic, social, and cultural impacts immigrants from and to diverse regions of the world have had in their home countries.” Contrasts abound. There is a clear “good” vs. “bad” dimension in the range of impacts discussed. Chinese and Indian emigrants (Chapter 4) played central roles in the economic awakening of their countries of origin by sending back funds and expertise. Emigrants from El Salvador (Chapter 10) and Mozambique (Chapter 11) stimulated social disasters in their countries by sending back American street gangs and HIV/AIDS. There is also a clear “small numbers” vs. “large numbers” dimension

to these emigrant stories. While it took the actions of just a few highly successful Chinese emigrants to influence the economic future of their homeland, it took the successful channeling of the savings of millions of emigrants from Morocco working in Europe into the Moroccan national bank (Chapter 8) to fund successful Moroccan economic development programs. And money is not always the most powerful remittance. In the case of Turkish emigrants in Europe (Chapter 7), many of whom were oppressed ethnic minorities at home, gaining European state recognition for their groups helped redefine Turkish nationalism at home. Nor is there a necessary constancy in any one country's emigrant impact story. In Cuba the domestic impact of the initial wave of post-Castro emigrants could not be more different from that of the most recent post-1990s wave of emigrants (Chapter 5). The first revolutionary wave of emigrants sent little back to Cuba and called for a break in all ties between the Cuban and US economies. The Cuban state called these emigrants "worms" and denigrated their patriotism. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the changed economic conditions it brought to Cuba in the 1990s there was a shift. Economic emigrants left Cuba for the US to earn money that they could send home to support their families. The Cuban state supported this shift and instituted numerous policies to use these remittances to maintain its political commitment: dollar stores and a dual peso system, for instance. Ironically, these policies have many contradictions built into them: a consumer-oriented culture has flourished and the society's internal stratification system has been upended. Families of Cuban doctors making \$20 to \$30 a month in pesos find themselves placed well below working-class families with emigrants sending back remittances from the US. These diverse "emigrant stories" do not lend themselves to easy generalizations, although the editors attempt to provide some in the two introductory chapters. Historical specificity and not social science generalization is what this volume offers. After reading it, one is likely to view with some skepticism the findings of econometric studies attempting to distill the impact of emigrants' "remittances."—D.H.

**MORTEN JERVEN**

*Poor Numbers: How We are Misled by African Development Statistics and What to Do about It*

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013. 176 p. \$22.95 (pbk.).

Reliable statistics on national income and its growth and composition are essential for development planning and policy analysis by governments and international organizations. This book argues that economic statistics and national income accounts in sub-Saharan Africa are often of very poor quality. Census counts can also be problematic, but selected social, health, and demographic statistics are typically more accurate because they are estimated by the Demographic and Health Surveys, which are conducted about every five years in many African countries. Some users of African statistics are aware of these data problems, but many others including policymakers too often assume the numbers to be more accurate than they are. The errors in income and growth estimates identified in this volume are large enough to compromise many quantitative analyses and international and national policy