Part I

Empire, Nation, Diaspora

We group the terms empire, nation, and diaspora because the articulation of each as recent fields of study has often been explicitly or implicitly constituted in relation to the other terms. During the 1980s and 1990s, long-standing critical perspectives on the use of US power around the globe converged with new social movements that opposed the reinvigoration of empire under the Reagan administration. This convergence produced a remarkable range of new work foregrounding US empire globally as well as questions of how the nation was figured as an imperial space through the overlapping dynamics of conquest, slavery, Indian removals, and immigration. Theoretically, these developments have been marked by debates over the multifaceted nature of power relationships, the relationship between power and culture, and the character of the globalization of capitalism. As forced and voluntary migrations were driven by the imperatives of mercantile, industrial, and multinational capital, they have often collided with the dictates of nationalisms. Much of this scholarship has called into question the meaning, viability, and political and cultural efficacy of the nation. Contingencies wrought by multinational capitalism, American imperial expansion, and immigration, along with the salience of race and gender ideologies in constituting nationalist discourse and in the making of the modern American nation, have undermined the very coherence and stability of the category of nation. Many of the articles that we have included in this analytic could also be productively read through our second analytic, "State, Citizenship, Rights," yet we note a productive tension in methodologies, as much of the work that is included in this first analytic takes the subjectivities of displaced and/or non-elite people as its entry point, whereas post-Foucauldian understandings of the state have tended to focus on the relationship between law and society and technologies of discipline.

Scholars have probed the reshaping of gender and race in the imperial arena with the emergence of the United States as a global power, as well as the myriad ways in which the politics of US continental and overseas expansion, conflict, and resistance have shaped American culture. The relational study of empire, nation, and diasporas has fundamentally altered our conversations organized through older analytics such as race and gender. These areas of inquiry have also effected the displacement of an older Americanist paradigm that was bound up with civic republicanism. Nikhil Singh, for instance, examines the ways in which race is articulated within a critique of nation, and offers an understanding of racial formation as rethought through the formation of empire and through diaspora. Singh exemplifies the displacement of an older American paradigm that was bound up with civic republicanism. In his critique of the traditional debate between liberalism and republicanism, and in his analysis of the performative effects of representation, Singh examines the ways in which the "idea of American universalism, and the moral and political primacy it attributes to individual freedom and civic egalitarianism," is implicated in creating and sustaining racial division, Singh argues that "liberalism as a theory of market society and democratic–republicanism as a theory of political society" both deny their own limitations and collude in the perpetuation of racial inequality

by locating the problem in the other paradigm. Amy Kaplan explores the spatial and political interdependence of home and empire and considers rhetorically how the meaning of the domestic relies structurally on its intimate opposition to the notion of the foreign. Examining the ways in which race and gender were integral to nineteenth-century projects of manifest destiny/imperialism and how the sentimental ethos was underwritten by and abetted imperial expansion, Kaplan revises older (and predominantly) feminist accounts of the ideology of domesticity, contesting the idea of separate spheres by showing that the boundary was both ideological and functional for the state/nation. Kaplan uses the feminist analytic to rethink older categorical distinctions and, in the process, unsettles the first set of feminist optics. Thus, in Singh and Kaplan, race and gender are reread through new analytics.

Challenging older distinctions between continental and extra-continental expansion, scholars have increasingly highlighted location and displacement in a new mapping of American cultural studies. José Saldívar explores "frontier modernism" and the irrevocably global *and* local character of US imperialism. He outlines a beginning genealogy of US–Mexico border studies and stresses the need to put such comparative work in a global context. Focusing on imperialism as a subject-constituting practice, as well as the imaginative work of transnational identity as a response to empire, Saldívar poses the critical question: what happens if US imperialism is displaced from its location in a national imaginary to its proto-imperial role in the Americas and the rest of the world? Brent Edwards reads a complex black diaspora as shaped by cultural practices of translation across national, linguistic, and political boundaries. Drawing on Stuart Hall's theoretical elaboration of the concept-metaphor of articulation, and insisting on a focus on the ways in which discourses of internationalism travel – are translated and debated – in transnational contexts

marked by difference, for Edwards the discourse of diaspora articulates difference. Diaspora does not imply identity but calls for the examination of specific and strategically joined structures, the non-naturalizable linkages between disparate societal elements. Edwards shows the importance of aesthetic/cultural production in producing intellectual and political change; the cultures of black internationalism can only be seen in translation. In drawing our attention to internal empires and diasporas in the tragic intersections of Indian removal and the western expansion of slavery, Tiya Miles challenges older categories of ethnic studies by showing the profoundly relational and intersectional histories of Native Americans and African Americans. Racial formation within the Americas was constituted through these intertwined histories and cannot be grasped by attempting to bring together discrete building blocks of what have often been presumed to be distinct ethnic identities.

