

North Atlantic Perspectives: A Forum on Stuart Hall's *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation, Part I*

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Abstract: Stuart Hall, a founding scholar in the Birmingham School of cultural studies and eminent theorist of ethnicity, identity and difference in the African diaspora, as well as a leading analyst of the cultural politics of the Thatcher and post-Thatcher years, delivered the W. E. B. Du Bois Lectures at Harvard University in 1994. In the lectures, published after a nearly quarter-century delay as *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation* (2017), Hall advances the argument that race, at least in North Atlantic contexts, operates as a 'sliding signifier,' such that, even after the notion of a biological essence to race has been widely discredited, race-thinking nonetheless renews itself by essentializing other characteristics such as cultural difference. Substituting Michel Foucault's famous power-knowledge dyad with power-knowledge-difference, Hall argues that thinking through the fateful triangle of race, ethnicity and nation shows us how discursive systems attempt to deal with human difference. Part I of the forum critically examines the promise and potential problems of Hall's work from the context of North America and western Europe in the wake of #BlackLivesMatter and Brexit. Donna Jones suggests that, although the Birmingham School's core contributions shattered all certainties about class identity, Hall's Du Bois Lectures may be inadequate to a moment when white racist and ethno-nationalist appeals are ascendant in the USA and Europe and that, therefore, his and Paul Gilroy's earlier work on race and class deserve our renewed attention. Kevin Bruyneel examines Hall's work on race in relation to three analytics that foreground racism's material practices: intersectionality, racial capitalism and settler colonialism. William Garcia in the final contribution asks us to think about the anti-immigrant black nativisms condoned and even encouraged by discourses of African-American identity and by unmarked references to blackness in the US context. In 'Fateful Triangles in Brazil,' Part II of *Contexto Internacional's* forum on *The Fateful Triangle*, three scholars work with and against Hall's arguments from the standpoint of racial politics in Brazil.

Keywords: Stuart Hall; Birmingham School of cultural studies; ethno-nationalism; nativism; African-American identity; racial capitalism; intersectionality; settler colonialism.

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An Historical Postscript to Stuart Hall's *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation*

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Upon reading and re-reading Stuart Hall's *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity and Nation*, one cannot resist reflecting back on the panoramic scope of Hall's career as an architect of the field of cultural studies, nor can one help but recall the profound history of the Birmingham School which Hall's sociological and political writings steered throughout the turbulent Thatcher years and beyond. *The Fateful Triangle* marks the culmination of Hall's thinking on social categories of difference, race being the most enduring and destructive of the three. Hall began his career using the unambiguous language of race and ideology. In the essay 'The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media,' Hall (1981: 32) describes the rhetorical dynamics of common-sense rationales for unassimilable cultural differences: 'Ideologies work most effectively when we are not aware that how we formulate and construct a statement about the world is underpinned by ideological premisses; when our formulations seem to be simply descriptive statements about how things are (i.e., must be), or of what we can "take-for-granted.'" Bracketing both the ideology critique and the Althusserian framework of his earlier sociological work, Hall adopts the conceptual framework of post-structuralism: to understand the modalities of race we must first understand it discursively, because while race and racist policies may present themselves as biological fact in an attempt to 'fix difference,' race is primarily discursive: '...it is through its *discursive operations* that race gives meaning to the world, makes a certain kind of sense of the world, constructs an order of intelligibility, organizes human practices within its categories, and thus comes to acquire real effects' (Hall 2018: 81). Race is an enduring, almost mystical concept; a signifier which has no material referent, yet which nonetheless persistently yields real and disastrous lived effects. In thinking race, one attempts to reduce human variation to something fixed, to a set of physical characteristics, or in the most egregious understanding of race, to a substance or a property – the magical thinking of aristocracy – enduring characteristics transmitted through time, somehow in our blood. However, these are archaic understanding of race, Hall argues. Contemporary biological science has disproven race as a biological category; indeed, race is a social construction. And yet race as an explanatory category persists; converging with the discourses of cultural difference and theorizations of ethnicity – 'sliding' from one category to another.

Hall presents this study as a genealogy of the concept of race, an effort to trace its modalities as it transitions through British socio-political periods of the post-war decades. My first question to our forum would be how does this work that so deliberately tackles the conceptualization of race, ethnicity and nation at the height of the push towards British multiculturalism hold up in our present moment in which pluralistic organizational efforts and concepts such as multiculturalism have, in Europe in particular, all but collapsed to be replaced by nationalist, populist and isolationist understandings of culture, ethnicity

and race? Indeed, it is odd to return to Stuart Hall's critical study of the persistence of the race concept in the anodyne discourse of multiculturalism, as the chaos of Brexit unfolds before us. In these brief comments I think it necessary first to quickly detail the historical trajectory of Hall's argument – while *The Fateful Triangle* successfully contests Anthony Appiah's optimistic projection that conceptually race has lost its explanatory utility; Hall's study provides in addition an engaging account of the rise and fall of both social theories of assimilation and multiculturalism; countering Appiah, Hall insists that the concept of race persists in these social policies, subsumed in the discourses of cultural and ethnic difference. Hall concludes the *Fateful Triangle* on both a prescient and somewhat hopeful note: globalization will produce strategies that will endlessly incorporate the conceptual framework of race to account for difference and social hierarchies; yet Hall sees promise in the diaspora.

