Geographies of nationalism

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Abstract. This review article considers recent scholarship on the geographies of nationalism by focusing on three key binaries that have defined the field of nationalism studies: inclusive/exclusive (geographies of community), love/hate (geographies of emotion), and past/future (geographies of time). It argues that asking who participates in constructing such conceptual dualisms, geographers can offer important insights about how nationalist discourses underpin contemporary practices of governing our selves and others as political subjects – and their multifarious spatial dimensions. Geographers are well positioned to investigate the drawing of conceptual boundaries as political acts, with real effects in the world, rather than intellectually "wrong." As such, this article calls for nationalism scholars not to outright reject binaries, but to take them seriously as a way to open up broader questions about the geographies of nationalism that all subjects of today's state system must confront.
Keywords: nationalism, identity politics, time geography, affect, binary, methodological nationalism

Introduction

Nationalisms are famously two-sided in many respects: as a political discourse, they are described as both forward-looking and backward-looking, civic and ethnic, inclusive and exclusive. But in a recent special issue about the use of binaries in nationalism studies, James Kennedy and Maarten van Ginderachter (2022) critique their persistence as a major failing. They stress that binaries *constrain* our understanding of nationalism, arguing that "they do not sufficiently allow for a variegated understanding of nationalisms and the ideologies that underpin them" (Kennedy and van Ginderachter, 2022: 453). Their critique is valid insofar as nationalism is a social construct, a set of practices and concepts mobilized by situated actors. It does not have an essence that the traditional binaries can readily map.

A common response to the intellectual problem of dualisms is that scholars simply need to be reject or replace them, often with some kind of "nuanced continuum" accounting of the phenomenon at hand. But as John Law (1994) argues, "to turn away from dualism doesn't mean that we should ignore the ordering strains *towards* dualism built into the modern project. Instead, we should seek to treat dualism as a social *project*" (Law, 1994: 138). Timothy Mitchell (1991) makes a similar point in his analysis of the state-society dualism, showing the conceptual borders between "state" and "society" are themselves a resource. This is because certain actors construct, act on, mobilize, and otherwise profit from such binaries, and in this way, maintain a given financial and economic order (Mitchell, 1991: 90).

Law and Mitchell thus suggest that scholars should not outright reject binaries, but instead need to ask *how* binaries are mobilized and taken for granted in modernist political projects – like the territorial state and its nationalisms. This review article applies this line of inquiry to the geographies of nationalism. Because nationalisms encompass many different binaries, which I cannot properly survey here, I highlight three that geographers could explore more deeply in future research: inclusive/exclusive (geographies of community), love/hate (geographies of emotion), and past/future (geographies of time). I suggest that by asking who participates in constructing such conceptual dualisms, geographers can offer important insights about how nationalist discourses underpin contemporary practices of governing our selves and others as political subjects – and their multifarious spatial dimensions.

Inclusive or exclusive? Nationalism's geographies of community

As an identity narrative and grammar of political subjectivity, nationalism is imagined, internalized, and performed in myriad ways. Nationalist stories of self-affirmation celebrate the culture and identity of the nation, while also delimiting the bounds of that group through (more and less strictly policed) narratives about who legitimately "belongs," between "us" and "them" (Paasi, 1996). To do so, these community-building narratives of inclusion and exclusion draw their emotional fuel from both positive and negative feelings, frequently mixing pleasure and animosity, love and hate, joy and antipathy. Nationalism is an

inherently affective phenomenon because it is tied to the experience of community, of "what Max Weber called a *Zusammengehorigkeitsgefuhl*, a feeling of belonging together" (Brubaker, 2004: 46). As geographers have long shown, nationalism is a *spatial* expression community because it "is fundamentally an ideology and political action program designed to convert land into national territory" and is thus "a mode of constructing and interpreting social space" (Kaiser, 2002: 231; see also Anderson, 1988; Herb and Kaplan, 1999; Hooson, 1994; Kaplan, 2018; Kaplan and Herb, 2011; Knight, 1982; Mayer, 2000; Murphy, 1990; Storey, 2001; Williams and Smith, 1983).

