STOP RACISM

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Distinctions, dilemmas, and dangers

Sociological approaches to race and nationalism

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Introduction

In the summer of 2018, news broke of South African debates over the African National Congress (ANC) initiative to explore land reform as a form of apartheid-era reparations. Afri-Forum, a South African lobby group supporting white Afrikaner farmers, began circulating a rumor that white farmers would face "genocide" (Chothia, 2018). A British columnist seized upon the debate to make a hyperbolic comment that "The violent, ethnic cleansing of white farmers by armed, black gangs is infuriating & heartbreaking" (in Chothia, 2018), which one South African political scientist saw as an instance of "Afrikaner nationalism" that is "built around farming and language, so they see this as an existential crisis" (in Chothia, 2018). In September 2018, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un received South Korean president Moon Jae-in, for what was described by journalists as the "centerpiece of North Korea's propaganda specialists as they promote an ideology of race-based nationalism that describes North and South Korean people as one nation, temporarily divided" (Klug, 2018). And on the heels of these incidents and many more—from white nationalist rallies in Charlottesville, VA and Washington, DC to the dust-ups over take-a-knee protests against police brutality—Barack Obama broke a tradition of silence about presidential successors to state that the Trump administration appeals to "racial nationalism that's barely veiled, if veiled at all" (in Thiessen, 2018).

What do these intersections of "race" and "nationalism" mean? Alone, these concepts, which contain both a vast sociological literature and pronounced layperson baggage, hold a diffuse and arguably vague denotation to the point of providing as much analytic confusion as clarity. How do they shape each other and create new, *sui generis,* interpretations of phenomena under the umbrella of "racial nationalism"? Terms, methodologies, and theories endemic to each subfield structure a variety of scholarly conversations. Each sociological approach to race and nationalism provides specific strengths and weaknesses. Synthesizing these traditions leaves one with a kaleidoscopic view; at once variegated, attractive, and all-encompassing, and yet, simultaneously fractured, incoherent, and distracting. In what follows, we demonstrate the

sociological utility of synthesizing race and nationalism. We then discuss four patterns of their use in contemporary sociology in order to reveal their assumptions, uses, and import.

Race + nationalism = racial nationalism?

The modern concept of race did not exist in the ancient world (cf. Gossett, [1965] 1997; McCoskey, 2012; Snowden, 1970). People categorized and treated people differently based on their social classes throughout the historical record. However, there was no fixed categorical system we would today call "race" until the modern era (McCoskey, 2012). In the eighteenth century, a dominant Eurocentric "scientific" discourse arose to typologize and rank racial groups. "Race" then signified both essentialism and determinism; asserting a biological reality whereby racial groups possess different characteristics that, in turn, result in varied outcomes (cf. Byrd and Hughey, 2015). By the mid- to late-twentieth century, most scholars settled on a social constructionist approach wherein "race" is the product of social forces with a semi-autonomous status (a "social fact"), neither illusion nor reality, but a socially real category with social effects (see Bonilla-Silva, 1999; Omi and Winant, 1994).

Nationalism is the combination of political, social, and economic systems that promote a country's interests, sovereignty, and self-determinism. Nationalism promotes the establishment of a master status based on characteristics such as language, religion, political ideology, and/or common ancestry (Skitka, 2005). It is marked by an "uncritical acceptance of state political authority and belief in the superiority of one's nation compared to others" (Fozdar et al., 2015:321).

Nationalism can take the shape of a "civic" nationalism (Habermas, 1994; Smith, 1991) whereby participants enact a shared commitment to government, civic institutions, and laws as an ordained destiny. It can also be a form of "ethnonationalism" (Gellner, 1996) in which the basis of the nation-state depends on a shared sense of "belonging" rooted in exclusionary access to shared language, culture, traditions and/or history of a particular people. Either can be "banal" (Billig 1995) or become more pronounced via patriotism, and can easily dovetail with xenophobia, Nativism, and jingoism that defines an outgroup as alien, dangerous, and essentially "other" (Turda and Weindling, 2006).