One objective of these essays is to trace the trajectories of race as it mediates cultural differences – its slippage – from the assimilationist discourse that structured policy and social theory of the postwar migration from Britain's former colonies to the policies of multiculturalism which arose from the limitations of assimilationist discourse. Not to resort to the generalization of a *zeitgeist*, but I believe we might agree that multiculturalism, by Hall's understanding, a discourse promoting a pluralistic understanding of ethnicity, functioned as a strategy to present the social and economic inequalities of the burgeoning neoliberal order as a cacophonous assembly of cultures – this was the era of the clothing brand Benetton's *United Colors* advertising campaign. In his genealogy of the changing conceptualization of race, ethnicity and nation, Hall places multiculturalism as the reaction to the post-war discourse of assimilation. As anyone who has encountered Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* or dissected John Akomfrah's fragmented epic of migration *Nine Muses*, black and Asian immigrants to Britain, the Windrush generation, struggled to make sense of their experience of migration to the metropole through the contesting discourse of assimilation. Assimilation for white Britons who feared difference depicted the new arrivals as 'just like them'; to the newly arrived black and Asian immigrants, assimilation required them to conform to an impossible standard – relinquish who you were, become whom we want you to be, yet know that you will never truly be British. In his sociological work, Hall meticulously detailed the brutal contradictions of Britain's assimilationist ideology (here I am referencing, in particular, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (Hall et al 2013)). However, the development of Thatcherism into the form of a mature and global neoliberalism gave rise to a shift in the ideological framework that would shape the discourse of racial and cultural difference; enter multiculturalism, a strategy which emerged from the explicit failure of assimilation.

Globalization, Hall observes, throws 'cultures contradictorily together'; thus, multiculturalism is one process by which the signification of cultural difference is mediated – 'If I give up my burka will you give up your Union Jack?', Kobena Mercer cites in the introduction (Hall, cited in Mercer 2017: 28). With this effort to acknowledge the social as an assemblage of differences, the state poses as a neutral arbitrator, alternately celebrating and moderating cultural differences. Globalization is the historical endpoint of *The*

Fateful Triangle. Hall connects in passing the discursive dynamics of multiculturalism with the economic dynamics of globalization: globalization post-Thatcher requires forms of identity to take the forms of individual marketable features – cultural habits take on relative social value that in turn reinforce ethnic and racial hierarchies (see Michel Feher's (2018) brilliant analysis of identity and neoliberalism, *Rated Agency: Investee Politics in a Speculative Age*).

However, in 1994, the global economic crisis had yet to occur; the collapse of the world banking system, the imposition of severe austerity programs in the West and the subsequent far-right and nationalist reaction to this crisis require that we imagine an addendum to Hall's thinking. Hall concludes *The Fateful Triangle* advocating the capacity of diaspora as a concept that could evade the confining structure of race. If indeed globalization 'dislocates' us from collective identities in an effort to break forms of solidarity based on shared interests, or shared suffering, keeping us atomized, to force us to understand ourselves as an amalgam of marketable qualities, then, rather than fall into the nostalgic embrace of a lost ethnicity or race, we should recognize and embrace rootlessness as the lived condition from which we construct our identities.

It is prescient that Hall looks to diaspora and rootlessness; of course, one might first surmise that Hall sought to converge his thinking with Paul Gilroy's magisterial *Black Atlantic* published a year earlier in 1993 (see Gilroy 1993). Gilroy argues that the critical potential of black thought and culture should be found in the cultural artifacts that speak directly to the black experience of dislocation – the blues song 'Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child' revealed more about the contingencies of modernity than any attempt to reassemble a lost African past or forge a future from a European present. Nonetheless, now, I can only think of Hall's call to diaspora and rootless in the context of the horrific experiences and realities of global migrant populations in the journeys to Europe and the USA. The current dislocation of thousands, upon thousands of global migrants, their rootlessness, their errant and precarious existence, is the end result of the economic demands of globalization.

