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Introduction: Nationalism's Futures

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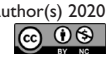

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Abstract

At a time when nationalist sentiment is on the rise, this special issue takes stock of how sociology can contribute to understanding the past, present and future of nationalism. In contrast to declarations of 'the end of history', which was also meant to herald increasing integration due to a lowering of cultural and national barriers, nationalism never went away. The articles in this collection engage with the question of nationalism at a theoretical and empirical level and in different regional contexts, assessing how national boundaries are drawn and policed, how national identities are formed and the myriad political and everyday consequences of nationalism.

Keywords

everyday nationalism, globalisation, indigenous nationalism, national belonging, national identity, nationalism, populism, sociology

Why a Special Issue on Nationalism?

It is perhaps not surprising that *Sociology* is publishing a special issue on nationalism. Public debate in the UK, where the journal is based, has for the last half-decade or so been dominated by the issue of Brexit. The feverish nature of these debates has not

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abated, quite the contrary, since the 2016 referendum that decided that the UK should leave the European Union (EU). Valluvan and Kalra (2019: 2394) have characterised Brexit as a 'new nationalist political programme that hinges substantially on the ostensible problems of immigration, multiculturalism, and ethnic diversity more broadly'.

The UK is of course not the only country to exhibit such a rise in nationalist sentiment. Across the world, we have witnessed the emergence of political leaders and political parties relying on nationalist discourse, often of a populist kind: Donald Trump in the USA, Fidesz, led by Viktor Orbán in Hungary, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the leadership of Narendra Modi in India and Jair Bolsanaro in Brazil. What unites these leaders and parties, and many more like them, is their espousal of nationalism, majoritarianism, populism and authoritarianism (Brewer, 2019; Chatterji et al., 2019; Valluvan, 2019). The nationalist rhetoric employed is one that presents 'them' – ranging from migrants, ethnic and religious minorities, foreign people and states, sexual minorities to liberals – as a threat to the nation. Furthermore, 'the nation' – that is, those people who can claim an 'authentic' national identity and whose interests are to be protected from internal and external threats – is depicted in homogeneous and unified terms. This majority is seen as having the right to rule, while minority populations are marginalised. In India, for example, the aim of the BJP is 'to "defend" the interests of Hindus first and foremost, at the expense of the rights of the Othered/minorities in the country' (Chatterji et al., 2019: 3, 4). Notions of pluralism are anathema to this kind of nationalism. Populist leaders present themselves as alternatives to the political establishment and prefer to communicate directly to the people – President Trump's prolific Tweeting is a prime example (Brewer, 2019; López-Alves, 2019). They also espouse an authoritarian style of governance and wish to present themselves as strong leaders (Gessen, 2020).

As sociologists, what has piqued our interest, as it has that of many others, is the rise of nationalist sentiment not long after Fukuyama (1992: 1) famously declared 'the end of history' as a result of 'the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government'. A number of scholars joined to celebrate the triumph of liberal democracy that, it was argued, would lead to the end of ideological struggle, a global civil society and post-national citizenship (e.g. Featherstone, 1990; Habermas, 2001; Nussbaum, 1996). According to such claims, globalisation, which requires free movement of people and goods, would lead to increasing integration due to a lowering of cultural and national barriers (López-Alves and Johnson, 2019; Tamir, 2019). It was assumed that 'the Western world . . . had outgrown nationalism' (Tamir, 2019: 5).

Reality turned out to be rather different. Many scholars have argued that the recent resurgence of nationalist discourse and politics should not be interpreted as a 'return' of nationalism because, in fact, nationalism never went away (e.g. Jusdanis, 2019; López-Alves and Johnson, 2019; Valluvan, 2019). The world was never as integrated or democratic as it was assumed, and the international arrangements that had been reached were volatile and disorderly (López-Alves and Johnson, 2019; Tamir, 2019). Jusdanis (2019: 41) urges us to also remember 'the nationalism explosions and bloodletting of the 1990s' such as the ethnic cleansing in former Yugoslavia and wars in Georgia and Chechnya. In addition, 'to refugees, borders have always remained not only physically real but almost unscalable' (2019: 48). The ability to cross national borders is unequally distributed in a manner that helps preserve the colonial order (De Noronha, 2019). The bordering

practices around citizenship in countries such as the UK also create racialised hierarchies of belonging (Kapoor and Narkowicz, 2019; Yuval-Davis et al., 2018).