Together, "racial nationalism" is a doctrine in which the "nation," as an imagined community (cf. Anderson, 1983), is composed of a supposedly homogenous or pure racial or ethnic group. As Turda and Weindling (2006:7) write, this ideology puts forth that "the state was a nation-state, and the ethnic majority therein represented the nation." However, the role of the state is also varied and contested. Racial nationalism is often tied to an idealized racialized vision of the nation-state. It can also take on anti-statist discourses as in contemporary fascist movements in the U.S. and Europe who advance anti-Semitic conspiracy theories about Jewish control of the government (Back, 2002).

Racial nationalism as a political-racial project imagines and endeavors to realize an intensely racialized image of the national character. It elevates a particular racialized group as paragon of the nation. It thereby excludes other groups, envisioning and treating them as unbelonging. The conflation of positive and negative physical, moral, and mental characteristics with ethnic groups is endemic to such projects to rationalize dominant ethnic groups as ideal political subjects. For example, in the mid-nineteenth century U.S., Anglo-American imagery of the famine era Irish immigrant depicted the physical and economic impacts of the famine as a set of distinct and inferior natural characteristics and helped justify the extant ethnic social hierarchy (Knobel, 2001).

Given this usage, the term "racial nationalism" meets one of the aims of social scientific knowledge. It is a means to discover and provide a general relationship of social dynamics and human behavior from various contexts. There exist general principles about the operation and variation of racial nationalisms, but explanations for how and why racial nationalism functions remain underdeveloped.[1] There is not a shortage of explanations but rather they are diffuse and contradictory. Below, we review four dominant explanations.

Analytic distinctions, dilemmas, and dangers

The state vehicle of race

A predominant explanation of racial nationalism, particularly in Westernized industrial democracies, is the "racial formation" perspective (Omi and Winant, 2014). Here, racial formation affects all social spheres, but a primary role is assigned to the political level via the idea that the "racial state" is the principal cause of cohesion and/or conflict in a racialized society. Accordingly, a "racial formation" is the "process by which social, economic, and political forces determine the content and importance of racial categories, and by which they are in turn shaped by racial meanings" (Omi and Winant, 1986:61).

> State → Race → Nationalism

Well explained by the historian George Mosse (1987, 1975, 1964), such formations take place when the state is able to marshal racial mythologies, symbolism, and political liturgy. The state constructs powerful racial concepts, taking the example of German Nazism, by blending a

> view of Christ with the ideal of force. Germans … should model themselves upon the medieval bishops who advanced, sword in hand, against their enemies … By fusing Christ with the life spirit of the Aryan, these men wanted to create a national religion … This was the "race mysticism" … Out of this mixture of the romantic and the occult the Aryan arose … This, however, was not the Darwinian struggle of the survival of the fittest, but rather the good fight of the Aryan who was eternally of the elect
>
> *(Mosse, 1987:210–11)*

Such a "racial formation" can be a powerful tool in the interests of the state. In particular, within this "nation-based paradigm of race," the race concept is a catalyst for the promotion of a blended political and ethno-ontological nationalism, but is not a causal or primary instrument in the creation of that nationalism. Rather, "race" is secondary to the power of the state, which engages in various racial projects to bolster state supportive nationalist sentiment and practice. Alternatively, people can deploy racial projects *qua* nationalism against the state. Omi and Winant (2014:95) write:

> … the nation-based paradigm of race is an important component of our understanding of race: in highlighting "peoplehood," collective identity, it "invents tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger, eds. 1983) and "imagines community" (Anderson, 1983). Nation-based understandings of race provide affective identification: They promise

a sense of ineffable connection within racially identified groups; they engage in "collective representation" (Durkheim 2014). The tropes of "soul," of "folk," of hermanos/hermanas unidos/unidas uphold Duboisian themes. They channel Marti's hemispheric consciousness (Marti 1977 [1899]); and Vasconcelo's ideas of la raza cosmica (1997, Stavans 2011). In communities and movements, in the arts and popular media, as well as universities and colleges (especially in ethnic studies) these frameworks of peoplehood play a vital part in maintaining a sense of racial solidarity, however uneven or partial.