Perhaps this is the moment to imagine an addendum or postscript to Hall's contribution – the 'global' of the 'global times' to which Hall refers has changed considerably. It would appear that in this era of nationalist reaction, ironically, globalization has managed to subsume comfortably the archaic language of a nation rooted in blood and soil. Is rootlessness as a critical framework, or an appeal to the unfixing nature of diasporic culture a sufficient corrective to the ethnocentric and racist appeals to the nation that have in this past decade become ascendant? While I have not thought this through in much depth, my instinct directs me to Hall's previous work, his writings on Thatcher and his work on the inseparability of race from class: 'The class relations which inscribe the black fractions of the working class function as race relations. The two are inseparable. Race is the modality in which class relations are experienced' (Gilroy 1982: 282). I have always held that the Birmingham School's signature contribution has been to banish forever any naive understanding of class as a purely abstract concept, autonomous from the discourses of nation or race. I strongly suggest that we revisit these works, this time perhaps, focusing our at-

tention to the multiple modalities of *class* in populist discourse. Indeed, the long aftermath of the Reagan/Thatcher years all but vindicates the assertions of the Birmingham School of the inextricable link between class, race and nation. As the scholarship in whiteness studies has long argued: race has always been the invisible framework structuring the abstraction and universality of class. At moments of crisis, this framework makes itself visible. In this use, this comes in the form of the compound subject of ‘the white working class’ as an indicator of an unadulterated class subject.

I would like to conclude my remarks with a brilliant quote from Paul Gilroy’s “‘Step-pin’ Out of Babylon”: *Class, Race and Autonomy*, which seeks to dampen the enthusiasm of populist revival of the early seventies left political criticism. Gilroy’s observations seem particularly useful today:

The popular discourse of the nation operates across the formal lines of class, and has been constructed *against* blacks [...] It should be clear that the authoritarian statism that signals the transformation of social democracy in this country has been secured on the basis of popular consent. *For us, the racist interpellation of ‘the nation’ is a prime example of social democracy having provided authoritarian populism with popular contradictions on which to operate.* Laclau explains that popular democratic discourses are constructed on the basis of opposition between ‘The People’ and The Power Bloc. However, his followers remain unable to face the fact that for Britain in crisis, ‘The People’ are articulated into a racially specific discourse which has distinctly undemocratic consequences for blacks whom it excludes. For example, where they follow the Fascist dictum and black the bosses for the blacks, the white people confront an ill-conceived vision of the power bloc, alone in racial purity and for the wrong reasons (Gilroy 1982: 278).

To put it plainly, we have returned to a moment of crisis in which populist discourse has mobilized an exclusionary concept of ‘the people.’ In Europe and the United States, political opposition to the excesses of neoliberalism is expressed in an unabashed national/racial populism: class identities that might have indicated shared economic or political interests have given way to identities formed through impromptu rituals of racial or ethnic spectacle – UK Independence Party (UKIP) marches and Trump rallies. We live in an age in which ‘economic anxiety’ and demographic panic are one and the same. A secure and relatively uncontested neoliberalism gave us multiculturalism as a panacea to the social marginalization of immigrants and racial minorities in industrialized West; now, as this system is in crisis, and as the anodyne solutions of tolerance gives way to increasingly authoritarian populism, I ask what would a contemporary version of the *Fateful Triangle* look like?

Thinking with Stuart Hall's *Fateful Triangle* through the Knotted Triangle of Intersectionality, Racial Capitalism and Settler Colonialism

Kevin Bruyneel

In 1994, Stuart Hall (2017: 41) set out the problem: 'Simply put, we have to account for why race is so tenacious in human history, so impossible to dislodge'. In response to arguments from the left to liberal end of the philosophical spectrum that endeavoured to reason away race, he offered a counter-posing foundational premise for addressing this problem:

...I do nevertheless want to advance the scandalous argument that, socially, historically, and politically, race is a discourse; that it operates like a language, like a sliding signifier; that its signifiers reference not genetically established facts but the system of meaning that have come to be fixed in the classifications of culture.... Far from signaling just talk, the term 'discourse' suggests exactly the breaking down of the distinction between the two levels of 'pure ideas' and 'brute practice' in favor of the insistence that all human, social, and cultural practices are always both, that is they are always *discursive practices*. And this means we need to be cautious before too hastily trying to distinguish the discursive from the extradiscursive (Hall 2017: 45-46).

Hall's innovation was to make the case that racial discourse is a practice that is as constitutive and foundational as those that fall under the category of the 'material,' which itself is a discursive framing – and for some an elision – of the inescapably mediated relationships amongst humans and with the world around us. Thus, good faith efforts to demonstrate the lack of biological, cultural or otherwise essential sources of race run into two problems. First, the signifier of race slides from one premise to another and thus cannot be pinned down outside of an engagement with the system of social meaning in which it exists. In this regard, the notion of race as a sliding signifier references not its mystical qualities – as if at one point it might just slide right off the page not to bother us again – but rather its constitutive and adaptive function in the systems of meaning in contemporary societies. Secondly, therefore, one can only grasp and engage with the persistence of race by critically engaging this wider system, not imagining or hoping that race can be split off from it, as somehow epiphenomenal, an effect or symptom of an 'extradiscursive' cause. Hall is telling us that there is no outside here; the call is coming from inside the house! Still, regardless of the coherence of his claims, the case he was making in the mid-1990s seemed to him so farfetched as to lead him to suggest he was veering into argumentative territory that was nothing less than scandalous. That he felt compelled to so qualify his argument speaks to the degree to which, in his time, the tenacity of race was an ironic consequence

of the dominance of political, philosophical and social views that deemed race somehow detachable or disposable from more fundamental, structural concerns.

