Race and State

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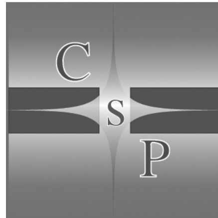
Edited by

Alana Lentin and Ronit Lentin



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Alana and Ronit dedicate this book to Lia, in memoriam.

INTRODUCTION

ALANA LENTIN AND RONIT LENTIN

SPEAKING OF RACISM

It has never been easy, but speaking about racism in the western political climate of the first decade of the twenty-first century is more difficult than ever before. There is a feeling in post-colonial and post-immigration societies that the blatant, overt racism of the past is no longer as pressing. We hear more and more talk of euphemisms such as discrimination, intolerance or the challenges of living with diversity than of the bluntness of racism. Racism evokes times past: the extermination of the "racially impure", the trade in captured slaves, the lynchings, the injustices of Apartheid… It is unimportant that the legacies of these histories continue to define societies in many areas of the world. What is important is that "we" can relegate these horrors to times and peoples past. Anything that reminds us of them—the chanting neo-nazi "thugs", their excrement through letter boxes, the jokes in bad taste—are written off as ignorance at the margins, psychologically challenged individuals to be either helped and educated or written off.

There is a deep discomfort about admitting racism, in Europe in particular, because common wisdom, fed by national and supranational policy, tells us that racism opposes everything that we believe in as citizens of democratic, "civilised" modern states; at least the virulent racism we associate with ghettos and genocide. When it comes to the everyday issues of discrimination in employment, education and access to services, unjust policing and the racialisation of minority religion and culture we question whether this can really be called racism. Isn't it in fact rather arbitrary? Isn't just a question of a few "bad apples" to be weeded out?

In reality, racism goes well beyond the everyday discrimination that continues to affect the children and grandchildren of immigrants and indigenous minorities. Today's racism descends directly from the pernicious history of twentieth century Europe. This is the racism of the immigration regime: the rounding up of "illegal" immigrants, their incarceration in detention centres,

their expulsion—bound and gagged—on chartered planes. There is the scapegoating of Muslims for the threat posed to western culture and civilization, the attack on the civil liberties of those racially profiled brown-skinned others, blamed for bringing the Middle East onto our streets, and the equation of every political action taken by a black or brown person with fanaticism, barbarism and primitivity. Finally, there is the antisemitism that political leaders insist on blaming on abstractly defined Muslims, purposefully avoiding the implications of pitting minority groups against each other and leaving officials free to rail against Jew hatred while drafting even stricter policy to curtail asylum and immigration.

In other words, racism both past and present is inextricably linked both to the policy instituted by states and to the political climate engendered by governmental leaders playing the proverbial "race card". The fact that it is impossible to disentangle it from the role of the state in its perpetuation is what makes it so difficult to talk about racism, in either politics, academia or just among our friends and acquaintances. Few brought up in the culture of national education systems that preach the supremacy of western democracy are capable of admitting the interdependency between racism and the functioning of the state. Furthermore, the anti-racism that the majority white population is exposed to is not based upon the lived-experience of those who face racism, but on vague principles of tolerance, solidarity and respect for human dignity that tend to leave out a lot of the detail. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that people facing racism are often accused of exaggeration and self-victimisation.

Under these conditions, it is all the more important that the interconnections between "race" and state are brought out. The papers collected in this book all seek to draw attention to these relationships from either historical, theoretical or contemporary sociological perspectives and, in some cases, in specific relationship to the Irish case. These papers are bound together by their being unapologetically political. In opposition to the contemporary tendency to dissociate sociological phenomena from contemporary political processes and events—not least the ongoing "War on Terror"—the contributors to *Race and State* seek to engage theory, history and sociology with the world which inspires them. This collection aims to contribute to the revitalisation of a politicised approach to doing social science through the specific prism of "race". As both Eric Voegelin (1933) and Michel Foucault (2003), two key figures in the theoretical background to the discussion of "race" and state, have pointed out, the discussion of "race" and racism is interesting because of what it can tell us about the nature of the state and politics. While the contributors to this volume are more committed to the study of racism for its own sake, the point is well taken and serves to validate the importance of insisting on treating racism politically and not, as is too often the case, as pathology.

Why "race" and state?

