Counterterrorism and Race

Abstract: This article examines the field of counterterrorism and race in the context of International Relations (IR) scholarship. The article identifies noteworthy texts for examining situated knowledge and individual experiences of counterterrorism as a form of IR-relevant inquiry. Drawing on the fields of postcolonialism, sociology, and legal and terrorism studies, this paper identifies the real-world challenges that academics of counterterrorism and race are responding to, the analytical frameworks they utilise, and the key questions they collectively pose for IR. The article finishes by presenting the problem of how to reconcile two understandings of race: one, upheld by those with state-endorsed counterterrorism knowledge with more academic understandings of race, and another disconnected from a wider politics and submerged in colonial/imperial histories.

Introduction

> *The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the "emergency situation" in which we live is the rule. We must arrive at a concept of history which corresponds to this–Walter Benjamin (1974)*

When discussing the global effort to counter terrorism as a feature of international politics there are few comments that ring truer than Walter Benjamin's. In fact, replacing his very usage of the word 'history' with 'counterterrorism', and arguing that individuals must arrive at a concept of counterterrorism which corresponds to the tradition of the oppressed, sets the stage for an important conversation that this article seeks to extend. At its centre lies the provocation that the politics of counterterrorism in the Global North demonstrates International Relations' (IR) underpinnings in systems of power structured by histories of racial ordering.

The purpose of this article is to offer a starting point for IR scholars entering the field for counterterrorism and race. This state of the field canvases an extremely broad and interdisciplinary literature, inclusive of postcolonial, sociological, and legal studies as well as literature critiquing public policy, highlighting activism, and evaluating critical and orthodox terrorism thought. In order to illuminate significant controversies, whilst also presenting innovative perspectives that emphasise the significance of situated knowledge and individual experiences of counterterrorism to IR inquiry, this article specifically engages with developing issues and trends in the study of counterterrorism and race.

The definition of race that prevails in this article is one that broadly acknowledges race as the hierarchical adjudication of human competencies through the categorizing and essentialising of group attributes (Shilliam 2016). The breadth of this definition is one that allows for an emphasis not just on the constitution of race, interpretations of the idea of race and the types of discrimination that flow from these interpretations (otherwise known as racism), but also on the representational process whereby political consequence is ascribed to race (Anthias and Yuval Davis 1992; Garner 2010). This latter process is known as racialization.

As a contested term simplified for purposes of a broad assessment of global affairs, here, counterterrorism is explained generically as a wide-ranging and all-encompassing effort by state actors and those they employ to ensure the integrity of existing social, political, and economic structures (Crenshaw 1991;2001). Correspondingly, terrorism can be comprehended as the politically motivated effort by state and non-state actors alike to ensure and contest the status quo through violence and subversion (Crenshaw 2001; Kilcullen 2005). For the purpose

of clarity, this article primarily examines the racial politics of counterterrorism as it is implemented by state actors (i.e. Governments and security institutions) and directed towards non-state actors (i.e. Daesh-Inspired political extremists) and everyday people within the Global North.

The article is comprised of four parts. Part one of the paper contextualizes the field of counterterrorism and race within a wider examination of counterterrorism as a pursuit of policy and form of knowledge production in a racial world order. Part two presents recent noteworthy texts that have utilised counterterrorism and race together to shine light on the racial nature of counterterrorism politics and the transnational ramifications of its imperial attributes. Here, the writings of Poynting et al. (2004), Razack (2007), Kundnani (2015) and Khan-Cullors and Bandele (2018) are engaged with as resources for understanding how situated knowledge and individual experiences of counterterrorism constitute a form of IR-relevant political inquiry. Part three of this article itemises and interrogates key issues and analytical frameworks shared by the aforementioned texts. The fourth and final section is dedicated to examining challenges and paths forward for those interested in this field.

Counterterrorism and the racialization of world politics

In the realm of IR, counterterrorism mainly operates as "a metaphor", a "mode of domestic governance as well as a foreign policy tool" (McCulloch 2016:250). It describes a transnational industry – though unique, pending geographic location and application – that "marks the arena of elections", the activities of police and intelligence authorities, and "the doings of governments and parliaments" (Holland 2009:282). As a concept, counterterrorism is inherently political in how it relays "the establishment of [a] social order which sets out specific accounts of what counts as politics and …not politics" and what counts as security and not security (ibid). As a result of how it is practised, operated, and studied as a form of conflict resolution, counterterrorism exists as one part of a wider thematic trend of academics, government officials, and security experts framing international politics so that it suits their empirical interests and world view (Crenshaw 1991; Stampnitzky 2013; English 2018).