In this explanation, the concept of race is a vehicle marshaled by or against the state toward the fermentation of varied forms of nationalism. The state's monopoly on the legitimated use of physical and symbolic violence is an instrument in contestations over the racialized definitions of the nation and the dispersal of power and resources (see Rosino, 2017a). For instance, Murdocca (2010:369) seeks to illuminate "connections between race, nationalism, and legal violence" via "biopolitical forms of racial governance." Movements work through political efforts to redefine racial categories, have them codified by the state, and produce new racial structures. From this configuration, the racialized image of the nation is shaped by struggles between racial groups which are themselves prefigured by racial categories. For instance, Moreno Figueroa and Tanaka (2016) posit that racism and *mestizaje* becomes a form of nationalism within political contestations in Mexico.

This perspective holds two major limitations. First, "race" becomes a vacant concept that is used or fillable by any political agenda. We are not told why some racial groups (or even particular subgroups) cohere around politically conservative or politically progressive projects. Differing "racial projects" appear as happenstance quarrels over political positions and state power. Second, the spectrum paradigm comes close to race-reduction or conflation in many areas. For instance, the term "racial state" seems to reduce the concept of "race" only to that of the state's ability to mobilize various political agendas, or people's ability to marshal political opposition against the state. It is not clear if race is (or can become) an independent basis of group association and action. The conceptual slippage between race and politics via the state, lends to a reading of racial dynamics as "superstructure" to the materialist "base" of political conflict and state power.

Nationalism builds race

Another branch of scholarship accentuates the causal role of nationalism in constructing or solidifying the salience of racial categories. From this perspective, rising nationalist sentiment corresponds with strengthening ethno-racial boundaries and the significance ascribed to these divisions as markers of authentic national belonging.

Nationalism → Race

For instance, (Cox, 1946:614) wrote:

> The more nationalistic a people, the less will be its tendency to assimilate, the more it will tend to value its culture, especially its non-material culture, its religion. Moreover, when two highly nationalistic groups come into contact, there will be mutual fear, distrust, and intolerance.

From a Marxist standpoint, Cox emphasized how the power of the state can promote and leverage ethnic and racial cleavages and antagonisms for the class interests of capital. From this view, class elites are adept at using ethno-racial prejudices and animus to "dupe" (cf. Hall, 1981) the proletariat against themselves, preventing the formation of cross-racial class solidarity.

The analysis of white nationalism is one prominent area in which this perspective has been applied. For example, Futrell et al. (2006) contend that nationalistic ideals, technology, and state sanctioned "free speech" allows for some lower-socioeconomic whites to find and use the White Power Movement to promote a sense of white racialism and white racial peoplehood:

> U.S. White Power Movement (WPM) activists use music to produce collective occasions and experiences that we conceptualize as the movement's music scene … We emphasize three analytically distinct dimensions of this scene-local, translocal, and virtual-and specify how each contributes to emotionally loaded experiences that nurture collective identity.
>
> *(Futrell et al., 2006:275)*

More contemporary research pushes back against these interpretations. For instance, Flemmen and Savage (2017) find that elites—not the working class—are more likely to embrace racism in service of the national project, while the working class or "disenfranchised" are more likely to engage with a populist nationalism less attached to notions of race.

> We argue against the view that disadvantaged white working class respondents are especially xenophobic, and show that racist views are not strongly associated with social position. In exploring the clustering of different nationalist and racist sentiments amongst economic and cultural elites, and comparing these with "disenfranchised" respondents with little economic and cultural capital, we show that it is actually the elite who are most likely to articulate "imperial racism". By contrast, the "disenfranchised" articulate a kind of anti-establishment nationalism which is not strongly racist.
>
> *(Flemmen and Savage 201: 233)*