There remains disagreement among scholars as to the beneficial and harmful effects of nationalism. Tamir (2019) emphasises the virtues of nationalism, including that it can offer people an important source of belonging and identity, thus offering a basis for social solidarity. She writes of the many positive things that have been achieved in the name of nationalism, including citizenship rights, public education and social welfare. Contrast this with Valluvan's (2019) analysis of nationalism as inherently exclusionary of the 'other', based on for example skin colour, religion or class (see also Billig, 1995). Valluvan (2019: 38) argues that the nation should be understood as 'a politics of enmity' based on a 'strong aversion' towards 'others' rather than 'a politics of belonging'.

Recent scholarship has been concerned with the populist bent of nationalism across the globe at the moment. Populist parties have come to exert considerable political influence on public debates, and have secured a place in government in a number of countries, for example Finland, Austria, Hungary and Poland. Many so-called mainstream parties have adopted right wing populist nationalist ideals as a way of securing votes – the Conservative Party in the UK is a case example (Valluvan, 2019). While 'not all nationalisms are populistic', 'virtually all populisms are nationalistic' (López-Alves, 2019: 21). Populist politicians claim to speak for 'the people', a supposedly forgotten section of the population such as 'the white working-class' in the UK and the USA, or the 'hurt' Hindu majority in India (Bhambra, 2017; Chakrabarty and Jha, 2020). Their rhetoric centres on the need to protect national interests against internal threats posed for example by 'the liberal elite' and external threats posed by immigrants and other nation states (Jusdanis, 2019; López-Alves and Johnson, 2019). Populist nationalism is thus centred around xenophobic fears of the 'other' (Valluvan, 2019). In majority white countries, this 'other' is usually racialised as non-white, often of immigrant or refugee background.

The current moment can also be characterised as one where national sovereignty is coming into sharper focus, leading in some cases to isolationism. The USA offers a stark example of this. One of Trump's first acts as president was to announce that the USA would withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change. He has reportedly expressed a wish to withdraw from the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), has threatened trade wars with nations such as China, has made executive orders banning citizens from so-called 'Muslim countries' from entering the USA and continues to speak of building a wall on the US–Mexico border. The UK is another example of a 'turn to an inward nationalism – anxious, defensive and resentful', exemplified by the debates surrounding Brexit and the government's 'hostile environment' policy towards immigrants (Valluvan and Kalra, 2019: 2393; Wardle and Obermuller, 2019).

At the time of writing this introduction, in September 2020, countries across the globe are dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Governments have tended to respond to this pandemic by closing down or more tightly controlling travel in and out of the country, thus exercising sovereign power and reinforcing national boundaries (Tisdall, 2020). There have in some countries been unprecedented periods when non-citizens and even citizens have been barred entry. In the EU, what was noticeable in the early weeks and months of the pandemic was the lack of a coordinated response between member countries. Instead, each country implemented their own measures to control the

spread of COVID-19. While the EU has since agreed a joint COVID-19 rescue package, in the initial stages of the pandemic, economic responses to the virus were led by national governments. In other words, the crisis has highlighted the continued salience of nation states, which partly rests on the fact that it is national governments that have the power to close down national borders and to legislate lockdown measures in order to curb the movements of people into and within the country. Furthermore, national governments are in charge of national budgets and policy, such as policies pertaining to public health. The issue of a hoped-for vaccine against the virus is also riven with nationalism, as countries vie to be the first to develop such a vaccine. In March 2020, the US made moves towards buying the rights to a vaccine being developed by scientists based in Germany (Carrel and Rinke, 2020), and in September, the Trump administration announced 'it will not join a global effort to develop, manufacture and equitably distribute a coronavirus vaccine' (Rauhala and Abutaleb, 2020). There is currently talk of a 'Russian vaccine' as the possible first to be used on a population (BBC, 2020).

Given all of the above, this is a good time to take stock of the nature of nationalism(s). In our call for papers for this special issue, we invited authors to consider how we as sociologists can make sense of and theorise contemporary forms of nationalist ideologies and policies, and the consequence of these. The articles in this issue shed light on a number of dimensions of nationalism and how sociology can help understand nationalism's past, present and future. We now turn to discuss some of the cross-cutting empirical and theoretical themes that run through the articles.

Sociological Themes and Debates

There is not the space in our introduction to offer a comprehensive overview of the literature on nationalism past and present. Instead, we highlight a few of the key sociological themes that the articles, essays and book reviews included in this issue touch upon.

