"Sociological Political Economy of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion"

for the Edward Elgar *Research Handbook on Historical Sociology*, ed. Marco H.D. van Leeuwen

Kerice Doten-Snitker

Santa Fe Institute

Abstract:

Historical sociology overlaps in interests with a new subfield in social science, historical political economy (HPE). This chapter introduces historical sociologists to HPE through pointing out shared interests and placing the goals of HPE within the current of historical sociology. Historical sociology is looking ever more towards the genesis and maintenance of social categories, especially race. HPE has likewise been interested in how difference is created, and with what consequences for politics and economics. In this chapter, I identify how HPE has answered these questions and what openings there are for historical sociologists to add to this young field.

Keywords: historical political economy, identity, inclusion, discrimination

Total word count: 7602

The social construction and politics of difference had a heyday in the 1990s and early 2000s in sociology and political science with the unfolding of a new wave of scholarship on nationalism. Against a backdrop of new independences, separatism, and regime change,

historical social science pondered the possibilities for pluralism through looking again at the geneses and maintenance of political identities. The scholarly headlines were deep dives into the meaning of "group" (Brubaker, 2004) and debates over the historical determinants of the formation of different groups, with organizational (Varshney, 2002), symbolic (Lamont, 2000), relational (Hale, 2008), and social structural (Gould, 1995; Hechter, 2000) explanations. No single explanation won out.

Today's scholars work against a very different backdrop. The older debates continue, but they contend with different sets of dynamics. While past cleavages were often geographically limited and had correspondingly local political conciliations, today's agitations extend throughout states and span continents. The prime example is Black Lives Matter. It, and other political movements like it, draws attention to a shared political economy of exclusion, enacted within the US specifically but also similarly across Europe and the Western Hemisphere through the heritage of Western imperialism. It is no wonder, then, that historical social science has pivoted to stress cross-cutting factors like political economy and empire in diagnosing group-based inequalities. While research on capitalism and imperialism is not a new phenomenon, the past decade has seen particular growth on the topic of how these phenomena relate to racialization.

This essay bridges sociological perspectives and historical sociology on political economy with historical political economy (HPE) on the topic of social difference, namely in racialization, ethnicity, and religion. In common conception and in print, HPE is definitionally outside of sociology. Workshop calls for papers name economics and political science as their only fields of interest. In their introduction to the recent handbook on this interdisciplinary field, Jenkins and Rubin describe HPE as studying "how political and economic actors and institutions have interacted in the past or over time" (2024). Two

handbook contributors are sociologists.[1] There is nothing in the practice or in Jenkins and Rubin's definition that functionally excludes sociology.

In fact many sociologists would describe themselves as researching this phenomenon. Sociologists hover around the same intellectual territory in areas of collective action, organizations, and neoinstitutionalism, but without occupying the same professional spaces. HPE is often quantitative in methods, and historical sociology's predilection for archival and narrative methods may be one reason for mutual non-recognition. Another is certainly perceived differences in theories and vocabularies. But there is plenty of overlap. And especially with research on historical racialization, ethnicity, and religion moving further into the mainstream in political science and economics, HPE is moving nearer to historical sociology (Bateman et al., 2024; Suryanarayan & White, 2024).

As an entry point into contemporary historical sociology on racialization, ethnicity, and religion, I begin this chapter in historical social science on two of the biggest factors on modern political economy: capitalism and imperialism. Historical sociology gravitates ever more to the role of these twins in creating and maintaining difference. Lessons from this area can be applied generally to studying the government of difference, so in a second section I describe how a sociological insistence on describing the constitution of difference, ever-present in the literature on racial capitalism and colonialism, helps us analyse the historical political economy of difference. I draw a line between the animating questions of racial capitalism and HPE, reviewing recent answers from the latter to the questions of the former. Finally, I wrap up with research on how the meso-level – groups and organizations – matter for the macro-level outcomes of inclusion and exclusion.

[1] Adam Slez (Slez, 2024) and Steven Pfaff (Becker & Pfaff, 2024)

Capitalism, imperialism, and racialization

Research on racial capitalism and imperialism has pushed the study of categories and their consequences in new directions. As a concept and perspective, racial capitalism aids in theorizing and describing how politics and economics intertwine to incentivize categorical discrimination and the erection, or extension, of systems that perpetuate disadvantage. Scholars in this area have reinterpreted stories of state and market development in ways that help elucidate the stickiness of racialization.[2] Simultaneously, we see states and markets in fresh ways. To paraphrase Michener, SoRelle, and Thurston (2022), we will misunderstand political economies when we do not study how and why they marginalize, disadvantage, or victimize.

For example, Thurston (2018) and Robinson (2020) both study how twentieth century interventions in housing markets expanded the American state. This is no large departure from the bread and butter of political economy. However, each highlights how the extension of credit was imbued with racial thinking about who deserved public assistance, and for whom the state should be expanded. Consequently, they each argue, the state was visible as participant in the housing market for the majority white American public only when intervention included black Americans. The invisibility of the state is a resource for policy that manages political conflicts (Quinn, 2019). If the state is intermittently visible in direct variation with who policy aids, then some conflicts will be mitigated and others stoked – here, class conflicts and racial conflicts, respectively. Racial economic inequalities have been perpetually exacerbated through racialized market access. The interaction of race – as historically constructed – and market power reifies race as a category and layers on contemporary social meaning.

[2] Sociologists stress the ongoing creation and maintenance of "race." The term "racialization" captures this active social process. "Racial formation" is a near cousin, but implies focus on the genesis of race.

