

Shades of sovereignty: racialized power, the United States and the world

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The segregated diners along Maryland's Route 40 were always somebody's problem – mothers packing sandwiches for a daytrip to the nation's capital, Jim Crow on their minds – but they were not always John F. Kennedy's problem. That changed in the early 1960s, when African diplomats began arriving to the United States to present their credentials to the United Nations and the White House. Between the high-modernist universalism of the former and the neo-classical, republican universalism of the latter, at just about the place where ambassadors got hungry, lay a scattering of gaudy, ramshackle restaurants straddling an otherwise bleak stretch of highway. As the motoring diplomats discovered to their shock, the diners excluded black people in ways that turned out to be global: whatever their importance to US foreign policy, African economic ministers and cultural attaches received no diplomatic immunity.¹

The incoming Kennedy administration soon confronted an international scandal, as the officials filed formal complaints and US and overseas editors ran with the story. "Human faces, black-skinned and white, angry words and a humdrum reach of U. S. highway," read an article in *Life*, "these are the raw stuff of a conflict that reached far out from America in to the world." Kennedy, reluctant to engage the black freedom struggle except where it intersected with Cold War concerns, established an Office of the Special Protocol Service to mediate: its staff caught flak, spoke to newspapers, and sat down with Route 40's restaurateurs, diner by diner, making the case that serving black people was in the United States' global interests. High-level officials argued for the desegregating of Maryland's public accommodations for both visiting dignitaries and African Americans. "Let me say with a Georgia accent," stated Secretary of State Dean Rusk, "that we cannot solve this problem if it requires a diplomatic passport to claim the rights of an American citizen."² In the context of Cold War rivalry and African decolonization, Route 40's petty apartheid was no longer just its own. Racialized power had a geopolitics; one that had suddenly brought the President to within two degrees of separation from the owners of the Double-T Diner.³

This chapter explores intersections between the politics of racialized difference and the United States' geopolitical histories, and the rich varieties of ways that historians have mapped them.⁴ The assertion that the United States' place in the world had something – perhaps everything – to do with race would have been uncontroversial for those who dominated the nation's early political, economic, and social life: slave-based capitalist empire, the displacement and elimination of Native peoples, and a sense of America's Anglo-Saxon roots and destinies were widely understood to be foundational to and defining of the United States itself.⁵ Nor would this statement have surprised Native and enslaved peoples who a paid high price for US national-imperial expansion. From the mid-nineteenth century forward, it was the activism and scholarship of the critics of racialized supremacy, both those who suffered under it directly and their allies, who inaugurated the hard work – still unfinished – of shifting race from essentialized, ontological reality and moral norm to social construction and political problem. A rising, critical consciousness developed of the ways that racial systems in the United States formed an integral part of what W. E. B. Du Bois called a global belt of white supremacies, sparked by transnational abolitionism, and intensifying in particular where the expansion of a black public sphere and African Americans' increasingly worldly horizons challenged exploitative, aggressively hierarchical European and US colonialisms at the turn of the twentieth century.⁶ By the early Cold War, a sense that the most egregious, visible, and terroristic faces of the US racial state – if not racialized social inequality generally – were, in an interconnected world, an international public relations problem in need of technocratic management, had shifted from outsider politics to establishment circles, including presidential administrations.

But this awareness – vibrant in activist networks, intellectual circles and the black academy – was, for an extremely long time, segregated from the fortified precincts of US diplomatic history. This was not so surprising. With its Eurocentric, Atlanticist orientation, elite-centered methodologies, and aspirational ties to the State Department (an agency with its own deep history of exclusivity, including racial line-drawing), early diplomatic history embarked from confident assumptions about global hierarchy that were inhospitable, where they were not actively hostile, to critical accounts of that hierarchy, including of its racialized dimensions.⁷ This said, there were early works that, in recounting the history of US–Japan relations and the centrality of struggles over migration to those relations, necessarily emphasized the politics of racialized exclusion at their center; while important foundations, these works did not establish race as an analytic category more widely.⁸

By contrast, mid-to-late twentieth-century scholarship in the history of US foreign relations witnessed a variety of dramatic openings when it came to the role of race.⁹ They were ushered in, first and foremost, by activists and intellectuals during the Vietnam War era that linked anti-racism and anti-imperialism, and critiques of American power to anti-colonial struggles throughout the world.¹⁰ In

the long wake of these struggles, late twentieth-century historians of the United States' role in the world began stressing the role of "nonstate" actors (including anti-racist activists); the social-historical experiences of groups that had, up to then, been marginalized within diplomatic historiography, especially African Americans, Latinos and Asian-Americans; and culturalist methods that, in their late twentieth-century modes, foregrounded questions of meaning, identity, and power. Given the centrality of the Cold War to US foreign relations historiography, and African Americans to the study of race in the United States, it made sense that the foundational works connecting race and diplomatic history established the fact of Jim Crow as an international embarrassment in the post-1945 period, and black and anti-racist activists' varied uses of this reality, revelations that were bold and of enduring impact. Especially since historians' discovery of this "Cold War civil rights" nexus, race has (against long odds) emerged as a major analytic category in US foreign relations historiography, figuring both in works that foreground it and, just as importantly, in scholarship with fundamental concerns that lie elsewhere.¹¹

Specifically, this chapter will discuss eight domains of scholarship, among many possible others: histories treating the racializing of sovereignty; policymakers' approaches to race; race in cultural histories of American perceptions of the world; the making of transnational racial solidarities; transfers of racial and anti-racial practices; the racial politics of migration and border control; intersections of race and capitalism; and race in US militarization, war-making, and occupation. This chapter's title has two intended implications. First, "shades" suggests the ways that the racialized politics of social differentiation were and are, to important degrees, reflections of – shadows cast by – conflicts over geopolitical questions: who legitimately governed whom, by what means, in the name of what principles, and toward what ends; about the meanings of nationhood and statehood in a globalizing world; and about definitions of and boundaries between legitimate and illegitimate violence. While conventional historiographic approaches have plausibly prioritized the causal power of race in shaping American geopolitics – particularly as the impetus, template or ready-made rationale for imperial projects – my approach here takes seriously the equally plausible but less explored proposition that struggles over the United States' presence and power in the world, unfolding in transnational, imperial, and global contexts, played decisive roles in shaping Americans' notions of racialized difference and its political meanings.

Second, "shades" is meant to evoke degrees, gradations, and variations, as an explicit challenge to stark, counter-productive dichotomies that characterize literatures on both race (white/non-white, racism/anti-racism, racial/civic, exclusion/inclusion) and US foreign relations history (realism/idealism, culture/power, domestic/foreign, empire/democracy). The most generative literature in this field, I'll suggest, exposes the limits of these binaries by looking at the varied, evolving, and conflicting ways that Americans have made sense of their transnational encounters, including in racialized ways; the wide array of US

geopolitical projects Americans have engaged in, and the complex, multi-directional ways these histories inform each other.