In George Mosse's seminal examination of the rise of Nazism, he reminds us that we do not have to possess any special powers to understand the origins of racism, we have merely to "integrate the study of racism within our study of the modern history of Europe" (1978: 236). As this is true historically for understanding the rise of racism, colonialism and genocide, so it is true for interpreting racism today. The way in which the modern nation-state in the West has evolved, from the Enlightenment to neo-colonialism, determines the patterns of inclusion and exclusion that dominate relationships between the state and individuals and groups in society, and between the West and "the rest".

By highlighting the way in which "race" and state, and racism and state practices are interwoven, this collection of papers hopes to contribute to a significant, if minoritarian, body of literature on the politics of "race" and racism. The official histories of the West at best portrayed racism as a bloody blot on the memory of the twentieth century rather than, as Zygmunt Bauman (1989) has shown, as politically inseparable from the modern project. The work of authors such as Voegelin and Foucault, along with others including Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Hannah Arendt, C.L.R. James, George Mosse and, more recently, Etienne Balibar, David Theo Goldberg, Howard Winant, Enzo Traverso, Ivan Hannaford and Barnor Hesse, stands in stark contrast to the received tradition in thinking on the history and sociology of modern racism.

The title of this collection and that of the conference from which it emerges is borrowed from Eric Voegelin. In 1933, Voegelin, a German philosopher forced to seek exile from his native country due to the rise of Nazism, published two volumes on "race": *Rasse und Staat* and *Die rassenidee in der Geistesgeschichte von Ray bis Carus*. The first volume in particular outlines Voegelin's theoretical approach to "race" which he views as crucial to a theory of state and, therefore, as inherently political. He completely rejects the potential usefulness of scientific racism, separating between what he calls the "race concept" and the "race idea". While the pseudoscientific "race concept" is accepted by Voegelin as the basis for the "race idea", he focuses on the political implications of "race" and sees them as entirely more pernicious than the false science that he takes the concept to be. Voegelin's work on "race" is part of a much wider project to establish a theory of state. He saw such a theory as based upon a set of body ideas, or "any symbol which integrates a group into a substantial whole through the assertion that its members are of common origin" (Voegelin 1940: 286). In other words, what Voegelin was trying to theorise was the basis for the idea that human beings should live in defined territories known as nation-states with which they are supposed to identify. He sought to uncover the theoretical glue holding together the initially nebulous idea of the unity of

nation-states and the reasons for which, despite this, they have come to be the only accepted and legitimated means of organising societies.

In constructing his theory, Voegelin saw "race" as the most important of all the body ideas. This is because the state takes action, according to Voegelin, on the basis of a vision of the type of people belonging to its political community and an assumption about the type of collective moral experiences they have had. At the time of Voegelin's writing *Rasse und Staat*, the belief that racial categorisation was the sole means of making sense of human difference and the consequent organisation of society had reached its peak. The amalgam of science and politics used to bring the "race idea" to full fruition meant that it was particularly prone to the type of myth-making that perpetuated its appeal. It could therefore dominate over other equally important body ideas by drawing on pre-modern myths, such as medieval Jew hatred or the danger posed by the Barbarians, for example, and combining them with the modern, rational argument for strong "race nations", binding together individuals born into a common destiny.

Voegelin, by drawing on the writings of several "race" theorists, demonstrates how the birth of the nation-state turns history into the servant of politics. This nationalisation of history, its orientation towards benefiting the creation of nations in the place of states, contributes also to the rise of "race". Because the nation needs to constitute itself as unique, it benefits from the stamp of scientific approval that "race" provides. It is when embodied by the state and integrated into its institutions that the unique "race nation" can constitute itself as more than a mere ideal.

The theorists of "race" and racism that have inspired our thinking on "race" and state focus on the intrinsically modern nature of racism. They link it, in methodological terms, to the emergence of Enlightenment thought, and in political terms, to the birth of the nation-state. Hannaford (1996) proposes that the possibility of thinking about humanity in racial terms comes about with the shift from monogenesis to polygenesis: the rejection of the singular belief in Creation. Once it is considered that all humankind may not originate from the work of one god, it becomes possible to think about groups of human beings as being inherently physically and mentally different from each other. The Enlightenment made this shift in thinking concrete by providing the tools for 'a more logical description and classification that ordered humankind in terms of physiological criteria based on observable "facts" and tested evidence' (Hannaford 1996: 46).