Some scholars suggest that this world view is generally one dependent on the predominance of a 'West' that arose historically with the European colonization of 'non-Western' societies (Said 1979; Razack 2004; Thobani 2007; Parashar 2018). As a result, counterterrorism as a concept, practice, and pursuit of knowledge is argued to be epistemologically and structurally "tied to the emergence of whiteness as a social identity", and the politics of racial hierarchies instituted through neo-colonial violence (Thobani 2007:171). It is this political backdrop that I take to underpin the field of IR inquiry dedicated to the study of counterterrorism and race

Prior to explaining the particulars of the field of counterterrorism and race, it should be understood that historically, counterterrorism has been examined in the sub-fields of terrorism and critical terrorism studies. Here, academic debate has focused on the merits of "methodological and disciplinary pluralism" and the significance of adopting "postpositivist and non-IR based methods and approaches" to counterterrorism investigation (Horgan and Boyle 2008:55; Smyth 2007; Gunning 2007).[1] There are a notable number of critical and orthodox identifying terrorism-studies scholars who also see counterterrorism practices and

[1] This article does not engage with contestations concerning the existence of such fields [i.e. the case against critical terrorism studies or vice versa], but it does acknowledge that authors who are members of these distinct disciplines make significant contributions to inquiries regarding the ways in which governments of the Global North pursue counterterrorism.

research as being constitutive of wider political projects. Some of these include Smyth (2007), Burke (2008), Crenshaw (1981;1991;2001), English (2018), Jackson (2012), and Sageman (2017). Nonetheless, fields specific to the study of terrorism/counterterrorism still often "carry Eurocentric dispositions" that have fixed their conceptualisations of counterterrorism "within particular contexts and with particular normative connotations" (Shilliam and Rutazibwa 2018:1).Terrorism studies, including its critical variant, might not be different from other white-dominated fields that took shape historically when much of the research that passed as objective was "in fact ideologically white supremacist" (Bonilla-Silva and Zuberi 2008:16; Puar and Rai 2002; Pain 2014; Kibria, Watson, and Selod 2018).

The often-violent colonial frameworks within which the study and deployment of counterterrorism grew is still sometimes obfuscated by scholars, particularly when the practice of counterterrorism itself speaks to "a universalist normative agenda that few…want to question" (Bonilla-Silva and Zuberi 2008:16). It is for these reasons that scholarship studying the intersection of counterterrorism and race is necessary, for addressing the international ramifications of counterterrorism pursued within the context of a racial world order. Arguably, while the language used to address both counterterrorism and its politics remains diverse, the pursuit of counterterrorism has always been intertwined with the politics of "European contact, colonisation, and the domination of people thought to be beyond modern civilisation" (Bonilla-Silva and Zuberi 2008:5).

For instance, in studies of the early 2000s, counterterrorism was predominantly presented as a foreign policy matter with government agencies seeking retributive justice in opposition to those of the axis of evil within the global South (Said 2001; Thobani 2003; Razack 2004; Kundnani 2007;Nayak and Malone 2009).The US-led War on Terror "marked a significant shift in postcolonial articulations of whiteness" (Thobani 2007: 169). At this time, entities such as the Bush administration and its allies were recast as vulnerable guiltless Western victims of the "irrational hatred of this fanatic non-Western Other" (ibid: 170). More recently, targets of counterterrorism are increasingly categorised as belonging to a transnational diaspora of political actors who in their essence are irrational, corruptible, apolitical, but still non-white (Garner and Selod 2015). In accordance with the counterterrorism politics of both the war to counter the axis of evil and the war to counter the transnational diaspora, the very existence of racialized peoples in the West remains a matter of racial paranoia amongst neo-imperial entities. These arguments demonstrate the contribution of studying counterterrorism and race together where scholars can trace how the experience that is the racialization of people as a result of counterterrorism practice constitutes a source of political knowledge that deserves further exploration.

Whiteness is a matter of social and political positioning where those viewed as white or white adjacent accrue differential treatment and socio-political advantages due to their assumed civility, competence, and humanity (Gantt 2010; Garner 2010; Abu-Bakare 2017). Authors such as Razack (2017:92) and McCulloch (2016) remind readers that the police and intelligence entities often tasked with upholding counterterrorism form a political elite with "a key role to play in the symbolic and material arrangements of a racially ordered society". Today a number of activities can be categorized as racialized counterterrorism: supressing migrants entering illegally at the US Border, subduing protestors contesting police brutality and inhumane deportation in the name of blacks lives, and instrumentalising policies that render Muslim and perceived-to-be Muslim citizens under suspicion for political capital (Razack 2008; Forcese and Roach 2015; Kundnani 2007,2015; Coates 2015; Weaver and Grierson 2016; BBC 2017; Khan-Cullors and Bandele 2018).

In sum, and reminiscent of the famous words of Karl Marx, those studying counterterrorism and race together acknowledge that that while today's counterterrorism policymakers may invent their own history, they cannot make it as they please (Stampnitzky 2013). Counterterrorism practices occur under circumstances already existent, granted, and transmitted from a colonial past. This is true, even though as a term indicative of political security and societal analysis, counterterrorism is defined in numerous ways, depending on the positioning of the expert (Crenshaw 1981;1991; Richards 2015). Counterterrorism wears many different faces pending the locality and level of its application. It is reimagined and re-contextualised as counter-extremism: an activity aimed at addressing vocal or active opposition to fundamental North American/European values; and counter-radicalisation: "an activity aimed at a group of people intended to dissuade them from engaging in terrorism-related activity"; (Richards 2015; May 2011:107; Goodale 2019). Contestations concerning 'what specifically constitutes counterterrorism' happen as a result of counterterrorism policy and legislation occurring in numerous settings "of a policy debate involving government institutions, the media, interest groups, and the elite and mass publics" (Crenshaw 2001:335).