To begin, the chapter attends to some necessary definitional work. Both despite and because of decades of struggle, race remains hard to pin down.¹² Discussions of race have long been characterized by imprecise, essentializing definitions and intense, moral-political charge – themselves related – as well as identitarian criteria for participation, but more than anything else, by the overwhelming ideological need to cast race as liberalism’s other, whatever else it may be: in the case of the United States, at least, a language of “dilemmas” and “contradictions” has long rendered antithetical things that are not, in fact, opposites. In these classic, liberal formulations, race is contrary or external to the ordinary operations of capitalist social relations and national civic membership, and will wither with the advance of their universalizing logics. This fundamental role as negation may be precisely what has given race its expansive, indefinite character; other categories – class and empire come to mind – play similar roles as liberalism’s fraught but defining outer limits. It does not help race’s clarity that essentializing meanings of the term (as natural, hierarchical typology) and deconstructing ones (as socio-political construct) share the same word, unlike the generative distinction between “gender” and “sex,” for example. When invoked without specificity in the context of terminological confusion and conflictual politics, the term “race” can essentialize the very people and situations it is meant to account for (similar to the way early twentieth-century Americans used the adjective “race” to modify only those things pertaining to African Americans).

Equally unhelpful is the unselfconscious hegemony of US-based, Anglophone framings. Due to the relative power and resources of the US academy and publishing in a more and more Anglophone world, and the decisive, transnational impact of the African American freedom struggles during and after the Cold War (itself inseparable from the United States’ status as hegemon), American ways of theorizing US-centered racialized systems have become powerful templates for “race” in many other scholarly and political settings. In ways that remain to be fully explored – intended, unintended, ironic, tragic, and productive – post-1945 American theorizations of race, essentialist and anti-essentialist, hegemonic and liberatory, may be one of the United States’ most important American Century intellectual-political exports.¹³ These conceptualizations, for better and worse, tend to take as their conscious and unconscious object the American subjection of black people – often, more narrowly, Jim Crow – physical criteria of racialized difference, and one-drop rule delineations as defining not only of race in parts of the United States, or the United States, but of “race” generally. While not without its benefits for both scholarly inquiry and emancipation politics, this dynamic – running parallel to Americans’ other confluences of nation and globe – expresses its own kind of imperial provinciality. With these contending frameworks in play, it is worth building a fresh historical account on an original conceptual foundation.

For my purposes, racialized power combines exception, descent, and domination. This succinct definition requires unpacking. Race appears here as a verb – something actors past and present do to each other – rather than a noun; as noted above, race in the nominative form hovers uneasily between essentialist and deconstructive tasks. That race modifies power here signals its irreducibly political character: that it is forged and challenged in historical and present-day struggles over power, whatever its proponents' pretensions to primordial history, scientific authority, divine will, or identitarian authenticity. By exception, it refers not only to exceptionalism in an ideological sense (the notion that certain “races” may be positively or negatively exceptional *vis-à-vis* a norm, for example) but to extraordinary exercises of dominating power and the absence or suspension of rights; these political exceptions are neither separable nor derivable from exceptionalist ideologies. Unlike conventional US-centric definitions that foreground physical criteria – often explicitly scientized – the definition presented here emphasizes distinctions of descent, definable through myriad authority systems (religious, historical, kinship-based, scientific) but tied ultimately to questions of reproduction, lineage, and historical continuity, and their relationship to socio-political membership.¹⁴ It is for this reason, among others, that racialized power and gendered power are inseparable: policing and preserving lines of descent requires disciplining gender definitions and sexual behaviors in ways that secure only sanctioned forms of biological and social reproduction. While cultures of bodily differentiation were at the core of slavery and its aftermaths in the Atlantic world, racialized power has been built upon equally compelling distinctions of language, religion, region, occupation, space, technology, and material culture. Finally, race as defined here involves relations of asymmetrical power, power that was limited, among other factors, by the resistance of those subjected to it. Where conventional definitions tend toward a sharp typological distinction between race and its others (as in the long-running debate about when race first emerged), one of the important features of this definition is that, by employing race as a verb, it also renders it both a process and a spectrum: something becomes racialized only to the extent that the separable gears of exception, descent, and domination grind together.

I have built this definition in part to counter one of the most influential, durable and misleading presumptions about “race” in scholarship and public life: that it is reducible to ideational activity, “prejudice,” “ideology,” and “racism” (understood as a coherent body of beliefs) being three of the most common formulations. The notion that race is simply a matter of (bad) thinking is an old one, dating back at least to the 1920s, and became dominant during the post-1945 period for complex reasons, among them the rise of culturalist thought and survey metrics of “attitude” in the social and human sciences, and the driven, Cold War pursuit of anti-materialist, anti-socialist theories that could displace what for many were compelling accounts of race's profound, structural ties to capitalism. What might be called the mentalizing of race

requires a deeper history than is possible here.¹⁵ What is most relevant for present purposes is that in part because of this association with “ideas,” race entered the historiography of US foreign relations understood to be a subset of “culturalist” approaches. While this fact promoted a rich literature on the role of racialized ideology in US foreign relations, it reinforced a misunderstanding of race as primarily or exclusively a matter of mind, rather than a mode of power with material, behavioral, social-structural, institutional, and spatial dimensions, alongside ideological ones.¹⁶ It also made race-focused scholarship subject to some traditional diplomatic historians’ periodic, revanchist longings to return to the time when their subjects’ meaning-making and racialized enterprises could go uninvestigated. As they did with “culture” or “ideas,” these historians asked whether race “mattered” by holding it to what they took to be the stern test of “power,” defined narrowly: did race affect “policy”?

While late twentieth-century historians of US foreign relations would broaden the field’s animating questions beyond “policy,” they would also provide a sharp reply to this dismissive inquiry, one sharp enough to constitute a rebuke. When it came to US foreign policy, they demonstrated, race had, indeed, mattered a great deal. From US policymakers’ pursuit of the removal and elimination of Native Americans, to fears of a British abolitionist presence in the United States’ slave-based empire, to long refusals to recognize independent Haiti and Liberia, to the Anglo-Saxonism that framed and rationalized continental and extra-continental empire-building, to Yellow Peril fears of Japan’s empire and Pacific Coast migration in the early 20th century, to resistance to multilateral institutions on the grounds of possible interference with “domestic” institutions such as Jim Crow and immigration restriction, to racialized wars of empire in Asia, from the Philippines to the Pacific Islands and Japan to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, to the sense that Soviet and Chinese communisms were sinister in part because of their “Asiatic” roots, to concerns that extreme “domestic” expressions of racial hierarchy would alienate a decolonizing world, to the exceptionalizing of Islam as possessing inherent affinities with terrorist technique: in different ways, at different moments, and with different degrees of intensity, racialized distinction played a critical role in shaping US policymakers’ calculus of interest, alliance, enmity, tactics, and strategy.¹⁷

The definition advanced here intends to move beyond the question of whether a given historical phenomenon or process “was” race or not, toward the question of how precisely it came to be racialized and/or deracialized.¹⁸ How did the politics of exception operate? Against what norm was exception constructed? Was it that the dominant were exceptional, and subordinates made the homogenized norm, or the other way around? What practical, institutional, and policy expressions did exception take? How did the excepted challenge their condition? What, if any, universals did they invoke and organize around? What kinds of descent-lines mattered, and how did they

make themselves known? To what extent were inherited characteristics understood to be malleable or fixed? By what mechanisms were they understood to be transmitted across time? How and why did the racialized embrace, transform, or reject these attributions? What kinds of asymmetrical power did the workings of exception and descent authorize and organize? How were subjects' constructed peculiarities forged into arguments for domination, and vice versa? How did those subjected to these regimes negotiate, internalize, and resist them?