The broadest version of racial capitalism rests on the premise that "race and capitalism are mutually supporting" (Táíwò & Bright, 2020). This could be left here, as a concept more than a theory, as it often is in common parlance. But a robust sociological version of racial capitalism asks what kinds of racial thinking are deployed where and when, how those ideas are called upon instead of others, and to what consequences. The core theoretical position, as developed by W.E.B. Du Bois (1935), Oliver C. Cox (1970), Stuart Hall (2018), Cedric Robinson (2020), and Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2002, 2007), is that capitalism and racialization are constitutive of each other and inseparable: racialization and capitalism developed together, and racialization could not exist except in the modern world, as birthed through (colonial) capitalism.[3]

W.E.B. Du Bois was interested in how modernity and its relationships, to self and to others in one's own society and to societies beyond, were woven through with racism. In his chapter in this volume, Martin Ruef outlines Du Bois' theory of the economic, social, and psychological costs of slavery and its lingering traces. Through personal experience traveling in different societies (Thomas, 2020), Du Bois built theory that helps develop global and intertemporal comparisons of ethnoracial hierarchies under capitalism. The return of Du Boisian theorizing (Itzigsohn & Brown, 2020; Morris, 2015) gives language and tools for describing the invisible racial or ethnic nature of political economy when dominated by one group.

The *global color line*, one of Du Bois' key concepts, describes the social construction of whiteness and non-whiteness through Euro-American slavery and colonialism, placing subjugated and exploited peoples across the world in similar separation from Euro-Americans, yet in forms specific to their contexts. The color line thus calls attention to the

[3] For one recent exchange on the goals and usefulness of "racial capitalism" as sociological theory, see Wacquant (2023b, 2023a), Bhambra and Holmwood (2023), and Subrahmanyam (2023). See also Ralph and Singal (2019).

ways that colonizers deployed racializing logics of governance across contexts, creating new categories, inventing new discriminations, and spurring rhyming legacies. Quisumbing King (2019) calls on others to join her in asking how the color line is enforced for different groups, at different times, and through different institutions. She illustrates her argument for comparative racisms through how US policies targeting different racialized groups shaped population demographics both inside the US and in countries the US has colonized. Without the lens of the color line, we flatten meaningful differentiation; we might expect the US to have one single and uniformly applied logic of imperialism, and the UK another, and so on. Without the lens of the color line, we also are prone to importing inappropriate racial concepts across scholarly objects; we might expect to have one single, global logic of racism in uniformly applied categorizations.

The classical theory of racial capitalism -- that capitalism and racialization cannot exist independently, and racialization is uniquely modern -- curtails the investigation of political economy and difference-making to as far as modern European and Western hegemony extend. It blocks off earlier times from view and makes fuzzy any contemporary settings where capitalism is less dominant or where Euro-American colonialism has had a smaller footprint. If the core of racial capitalism theorizing is to investigate variation in racial thinking across time and place, then Du Bois' concept of the color line can be extrapolated to question how subjugation based in racial thinking has placed groups of people into common relationships with dominating groups.

In my own studies of premodern European antisemitism (Doten-Snitker, 2021, Forthcoming), I have observed from the historiography that Jewishness was physically essentialized and was grounds for (at times violent) financial exploitation by Christian elites and institutionalized discrimination in marketplaces across European societies. Premodern European political economies incorporated antisemitism, politically and economically

rationalizing Jewish difference and suitability for exclusion. This is a test case for the classical theory of racial capitalism. Since the setting was pre-capitalist and yet racial thinking was employed, it questions how inalienable capitalism is from racialization, as compared with other exploitative and/or violent economic systems.

As the case of premodern European antisemitism demonstrates, a fundamental problem with insisting on the modernity of racialization is the misunderstanding of premodern social constructions of difference. Theory developer Cedric Robinson did grant the existence of pre-capitalist racialisms – but his ideas of premodern race sound more like our contemporary notions of ethnicity (Go, 2021, p. 40) rather than race, seeing cultural differentiation without the implication of biology inequality. In contrast, the humanistic scholarship of the past two decades has demonstrated the premodern European biologically essentializing conceptions of group identity (Hendricks, 2010; Heng, 2018; Kim, 2019, 2022; Lopez-Jantzen, 2019; Lumbley, 2019; Weeda, 2021), which makes them more like racializations than previously acknowledged. That same scholarship pushes these conceptions back in time – not just on the eve of and with the first external colonial endeavours.

Generally, advances from the perspective of racial capitalism can be fed back into historical social science writ large through three tactics: (1) to focus on racialization, on the process of differentiation and exclusion; (2) to see similarities between modern racism and other exclusions, without insisting on complete equivalence; and (3) to move deeper into history. These three will also develop a more sociological approach to historical political economy. Concerning the first, HPE scholarship often glosses over the process of differentiation, leaving it up to the reader to fill in how categories and their discriminations emerge instead of elucidating how particular politics, economics, and discrimination can be "mutually supporting." The next section demonstrates this oversight and the opportunities it creates. To the second point, in the spirit of the color line's motivation of comparative

racisms, HPE scholarship can make a practice of talking across different types of discriminatory categorizations in order to compare them, but only if there is more explicit theorizing of categories, as encapsulated in the color line. To the third point, while HPE is not exclusively a pursuit of the modern era, like racial capitalism it would benefit from richer historical perspective by developing a better sense of the evolution of difference across premodern time periods in order to better historicize particular political economies of difference. On this I echo Angel Adams Parham (Parham, n.d.), whose forthcoming chapter on deepening the historical sociology of race will surely become foundational, as well as Bateman, Grumbach, and Thurston (2024) in their chapter specifically on HPE research about race and racism.