Exploring the collaborations between Okinawan women activists and East Asian–US international women's networks of anti-base activists, Yoko Fukumura and Martha Matsuoka argue for the inefficacy of national understandings and responses to globalized projects of empire. For these activists, a cohesive resistance against the US military entails a global redefinition of national security. As military violence is systemic, wreaking havoc in ostensibly civilian spaces, the story of the military is a story of sexual violence, environmental degradation, and the violent creation of multiple diasporas in the wake of profound social and economic disruptions. The broader problem of the military points to methodological challenges faced by Americanists: how to take on the scope and hubris of US hegemonic projects without reproducing the hubris and/or totalizing logics. The transnational responses to US empire of anti-base activists suggest ways of responding to this challenge through participation in collaborative transnational modes of knowledge production and critique.

1

Rethinking Race and Nation

Nikhil Pal Singh

[. . .]

American Race/American Racism

No single argument could possibly condense the full scope of American "multiracism" over centuries of continental expansion, racial slavery, imperial conquest, and international labor migration.[1] It is crucial to begin with the recognition, however, of the extent to which a normalizing claim to whiteness preceded the assertion that US nationality and citizenship transcend allegedly prior differences of kinship, ethnicity, race, or nationality. Beginning in the early republic, whiteness was invested both literally and symbolically with the attributes of property. If property rights were the foundation of liberal theories of political order, property-in-oneself was the basis for conceptualizing republican government and political democracy. One owned oneself insofar as one was white and male. Self-ownership, in turn, was a cornerstone of both the market contract and the social contract. It signified at least a potential, if not actual, access to Indian lands and African slaves. And it underwrote the most dramatic feature of the American Revolution, a "universal" right to participation in politics.[2]

In this founding liberal-republican schema, the development of an order of difference with respect to phenotype, affect, intelligence, and what W. E. B. Du Bois called "gross morphology" was codified as racial difference and legally constituted as an obstacle to both market activity and the exercise of citizenship rights for those marked as "other" by their color. Here, the incipient scientific racism of

Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785) emerges as at least as important as the nonracial, revolutionary lines he authored in 1776 [. . .] The two Jeffersons suggest a complicated history of interdependence between race and nation, racism and nationalism, as ways of imagining kinship, community, economic activity, and political society. This is not to say that the American civic-nation had a racial basis at its inception. Rather, racial definitions enabled the very process of thinking about US national belonging as both a normative and a universal condition.

In the US context, the ideal national subject has actually been a highly specific person whose universality has been fashioned from a succession of those who have designated his antithesis, those irreducibly *non-national* subjects who appeared in the different guises of slave, Indian, and, at times, immigrant.[3] The capaciousness of American nationalism was due not to its inclusiveness, but to its ability to accommodate significant national, class, and religious diversity among its settler populations. Here, the forging of national subjectivity, famously described by Hector St. John Crevecoeur as the "melting" of men of all nations and ranks into a "new race of men . . . an American race," was derived from a carefully delimited heterogeneity, or what Crevecour qualified as that "mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans and Swedes."[4]

Of course, it's not enough to stop here. The power of American nationalism, for its defenders, is that it has enabled the "widening of the circle of we."[5] The contours of the national "we" have been constantly recomposed as those previously excluded have asserted their own claims

to be a nothing-in-particular American, or true national subject. This is where things get interesting, because the process of reshaping the boundaries of nation has also involved rearticulations of race. This process allowed for the incorporation of not-quite-white, but not-quite-not-white Irish, Jewish, and Southern and eastern European immigrants into the canons of whiteness through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, making them Americans first in a legal and then in a cultural sense.[6] The question remains, how does this process work – or does it – for groups that have been more durably caught within the world-system of racial marks, particularly peoples of African descent?