Contemporary Sociological Debates

A number of the articles discuss sociology's contribution to understanding the emergence and development of nationalism, as well as its present and future. Brincker charts the development of nationalism studies, including the early discussions over whether nationalism represented a break between pre-modern and modern, and the extent to which nationalist ideologies can be traced back to pre-modern roots or whether nationalisms should be understood as modern constructions. Another focus of debate has been whether nationalism should be seen as beneficial or harmful. Brincker also notes that some theories of nationalism emphasise culture while others discuss nationalism in the context of nation states. Leddy-Owen argues that understanding the salience of nationalism is critical to an understanding of political agency and identifications. He makes the case that statehood should be more central to our analysis of nationalism, given the international ubiquity of the nation-state model and the dominance of the language of nation and nationalism in understandings of political personhood.

It is important to understand past and current developments in nationalism through a postcolonial lens. Brincker's article notes that contemporary studies of nationalism seek

to overcome the Eurocentric approach of the field over the past 70 years. While earlier debates did ensure that the question of nationalism was central within the discipline of sociology, contemporary studies of nationalism critique the Global North focus of these earlier approaches. Dunne et al.'s article, which explores how young people in North Nigeria identify with the nation state, offers an example of such challenges of Eurocentric analyses of nationalism. As a postcolonial nation, Nigeria forms part of the Global South which has until recently been ignored by sociologists. Through engaging with postcolonial theory, the article sheds light on the relationship between modernity and colonialism in the construction of a nation state. The authors thus demonstrate that the construction of the nation involves multiple temporalities.

Oksanen highlights that the literature also has some way to go in addressing various forms of indigenous nationalisms. While there is a long history of resistance by indigenous peoples against being colonised, only recently have such actions gained some success in terms of winning back territories and reversing assimilation policies. Oksanen employs Keating's (2001) concept of plurinationalism to explore how relations between settler nations and indigenous people have been reconfigured as a result, leading to the existence of a plurality of nationalisms within one nation state.

James and Valluvan's essay points out some potential unanticipated consequences of the increasingly nationalist politics espoused by Britain's Conservative government which won the 2019 General Election on the slogan 'Get Brexit done'. As traditional capitalist ideology has fallen by the wayside, the ideological gap that it has left in its wake has opened up the possibility for anti-capitalist ideologies to gain traction, especially among the disillusioned younger voters whose lives are governed by unprecedented precarity. Thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is the possibility that 'this discontent might obtain a more diffuse mainstreaming that reaches beyond youth constituencies'.

Boundaries of National Belonging

The next group of cross-cutting themes are closely interlinked and concern the issue of how boundaries of national belonging are drawn and policed: inclusion and exclusion; national identity; and the 'other' and othering. Given the inherently exclusionary nature of nationalism (Valluvan, 2019; see also Billig, 1995), it is no surprise that these concepts run through many of the articles that make up this special issue. Related to these is the question of national borders and how these are policed, both at state level and in everyday interactions. Western nationalism is based on 'the exclusionary politics of Othering', made tangible through 'the provisioning of passports, voting privileges, welfare rights and so forth' (Valluvan and Kalra, 2019: 2395). Anyone who does not belong to the nation is constructed as an outsider. Even those who technically *do* belong to the nation can find themselves under suspicion as 'other', an experience sadly familiar to many ethnic and religious minorities, such as British Asians and African-Caribbeans in the UK and Muslims in India (Chatterji et al., 2019; Wemyss, 2009).

The central importance of 'race' to the project of nationalism in Europe and the US is well established in the literature (Valluvan, 2019; Yarish, 2019). It is worth noting the intimate connection between the emergence of nation states, colonialism and

constructions of 'race' (Bhambra, 2007). One of the consequences of these intertwined histories is that national belonging is racialised, whereby racialised minorities are regularly positioned as a threat to national values and culture (Valluvan, 2019; Yarish, 2019). The rising popularity of far-right political groups and parties feeds on such fears that present racialised minorities as being 'too many, have been given too much allowance, wield too much power' (Valluvan, 2019: 52).

The articles in the present collection illustrate the centrality of the issue of 'race' to the question of national in/exclusion. Liinpää, who studied the experiences of minority ethnic people during the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, notes that those who are racialised are 'marked as "different", as a "threat", or as "inferior" due to the colour of their skin or their assumed religion (especially Muslims contemporarily)'. Racialised minorities are regularly reminded of their status as a 'stranger' who does not belong to the nation, as 'their very being, and their right to occupy a certain space' are challenged in daily interactions. Joost and Skey's article shows that in the 'plastic Brits' debate surrounding the 2012 London Olympics, it was minority ethnic athletes in particular who came under suspicion of not being 'British enough' to represent the nation. James and Valluvan note in their essay that 'the attentiveness to life and its value that has resurfaced in our COVID-19 moment all too predictably stops at the borders of race and nation'. By this they are referring to the 'almost total absence of political feeling' for the most vulnerable populations of the world in war ravaged countries and in refugee camps and to the disregard with which the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on racialised minorities in Britain has been met.