Moving away from class-based arguments, others argue that racial identity claims strengthen and solidify based on accelerations of national and patriotic sentiment. For instance, Foucault (1978:149) came to understand the concept of "race" and "racism" as a particularly "modern" trope of national "power/knowledge" that "took shape at this point (racism in its modern, 'biologizing' statist form)." Here, the state's ability to engage in racial group-making (labeling, counting via census data, and classifying resources based on group-need) can intensify with commitment to state patriotism and nationalism (cf. Burchell et al., 1991; Scott, 1998). Whether "nominating into existence" (Goldberg, 1997:29–30) new racial categories and state sanctioned personhood—such as in the Jim Crow U.S. (Davis, 1991), Nazi Germany (Burleigh and Wippermann 1991) and Apartheid South Africa (Geoffrey and Star 1999)—or in official policies of refusing to acknowledge race—such as the racial backlash against France's recent move toward a refusal to count or acknowledge race (Léonard, 2014)—the practices of (non)recognition driven by nationalist sentiment result in investment in racial identities and group commitment. While such nationalism-driven categories can appear non-consequential, they can easily "cascade" (see Kuran, 1998; Laitin, 1998, 2007) to high

levels of racial commitment in response to a variety of intended and unintended consequences of nationalism (cf. Brubaker, 2009). Regardless of intent, both the promotion and stifling of racial concepts in the name of the state and its professed values are mechanisms of what Bourdieu called "symbolic violence":

> …*official naming*, a symbolic act of imposition which has on its side all the strength of the collective, of the consensus, of common sense, … it is performed by a delegated agent of the state, that is, the holder of the *monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence*".
>
> *(Bourdieu 1991[1982]:239) (emphasis in original)*

In contrast to seeing the state as simply a space of contestation over racial meanings, this perspective plots a more straightforward path between nationalism and race. It contends that nationalism, as a belief in the meaningfulness of the nation as a category of social division, escalates racial conflict and domination. While this strain of theorizing racial nationalism has important contributions, it remains unclear as to whether such an amplified commitment to nationalism is instrumental to the escalation and maintenance of racial domination by elites or a form of false consciousness or psychic wages (cf. Du Bois, 1935) picked up by groups who are disadvantaged by their class position. Moreover, the role of the state as a major institution of promoting national identity in amplifying, silencing, and legitimating forms of racial nationalism deserves more fine-tuned attention from social theorists.

The conflation of nationalism and race

Investigations of the intersection of race and nationalism frequently appear to conflate "nationalism" and "race," which muddles both the two previous models of causality (cf. Brubaker, 2009: 22–23, 25–26). The definitions of these concepts so often are so similar that they are exchangeable; "nationalism" and "race" have been described in equally applicable terms, such as vague and opaque allusions to a shared sense of belonging based on fictive kindship ties and imagined communities that bind one to common interests and a collective identity.

Nationalism = Race

For example, Miles (1987:27) emphasizes how both race and nationalism are subject to similar reifications, whereby analogous formative qualities are ascribed to both:

> the ideas of 'race' and 'nation' are both categories of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion. They define certain types of boundary which separate populations into discrete groups which are alleged to be naturally and inevitably distinct … Herein lies a process of reification because the criteria of inclusion/exclusion are made to appear as the determinants of groups' differentiation rather the act of signification, the reproduction of the act of signification, and the ordering of the material world in ways consistent with the act of signification.

While Miles (1987:27) clarifies that the idea of race generally connotes criterion that is "biological, usually phenotypical (e.g. skin colour) but occasionally genetic" while the

nationalism refers to criteria that "is usually cultural (e.g. language)", both cases are similar when "those possessing the characteristics are assumed thereby to form a group by natural means." Hence, when the processes of nationalism and race are thought to overlap and converge, they are rarely disentangled and disambiguated.