There is a large and diverse community of authors who have addressed the subject of counterterrorism and race as a form of politics in itself, explicitly derived from and produced "in the structural relations of inequality…that characterize established social orders" (Scranton 2004:179). For instance, the works of Grewal (2003), Thobani (2003), Puar (2007), Kumar (2012) Delphy (2015), Mondon and Winter (2017), Lyons (2018), Belew (2019), all provide important contributions. Nonetheless, for scholars of counterterrorism and race looking to specifically observe the positionality of the counterterrorism subjects in relation to global structures, there are texts which are particularly helpful for understanding how situated knowledge and individual experiences of counterterrorism constitute a form of IR-relevant inquiry. I now turn to these texts.

Key texts for understanding the intersection of counterterrorism and race

Counterterrorism, as it conventionally stands, can be considered a practice of knowledge production. Anecdotal, anthropological, and journalistic assessments of black, brown, and faith-identified criminality have and continue to inform popular understandings and in turn social acceptances of practices of counterterrorism. Alternatively, few scholars in IR have consistently linked counterterrorism and racial suppression measures ongoing in the global North with neo-colonial military interventions in the Global South. What is more, thinkers such as W.E.B. Du Bois (1925), Frantz Fanon (1952;163) and Edward Said (1979; 1987;2004) are hardly recognised by state institutions as counterterrorism knowledge producers (Blain 2018). It is highly unlikely that such actors ever sought out such recognition. Their writings have instead been mostly engaged with in the fields of political theory, sociology, anthropology, feminism and legal studies. It is with this politics of knowledge recognition in mind that I offer scholarship on counterterrorism and race emanating from these aforementioned disciplines as key texts for those interested in IR-relevant research on counterterrorism and race.

In the following literature review, texts written by Scott Poynting, Greg Noble, Paul Tabar and Jock Collins, Sherene Razack, Arun Kundnani, Patrisse Khan-Cullors and Asha Bandele are presented in order of their publication date. Each text draws specific attention to counterterrorism as a reflection of a racialized and neo-imperial dynamic. These authors demonstrate how racial logics prevail in institutions responsible for counterterrorism discourse, practice, and legislation. Each of these texts notably fall outside of IR in their purview due to

their separate trajectories of argument emanating from postcolonial and sociological modes of societal inquiry as well as broader political historical, and literary mediums. Nonetheless, they remain integral for IR inquiry into counterterrorism and race in so far as they discuss real-world politics wherein racialized discourses shape counterterrorism through government and societal apparatuses (Kurz and Berry 2015).

Poynting, Noble, Tabar and Collins (2004) Bin Laden in the suburbs: criminalising the Arab Other

Speaking to the Australian political climate in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, this text argues that agendas of counterterrorism in the 'West' transcend North America and instigate racialization as a form of political discourse in Australia. *Bin Laden in the suburbs* (2004**)** demonstrates that when counterterrorism is legitimised as a discourse of ethnic crime, counterterrorism persists as a form of policing and intelligence activity. The book also tracks the everyday tendencies to stereotype Arabs, South-Asians, and/or perceived-to-be Muslims as being sympathetic to or complicit with, terrorism (Poynting et al.2004:2). Counterterrorism is shown in this Australian case study to exist as part of a wider process of ideological representation sustained by media and politicians but also reinforced by the judicial system and social policy. Through arguments emanating from the scope of criminology, Poynting et al. (2004) argue that in response to the War on Terror, the societal propagation of the Arab Other functions in the Australian political imaginary to sustain a project of national belonging in the face of national insecurity.

While the term 'counterterrorism' is not explicitly used in this text, Poynting et al (2004) present the act of countering terror as political and implicated in the endeavours of Australian politicians to quickly diagnose a society's ills through the establishment of racial hierarchies. Their book highlights the significance of everyday white Australians being readily willing to accept this course of action. Though Poynting et al. do not emphasise how the racialization of terrorism is linked to institutionalised neo-imperial thinking, in the forward of this book, acclaimed anthropologist Ghassan Hage makes a point of discussing the relevance of Australia existing as post-colonial state to its counterterrorism discourse. Hage argues that Australia's colonial past is directly related to both elite and everyday Australian ambivalence concerning the "Arab within the metropolis" (Poynting et al.2004:x). Hage asserts that this same contemporary uncertainty towards the Arab in 2004 is parallel to the manner in which colonial entities historically remained ambivalent towards the Arabs of their colonies, continually asking themselves "Is the Arab a migrant 'black African' bodily other, or a 'Jewish' subversive scheming will?" (ibid).

As Poynting et al. appropriately highlight, what makes the diagnosis for the terrorist problem proposed by Australian political elite ring true so easily for everyday Australians is the fact that such resolutions strike a chord with fears emanating from Australian peoples' world views; particularly with those suffering from anxieties about trends of social change ongoing in twenty-first century Australia. As a result of countering terrorism now associated with the act of e.g. raiding the homes of Muslims at gunpoint, these people can validate their already existent concerns via a collective sense of a social ailment that arises amidst a climate of fear (Poynting et al. 2004).

Whilst connecting counterterrorism debates to Australian societal concerns over immigration, dog-whistle politics, and election campaigning, Poynting et al. (2004:5) demonstrate how problems of counterterrorism and race move between global, national, and local events,

showing how these different levels "are imbricated in moments of moral panic". As they remark, an appearance of causality arises in the process of racializing and justifying the subsequent 'Othering' of Arab and other Middle Eastern immigrants, asylum seekers and Muslim Australians as: illegal immigrants, gangs, rapists, and terrorists (Poynting et al. 2004 :116; 127). Experts examining counterterrorism politics, security discourses, and the geopolitics of fear such as McCullloch and Pickering (2009), Pain (2010), Spalek (2012), and Cherney and Murphy (2016), cite this book as an important text for understanding the intersection of counterterrorism with wider concerns of global politics, linking the societal issues of Australia to the rest of the world.