Governing difference

Racialization is one type of difference-making. In fact, the bulk of a recent efflorescence in the historical political economy of difference concerns two other types of social difference, ethnicity and religion. This area is taking off among sociologists but especially among political scientists and economists. New methods and data-gathering techniques are opening up new cases and comparisons for computational and statistical analysis. These are not unique to HPE, but rather they represent a broad interest in quantitative social science that is especially suited to this area, namely the mustering of diverse and creative data sources to analyze complex processes. Historical political economists seem to be afflicted with a preoccupation with clever, historically-specific operationalizations of general concepts, while historical sociology has all the same debates as sociology writ large on the value of or limits to generalizability.

Research designs in HPE generally reflect the ethos of causal modeling, currently dominant in economics and political science, including by searching out natural and quasi-

Table 1. Questions in historical political economy of difference and their answers

Questions	Answers
How do categories and their discriminations emerge?	• Primordial/preexisting • Conflict: material distributions, persecution • Social construction: cultural artifacts, social geography, policy
How does difference persist?	• Transmission in social networks (Charnysh 2019, Charnysh and Peisakhin 2022) • Geographic and network segregation (Charnysh 2022) • Cultural artifacts (Braun 2022)
How and why is difference institutionalized?	• Support governors' legitimacy • Incentivize assimilation (Saleh & Tirole 2021) • Elicit compliance from different groups (Johnson & Koyama 2019) • Alliance with group-leading elites extends the reach of the government (Rubin 2017, Charnysh 2022) • Alliance with group-leading elites invests their supporters in a government's success (Luft 2020) • Social influence between polities (Doten-Snitker 2024) • Transport by imperial agents (Go 2020)
How do the politics of economies matter for categorical hierarchies?	• Group economic complementarities limit persecutions; competition fosters persecution (Jha 2013, 2014) • Importance of group economic functions can make a group a political target (Anderson, Johnson, & Koyama 2017; Jedwab, Johnson, and Koyama 2019) • State institutions are a solution for cooperation across difference, with positive feedback for economic activity (Charnysh 2019)
How do the economics of governance reward inclusion versus exclusion?	• Fiscal payoffs to discrimination (Saleh & Tirole 2021, Johnson & Koyama 2019) • Othering is a tool for building advantages in political competition (Doten-Snitker 2020, Ovink, Ebert, and Okamoto 2016)

natural experiments. Chief among the methods have been differences-in-differences linear regression and instrumental variables or two-stage least squares regression (2SLS). Differences-in-differences is useful for comparing the trajectories of two groups across time; it compares each group to itself at an earlier time point and then compares the within-group differences. Instrumental variables can help solve problems of collinearity between a key

independent variable and an outcome by substituting predicted independent variable values based on a third variable related to the key independent variable but not the dependent variable. And historical change variables are often collinear. Data-gathering possibilities have included using GIS to calculate distances and therefore exposures to social phenomena elsewhere, climate reprojections to understand potential agroeconomic fluctuations, optical character recognition (OCR) to digitize and search historical sources, recently digitized public archival sources, and more.

Within these new methods run the same themes that motivate sociological studies of racial capitalism: how (why?) difference is institutionalized and persists, how the politics of economies matters for categorical hierarchies, and how the economics of governance rewards inclusion versus exclusion. This section will take each of these themes in turn, with an initial discursion on the more foundational question of how categories emerge. Table 1 summarizes the section's topics in the form of questions and answers.

Theories of difference

Before moving on to research themes, a further discussion of race, ethnicity, and religion is warranted. In this chapter, I cover these three together as categorical differences. Some researchers are not interested in distinguishing between these three, while other researchers are disinterested in comparing theoretical implications of their insights in one category to another type of category. Indeed, much recent work seems to avow no theory of difference at all. But explicit discussion of how specific categories work, reminiscent of early 2000s debates and sociologists' preference for precision in theory and terms, will draw social science fields together, across periods and cases, both in theory and in methods. Therefore, an assessment of theories of racial, ethnic, or religious differentiation in recent work is an important step before we proceed to discuss how researchers investigate difference within

HPE. In some studies, categories are taken for granted. Other research follows more well-trod paths of primordial theories of difference or conflict theories of difference. The most theoretically explicit work develops constructivist theories of difference.

For better or for worse, much of the HPE research outside of sociology does not seem burdened with defining "identity", "religion", "cultural difference", and the like. It saves space in print. It narrows focus to the specific argument about governing difference. But it hides how concepts of race, ethnicity, or religion are central to those arguments, and what generalizations or recommendations might be made for other contexts. Absence of a theory of difference makes it difficult to impossible to assess counterfactuals, and other possible futures. Part of the problem in such studies may be that humans are missing, or at least are not described in anything but a passive way concerning their identities – limited or no agency in difference-making, just bundles of traits.

As an example, take Saleh and Tirole's (2021) study of taxation in Egypt during the seventh to twelfth centuries, as Islam spread with Muslim in-migration. Their focus is on why Muslim tax agents would institute discriminatory taxation that differentiated between Coptic Christians and Muslims. While the study is exemplary in many respects, agnosticism about "identity" leads them to asymmetrical descriptions of Muslim and Christian religious identities. For Muslims, they conceptualize religious identity as an *endowment*, applying the common term in economics that signifies resources or skills to be individually exploited for personal gain, and operationalize it as Arab community presence, indeed a social resource for the individual. On the other side of things, Coptic Christian identity is operationalized three ways: in a communal, cultural toolkit-type conception of religious identity; oppositional identity formation through conflict; and economic grievance-based identity. The benefit of eschewing coherence to "religion" or "religious identity" is that Saleh and Tirole have created many ways for scholars partial to specific theorizations of identity to find a believable

story in their work, and it feels generalizable across different types of identity. The drawback is that it feels like identity happened to Muslims and was forced on Coptic Christians. And the three theories of difference for Coptic Christians provide ignored alternatives that undermine the endowment-based argument for why Muslim officials would discriminate against Coptic Christians.