Most important for historians and most amenable to their expertise is the question of change over time: how did projects in exception, descent and domination shift, both separately and in their intersection? How did those promoting and challenging them advance their cause, and with what success? While often taken to be historically fixed (a possible conceptual spillover from the notion of race as a form of fixed status), race was profoundly protean, seizing upon socially and historically available distinctions and, in turn, intensifying those distinctions by enlisting them for political purposes. Under changing historical conditions – especially in the face of challenge – constellations of exception, descent, and domination slid, snakelike, out of their particular skins, living to strike another day.

In making sense of race's historical multiplicities, it is useful to map specific phenomena on a spectrum from what I will call absolutizing to civilizing modes of power and differentiation. Both of these represent ideal types, unable to fully capture the idiosyncracies of actual historical processes, but they are nonetheless analytically useful. Absolutizing power spoke in a language of fixity: individuals were assigned to single, all-encompassing social categories defined by unchangeable features; social groups were seen as unable to alter their fundamental characteristics; salient difference was grounded in transcendence, especially in God or natural order. Political life was understood to consist of irreconcilable, zero-sum conflict between something approximating species. Absolutizing power's defining dilemma was category disruption, whether through transgressive sexuality and reproduction, socializing, mobility, or political resistance. It was recognizable in metaphors of walls, barricades, and fortifications – between bodies, categories, and spaces – and of the floods, swarms, and invasions that imperiled them. In US foreign relations history, advocates for the containment of both Asian migrants and globalizing communism, for example, drew on absolutist tropes of menacing flows and beleaguered ramparts.

By contrast, civilizing power was grounded in process: individuals and groups were assessed precisely in terms of their position and potential with respect to advancement in hierarchical, evolutionary time. Standards of civilization were necessarily ones along which subjects could move: bodily comportment, labor discipline, political rationality, material/technological sophistication, education and literacy, capital accumulation, consumption, urbanity. Identity with or proximity to Europe – understood biologically,

religio-culturally, or historically – was a core if contested feature. If civilizing power had two defining metrics, they were moralized, patriarchal, heterosexual order – especially, the containing of women’s sexuality within male-dominated households – and the capacity of individuals and groups to inculcate civilizing disciplines in what were understood to be peripheries: downward across the social scale, and outward toward the state’s geographic fringes. Political life consisted of the use of disciplining standards to gauge degrees of socio-political incorporation, rights, and power. Historical expressions of civilizing power would include Anglo-American Protestant missionary endeavors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and Cold War-era programs in international student migration to the United States, both of which sought the global diffusion of civilized and civilizing forms.¹⁹ One clearly recognizable index of civilizing power was the presence of a logic of bipolarity – heathen/convert, bad Muslim/good Muslim – across which progress was possible, desired and required.²⁰

For complex political and intellectual-historical reasons, race is often confused with only its absolutizing variant. Indeed, what I am calling civilizing power was (and is) commonly posed as the opposite of “race”; according to conventional (and problematic) definitions of race – as bodily, totalizing, and immutable – civilizing power is not racial. Precisely for this reason, it is important to ask what exactly was exceptionalizing, descent-making, and dominating – racial, in my terms – about civilizing formations? There was the question of how the uncivilized might progress: theoretically capable of universal advance and the rights that came with it, they were simultaneously held back by unique obstacles, particularly by deep, intractable (but not necessarily immutable) traits based especially in culture, social structure, family, and behavior. Only the summoning of extraordinary disciplinary power – surveillance, evaluation, policing, and violence – might advance the uncivilized and gauge their always contingent prospects for socio-political membership. In civilizing formations, absolutist imagery of the other served as the metric of progress, the “base” from which the would-be civilized must seek to climb. Finally, there were the ways that civilizing power’s universalizing pretensions required symbolisms of diversity that, in turn, required the fixing of individual and group particularities, emptied of meanings that undermined universalist claims. The formerly uncivilized could only convey civilization’s universality if they also, always, represented their uncivilized pasts. By the late twentieth century, imperial diversity – civilized multitudes posing no threat to capital’s remorseless, universalizing advance – became one of the defining faces of a globalized market fundamentalism underwritten by US state power.

One of the reasons for civilizing power’s misrecognition as anti-racial was its use as a weapon by historical actors in their campaigns against absolutizing power: for them, the capacity of individuals within subordinated groups (at

least, some of them), to conform to civilization's strict, legitimate dictates successfully undermined illegitimate, "racial" assertions of wholesale, permanent inferiority. But if, as done here, race is defined in terms of exception, descent, and domination, civilizing power was a key expression of racializing power, arguably one of its most resilient, elusive, and invisible forms. By the early twenty-first century, scholars had begun to capture it with terms such as racial liberalism, color-blindness, flexible racism, inclusionary racism, cultural racism, and liberal accommodation, each concept shedding some light and some darkness.²¹ Civilization and its cognates, closely associated with the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, can seem an awkward rhetorical fit for later periods. But their utility resides in precisely this strangeness: it may point historians' attention to hidden continuities that undermine comforting accounts of rupture – of race's rise and fall – requiring them to ask to what extent the ancestors of modernization theory, neoliberal globalization, and multiculturalism wore Victorian pith helmets.²²

In large part because of the mistaken identification of race with only its absolutizing variants, US foreign relations historians (among many others) have constructed an overarching narrative that tracks race's high tide in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century and its mid-century downfall under the combined pressures of anti-fascism, anti-communism, decolonization, and black freedom politics. When writing about periods after about 1975, with so many of race's conventional markers behind them – Jim Crow, race war in Vietnam, the racialized exclusion of immigrants – these historians have found race far harder to identify, with the key exception of the politics of South African apartheid; to the extent that US foreign relations historians factored in race at all, it was relatively easy for them to consign it to the past, whatever recurrent, painful evidence to the contrary.