Twenty-five years later, an argument such as Hall's about the role of race as a discursive practice that refuses the distinction of 'pure ideas' and 'brute practice' still raises eyebrows, especially from those who persist in finding comfort in the perceived concreteness and therefore ostensible *truth* of 'materiality' versus the purported mystification of that which is called discourse. The 2016 US presidential primary campaign of Senator Bernie Sanders for the Democratic Party nomination may have provided the best example of this difficulty. Sanders made a serious run for the Democratic nomination from the political left of the centrist norms of the party, building his case around a policy vision based upon an economic redistributive agenda that was avowedly socialistic in many respects. He succeeded in mobilizing support for his candidacy by addressing class-based socio-economic concerns, with the aim that doing so would serve to alleviate racial inequality, among others. However, for all of Sanders' progressive credentials, proposals and legitimacy, especially in the face of corporate capitalist Democratic Party opposition, he still struggled to articulate the relationship of race and class in explaining the reasons for and conditions of inequality in the United States, and how to address them. This is not to say there was a lack of effort on Sanders' part, certainly better than his centrist opponent, Hillary Clinton. Yet he could not quite convey, in speech and policy, one of Stuart Hall's (1980: 314) definitive insights, which is that 'race is...the modality in which class is lived, the medium through which class relations are experienced.' These are Hall's words in 1980, a precursor to the sliding signifier/race as discourse argument of 1994, in which he guides us to see that class speaks through and is constitutively shaped by race. As such, one cannot analyse or organize on class lines without addressing the differential racial experience of class in its socio-economic, cultural, political and ideological forms. In our time, the lessons offered by Hall still face difficulty in taking root in political life. However, I want to turn our attention to increasingly imperative analytics that reflect not just Hall's spirit of critical intervention but those of scholars and activists before, during and after his time. The three analytics are intersectionality, racial capitalism and settler colonialism. They exist in a mutually implicated relationship with one another even if they have not all taken hold to the same degree in the systems of meaning of the already well-worn 21st century.

Intersectionality signifies the need to understand oppression not from a single axis (patriarchy, racism, colonialism, heteronormativity, capitalism, ableism, etc.), but from the intersecting dynamics of two or more of these axes that shape most experiences of domination, exclusion and marginalization. In this regard, it is not a coincidence that black women are the political and intellectual source of this increasingly mobilized analytic, tracing from the Combahee River Collective (1977; see also Taylor 2017) to legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) and such scholar-activists as Cathy Cohen (1997). In many ways, intersectionality points to the inadequacy of an analytical triangle of 'race, ethnicity and nation' when the tenacity of each of these necessarily implicate, as a start, the oppression and normalization of gender and sexuality. The Movement for Black Lives that emerged in 2012, founded by Alicia Garza, Patrice Cullors, and Opal Tometi – three

women of colour, two of whom are queer – transformed the signification of racial struggle in the United States, and beyond, with the hashtag/phrase #BlackLivesMatter. From the beginning, as Garza (2014) makes clear, ‘Black Lives Matter affirms the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, Black-undocumented folks, folks with records, women and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. It centres those that have been marginalized within Black liberation movements. It is a tactic to (re)build the Black liberation movement.’ Note that the strategy here is to address the tenacity of race through its intersected and thus constitutive relationship to various axes of oppression as the means to rebuilding and redefining black liberation politics. This redefining is not about being more inclusive, which denotes the multicultural assimilatory language that Hall warns is the emergent neoliberal competitor to an anti-racist perspective. Rather, it seeks to signify those who *always already* constitute this racial formation but who have not been politically represented as such. Thus, Black Lives Matter stands as a contemporary discursive practice that fulfils and extends Hall’s advocacy of understanding race as a discourse that ‘suggests exactly the breaking down of the distinction between the two levels of “pure ideas” and “brute practice”’ (Hall 2017: 46). The intersectional approach of the Movement for Black Lives references neither just an idea nor brute practice but rather the discursive practices that condition racial oppressions – oppressions in the plural – in ways that are necessarily ideational and material at once and thus upset the cohesiveness of the ideal/material distinction – an upsetting that is necessary if we are to seriously attend to the problem.