Another segment of HPE leaves difference as something primordial – or at least out of view – about norms, beliefs, or behaviors of separate peoples. Charnysh (2019, 2022) takes ethnic and religious cultural difference as ex ante. In both the context of post-WWII Poland and the late nineteenth century Volga region, she emphasizes the role of the state in interactions across group boundaries. In the former, ethnically heterogenous communities turned to the state to facilitate intergroup collaboration to produce public goods, an argument supported through historical census data, a register of local organizations, and administrative surveys, among other sources. Bracketing the question of their origin, Charnysh focuses on why ethnic differences persist. She theorizes that ethnic differences are held and maintained in informal networks, and then describes a historical case and operationalizations that play out across sixty years. One prediction from her work is that local cultural heterogeneity declines as a state facilitates the knitting together of ethnic networks, but the evolution of informal networks and ethnic differentiation are not explored.

Perhaps the most natural view of difference in HPE is one rooted in conflict, in seeing the distribution of resources and positions alongside opposition and violence. After all, the core concern of political economy is how politics and economics each condition the central distribution of the other, namely political power and material resources. A nice example is Johnson and Koyama's (2019) volume on the rise and fall of religious persecution in Europe. Their formulation of religious difference begins with belief heterogeneity. To them, because beliefs are in conflict, particularly an orthodoxy in opposition to "deviant" beliefs, people are

brought into conflict; governments create institutions that discriminate against heterodox believers. Where do these conceptions of deviance come from? Johnson and Koyama seem to attribute Christian perceptions of Jewish deviance to economic position – basically, Hechter's (1978) cultural division of labor, in which inequalities align with cultural divides and are processed into grievances. Analogy can transfer material and social structural divisions to religious divisions.

Most aligned with the broader proclivities in historical sociology are constructivist theories of difference, although sociologists are not the only scholars applying them. These theories consider how political economies generate difference. In one of the most creative recent studies, Braun (2022) brings a 1930s German catalogue of folk stories together with GIS work on distances to border crossings, alongside more typical control measures like economic structures. He argues that difference (here, antisemitism) can be evoked and then culturally reproduced in borderlands because geopolitical threat, and therefore also difference, is perceived more strongly there. In another paper, Charnysh and Peisakhin (2022) demonstrate how imperial Austrian political values persist away from and after that regime among Galician migrants to western Poland. In concordance with Charnysh's other work discussed above, values and norms are portrayed as conserved through community networks; in divergence, the authors theorize in this work that ethnic distinctiveness is at least partly a product of policy. Each of these studies, in identifying processual mechanisms, contribute to the related question of why difference persists. Importantly, they build the interplay between cultural context and formal structures into their research on political economy outcomes, including the distribution of difference.

Historical political economies of difference

Historical sociologists have been a bit loath to take on the label of political economy in the past decades, despite it being the dominant current in the field over the past half a century. Perhaps it fell out of favor because of its associations with modernist theory, or perhaps it has felt synonymous with Marxist sociology or world-systems theory, neither of which quite captures the breadth of historical sociological political economy. But historical sociologists are perennially interested in how values and norms are institutionalized in ways that matter for equality and inclusion. This is political economy; as Levi (2020) wrote, "Every political-economic framework embeds values and encodes standards for behavior and choice." Historical sociology of race and empire, of which racial capitalism is one piece, has long been interested in how categories have been affected or created in imperial encounters, with both short-term and longer-term political economy consequences. For example, Hammer (2020) asserts that state institutions – in particular, civil codes instituted by colonial governments – are inseparable from the meaning systems in which they are constructed. Among research areas in political economy, HPE has been especially interested in difference-making and exclusionary meaning systems. The three major research themes in the historical political economy of difference have been explored by non-sociologists and sociologists alike.

Why and how is difference institutionalized?

The most foundational question in the historical political economy of difference is why – and how – difference is institutionalized. The dominant answer among recent research is that enforcing difference serves legitimacy needs of governors. Johnson and Koyama (2019), as discussed above, theorize that governors try to enforce religious conformity so that there is alignment between a single principle of legitimacy and the population's beliefs, in order to incentivize greater compliance with laws. While their case is the medieval to early modern shift in European approaches to religious diversity, their argument is historically

neutral. Johnson and Koyama's governors develop identity rules that institutionalize categorical boundaries and differential treatment to cordon off people outside their preferred legitimacy principle and demonize them, with the desired effect being positive feedback to the legitimacy principle – strengthened rulership.

Rubin (2017) likewise focuses on the role of religion as legitimation, but his emphasis is on how governors rely on religious leaders to propagate their legitimacy. He compares and contrasts the reliance on Christian and Muslim religious leaders in Europe and the Middle East, respectively, arguing that as long as religious leaders were vital to political legitimacy, they had enough political influence to enshrine religious rules in political institutions, including religious rules that distinguished between what was permissible for co-believers and what was permissible for non-believers. Ultimately, his point is that religious rules curtailed possible economic institutions, and secularization in parts of Europe opened new possibilities for economic growth.