With race reconceptualized along the lines I've suggested – as the compounding of exception, descent, and domination, with more absolutizing and more civilizing variants – the story of the twentieth century shifts profoundly, from the "fall" of race, to the relative decline of absolutizing formations and the relative triumph of civilizing ones, beginning at the turn of the twentieth century, rather than its midpoint. The relative nature of this shift is critically important. Absolutizing power obviously survived its mid-twentieth-century crises, and the transition toward the hegemony of civilizing modes was partial, fragmented, and embattled, far more evident in some socio-political contexts than others. At the same time, absolutizing and civilizing efforts could and did commingle in a single setting, institution, or project, easily and uneasily. But a transition toward civilizing modes of power and differentiation was nonetheless unmistakable. It was measurable, for example, in political-cultural shifts in American public life from the legitimate political invocation of the Black Beast, the Lazy Native, and the Yellow Peril, absolutizing power's defining others, to the conjuring of the criminal, the terrorist, and the illegal, civilizing power's constitutive enemies. The plausible deniability of these modes

of differentiation as “race” when it came to the mid-twentieth-century absolutizing standard – in theory and practice, criminals, terrorists, and illegals can be white – only enhanced their power to conceive, institutionalize, and legitimate relations of exception, descent, and domination.

Despite dogged denials of race’s relevance to US foreign relations history and historiography, what strikes even the casual reader is, to the contrary, the rich constellation of literatures in which racialized power features as a theme in the history of United States’ relations with the wider world. First, and overarching, is a literature that deals with the constitution of sovereignty in the emergent international politico-legal order of the nineteenth century. As Euro-American imperial powers extended their geographic reach, they constituted themselves as sovereigns through a globalizing politics of recognition that set the boundary between statehood and its others at “civilization,” subordinating or liquidating polities that failed to meet its Eurocentric “standards,” particularly when it came to legal order and the protection of Euro-American migrants and their property.²³ By the early twentieth century, the global map of subordinating sovereignties – binding large parts of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East to Euro-American powers – played a profound role in generating both affirmative and critical senses of “race” itself.

One of the defining features of this civilizationist order was what might be called its particularist universalism: while anchored geographically in Europe and Christianity, it was also necessarily capable of indefinite expansion, at least theoretically. The admission of Japan and the Ottoman Empire into the “society” of recognized states reinforced these claims to universality *vis-à-vis* exceptions of “race” and religion. Indeed, some scholars have embraced the logic of civilizing internationalism as their own, celebrating non-Western elites’ pursuit of international recognition and narrating their gradual triumph over “race,” culminating in the rise of the generalized norm of national states in the post-1945 period. In doing so, they have underplayed the ways that civilizationist order encoded exception, descent, and domination in post-absolutist ways.²⁴ Civilizing internationalism was a system of membership that was also a system of discipline, discipline felt most heavily at aspirant states’ social margins (nomads, the poor, women, minoritized groups), as would-be states civilized themselves “internally” in search of international recognition.

The best work in this field explores sovereignty as an idiom of difference, in which the crucial boundary-line was ultimately between those who could be subjected to Euro-American powers, and those that could not; it also critically historicizes civilizing modes rather than analytically and normatively embracing them.²⁵ In the world of imperial internationalism, racialized difference was often measured in the capacity for self-rule, with certain “races” understood to possess these capacities, while others were lacking them, and thus in need of Euro-American supervision, discipline, and, sometimes, assimilative training. The US national government’s repeated

violation of treaties with Native Americans, for example, forcefully enacted the non-recognition and strategic recognition of native polities, drawing upon and reinforcing the sense that native peoples remained in a prior, inferior stage of political evolution. When it came to the question of whether differences were absolute or capable of civilizing mitigation, imperial states varied not only between themselves, but internally, their choices dependent on setting, timing, and the peculiarities of local–foreign political relationships. Where “natives” were granted limited degrees of sovereignty, the perceived character of their rule was tapped as a rich font of colonial ideology – apparent irrationality, corruption, superstition, and conflict were carefully extracted from the colonial condition and made to register the intractable barbarism of the colonized and the inherence of “good government” in the racialized geography of the West.²⁶ While the racializing of sovereignty and the sovereigntizing of race could stabilize colonial rule, they also generated racially aversive anti-colonialisms, particularly where states lacked the required tools for insulating their politics fully from the agency of those subjected to their sovereignty. In the United States and elsewhere, the fear that migrating or enfranchised colonial subjects might compromise metropolitan self-government haunted the dreams of many an anti-colonialist.²⁷

Closest to traditional diplomatic-historical methods have been state-centered works that focus on the ways that US state actors – diplomats, executives, legislators, and policymakers – and adjunct civil society elites approached questions of racialized domination based inside the United States (such as Jim Crow) or outside it (such as South African apartheid); this literature has paid particular attention to the conjunctures of Cold War and decolonization politics in delegitimizing absolutizing racial power. Some of this literature has focused on the ways officials’ ideas about racialized difference shaped their policy approaches toward European colonialism and anti-colonial struggle, particularly when it came to assessing the progressive or regressive character of European domination, and the “maturity” and “stability” of anti-colonial forces.²⁸ Other scholarship has focused on the ways policymakers came to see absolutist systems – especially those identified with the US South – as a diplomatic impediment, even as they failed to view these systems as problematic in their own right. Once associated with modern statehood itself, the politics of aggressive Euro-American supremacy increasingly came to be seen as dangerously unaligned with the desires of those decolonizers whose allegiance US policymakers anxiously sought. As this scholarship shows, anti-racist and anti-colonialist activists operating both inside and outside the United States – and often moving between these spaces – played a catalytic role in channeling Cold War fears toward anti-segregation, and generating the belated, begrudging official sense that it was not worth losing the world over Whites Only signs.²⁹ The United States’ abiding support for the apartheid regime in South Africa nonetheless made clear the ways that violent, absolutist domination was fully compatible with Cold War notions of anti-communist “freedom.”³⁰

Race has also figured prominently in scholarship located at the intersection of cultural history and US foreign relations history, which foregrounds questions of rhetoric, symbolism, and imagery – “discourse” – to explore the ideological architecture of Americans’ perceptions of the world; much of this literature has centered on the foundational role of racialized and gendered difference in the symbolic constitution of the US national “self” and its many and varied “others.” Some scholarship, carried out by foreign relations historians moving toward “culture” and arguing against Cold War claims that Americans were somehow immune to “ideology,” identified race as one of a number of belief systems Americans employed to make sense of the world; while this work participated in the broader mentalizing of race, it nonetheless played a decisive role in legitimating race as an object of inquiry for US diplomatic historians.³¹ Other work, carried out by American Studies scholars moving toward “the world,” and often employing versions of a Saidian analysis of Orientalism, applied cultural studies techniques of deconstructive reading primarily to the work of US cultural producers.³² This scholarship emphasized continuities in Americans’ racialized and gendered perceptions: the ways that recognizable, prior formations were “exported” to make sense of newly encountered situations and populations. While provincial in its questions and methods – particularly to the extent that it labeled itself “transnational” – this literature powerfully demonstrated the ways that Americans have shaped and imagined imperial power relations in racialized and gendered ways.³³ Other scholarship, characterized by transnationalized questions and methods and sources, asked how Americans’ visions of the other were forged in specific, historically changing contexts of encounter, and shaped by the agency, cultures, and histories of those they sought to apprehend. Aligned with other histories seeking to challenge national frames of analysis, this work demonstrated that Americans’ racialized practices were not strictly derivable from any one national history, but emerged dynamically, contingently, and unpredictably from confluences and collisions between multiple histories.³⁴