Focusing on the rise of modern antisemitism, Hannah Arendt, Zygmunt Bauman and Enzo Traverso have all related its emergence and the process leading to the Holocaust to the nature of modernity as embodied by the state. Bauman (1989) shows how the assimilation of the Jews, enabled by the advent

of the modern secular nation-state, made their existence strange where once it was natural; closed off in ghettoes and therefore identifiably distinct. Assimilated Jews become, for Foucault (2003), the "race" present among all "races", the dreaded threat within. When the perception of this threat is coupled with the rationalisation upon which modern state societies are built, racism taken to its extremes is made possible. Bauman's by now infamous metaphor of the gardener associates modern societies with the order and rationality of gardening as opposed to the laissez-faire attitude of the pre-modern gamekeeper. To maintain the order of the garden, the gardener must weed out 'every self-invited plant which interferes with his plan and vision of order and harmony' (Bauman 1989: 57). So too, the success of a racialised vision of the nation, made up of individuals with a common heritage and shared destiny, made it necessary to order populations, sorting between insiders and outsiders, between us and them. The scientific legitimation that came with racial science by the mid-nineteenth century led to a perfect marriage between science and politics, uniting theory and practice in the body of the modern, rational, territorially-bound and unified nation-state.

The work of Etienne Balibar is also central to the analysis of the relationship between "race" and state. He focuses (1991a) more precisely on racism and nationalism, yet does not treat them as abstract ideologies but as tools of the state. It is only as a function of state power that racism, as it intersects with nationalist ideology, becomes significant. Balibar describes the relationship between racism and nationalism as one of "reciprocal determination". They are not reducible to each other, but each determines the other's political potential within the context of the growth of both the nation-state itself and its project of imperialist domination.

By the end of the nineteenth century, racism could be said to have two main political functions. The first was to establish the terms of conflict between "race nations", the European states themselves, each considered to unify a "race" of people within them. The second, more durable and ultimately pernicious task was to distinguish between different groups of people both within and between societies based on a system of hierarchies which placed the European at the top. Racism was originally employed as a discourse against the presumed "weakness" of the working class, thought to dilute the strength of the "race nation" (Balibar, 1991b; MacMaster, 2000). However, when the outbreak of the First World War and mass conscription necessitated the rallying of the working class, racism sought different targets. It took on both an internal and external dimension which were nonetheless mutually complementary. Externally, racism was used to explain the differences between Europeans and the "natives" in the colonies, legitimating both their direct domination and the civilising mission woven into the colonial enterprise. Internally, racism theorised the enemy

within; be it the often invisible and thus particularly dangerous Jew, or the sharp reminder of the long-time diversity of European societies represented by Gypsies, blacks and immigrants.

The need to classify human beings that the nation-state gave rise to and which racism fulfilled is related by Balibar to universalism. Balibar sees racism and universalism as opposites which determine each other. This is why, he explains, 'each of them has the other inside itself—or is bound to affect the other *from the inside*' (Balibar 1994: 198). Racism and universalism are so intimately connected because the power of racism is in its ability to define the frontiers of humanity. The reason why racism has endured past the end of slavery, the Holocaust and into the postcolonial era is that it was able to institute ideas about the purportedly inherent differences between West and East, "civilised" and "primitive", or in other words, between the "raceless" and the "raced". Racism and universalism reflect each other because it is impossible to dissociate racism from the project of defining a "general idea of man" at the core of universalism. In order to define universally rational man, in the sense of the Enlightenment philosophers, it was also necessary to define who such a being was not. It is here that the hierarchical categorisation of "races" from the superior to the inferior, upon which racism is based, is fundamental. Because the idea of universal humanity was constructed in the image of the white European, against the non-European, the blacks in the colonies and the internal others, the application of the essence of humanity, as it was defined by European thinkers, to all men and women was impossible from the outset. It is simply not possible for those who do not comply with a definition of humanity—rationality, individuality, white aesthetics—to be considered (fully) human. It is for this reason that Hesse (1999) has insisted on referring to *European* universals in an attempt to point out the specificity of the ideal of humanity proposed by Europeans. It is only because of the rise in Europe's power and its domination over the rest of the world that this perspective could be presumed to be universal. This question remains central to today's debate over a "clash of civilisations", theorised in the West against a supposedly politically immature, irrational and dangerous East.