Closely linked to these processes of in/exclusion is the question of national identity, and who has the right to claim such an identity. In his article on Sámi nationalism in Norway, Sweden and Finland, Oksanen argues that the question of whether Sámi and Nordic national identities are mutually exclusive is a contentious one among Sámi people, many of whom are worried about assimilationist pressures on the Sámi and the blurring of the Sámi/non-Sámi boundary. The claims to national identity of 'urban' Sámi and 'new' Sámi, who are of Sámi descent but have grown up outside a Sámi cultural environment, are questioned. Some 'new' Sámi self-deprecatingly call themselves 'plastic' Sámi. What is at stake here is the notion of 'authentic identities' and who has the right to determine national identity: indigenous peoples themselves or nation states.

The notion of 'plastic' (i.e. somehow fake) national identity emerges also in Jansen and Skey's article on the debate in the UK over so-called 'plastic Brits' during the 2012 London Olympics. Some media outlets were concerned that the authenticity of the Olympics as an inter*national* sporting event was under threat by foreign-born naturalised British citizens who represented the nation. Similarly, Yemini et al.'s article on the forms of mobile nationalism adopted by middle-class global parents, shows how the seemingly self-evident boundaries of national identity become fuzzy as people cross national boundaries, leading to questions of who belongs but also how national identity can be upheld and cultivated.

The creation of an internal boundary within a nation state is evident in the article by Dunne et al., in which they examine identifications with the nation state by young people in Northern Nigeria. Created through British colonialism, it is a multi-ethnic and multilingual country in which the Muslim and Christian populations are divided geographically. Young people are shown to identify with the nation state that goes beyond a secular

understanding towards something that involves multiple temporalities. Differences of religion and ethnicity are used not only to construct and belong to the nation but to police the female body.

The Relationship between Globalisation and Nationalism

In his theoretical contribution, Chernilo considers three important debates about nations and nationalism: methodological nationalism, primordialism versus modernism and universalism versus particularism. Sociological debates on nationalism involve historical contextualisation and this article moves on the debate by reflecting on the challenges posed by, for example, new forms of nationalism. Chernilo guides us through the relationship between globalisation, cosmopolitanism and methodological nationalism in relation to a type of national self-determination that is in tension with transnational identities. Through a consideration of nationalism and cosmopolitanism together with universalism and particularism, the article emphasises how important it is for sociologists to consider the futures of nationalism and reminds us of the instability and constant evolution of national politics.

Two of the empirical articles, by Yemini et al. and Scheiring, demonstrate that in contrast to the predictions of an 'end of history' and a weakening significance of nation states brought on by globalisation, the latter may indeed reinforce national belonging. The geographically mobile middle-class parents in Yemini et al.'s study employed a number of strategies to ensure that their children developed a strong sense of belonging to their parents' country of birth. Globalisation and deindustrialisation emerge as key factors in Scheiring's article on why working-class voters in the Hungarian rustbelt, who historically voted for the Left, have become a key constituent behind the electoral success of Viktor Orbán's neo-nationalist Fidesz party. Scheiring argues that this can be interpreted as a Polanyian countermovement against commodification, globalisation and deindustrialisation which have violated the country's social contract. The industrial working classes have experienced job losses, precarity, a drop in living standards and a loss of previously subsidised services such as holidays. Consequently, the participants in Scheiring's study felt that they had been excluded from the distribution of assets that followed the shift to a market economy. Put simply, in their view, the working class was 'the victim of the transition, abandoned by the Socialist Party and trade unions'. The gap left by the loss of class-based language of old that previously shaped collective identities has been filled by the neo-nationalist ideology of Fidesz, which identifies foreign capital and elites as the threats to the wellbeing and livelihood of those living in deindustrialised cities. Fidesz has also been able to convince many working-class voters that it could 'correct the failed transition'.

In their essay, James and Valluvan argue that nationalism is unable to offer an appropriate response to global crises, such as those posed by COVID-19 and the climate crisis. This is because the crises that nationalism purports to solve are 'always-already inside', while national solutions are insufficient to tackle problems at a global scale.