While intersectionality and Black Lives Matter have made their way into the public discourse around race, serious critiques of capitalism remain marginalized from the public sphere, for the most part. However, in academic circles one can witness a movement to connect the history and present of racial oppression to the history and practices of capitalism. The idea that race, slavery and capitalism are mutually constituted formations in US and global history was set out by W.E.B. Du Bois ([1935] 1998) in the early 20th century. Cedric Robinson (1983: 2-3) gave the concept more precise theorization in the 1980s in his book *Black Marxism*: ‘As a material force, then, it could be expected that racialism would inevitably permeate the social structures emergent from capitalism. I have used the term “racial capitalism” to refer to this development and to the subsequent structure as an historical agency.’ As historian Walter Johnson (2018) put it, in a 2018 essay, ‘The history of racial capitalism...is a history of wages as well as whips, of factories as well as plantations, of whiteness as well as blackness, of “freedom” as well as slavery.’ It is also a history, as Johnson notes, of gender and sexual oppression, the use and abuse of black women to reproduce a slave population, and the dispossession of Indigenous people from their lands. While this analytic has not gained meaningful traction in more mainstream political discourse, racial capitalism has begun to offer scholarly analysts a way to grasp the problem of the tenaciousness of race by examining its mutually constitutive relationship to capitalism. To recall the dilemma faced by Bernie Sanders in 2016, racial capitalism compels those seeking to mobilize around socio-economic inequality to understand the need to address racial oppression as a constituent of capital oppression, not just as a consequence of it. In the spirit of Hall’s (2017: 118) claim that ‘the ways that liberalism and

Marxism alike tell the story of modernity are one-sided and incomplete,' racial capitalism is an effort to intervene in the system of meaning to tell a multi-sided story to correct for those focused on either race alone, as liberals tend to do, or capitalism alone, as can be the case with Marxists. At its most basic level, racial capitalism can open up an understanding that to be an anti-capitalist means being an anti-racist, and vice versa.

Settler colonialism is historically and politically interwoven with and mutually shaped by intersectional oppressions and racial capitalism, but it is the one of these three that is often disavowed from the discourse and politics of race. This disavowal is critical to understanding the problem of race. If race is a sliding signifier, then settler colonialism and Indigeneity are disavowed ones, there and not-there at the same time. Settler colonialism refers to the dispossession of Indigenous people from their lands and the settlement of colonizers upon said land. As Patrick Wolfe (2006: 388) put it, 'settler colonizers come to stay; invasion is a structure not an event.' In settler colonial contexts, such as the United States and Canada, the tectonic plates of settler colonial dispossession are the under-attended factors that are the condition of possibility for the sliding dynamic of race as a signifier. Indigenous studies scholars such as Jodi Byrd (2011), Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2015) and Circe Sturm (2002) have offered keen insight on the relationship of race to Indigeneity and of white supremacy to settler colonialism. In their own way, they each demonstrate how one cannot grasp the functioning of race and white supremacy in settler contexts without attending to their relationship to Indigeneity and settler colonialism, beginning with the intertwined historical relationship of slavery and land dispossession in settler contexts such as the United States. However, for the most part, scholars and activists whose central focus is on race have found it difficult to acknowledge the constitutive role of settler colonialism and Indigeneity in race discourse. This is an example of what I call settler memory, which refers to the existence of knowledge about Indigenous and settler colonial history, even in some rudimentary form, that is nevertheless disavowed of its importance for understanding the political and cultural challenges and imperatives of our time. Settler memory plays an important role in the play of signification in settler societies. The inability to seriously acknowledge the role of settler-colonial history and Indigenous presence in the system of meaning further enables the capacity of race, ethnicity and nation to slide, because settler belonging on the land remains constructed as a matter not up for discussion, investigation and challenge. It appears settled as a political matter in the settler system of meaning. This makes the formation of anti-racist principles and practices that much more difficult, as it presumes, rather than refuses to accept and thereby resist, these conditions of possibility for the perpetuation of white supremacist settler societies. However, when settler memory is refused, which means directly engaging with the political implications of settler colonialism's constitutive role in the system of meaning of settler societies rather than disavowing its relevance, a new way of thinking and mobilizing about racial and intersecting forms of oppression and racial capitalism can become clearer.

At the end of his final 1994 Harvard lecture, which thus concludes *The Fateful Triangle*, Hall called upon theorists to refuse accepted truths about the conditions of our political existence: 'The task of theory in relation to the new cultural politics of difference is not

to think as we always did, keeping the faith by trying to hold the terrain together through an act of impulsive will, but to learn to think *differently*' (Hall 2017: 174). While Hall was not referring to settler colonialism here, I close by suggesting that it is our task to intervene in race discourse with attention to settler colonialism in order raise the vital matter of how it shapes the system of meaning regarding the relationships among people, and of people to the land and to non-human life. Hall sought to upset the notion of a distinction between ideas and brute practice, and in that spirit we must take more seriously the discursive place of land in the systems of racial meaning, especially in settler societies whose existence depends on dispossession and claims to belonging through such constructs as race, ethnicity and nation. The dispossession of Indigenous people from their lands is the *sine qua non* of settler societies and exists in a fundamental relationship to modern racial capitalism developed and maintained through practices of intersectional oppression. Centring this relationship in our critical analysis and politics should compel us to think and act *differently* about the problem of race, or at least place us on the path toward doing so.