In a third take, Luft (2020) starts from a similar place as Rubin in her analysis of how the Vichy Regime needed the support of Catholic leaders to legitimate the transition to autocracy. She explains that the moral authority of religious organizations is an especially useful resource for governors. Recruiting religious leaders to support a government invests religious adherents in the success of that government (Luft, 2020, pp. 74–75), broadening its popular approval and limiting conflict, even if new policies run counter to past ones or to other positions the religious adherents might hold. In the case of French Catholic bishops, their support of the antisemitic Vichy Regime put them at odds with the Jewish leaders they formerly collaborated with. The regime's use of religious language to legitimize itself appealed to Catholic bishops' interest in a greater public role of the Catholic Church, lulling the bishops into silence on increasingly exclusionary laws. However, she says, Catholic bishops later defected from the regime on religious grounds, emboldened by the recognition

that they held the organizational resources to countermobilize against the Vichy government and protect Jews. These three approaches all highlight the consequences of collaboration between political and religious elites.

Other theories of difference-making are not necessarily in conflict with the legitimacy thesis, but they do helpfully direct attention in other directions. In the study above by Braun (2022) on antisemitic folk tales in Germany, he demonstrates that geography of the state (internally) distributes economic and political grievances that can be cultivated into local boundary-making. In a corrective to the accepted tenet that indirect governance solves problems for majority-run central governments, Charnysh (2022), also discussed above, contends that this is only a short-run outcome. In the long run, however, delegating to local agents from minority groups impedes interaction and familiarity between minorities and the state-controlling majority; it limits the legibility (and therefore governability) of the minority group. She reaches this conclusion based on the case of Russian nineteenth century governance of ethnoreligious minority groups. Both Braun and Charnysh expect persistent geographic variation in why difference would be institutionalized. On the other hand, I (Doten-Snitker, Forthcoming) and Go (2020) both offer explanations for consistency in institutionalized difference. I argue that social influence between polities affects whether exclusionary ideas travel and take hold. I stress how political economy interdependencies between polities can dictate policy consistency versus policy dissonance. Go (2020), describing how imperial military experience shaped American police leadership and their organizational changes in the early twentieth century, theorizes that imperial encounters are analogized at home by returned imperial agents, and institutions of control are re-imported from the colony to the metropole. Space, timing, and cross-polity relationships are also important dimensions to the institutionalization of difference.

How does the politics of economies matter for categorical hierarchies?

A second research theme concerns how the politics of economies matters for categorical hierarchies. The central line of reasoning begins with economic complementarities. Jha (2013, 2014) looks at the contemporary political consequences of historical economic complementarities versus competition between Hindus and minority Muslims in India. In medieval port cities, Muslims had advantageous access to Indian Ocean trade through the Hajj pilgrimage and its coordination that non-Muslims could not replicate, so Hindus could gain much from peaceful trade with Muslims. He finds that ethnoreligious riots in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries were less common where economic complementarities had previously prevailed, rather than economic competition. His work is a longer-term and economy-focused version of Varshney's (2002) argument that intergroup relationships of cooperation, contrasted with ethnic segregation, are a bulwark against interethnic violence.

In contrast, Anderson, Johnson, and Koyama (2017) argue that economic function facilitated the scapegoating of European Jews during periods of poor climate for agricultural production. From the medieval into the early modern eras, Jews were a fiscal resource for Christian European rulers because they were more likely to be involved in trade and finance – due to legal restrictions – and thus both contributed a tax base as well as fostering economic growth. This position as aids to power made them targets, Anderson et al. argue, for Christian populations upset at how their leaders handled economic strains. In a follow-up, Jedwab, Johnson, and Koyama (2019) offer the revision that playing an important economic function reduces the risk of being made scapegoats.

Charnysh (2019) follows a similar vein as Jha, but with attention to the role of the state, placing political institutions anterior to economic outcomes. In her eyes, more inclusive states perform coordination between heterogeneous groups, fostering better economic outcomes over time because the state gains capacity to mediate and state enforcement is more

desired in economic activities. She develops this idea through evidence on ethnically diverse Polish communities in the middle twentieth century who relied on the state to enable the provision of public goods and who later emerged from socialism with a stronger local culture of state reliance, fostering market exchange and entrepreneurship. In comparison, she theorizes, predatory states play on difference and undermine economic activity. Charnysh's work gestures towards one underexplored area that is emphasized by the research on racial capitalism: the role of government in distributing economic roles and legislating economic opportunities.

How do the economics of governance reward inclusion versus exclusion?

The third research theme explores how the economics of governance rewards inclusion versus exclusion. Broadly, political decision-makers face incentives to include or exclude, to unify or to divide (Wimmer, 2013). Research that stresses the fiscal benefits of discrimination, examples of which I have already noted (Johnson & Koyama, 2019; Saleh & Tirole, 2021), are one application typical of economics. Related to this is Rubin's (2017) explication that through using (discrimination-seeking) religious leaders to legitimize a government, governors can economize on costs of rule. For premodern European violence against Jews, Finley and Koyama (2018) conclude that competition over authority reduces the incentives for governors to spend state resources on protecting fiscally valuable minority groups.