Whatever the context, nationalist discourse invariably includes diverse storylines about how these boundaries of "us" and "them" should be drawn. For example, white nationalists in the United States or Hindu nationalists in India articulate a narrow vision of who "should" be included in the national community based on race and religion. But in both countries, these exclusivist storylines coexist with inclusivist storylines that delineate the boundaries of the national community as encompassing people of different racial and religious backgrounds. Rather than a problematic analytical divide between exclusive and inclusive versions of nationalism, the U.S. and India examples highlight how there is actually direct political conflict *about* this divide – about whether the exclusivist or inclusivist nationalist vision is the "correct" one (see e.g. Berry, 2017; Blazak, forthcoming; Chowdhury and Keane, 2021; Darby, 2020; Hart, 2020b; Kaplan, 2020; Koch, 2019; Sinha, 2021; Solomon et al., 2021; Vitolo-Haddad, 2019).

Indeed, the rapid growth of xenophobic and animosity-fueled nationalist storylines, espoused by far-right politicians and populist leaders across the world since the mid-2010s has sparked new interest among scholars, who suddenly became anxious about the perceived threat of these forms of nationalism to the cosmopolitan worldview that they once took for granted. This newer scholarship on the geography of "exclusionary nationalisms" or "ethno-nationalism," aims to show how hate-based and exclusionary scripts of nationalism work to territorialize a community within an imagined "pure" (or "purified") homeland (e.g. Avni, 2021; Anderson and Secor, 2022; Bescherer and Reichle, 2022; Bosworth, 2022; Chatterjee, 2021; Conversi, 2020a; Cunningham, 2020; Dahlman, 2022; Decker et al. 2022; Dempsey, 2022a, 2022b; Devadoss and Culcasi, 2020; Dossa, 2021; Flint, 2004; Getzoff, 2020; Goalwin, 2017; Goonewardena, 2020; Hart, 2020a; Khan, 2022; Koch and Vora, 2020; Kolstø and Blakkisrud, 2016; Luger, 2022; Nagel and Grove, 2021; Mulej, 2022; Mullis and Miggelbrink, 2022; Shoshan, 2016; Singh, 2022; Stock, 2020; Wondreys and Mudd, 2022; Yiftachel and Rokem, 2021).

This new research raises the alarm about how certain nationalist scripts are harnessed by individuals to promote harmful, violent, and exclusionary practices in the construction of local communities. These problems have unique contemporary expressions, but the broader set of border-making practices is a key focus of scholarship on the geographies of nationalism and nationalism studies more broadly. For example, the hate-mongering of professed nationalists was a topic of special concern in Euro-American scholarship following the brutal conflicts surrounding the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s (Brubaker, 1995, 1996; Campbell, 1998; Dahlman, 2005; Dahlman and Williams, 2010; Judah, 2000; Kecmanović, 2002; O'Loughlin and Kolossov 2002; Ó Tuathail, 1996; Ó Tuathail and Dahlman, 2004; Pavković, 1997; Toal and Dahlman, 2011).

One important academic outcome of the explosion of interest in violent ethnonational conflict following the Balkan wars was that critical nationalism scholars began to voice a concern about Western habit, whereby the "irrationality of nationalism is projected on to [non-Western] 'others'" (Billig, 1995: 38). Michael Billig (1995) traces this academic habit of vilifying non-Western nationalisms to a number of scholars, but most prominently, Walker Connor, who argued for a distinction between "nationalism" as something backward and irrational, and "patriotism" as something beneficial and necessary (Billig, 1995: 55). The simplistic moral geography that underpins such approaches, which are rooted in Orientalist thinking, has been widely critiqued (see also Hage, 1996; Todorova, 1997; Webster, 2011). Though most longtime scholars of nationalism are familiar with this part of the field's history, sensitivity to the problem of stigmatizing the nationalism of "others" while overlooking one's own national biases, has been lost in the flood of scholarship on far-right and populist identity politics since the mid-2010s (Koch, 2017, 2019). Much of this writing implicitly or explicitly constructs a moral geography whereby exclusionary nationalist storylines are set in contrast to the "good" cosmopolitan, inclusionary forms of nationalism (e.g. Antonsich

and Petrillo, 2019; Ferretti, 2022; Kalb, 2021; Marshall and Staeheli, 2021; Kastrissianakis et al., 2021; Thiollet and Assaf, 2021a, 2021b; Yanik, 2017).