Razack (2007) The Impact of Systemic Racism on Canada's Pre-Bombing Threat Assessment and Post-Bombing Response to the Air India Bombings

As a Canadian postcolonial feminist and legal scholar, Razack is renowned for her writing on neo-colonial interventions by the Canadian government within and outside its borders. This work can be found in her (2004) monograph *Dark threats & white knights: The Somalia affair peacekeeping and the new imperialism*, and her (2008) publication *Casting Out, the Eviction of Muslims from Western Law and Politics*. Both aforementioned works discuss how Canadian security measures are applied to darker peoples in the name of peaceful intervention and the law, and of how this process exists as part of a greater political project "disciplining…Third World peoples who irrationally hate and wish to destroy their white saviours" (Razack 2004:7).

In *The Impact of Systemic Racism on Canada's Pre-Bombing Threat Assessment and Post-Bombing Response to the Air India Bombings* Razack examines how procedures of counterterrorism work to disguise systematic racism in action, often allowing political terror to disproportionately affect bodies of colour. This is so even when affected bodies of colour occupy a presumed privileged status as citizens of Canada. In this text, Razack illuminates how racial thinking institutionalised within a government apparatus is directly inherited from its colonial past and how this affects the ability to mitigate and reconcile with terrorist plots. Razack argues that this inability to reconcile results in far reaching consequences for the government's citizens. Razack was commissioned by a lawyer representing victims of a Canadian terrorist attack and their families to write this report on the Air India bombings to submit before the Canadian government. Readers of the paper will be able to observe an argument using empirical assessments of Canadian law and intelligence findings to demonstrate how events of terrorism and procedures of counterterrorism inequitably affect non-White citizens, particularly when they are the immediate victims of a terrorist attack.

The aforementioned paper focuses on the Canadian government's response to a terrorist attack that occurred in 1985 where 331 innocent people, most of them Canadians of Indian heritage, lost their lives in a plane bombing organised by Sikh extremists on Canadian soil. It was not until 2006, twenty-one years later that, due to continued public pressure, the Canadian government held a public inquiry into the investigation of the 1985 Bombing. A key finding of the inquiry was that five years before the bombing there had been "considerable discussion of an imminent threat of extremist Sikh terrorism in Canada" and regular warnings from the government of India and the Canadian high commissioner to India of an incoming attack (Razack 2017: 94).These warnings "included information that Indian intelligence felt that an Air India plane would be targeted" (Razack 2017:94). The Indian government conveyed that, from July 1984 to June 1,1985, out of seventy-three threats, thirteen were specifically devoted to Air India (Razack 2017). Despite this knowledge being readily available, Canadian security authorities did not take appropriate preventative measures to address the potential attack.

As a result of the inquiry, the victims' families alongside the rest of the Canadian public also came to learn that Canada's Security and Intelligence Services (CSIS) authorities considered of the numerous warnings from the Indian government to be an exaggeration rather than a plausible security threat (Razack 2017). This was so even though Canadian authorities also received plausible intelligence, such as audio of meetings of suspects regarding plots in Quebec and Southern Ontario, and despite the fact that the Air India airline itself began issuing security-orientated logistical requests and warnings (i.e. additional x-rays of bags, the use of explosive services, sniffing dogs) to CSIS, RCMP, and transport officials in the immediate months before the bombing occurred (ibid).

The Air India inquiry also found that Canadian security and airline officials poorly disseminated information surrounding these requests and failed to efficiently brief or train associated airline workers and departments on the threat of Sikh extremism, despite being given sufficient time to do so. Despite the Canadian citizenship of a majority of these victims, he Canadian government initially dismissed the bombing of Air India Flight 182 as a foreign disaster taking the stance that "a foreign carrier had crashed off foreign seas" (see Blaise and Mukherjee 174 in Chakraborty 2015:111). As a result of these findings, families of the victims of the bombing argued that a more efficient and immediate counterterrorism response by the Canadian government into the 1985 incident did not occur because of the Canadian government's own "failure to fully acknowledge the victims of the crash as Canadians" (Chakraborty 2015:111).

In her report, Razack (2017:86) acknowledges that while " it goes without saying that no single factor can account for the institutional response to the bombings", when examining the Commission of Inquiry into the Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182, it is evident that systemic racism [was] a factor that affected the behaviour of CSIS, the RCMP, the Canadian federal government and "their assumptions about the nature of the Air India terrorist threat and of who would most likely be affected by it" (Razack 2017:88). For Razack (2017:87) systematic racism "operates when all lives do not count the same and when those charged with protection are not inspired to do their best to ensure that no life was lost". These comments led to a media sensation as the Canadian government publicly challenged Razack's study.