If whiteness became the privileged grounding and metaphor for the empty abstraction of US citizenship, blackness presented an apparent contradiction and a fixed limit against which it was enacted and staged, beginning with the consolidation of a slave regime based on African origins and the codification of racial rules of descent. While other racialized groups have since been similarly subordinated, and in the case of American Indians violently expelled from the nation's borders, blacks presented the anomaly of an exclusion that was at once foundational to and located within the polity. Despite the wish of iconic US presidents like Jefferson and Lincoln that black slaves be emancipated and then removed ("beyond the reach of mixture," as Jefferson put it), an enduring black presence within the nation-state has led to an extraordinary cultural and political dynamic.[7] In this dynamic, African – and later Negro, black, and African American – struggles against civil death, economic marginalization, and political disenfranchisement accrued the paradoxical power to code all normative (and putatively universal) *redefinitions* of US national subjectivity and citizenship. Lurking within the original conceptions of American freedom, providing the underlying logic of the brutal civil war of national unification, unsettling the fragile legitimacy of the US defense of the free world after World War II, and inhabiting contemporary justifications for dismantling the welfare-state is the question of the status of black existence: the problem of race in the United States.

From this standpoint, then, comes another reading of America's universalism: it is built around an exception, leading to torturous but creative efforts to accommodate the racism internal to the nation-state's constitution. For most of US history this problem was simply resolved by defining black people apart from any representation of the national interest. At the delicate intersection of public opinion formation and public policy formulation

– national sovereignty and state institution building – was a broad racial consensus based on black exclusion. This may be the most succinct definition of racism as a social and institutional fact: the construction of black people as subjects proscribed from participating in the social state in which they live, and that part of the public whose relation to the public is always in radical doubt.

Prior to slave emancipation and political enfranchisement that culminated in the constitutional revisions of the Reconstruction era, the vast majority of blacks in the United States were excluded from the nation-state as a guarantor of natural rights and political participation. The slave was not merely the other of the republican citizen, but was the symbol of what was incommensurable with political society, a representative of a boundary to national belonging, a zone where the radical Enlightenment ideal of "the rights of man and citizen" was irrelevant. This was evident in the evasions of the Constitution, which refused to refer directly to slavery even while including the "three-fifths" clause that rendered slaves as part persons, part property.[8] Senator Henry Clay was more straightforward in 1850, pronouncing, in response to rising sectional tensions, that slavery was "an exception (resulting from stern but inexorable necessity) to the general liberty in the U.S."[9] The paradox of a parenthetical black presence – never absent but never fully present – was best captured by the antebellum blackface minstrel show, a popular form that underlined the creation of a national popular culture whose basic grammar and content was predicated on what was excluded from that culture.[10]

By making ex-slaves into citizens and enfranchising black men, the Civil War and Reconstruction era established a new cultural and political trajectory. Of paramount import was the augmentation of a universalizing nationalist imperative in which the masses of black people – no longer located outside the US nation-state, its imagined community, public sphere, and political society – entered America's shared, if fiercely contested symbolic, social, and political space. At the same time, freeing the slaves also freed racism as a constituent element of national popular politics.[11] In the South the attack on Reconstruction was swift and immediate after the northern armies withdrew in 1877. It led to the organization of new segregated institutions, white supremacist ideologies, legal rationalizations, extralegal violence, and everyday racial terror, which elaborated black racial difference as the basis of a new order of unequal social relations. While the severe policing of racial boundaries was already a fact of life in many northern states where free

blacks lived, the end of Reconstruction led to the nation-alization of a new racial regime in which blacks were reconstructed as "anti-citizens . . . enemies rather than members of the social compact."

There's a difference between being socially unintelligible and being society's enemy.[12] As enemies of a newly emerging liberal-nationalist order, blacks virtually had no room to maneuver politically, but their collective situation could at least be grasped as one subject to politics and to their collective influence as political subjects. Nothing can better explain the intensification of white supremacist activity during this period – lynching, segregation, "scientific" racism, the white riot, and pogrom – than the real possibility of black participation in the common social and institutional life of the nation-state. As Senator William Windon of Minnesota put it in a telling admission in 1879: "the black man does not excite antagonism because he is black but because he is a *citizen.*"[13]