The connection between racism and the quest to define an ideal vision of what it is to be human, is illustrated by looking specifically at how racism evolved in the colonies. David Goldberg (2002) theorises a separation between "naturalist" and "historicist" racism. The former lasted from the seventeenth to approximately the mid-nineteenth century and was defined by the idea that racial inferiority was inherent and scientifically provable. Historicist racism comes later but continues to overlap with naturalism. It is based on the idea that racial progress is possible. In other words, through exposure to Europeans in the colonies, education and assimilation, "inferior" racial groups could eventually

evolve and attain a higher level of humanity. This progressivist approach is at the heart of contemporary debates on the integration of immigrants and their descendents, as though imposing "our way of life" upon them were sufficient to make differences disappear and end racism. Historicist racism is the relationship between racism and universalism in practice. It endures when virulent, overt naturalist racism is weakened because it functions under the guise of offering others the possibility to become like us, although we never ask whether this is in fact desired.

Goldberg demonstrates how historicist racism, the attempt to assimilate colonised and immigrant peoples into a European standard that was considered a higher way of life, continues to determine racism today. The assimilation of difference is the prerequisite for "racelessness" or the belief that we live in a post-racial age when the divisions "race" creates have lost significance. For Goldberg, this position emerges from dominant white thought, in which only whiteness is racially neutral. It is by failing to engage with the experience of racism that it is possible to claim that "race" has faded away and is no longer significant for individual lives and societies. While biological racial differences are inexistent, the effects of the racism that nevertheless persist make it impossible to relegate the experience of "race" to the shadowy past. Racism in contemporary western societies is experienced, above all else, as the discrepancy between the promise encapsulated by the *idea* of the West (integration, democracy, human rights…) and the reality; that it is always nearly there, but ultimately just out of reach.

The double face of the racist state

Today the postcolonial, post-immigration societies of the western world present us with a political paradox that has a strong influence over how we interpret and struggle against racism. Put simply, the discourse and practice of western states are both racist and anti-racist. What does this mean? The end of the Second World War and the realisation of the horrors of the Holocaust brought with it a commitment to eradicate racism. Governments and international institutions introduced programmes of education, public information and legislation to this end. Their approach was founded upon the idea that racism is an external force that invades the body politic but that the state itself, contrary to the argument this collection seeks to make, is unconnected from this process. Racism is seen as an aberration of the politics of democratic nation-states, the work of posthumously named fanatics as epitomised by Adolf Hitler. Following the Holocaust, the bringing to an end of colonialism and the beginning of large-scale non-European immigration to the West, it was important to officially prove the falsity of racism as a scientific

idea. The emphasis of organisations such as UNESCO in the 1950s, which strongly influenced government policy, on providing alternative explanations for human difference by focusing on culture and ethnocentrism rather than “race” and racism, had an important effect on policy-making (Lentin 2004). Successive governments over the last fifty years have officially promoted the importance of confronting and punishing racism, while at the same time both instituting policies that could only be described as racist and failing to challenge a culture of discrimination that ensures the persistence of racism.

The contemporary political situation throws this paradox into relief. There is an increasing concern in the West with identity or what it means to belong to a particular national entity, to Europe, or to what is considered western civilisation. This identity is being pitted against a non-western essence, that has entered the metropolis and which for many runs the risk of overrunning the West itself. Difference from western cultural norms, which has always been strange and vaguely threatening, has come now to symbolise an attack on values that have taken on proportions of “we-ness” that greatly exaggerate the realities of the majority of those living in today’s diverse societies.

Since the eleventh of September, 2001 this threat has been mainly associated with Islam. The religion itself and Muslims have been associated with barbaric actions and inhumane attitudes. This notion has not confined itself to rhetoric, but has been practically transformed into the “War on Terror”, a war on all fronts that has the potential to attack our neighbours in Paris, Amsterdam and London as much as those in Iraq and Afghanistan. The “collateral damage” caused by this war is the erosion of everybody’s civil liberties, a fact that the politics of fear have managed to convince the majority of us is for our own good. It is impossible to dissociate the fear and hatred of Islam and Muslims from the actions of states in their quest to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. Although we can make coherent arguments that demonstrate the rise in Islamophobia since “9/11”, it is rare that the racial profiling of the brown-skinned in general is perceived as racism. The dominance of “human security” above all political concerns has made this a question of commonsense. It is important to recall that, in Europe, the historical precedent for this is the widespread social antisemitism that indirectly enabled the gas chambers.

In the approach of western states and supranational institutions today there is no sense of the contradiction between the discrimination bred by the human security regime and what racism is officially understood to be. Racism, as an aberration from the “natural” course of modern state politics has always been seen as marginal. It has been treated psychologically, as a problem of individuals, the result of ignorance or socioeconomic disadvantage. Rarely has it been treated as a problem of elites and, even less so, as the business of states. Even the landmark admission of the institutionalised racism of the British police

force in 1997 (The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 1997) focused on the perceived importance of introducing greater numbers of minority ethnic police officers into the force, as though police racism was uniquely a result of individuals' lack of sensitivity.