These conflations appear both empirically and as an artefact of post-hoc analysis. For example, in an analysis of white Australian meaning-making over the Australian flag, Perera (2007:12) cataloged how the Australian flag became "an emblem of racial particularism and aggression" and that politicians and the media failed to distinguish between "deploying the flag as a celebration of 'harmless' nationalist sentiment and deploying it as an emblem of exclusionary violence." In this same vein, Fozdar, et al. (2015: 332) argued that the Australian flag is a processual site where nationalism and race become intertwined:

> Is it possible to conclude that the Australian flag has come to stand for exclusionary nationalism? Not absolutely, for all uses of the flag are contextual. But it seems clear that with the change in uses of the flag, the growth in public 'ownership' of it, and its increasing importance as a symbol aligned with a certain version of Australian identity, there is a danger that it may be becoming so.

In both empirics and evaluation, the flag is interpreted as a symbol of equal parts race and nationalism, divorced from both its history of "White Australia" policies and the future exclusion of people of color, especially the indigenous.

A pitfall of the combined use of terms like "racial nationalism" is how to distinguish between the two concepts (race *and* nationalism) while illuminating what each term either explains: in terms of not only the causes, processes, and outcomes of behavior, but also under what contexts each term might be a better fit for predicting or explaining the same phenomena. For example, Brubaker (2009:24–5) writes that there is an:

> enormous range and heterogeneous causal texture of the phenomena subsumed under the broad rubrics of race, ethnicity, and nationalism … This heterogeneity requires the conjoint use of theoretical resources drawn from a variety of traditions and warrants skepticism about any project of constructing a single unified theory of ethnicity, race, and nationalism … the emerging field [that integrates the concepts] treats race, ethnicity, and nationalism as belonging to a single integrated domain.

Brubaker (2009:26) explains that the integration of these terms does not

> mean that one should treat race, ethnicity, and nationalism as an undifferentiated domain. Distinctions can be drawn on a number of dimensions … grouped for expository purposes into clusters focused on categorization and membership, social organization, and political action.

These concepts rest on sociological assumptions concerning their ability to be descriptive or explanatory. One school of thought sees value in reporting how people's "folk concepts" (about race or nationalism) reflect and give rise to human action and order. A contrasting perspective views such concepts as too vague and murky to serve as precise analytic concepts for sociological explanations (e.g. Alexander 2016; Anderson 1999; Brubaker, 2009; Duneier 1999; Newman 1999; Wacquant 2002).

The first school of thought portrays the specific activities and categories of meaning as providing thick description from which the deeper social relationships and emotions can come through. Fozdar et al. (2015) examined specifically those Australians who fly flags from their cars on Australia Day to understand their perspectives on nationalism and race, finding that flag flyers were more likely to hold racist and exclusionary perspectives of nationalism. Understanding the context-specific meanings that intertwine notions of race and national identity for specific actors can reveal such important insights. From this second perspective, the categories and ideas themselves are not as essential as their analytically generalizable features and processes. For instance, drawing on case studies ranging from the Nazi state to the South African Apartheid Regime, Van Vuuren (2005:60) points out that the common feature of these cases and their escalation into totalitarian violence is "the idealistic self-images of the nation and normative assumptions about its superiority are turned into natural and historical facts."

As Meer (2018:3) writes, "Perhaps the simplest way to put this is to say that social scientists tend to be interested in the dynamic and relational properties of race as both a historical idea and social category." Both perspectives have sociological import but may prove difficult to synthesize while avoiding such conflations as treating race and nationalism as interchangeable. The distinction of these two concepts must be clarified so that precisely what type of features of social reality, relationships between groups, or social processes scholarship seeks to understand when examining "racial nationalism" can truly be unearthed.

The reduction of race into nationalism

Unlike the second paradigm, scholarship of this ilk does not describe race as a phenomenon caused by nationalism. Rather, adherents tend to advocate that nationalism is a larger, more encompassing, (and often better) explanatory concept than race. The race category is simply viewed as a blunt and unsophisticated concept.