Emerging at the crossroads of ethnic studies, African American studies, social movement history, and US foreign relations history is research that explores the formation of cross-national solidarities informed by racialized distinction, across sometimes vast geographic space. Some of these works examine varieties of emancipatory politics – especially the connective recognition of common problems and common struggles among those subjected to racialized exception. Especially central to this literature has been the development of a self-consciously transnational politics among African Americans, from the redemptionist, civilizing visions of Africa in the nineteenth century, to the more assertively anti-colonialist politics of the interwar years, allied with Indian, Ethiopian, and Haitian struggles, to the more globalized anti-colonialisms of the post-1945 period, anti-colonialisms that took on rival pro-communist and anti-communist forms. This work has

centered on dynamics of intercultural solidarity: the question of how those subjected to racialized power built convergences between themselves and often distant others, how they constructed and maintained long-distance ties, and how they sought to leverage transnational connections into “boomerang” effects on national instruments of power.³⁵

While much of this literature celebrates transnational, anti-racist solidarities as such, some works also flag troubling questions of solidarity’s misfires, as in some African Americans’ support for Japan’s colonial conquests in East Asia, understood as the triumph of a vanguardist “colored” empire that would displace and delegitimize white supremacist colonialisms (even as it brought its force against Asian subjects in Korea and China).³⁶ Other scholarship has examined shared, transnational senses of racialized privilege and power among the globally dominant. Solidarity was not just for subalterns: even as national-imperial states jockeyed with each other for colonies, resources, and markets, their politicians, officials, and intellectuals built compelling inter-imperial narratives of shared mission, danger, and sacrifice. These narratives – grounded in the different idioms of whiteness, Anglo-Saxonism, and the West – crystallized upon, and underwrote, projects in inter-imperial cooperation and alliance.³⁷ They were often built around long-distance senses of common predicament, especially when it came to the maintenance of racially subordinating labor systems and the restriction of undesired migration, and they helped empire-builders explain their dominance to themselves and others, while embedding nationalist ideologies and pursuits in the transcendent forces of nature.³⁸

Allied with solidarity scholarship are histories of the transfer of techniques of racialized domination and resistance: of historical actors’ selective borrowing and adaptation of technologies of racialized labor control, migrant exclusion, and socio-political subordination from other societies, on the one hand, and the strategies of organizing, confrontation, and resistance, on the other. The transnational itineraries of segregation, the literacy test, eugenic knowledge and policy, and nonviolent resistance are among the best explored of these trajectories.³⁹ So, too, have historians painted vivid pictures of efforts to impose segregated spatial and social arrangements by US officials in occupied towns during and after World War II and in the Panama Canal Zone, and by US companies in oil enclaves in the Middle East.⁴⁰ These transfers were both enabled by and indexical of broader connections, especially the transport and communication grids that allowed historical actors to move beyond their ordinary frames of reference, finding and inventing solutions that had previously eluded them among what they perceive to be successful outsiders, or extending adapted variants of pre-existing formulas they had the power to execute. This still-small literature seldom links up to scholarship on “transfer” self-consciously, but it nonetheless shares many of its core features, especially accounts of mobile experts, technocrats, and intellectuals: professional comparers and learners who often joined a sense of domestic blockage to

optimistic faith (sometimes naïve or utopian faith) in foreign solutions. Borne by steamship, railroad, and airplane, webbed together by conferences, lecture circuits, and journals, these experts grappled with the myriad challenges of remaking parts of their societies with pieces they drew from others.⁴¹ In mapping out this world of transfers, historians face the occupational hazard of homology – of turning perceived similarities of cultures, practices, or institutions in discrete settings into evidence of connection – but this danger does not diminish the prospects for illuminating accounts of the ways racialized systems informed and influenced each other.

Scholarship on the centrality of race to the politics of migration, naturalization, and US boundary control is only recently beginning to intersect with US foreign relations history in earnest. Early work on US–Japan relations necessarily treated the international politics of migration, including its racialized dimensions, but otherwise, US immigration policy history and foreign relations history remained largely separate, a gap that is being rapidly and richly filled as historians reconstruct the complex ways in which US boundaries were shaped by transnational and global processes.⁴² This said, race has unavoidably figured prominently in US immigration historiography, given its centrality to US migration and naturalization policy itself. From the 1790 naturalization act, with its exclusionary invitation to “free white persons of good character,” to anti-Chinese legislation, to civilizing distinctions among Japanese, Chinese, Indian, and South and Eastern Europeans, to the confidently absolutizing national origins quota system, with its preferences for Northern and Western Europeans, to the post-9/11 targeting of Muslims, Arabs, and South Asians, racialized distinction has played a foundational role in policy and popular determinations of who constituted “desirable” denizens and citizens of the United States and who represented threats.⁴³

The racialized dimensions of US immigration policy were also among their most fiercely contested features, as migrants, their communities and states of origin all protested stigmatizing exceptions in law, policy, and enforcement, as well as the essentializing visions they embodied and promoted. Intersecting with the Cold War politicizing of Jim Crow as a global embarrassment was the view that the rigidly absolutist national origins quota system was both a logistical headache (the anti-communist escapees that US policymakers hoped to relocate inconveniently clustered in the tightly restricted regions of Eastern Europe and East Asia) and sent out insulting and inaccurate messages about the United States’ friends and enemies.⁴⁴ This argument that US immigration policy needed not only to protect “domestic” space from corrupting influences, but to help project US power transnationally and globally rose in influence during the Cold War and its aftermath: the 1965 Hart-Celler Act, for example, best known for dismantling the last vestiges of national origins, was, less familiarly, a tool for attracting the technical experts required for military-industrial competition, facilitating the escape of refugees from communist states, and sending signals about the exceptional capacity of capitalist societies to diversify. While

immigration scholarship has tended to thematize and problematize restriction, one of the distinct contributions of an immigration–foreign relations nexus may be to bring critical attention to the geopolitics of opening.⁴⁵

Similarly emerging on the scene are works that interweave questions of race, capitalism, and US foreign relations. Race was relatively marginal to the earliest diplomatic historians who problematized capitalism in US foreign relations, the Wisconsin School; similarly, dynamics of commodification, labor exploitation, capital accumulation, and class power were not emphasized in many of the early histories of US foreign relations that took race seriously. The reasons for this disjuncture are complex. Especially important are both direct and internalized Cold War pressures not to place capitalism in a critical spotlight, and an intractable, polarized rivalry between totalized “race” and “class” critiques. Critical breakthroughs occurred earliest not among foreign relations historians, but among critical intellectuals during the Vietnam War era, especially intellectuals of color, who began to combine critiques of racial domination, colonialism, and capitalism; Martin Luther King, Jr.’s April 4, 1967, “Beyond Vietnam” address is one of the many eloquent expressions of this position.⁴⁶ Equally important were histories that connected racial slavery and industrial capitalism; once seen as the pre-modern, feudal precursor to capitalist modernity, slavery was recast as capitalism’s foundationally modern laboratory and engine.⁴⁷