Sociologists tend not to stress the financial incentives as much, even while making use of economic thinking. For instance, rather than taking the more well-trod approach to the medieval European political economy of Christian toleration of Jews that focuses on Jews as financial resources to governments, I (Doten-Snitker, 2020) was interested in how the structure of political relationships among Christian elites incentivized antisemitic policies. From an analysis of over 800 cities, I concluded that authority fragmentation was risky for

Jews in medieval Germany, not because of costs of rule themselves but because political competition creates more incentives to wield exclusionary boundary-making. In concert, Ovink, Ebert, and Okamoto (2016) contend that the symbolic politics of exclusion benefit legislators in terms of what they communicate to target constituencies, garnering political support. As in these two examples, as well at the work of Braun, Luft, and Go mentioned previously, sociologists working on HPE often explain exclusionary difference-making as a contingent outcome under sets of cognitive and social, rather than fiscal, incentives, when cultural/ideological building-blocks for exclusion are available.

Identity and collective action against persecution

I close with a brief coda on the power of group identity, as organization and as motivation, for collective efforts against persecution. HPE is largely concerned with the macro level of society-level outcomes, and alongside that, the micro-level experience for any given member of a society. But as has peeked through in the preceding sections, groups mediate between states, staffed and controlled by majorities, and minorities. Collective action by majorities, on behalf of economic chauvinism or religious beliefs or ethnoracial ideologies, certainly has the power to lead to violence and repression. The hope of secularization theory and the fear of biological and religious essentialisms is in whether more peaceful and inclusive societies are possible. Meso-level dynamics are a lynchpin in what happens.

Three open questions help us answer the question of inclusion versus exclusion in the past and in the future. They are open not because there have been no answers but because answers are specific to historical and contextual contingencies.

First, what state-level and international structures and meanings are available? Structures feed opportunities for collective action, and meanings provide logics that can be

used as leverage in appeals for social reorganization. On secularization, and therefore interreligious inclusion, in public education in Australia and the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Mayrl (2015, 2016) elucidates how the structure of the state creates or interrupts opportunities for minority groups to protest the imposition of religious education. Blending national and local, Wilfahrt (2018, 2021) looks to the political past in place: she tests whether regional institutions create local identities that can linger and affect political economy outcomes long after the institutions themselves disappear. She exhibits that precolonial political coordination in West Africa aids inclusive public goods distribution, moreso than more recent collective action. Looking for external influence instead of subnational, Tsutsui (2017, 2018) meticulously traces the interplay between collective action by minority groups in Japan and the global minority rights movements of the twentieth century. He compares the social positions of three different minority groups (the Ainu, Zainichi, and Burakumin), demonstrating how these different positions shaped their strategies for remedy to discrimination. The global gave new vocabulary, legal avenues via the United Nations, and mobilization resources, leading to the dismantling of several exclusionary institutions in Japan. National, international, and historical institutions give rise to different possibilities.

Second, what structures and resources do potentially minority-allied groups have? In the Netherlands and Belgium during World War II, the local Christian religious minority (Catholics in Protestant areas, Protestants in Catholic areas) helped Jews evade the Nazis (Braun, 2016, 2018, 2019). Braun argues that the local social position of minority church members facilitated secret collaboration via dense but circumscribed social networks. In essence, minority churches had organizational capacities to mobilize and rescue Jews. Luft's (2020) thesis is similar; she says organizational capacities at the lower levels of the Catholic hierarchy in France fed the capacity of the Catholic bishops to eventually change course and

intervene against violence against Jews by the Vichy Regime. In neither case was the minority in question able to orchestrate their own inclusion; collaboration from other groups was required.

Finally, which identity will be mobilized? Political organizations select and construct identities as part of mobilization (De Leon et al., 2009). One example comes from De Leon (2017), who contends that White US labor leaders' post-Civil War rejection of antiracism shunted Black laborers' ongoing fight for inclusion into a separate sphere. A more exclusive group identity limited collective action by denying access to organizational resources. Just as identities are manipulated by cleaving, identities can be invented to assert presence and create visibility to the state, and from this basis to demand resources, as Mora and Okamoto document of collective action in the US on the panethnic identities "Hispanic" and "Asian American" (Mora, 2014; Mora & Okamoto, 2020a, 2020b). Both movements, which were concurrent and in the same political milieu, nevertheless made different use of US colonial history. Historical social science demonstrates that a dreamed-of future with greater inclusion is indeed possible, but not to be assumed or taken for granted.

Acknowledgements

This chapter benefitted from the feedback of Marco van Leeuwen, Rowena Gray, Ana Macanovic, Martin Ruef, and Jonathan Schoots.

References

Anderson, W., Johnson, N. D., & Koyama, M. (2017). Jewish Persecutions and Weather Shocks: 1100-1800. *The Economic Journal*, *127*(602), 924–958. https://doi.org/10.1111/ecoj.12331

Bateman, D., Grumbach, J. M., & Thurston, C. (2024). Race and Historical Political Economy. In J. A. Jenkins & J. Rubin (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197618608.013.37

Becker, S. O., & Pfaff, S. (2024). Church, State, and Historical Political Economy. In J. A. Jenkins & J. Rubin (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy* (pp. 925–944). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197618608.013.48

Bhambra, G. K., & Holmwood, J. (2023). The Trap of "Capitalism", Racial or Otherwise. *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *64*(2), 163–172. https://doi.org/10.1017/S000397562300036X

Braun, R. (2016). Religious Minorities and High Risk Mobilization: The Collective Rescue of Jews in the Netherlands during the Holocaust. *American Political Science Review*, *110*(1), 127–147. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055415000544

Braun, R. (2018). Minorities and the Clandestine Collective Action Dilemma: The Secret Protection of Jews during the Holocaust. *American Journal of Sociology*, *124*(2), 263–308. https://doi.org/10.1086/699651

Braun, R. (2019). *Protectors of pluralism: Religious minorities and the rescue of Jews in the Low Countries during the Holocaust*. Cambridge University Press.