Many scholars are explicit in stating their wish to promote inclusive, cosmopolitan identity politics, but the challenge with this simple "disclosure" of one's positionality is that it implies that nationalism is fine if we can just promote the "right" kind. This pattern was seen with the 2021 inauguration of the U.S. President Joe Biden: following four difficult years of hate-based nationalism from former President Donald Trump, Biden's inauguration became a spectacle on the American left to celebrate the "good" kind of inclusive nationalism that his administration was imagined to herald (see Boot, 2021; Carlson, 2021; Viala-Gaudefroy, 2021). But of course, the supposedly good form of nationalism of U.S. Democratic cosmopolitanism over Republican xenophobia is still *nationalism*. Just as all "more inclusive" nationalisms are still nationalisms.

Insofar as narratives of good nationalisms build a moral map set against "bad," aberrant or toxic nationalisms, they continue to naturalize the very phenomenon of nationalism. And in so doing they reinforce the sociological forgetting of the violence that gave rise to all nationalisms, as well as the silencing of violent nationalist war-making in Western countries that are imagined to be morally superior (Billig, 1995; Biolsi, 2005; Churchill, 1993; Coddington, 2020; Hage, 1996; Kosasa, 2000; Lindsay, 2012; Ryser, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). The longstanding critique of this moral posturing among Western authors, often implicit in their writing about nationalism, is especially important to recall now because it highlights the theoretical problems that arise when scholars assume a normative valence to nationalism.

"We" expert scholarly readers cannot simply map the moral geographies of "inclusive" or "exclusive" nationalist scripts, without implicating ourselves in the political project of drawing such a boundary between good/bad and us/them. This analytical problem – of allowing our own national biases to filter our reading of nationalist discourses – is called "methodological nationalism" (Koch, 2020a). Critical scholars have understood this problem for many years, but because of how pervasive and hegemonic nationalism is in our contemporary world, there is a constant threat that we smuggle in our own nationalist assumptions of good and evil. Of course, each of us will have a personal interpretation of "inclusive" and "exclusive" nationalist storylines, but the important contribution that geographers can make is not to naturalize our own moral geographies in this binary, but rather to ask: how does it get constructed by specific political actors and, in turn, how is it spatialized and reflected in nationalism's geographies of community?

Love or hate? Nationalism's geographies of emotion

An established question of nationalism studies is: how do individuals come to identify so strongly with the nation or the state, such that they are willing to kill and die for it? In Michael Billig's (1995) critique of Western scholarship on non-Western nationalisms in the 1980s and 90s, discussed above, he challenges the simplistic divide of "good" patriotism based on narratives of love and community, and "bad" nationalism based on narratives of hate and violence thus:

> The problem is how to distinguish in practice these two allegedly very different states of mind. One cannot merely ask potential patriots whether they either love their country or hate foreigners. Even the most extreme of nationalists will claim the patriotic motivation for themselves. Fascists will protest that they are defenders, not attackers, only taking against foreigners when the latter are a danger to the beloved homeland. Hitler, for example, imagined that he was defending Germany against the Jews, asserting in *Mein Kampf* that "the Jew is not the attacked but the attacker." Today's fascists, likewise, claim that they only desire to protect the homeland from invasion, conspiracy and racial pollution. The hatreds will be justified in the name of love. (Billig, 1995: 57).

Indeed, this comingling of pleasure and enmity is a running interest of nationalism scholars, who have been publishing on the affective pull of nationalism since the 1960s (e.g. Bellah, 1967; Hayes, 1960; Kedourie, 1961). Although affect is often framed as a "new" topic today, scholars have analyzed the geographies of emotion for more than 60 years, showing that nationalism's emotional register cannot simply be placed on

a continuum. Rather, it always mobilizes a *mix* of emotions – sometimes experienced simultaneously and other times separately.