With the fading of Cold War polarities, the rise of a critical politics of globalization, and crises of capitalism in the early twenty-first century, new and vital spaces opened up for a scholarship capable of making critical, combined sense of race and capital in the United States’ transnational histories. Entering and widening this space is scholarship that explores racialized dimensions of imperial labor regimes: elites’ deliberate use of divide-and-rule tactics to split potentially rebellious workers along lines of color, language, and nationality; the ranking of workers along essentializing grids with respect to their propensities for labor, compliance, and rebellion; the vulnerability of race-dominant workers when it came to racializing, nationalizing appeals, and their complicity in promoting, democratizing, and inflicting them on others.⁴⁸ As this work shows, there were horrific convergences between racialized exception and the capitalist hyper-exploitation of labor, affinities that were only amplified in exceptionalized, anything-goes spaces of empire. There is also scholarship on racialized dimensions of the economic projects of US government agencies and US-based banks in their transnational operations: the exceptionalizing regimes of economic discipline imposed on some societies but not others; the relentless, essentializing calculus of which peoples were capable of capitalist rationality – self-interest, accumulation, profit maximization, and the exploitation of others, for example – a virtue understood by many to be characteristically white and Western.⁴⁹ This literature’s main challenge will be to resist the longstanding temptation to reduce race to capitalism’s mandates, or capitalism to the logics of race-making; it will succeed only to the extent that it cultivates and sustains a

dynamic, dialectical interplay between the politics of exploitation and marginality, capital and exception.

Finally, race figures in complex and varied ways in the historiographies of militarization, war-making, and occupation in the United States. From colonial militias to the late twentieth-century all-volunteer military, racialized distinction has powerfully shaped the building and organization of US military forces, for example. The impulse to exclude non-white men from military service, or to subordinate them within it, derived in part from the perceived dangers of arming and training people subjected to racialized domination. It also owed much to the martial dimensions of American republicanism: to the extent that military sacrifice provided access to US civic belonging, political rights, and veterans' benefits (at least in theory), racially subordinated soldiers and veterans, and their wives, widows, and families, might leverage martial patriotism against race in ways that could undermine supremacist power relations. Pressures to employ and integrate non-white soldiers into US military forces included voracious demands for military labor, political activism by racially subjected groups, and the logistical tangles involved in maintaining segregated forces and facilities.

Until the formal integration of the US military during the early Cold War, the dominant approach to the problem of extracting military labor without conceding troubling rights was subordinated inclusion: segregated units and facilities, the disproportionate assignment of non-white soldiers to stigmatized "labor" duty, highly restrictive policies toward non-white officers (especially when it came to the command of white soldiers), lower military pay, and harassment by soldiers and civilians, all underwritten by imagery that racialized capacities for martial virtue and discipline by casting non-white soldiers as cowardly, lazy, barbaric, insubordinate, and disloyal. As white supremacists feared, racially subordinated soldiers, their families and communities did advance claims for inclusion on the grounds of martial participation: claims that proved especially compelling where the United States' enemies promoted racial ideologies possessing uncomfortable similarities to the United States' own.⁵⁰ Furthermore, racially oppressed soldiers' novel, inter-cultural encounters during overseas military deployments could prove politically transformative, especially where these soldiers encountered relative acceptance, recognition, and even celebration, or developed new, critical solidarities.⁵¹ To paraphrase the World War I-era jazz hit, after they'd seen "Paree" – or anywhere else they were less exposed to racist brutality – black soldiers proved harder to keep down on the farm, metaphorically and literally.

At the same time, assertions of rights on the grounds of martial patriotism and sacrifice, and their far less frequent realization, gave non-white people a stake in the US national-imperial state, and the politics of racial inclusion would become increasingly militarized during and after the Cold War: as non-white soldiers came to enjoy the fruits of US global power and segregated military and civilian structures gave way, imperial expansion and racial integration became

powerfully intertwined.⁵² While it indexed the racialized character of the US class structure, for example, the “diversity” of the all-volunteer military and the prominence of non-white people in leadership roles was mobilized as a sign of its meritocracy and color-blindness: increasingly detached from the rest of American society, the US military came to represent the inclusionary vanguard of the stratified society for which it fought.

From long before the United States’ founding, war proved a crucible in which racialized division was forged, expressed, and contested. In contexts of war-making, existing distinctions of friend and enemy were seized upon and deepened, but also uprooted and transformed, as participants reframed their notions of self, community, state, and opponent amid the exigencies of combat and the broader geopolitics in which it was embedded. Given the importance of racialized supremacy to Anglo-American settler-colonial polities and the US national state at its founding, it is unsurprising that racial hierarchy often played a role in defining the ends of US warfare: from the conquest and removal of indigenous people in the interests of a continental “empire of liberty,” to the transnational diffusion of Anglo-Saxon civilization to the world’s darker corners, to the modernizing terrors of American counterinsurgency in the decolonizing world, particularly in Southeast Asia, to the civilizing globalism of the “war on terror.” In varying ways, American proponents of these wars, and many of the American soldiers who fought in them, justified these campaigns by exceptionalizing and essentializing themselves as protagonists and their opponents as inferiors, rooting these claims in transcendent notions of nature, history, and the sacred.

Race also played a recurrent role in the way Americans approached the means of war: the question of which tactics, strategies, and targets were legitimate and illegitimate. Here the bounding and unbounding of violence was often tied to perceptions of the enemy: their rationale for fighting, their willingness to surrender, and the ease or difficulty of distinguishing combatants from civilians, for example. Racial superiority was keyed to a hierarchy of fighting styles: civilized people – Europe and its offshoots – ostensibly fought legalized, rights-protecting, civilized campaigns, while barbarians fought irregular ones rooted in brutality, concealment, and deception and terrorism. Across the decolonizing world, the racializing of combat and militarizing of racial distinction allowed rebels’ guerrilla struggles in contexts of asymmetric warfare to be enlisted as arguments for both the civilizing mission and the abandonment of civilized warfare by dominant powers. It was not, then, simply that Americans waged particular kinds of wars against states and peoples they racialized in particular ways; war-making and race-making were dynamically interwoven processes, with sinister elective affinities between the exceptionalizing of the enemy and their subjection to exceptional forms of violence. Where these dynamics spiraled together most intensely, the result could be racial exterminism, the legitimation of violence against all members of a “race” during war’s duration as a matter of tactics and strategy, and

genocide, in which the physical elimination of an “enemy race” was war’s ultimate goal.⁵³ This race/war dynamic unfolded not only in battle zones, but in more expansive war zones that included “home fronts”: when, for example, people of Japanese descent, including many US citizens, were presumed inherently loyal to Japan during World War II, their already-fragile hold on American civic membership was devastated by what might be called the hard hand of war essentialism.⁵⁴ Racially subordinated soldiers and civilians would have complex encounters with racialized US wars, in some cases seeing participation in the campaigns as an opportunity to blunt oppressions directed against them by proving their loyalty and manhood, in other cases losing faith with the US war effort on racial and other grounds, and even forging sympathies and solidarities with the racialized adversary.⁵⁵