Braun, R. (2022). Bloodlines: National Border Crossings and Antisemitism in Weimar Germany. *American Sociological Review*, *87*(2), 202–236. https://doi.org/10.1177/00031224211071145

Brubaker, R. (2004). *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Harvard University Press.

Charnysh, V. (2019). Diversity, Institutions, and Economic Outcomes: Post-WWII Displacement in Poland. *American Political Science Review*, *113*(2), 423–441. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055419000042

Charnysh, V. (2022). Explaining Out-Group Bias in Weak States: Religion and Legibility in the 1891/1892 Russian Famine. *World Politics*, *74*(2), 205–248. https://doi.org/10.1017/S004388712100023X

Charnysh, V., & Peisakhin, L. (2022). The Role of Communities in the Transmission of Political Values: Evidence from Forced Population Transfers. *British Journal of Political Science*, *52*(1), 238–258. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123420000447

Cox, O. C. (1970). *Caste, class, & race: A study in social dynamics*. Modern Reader Paperback.

de Leon, C. (2017). Black from White: How the Rights of White and Black Workers Became "Labor" and "Civil" Rights after the U.S. Civil War. *Labor Studies Journal*, *42*(1), 10–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0160449X16676417

De Leon, C., Desai, M., & Tuğal, C. (2009). Political Articulation: Parties and the Constitution of Cleavages in the United States, India, and Turkey. *Sociological Theory*, *27*(3), 193–219. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2009.01345.x

Doten-Snitker, K. (2020). *Medieval Political Competition and the Attack on Ethnoreligious Diversity* [Thesis]. http://hdl.handle.net/1773/46194

Doten-Snitker, K. (2021). Contexts of State Violence: Jewish Expulsions in the Holy Roman Empire. *Social Science History*, *45*(1), 131–163. https://doi.org/10.1017/ssh.2020.39

Doten-Snitker, K. (Forthcoming). The Diffusion of Exclusion: Medieval Expulsions of Jews. *Comparative Political Studies*.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1935). *Black Reconstruction in America 1860-1880*.

Finley, T., & Koyama, M. (2018). Plague, Politics, and Pogroms: The Black Death, the Rule of Law, and the Persecution of Jews in the Holy Roman Empire. *The Journal of Law and Economics*, *61*(2), 253–277. https://doi.org/10.1086/699016

Gilmore, R. W. (2002). Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography. *The Professional Geographer*, *54*(1), 15–24. https://doi.org/10.1111/0033-0124.00310

Gilmore, R. W. (2007). *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*.

Go, J. (2020). The imperial origins of American policing: Militarization and imperial feedback in the early 20th century. *American Journal of Sociology*, *125*(5), 1193–1254.

Go, J. (2021). Three Tensions in the Theory of Racial Capitalism. *Sociological Theory*, *39*(1), 38–47. https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275120979822

Gould, R. V. (1995). *Insurgent identities: Class, community, and protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune*. University of Chicago.

Hale, H. E. (2008). *The Foundations of Ethnic Politics: Separatism of States and Nations in Eurasia and the World*. Cambridge University Press.

Hall, S. (2018). Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance [1980]. In D. Morley (Ed.), *Essential Essays, Volume 1* (pp. 172–221). Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478002413-010

Hammer, R. (2020). Decolonizing the Civil Sphere: The Politics of Difference, Imperial Erasures, and Theorizing from History. *Sociological Theory*, 0735275120921215. https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275120921215

Hechter, M. (1978). Group formation and the cultural division of labor. *American Journal of Sociology*, *84*(2), 293–318.

Hechter, M. (2000). *Containing Nationalism*. Oxford University Press.

Hendricks, M. (2010). Race: A Renaissance Category? In *A New Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture* (pp. 535–544). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444319019.ch80

Heng, G. (2018). *The invention of race in the European Middle Ages*. Cambridge University Press.

Itzigsohn, J., & Brown, K. (2020). *The sociology of W.E.B. Du Bois: Racialized modernity and the global color line*. New York University Press.

Jedwab, R., Johnson, N. D., & Koyama, M. (2019). Negative Shocks and Mass Persecutions: Evidence from the Black Death. *Journal of Economic Growth*, *24*, 345–395. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10887-019-09167-1

Jenkins, J. A., & Rubin, J. (2024). Historical Political Economy: What Is It? In J. A. Jenkins & J. Rubin (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy* (pp. 3–16). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197618608.013.1

Jha, S. (2013). Trade, Institutions, and Ethnic Tolerance: Evidence from South Asia. *American Political Science Review*, *107*(4), 806–832. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055413000464

Jha, S. (2014). 'Unfinished business': Historic complementarities, political competition and ethnic violence in Gujarat. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, *104*, 18–36. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2014.02.023

Johnson, N. D., & Koyama, M. (2019). *Persecution and Toleration: The Long Road to Religious Freedom*. Cambridge University Press.

Kim, D. (2019). Introduction to literature compass special cluster: Critical race and the Middle Ages. *Literature Compass*, *16*(9–10), e12549. https://doi.org/10.1111/lic3.12549

Kim, D. (2022). The Historiographies of Premodern Critical Race Studies and Jewish Studies. *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, *9*(1), 139–148. https://doi.org/10.1017/pli.2021.40

Lamont, M. (2000). *The dignity of working men: Morality and the boundaries of race, class, and immigration*. Harvard University Press.

