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# 1

## Introduction

### A Ruinous, Residual Racism

FROM 1901 TO 1973, Australia had the world's most racist immigration policies. These policies were called "White Australia," and their purpose was to "guard the last part of the world in which the higher races can live and increase freely for the higher civilization."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the parliamentary debate over these laws exuded an incontrovertible racism, as Australian policymakers feared that the White race would soon face an overwhelming economic, social, and political threat from non-Whites.<sup>2</sup> Too much racial mixing, after all, would dilute and denigrate the White race,<sup>3</sup> and the Australians were willing to face the imperial and international consequences of their actions.<sup>4</sup>

This government-sponsored racism began to change in 1966. Over the next few years, the Holt government passed several new laws that shifted Australia's policies away from selecting immigrants on the basis of race and toward selecting them on the basis of skill, expertise, and race-blind desirability. Accordingly, ever since the Whitlam government abolished the last remnants of White Australia in 1973, many Australians have praised their immigration policy as fair and nondiscriminatory. By the letter of the law, Australia's transformation from racist to "color-blind" is a remarkable achievement.

1. Pearson 1893, 15–16.

2. Many throughout the Anglo-European world shared similar fears of a "Great Replacement" or "race suicide" that would threaten world White supremacy. See, e.g., Barder 2019.

3. For example: "We have more to fear from the educated coloured people than from the ignorant coloured people, because the latter will not attempt to mingle or associate with the white race." Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary debates, session 1901–02, IV, 4633, 1 September 1907.

4. Lake and Reynolds 2008, 75–94.

However, recent events cast doubt on the reality of this transformation. In 2018, the Australian government introduced a special humanitarian program to allow immigration from White South African farmers who, proponents exclaimed, faced increased violence and unlawful land seizures from the country's Black majority. Although no data support the claim that White South Africans face excessive violence,<sup>5</sup> Australia was eager to give the farmers special dispensation in the immigration process. To justify this initiative, Peter Dutton, the Minister for Home Affairs, argued that the farmers were hard-working, would not need welfare, and would integrate and contribute to Australian society.<sup>6</sup> In other words, these South Africans were the ideal beneficiaries of an immigration policy designed to rescue victims of persecution and bring in the best and brightest from abroad. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull lauded this “generous” policy as “non-discriminatory,” implicitly associating it with Australia's post-White Australia, egalitarian Renaissance.<sup>7</sup>

During the same period, the Rohingya ethnic minority in Myanmar faced *verified* persecution and violence from their country's military. Many Rohingya are also farmers, family-oriented, and likely hard-working (most farmers are). But they are non-White Muslims. Would Australia offer the Rohingya the same “non-discriminatory special attention” as the White South African farmers? After all, they are an industrious population that allegedly face race-based violence, just like the South Africans. If politicians designed Australia's migration policy to both rescue victims of extreme violence and bring in immigrants who could immediately contribute to the public welfare, then the Rohingya were excellent candidates for special attention too.<sup>8</sup>

The answer is no. Instead, Australia offered asylum to only two thousand of the estimated one million displaced Rohingya,<sup>9</sup> detained others indefinitely on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island, and offered AU\$25,000 per person to return to Myanmar to face what the United Nations called “a textbook

5. R. Davis 2018.

6. BBC 2018a.

7. Dzedzic 2018.

8. Australian human rights groups have called Burmese treatment of Rohingya an “apartheid” (Mallinson 2017) or a “genocide” (Zarni and Cowley 2014). This label is ironic considering that the Australian government was willing to take in White refugees from South Africa—a formerly apartheid state—under dubious circumstances, while unwilling to take in non-White refugees experiencing an apartheid in another state.

9. Doherty 2018; Kohli, Markowitz, and Chavez 2018.

example of ethnic cleansing.”<sup>10</sup> When asked whether Australia was offering such incentives for Rohingya to leave and whether it was safe for them to return to Myanmar, Mr. Dutton declined to answer. In the end, the Rohingya were not similar enough to the South Africans: they may have been hard-working farmers facing existential violence, but something was missing to persuade the Australian government to apply the same “non-discriminatory” policy to them.

Some argue that this something is race: Australia did not take in the Rohingya refugees because its leaders and citizens viewed them as a part of a larger “unregulated surge” that threatened their way of life.<sup>11</sup> These critics point to the resurgence of White supremacist opposition to immigration in Australia over the last thirty years,<sup>12</sup> and they highlight the first conversation between US president Donald Trump and Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull, in which the former praised the latter for being “worse than I am on asylum seekers.”<sup>13</sup> Racism, these critics argue, continues to hide in plain sight because leaders like Turnbull boast of their country’s nondiscriminatory migration policies with one side of their mouth and brag about excluding undesirable migrants with the other. These leaders simply dress up their desire to discriminate on the basis of race in “color-blind” clothing.

However, it is difficult to square this argument with the reality that migration policies throughout the world no longer discriminate on the basis of race. The issue is that leaders like Prime Minister Turnbull can always deny charges of racism on the grounds that their immigration laws are nondiscriminatory. They can respond that the goal of immigration policies is to use objective criteria to admit the best immigrants that will benefit the national interest, nothing more. It is not the head of state’s fault, they will exclaim, that migrants from certain parts of the world are poorer, more prone to violence, or less educated than others. So, while the disparities in Australia’s treatment of the South African farmers and the Rohingya suggest racial bias, the available evidence is not discerning because the lack of explicitly racist policies shrouds the intentions of policymakers in ambiguity.

As such, this book generalizes from individual cases and provides clear evidence that racial discrimination persists in international migration, regardless

10. Safi 2017.

11. Hogan and Haltinner 2015; Maguire and Elton 2017.

12. Flitton 2014; Dunn, Klocker, and Salabay 2007; Poynting and Mason 2007.

13. Bourke 2017.

of leaders' intentions. It explains why this *residual racism* remains in a "color-blind" international system that forbids racial discrimination, and it ties this inequality to the era of explicit racism, colonialism, and policies like White Australia. Abstracting from individual cases shows how structural racism operates in the international system, much like it operates in neighborhoods and cities.<sup>14</sup> Instead of arguing that the international system is full of racist leaders who covertly use race-neutral laws to produce a "global apartheid,"<sup>15</sup> the following story illustrates how discrimination persists even if all overt racism vanishes. Such *structural* racial inequality is ruinous because it hides in plain sight.