Finally, race and war crossed when it came to the politics of legitimation, particularly where the United States confronted states whose national identities were grounded in racist narratives (as in the case of Nazi Germany), or “anti-racist” ones (as in the case of Imperial Japan and the Soviet Union). In such cases, Americans often found their exceptionalist pretensions to democracy and freedom challenged on uncomfortably global terrain, particularly where the propaganda engines of enemy states capitalized upon and amplified US racial domination, exclusion, and violence. As early as the turn of the twentieth century, some Americans had anxiously observed a crisis of white supremacy, evidenced in restive colonial populations and, especially, by the military-imperial rise of Japan.⁵⁶ Over the course of the century, anti-racial activists would take advantage of, and deepen, these vulnerabilities. During World War II, for example, they would – within the stringent constraints of wartime loyalty politics – construct critical equivalences between Jim Crow and European fascism through a “Double Victory” campaign against racial terrorisms far and near. Despite the common historical claim that the war against the Nazis and Americans’ encounters with the Holocaust delegitimized racism in the United States, fighting extremely racist enemies also managed, to the contrary, to persuade many white Americans that their own racial problematics were comparatively negligible and benign.

Where the United States faced off against powers like Japan and the Soviet Union, which ferociously criticized Euro-American racism and colonialism (while rationalizing away their own), anti-racial activists, as well as many powerful policymakers, argued that the United States must reform itself (at least when it came to Jim Crow and the national origins quota system) to render itself less vulnerable to these charges, particularly before the skeptical eyes of the decolonizing world.⁵⁷ Self-reform would also, importantly, free Americans to stigmatize rival states’ “domestic” oppressions, as in the case of Soviet anti-Semitism. Such calls to dismantle absolutist systems in wartime were muted by actual and potential charges of disloyalty – particularly where Americans’ criticisms of the United States echoed the enemy’s – and deflected by increasingly subtle image-making efforts that detached state symbolism from

substantive change. While often registered as a factor in the triumph of anti-Jim Crow politics, the Cold War civil rights intersection needs to be explored more fully as one moment in the much longer history of the United States' pursuit of hegemonic legitimacy in a decolonizing world. The defining down of race to merely its absolutist modes, discussed above, is not separable from this history and may, in fact, be one of its most enduring artifacts.

To the extent that US foreign relations historians traditionally followed the analytic lead of the policymakers they studied, there was a certain irony in their reluctance to take race seriously as an analytic category: in their ambivalence, and even hostility, to these inquiries, they were breaking with historical actors, for whom race was often a critical, shape-shifting factor in considerations of the United States' engagements with the wider world. For some, race was ontological reality, nature's gift and burden to statecraft, with the preservation of white supremacy in and among the United States' other state interests. For others, it constituted a managerial concern as the United States – born in settler colonialism and slavery-based capitalism – fought rearguard struggles to achieve hegemonic legitimacy in a world its racial systems defined as largely non-white. For still others, especially anti-racial and anti-colonial campaigners, race was a socio-political problem: one of the core elements of a hierarchical, Eurocentric world order that must be uprooted in the pursuit of social justice both within and between societies. Regardless of their position on its precise meaning, historical actors might have been surprised to hear assertions that race ought to be, at most, a minor consideration in US foreign relations history.

The impulse to take race seriously in histories of the US in the world arose in the wake of mid-twentieth-century social movements that disrupted and problematized naturalized hierarchies of racial exception at national and international scales. As this chapter has attempted to show, the result has been extremely generative in historiographic terms, bringing hitherto understudied dynamics to light and neglected actors to the fore. Among the most important benefits of this literature is its capacity to move forward the de-insulation of US foreign relations historiography itself. Race is one of a number of analytic categories and methodologies – gender and cultural history also come to mind – that have long been central to US historiography and history-writing in general, and can therefore be seen as bridges across the still formidable divides between “domestic” US and “international” histories. To the extent that these analytic categories advance, US foreign relations historians may find it more and more difficult – and, perhaps, less and less desirable – to isolate and exceptionalize themselves *vis-à-vis* other historians of the United States, as well as international and global historians more generally.

In this process, though, historians of racialized power – whether working within national or transnationalized frames – would do well to recognize the ways in which the very meanings of “race” largely derive from mid-to-late twentieth-century intellectual-political framings, forged in the long (and

unfinished) struggle against absolutist racial power in the United States: as bodily, color-coded, and mental, scientized and segregating, fixed and fixing. Even as these definitions have enabled both historical analysis and critical politics, they have rendered the operations of civilizing power less visible, in part because of the very ways they have been enlisted in anti-absolutist struggle. Historians of race can and should do more than problematize expressions of racialized power with which John F. Kennedy himself was frustrated, and this task, in turn, requires not only empirical reconstruction, but creative reconceptualization. Shedding critical light on structures of exception, descent, and domination – in their absolutist expressions, and their more subtle and sinuous ones – remains a necessary and urgent task.

NOTES

My thanks to Dirk Bönker, Nathan Connolly, Andrew Friedman, Kevin Kim, Matthew Lassiter, Adriane Lentz-Smith, Noam Maggor, Daniel Margolies, Andrew Rotter, Michael Thompson, Andrew Zimmerman, and the Vanderbilt Americanist workshop for their comments and critiques, and to Frank Costigliola and Michael Hogan for their support.

1. Renee Romano, “No Diplomatic Immunity: African Diplomats, the State Department, and Civil Rights,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 87, No. 2 (2000), 546–79.
2. Quotations from “Big Step Ahead on a High Road,” *Life Magazine*, December 8, 1961, 32–9.
3. On Kennedy and African decolonization, see Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy’s Courting of African Nationalist Leaders* (New York, 2012); James H. Meriwether, “‘Worth a Lot of Negro Votes’: Black Voters, Africa, and the 1960 Presidential Campaign,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 95, No. 3 (December 2008), 737–63.
4. For helpful historiographic assessments of race and US foreign relations history, see Gerald Horne, “Race to Insight: The U.S. and the World, White Supremacy and Foreign Affairs,” in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, eds. *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd edition (New York, 2004), 323–35; Ryan M. Irwin, “Mapping Race: Historicizing the History of the Color-Line,” *History Compass*, Vol. 8, No. 9 (September 2010), 984–99.
5. Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, MA, 1981).
6. W. E. B. Du Bois, “The Present Outlook for the Darker Races of Mankind,” *A. M. E. Church Review*, Vol. 17 (October 1900), 95–110.
7. On the State Department and racial exclusion, see Michael Krenn, *Black Diplomacy: African Americans and the State Department, 1945–1969* (Armonk, NY, 1999). Also important was the normative imperialism of early international relations scholarship. See Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).