Bridging Blackness, Ethnicity, and Nation in the United States

William Garcia Medina

In Stuart Hall's (2017: 81) *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation* he argues that racial discourse is not a form of truth in any case, but rather 'a regime of truth.' This regime of truth I believe is within a set that considers race, nation, and ethnicity as identities of difference that have had pivotal meanings in the shaping of blackness as a concept in the United States. Adding to the dialogue that Hall presents in this work, I want to draw attention to the need to incorporate ethnicity and nationality within the field of Africana Studies by providing a simple reflection on the relationship between these when we talk about black race, black ethnicity and black nationalism and nativism. The reality is that there is a regime of truth that we find in the resurgence of black nativism and black conservatism in the United States as a result of migration from other places in the African diaspora. In this case, how can we think of blackness diasporically if we do not address how race, nation and ethnicity create a regime of truth for how blackness in the United States is understood, policed, surveilled and shaped?

Black conservatism and black nativism have increased, thereby forcing us to consider the political end of Africana Studies as a field. In addition, Hall asserts that this distinctive area of difference – the shared languages, traditions, religious beliefs, cultural ideas, customs and rituals that bind together particular groups – where race is subsumed is also known as ethnicity. In the case of the United States, the Black Power movement may have been interpreted as a global movement underscoring the dispersal of black bodies through colonialism and imperialism, but, parochially, in the United States, the Black Power movement was interpreted as an extension of black American citizenship. This contradiction

was overlooked by many scholars who decided to continue with an Afro-diasporic stance without taking into account the real implications of black Americanness considered as coterminous with the political landscape of US national history.

Most recently, African-American conservatives like Herman Cane, Allen West, Ben Carson among others are in the political spotlight. Concurrently, black conservative Facebook pages such as 'Common Sense Black Conservatism,' 'African-American Conservatives,' and so forth rose in membership as I was able to observe. They were posting proudly about their guns, which reminded me of how American conservatives and also the Black Panther Party both have argued for their rights to participate in the US Constitution's Second Amendment freedoms. It was interesting to see these black conservatives celebrating the proposal to put Harriet Tubman on the \$20 bill, just as I saw on other black Facebook pages, like 'Black Studies and Critical Thinking,' which claims to '...provide a space where individuals from all walks of life, nationalities, and cultural backgrounds can freely engage in thought-provoking discussions rooting in any manner of Subjects [sic] relevant to, and that has an impact on, the black community at large' (see *Black Studies & Critical Thinking* n.d.). Yet, here I saw many express anti-immigrant sentiments and see some remnants of black American nativism in a social media digital space that claimed to tend to issues in a black diaspora community.

If this is black American nativism, then what would it mean to acknowledge it as a 'regime of truth' being that black American nativism has been around for more than a hundred years? Daryl Scott (1999) reminds us that A. Phillip Randolph, a civil rights leader during the 1920s, was a black nativist against immigration and initiated the 'Garvey Must Go' campaign to deport Marcus Garvey. Ira Reid's (1939) work also reminds us of the atrocious history of black American nativism in the 'social media' of the early twentieth century, i.e., newspapers, word of mouth and of course popular culture. How is it that we haven't talked about this more in Black or Africana Studies circles? Why is it now with twenty-first-century social media that we can see this blatant nativism happening among both black conservatives and black liberals in the USA? These sides disagree on many things, but they also have things in common. Finding similarities between these groups, such as the American Descendants of Slaves movement (ADOS), emerging from liberal and conservative political strands, made me think of diaspora dystopically. Why do 'regimes of truth' like ADOS exist? Is it because of a lack of black immigrant representation in textbooks, in black museums, in black Hollywood? Or, is it about structures of signification?

Historically, black American nativism as a racial discourse that claims to be a regime of truth has had its benefits. Susan Roth Breitzer's (2011) article, 'Race, Immigration, and Contested Americanness: Black Nativism and the American Labor Movement, 1880-1930,' notes that US black nativism during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era was a strategy for group advancement during a critical period in North American labour and immigration history. Furthermore, Jodi Melamed (2011: 20) emphasizes that '...liberal anti-racism after World War II valorised a set of altruistic Americanisms – abstract equality, individual rights, and marketed liberties – as the substantive content of anti-racism. Along with the social engineering of white attitudes, achieving racial justice meant including African

Americans in the community of the American creed.' This is to say that Black Americanness also becomes part of a regime of Americanness itself. Ira Reid's (1939) seminal study on black immigration *The Negro Immigrant: His Background, Characteristics, and Social Adjustments, 1899-1937* reminds us that black Americans who demanded black US assimilation thereby reinforced the black/white bifurcation through a coloniality of power that interacted with the politics of US integration and also became complicit in anti-black migrant discourses since the early twentieth century. In other words, this is what it looked like to buy into this regime of truth of blackness in the United States. Black nativism polices not only citizenship, but also blackness.