Everyday Nationalism

Our call for papers asked how old and emergent forms of nationalism are lived on the ground. A number of the contributions to this special issue discuss this matter of

everyday nationalism (Fox, 2017). In his essay, Marco Antonsich offers a brief overview of the origins and theorisation of nationalism, and its omnipresent nature in modern societies, as captured by Billig's (1995) term 'banal nationalism'. Nation, and nationalism, imbue our everyday lives, from coins and weather maps to linguistic expressions of national belonging (although see Leddy-Owen's critique above – he argues that this is about everyday statism as much as nationalism). What is more, people are not passive consumers of such everyday forms of nationalism, but rather they reproduce it through their actions, words and thoughts. Chernilo sounds a note of warning though. Through a critical engagement with theoretical debates on nations and nationalisms, he points to how the banal nationalism of everyday language is used to speak uncritically about the perceived homogeneity of countries and nation states. The presumed cultural, the political and historical continuity are cited as contributing to an inner core of a nation. Scheiring's analysis of Hungary's neo-nationalism demonstrates what can happen when the everyday constructions of homogeneous and continuous nations come under threat. Scheiring identifies working-class voters' anger over the violation of the implicit social contract, that is 'informal, everyday moral codes . . . about the hierarchies of authority, the division of labour and the distribution of goods and services', as one of the root causes of their support for Viktor Orbán's Fidesz party.

In three of the articles, everyday nationalism involves strategies aimed at securing or making a claim for a sense of national belonging as adopted by those whose national belonging has come under question or threat. Liinpää details the ways in which ethnic minorities in Scotland experience nationalism in their everyday lives, such as the 'othering gaze' that marks them out as not belonging to the nation. One response to such exclusion is to try to 'fit in', for example, by adopting a Scottish accent or Anglicising their names. Jansen and Skey analyse the destigmatisation strategies used by the elite athletes who faced the accusation of being 'plastic Brits'. These included associating themselves with markers of British culture, for example, learning the words to national songs or appreciating staple British foods such as fish and chips. Yemini et al.'s article shows that the middle-class parents in their study, who experience constant geographical mobility across state borders, put great stock in ensuring that their children develop a sense of belonging to their country of birth. Their strategies for doing so include speaking the language of their country of birth and making national rituals and traditions a part of family life.

The Digital

A dominant theme emerging within current sociological debates over nationalism is the role of digital technology and social media. This is addressed in Rui Hou's review of Schneider's (2018) *China's Digital Nationalism*. The internet has been crucial in disseminating discourses of nationalism, with platforms such as Twitter and Weibo becoming arenas for multiple actors including government, corporations and private users to spread nationalist messages. Some have argued that ICTs will pave the way for 'a cosmopolitan age where the flow of diverse information will educate and empower users' (Schneider, 2018: 220). Schneider's work demonstrates that this is not necessarily the

case. In the People's Republic of China (PRC), the ruling Chinese Communist Party aims to control internet networks through 'hierarchical configurations and carefully circumscribed interactions' on 'authoritative, sanctioned media networks' (2018: 225) such as Weibo. The internet therefore mirrors the authoritative and hierarchical information networks that characterise traditional broadcast media. Both are used to construct 'a single, monolithic national narrative' (2018: 222), thus ensuring that certain discourses of nationalism are celebrated. This Chinese nationalism targets as 'out-groups' Japan, 'the West' and immigrants from African nations. Schneider (2018: 235) warns that digital media have an 'in-built propensity . . . to inspire myopic views' that allow for a nationalism that is anchored in false dichotomies between 'us' and 'them'. The opportunities to influence social media users through paid advertisements or targeted messages ensure that those with the funds have the ability to use nationalist discourse to influence people's voting patterns.

Special Issue Content

We now briefly introduce the nine articles, two essays and three book reviews that comprise this special issue. These include both theoretical interventions in the study of nationalism and empirical studies conducted in different regional contexts. As discussed above, the contributions engage with a range of empirical questions and sociological debates relevant to nationalism.