### The Exclusionary Politics of International Migration

The Australian case evokes international migration's status as the most politicized area of world politics. No other issue so easily elicits fear from electorates, motivates states to collaborate, and spurs action from leaders. In the past decade, concerns over the movement of people swung the Brexit referendum, elected populist leaders, affected citizenship policies, and produced staggering levels of collaboration between the European Union and its neighbors.<sup>16</sup> Immigration engenders these responses because it taps into primordial questions of politics and the human experience: What is a political community? Who are the legitimate members of that community? How do we balance the interests of different groups within that community? What do we owe outsiders? The existential nature of these questions ensures that international migration will intervene in almost any political issue, international or domestic. Moreover, it is unlikely that conflicts over immigrants will abate because citizens in both the global North and global South have become increasingly reluctant to welcome outsiders into their communities.<sup>17</sup>

Two patterns stand out when one examines the politics of international migration in more detail. First, the pronounced public hand-wringing over immigration is an outlier when compared to the other tenets of the liberal

14. Bonilla-Silva 2006; Feagin 2006.

15. Alexander 1996.

16. Alarian 2017; Dennison and Geddes 2019; Goodwin and Milazzo 2017; Hansen and Randeria 2016; McAlexander 2020.

17. Buehler, Fabbe, and Han 2020; Semyonov, Rajjman, and Gorodzeisky 2006; Cogley, Doces, and Whitaker 2018.

international order. In general, the weight of Western public opinion supports the freedom of movement of goods, services, and capital.<sup>18</sup> For example, although public opinion varies with the particularities of domestic politics, most educated citizens of the developed world support free trade and do not consider it to threaten the national interest.<sup>19</sup> This support provides further evidence that free market capitalism has become hegemonic in the post–Cold War era.<sup>20</sup> However, many of those who support the other tenets of the liberal world order are *against* immigration.<sup>21</sup> While states eliminated their explicitly discriminatory immigration policies during the postcolonial era in the spirit of these liberal principles, the public remains firmly suspicious of newcomers.

Second, although states eliminated racially discriminatory policies, their objective policies have become more prohibitive in recent decades.<sup>22</sup> Some scholars use the Western public’s insatiable appetite for discriminating against undesirable immigrants to argue that migrants of color bear the brunt of these restrictions.<sup>23</sup> Leaders lend credence to these critics when they refer to migrants as “parasites and protozoa” (Jaroslaw Kaczynski),<sup>24</sup> “bank robbers” (Boris Johnson),<sup>25</sup> and a “swarm” (David Cameron)<sup>26</sup> that is “carrying diseases” (Andrzej Duda)<sup>27</sup> to “threaten Christian Europe” (Victor Orbán).<sup>28</sup> Yet, at the same time, many of those same leaders proclaim that their immigration policies are “non-discriminatory” (Australia) because they are based on “universal” (US), “clear” (Germany), or “objective” (UK) grounds.<sup>29</sup> This juxtaposition suggests that these objective laws may service nonobjective goals, and that evidence of inequality is not coincidental.<sup>30</sup> However, one

18. Murray 2019.

19. Hainmueller and Hiscox 2006.

20. Milanovic 2019.

21. Mayda 2008.

22. Peters 2017.

23. Ayers et al. 2009; Chatham House 2017; Douglas, Sáenz, and Murga 2015; Ellermann and Goenaga 2019; Ford 2011; K. R. Johnson 2000.

24. Cienski 2015.

25. BBC 2018b.

26. BBC 2015.

27. Al Jazeera 2015.

28. Karnitsching 2015.

29. Dernbach and Starzmann 2018; Dziedzic 2018; Secretary of State 2018; White House 2019.

30. The politics and ethics of race are difficult to navigate. Throughout this book, I use the term *Anglo-European* to refer to countries that laypeople may consider “White” or majority

cannot directly observe their discriminatory intent *because the laws are legally color-blind*. Ironically, racist laws like White Australia were inferentially useful to expose and combat prejudice because they clearly indicated where racism existed. Without these laws, that relationship, like many instances of racism in the modern world, hides in plain sight.

Some scholars downplay elite rhetoric and public opinion. After all, sovereign states have the right to control their borders,<sup>31</sup> and many leaders justify their restrictive policies on these grounds.<sup>32</sup> As long as the letter of the law is race-neutral, it does not make sense to conclude that states continue to restrict on the basis of race. Politicians changed explicitly racist laws, and now all potential migrants are welcome if they meet certain objective criteria. In this world, leaders, publics, and putative migrants are rational actors, and migration occurs when all the incentives line up for all the parties. Individuals decide to move if the expected benefits exceed the expected costs,<sup>33</sup> and states accept migrants if they will benefit society.<sup>34</sup> For scholars in this camp, there are many factors that produce different immigration policies, such as domestic business interests,<sup>35</sup> trade policy,<sup>36</sup> and war.<sup>37</sup> Immigration policies emerge out of this complex dance among firms, lobbyists, politicians, citizens, and the global economy, all of which vary over time to produce different levels of restrictiveness. But as long as the law forbids racist policies, any arguments linking race to immigration policy or the ability to migrate are ignored or rejected. Some even claim that nativism cannot explain changing levels of restrictiveness because it has remained more or less constant over time.<sup>38</sup>

For other scholars, the second observation explains the first: citizens of the West are against immigration because they are racist, and elites oblige

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“White.” I do so because this term alludes to the role the so-called Anglosphere has played in colonialism and explicitly racist policy throughout world history (Vucetic 2011). Unfortunately, this classification ignores the real diversity within these states and silences these populations. In the absence of a better term, however, I use *Anglo-European* because it connects to the important history that I unpack later in the book.

31. Martin 1989; Opeskin 2012.

32. Hathaway 1994; Shanks 2001.

33. Sjaastad 1962; Todaro 1969.

34. Adamson 2006; Rudolph 2003.

35. Freeman 1995.

36. Peters 2017.

37. Rudolph 2003.

38. Peters 2017, 7.

these desires for discrimination despite their distorting effect on the world economy. Immigration led to a racist backlash in the past, and it leads to a racist backlash today. This backlash occurs because leaders and citizens are explicitly racist against outsiders. In fact, immigration restrictions are inherently racist and are the product of racial capitalism. These policies have racist origins, have always been tied to colonial practices and raced notions of desirability, and continue to directly and indirectly perpetuate racist ends.<sup>39</sup> With this perspective, *any* immigration policy is suspect because “[immigration policies] legitimate racism, feed racism, and are explicable only by racism.”<sup>40</sup> There is no puzzle for those in this group. Western states are more open to the freedom of movement for goods, services, and capital than people because, in such a world, elites and citizens would not have to share a society with racial undesirables, but would still reap the economic benefits of globalization.

This book is a response to both camps.<sup>41</sup> On the one hand, it would be intellectually dishonest to ignore the real progress toward racial equality in the postcolonial era. Decolonization led to the proliferation of new nation-states in the international system, which produced an international society of states that gives a voice to the former victims of Anglo-European colonialism and White supremacy.<sup>42</sup> This global transition coincided with Western states replacing immigration policies that discriminated on the basis of race with policies that admit immigrants who pass objective, inexplicitly racist criteria.<sup>43</sup> This real progress makes it difficult to completely vilify states and their leaders because it is impossible to argue that the problem of racism in the international system has not somewhat abated.

On the other hand, an overly optimistic or uncritical view leaves one blind to the remaining inequalities in the international system. Looking at the letter of the law is just one way that color blindness can blind one to persistent racial inequality. Human beings have a natural blind spot for racial inequality in contexts where such inequality is legally forbidden.<sup>44</sup> For example, during

39. Anderson 2013; Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018; Hayter 2000; Sharma 2020.

40. Hayter 2001, 149.

41. To be sure, migration scholars do not fall into two neat camps. These are just ideal types, and I do not mean to perfectly represent the vast and diverse scholarship on international migration policymaking.