The ever-increasing number of black immigrants and other immigrants from Latin America, the media success of black British actors and activists and the recent visibility of Afro-Latinos in the United States has caused a resurgence of paranoia and black nativism in the United States on the part of many black Americans, especially from working-class backgrounds. These instances challenge the social logic of black Americanness. The twenty-first century has witnessed a steady rise of black American nativism due to the increase of African migration and their view as competitors who have come to 'take their jobs' (see Grant Nieva 2011). In other words, even within racial discourses of difference, there is ethno-racialized and nationalized 'otherness from within' a country vis-à-vis iterations of blackness that are 'otherness from without,' as described by Tina Campt (2005). I believe Stuart Hall missed the mark that black ethnics are supposed to be 'others from without' but become 'others from within' because of race and nationality. The term ethnicity has caught the attention of many scholars who like Hall are interested in revisiting its implications with race and nation. Although many Africana Studies scholars began challenging and abandoning the significance of nationality and ethnicity with notions such as 'overlapping diasporas,' 'black unity,' 'black internationalism,' 'diasporic blackness,' the field began to assume these factors would not need to be explored.

Hall (2017: 81) was cognizant of the need to explore ethnicity when he argued

But one implication of my viewpoint is that with all of the discourses of difference we are really on the terrain of the making of meaningful distinctions, which has always to be seen as articulated with the operations of power – with the real and symbolic effects of subordination and subjectification – which in turn, work to position all discursive systems within its symbolic boundaries.

Hall (2017: 85) underscores the global dimensions of contemporary migrations and the unexpected return of ethnicity to the late modern or postmodern stage: 'In this way, my aim is to see the question of ethnicity – alongside and in an uneasy and unresolved relationship to race, on the hand, and to nation, on the other – as posing a key problem that radically unsettles all three terms.' 'Posing the question in this way,' he states, 'presents us with what I see as *the* problem of living with difference – in a manner that is not only analogous the problem of the "color line" that W. E. B. Du Bois pointed to more than a hundred years ago but also a historically specific transformation of it' (Hall 2017: 86).

As Craig Calhoun (2007: 51) argues,

Neither nationalism nor ethnicity is vanishing as part of an obsolete traditional order. Both are a modern set of categorical identities invoked by elites and other participants in political and social struggles. These categorical identities shape everyday lives, offering both tools for grasping pre-existing homogeneity and difference and for constructing specific versions of such identities.... Ethnic solidarities and identities are claimed most often where groups do not seek 'national' autonomy but rather a recognition of internal to or crosscutting national or state boundaries.

In this sense, the idea of black Americans composing 'a nation within a nation,' the nomenclature of 'African American,' can also be interpreted as a form of ethnic solidarity. Unlike ethnicity marking foreignness in a country, ethnicity in this sense is intertwined with nationality. Therefore black American identity as *the* ethnic identity of the nation is central to claims such as 'We built this country,' which have been used by liberal, radical and conservative political discourses. Thus, blackness, nationality and ethnicity intersect, while making blackness seem to be solely about racial signifiers.

While black American identity and nationalism are deemed incommensurable due to discourses that arose after the Black Power movement, *black identity* and *American identity* are still operating interdependently. The rise of Afrocentric philosophy as a result of the Black Power movement sought to re-educate black American self-love and self-emanicipation by dissociating itself from integrationist and accommodationist discourses promulgated by earlier black American figures, such as Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, who sought to incorporate black Americans into the national fabric.

A refreshingly critical approach to black nationalism, already explored by overlooked scholars such as William J. Moses (1988, 1993) and Tunde Adeleke (1998), must take into account the importance of nationalism in the twenty-first century. Certainly, I would like to suggest that there is a need to overcome the limited discourses that ensued from black radicalism during the 1960s, which sought to project black Americans as antithetical to nationalism. It is important to view nationalism in relation to empire and colonialism, and attempt to demonstrate how black American national identity is constantly manifested in everyday North American life. Yet much of the Black Power movement sought to rekindle an imagined sense with the African continent while never rejecting their North American citizenship.

As already mentioned, the field of African American studies has seemingly ignored the important role of nationalism as an articulation of black American identity. It is unclear how we are to engage other important theoretical developments such as black queer studies, black feminist theory, Afro-diasporic theory, black phenomenology, post-blackness and so forth without acknowledging and parsing through black American nationalism and nativism's 'regime of truth.' Black *American* identity still remains all around us: in media such as movies and social networks, in sports, public historical sites, museums,

different political ramifications, literature, affect among other things. Furthermore, xenophobic discourse on black immigrants as ‘monkey chasers’ or ‘African booty scratchers’ in US black comedy results in acculturative stress, social distancing and the pervasive reality of black US essentialisms as gridlocked through a black/white bifurcation. Ethnicity and its implications for how we think about black identity and group representation in the United States are an important factor that seldom becomes intersected with scholarly dialogues and instead becomes circumvented into a black/white bifurcation that legitimizes a certain acceptable and essentialized black identity while silencing ‘unusual blackness.’