Periods of democratic upheaval, in which an activated citizenry threatened to overturn or radically reorder governmental powers in the name of civic-egalitarian principles, such as Jacksonian democracy, the Populist movement of the 1890s, or the labor movement of the early twentieth century, not only failed to challenge racial hierarchies, but often heightened them, succumbing to explicit "master race" appeals that helped to shape the future course of democratic expansion. At the same time, it was often the guardians of established property relations who paternalistically presented themselves as the true champions of defenseless blacks and Indians, in the context of an overall defense of social order and as a counterweight to socially disruptive political challenges from below. The political divide between northern and southern elites that led to the Civil War complicates this argument, but the compromises that led to a segregationist South after the Civil War reverted to the pattern. Once the radically democratic hopes of interracial populism were undermined, segregation was advanced by both northern industrialists and rising New South boosters as a more moderate form of white supremacy, a check on the "democratic" excesses of the white rabble and a political solution that would guarantee the orderly succession of property relations in the South that liberals believed would be the true source of social progress.[14]

It might seem puzzling or contradictory that proposals to ameliorate racial subordination have been tied to the reinforcement of hierarchies of property, and democratic social movements tied to the reproduction of hierarchies of race. The destruction of the fleeting experiments with interracial politics during Reconstruction

and the end of interracial populism and trade union organization during the 1880s and 1890s led to the wholesale exclusion of blacks from participation in the egalitarian struggles that were beginning to reshape the republic at the end of the nineteenth century. The attitude of American Federation of Labor (AFL) founder Samuel Gompers was typical when he said that blacks did not need to be afforded trade union protection because they had "no understanding of the philosophy of human rights." At the 1901 convention of the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA), President Carrie Chapman Catt divorced the suffrage movement of white women from the "hasty and ill-advised" enfranchisement of black men, which, she said, had led to "inertia in the growth of democracy" and "the introduction into the body politic vast numbers of irresponsible citizens." One time populist-egalitarians like Tom Watson were irresistibly drawn to herrenvolk ideas. Even the incipient socialist movement had little interest in racial inequality. As Eugene Debs, otherwise one of the most radical political thinkers of his generation, put it, "we have nothing special to offer the Negro."[15]

What historians and theorists have represented as a deep-seated conflict between liberalism and civic-republicanism in American political life has actually been mediated through a series of negotiated compromises around racial boundaries. That these have been forged at the expense of black equality is ignored by partisans on both sides of the debate.[16] To understand this more fully we need to unpack a series of oppositions inscribed in the wider debate surrounding liberalism and republicanism in US political thought: the market versus the state, the private and the public, the defense of liberty and the goal of equality. If the ideal inhabitants of the nation-state are citizen-subjects, abstract, homogeneous, and formally equivalent participants in a common civic enterprise, then the ideal inhabitants of the market are private individuals endowed with an unknowable range of different attributes and engaged in competition and personal advancement. The principles that apply to the market and those that apply to the nation-state, in other words, are in direct conflict much of the time. While the market presumes the atomistic freedom of individual competition and advantage, the state presumes equality with respect to nationality and the forging of a common communal life through politics. The market derives its theories from eighteenth-century liberalism, while the modern political state is an achievement of democratic revolutions and republican theories of good government. Both the state and the market posit an abstract individual subject, but

within the market that abstraction opens the way for the play of differences, while the political state is organized around the principle of sameness.

While these two realms are imagined as separable, they are deeply intertwined. The political state not only literally underwrites social faith in the market (in the form of money), it creates the basis of accumulation, stabilizing market exchange in a sphere of civic order and preventing the war of all against all. What needs to be grasped is how in the United States the market and state combinatory (i.e., the capitalist state) constitutes and maintains racial inequality. This is most easily perceived in relation to the operations of the state, in which racial exclusion has taken the force of juridical sanction. In this case, alleged sensuous particularities of black embodiment (odor, unsightliness, sexual excess) have provided a variety of rationales for denying abstract equality and political participation within the national community. But antiblack racism has also operated at the level of market activity and so-called private life, where blacks have been prevented both formally and informally from acting as proprietors of their own capacities, sellers of their labor-power, and sensuous participants within exchange relations. In these cases, racial stigma has been applied to blacks as a group, preventing them from being perceived as qualitatively differentiated individuals.