42. Bull and Watson 1984; Strang 1990.

43. Joppke 2005, 2.

44. Bonilla-Silva 2006; Sullivan and Tuana 2007.



the 2016 Brexit referendum, some leaders used racist caricatures of Muslims to argue that “open borders make us less safe,”<sup>45</sup> while others articulated a desire to protect social services from “objectively” poor and undesirable immigrants and to reassert “self-determination.” These appeals resonated strongly with voters with heightened perceptions of Muslim immigration, even though they lacked a factual basis.<sup>46</sup> Yet, most policymakers and citizens fail to reckon with these examples, and they neither consider that modern immigration policies may still be racially biased nor interrogate how, in this example, British imperialism was complicit in *producing* that undesirability to begin with. Moreover, such examples run against the argument that nativism is constant and therefore cannot explain policy changes.<sup>47</sup> While nativism may be constant in rich countries, *exposure* to racial outsiders is not, and public support for the Brexit referendum emerged in response to increased emigration from the postcolonial world. This perspective allows for a nuanced view of how race and racism operate in the international system, does not depend on all politicians and citizens being “old-fashioned” racists, and helps explain how racial inequality in international migration can persist *and worsen* in the absence of legal discrimination.

## How Race “Hides” in International Migration

Systemic racial inequality in international migration is a product of three inter-related processes: the need of sovereign states to restrict undesirable immigrants, the legacy of colonialism, and the expansion of sovereignty. These three processes are interdependent, but the story begins with the assumption that “proper” sovereign states control their borders and have an inherent right to exclude foreigners. Modern racial inequality in international migration begins with this assumption, which supposedly goes back to the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia and motivates leaders to restrict immigration and control their borders. However, I argue that the right to control one’s borders is *not* an inherent feature of state sovereignty. Contrary to the rhetoric of most leaders and publics, international legal jurisprudence was ambivalent about border control during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In fact, this “right” only emerged with the rise of the modern, “rational” nation-state during the

45. Virdee and McGeever 2017.

46. Carl 2018.

47. Peters 2015, 114.

nineteenth century.<sup>48</sup> Modern nation-states were intoxicated with ideologies of progress, which led them to embrace scientific racism as a tool to perfect their societies. In many Anglo-European states, such as the United States and Australia, this transformation coincided with an influx of immigration of racial outsiders due to industrialization, colonialism, and the expansion of global capitalism. Racist migration policies emerged from these historical processes as a means to limit immigration of racial undesirables and protect the sanctity of the native population.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, the right to border control is not an inherent feature of sovereign states; *it is a modern consequence of racism*. Racism and White supremacy merely ensconced this “right” into the conventional wisdom of how modern states ought to behave.

As a result, racial inequality in migration persists because the desire to limit undesirable immigration never went away, and the norms of sovereignty validate those desires as a legitimate and necessary exercise of state authority. Prior to decolonization, the standard of immigrant desirability was race. In the modern day, elites and citizens continue to clamor for policies that restrict undesirable immigrants, but race is no longer a legally allowable criterion for desirability. Instead, policymakers use supposedly objective criteria to determine desirability, such as education and language. The issue is that these formally “color-blind” criteria are still correlated with race. For example, a US president recently implored Congress to restrict immigration from “shithole countries” in Africa because they threaten the national interest.<sup>50</sup> However, there is little reflection on what makes some countries dangerous “shitholes” in the first place, or whether citizens deterministically embody their homeland’s characteristics. Appearing undesirable often has nothing to do with an individual migrant and instead depends on how explicit racial inequality and colonial exploitation in international politics affects their home country.

This description of how Western states construct non-White migrants as undesirable finds common cause with W.E.B. Du Bois’s “The African Roots of War.”<sup>51</sup> More specifically, it highlights how long histories of explicit

48. Buzan and Lawson 2015, ch. 4.

49. As Adam McKeown notes in related work, migration control did not emerge as a logical necessity of the international system, but “out of the attempts to exclude people from that system” (McKean 2020, 3). However, McKeown does not discuss race in his exploration of this history; he focuses on “civilizations” instead.

50. Davis, Stolberg, and Kaplan 2018.

51. Du Bois 1915.

racism, chattel slavery, and colonialism produced “dangerous” modern subjects that Western states—often former colonizers—now routinely restrict. During decolonization, Anglo-European states assumed that recognizing former colonies as sovereign equals would settle the issue of racial inequality. These powerful states ignored the fact that former colonies gained independence after experiencing debilitating periods of domination at the hands of the great powers. Sovereign equality did not erase the long histories of exploitation that led to citizens from postcolonial states appearing inferior, undesirable, or even dangerous when compared to citizens of the Anglo-European states. Although the international system is now legally color-blind, we still observe inequality in migration because racism now hides in this uncritical view of why some migrants appear threatening. And the states that created those “dangerous” migrants are the same states that now categorize them as inherently unfit to immigrate. In this way, the decline of explicit racism and the rise of color blindness allow race to appear as a settled issue in the politics of migration, while obscuring that simply recognizing postcolonial states as equals does not create equality.

An unfortunate implication of this relationship between colonial exploitation and the ignorance of “color blindness” is that racial inequality in international migration is unlikely to abate *due* to the expansion of sovereignty in the postcolonial world. The conventional account of decolonization in international relations (IR) is that the European-dominated international society expanded to include former colonies, thereby becoming a global society.<sup>52</sup> Now that postcolonial states were recognized as equal members of the sovereign state system and its institutions, racial inequality was supposedly resolved. Instead, the globalization of the international society led to further closure and inequality because of the persistent hierarchy that lurks in contemporary global politics. Anglo-Europeans only conditionally accepted postcolonial states as members of the international society after years of exploitation, imposing arbitrary boundaries and, in many cases, disrupting centuries-long norms of freedom of movement.<sup>53</sup> This conditionality creates the perpetual need for postcolonial states to perform their legitimate statehood because, otherwise, Western states are free to intervene in their affairs.<sup>54</sup> Strict border controls are one important way of demonstrating authority and

52. Bull and Watson 1984, 432.

53. Herbst 2000, 228.

54. ICISS 2001.

legitimacy, as the closing and policing of international borders has become an important symbol of sovereignty. As a result, postcolonial states have built border fences and expelled foreigners at an alarming rate, which has increased racial inequality in migration by inhibiting migration within the global South. This shows that one cannot understand the postcolonial rise of restrictiveness in international migration without appreciating the history of Western colonialism.

This argument reveals how putatively good faith efforts to eliminate racial inequality can create conditions that perpetuate it. However, immigration policymaking takes place on a state-by-state basis, and Anglo-Europeans do not collude to intentionally discriminate against the postcolonial world. Accordingly, it is difficult to provide evidence of systemic racial inequality in this allegedly “color-blind” process. This inferential problem crops up whenever laws and behavior pull in opposite directions, and this book’s task is to unmask the bias against non-White migrants that lurks beneath these face-neutral policies.