8. Thomas Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese–American Crises: An Account of the International Complications Arising from the Race Problem on the Pacific Coast* (Stanford University Press, 1934); Akira Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897–1911* (Cambridge, MA, 1972); Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (New York, 1969).
9. For a useful collection of essays on race and US foreign policy, see Michael Krenn, ed., *The Impact of Race on U. S. Foreign Policy: A Reader* (Routledge, 1999). See also Krenn’s synthesis, *The Color of Empire: Race and American Foreign Relations* (Sterling, VA, 2006).
10. See, for example, the writings of Jack O’Dell: *Climbin’ Jacob’s Ladder: The Black Freedom Movement Writings of Jack O’Dell* (Berkeley, 2010).
11. Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ, 2000); Azza Salama Layton, *International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States, 1941–1960* (New York, 2000).
12. For a powerful account of changing theorization of race in the United States, see Thomas Holt, “Explaining Racism in American History,” in Anthony Molho, ed., *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past* (Princeton, NJ, 1998), 107–19. For an influential theorization of race, see Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: from the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York, 1994). For a collection of theoretical works, see Les Back and John Solomos, eds., *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader* (New York, 2000).
13. For a charged debate on whether or not US-based conceptualizations of race constitute an imperial export, see Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, “On the Cunning of Imperial Reason,” *Theory, Culture, and Society*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (1999), 41–58; Michael Hanchard, “Acts of Misrecognition: Transnational Black Politics, Anti-Imperialism and the Ethnocentrism of Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant,” *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (2003), 5–29.
14. The more conventional criteria here would be essence, fixity, or immutability. Ideologies and institutionalizations of descent were and are enlisted for essentializing purposes, but I suggest here that making essence the litmus test for race is one element in the broader confusion of absolutizing formations with racialized formations more generally, in the mid-to-late 20th-century mode. In other words, descent is the overarching feature – involved on both ends of the absolutizing/civilizing spectrum – with essentialist understandings of descent present more strongly in instances of absolutizing power.
15. For a powerful account of the related category of “racial individualism,” see Leah Gordon, *From Power to Prejudice: The Rise of Racial Individualism in Midcentury America* (Chicago, 2015).
16. Race is, for example, one of the dimensions of Americans’ foreign relations ideology in Michael Hunt’s foundational work, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, 1987).
17. It merits stating that the United States was not exceptional in the role that race played in its foreign policy. For a collection that explores the role of race in other states’ Cold War politics, for example, see Philip E. Muehlenbeck, ed., *Race, Ethnicity, and the Cold War: A Global Perspective* (Nashville, 2012).

18. For a compelling discussion of “race-making,” see Thomas C. Holt, “Marking: Race, Race-making, and the Writing of History,” *American Historical Review*, Vol. 100, No. 1 (February 1995), 1–20.
19. Paul A. Kramer, “Is the World Our Campus? International Students and US Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century,” *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (November 2009), 775–806.
20. For recent instances, see Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (New York, 2005); Evelyn Asultany, *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation after 9/11* (New York, 2012).
21. The terms racial liberalism, color-blindness, and cultural racism are widely used by scholars. On flexible racism, see Mona Domosh, *American Commodities in an Age of Empire* (New York, 2006). On inclusionary racism, see Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill, 2006). On liberal accommodationism, see George Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny* (New York, 1971). The politics of respectability can also be seen as a variant of civilizing power. See, for example, Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, 1996); Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women’s Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920* (Cambridge, 1994).
22. For linkages along these lines, see Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca, 2011); Jon Davidann: “‘Colossal Illusions’: U.S.–Japanese Relations in the Institute of Pacific Relations, 1919–1938,” *Journal of World History*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Spring 2001), 155–82.
23. Jorg Fisch, “International Civilization by Dissolving International Society: The Status of Non-European Territories in 19th Century International Law,” in Martin Geyer and Johannes Paulmann, eds., *The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society, and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War* (New York, 2001), 235–58; Anthony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (New York, 2007).
24. Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of “Civilization” in International Society* (Oxford, UK, 1984); Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamism and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York, 2007).
25. See, for example, Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu, 1994).
26. See, for example, Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley, 2002); Kelvin Santiago-Valles, “Subject People” and Colonial Discourses: Economic Transformation and Social Disorder in Puerto Rico (New York); Mary Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915–1940* (Chapel Hill, 2001); Lanny Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago: Representation and Rule in the Insular Territories under U.S. Dominion after 1898* (Honolulu, 2010); Vicente Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham, NC, 2000); Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham, NC, 2006); Michael Salman, *The Embarrassment of Slavery: Controversies over Bondage and Nationalism in the American Colonial Philippines*

- (Berkeley, 2001); Alfred McCoy and Francisco Scarano, eds., *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison, 2009); Kramer, *Blood of Government*.
27. Christopher Lasch, "The Anti-Imperialists, the Philippines, and the Inequality of Man," *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 24 (August 1958): 319–31; Eric Love, *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill, 2004).
 28. Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA, 2001); Jason C. Parker, *Brother's Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937–1962* (New York, 2008); Cary Fraser, *Ambivalent Anti-colonialism: The United States and the Genesis of West Indian, 1940–1964* (Westport, CT, 1994); Mark Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919–1950* (Chapel Hill, 2003); George White, Jr., *Holding the Line: Race, Racism, and American Foreign Policy toward Africa, 1953–1961* (Guilford, CT, 2005); Andrew Rotter, *Comrades at Odds: The United States and India, 1947–1964* (Ithaca, 2000).
 29. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*; Layton, *International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States*; Brenda Gayle Plummer, ed., *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights and Foreign Affairs, 1945–1988* (Chapel Hill, 2003).
 30. Thomas Borstelmann, *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War* (New York, 1993); Thomas J. Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation: The United States and White Rule in Africa, 1948–1968* (Columbia, MO, 1985); Ryan Irwin, *Gordian Knot: Apartheid and the Unmaking of the Liberal World Order* (New York, 2012).
 31. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*. On US foreign relations historians' approaches to Edward Said's *Orientalism* and broader questions of ideology, see Andrew Rotter, "Saidism without Said: Orientalism and U. S. Diplomatic History," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 105, No. 4 (Oct. 2000), 1205–17.
 32. The key volume that initiated this approach was Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham, 1993).
 33. For a critique of this "export" model of race, see Paul A. Kramer, "Transits of Race: Empire and Difference in Philippine-American History," in Manfred Berg and Simon Wendt, eds., *Racism in the Modern World: Historical Perspectives on Cultural Transfer and Adaptation* (New York, 2011), 163–91.
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