This dominant attitude makes it possible for the paradox at the heart of official approaches to dealing with racism and discrimination to function. On the one hand, governments admit that great numbers of the population face discrimination in employment, education, health care, and in social and political life. This discrimination is put down to a variety of factors and is rarely cognisant of the role played by states, and the political culture in which they are moulded, in bringing it about. On the contrary, the state is seen as a source of protection against discrimination through its declared commitment to principles of democracy, equal rights and the rule of law. Moreover, the state actively intervenes against discrimination in various ways, including the funding of campaigns, training programmes, employment schemes, educational programmes etc.

On the other hand, states across the West actively participate in the practice of racism in many ways. Most significantly, they do so by distinguishing between citizens and non-citizens on the basis of racialised criteria. Immigration policies are differentially oriented according to country of origin. To curtail the flow of unwanted western-bound immigration, all western states have embarked upon a politics of detention and deportation that violates the treaties that they themselves have signed to protect human rights. There is an increased link drawn between immigration and asylum and terrorism, creating the impression that those wishing to come to the West are a potential threat to "our" security. Finally, children and grandchildren of immigrants do not escape this general association of the "foreigner" with danger or threat. It is more and more common to hear about the radicalisation of young people of immigrant origin, almost always associated with Islamic fundamentalism whether or not these claims have any bearing in reality. Despite the living together of generations of young people of different origins in western metropolises for decades, an image has been created that gangs of ethnically segregated young people endanger our neighbourhoods and that, in the worst cases, they have links to terror organisations that bring the threat to our very existence into the heart of society.

The uprisings of young people in the *banlieues* of France for three weeks in November 2003 highlighted the nature of contemporary western racism. The response of the French government was to admit to the social disadvantage faced by residents of these poor and under-serviced areas and to promote the importance of greater "*mixité sociale*" as a solution to the discrimination faced by young people of minority ethnic origin. This response nevertheless came after the French interior minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, called the rioters "scum". It

was also tempered by the overriding belief that solutions to the problems of the "difficult neighbourhoods", as they are euphemistically referred to in French, could be overcome by a reinstatement of "French values" (Lentin 2006). Encouraging diversity, or *"mixité sociale"*, as a solution to the police brutality that actually triggered the riots or the daily racism faced by brown and black people in a myriad of spheres, reveals the extent to which racism is divorced from acts and practices carried out in the name of the state and analytically confined to the domain of intercultural communication. The insistence in France, but also in other examples from the US, that these young people are in fact French sends out mixed messages when they are also culturally reified as different from their peers of "French stock".

The racism of western states cannot be separated from their publicly declared commitment to anti-racism. This is because the definition of racism upon which official anti-racism is built is often very far removed from what the lived-experience of racism tells us that it is. This dissociation of racism from the state and its resultant depoliticisation is what ultimately leads to the bubbling over of rage that became the French riots of late 2005. Until there is a widespread realisation of the need to analyse racism from a perspective that sees the state as central to its origins, its persistence and perhaps its resolution, it will remain impossible to redress the injustices that racism has left as legacies imprinted upon societies and individuals.

Ireland as a textbook case

It is not only because the conference from which this collection derives was held in Ireland that there is a whole section in this collection which deals with the "racial states" of Ireland. Ireland is indeed uniquely positioned among European nation-states. Though a former colony, the Irish nation-state has imagined itself as based on a racialised notion of identity and on a desire to demonstrate that the claim to statehood was in part based on the assertion that the Irish nation was not different from other European nations and did therefore differ from subaltern non-European peoples. However, in recent years common wisdom has it that Ireland has only just changed from being a "sending country" to being an "immigration destination". While the case of the Republic of Ireland can be used as a laboratory case in illustrating the nexus of "race" and state, the "racial statelet" of Northern Ireland, the capital of which has recently been declared as "the race hate capital of Europe" (see McVeigh in this volume), serves as an even more peculiar illustration of the intersection of the colonial and the racial.