### Why We Need a Measure of Racial Bias

At its core, my argument suggests that removing discriminatory laws is insufficient to dismantle racial hierarchies in the postcolonial international system. A significant proportion of the migrants the West now restricts on “objective” grounds come from countries that bore the brunt of colonial exploitation. This connection between past ills and present perceptions ensures that states and international politics cannot outrun their colonial histories. This assertion parallels other accounts of inequality in the postcolonial international system. For example, Antony Anghie argues that the West deliberately entrenched neoimperial economic relations into international law in response to decolonization.<sup>55</sup> Others like Siba Grovogui highlight how Anglo-European states continue to control institutions of global governance and function to disadvantage postcolonial states.<sup>56</sup> In these cases, identifying hierarchies is straightforward. One can point to exact moments and cases in international legal jurisprudence when Anglo-Europeans revealed their inclination to curtail the postcolonial world’s sovereign equality.

55. Anghie 2007.

56. Grovogui 1996.

The case of international migration is more complicated. The absence of racist language in modern immigration laws makes it difficult to provide evidence of global patterns of racial discrimination. Modern laws *forbid* such discrimination; one can no longer point to a racist policy to warrant the existence of discrimination in the opportunity to migrate. Without these laws, it is no wonder why scholars presume that international migration is a race-neutral process. The West scrubbed racist language from laws and institutions during the transition to color blindness, so racial inequality is out of sight and out of mind. This problem resembles past difficulties in measuring racial discrimination in American cities after the civil rights era. Without scholarly intervention, those inequalities would have remained invisible as well.

Likewise, we need a measure of racial inequality in international migration because, without such a measure, this inequality is *invisible*. In other words, without a measure, one is left to use various cases and anecdotal evidence to argue that such inequalities persist. While there are many cases that suggest certain countries discriminate against some types of migrants,<sup>57</sup> these studies remain vulnerable to the critique that racial inequality in migration is fleeting, case-specific, or unintentional, and therefore not a real structural concern in international politics.

This issue relates to a broader debate in the global governance literature regarding how problems emerge as necessary targets of state and international intervention. This discussion is vital because issues of global governance are often collective action problems: all relevant states must act to solve them. However, this collective action requires a shared perception of the state of the world and its facts, and that those facts constitute a legitimate problem to solve.<sup>58</sup> As Bentley Allan argues, an epistemic community or organization must first observe and classify an entity appropriately before the international community will see it as a legitimate issue.<sup>59</sup> Without this step, it is difficult for leaders to recognize an issue because, if they cannot see it, they cannot fear it.

What is more, *how* something is classified also impacts how states respond. In the case of the global climate crisis, Allan argues that the US government and its scientists classified the climate as a deterministic object that states could control. This choice produced policies such as carbon pricing schemes that presume humans can control a slowly changing climate. However, the

57. Alexander 1996; Köhler 1995.

58. Wendt 2001, 1023.

59. Allan 2017, 137.

climate is not deterministic and likely will change too fast for such deliberate policies to help.<sup>60</sup> Had scientists and policymakers constituted the climate as a different sort of problem—a complex, nonlinear system—this emphasis on control may have given way to a different governance model that would have facilitated more experimentation and ultimate success. In short, how scientists and elites defined and measured the climate problem affected how states addressed it.

I argue that elites and scholars ignore or downplay racial inequality in international migration because it lacks such a clear designation. Without racist laws, one cannot denote this inequality as a legitimate problem because the social undesirability of racism in international politics has rendered it invisible. There is no way to indicate whether inequality exists, so it is impossible for one to observe and classify this inequality. As such, it is unlikely that racial inequality in migration will emerge as a problem in global governance, beyond a corner of the IR academy, if it is not measured and unmasked.

This issue is analogous to the difficulties in studying racial inequality and segregation within cities, and in countries that do not collect statistics on race, such as France. For example, the US Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, familial status, or disability. One effect of the act was the end of *legal* segregation in the United States. However, despite the dawn of putative legal equality, it was clear that segregation continued, and scholars were forced to use other techniques to study the residential inequality that remained in the absence of explicit laws. These techniques compare observed racial distributions in housing to those we would expect in a truly desegregated world to infer the continued existence of spatial inequality, segregation, and redlining.<sup>61</sup> Without this scholarly effort, skeptics would still be able to dismiss continued residential segregation.

However, many scholars and policymakers oppose collecting statistics on race or ethnicity to inform policy. This resistance takes two forms. First, some resist racial classification for obvious historical reasons. The measurement of race—including the Human Genome Project—hearkens back to the age of scientific racism and raises important ethical questions.<sup>62</sup> This rationale against collecting racial statistics or measuring racial inequality finds

60. Allan 2017, 154.

61. Duncan and Duncan 1955; White 1983.

62. Phelan, Link, and Feldman 2013.

common cause with a similar debate among international relations scholars. Some argue that measurement and the use of indices hold disproportionate power in global governance. Measures constitute, rather than represent, the reality they claim to depict. There is no such thing as an objective measure; the creator's preconceptions always influence the index. As such, numerical indices in international politics reproduce relations of power, rather than simply measure objective facts about the social world.<sup>63</sup> When states, elites, and academics recognize the legitimacy of indices such as the World Bank's governance indicators, it gives credence to notions of good governance that Western states have used to warrant interventions in postcolonial states.<sup>64</sup>

Second, some states do not collect racial statistics because their model of comprehensive immigrant integration precludes it. France is the most extreme example of this policy. The French model of integration presumes that immigrants will lose their cultural distinctiveness on the path to citizenship. In fact, the definition of republican "Frenchness" explicitly forbids any mention of race or ancestry, and "the idea of a hyphenated Frenchman acquired no political or social legitimacy" in society.<sup>65</sup> As a result, there is no need to distinguish among French citizens on the basis of their national origin or race. Although the ideals of a color-blind society are admirable, this color-blind approach renders authorities effectively ignorant to still-existing racial inequalities. Rather than eliminate racial prejudice and other issues, the statistical invisibility of race conceals the extent of discrimination in French society and calls into question whether the government promotes civic nationalism and prioritizes assimilation to remain deliberately ignorant.<sup>66</sup>

This perspective implicitly subscribes to the philosophical position of *racial eliminativism*. Adherents to racial eliminativism argue that the concept of race must be eliminated from public discourse because it is scientifically inaccurate and rests on neither neutral nor factual grounds. In short, the concept of race refers only to a discrete group of people that share the same genetic features. Such genetic similarity can only emerge in a group of people that are genetically isolated, such as the Amish in the United States. However, by this standard, the concept of race only refers to groups that are not

63. Hansen and Porter 2012.

64. Gruffydd Jones 2013.

65. Simon 2015, 65–66.

66. N'Diaye 2006, 2008.

typically considered races (e.g., the Amish) and cannot apply to conventional racial groups (e.g., Black Americans) because the latter are not genetically isolated or distinct by any standard.<sup>67</sup> Eliminativists argue that this incoherence proves that scholars and laypersons should cease referring to races even when they do so in good faith.<sup>68</sup>

The issue with racial eliminativism is that it ignores the role of race as it currently exists in modern society. Critics of racial eliminativism argue that races are socially constructed, and despite their lack of scientific grounding, racial categories remain determined “by various historical, cultural, and social facts.”<sup>69</sup> In other words, simply noting that there is nothing biologically real about races denies that many in the wider world continue to treat some people differently on this basis. These *racial constructivists* believe that race is “both real and unreal”:<sup>70</sup> society groups humans on the basis of ancestry, phenotypic properties such as skin tone and hair texture, and other cultural markers. So, even though race is a scientific falsehood, society treats these groups as real and membership in racial groups affects one’s experience in the world.