Indeed, Moses (1993: ix) reminds us that ‘although the fashion of emphasizing “difference” in approaches to Afro-American studies is certainly legitimate, one should never forget that black Americans have been immersed in mainstream Protestant American traditions since the revolutionary period.’ Moses’s focus on the intersections between the Protestant Christian messianic tradition and black American identity are related to John Armstrong’s conception of modern nationalism as a result of ethnic persistence, that is defined by exclusion which overlap with religious and class loyalties (see Ozkirimli 2010: 145-147). Slavery becomes the impetus for black nationalism and later adaptations of Anglo-Saxon traditions into black American culture. One can say that this forms the basis for what constitutes a native black American from a non-native black American. In this sense, the black nationalism that arose from the 1960s and 1970’s was not a tabula rasa but rather a continuum fundamentally multi-dimensional. Ethnoscymologists pose fundamental questions about nationalism that should not be overlooked (Ozkirimli 2010: 148-149; Armstrong 2008): *Who* is the nation? What are the ethnic bases and models of modern nations? Why did these particular nations emerge?

Black American scholars and black American organizations tend to omit the word American by solely using the word ‘black’ – the Black Love Symposium, the Black Caucus, Black Lives Matter, Black Power, the Black Church, Black People – all the while ignoring the word ‘*American*.’ But just because the word is ignored does it mean it is not there? The literature on black radicalism and the African diaspora have omitted the importance of the nationality and ethnicity within black American discourse. Those of us who work with black migrants and Afro-diasporic literature need to add the word ‘American’ to many of those terminologies in order to understand what black Americans mean when ‘black’ becomes the all-encompassing terminology.

In closing, black American identity is deeply and particularly rooted and encrusted within the fabric of the American national discourse, and this needs to be the centre of conversation when thinking about black diasporic difference. While discussions of Afro-diasporicity and black migrant creolizations in the United States are important, we need to understand the various reasons why black American racial discourses refuse to acknowledge black ethnic experiences. Furthermore, what is at stake in demanding that black ethnic experiences in the United States be at the centre of black racial discourse? Black American identity continues to serve as the poster child for radicalism and democracy, when black nationalist historiography clearly demonstrates that black American identity can be oppressive as well. The word *black* attempts to include all black people in

the United States but it doesn't mean it is devoid of national attachments and nativist belief systems. There are meaningful distinctions of blackness and black Americanness that are 'articulated with the operations of power' (Hall 2017: 81), by which blackness must remain within its symbolic boundaries of Americanness. My aim in this contribution was to underscore the need to intersect black American identity, ethnicity, nativism and nationality when we discuss black identity in the United States in order to have a better understanding of what the implications are when a discourse of US blackness is framed as the sole vehicle of freedom for all black peoples in the United States and the African diaspora.

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Perspectivas do Atlântico Norte: Um Fórum sobre The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation, de Stuart Hall, Parte II

Resumo: Stuart Hall, um acadêmico fundador da Escola de Birmingham de estudos culturais e eminente teórico de etnia, identidade e diferença na diáspora africana, bem como um dos principais analistas da política cultural dos anos Thatcher e pós-Thatcher, realizou as Palestras W. E. B. Du Bois na Universidade de Harvard em 1994. Nas palestras, publicadas após um atraso de quase um quarto de século como *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation* (2017), Hall avança o argumento de que a raça, pelo menos nos contextos do Atlântico Norte, funciona como um 'significante escorregadio,' de modo que, mesmo depois que a noção de uma essência biológica para a raça tenha sido amplamente desacreditada, o raciocínio racial, no entanto, se renova ao essencializar outras características, como a diferença cultural. Substituindo a famosa díade de Michel Foucault com conhecimento-poder-diferença, Hall argumenta que pensar através do triângulo fatídico da raça, etnia e nação nos mostra como os sistemas discursivos tentam lidar com a diferença humana. A Parte I do fórum examina criticamente as promessas e potenciais problemas do trabalho de Hall a partir do contexto da América do Norte e da Europa Ocidental, na esteira do #BlackLivesMatter e do Brexit. Donna Jones sugere que, embora as principais contribuições da Escola de Birmingham destruíssem todas as certezas sobre a identidade de classe, as palestras de Du Bois proferidas por Hall podem ser inadequadas a um momento em que os apelos racistas e étnico-nacionalistas ascendentes nos EUA e na Europa e que, portanto, o trabalho anterior de Paul Gilroy sobre raça e classe merece uma atenção renovada. Kevin Bruyneel examina o trabalho de Hall sobre raça em relação a três análises que expõem as práticas materiais do racismo: intersetorialidade, capitalismo racial e colonialismo de colonos. William Garcia na contribuição final nos pede para pensar sobre os nativismos negros anti-imigrantes tolerados e até encorajados pelos discursos da identidade afro-americana e por referências não marcadas à negritude no contexto dos EUA. Em 'Fateful Triangles in Brazil', Parte II do Fórum da Contexto Internacional sobre *The Fateful Triangle*, três estudiosos trabalham com e contra os argumentos de Hall do ponto de vista da política racial no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: Stuart Hall; Escola de Birmingham de estudos culturais; étno-nacionalismo; nativismo; identidade Afro-americana; capitalismo racial; interseccionalidade; colonização de povoamento.

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