Indeed, what makes racial ascription and antiblack racism so powerful and so difficult to undo is that it has possessed this double optic, working its pernicious effects, both as an inscription of embodied particularity and as an abstract universality. In the process, it has helped to suture the otherwise problematic split between the public and the private that characterizes the development of modern bourgeois society. Thus, on the one hand, racial differentiation has underwritten the abstract egalitarianism that animates the idea of the democratic public, providing the latter with a particular, putatively "real" sensuous precedent, the idea of different skin and physical embodiment. On the other hand, racial differentiation is itself a form of abstraction, providing what is imagined to be an infinitely differentiated realm of private individuality and sensuous embodiment with a normative framework (that is, whiteness).

Liberalism as a theory of market society and democratic-republicanism as a theory of political society collude in the perpetuation of racial inequalities by denying their own theoretical limitations and by locating the cause of racial division in the other theory. Thus, liberalism would understand racial inequality to be the result of state interference with otherwise neutral market principles, suggesting that such discrimination would disappear if the market were only allowed to operate according to those principles. The liberal's answer to racism, in other words, is to remove the barriers to market freedoms and private individuality. On the other hand, democratic-republican, civic-nationalist, and communitarian arguments understand racial inequality as a subset of the inequalities generated by the market itself, which has engendered competition and distinction among a range of excluded groups and prevented their unified political pursuit of the common good. The answer for the republican theorist is removing the barriers to democratic politics and public power.

In each instance, to combat racial ascription, it is merely necessary to affirm the universality and rightness of the original theory and to bring it into line with practice, just as in both cases, the specific fate of racially aggrieved populations causes no special alarm within the terms of the theory. Since these frameworks of theory, social action, and institutional development are in practice interdependent rather than oppositional, each provides the other with a kind of plausible deniability around the historical persistence of racism and the problems it poses for producing the good society. The irony is that even when liberals and civic republicans take racism into account, it does not contradict their own fundamental premises, but instead reconfirms their universal validity. In each case, racism winds up being little more than an aberration of, or deviation from, what is otherwise a fundamentally sound liberal or civic-nationalist project, rather than something that has shaped and animated US society at every turn.[17]

Racism and the reproduction of racial hierarchy are blind spots for the forms of liberal and democratic political theory and practice that are said to constitute American nationhood. What needs to be recognized is that white supremacy is neither the essence of US nationality nor its antithesis, but an ever-active ideological formation that has structured market behavior and social movements within the constitution and governance of the US nation-state. More precisely, racial classification has provided what Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham terms a "metalanguage" of American culture and politics. As such, it has operated as a durable medium of symbolic constitution, cutting across conventional boundaries between the economic and the political, the private and the public, with the power to shape both the dispensation of value and the formation of groups.[18]

To put this a different way, racism (here, more specifically antiblack racism) and conceptions of racial

hierarchy have provided decisive symbolic and cultural elements for creating hegemonic political and economic arrangements throughout US history. The liberal-republican antithesis in American politics, in this sense, converges around a two-pronged acceptance of racial exclusion – the uses of blackness as a market differential (for example, housing markets, labor markets, capital investment), and as an index of political community (for example, residential segregation, civic participation, public investment). Just as the question of black employment (including the deployment of black strikebreakers, practices of "lily-white" trade unionism, the protection of occupational sinecures) has been integral to more than a century of conflicts between labor and capital, the question of black social and political participation has been a flashpoint in struggles over the proper scope of government authority (including debates about federalism, state's rights, and private entitlements to discrimination).

This approach can help explain the steady reproduction of racial ascription in US political culture across time. Often this has been understood too simply as a function of an invariant need to constitute a compelling collective identity for the nation. In other words, racism is often conceived as a distortion arising from the symbolic identity requirements of civic-egalitarian dynamics and democratic sovereignty. Racism, in this view, provides specific cultural content to an otherwise empty democratic universalism, enabling the forms of boundary-drawing and fusions of past and present crucial to fashioning the story of a particular national "we."[19] But this is not the whole picture. Racism has also been central to the constitution and defense of material investments and market inequalities (in the United States and globally). This begins with the world trade in black skin and includes imperialist land grabs, quests for markets and raw materials, use of racist ideologies and practices to drive down the price of labor at home and abroad, and phenomena of property devaluation and residential segregation tied to concentrations and population movements of peoples of color. Just as racism fills the empty universalism of democratic theory, it provides an otherwise abstract capitalist market with one of its most reliable mechanisms of value-differentiation.