In this book, I take such a constructivist approach to the study of race in international migration. While I acknowledge that race has no biological reality, people throughout the world still categorize others on the basis of these imagined categories. Race is a powerful concept *because* it is a social fact, not in spite of it. This rationale justifies the need for a measure of racial bias in international migration. The color blindness of international politics presumes that the removal of racist immigration policies is sufficient to end discrimination in immigration policies. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that states continue to close their borders to “undesirable” immigrants. Without a measure of racial bias to investigate these practices, we are unable to address inequalities in the international system, even if the basis of those inequalities is pseudoscientific. Creating this measure and revealing that stark inequalities exist despite their legal prohibition will illuminate racial inequality, particularly in migration, as a legitimate problem in international politics. While measurement is not an unqualified good, I use the power of measurement and classification in the service of uncovering otherwise invisible structural inequality.

67. Appiah 1996, 73.

68. Mallon 2006, 526.

69. Mallon 2007, 103.

70. Mills 1998, 47.



## Race, Racism, Racial Inequality

Even with this basic argument and empirical justification in view, however, we still need to define race and racism, as well as what they mean in an international context. Race is a multidimensional, hierarchical, and socially constructed label.<sup>71</sup> As such, the study of race raises ethical and conceptual issues that do not afflict other concepts in the social sciences. For one, the history of race is one of domination, genocide, enslavement, and pseudoscientific manipulation. The Anglo-European world constructed the concept of race to justify White supremacy, and its agents have used it to warrant countless incursions throughout the world.

François Bernier first used the term in 1684 to comment on the perceived distinctiveness of humans in different geographical areas,<sup>72</sup> and this classification quickly acquired its negative connotation and purpose in the eighteenth century. In fact, Immanuel Kant argued that “Negroes and whites are clearly not different species of human beings (since they presumably belong to one line of descent), but they do comprise two different races,”<sup>73</sup> and Europeans colonized the world on the basis of this newfound, objective (rather than theological) justification for their superiority. Given this history, many scholars, activists, and laypersons consider any “scientific” study of race to reproduce the historical injustices delivered in the name of human progress.

In addition, one of the perpetual methodological difficulties in cross-national research is *construct equivalence*, or “the instance where the instrument measures the same latent trait across all groups, or nations, or cultures.”<sup>74</sup> Construct equivalence is important because it is impossible to make general explanations about a given concept if it lacks a consistent definition. These difficulties pervade the study of race in international politics. Different countries have different histories and cultures, which lead them to hold different racial classifications. Therefore, reluctance toward studying race and racism in the international system is warranted because races often are not stable categories *within* states,<sup>75</sup> much less between them.

However, these issues do not preclude the study of racial inequality in the international system. Following Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann,

71. Omi and Winant 1994.

72. McPherson 2015, 677.

73. Kant 1777, 9.

74. Mills, Van de Bunt, and De Bruijn 2006, 623.

75. McPherson 2015.

I define a *race* as “a human group defined by itself or others as distinct by virtue of perceived common physical characteristics that are held to be inherent,” but that have no actual biological basis.<sup>76</sup> As such, racial groups become racial groups when others act as if that group is inherently distinct. This categorization is often made on the basis of appearance, culture, or behavior, and it has profound implications for that group’s power, its position in the social hierarchy, and the societal resources accessible to its members. In this way, race is “a relationship between persons mediated through things,”<sup>77</sup> and this broad definition is important because it avoids biological determinism; highlights the contingent, socially constructed nature of race; and emphasizes that this social construction occurs “relationally via the distribution of social, psychological, and material resources.” Under this definition, White Australia was a “racial” restriction because it was “imbued with the negative thrust of excluding some immigrants as members of other-(rather than self-) defined groups that were deemed intrinsically inferior.”<sup>78</sup> These policies reproduced racial groups because they withheld the ability to immigrate (a material resource) on the basis of putatively immutable characteristics that *others* defined (a racial classification).

Defining race this way clearly delineates it from the concept of ethnicity. The difference between a race and an ethnic group is that ethnic groups are self-defining and races are other-defining: ethnic groups *define themselves* on the basis of shared culture, language, religion, and history.<sup>79</sup> Ethnic groups only require members of a community to share a common origin and culture.<sup>80</sup> Races can, and often do, cross ethnic lines because the outsiders that use racial labels often are ignorant of ethnic divisions. As such, in this book, the distinction between race and ethnicity revolves around who defines the group, whether that group has an inherently negative connotation, and the effects of being placed in that group. Ethnicity is a horizontal label, while race is a vertical label: race implies hierarchy based on the implication of membership.

Be that as it may, the concepts of race and ethnicity further relate because the former has no biological basis and depends on the latter’s cultural traits. This interdependence can complicate matters because scholars make sharp

76. Cornell and Hartmann 2006, 22.

77. Ray 2019, 29.

78. Joppke 2005, 32.

79. Cornell and Hartmann 2006, 19.

80. Joppke 2005, 3.

distinctions between their concepts. But adopting the racial ontology of Alain Locke provides guidance for navigating the murky waters between race and ethnicity, strengthens the utility of the modern concept of race, and is faithful to a racial constructivism that acknowledges the lack of a biological basis for race, as well as its social effects.

Locke (PhD, Harvard, 1918) was the first black recipient of the Rhodes scholarship,<sup>81</sup> lectured widely on race and international relations,<sup>82</sup> and was the most prominent philosopher of the Harlem Renaissance.<sup>83</sup> Locke responded to the conventional wisdom of the time that race was a scientific or biological reality; he was a racial constructivist who saw these distinctions as *social categories*. For Locke, racial divisions boil down to the socially inherited cultural traits that outsiders attribute to groups from particular geographic areas. To explain the “so-called permanency” of races that scientific racists sought to account for, Locke pointed to the “determinism” of “social heredity, and its distinctions due to the selective psychological set of established cultural reactions.”<sup>84</sup> In short, ethnic groups are associated with certain cultural traits and geographic areas, which have “social and historical causes.”<sup>85</sup> Race “operates as tradition” and as a “selective preference for certain culture-traits and resistance to certain others.”<sup>86</sup> To summarize, an ethnicity becomes a race when its historically determined cultural practices are constructed as inherent. Races have no biological basis: they are “ethnic fictions” imposed on groups from the same geographic area on the basis of the favorability or unfavorability of their traits. This definition means that races are socially constructed, not Platonically real, but the construct still has devastating effects even in an era of putative color blindness. Locke’s constructivist connection between social practices, geography, and perceptions inform my empirical strategy for unearthing racial inequality in international migration.