'Beyond the Nation? Or Back to It? Current Challenges in the Sociology of Nations and Nationalism' by Daniel Chernilo

Chernilo's article provides a critical engagement with three theoretical debates on nations and nationalisms: the problem of methodological nationalism, the debate between primordialism and modernism, and the politics of nationalism. Analysed together, Chernilo claims that due to globalisation and non-state governance, nations and nation states are formed through compatible processes rather than opposed, that nations are composed of the modern and pre-modern and that the particular and universal dimensions must be accounted for in the politics of nationalism. The analysis shows the difficulties created when viewing the nation state through methodological analysis and the shortcomings of a sociology of nationalism. Chernilo takes us through the emergence of postcolonial states, the end of the Cold War and the globalisation–cosmopolitanism coupling versus nationalism. A key objective of the article is to move debates beyond the question of nations as a modern invention, something that Chernilo views as an oxymoron. While discussion of the politics of nationalism usually focuses on right wing nationalism, xenophobic discourses and sovereignty, which demonstrate a particularistic understanding of the nation, Chernilo proposes that in order to understand the politics of nationalism, the universalistic dimension of cosmopolitanism needs to be included. By applying particularism and universalism to nationalism and cosmopolitanism, the article provides a nuanced understanding of the politics of nationalism. It emphasises that a sociological account must include both the regressive and progressive nature of nation states.

'Bringing the State Back into the Sociology of Nationalism: The Persona Ficta *Is Political' by Charles Leddy-Owen*

In his assertion of the importance of considering the state's role in nationalism, Leddy-Owen argues that the state is a *persona ficta*; that is, a seemingly permanent entity which is distinct from governments or members of the political community. Yet it is constructed by and also shapes both government and wider society. This understanding of the centrality of the state requires for Leddy-Owen, a reconsideration of, for example, banal nationalism. He argues that it is important to recognise that national rituals, such as allegiance to the flag, are state-instituted rituals. Distinguishing between state-based and nationalist loyalties are important for Leddy-Owen as it enables a clearer view of social solidarities, loyalties and identifications. He also challenges critiques of nationalism to acknowledge the endurance and longevity of the state. According to Leddy-Owen, sociological analyses have so far left 'the basic conditioning effects and implications of statehood largely unexamined'.

'On the Roles of Institutions and Agency in Nationalism and the Relations between Them: A Theoretical Enquiry into the Study of Nationalism, Its Present and Future' by Benedikte Brincker

Brincker's article explores sociology's contribution to debates on nationalism, through a focus on three key debates. These include: early debates in the 1950s and 1960s between Elie Kerdourie and Ernest Geller; the discussions between ethnosymbolists and modernists during the 1980s and 1990s (including Geller, Anderson and Hutchinson among others); and a more recent third tranche of debates including scholars such as Sinisa Malesevic and Andreas Wimmer who seek to expand nationalism's conceptual boundaries while also incorporating a methodological element. Through an analysis of these key debates Brincker identifies an emerging analytical framework which breaks with the civic-ethnic and primordial constructivist distinctions dominant within nationalism studies. This is explored through the lens of institutions and agencies focused on the arts in Nordic countries. In doing so, Brincker illuminates sociology's role in understanding nationalism's present and future.

'Beyond the Modern: Muslim Youth Imaginaries of Nation in Northern Nigeria' by Máiréad Dunne, Barbara Crossouard, Jennifer Agbaire, Salihu Bakari

Dunne et al. use a postcolonial lens to challenge Eurocentric understandings of nation and its modern associations through empirical research conducted with youth on identifications with the nation state in Northern Nigeria. Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multilingual state created through British colonialism with Christian and Muslim populations separated in the north and south. The findings from the narratives of young people are valuable because they highlight that identifying with the nation state goes beyond a secular understanding which separates state and religion. Orientalist understandings present

non-western societies as pathological and deficient with religion featuring as a major organising factor. Through a poststructuralist understanding of identity as discursively produced and ongoing, the article shows how a national identity in Nigeria is constituted through difference of religion and ethnicity or relations to the 'Other'. The last section is devoted to a discussion on gender at the intersection of religion whereby the postcolonial nation asserts its distinctiveness as anticolonial through the policing of women's bodies.

'The Rise of Indigenous Nationalism: The Case of the Sámi People' by Antti-Aslak Oksanen

In the field of nationalism studies, indigenous nationalism has received relatively little attention. Oksanen's article, based on existing research and interviews with Sámi leaders in Norway, Sweden and Finland, explores how the claims to Sámi national identity in the face of settler colonialism have led to a form of indigenous plurinationalism. Oksanen's analysis shows that Gerald Taiaiake Alfred's (1995) model of how indigenous peoples' claims to national identity proceed helps explain the development of relations between Sámi people and settler states from co-option to conflict. But Alfred's model is not able to explain why earlier campaigns in the 1950s and 1960s were largely unsuccessful, while the mobilisation of Sámi people against the proposed Alta hydropower plant in Norway the 1970s and 1980s led to more fundamental changes, particularly in Norway. Oksanen employs Michael Keating's (2001) work on post-sovereignty to show that we must take into account the numerous international agreements and conventions on the rights of minority and indigenous peoples, which have offered a broader supranational legal-normative context that lends weight to the demands of indigenous nationalist movements and constrains the actions of nation states. Oksanen argues that because of the increasing success of indigenous peoples in claiming their national identity, indigenous nationalism will constitute an important part of nationalism's futures.