Insofar as liberalism insists on divorcing universal questions of individual rights from a historical context of unequal property relations and what Karl Marx termed primitive capital accumulation, it is not only ill-equipped to combat white supremacist constructions of peoplehood, but invested in their reproduction. Recent scholars have taken this further, suggesting that it is not

possible to separate the core ideas of liberalism from the milieu of imperial expansion in which they were fashioned. Uday Singh Mehta thus argues that a politically exclusionary impulse can be found *within* the "theoretical framework of liberalism" itself. This is not, he suggests, because liberal ideals (i.e., universal suffrage, individual freedom, self-determination, etc.) are themselves fictitious or hypocritical, or even because they are practically difficult to implement. Rather, liberal universalism has been based upon a distinction between "anthropological capacities and the conditions for their political actualization." Behind the liberal notion of universal human capacity has been a thicket of delimiting "social credentials" – cultural, historical, material, biological, and psychological "preconditions" – for which race (and gender) have proved to be highly durable shorthand and broadly disseminating rubrics.[20]

[. . .]

Americans have largely lived in denial about the centrality of their racial-imperial project to national self-conceptions. One of the main bulwarks against admission has been the typical argument of US exceptionalism: the United States it is said, has never pursued the kind of territorial colonialism of European nation-states. The turn-of-the-century acquisitions of Hawaii, Cuba (for practical purposes), the Philippines, and Puerto Rico forces some qualification of this claim. Yet, even this might be considered a minor episode in US history. What can hardly be disputed, however, is that relative absence of territorial conquest abroad was enabled by an unprecedented expansion of the contiguous national territory, from the revolution and westward expansion to Indian wars and removal policies to the seizure of northern Mexico from the Southwest to the Pacific Coast.[21]

A major psychic motivation for denying the role and scope of American empire is that so much of this activity proceeded under the terms of a now-discredited, overt, and extreme racism. Here, in fact it is less easy to differentiate the United States from Europe. Both viewed themselves as carrying a superior civilization to subject peoples, through conquest, forced labor, and extermination of indigenous populations. Even when engaged in so-called great power rivalry, each advanced a transnational racial vision of the historical progress of European-derived, or in the case of the great US imperialist Teddy Roosevelt, "Anglo-Teuton" peoples. The boundaries of the civilizing process were secured by a remarkably simple

axiom: the uncivilized (that is, racialized) subject was a person who could be killed with impunity. They were, in the words of the great British imperialist poet Rudyard Kipling "lesser breeds without the law."

The racism of imperialism presents a significant problem for its latter-day defenders. This is one reason that no matter how much historians may now claim that statist liberalism triumphed over republicanism in the twentieth century, when it comes to imperialism, America is still cast as a republic, not an empire. Here we see similar tactics of bait-and-switch, in which a domestically racist republicanism can, from another vantage point, become the source of aggressive claims for US anti-imperialism (just as a globally expansionist liberalism is often heralded as the intellectual harbinger of a more benign racial order at home). Once we recognize that racist commitments have routinely transcended such oppositions, however, a different picture can emerge. Rather than canceling out the other's racism, racist practice has been more likely to demonstrate a cumulative logic. In this sense, rather than seeing domestic racism simply fueling empire, we can recognize how imperial expansion at the turn of the century and Jim Crow had reciprocal effects. Both gave new life to racist schemas of thought already deposited in the American past.

The flowering of US liberal internationalism in the twentieth century, encapsulated by Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points," was nominally anti-imperialist, offering general support to the principle of national self-determination in international affairs. This should not mislead us, however. Wilson's views were partially born of strategic considerations, particularly of the threat posed by the radical, left-wing anticolonialism of the Bolshevik revolution under V. I. Lenin, which quickly gained adherents among intellectuals and insurgents of the colonial peripheries. Defeated by the more robust vision of imperialist rivalry favored by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Wilson failed to transform US foreign policy and public opinion, which returned to isolationism within a hemispheric dominion after World War I. Indeed, even in its most enlightened form, Wilsonian internationalism failed to address colonial and minority questions, as both the United States and European powers remained notoriously hostile to the grievances of colonial subjects and rising nonwhite powers such as Japan. A Southerner, Wilson's own racial antipathies were well known. He enforced rigid segregation on the capitol during his years in the White House and he regarded US black soldiers as an especially dangerous group, a fertile

conduit, he said, for the spread of Bolshevism in the United States. This viewpoint gained a wider purchase through popular period works depicting western civilization imperiled by the twinned threats of international revolutionary politics and white racial degeneration. Following World War I, the combination of Red scares and race riots fueled a counter-subversive imagination that would inextricably link antiblack racism and anti-radicalism for years to come.[22]