As a result, I define *racism* as both an ideology that characterizes and ranks human groups (races), with some being inferior to others, and “the unequal treatment” or “exploitation” of those groups.<sup>87</sup> Racism is complex because it is both an action and a belief, and the absence of one type of racism does

81. Vitalis 2015, 11–12.

82. Henderson 2017.

83. Locke 1925.

84. Locke 1924a, 191.

85. Locke 1924a, 192.

86. Locke 1924a, 195.

87. Williams, Lavizzo-Mourey, and Warren 1994, 29.

not falsify the existence of the other. The consequence is that we can label a practice, institution, or structure racist if it treats members of different racial groups unequally, even if the perpetrator does not hold explicitly racist beliefs. For example, a bank's loan officers commit a racist act if they deny a loan to a Black family because they live in a redlined neighborhood. Regardless of the loan officers' beliefs, they still treat members of a racial minority differently on the basis of a group-based attribute. This treatment is pernicious because, in this example, the racial and geographical disparity in mortgage lending is a racist *structure* that produces harmful environments, such as violent neighborhoods and vacant homes, which lead to racial isolation and fuel racist beliefs. Each of these aspects reinforces the others in a feedback loop that reproduces racial classifications. Black Americans living precariously in the same poor and violent neighborhoods appears natural and given, which further affirms the racial classification and the racist beliefs of Whites. This process is what Abigail Sewell calls the "racism-race reification process."<sup>88</sup>

This cycle of race and racism resonates beyond American society because it involves the relationship between economic inequality and racial subjugation. Postcolonial theorists have long considered how race and racism sustain unequal political and economic relationships, and they apply this logic to the international system. For instance, Aimé Césaire describes how European colonizers used racist practices to dehumanize indigenous populations, label them barbarians, and establish colonies on the basis of White supremacy. These overtly racist tactics were individual (theft, rape, and various forms of psychological abuse) and institutional (forced labor, conscription, taxation, and appropriation).<sup>89</sup> In Césaire's account, colonialism thrived on racism and the production of racial groups because this dehumanization created a self-fulfilling prophecy that justified colonial exploitation.

Likewise, Frantz Fanon claims that "European opulence . . . owes its very existence to the soil and subsoil of the underdeveloped world" because its "well-being and progress were built with the sweat and corpses of blacks, Arabs, Indians, and Asians."<sup>90</sup> However, decolonization did not end this cycle of exploitation, and Fanon describes how former colonist countries exchanged independence for a "return to the Dark Ages" and withdrew "capital and technicians and encircl[ed] the young nation with an apparatus

88. Sewell 2016.

89. Césaire 2000.

90. Fanon 1963, 53.

of economic pressure.”<sup>91</sup> Anglo-European states may have acquiesced to independence, but they ensured that their former colonies would remain disadvantaged. This less visible dimension of decolonization crystallized postcolonial subjects as “undesirable,” and it shows the antecedents of this book’s main argument. With the benefit of hindsight, it expands beyond the immediate effects of colonialism to describe how this dehumanization and abuse affects contemporary politics.

Although these definitions do not subsume the myriad politics surrounding race and ethnicity, they highlight how I think of race operating in the international system. States and societies may have their own racial categories, but race and racism become international concepts when states (politicians, elites, publics) make or support policies on the basis of perceived difference. In many cases, scholars see race as a cause of various social phenomena: segregation, health inequality, police violence, and so on. However, race is better seen as an *effect* of social practices. In other words, states do not need to have the same racial ontology; they just need to act in similar ways in the face of groups that they consider racially different. This conception is similar to how Du Bois defines race when he remarks that “a black man is a person who must ride Jim Crow in Georgia.”<sup>92</sup> Being a victim of Jim Crow—an effect of racism—defined one as “Black.” Biological facts do not make race a coherent concept; rather, the inequalities and social conditions experienced by those labeled as racially distinct do.

### Who Are the “Racists”?

At first blush, this argument seems quite sinister. Racial inequality in international migration continues to exist because elites enact laws that are race-neutral in name only. These leaders and their constituents still want to restrict on the basis of race, but since racism has become socially undesirable, they must act through race-neutral policies. Advocates must then appeal to sovereignty, “objective” criteria, and the need to protect national security to justify these restrictive policies. After all, what citizen of a respectable country would not want to be extra safe when admitting outsiders? The story becomes fully international when newly independent states of the non-White world adopt Anglo-European models of sovereignty and implement their own

91. Fanon, 53–54.

92. Du Bois 2007 [1940], 77.

restrictive immigration regimes in an effort to act like a legitimate state. In this account, the behavior of hidden racists catalyzes this circuitous mechanism, leading from the end of racist quotas through decolonization to the present day.

The “sinister” interpretation of this argument reveals an important dimension of this book: the role of intentionality. Am I arguing that citizens and politicians *intend* to produce racial inequality? In its broadest definition, actors are intentional when they use their mental states—beliefs, desires, and preferences—to act purposively.<sup>93</sup> I have intentionality because I have beliefs (that I should write a book) and then act deliberately on the basis of those beliefs (I wrote a book). Intentionality is a philosophical concept, but it has important implications for politics because it helps us answer questions of intent and responsibility. Why did two states go to war? Why does recidivism occur? Why did someone default on a loan? In these cases, the philosophical debates surrounding intentionality matter a lot.<sup>94</sup> Consider the case of a loan default. An “internalist” would answer that what matters in explaining this default is that person’s own thoughts, beliefs, and preferences. To explain why the individual defaulted, we need to get inside the head of the defaulter and figure out why the person’s mental state led to this bad behavior. In contrast, the “externalist” would answer that human society is not merely the sum of billions of individuals with their own internal mental states. Instead, one’s environment also affects one’s intentionality. Humans “think through culture,”<sup>95</sup> and the externalist would respond that we need to understand how *society* affects the defaulter’s mental state that led to the bad behavior.

Intentionality plays a huge role in the study of modern racism, and this study is no different. For instance, many cities throughout the world are still racially segregated, even though explicit segregating practices—such as redlining—are now illegal. Competing explanations of this segregation fall along similar internalist/externalist lines. On the one hand, some argue that segregation is a product of structural racism, whereby non-Whites who would otherwise wish to move to a particular neighborhood are unable to do so because of factors that are out of their control, such as the history of income inequality between Whites and non-Whites. On the other hand, others argue

93. Wendt 1999, 172.

94. See, Wendt 1999, ch. 4, for an overview of the internalist/externalist debate over intentionality.

95. Shweder 1991.

that segregation is less a product of structure and more a product of preferential attachment or other deliberate behaviors. Cities remain segregated simply because people have a preference to live near those who are like themselves, or because lenders deliberately make it difficult for non-Whites to get loans. In these examples, intentionality matters. If non-Whites simply do not wish to live near Whites, or individual bankers deliberately hold non-Whites to higher minimum lending standards, then the solution is different than if society's structural or historical features perpetuate segregation.

Both of these cases reveal why we need to embrace “externalism” and appreciate the role of *collective* intentionality, particularly when we study racism. Collective intentions occur in supraindividual entities like societies, cities, and countries. For example, if you turn on a television news station, the commentators will discuss what countries and corporations intend all the time. The key point is that individual members of a supranational entity do not need to share its intentions. In the case of discriminatory bank lending, American society may collectively intend to restrict the frequency or size of the loans it gives to minorities because it intends to safeguard the loan market. This collective intention produces structural racial inequality regardless of the individual intentions of loan officers. The behavior of each officer matters—collective intentions do not come to fruition if individuals do not act—but collective intentions are not reducible to individual intentions, beliefs, or preferences.<sup>96</sup> Yet, the inequality that those collective intentions produce affects individual beliefs that can affect a loan officer's *future* intentions and behavior.