Levi, M. (2020). *An Expanded Community Of Fate*. https://www.noemamag.com/an-expanded-community-of-fate

Lopez-Jantzen, N. (2019). Between empires: Race and ethnicity in the early Middle Ages. *Literature Compass*, *16*(9–10), e12542. https://doi.org/10.1111/lic3.12542

Luft, A. (2020). Religion in Vichy France: How Meso-Level Actors Contribute to Authoritarian Legitimation. *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *61*(1), 67–101. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975620000041

Lumbley, C. (2019). The "dark Welsh": Color, race, and alterity in the matter of medieval Wales. *Literature Compass*, *16*(9–10), e12538. https://doi.org/10.1111/lic3.12538

Mayrl, D. (2015). How Does the State Structure Secularization? *European Journal of Sociology*, *56*(02), 207–239. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975615000119

Mayrl, D. (2016). *Secular conversions: Political institutions and religious education in the United States and Australia, 1800-2000*. Cambridge University Press.

Michener, J., SoRelle, M., & Thurston, C. (2022). From the Margins to the Center: A Bottom-Up Approach to Welfare State Scholarship. *Perspectives on Politics*, *20*(1), 154–169. https://doi.org/10.1017/S153759272000359X

Mora, G. C. (2014). Cross-Field Effects and Ethnic Classification: The Institutionalization of Hispanic Panethnicity, 1965 to 1990. *American Sociological Review*, *79*(2), 183–210. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122413509813

Mora, G. C., & Okamoto, D. (2020a). Boundary articulation and emergent identities: Asian and Hispanic panethnicity in comparison 1970–1980. *Social Problems*, *67*(1), 56–76.

Mora, G. C., & Okamoto, D. G. (2020b). Postcolonialism, racial political fields, and panethnicity: A comparison of early "Asian American" and "Hispanic" movements. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, *6*(4), 450–467.

Morris, A. D. (2015). *The Scholar Denied: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology*. University of California Press. http://www.dawsonera.com/depp/reader/protected/external/AbstractView/S9780520960480

Ovink, S. M., Ebert, K., & Okamoto, D. (2016). Symbolic Politics of the State: The Case of In-state Tuition Bills for Undocumented Students. *Socius*, *2*, 2378023116647969. https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023116647969

Parham, A. A. (n.d.). Race and Racialization Across the Centuries. In R. J. Emigh & D. McCourt (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Historical Sociology*. Oxford University Press.

Quinn, S. L. (2019). *American Bonds: How Credit Markets Shaped a Nation*. Princeton University Press. https://press.princeton.edu/titles/13320.html

Quisumbing King, K. (2019). Recentering U.S. Empire: A Structural Perspective on the Color Line. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, *5*(1), 11–25. https://doi.org/10.1177/2332649218761977

Ralph, M., & Singhal, M. (2019). Racial capitalism. *Theory and Society*, *48*(6), 851–881. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-019-09367-z

Robinson, C. J. (2020). *Black marxism: The making of the Black radical tradition* (Third edition, revised and updated). The University of North Carolina Press.

Robinson, J. N. (2020). Making Markets on the Margins: Housing Finance Agencies and the Racial Politics of Credit Expansion. *American Journal of Sociology*, *125*(4), 974–1029. https://doi.org/10.1086/707927

Rubin, J. (2017). *Rulers, religion, and riches: Why the West got rich and the Middle East did not*. Cambridge University Press.

Saleh, M., & Tirole, J. (2021). Taxing Identity: Theory and Evidence From Early Islam. *Econometrica*, *89*(4), 1881–1919. https://doi.org/10.3982/ECTA17265

Slez, A. (2024). Networks in Historical Political Economy. In J. A. Jenkins & J. Rubin (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy* (pp. 75–94). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197618608.013.5

Subrahmanyam, S. (2023). Revisiting "Racial Capitalism." *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975623000358

Suryanarayan, P., & White, S. (2024). Identity Politics in Historical Political Economy. In J. A. Jenkins & J. Rubin (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197618608.013.39

Táíwò, O. O., & Bright, L. K. (2020, August 7). A Response to Michael Walzer. *Dissent Magazine*. https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/a-response-to-michael-walzer/

Thomas, J. M. (2020). Du Bois, double consciousness, and the "Jewish question." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *43*(8), 1333–1356. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2020.1705366

Thurston, C. N. (2018). *At the Boundaries of Homeownership: Credit, Discrimination, and the American State*. Cambridge University Press.

Tsutsui, K. (2017). Human Rights and Minority Activism in Japan: Transformation of Movement Actorhood and Local-Global Feedback Loop. *American Journal of Sociology*, *122*(4), 1050–1103. https://doi.org/10.1086/689910

Tsutsui, K. (2018). *Rights Make Might: Global Human Rights and Minority Social Movements in Japan*. Oxford University Press.

Varshney, A. (2002). *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. Yale University Press.

Wacquant, L. (2023a). Racial Capitalism Decoupled: A Rejoinder and Reformulation. *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *64*(2), 183–193. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975623000346

Wacquant, L. (2023b). The Trap of "Racial Capitalism." *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *64*(2), 153–162. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975623000334

Weeda, C. (2021). *Ethnicity in Medieval Europe, 950-1250: Medicine, Power and Religion*. The University of York, York Medieval Press.

Wilfahrt, M. (2018). The politics of local government performance: Elite cohesion and cross-village constraints in decentralized Senegal. *World Development*, *103*, 149–161. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2017.09.010

Wilfahrt, M. (2021). *Precolonial legacies in postcolonial politics: Representation and redistribution in decentralized West Africa*. Cambridge University Press.

Wimmer, A. (2013). *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks*. Oxford University Press.