'Left Behind in the Hungarian Rustbelt: The Cultural Political Economy of Working-Class Neo-Nationalism' by Gábor Scheiring

Scheiring explores the recent neo-nationalism in Hungary as a Polanyian countermovement against commodification, globalisation and deindustrialisation. Drawing on interviews with workers in four towns, the article analyses the neo-nationalist turn of working-class voters in the Hungarian rustbelt. Working-class identities and the economy are shown to be entwined, with nationalist sentiment rising against a backdrop of social fragmentation, income inequality and cultural differentiation. Scheiring uses the term neo-nationalism with reference to a contemporary form of nationalism which draws on nationalist notions of kinship and cultural identity but within a specific phase of globalisation. The article reveals how a new narrative of working-class neo-nationalism emerges to express workers' anger at commodifying reforms during the transition from socialism to capitalism and the subsequent dissolution of local communities and local culture. This collective narrative identity draws on the nation as a moral community for those feeling left behind.

'When the Nation Becomes Louder: Everyday Nationalism and the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum' by Minna Liinpää

Liinpää's article is based on interviews with minority ethnic voters that were conducted before, during and after the 2014 Scottish independence referendum. The article contributes to the literature on everyday nationalism by arguing that experiencing the everyday as mundane – in this case experiencing belonging to the nation in an unreflexive way – is a racialised privilege only afforded to those who are deemed white. Those who are racialised white can 'blend in' and be inconspicuous, meaning that they can more unproblematically move through everyday public spaces. Racialised minorities, in contrast, are frequent targets of 'the othering gaze' that marks them 'out of place'. While it is true that the boundaries of the nation came to the fore in a more explicit manner in everyday life in the lead-up to and the aftermath of the Scottish independence referendum, Liinpää shows that the experiences of ethnic minorities, particularly racialised minorities, do not fundamentally differ between such times of hyper-nationalism and more 'ordinary' times. Her research participants were consciously aware of nation and nationalism in a range of everyday situations also before the referendum. During the hyper-nationalist context of the referendum, nationalism and the boundaries of the nation merely became 'louder', and ethnic minorities' awareness of their 'otherness' was consequently heightened.

'Who Can Represent the Nation? Elite Athletes, Global Mega Events and the Contested Boundaries of National Belonging' by Joost Jansen and Michael Skey

As with Liinpää's article on the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, Jansen and Skey focus on a key national event because it is at such times that the boundaries of the nation become more explicit. On the one hand, the London Olympics were meant to represent Britain 'as a multicultural, tolerant and inclusive nation', while on the other, foreign-born athletes who had gained British citizenship became the focus of negative media scrutiny as not 'British enough' to represent the nation. In their analysis of media reporting on the ensuing debate over these so-called 'plastic Brits', Jansen and Skey develop a dynamic theoretical framework to account for how boundaries of national belonging are drawn, the official and quotidian markers that are used to do so and how elite athletes try to destigmatise themselves in the face of efforts to exclude them as outsiders. Using Hage's (1998) distinction between institutional and practical belonging, the authors show how the institutional belonging that had been granted the elite athletes in the form of citizenship was not sufficient for them to be counted as belonging to the nation. In addition, the athletes referred to everyday forms of practice, such as an appreciation for 'British humour' and 'British food', to demonstrate that they were sufficiently British to represent the nation. Jansen and Skey's analysis demonstrates that national identity and boundaries of national belonging are never fixed, and that there is no one marker of Britishness that can be used to settle discussions about who does and does not belong to the nation.