An account of collective intentions is vital for this book for two reasons. First, an important consequence of my argument is that racial discrimination in international politics persists irrespective of the distribution of individual racism. Put differently, racism in an international process does not require collective intentions to reduce perfectly to individual intentions, *just like in the domestic case*.<sup>97</sup> Leaders and citizens can have various intentions, but these intentions serve the collective intention of producing restrictions that lead to racial inequality. This makes locating responsibility a difficult task. Second, this logic scales up to the international level. All states implement immigration and border policies, and each may have a different intention. However, these state policies serve the collective intention of maintaining the sovereign state

96. Searle 1995, 23.

97. Gibbs 2001.

system. Individual states might not care about preserving the system and its ordering principles. But the structure, culture, and incentives of international politics makes it likely that the actions of individual states will serve the collective intention of preserving the status quo. In turn, when the international system expands after decolonization, this collective intention strengthens out of sheer numbers.

These points reveal the nature of modern racism in the international system and the problem of pinning down racist intentions. As I note above, racism is an ideology that ranks human groups and treats those groups differently on the basis of that ordering. Crucially, this definition means that individual leaders and citizens can be guilty of supporting racist policies without holding overtly racist views. All that matters is that their perceptions lead them to order groups on the basis of desirability and treat the migrants within each of those groups differently. As a result, racist immigration policies can emerge in several different ways. First, overt racists still walk among us, and they use explicit racism to justify restrictive policies. This case is the easiest to identify because the policymakers *state* that they want to restrict immigration by those they consider undesirable, and their definition of undesirability uses racist tropes.<sup>98</sup> However, because such racism is socially undesirable, all but the most overt racists will use “objective” facts to warrant policies: their state must restrict certain immigrants because not doing so will be dangerous. Second, some people are misled about the relative danger posed by certain migrants. Ideological news sources and motivated politicians have the incentive to propagate false information for their own gain.<sup>99</sup> Finally, others may selectively consume accurate information about certain migrant populations, but miss how the West benefits from an international system that caused the perceived danger in the first place. Those in this camp are prone to thinking that, for example, migrants from certain countries will bring their unproductivity with them and drag down the economy.<sup>100</sup>

The intentions with respect to race are different in each case, and we cannot know for certain whether behavior is “really” racist without the ability to read minds because all but the most prejudiced will use nonracial language. Overtly racist leaders are the exception, not the rule. Trying to parse the intentions of individual leaders only leads one to miss the bigger picture. As such,

98. Davis, Stolberg, and Kaplan 2018.

99. Bierbrauer and Klinger 2002; Martin and McCrain 2019.

100. Collier 2013.



this book is about unmasking structural racial inequalities that reveal *collectively racist intentions*. The sinister explanation for racial inequality need not hold for there to be sinister systemic outcomes in an ostensibly “color-blind” world. International politics is yet another arena in which “racism without racists” powerfully dictates the distribution of benefits.<sup>101</sup>

In short, states collectively intend to restrict on the basis of race irrespective of the individual intentions of its members. In fact, the importance of collective intent reveals why, in most cases, uncovering explicitly discriminatory intent of states’ laws is so difficult. For example, take the argument that the language requirement in Germany’s immigration policy is racist. Who would the “racist” need to be to substantiate this claim? For an internalist, one would need to observe a legislator (or group of legislators) using an explicitly racist justification for introducing or supporting the policy. For the externalist, one would need to consider how society as a whole constructs migrants that do not speak German as racially undesirable. My view is that the latter is representative of how White supremacy operates in the modern international system, though there are a few high-profile examples of the former in contemporary Western politics. We can be agnostic about whether leaders deliberately mask their discriminatory intent and focus on the structures that produce inequality.

As such, I explore how colonialism has led the West to construct migrants from the non-White world as undesirable. This bridge from colonial history to the present explains how color-blind laws that emerge from this construction nevertheless continue to have disparate racial impacts. This structural racial inequality is powerful and ruinous because it hides in plain sight, just like domestic White supremacy. However, *my* intention is not to absolve individuals of responsibility for behavior that perpetuates racism and racial inequality. Structures do not act; people do. This approach merely reveals why structural racial inequality continues to pervade the world without requiring thousands of internalist “smoking guns.”

## The Study of Race and Racism in International Politics

Unmasking this collective racism and racial inequality is vital because “race has been a fundamental force in the very *making* of the modern world system and in the representations and explanations of how that system emerged

101. Bonilla-Silva 2006.

and how it works.”<sup>102</sup> In other words, race and racism lie at the heart of how international politics has unfolded for centuries, so exposing how these forces operate is part and parcel of studying international politics.

Be that as it may, recent international relations scholarship laments that the mainstream discipline has ignored issues of race and racism during the post-War era.<sup>103</sup> But this ignorance belies the discipline’s dark racial history. Infamously, the field of international relations began its life as a science of race management during a time when policymakers reckoned with how to manage a world in which global capitalism’s expansion and colonialism led to increased interactions between the West and the global South.<sup>104</sup> As Errol Henderson notes, the IR of the day had two axes. On the one hand, the dominant strand of White Anglo-European scholars pushed racist, pseudo-scientific accounts of a global racial hierarchy. Popular textbooks of the time argued vehemently about how this racial hierarchy was one of the fundamental facts of the social world, and this conventional wisdom informed debates in the United States and Great Britain over how to administer far-flung territories filled with racial undesirables.<sup>105</sup> On the other hand was the Howard School, which was composed of scholars like Locke, Ralph Bunche, E. Franklin Frazier, Rayford Logan, Eric Williams, and Merze Tate, who both combated the White supremacist foundations of the contemporary IR academy and developed their own theoretical approaches to international politics that preempted later theories, such as complex interdependence.<sup>106</sup>

Henderson, Robert Vitalis, and others have spearheaded efforts to highlight the early disciplinary history of IR and how the Howard School contributed to our total knowledge of international politics, but they also emphasize that scholars whitewashed this disciplinary history from the record after 1945. Indeed, Vitalis aptly notes that “scholars reliably produce unreliable accounts of the past of their own fields” and “International Relations is no exception.”<sup>107</sup> This erasure of IR’s foundational history has two consequences. First, it prevents contemporary scholars and graduate students from understanding the White supremacist foundations of the field and its theories, a task

102. Persaud and Walker 2001, 374.

103. See, e.g., Anievas, Manchanda, and Shilliam 2015.

104. Vitalis 2010, 911.

105. Henderson 2017, 493–495.

106. Henderson 2017, 497.

107. Vitalis 2015, 5.

to which several scholars have recently devoted their attention.<sup>108</sup> IR lies in a strange position within the social sciences because it only recently undertook this confrontation with its history, and this work will force scholars and practitioners to consider how the modern discipline descends from techniques of colonial administration that preserved (and expanded) international racial hierarchy.