Razack's controversial report, though no longer widely accessible in its original form, was recently re-published as part of Chandrima Chakraborty, Amber Dean, and Angela Failler's edited publication *Remembering Air India: The Art of Public Mourning* (2017). The report has been used to demonstrate how governments that claim to safeguard multicultural societies, cast themselves as victims of foreign political violence brought on by racialized immigrants, while successfully obscuring the central role that systemic racism plays in securitisation internal to the nation. Authors writing on histories of political exclusion and the politics of public memory such as Chakraborty (2015) and Ali Somani (2018), the latter of whom most recently accounted for Razack's (2007) report in their 2018 submission to Tania Das Gupta, Carl E. James, Chris Andersen, Grace-Edward Galabuzi, and Roger C. A. Maaka's edited work titled *Race and Racialization*, acknowledge Razack's (2007) publication as a text that efficiently demonstrates that, when racism penetrates counterterrorism institutions, it does so at a cost.

Arun Kundnani (2015) The Muslims Are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the domestic w
ar on terror

British scholar Arun Kundnani writes regularly on the contemporary effects of race, culture, and empire, and is well known for his acclaimed (2007) work *The End of Tolerance: racism in 21st century Britain*. His latest (2015) work *The Muslims are coming!* examines the politics of anti-extremism and counter-radicalisation in the United States and United Kingdom. The central argument of the text is that radicalisation has become the lens through which Western societies continue to view Muslim populations (Kundnani 2015:9). Whereas Poynting et al. (2004) focus on counterterrorism as a matter of political culture, and Razack (2007) addresses counterterrorism as an indicator of systematic inequality, Kundnani (2015) directly critiques counterterrorism by analysing how intelligence communities practice counterterrorism and examining the attributes of those who sponsor intelligence activities. Focusing on a key counter-radicalisation practice –using the personal relationships within targeted communities to obtain counterterrorism intelligence–Kundnani links contemporary counterterrorism to previous government campaigns to neutralise civil rights, black liberation, anti-war, and student movements. Establishing the connection between anti-Muslim and anti-black institutionalised racism allows Kundnani (2015:23) to empirically explore a variety of counterterrorism policies. The way in which these policies label certain forms of violence as terrorism is generally a racialized act.

Analysing previously classified data on the demographics of individuals profiled as extremists in accordance with the British government's Prevent policy and detailing the Obama administration's own participation in institutionalised violence against Black Muslim political leaders, Kundnani exposes the main confusions of the radicalisation discourse that prevails throughout the Global North. He discusses the continued counterterrorism focus on the religious beliefs and psychology of individuals, the downplaying of valid political grievances, and the belief that terrorism is rooted in a foreign youth culture of anger (Kundnani 2015:121). As an expert on media and communications, Kundnani addresses how partisan politics often works to misrepresent legacies of institutional racism. While neoconservatives invented the American terror war post 9/11, Barrack Obama's liberal policies normalised, further domesticated, and authorised its legal basis so that the US government could carry out extrajudicial killings without geographical constraints (Kundnani 2015:7).

As part of *The Muslims are coming!* Kundnani identifies two main modes of racial thinking which he argues pervade the domestic war on terror. The first mode, based on a culturalist argument, locates the origins of terrorism in what is regarded as Islam's failure to adapt to modernity. The second, the reformist argument, identifies the roots of terrorism not in Islam itself but in a series of twentieth-century ideologues that distorted the religion to produce a totalitarian ideology–Islamism–on the models of communism and fascism. According to Kundnani (2015), the problem with both of these approaches is that they eschew the role of socio-political circumstances in shaping how people make sense of the world and then act upon it. Additionally, Kundnani argues that these modes of thinking are not free-floating: they are institutionalised in counterterrorism practices which are actively endorsed by "well-resourced groups, and that reflect an imperialist political culture" (Kundnani 2015:10).

The Muslims are coming! Thus, explains that a key aspect of counterterrorism is the desire to engineer a broad cultural shift among Western Muslims while discounting the ways in which Western states themselves have become more disposed to use violence in a broader range of contexts (ibid). Calling on the writing of W.E.B Du Bois, Kundnani raises awareness of how the cultural tropes of Muslimness, such as wearing the hijab, now serve as twenty-first century racial signifiers, functioning in ways analogous to the familiar trade markers of "colour hair and bone"(Kundnani 2015:58).

Since its publication, Kundnani (2015)'s work has been used in empirical investigations into the way in which Western governments consistently position themselves as neutral mediators and absolve themselves of their role in "creating an environment in which identarian violence occurs" (Kundnani 2015:287). Scholars such as Fitzgerald (2015), Ragazzi (2017) and Spaleck (2016) have used *the Muslims are coming!* to demonstrate how counterterrorist interventions by Western governments tend to escalate rather than alleviate levels of perceived threat, violence, and alienation amongst their base populations (Fergusson and Ahmed 2017). Awan and Abbas (2015) are particularly notable in their use of Kundnani (2015) to highlight how British counterterrorism strategies are insufficient for accounting for white supremacist and/or far-Right violence.

A key finding emphasised in *the Muslims are Coming!* is that statistical data demonstrates that violence carried out by far-Right groups in Europe and North America is of a similar magnitude to that typically described as jihadist political violence (Kundnani 2015:22;24–242). While such commentary was once viewed as being controversial, security experts such as Holbrook and Taylor (2013) and Kaunert and Léonard (2019) consistently note trends in several European countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Sweden, and Belgium, where radical right-wing parties campaigning on an anti-immigration platform have achieved popularity and significant electoral successes. Significantly, in December 2019 the Home Affairs Correspondent for the British government reported that for the second year in a row the number of far-Right referrals to its counter-extremism programme hit a record high (Dearden 2019). Overall, Kundnani's (2015) publication will consistently prove helpful for those looking to apply the relevance of racial critique to the most contemporary practical and policy elements of security debates.