Since the growth of the economy of the Republic of Ireland in the 1990s and the arrival of a small yet significant number of immigrants—asylum seekers,

labour migrants, and undocumented migrants—the Irish state has both denied racism and consistently minimised the effect of state policies on the lives of racialised populations. On the one hand, emphasis has been placed on the need for more migrants to sustain the economic growth of the "Celtic Tiger". On the other hand, the state has made explicit its commitment to restricting immigration and increasing deportations of those not deemed "useful" to global Ireland. What seemed like a contradiction between the state's avowed commitment to anti-racism and its restrictive immigration politics is actually, as is the case elsewhere, entirely consistent. If the Republic of Ireland was facing substantial in-migration for the first time in its history, it goes without saying that racism was perceived to have been imported by migrants rather than being the product of state policies enacted by white, Christian, settled Ireland. The state had to do something, and the result was racial categorisation and state racism, a racism the state uses to defend "its own" population, a racism that society exercises against itself (Foucault 2003).

If from the start, the arrival of immigrants in Ireland was conceived as a "problem", there were specific developments in the Republic of Ireland which make it a textbook example of a contemporary "racial state". Of particular significance is the referendum held in June 2004 which asked the electorate to constitutionally change the *jus solis* citizenship entitlement to all people born on the island of Ireland, an entitlement which prevailed since the establishment of the state in 1922, into an entitlement based on *jus sanguinis* according to which only the children of citizens can become citizens at birth. The proposed change needs to be understood not only in the context of the formation of the state in Ireland, or the move from institutional to constitutional racism, with Irish historicism increasingly regarding non-Irish others as inadequate candidates for citizenship, employing patently racist legislation to criminalise, regulate and control both in-migrants and indigenous populations, but also in the context of globalisation. The racial state gives citizenship to some—including its own co-opted "ethnic minorities"—inside what can be termed a "gated community". Those, including labour migrants, indigenous and other racialised people, although not deemed eligible, are, as Michel Foucault (2003) would have it, "made live and let die". At the same time, the rest of the globalised world—through a series of imperialist and neo-imperialist moves—is "made die", and if they are lucky, "let live". Thus the globalised world shifts from sovereign power to biopower, in historical and structural terms, separating those within the gated community of the racial state from those without. Contemporary Ireland, declared by the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation as topping the globalisation index, is a prime example of the deliberate separation—using commonsense, legal, constitutional means—between those who can and those who cannot access citizenship.

The government's campaign for the Citizenship Referendum, sprung on the electorate without sufficient time to debate and explore the meanings of such a change, portrayed migrants as taking advantage of Ireland's supposedly "generous" immigration laws. Migrant mothers, in particular, were singled out for deliberately subverting "the integrity of Irish citizenship" by having Irish citizen babies (see Lentin and McVeigh, 2006). Privileging a progressivist vision about the integration of immigrants, particularly those labour migrants needed by the "Celtic Tiger" economy, the state was quite clear which categories of people it regarded as waste material, including, in particular, asylum seekers.

Admittedly this is not different from other European states, all of which boast a reduction in the numbers of people seeking asylum while omitting to admit that large numbers are not given permission to lodge their asylum applications in the first place. What is different about Ireland is that the Citizenship Referendum, posited by the government as essential to the "integrity of Irish citizenship", was passed with a majority of four to one. With this result, the state now argued, neither the government nor the majority of Irish people could be considered racist. On the contrary, both the electorate and the government are deemed to be anti-racist, even though the government has replaced its anti-racist policy with a focus on diversity that emphasises Irish racelessness while at the same time leaving "race" and racism out of official discourse.

Reading "Race and State"

The chapters in this book are organised into three parts, reflecting the structure of the conference from which this collection emerged. Not all the papers presented at the conference are included here. There are also three papers that were not presented at that occasion but which we felt could add to the argument the authors in this book collectively seek to make. These are the articles by David Theo Goldberg and Alana Lentin in Part I and of Ronit Lentin in Part III.

Part I of the book looks at theoretical issues in conceptualising the relationship between "race" and state. The authors centre their focus on how to build on historical and contemporary observation in order to construct a theory of "race" and state. Crucially, "race" and racism are always understood to emerge out of an historicised context, of modernity and the nation-state, of Nazism (Muelhauser), of colonialism (Lentin, Ikeotuonye) and of the contemporary politics of states such as the US and Ireland (Goldberg, Garner and Moran). Moroever, racism is always set in its political context so that there is no doubt that it must be viewed, in the opinion of these authors, from a

politicised perspective that leaves no room for the reduction of racism to pathology. Of importance also is the authors' location of the origins of racism in the West. While there has been a growing tendency to generalise the phenomenon of racism both to non-western contexts and to pre-modern times, it is important to identify the advance of racism as we know it today within the modern setting, its roots firmly implanted in Europe.