Second, erasing the racial history of IR legitimizes the relative contemporary paucity of scholarship on race and racism in international politics. Although IR began its disciplinary life explicitly as a science of racial issues (and racist assumptions), modern IR largely ignores race, racism, and racial inequality. Like most examples of disciplinary ignorance, IR's blindness to these issues should disturb readers because prominent scholars have raised this issue since the early 1990s. Scholars such as Roxanne Doty, Siba Grovogui, Sankaran Krishna, L.H.M. Ling, Randolph Persaud, Robbie Shilliam, and R.B.J. Walker—to name a selection—have joined Henderson and Vitalis in highlighting both the absence of mainstream (and critical) IR scholarship on race and the aforementioned disciplinary history.<sup>109</sup>

What explains this absence in the face of such vehement claims? The first explanation derives from the racist history of the discipline. When scholars found a discipline on racist foundations, they build White supremacy into its assumptions and conventional wisdom. Vitalis describes this historical phenomenon as a “norm against noticing” race, which comes about because scholars privileged the Anglo-European core during the era of explicit racism. Despite the advent of color blindness in the contemporary discipline, the Anglo-European core composes the field's historical framework for thinking about the world.<sup>110</sup> Beyond ignoring non-White scholarship and contributions to the field, this framework perpetuates a norm of ignoring or obscuring White supremacy and the persistence of race and racism in the contemporary international system.<sup>111</sup> As a result, mainstream scholars come to view IR as the study of great power politics, war, and trade that this pre-WWII history shaped without considering how race and racism continue to play a role. This norm resembles the erasure of prejudice from the study of international migration after decolonization. Once the world

108. See, e.g., Henderson 2013; Hobson 2012; Rutazibwa 2020; and Sabaratnam 2020.

109. Doty 1993, 1999; Grovogui 2001; Krishna 2001; Persaud and Walker 2001; Shilliam 2013.

110. See also Henderson 2015, 90.

111. Vitalis 2000, 333.

becomes legally color-blind, the importance of race fades from scholarly memory.

The second explanation involves method and methodology. Doty and Krishna attribute the absence of race to the discipline's privileging of "theory building rather than . . . descriptive or historical analysis."<sup>112</sup> Mentors encourage their graduate students to take a positivist approach to social science, which prioritizes "abstraction" and the construction of "clear and ambiguous definitions of concepts." According to Doty, race and racism are complex, not "self-evidently neutral" facts, and therefore they are not well suited to the dominant way of studying IR in the mainstream academy. Although positivists certainly appreciate problems of moving from theory to concept to measurement, this critique maintains that using "methodological measurement" to solve these problems blinds scholars to issues of race.<sup>113</sup> This reliance on positivism contributes to making the study of race "taboo" in mainstream IR because it is "too historical or descriptive" and lacks "intellectual rigor."<sup>114</sup> These debates over method lead Persaud and Walker to suggest that race has "been given the epistemological status of silence."<sup>115</sup>

Despite these critiques, recent work demonstrates that the study of race and racism in international politics is well suited to positivist and quantitative approaches. For example, Henderson uses statistical analyses to reveal how White supremacy and Western imperialism intervened in African domestic institutions to produce particular patterns of conflict since decolonization.<sup>116</sup> While Henderson responds to the conventional wisdom in international relations theory, others like Thandika Mkandawire and Sonal S. Pandya reveal how racism, ethnocentrism, and colonialism intervene in the modern international political economy through domestic policies, such as taxation and foreign direct investment.<sup>117</sup> This work goes beyond merely highlighting the racist history of the field of IR and lamenting the absence of mainstream scholarship on race and racism to reveal how modern White supremacy works in practice. Moreover, these examples show how taking a concern for how race and racism continue to operate in the modern international system does not preclude one from using positivist methods.

112. Krishna 2001, 401.

113. Doty 1993, 448.

114. Krishna 2001, 402.

115. Persaud and Walker 2001, 374.

116. Henderson 2009, 2015.

117. Andrews, Leblang, and Pandya 2018; Mkandawire 2010, 2015.

This book builds on this existing scholarship, and it exposes a further aspect of modern international relations rife with racial inequality: international migration. The book recognizes Doty and Krishna's critiques of positivist scholarship. But rather than acquiesce, I develop a measurement strategy that imperfectly attends to the complexity of race and racism in the service of a historical argument. In so doing, I further demonstrate the inferential gains that positivist methods can bring to bear on unmasking the persistence of race and racism in the color-blind international system.

## The Plan of the Book

Each of these themes emerges throughout the rest of the book. In the next two chapters, I situate immigration policymaking within the history of the rise of the modern nation-state. I overview the rise and fall of racist immigration policies and show that, contrary to conventional wisdom, the right to restrict foreigners was not an inherent principle of state sovereignty. This "right" arose only after settler colonial states began encountering racially undesirable immigrants, and I lay out how racist immigration policies emerged with the modern nation-state and its obsession with "rational" administration.

I then describe the transition from explicit discrimination to color blindness. There is a debate over whether this shift in policy orientation arose as a result of World War II and Nazi atrocities, or whether peripheral states successfully lobbied for the end of racist restrictions. I provide my historical synthesis of these perspectives to set the stage for the remainder of the book. The upshot is that by the end of decolonization, explicitly racist and discriminatory policies were gone. This sweeping sea change has led many leaders, policymakers, and academics to consider racial inequality in migration to be a settled issue. As I preview above, this assumption has prevented an inquiry into what makes some immigrants seem more desirable than others, and I reflect on the history of colonialism to describe how racial inequality persists in the color-blind international system. In chapter 4, I outline the inferential strategy for investigating these arguments and address some potential criticisms.

In chapter 5, I provide evidence that racial bias in the opportunity to migrate does remain, despite the end of racist quotas. The evidence in this chapter is the empirical centerpiece of my analysis, warrants the arguments, and sets the stage for the remainder of the book. To reveal the persistence of racial bias, I use an inductive strategy: I rule out all other possible explanations

of the patterns of movement between states that are not discrimination. In so doing, I explain as much of the movement between states as possible and then determine whether the remaining, unexplained component exhibits patterns of racial inequality. In short, I estimate the ideal-typical amount of migration we should expect to see between every pair of states in the world from 1960 to 2015. I then reveal that deviations from these estimates fall along racial lines to substantiate my argument that migrants from the non-White world migrate less than expected, while migrants from the global North migrate in numbers far closer to expectations.

In the remainder of the analysis, I interrogate my explanation for why this inequality persists. I argue that colonialism and legal racism in the international system produced the conditions that states now use as objective justifications for restrictive immigration policies. These policies, therefore, disproportionately affect non-White migrants from the postcolonial world. In the rest of chapter 5 and in chapter 6, I test this hypothesis directly. The final section of chapter 5 digs deeper into the racial argument. Specifically, I expand the analysis to determine whether latent, symbolic racism in Western states leads to more restrictive policies. It is difficult to test this proposition directly. To get at this question, I test whether the racial composition of immigrant flows is associated with greater policy restrictiveness. Chapter 6 broadens this analysis to consider the colonial history mechanism. In this chapter, I analyze whether states that receive greater immigration flows from former colonies enact more restrictive policies. In chapter 7, I test the final piece of the theory. In so doing, I infer whether the expansion of sovereignty into the postcolonial world is also responsible for the persistence of racial bias in international migration. I explore the rise of border fences in the global South to show that postcolonial states have internalized the exclusionary logic of the rest of the world. Finally, the concluding chapter considers the implications of my argument, explanations, and evidence for the future of the international system, global prosperity, and the well-being of all individuals.

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