Khan-Cullors and Bandele (2018) When they call you a terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir

For those directly affected by counterterrorism policy, the ability to recount their lived experiences can be a form of vindication amidst "a general climate of racial animus and societal complicity" (Bhabha 2013:83). This is because academic studies of counterterrorism rarely affirm "those members' lived experiences with inequality" (ibid). It is for this reason that the fourth and final text that I turn to is *When they call you a terrorist*, a book co-authored by American co-founder of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement Patrisse Khan-Cullors and journalist Asha Bandele.

Texts written from the perspective of those seen as terrorists by Western Governments such as Pierre Vallières or Sayyid Qutb are generally categorised as propaganda, radicalisation material or sensitive writings in a manner which often dissuades their usage (Vallières 1971; HM Government 2013; Forcese and Roach 2015; Siddique and Grierson 2020). Nevertheless, it is significant that the lived experience of being categorised as a terrorist under counterterrorism policy be examined by researchers of counterterrorism and race for two reasons. Firstly, without the accounts of those facing the direct consequences of counterterrorism policies, the power relations embedded in the official discourse of counterterrorism cannot be fully examined and addressed (Scranton 2004). Without texts such as Khan-Cullors and Bandele's (2018) *When they call you a terrorist*, education on matters of counterterrorism and race provide" not necessarily the truth, but that aspect and interpretation of the truth which the rulers of the world wish them to know and follow"(see Du Bois 1946 in Jones 2001:1). A second reason for examining such sources is to introduce humanising explanations into the study of

counterterrorism politics. Akin to critical stands of IR and security studies, prerequisites of the field of counterterrorism and race require deliberations on counterterrorism events and discourse that are considerate of equity in participation, subjectivity, value differences, and local knowledges.

Written by a political activist classified as a terrorist in the United States, *When they call you a terrorist* (2018) offers an auto-ethnographical text that is highly relevant to scholastic considerations of the quotidian nature of counterterrorism as it functions in collaboration with anti-blackness, ableism, policing, and intelligence. Chapters are organised in relation to each period of Khan-Cullors' life, and each chapter being pre-empted with the usage of quotations prevailing from the writings of black feminist, anti-colonial, and anti-racist activists. Her narrative is predicated on the telling of the personal intimacies and queer and disability politics to which Khan-Cullors and those immediately close to her are inter-connected. As such, the text showcases how counterterrorism researchers approach the subject of positionality in relation to their research. *When they call you a terrorist* (2018) reminds studiers of counterterrorism and race that when "routine relations of power and privilege pass without remark", this is indicative of the extent to which such relations are deeply embedded in a society (Pascale 2011:158). These are some of the reasons to include accounts that emanate from members of a society wherein counterterrorism exists as a regular routine disciplining people's everyday existence.

Whether it be the fact that in early 2019, nine BLM activists were convicted of terrorism related offences in the United Kingdom or that in 2017, the Guardian circulated the findings of a leaked internal FBI report that discussed concerns with the existence of Black Identity Extremists (BIE), recent events should remind readers the essential role that political blackness has historically played in counterterrorism politics. While contemporary debates tend to focus on the subject of Daesh-inspired extremism, it is too often infrequently remembered that world renowned anti-racist activists such as Martin Luther King, Angela Davis, Assata Shakur, Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, and Malcolm X were historically maligned with terrorism accusations. Dr Angela Davis, who authors the forward of *When They Call You a Terrorist*, reminds readers to "engage critically with rhetoric of terrorism", encouraging readers view counterterrorism within a wider critique of Western logic (Khan-Cullors and Bandele 2018: xiii).Khan-Cullors and Bandele (2018)'s publication is most regularly cited in relation to the subject of black feminism, criminology, and social transformation (for example, Browdy (2018), Updegrove, Cooper, Orrick, and Piquero (2018), and Welch (2019). Those who cite this text tend to highlight how the resistance of Muslims and other marginalised communities to state violence is framed as being inherently violent in accordance with a white-centric epistemology that determines what constitutes political terror.

Key issues and analytical frameworks

While the above authors and texts differ in discipline, research interest and institutional gravitation (i.e. activism, public awareness, academic research), there are clear commonalities when it comes to key questions and analytical frameworks. For instance, each of the aforementioned authors is concerned with:

- How to address the manner in which systematic racism pervades institutions key to the practice and discourse of counterterrorism in a manner that draws members of the public marginalised by policy and the policy elite to the same table for equitable reform.;

- Whether it will ever be possible for actors of the Western state apparatus to reconcile its imperialist tendencies with long-term systematic equality for its non-white citizens;
- The ways in which cross-racial and interfaith communities can best establish solidarity during times of crisis so as to contest state-racism in a matter that deconstructs white supremacy.

These issues are thematically linked across the texts in terms of how they circulate within similar analytical frameworks. Two examples of such frameworks include the examination of counterterrorism as a) an issue of coloniality and b) as a phenomenon of the racial state of world affairs.