NATIONALISM

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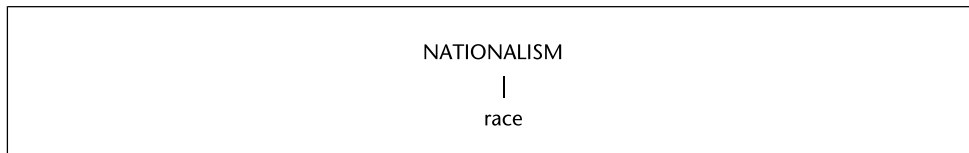
race

It is popular to reduce or decant "race" into concepts related to the state and nationalism; "race" exists as a second-order concept that lessens in explanatory strength in relation to notions such as a country's "values" (Miah, 2015) or notions of national "sovereignty" (Ware, 2008). While not seen as the direct offspring of nationalism, race is understood as an intellectual stepchild that does not allow its wielder any particular power not already found in the concept of statehood, colonialism, and nationalism. Under this paradigm, the privileging of race (rather than nationalism) presents a serious analytic limitation. Meer (2018:15) points to this trend with an example from how post-colonial scholarship has dealt with the intersection of race and nationalism:

> What I feel is observable across a number of academic outlets are the ways in which race concerns "have metabolized into the twin projects of diaspora identity and something called *post-/de-/colonial/-sim/-ity*" (Bhatt 2016, 398, emphasis in the original). That

is to say, that race scholarship on its own terms is missing. Is this a problem? Yes … since the portrayal of race scholarship can be at some variance from how race scholars conceive it … When, as I have suggested, post-colonial scholarship reduces race to affect or experiential dimensions, it also reduces its role in our understanding of origins and reproductions.

Sites for this particular scholarly logic can be found among attempts to measure how race is "declining in significance" (Wilson, 1978) or amidst those that insist that the using of "race" edges too close to biological essentialism and determinism (Berbrier and Cooper 2001; Gilroy 2000; Loveman 1999). In the former, race matters (and is a real social force), but matters less than nationalism and that state (and their influence over forces like political economy and labor markets). In the latter, race does not (and should not) matter as an intellectual concept among social scientists because it neglects a truly social constructionist approach to how politics and statehood *qua* nationalism form and direct human activity.

Yet, Hanchard and Chung (2004:322) contend that "both constructivist and essentialist arguments operate in arenas of politics in which the race concept in some form is already utilized to serve broader political aims of promoting racial hierarchy, racial egalitarianism, or 'race-neutral' political objectives." So also, Fields (2003:1400) makes a lucid point concerning the misstep of reifying the concepts of the state or nationalism above that of race while relying on the mantra that "race is a social construction":

> identifying race as a social construction does nothing to solidify the intellectual ground on which it totters. The London Underground and the United States are social constructions, so are the evil eye and the calling of spirits from the vastly deep, and so are murder and genocide. All derive from the thoughts, plans, and actions of human beings living in human societies.

Hence, if we accept the notion that "nationalism" and "race" are both products and producers of human activity, then appeals to social constructionism mean little without attention to why and how people actually understand and use both. That is, *a priori* assumptions that "race" is somehow better nested under the umbrella of "nationalism" (or other social forces) may hinder efforts at analysis and illumination. Meer (2018:1–2) again contends:

> race appears to have been traded downwards for sociologies of "development" or "global sociology" (as though race were not central to each) … [some] deem race as marginalized to 'an epiphenomenon to class, or subsumed under ethnicity, or collapsed within what, for some, are wider projects such as cosmopolitanism or social justice and human rights'.

By not treating race and nationalism as variant concepts that may have heterogenous relations across contexts, we foreclose on our ability to distinguish when some groups are constituted more by race or more by nationalism. Kumar (2006:4), for example, contends that English identity and white racial ethnicity were co-constructed via the global imperial relations of the Crown, writing that "it is from the empire that they get their sense of themselves, their identity." Moreover, Berbrier's (1998) examination of "contemporary white supremacist discourse" leads us to consider how varied forms of white pan-ethnicity (based on defined nation-states or imagined nationalities similar to diasporic identities) exist. At times, such discourse aims to present

whites as a "pan-ethnic" community of European descendants, whose ethnicity is equivalent to that of established ethnic and minority communities … If indeed there is an emergent pan-ethnic phenomenon among "European-Americans," then it may prove important to recognize when this phenomenon is rooted in white supremacy and when it is not.