In the past few decades, scholars in geography and ancillary fields have traced the wide range of positive emotional experiences enlisted in nationalist practices, covering everything from national holidays and other spectacles, sporting events, monuments, and the most mundane rituals of nationalist participation (e.g. Antonsich and Skey, 2016; Benwell et al., 2019, 2021; Brewster and Brewster, 2010; Dittmer, 2013; Edensor, 2002; Faria, 2014; Ferdoush, 2019; Fuller, 2004; Hagen, 2008; Hung, 2007; Homolar and Löfflmann, 2021; Koch, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2020b; Kong and Yoeh, 1997; Militz, 2016; Militz and Schurr, 2016; Molnár, 2016; Myadar, 2017; Paasi, 2016; Podeh, 2011, 2022; Rohava, 2020; Rossol, 2010; Skey, 2011; Stewart, 2021; Tomlinson and Young, 2006; White, 2017; White and Frew, 2019).

As this research shows, nationalist events, practices, and rhetoric can be immensely pleasurable for participants who join in one way or another. A key aspect of this pleasure is the positive feelings of conformity and obedience that comes with (re)affirming one's membership in a group. There is also pleasure in receiving recognition as belonging to a national group, derived from what Clifford Geertz (1973: 237) describes as a desire to be "a recognized and respected somebody in the world who counts and is attended to." Nationalisms appeal to this emotional energy, and speakers who harness this well in addressing a national audience "dress it in rhetorical finery and, then, these speakers-as-outfitter hold a mirror so the nation can admire itself" (Billig, 1995: 98).

Appealing to a person's desire to feel important and recognized is a rather straightforward way that nationalist rhetoric draws on pleasure. A more complicated aspect is how nationalism provides the discursive framework for a person to perform their subjectivity as a "good" citizen of the nation. As Lisa Wedeen (1999) explains in her analysis of the Syrian nationalist rhetoric under Bashar al-Asad's regime, official rhetoric is *orienting* insofar is it offers citizens a clear set of guidelines for "public compliance": "The rhetoric specifies the parameters of the permissible, communicating acceptable forms of speech and behavior to citizens" (Wedeen, 1999: 45). Although Wedeen's focus here is on the reproduction of authoritarian political culture in Syria, she and other scholars of nationalism under authoritarian systems show that established storylines offer a sense of safety to subjects, who can master them and thus perform their loyalty to an oppressive regime (see also Adams, 2010; Goode, 2021).

Going one step further, we also see that many people take pleasure in following the rules, in publicly demonstrating their compliance. Even in a culture of fear, social regulation does not just silence or warn of potential transgressions. It can also encourage people to voice support, admiration, or even love of political elites, through a system of positive reinforcement. Communities reward compliance and this can feel *good*. Antonio Gramsci (2008) famously addressed this in his *Prison Notebooks*, stressing how the "prize-giving" activities of groups and political actors are inseparable from repressive elements of social life: "praiseworthy and meritorious activity is rewarded, just as criminal actions are punished (and punished in original ways, bringing in 'public opinion' as a form of sanction)" (Gramsci, 2008: 247). Nationalism is built on and experienced as such a moral economy in which "docile"/"obedient" subjects are valorized and rewarded, rhetorically and materially. Dressing in patriotic clothes or "behaving" like a patriot (e.g. serving in the armed service or waving a flag) are all part of a normative system in which the surveying gaze is invited, often explicitly to achieve certain rewards, small as those might be.