Counterterrorism as an issue of coloniality

> *Many times, I have been stopped in broad daylight by policemen who mistook me for an Arab; when they discovered my origins, they were obsequious in their apologies; "Of course we know that a Martinican is quite different from an Arab." I always protested violently, but I was always told, "You don't know them" (Fanon, 1952: 91).*

Each of the aforementioned texts share an analysis framed by the issues of coloniality: the systematizing logic of colonialism, (the material process of domination inspired by imperialist ideology), and its concealment by a shroud of 'modernity' in counterterrorism policy debates (Quijano 2007). Each text shares common critiques of neo-imperialism and its present relationship with those governments authorising contemporary counterterrorism in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Post 9/11, in the aftermath of American and allied country interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, several academics turned to arguments of coloniality to explain the activities of the Bush administration, particularly its dehumanization of perceived to Muslim populations within the Global North and Global South (Salaita 2006; Barkawi and Laffey 2006; Welland 2015). The theme of counterterrorism as an issue of coloniality is associated by many with Edward Said's (1979) publication *Orientalism*, particularly its chapter titled "Orientalism now". There, Said argues that for every Orientalist, an imperialist actor aiming to specifically narrate the political existence of the Middle East and its peoples, there exists a system of staggering power that "culminates into the very institutions of the state" (Said 1979: 307). Said argues that "to write about the Arab world…is to write with the authority of a nation… the unquestioning certainty of absolute truth backed by absolute force" (ibid). This quote has inspired many academics, including those cited in the aforementioned texts, to critique the global war on terror as a contemporary form of colonial rule.

While several scholars initially stayed focused on arguments of orientalism, isolating the racialization of the Muslim as a unique phenomenon of counterterrorism, Said's scholarship has inspired many to look into the relationship between counterterrorism and coloniality more broadly. Arguments about the critical implications of the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, and of Western indifference to the plight of Palestinians, Somalians, Algerians etc. were bridged together, and Said's words were tied to those of Fanon (1952), Du Bois (1925) and others to underpin a thematic trend of anti-imperialist scholarship. Poynting et al., Razack, Kundnani, Khan-Cullors and Asha Bandele each individually demonstrate how the logics of Said, Du Bois, and Fanon continue and develop in their application during the twenty-first century. Each author also demonstrates that counterterrorism is still enmeshed with a system of representation

which authorises Western governmentality, installs racial differences, and produces the formerly colonized as entirely knowable (Childs and Williams 1997).

Counterterrorism as a phenomenon of the 'racial state' of world affairs

Furthermore, each of the aforementioned texts examine the logic of counterterrorism as part of the design of a racial world order (Henderson 2015). Scholars such as Kundnani (2015) argue that, explicitly racial tropes and conceptualizations of political terror have partially emanated from mainstream discourses of counter-extremism, racial thinking and racism continues to subliminally structure counterterrorism intelligence. Coloniality is not unrelated to this second analytical framework focused on racial statehood. As authors such as Anievas, Manchanda, and Shilliam (2015) observe, policy making in the racial state system references allows for white supremacy to guide the techniques and processes of reasoning about social facts, including facts about what constitutes terrorism and appropriate counterterrorism measures. This second analytical framework is unique in how, through its scope, counterterrorism is assessed sociologically as an arm of institutional governance; with its functionalities being argued to be present in the everyday technologies of micro-informal racist expression (Kapoor 2018).

Scholars who write on race and racialization and its implication for different oppressed communities such as Muslims, Jews, Black, and indigenous peoples, examine counterterrorism within the context of a colour-line inspired research agenda. In the early twentieth century, Du Bois (1903;1925) famously argued that the chief problem of international relations would be one of race relations. Counterterrorism can offer evidence of the colour line persisting in the twenty-first century (Razack 2004; Abu-Bakare 2017). In accordance with this framework, counterterrorism is examined as a security practice guided by white logic, which "assumes a historical posture that grants eternal objectivity to the views of elite Whites and condemns the views of non-whites to perpetual subjectivity" (Bonilla-Silva and Zuberi 2008:17–18). As suggested by the works of Poynting et al, Razack, Kundnani and Khan Cullors and Bandele, it is white logic that often side-lines the experiences of those contesting racialized counterterrorism in Western democracies.

Counterterrorism in this framework, is anchored in the Western sociological imagination as "a particular social threat– whether it be a 'condition', a crime or a social group – … identified and made subject to public debate and sustained media coverage" (Poynting et al.2004:11). In this framework, counterterrorism is understood as a racializing practice that illuminates power dynamics within collective identities affected by counterterrorism – "enclaves designed to keep threatening others out" (ibid:261). Approaching counterterrorism as a phenomenon of the 'racial state' of world affairs outlines the importance of seeking new models of public engagement at times of societal conflict, and new frameworks for articulating collective experiences of violence which can address the underlying problems of socio-economic division amidst security dilemmas.

Key challenges to the field and ways forward

As Stampnitzky (2013:7) correctly maintains, "struggles over the shifting terrain of the political and the apolitical and the rational and irrational" is not a "phenomenon unique" to counterterrorism expertise but is deeply intertwined with the politics of the international. An increasingly motivating factor causing counterterrorism policymakers to pay attention to racial

politics centres upon the question of whether accounting for *political grievance* will render counterterrorism policies more successful.