Racism has often been theorised as capable of taking on many guises and of adapting itself politically to time and context. Part II examines racism in its most pernicious contemporary manifestation, namely in the racialisation of "terror". While Kumar focuses on the historical and theoretical precedents, particularly in anthropology and geography, for the current racism of the "war on Terror", Sparks's and Bhattacharyya's pieces relate directly to contemporary politics. The significance of this section of the book is its ability to make concrete the link between racism and today's politics of fear by showing how, through the media (Sparks) and by the militarisation of everyday life (Bhattacharyya), the object of society's fears is a racialised being. The fears of western people for their personal security, justified as they may be to some extent, are channelled through a presentation of the threat in the figure of a brown-skinned man. Through the state's direct targeting of these internal outsiders as potential terrorists society is unable to formulate a contradictory impression that would reveal the tenuous link made between terrorism and the Muslims living among us.

The chapters in Part III, on the racial state(s) of Ireland, must be read against the background of post-Referendum Ireland, where new census categorisations will divide the population in "racial" terms (King-O'Riain), and where the debates on migrant labour privilege the interest of global capital (Allen and Loyal). The fact that Ireland has been convincing itself of its "monoculturalism" and non-colonial past is refuted by Mac Éinrí's discussion of Irish alliances with colonial whiteness. That Ireland has moved from being constructed in racial terms to being an explicitly—though not admittedly so—racist state (Lentin) is illustrated by the routinisation of racist discourse (Moriarty). These chapters, taken together, are an important addition to such a collection which, for the first time, focuses on Ireland as a "test case" for demonstrating and interpreting the relationship between "race" and state.

"Race and state" aims to contribute to breaking the taboo that clearly exists in the West regarding the racism of the state. We can no longer pretend that racism was only a passing phase through which some states passed, momentarily overtaken by anti-democratic fanaticism. Racism is not reducible to Nazism and fascism. It is very much a part of the lives of millions of individuals. Were it merely the "natural" feelings that lurk in us all, as many would have it, it could quite simply not cause the, often fatal and irreversible,

damage it incurs on our bodies and minds. It would not impinge upon how we live together in diverse societies, nor would it bring about such injustices and inequalities. For racism to function, it needs a political apparatus. That apparatus is the state, its bureaucracy and its institutions which in turn influence the hearts and minds of the people who live within it. It is how it functions that this book seeks to interrogate in the hope, always, of pointing towards a better future.

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PART I

THEORISING RACE AND STATE

CHAPTER ONE

DEVA-STATING DISASTERS: RACE IN THE SHADOW(S) OF NEW ORLEANS

DAVID THEO GOLDBERG

For at least the past half-century, America has advanced itself as committed to racial justice, pointing to the Civil Rights Movement and the wave of non-discrimination, anti-segregationist, and equal rights legislation that followed the series of Supreme Court rulings from the late 1940s onwards. These were important developments, and in many ways shifted the racial ground on which America historically has stood. Less noticed in the political sphere—certainly less celebrated—however, are the counter-trends in ideological representation, prevailing political commitment, and dominant social arrangement that these gains prompted as a backlash from the 1980s onwards (Gold 2004).

Old segregationist racism, from post-Reconstruction to *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), was what can properly be characterised as an *activist* segregation. It involved for the most part an active intervention in politics, economics, law, and culture self-consciously designed to produce segregated city, town, and neighborhood spaces. To combat this activism, to undo its pernicious and debilitating effects and implications, the Civil Rights Movement likewise was compelled to act responsively on every social, political, legal, and cultural register. Coalitional anti-racist resistance and struggle, perhaps by definition, are activist pursuits. Laws needed changing, the web of racial covenants and redlining promoting residential segregation needed unraveling, the closed doors of segregated schools and universities had to be unlocked, inaccessible workplaces had to be entered and transformed from the inside out, voting practices reproducing all-White city halls and legislatures had to be dramatically restyled and voting districts reapportioned (People 2005). None of this would have changed on its own, economic determinists of one stripe or another notwithstanding.