(Berbrier 1998:498)

The automatic subsumption of race to nationalism also disallows us from seeing the undulating meeting grounds of race and nationalism. For instance, in Virdee's (2014) examination of working class whites in England, we see moments in which this group both adopted or rejected racial or national belonging as well as when race was used to drive and exacerbate nationalism: "Each time the boundary of the nation was extended to encompass ever more members of the working class, it was accompanied and legitimized through the further racialization of nationalism that prevented another more recently arrived group from being included" (Virdee, 2014: 5).

Perhaps most salient to this trend, the reduction of race ignores the way that race has constructed both nation and nationalism as well as the academic disciplines we use to understand these relations. For example, Winant (2015: 2177) emphasizes that:

> nascent social science disciplines [were] core components of running the empires and managing the natives, the slavocracies, and the depredations fundamental to the rise of Europe and the development of the USA, but they were also vital explicators and rationalizers of these systems.

Similarly, Go (2018:446) argues that while post-colonial theory "sees social relations, social structures and institutions as determinant," the theory would help expand our "analytic scope to see those relations, structures and institutions as imperial and hence global, thereby overcoming the methodological nationalism and U.S.-centric (or metropolitancentric) tendencies in some currents of existing sociologies of race."

Conclusion

We outlined four dominant approaches to the sociological intersection of race and nationalism. We drew attention to their analytic shortfalls and implicit theoretical assumptions. Given this chapter's place in the *Routledge International Handbook of Contemporary Racisms*, we have been attentive to the ways in which the race concept has been muted as only an empty signifier or vehicle for nationalism, relegated to secondary variable, conflated with nationalism, or reduced below its explanatory potential. These types are not exhaustive. Nor are any singular one or all of these paradigms inherently flawed. We refrain from a *coup de main* wherein we pronounce one approach correct. The approaches sketched above are not strict types with sharp boundaries. Any heuristic is necessarily troubled, as Weber famously argued, by the imprecision of the categories of race and nationhood (1978[1922]:395, 925). Hence, we advocate for specifying the causes, processes, and outcomes of these terms within their relevant contexts.

In particular, sociology would be well-served by redoubling its efforts to specify the major dimensions of how race—as ideologies, identities, interests, institutions, and interactions (Hughey, 2015)—may overlap, co-vary, or ossify in relation to nationalism within particular social relations. Otherwise, we reify and preclude what we attempt to describe as "racial" as a specific class of people, rather than an action, state, occurrence, or process that can explain why and how human action and order occur as they do.

Race interacts with nationalism in various forms and magnitudes. First, "race" manifests as an *ideologically* laden racial classification system. For example, the development of "multi-raciality" in the wake of the 2000 U.S. Census (that allowed for respondents to select more than one race) is particularly double-edged. On the one hand, the rise of a "multiracial" cat-egory has legitimated a positive sense of national belonging (*qua e pluribus unum*) among many self-identified multiracial people, which is itself an ideological upheaval of the purity of whiteness which has historically manifested in legal and *de facto* practices such as the "one-drop rule" or "colorism." While on the other,

> both the scientization and politicization of multiraciality in which multiracial people are frequently framed as a utopian blank slate from which actual racist experiences and unequal histories have been scrubbed, multiraciality is increasingly used to signal both the "end of racism" … and to advocate for "color-blind" racist law and policy.
>
> *(Gardner and Hughey, 2019:659)*

Second, racial *identities* rest upon us/them distinctions and "otherness." Consider how centrally racial identities figured in the varied projects of European colonialism. For instance, binary demarcations of morality, health, education, and civilization mapped onto one another to construct a rather robust notion of both belonging and alien national-racial sub-jects, such as within both France and Holland:

> European nation-states were engaged in programmes of liberal reform to inculcate ideals of civic responsibility as part of a national project. There was a great focus on 'proper' upbring-ing, schooling and health, combined with widespread fears of (racial) degeneration. In France and Holland, such programmes targeted the poor and 'internal aliens' at home, but also poor whites in their colonies, along with the native population of the colonies to some extent (or more likely a privileged elite of them), and, to varying extent, the colony-born whites, the mixed-bloods offspring of white colonials and natives. 'Proper' (and 'white') sexual morality was restrained and continent, taking place within the family. There were fears that the colo-nial environment would contaminate and weaken Europeans, especially the poorer men who might live in concubinage with native women. Racial divisions corresponded with sexual-moral ones, such that Asians in the Dutch Indies were seen as licentious, indulgent, sexually uncontrolled and prone to prostitution.
>
> *(Wade, 2001:850)*

Simply put, "Racial identities continue to be central to imaginings of the nation and its des-tiny" (Wade, 2001:862).

Third, racial *interests* are pursued and protected via group formation and mobilization. Debates over ethnic, racial, and religious "superdiversity" (Vertovec, 2007) in England recently came to a fore in June 2016 referendum to support British withdrawal from the Euro-pean Union, known informally as "Brexit" (a portmanteau of "British" and "Exit"). Concern that BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) people—particularly immigrants—were unfairly hurting British-born whites through their usurpation of resources and jobs, were a large signal that a White nationalist sentiment was a large part, even core, of Brexit support. As Emejulu (2016) points out,

> In this seemingly "post-race" era, Brexit shows us how whiteness, as a power relation, oper-ates in ways to cast itself as both a "victim" and an "innocent" simultaneously. An unstated

campaign strategy of the Leave campaign was to re-imagine Britain and Britishness (but really Englishness) as white in order to make particular kinds of claims to victimhood … Thus we see whiteness operating as victim—the white working class is being held hostage in their own country by migrants. Any critique of this victimhood further re-enforces a victim status through fulminations that the critic is "the real racist" … whiteness, even in discussions about racism and anti-racism, can intrude, appropriate and colonise these spaces in order to re-enforce an identity of victimhood, whilst at the same time seemingly de-prioritising the interests and experiences of people of colour.

Fourth, racialized *institutions* constrain and enable racialized group relations to social space and resources. All institutions are racialized (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Feagin, 2006). Moreover, all social institutions such as the economy, the education system, the legal system, or the family serve this latent racial function. One such racialized institution is the complex bureaucracy that deals in issues of immigration and therefore disperses resources such as access to legal rights and status in the United States. As Ngai points out, "the Immigration Act of 1924 constructed a vision of the American nation that embodied certain hierarchies of race and nationality" (2015:23). This policy also produced new institutional mechanisms for mass deportations of those deemed to not to have the proper status or recognition. The new institutional apparatus "constituted undocumented immigrants as criminals" and advanced the nativist vision of racial nationalism via the "goal of expelling immigrants living illegally in the country" (Ngai, 2015:61).

Finally, through racialized *interactions* people engage in boundary maintenance, networks of accountability, and the material and symbolic struggles over, or cooperative endeavors toward, a shared future (Rosino, 2017b). Consider the following account of a British migrant in France:

> Algerians, Moroccans and Tunisians—Maghrebis—and Africans make up the bulk of France's estimated 6.5 million immigrants and they do not appear to have things as easy as I do. It is almost impossible to spend a Saturday afternoon downtown here without seeing some of them—individually or in groups—undergoing random ID checks by the police or riot police, and those without adequate ID have been known to be taken into custody with sometimes fatal results. I see at least one such check a week, although I have never heard of a Brit being checked in that manner.
>
> *(Cosgrove, 2010)*

Alongside ideologies, identities, institutions, and interests, everyday social interactions interconnect with social dynamics of racial nationalism. They provide micro-spaces wherein people continually enact and reshape their sense of the relationship between race and nation.

Note

1 In *The Nature of Social Science*, Homans (1967: 20–21) pens that "when the propositions state relationships between variables, the nature of the relationship, the function, is not very specific … in social science, the greater the generalization, the less its explanatory power."

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