Policymakers familiar with the work of Martha Crenshaw, a foundational author within the field of terrorism studies who argues that political grievance serves as a common sentiment known for driving individuals to become terrorists, appear to be accepting race-based counterterrorism scholarship on the grounds that it can serve as way of addressing different types of extremism (Crenshaw 1981; Crenshaw 2011). For instance, scholars such as Imran Awan, who in multiple presentations to the British parliament claims Islamophobia as a motivating factor for Daesh inspired extremism, is but one example of anti-racism-based counterterrorism scholarship's rising popularity (Awan 2013; Awan and Abbas 2015; Awan and Zempi 2017). His findings that anti-racism must be essential for counterterrorism to be truly effectual against Islamic-extremism has gained traction within British parliament, alongside his claim that current British counterterrorism strategies are inadequate for mitigating the growing presence of far-Right extremism in Britain. Awan, along with his collaborators, have recently been cited by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims. Their report, 'Islamophobia Defined: The Inquiry into a Working Definition of Islamophobia' (2019), contributes a working definition of Islamophobia / anti-Muslim hatred. The interest in the role of accounting for political grievance in counterterrorism practice has been influential in granting academics who analyse counterterrorism and race access to avenues of counterterrorism policy debate within parliamentary institutions in the area of responding to far-Right extremism as well (Holbrook and Taylor 2013; Perry and Scrivens 2018; APPG on British Muslims 2019; Goodale 2019).

Having the ability to influence counterterrorism policymakers–whether they be members of parliament, lords, police, or intelligence actors–is crucial for enabling knowledge on counterterrorism and race to flourish in wider society. Nonetheless, there is a tension here regarding whether academics are able to speak to policymakers and state elites without becoming part of the same eco-system that enables counterterrorism policymakers to avoid addressing structural inequalities. Arguing that by accounting for racism within Western society, counterterrorism policymakers and practitioners are directly reducing the threat of radicalisation and extremism is problematic. This is because such reasoning ensures only a short-term connection between counterterrorism policymakers and the marginalised communities they hope to engage. Such strategies of accounting for racial violence might still fall into the trap of upholding counterterrorism as a politically neutral project with respect to racial and religious identity, disconnected from globally relevant systems of oppression. The problem is that this surface level connection is unsustainable since there is only an instrumental interest in the subject of racism, i.e .in so far as it does not conflict with security interests, and of how to interpret racism as a structural problem of international affairs. There is a wider continued problem of academics and policymakers alike upholding that counterterrorism can be manipulated by anti-racist counterterrorism policymakers in favour of resolving, for instance, far-Right extremism, without resolving its structural issues. Suggesting that state actors should care about racial violence because it continues the cycle of terroristic violence does not account for the imperial foundation of epidemics of state violence nor does it ensure accountability on behalf of government entities for how their counterterrorism practices, past and present, perpetuate racial hierarchies.

When given the chance to independently assess their relationship to Islamophobia, counterterrorism policymakers still predominantly present anti-racism as a moral or economic quandary disconnected from political institutions and wider dimensions of power (Sayyid and

Vakil 2017). This action may have wider consequences including potentially minimising the structural relationship between the existence of the far-Right and neo-imperial state power or encouraging austerity and immigration politics to be framed as a matter of populism instead of racial violence (Goodale 2019; Kundnani 2007; Bhambra 2017; Shilliam 2018). In the face of the ongoing threat of growing political grievances and ongoing acts of political terror, governments of the Global North continue to maintain the existence of racial violence as a recent, small-scale, ahistorical reaction to Daesh-Inspired extremism and not a wider political phenomenon extending back into their racist histories as states(Paul 1997;Stoler 2011; Kundnani 2012; Perry and Scrivens 2018). It is through "the hegemony of the 'post-racial' myth" often propagated in the Global North, "the collective denial of the continued significance of race", that white supremacy endures and thrives" (Joseph-Salisbury 2019:4). In other words, allowing the government to interpret anti-racism in its favour might discourage it from coming to terms with its own sustainment of white supremacy.

An ongoing challenge for those studying counterterrorism and race concerns the reconciliation of popular and state-endorsed understandings of race with more academic understandings of race that are themselves connected to a wider politics submerged in colonial/imperial histories. Dismantling and resisting the systems of knowledge that prevail in the spaces where prominent counterterrorism knowledge is produced and validated should be a key concern for those academics studying counterterrorism and race as connected issues of international politics. In IR, lack of awareness of the racial politics of counterterrorism remains a problem of immense analytical and empirical importance. It is a challenge to keep the attention of those who implement counterterrorism but in a way that does not give in to neoliberal understandings of race or succumb to white logics of state-approved anti-racist discourse.

Researchers of counterterrorism and race in IR may consistently find themselves struggling to prove to other counterterrorism researchers that their interest in racial dynamics is not a trend or act of scholastic political correctness, but a genuine endeavour to produce more adequate and sophisticated knowledge of counterterrorism. The aim must be to pursue the study of counterterrorism and race in a way that is both self-reflective and considerate of the genealogies of terrorism studies and of how these genealogies have contemporary effects on the ways in which racial violence is framed and pursued by liberal democracies today. It is hoped that this article provides further clarity for how those who enter the field of counterterrorism and race may validate and extend their research as part of a wider IR examination of security events as ongoing imperial artefacts with continued racial effects.

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