Prompted by the tensions between political pressures at home and abroad, the period from roughly post-World War II to the 1970s was one of tension and contradiction between the ancient regime of racist structures and anti-racist possibilities. It was a period of promise and projection, expectation and elevation, denial and in some debilitating ways ultimately dashed hope. It was a period, in short, of desegregating commitment and the seeds of a re-segregating mobilisation. The logic of the old segregation supposedly was swept aside—only to be replaced by the whisper of the new, the subtle and silent, the informal and insidious, what elsewhere I have characterised as "the born-again" (Goldberg 2004). This newly expressed segregation, the newly privatising segregation at the heart of the model I designate *racial americanisation*, is no longer activist but conservative, a segregation in the literal sense conservationist.

To say that racism in the United States got to be born-again is not to say it ever disappeared. It shifted its modalities and expression, its articulations and dispositions, its ways of being. The public legalities aimed at undoing explicit racist practice in the name of the state redirected principal racist expression and reproduction to the private sphere, institutionally and personally. And in doing so it emphatically sought to protect privatised racist expression from state intervention. But this principal form of contemporary racial americanisation, of what I am calling born-again racism, proceeds not simply by reducing the social to the preferential, the state to the privatisations of (in)civil society. Preferences are not expressed, enacted, and experienced in a political and institutional vacuum. Rather, public spheres—and the state especially—structure the conditions of possibility on the basis of which choices are to be made, preferences pushed and indeed whether, when, and what punished or rewarded. State structures channel, shape, and mould both the boundaries and the terrain of choice-making and their implication; and preferences expressed and enacted reinforce existing state formation even as they inflect and color them.

Conservationist segregation thus fashions the model of racial americanisation. This model proceeds by *undoing* the laws, rules, and norms of expectation the Civil Rights movement managed to put in place. It attacks those laws and the social order predicated on them as unconstitutional, as the only sort of racial discrimination with which we should be concerned today. Embracing *race neutrality*, racial americanisation nevertheless licenses "limited" racial profiling for purposes of security maintenance, targeted policing and medical research as legitimate for combating the moral panics of terror and the disasters producing it, socially or naturally prompted. The Racial Privacy Act initiative, first introduced in California and now traveling to other states identified by racial conservationists as racial battlegrounds, embodies even in its title the

logic at work. Racial expression was not to be excised from the body politic. Rather, it was to be privatised, and protected in its privatisation (Post 2001).

In the absence of the Civil Rights spirit, and now in its active undoing, accordingly, the present period *conserves* (and deepens) the hold of racial preference schemes historically produced *as if they were the nature of things*. So racial americanisation is produced by a mix of doing nothing special, nothing beyond being guided by the presumptive laws of the market, the determinations of the majority's personal preferences, and the silencing of all racial reference with the exception especially of racial profiling for purported purposes of crime and terror control. This silencing fails to distinguish between exclusionary *racist* designs and practices, on the one hand, and redressive or ameliorative *racial* interventions, on the other, reducing the latter to the former for the most part as the only contemporary racist expressions worth worrying about.

William Bennett, self-ascribed arbiter of America's moral virtues, exemplifies the logic in play here. He recently responded to a call-in question on his radio show that, while morally reprehensible and ridiculous, aborting all Black babies would result in a sharp reduction in the US crime rate (Bennett 2005). His "hypothetical" if not hypocritical call, effectively genocidal, is protected as the sort of free speech the wall of privatisation around civil society is designed to render critically unreachable. Bennett's "observation" trades on a cache of widespread if no longer explicitly expressed presumptions: that the crime rate in the US is overwhelmingly fueled by Black criminality, that such criminality is a more or less natural and so inescapable condition of especially the Black poor, but also that it is not unacceptable to issue eugenicist judgments about the implications of hypothetical genocide in the case of African Americans in ways it would mostly not be for any other group today (Muslims included). This latter presumption trades on the Africanity of African Americans, the normalcy if not naturalness of early death in the case of the descendants of the despised continent. Hidden from view here is the less extreme logic on which the claim trades, for it is as surely the case that any aborting of babies of any ethnoracial background would likely reduce the crime rate, given that some percentage of that rate, large or small, is made up by members of every ethnoracial group. Bennett's racial eugenicism advances itself only at the price of the expendability of Black lives.

Only slightly less extreme, because not quite as explicit, the libertarian pluralist motto of "live and let live" licenses a surplus of possibility and opportunity for the affording few at the expense of the impoverished many. It might more accurately be replaced with the motto, "live free or die," most explicitly identified with the state of New Hampshire, implying that those who cannot afford the freedom will be left to perish. There is, as commentators on euthanasia have long pointed out, a thin line between (social) killing and letting