From the turn of the century until the New Deal era, black political actors faced a world defined by competing versions of capitalist imperialism (in which the entitlements of national belonging had little or no relevance or value for non-national subjects) and a nation-state organized around herrenvolk republicanism (in which civil, legal, and political institutions were effectively established as a white monopoly and institutional preserve).[23] In fact, whiteness was arguably solidified as a structure of privilege during this period, as immigration restriction and virulent Americanization campaigns hastened the assimilation of previously stigmatized European immigrants and the intensification of the legal and cultural codes of US biracialism at the national level. Even though whiteness and Americanness were never perfect synonyms, during the imperial scramble for territories they increasingly operated in concert as signs of universality, humanity, and civilization as the nation entered the globalizing epoch. The power of whiteness was enhanced by its mutability in a context of national and global expansion, even as the idea of blackness was more powerfully fixed as Its antithesis.[24]

Thus, just as the state and the market have converged around practices of racial ascription and hierarchy, so have the realms of the domestic and the transnational. Indeed, the great power of modern racism as a mode of symbolic action – a way of organizing ideas in relation to practice – is that its purview has been at once so great and so varied. No amount of qualifying American nationalism with the terms "liberal" or "democratic" can mitigate how the accumulated history of racial inequality has weighed on the movements of US history into the present day. The long centrality and normativity of whiteness in US political culture has not been inconsistent with the history of American liberal-democracy, but integral to it.[25]

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We will not understand the historical functioning and durability of race (and its cognate terms) until we

recognize that it is at once larger and smaller than the nation-state. We might think of race, racism, and fictive ethnicity as mysteries lodged within the "hyphen" joining the nation and the state, society and the market, liberalism and democracy. For what is the hyphen but the place of what is occluded from view, or ancillary to politics, and yet also what allows us to assemble these unstable conjunctions? On the one hand, the hyphen allows us to imagine that the universalizing value of national sovereignty can be separated from the racial depredations of modern imperialism. On the other hand, it suggests that the global expansion of Enlightenment universals and capitalist markets progressively overcomes parochialism and ethnocentrism, rather than unendingly renewing them.

Despite living in a democratic age, we remain haunted by a legacy of white men of property who adjudicated the "fitness" for self-government of their social inferiors. The racism that has shaped the world's "core" nation-states has in this sense not only helped to limit the most profound social injuries of the market to those cast outside the sphere of democratic sovereignty, it has also helped to ensure that rising democratic demands for social protection have never been commensurate with market expansion. Racialized peoples in turn are those who have been defined by a status that is never individuated enough to grant rights, nor collective enough to justify sovereignty. In the US context, this has entailed the production of a host of "exceptional" figures and legal fictions exorbitant to liberal-democracy: the three-fifths person (African slave), the "domestic dependent nation" (American Indians), "separate but equal," (black citizen), "foreign in a domestic sense" (Puerto Ricans), the "immigrant ineligible for naturalization" (Asians), and of course the "free white person."

It may not be possible to fully disaggregate racist commitments and histories from the liberal-democratic components of US national identity. Rather than being definitively separated from Europe, the United States emerged as a major tributary of the modern European stream of racist projections of an idealized humanity against an abject prehumanity or subhumanity. American universalism then, in both its liberal and democratic articulations, has degenerated into racism not because it has failed to be "true" to itself, but because racial demarcation has historically been a central measure of the inner constitution of modern, civic identity. As a consequence, when considering the historical and political status of racial exclusion and inequality perpetuated under the auspices of US liberal-nationalism, the reasser-

tion of American universalism provides few answers; it only begs more questions.

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Notes

1 "Multiracism" . . . is a term I borrow from Vijay Prasad, "Bruce Lee and the Anti-Imperialism of Kung-Fu: A Polycultural Adventure," *Positions* 11(1) (2003): 51–90.

2 Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975); Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 25; Cheryl I. Harris, "Whiteness as Property," in Kimberle Crenshaw et al., eds., *Critical Race Theory* (New York: New Press, 1995), pp. 276–92.

3 Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), p. 39. Also see Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, p. 22.

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6 The fullest account of this is Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color.*

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