'Mobile Nationalism: Mobility, Parenting and Belonging' by Miri Yemini, Claire Maxwell, Aaron Koh, Khen Tucker, Ignacio Barrenechea and Jason Beech

Yemini et al.'s study of mobile nationalism contributes to literatures on cosmopolitanism and on the global middle class who regularly cross national borders. One issue debated within these literatures is whether such people become stateless nomads whose sense of national belonging is weakened. Based on a qualitative interview study conducted with global middle-class parents from Israel, Asia, Latin America and Europe living in Hong Kong, Buenos Aires, Tel Aviv and London, Yemini et al. find that the parents used strikingly similar strategies to keep their children connected to a sense of belonging to their nation of origin, while also ensuring their children's future prospects of global mobility. Yemini et al. call this 'mobile nationalism', a form of everyday nationalism that parents engage in so as to 'consciously educate their children about belonging to a nation'. This mobile nationalism included teaching children the language of their native country (while also ensuring language skills in a 'global' language such as English or Mandarin) and celebrating national and cultural traditions. A sense of belonging to a nation of origin was further strengthened by regularly returning to a 'homeland'. Yemini et al. conclude that in contrast to theories of rootless nomads, the global middle-class parents in their study demonstrated a sense of commitment to nationalism by practising a form of mobile nationalism, meaning that geographical mobility and belonging to a nation state are not mutually exclusive.

'Everyday Nation in Times of Rising Nationalisms' by Marco Antonsich

In his essay, Antonsich examines the nature of everyday nation and its significance in times of heightened nationalisms, particularly in the context of populist politics. He argues that the study of everyday nationalism, which scholars had at one point deemed a thing of the past, continues to matter, particularly at a time of populist nationalism that presents the nation 'as a singular, monocultural and mono-ethnic entity'. Analyses of everyday nationalism can counter such discourses by highlighting the 'messiness' of nations and 'the fact that any nation is a multivocal construct, as people engage in a variety of ways with its content and symbols'. This includes giving voice to those sections of the population, such as racialised minorities, who otherwise find themselves excluded from the national 'we'.

'Coronavirus Conjuncture: Nationalism and Pandemic States' by Malcolm James and Sivamohan Valluvan

James and Valluvan begin their essay with a discussion on how the social contract in Britain seems to be shifting, however temporarily, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As noted above, they argue that part of the explanation for why anti-capitalist ideas are gaining traction can be found in the fact that the mainstream Right have to a degree abandoned traditional capitalist ideology in favour of nationalist sentiment. It is

possible that the (temporary) shift in the social contract brought about by the COVID-19 crisis might offer fertile ground for a more widespread adoption of anti-capitalist notions. And while the pandemic might have to an extent silenced extreme expressions of populist nationalism, as experts and scientists have re-gained some of the public's respect and as universalist sentiment flourishes, James and Valluvan warn of the inevitable return of calls for 'the primacy of the nation-state' and to 'retrench the validity of the border' as well as of 'protectionist scrambles' for a coronavirus vaccine. It is possible that nationalist rhetoric, which has famously hinged on the supposed dangers of specific outsiders, will now orient itself against the perils of 'a general outsider condition'.

Book Reviews

In the book review of Florian Schneider's *China's Digital Nationalism*, Rui Hou discusses the political complexity of China's digital nationalism and its multi-subject approach. Hou highlights the importance of the text for understanding how nationalism is framed by different digital stakeholders and the importance of this for social solidarity in a global context, particularly in light of COVID-19.

Emanuele Toscano, in the review of *Make America Meme Again: The Rhetoric of the Alt-Right* by Heather Suzanne Woods and Leslie A Hahner, draws on the role of memes in Alt-Right discourse. Focused on the Trump presidential campaign, Toscano discusses how the book broadens the scope of nationalist discourse by attending to the way memes use irony to normalise xenophobia, racist and homophobic messages.

In the book review of *Twilight Nationalism: Politics of Existence at Life's End*, by Daniel Monterescu and Haim Hazan, Hilla Dayan discusses the hidden narratives of nationalism in Jaffa. Drawing on the book's rich ethnographic accounts with older members of Jaffa's diverse community, Dayan notes the book's possibilities for a future foregrounded in lived commonalities and shared space.

Conclusion

In sum, the contributions in this special issue offer a rich and multidimensional analysis of the state of nationalism(s) past, present and future. While current developments such as the rise of populism and the COVID-19 pandemic mean that the specific nature of nationalism keeps shifting, some underlying themes remain. The articles speak to the role that states, institutions and individuals play in (re)creating and contesting nationalist ideologies. Furthermore, the exclusionary nature of nationalism is highlighted, as is people's use of strategies to make a claim for national belonging. The contributions also make apparent the presence of nationalism in the everyday and the way that globalisation has come to shape how the national 'we' is drawn in different contexts. What we hope that this special issue helps to demonstrate is the important role that sociology has played and continues to play in understanding and critiquing existing and emergent forms of nationalism.

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