Viewed thus, nationalism draws its strength from a confluence of top-down and bottom-up desires. It is an affective resource brought to life by leaders and followers who are recruited to the larger project of community-building, such that individuals "go willingly, following […] their impulses to seek pleasure in their own cultivation" (Adams, 2010: 187). In this sense, national identity is "a negotiated process by which people recruit themselves through everyday acts of 'national' resonance" (Kemper, 1993: 17). Acts of self-recruitment are perhaps easier to discern in analyzing the celebratory expressions of nationalism, like at parades and sporting events. But they follow the same pattern in the more violent practices of nationalist bonding too, such as when people enlist to fight a war in the name of the nation or join a hate-based nationalist group. For example, scholars who examine state-based militarism have shown that nationalism is not just about building up a sense of hatred for the Other through combat, but that the pleasure of wartime bonding or pride in serving one's country is also the vital glue for acts of violence in the name of the state

or the nation (Conversi, 2015; Cowen and Gilbert, 2008; Flint, 2005; Kuzio, 2022; McDowell, 2008, 2022; Woodward, 2000).

There is, in short, a kind of pride and pleasure that comes with obeying social expectations and demonstrating compliance with the moral framework of nationalism that construes "sacrifice" as the utmost virtue of a national subject. By committing acts of violence to "protect" the nation – whether as a military subject or as a subject of a far-right extremist group – individuals take pleasure in acts of social obedience, and often the moral superiority that comes with publicly performing this subject position. Not all members of a particular community will esteem acts of violence as "good," of course. But nationalist discourse serves as an important resource to grant moral license to violence, legitimating it by positioning "in the name of" the nation. Whether this claim to legitimacy is deemed valid depends on the audience that an individual or community deems to be the legitimate adjudicator of what is "good" for the imagined nation. And more specifically, it depends on how this audience is scaled. This scalar question is especially important in understanding recent far-right movements because people who recruit themselves into nationalist projects do not necessarily seek the validation of a community at the same scale as others who also see themselves as acting in support of the "nation."

Two examples help to illustrate this point. First, in the United States, military service members of all ranks are largely treated as national heroes in public – routinely given special discounts at commercial outlets, given priority boarding on airplanes, applauded at sports games, and much more. In this context, their participation in the nationalist institution of the military is framed by the broader community as something positive (Bernazzoli and Flint, 2010; on a similar dynamic in the UK, see Yarwood et al., 2021). But another expression of American nationalism is seen in the case of the Proud Boys – a far-right, neo-fascist extremist group that glorifies violence in promoting its vision of America as a "white" nation. Even though support for the group grew precipitously during the time of Donald Trump's presidency, it is still widely perceived as fringe and their nationalist story about violence is not broadly accepted by the American public. This notwithstanding, members of the Proud Boys feel the pleasure of community in their circle of peers and like-minded individuals. Even though their public activities may be defined by hate, it is important to see that members of such groups experience their enactment of nationalist zeal as something positive. They find pleasure in acting on their own moral maps, personally aligning themselves with a social system that frames their obedience as a good or dutiful or sacrificial act, and all the while receiving the moral validation of their community (Blazak, forthcoming; Vitolo-Haddad, 2019).

These two examples – of military servicepeople and extremist group adherents – are notable for the different *scale* of social acceptance and rewards that members receive for their nationalist performances. Whether lauded by society at large or a much smaller fringe group, the scalar variability does not make the affective pull of pleasure in violence any less real to an individual. But even where the emotions themselves are the same, their mixing plays out on a different scale, thereby differently affecting the political outcome. Although the territorial extent of a community is an important theme in geographic studies of nationalism, there has been little attention to the differential scale of the audience that a person might desire moral approbation for their performance of the nationalist imaginary. Extending our recognition that emotions *matter* in nationalist discourse, then, geographers could productively ask more critical questions about the scalar and spatial expression of nationalism's affective encounters and the geographies of emotion that they build upon, imagine, and challenge.

Past or future? Nationalism's geographies of time

A third defining binary in nationalism studies relates to time: in glorifying the nation, nationalisms simultaneously look backward and forward. Scholars have examined the backward-looking orientation of nationalism in many contexts, vividly showing how identity narratives are consolidated around myths and invented traditions, education systems, memorial landscapes, and countless other cultural and political interactions with the past (Allen, 2008; Anagnost, 1997; Anderson, 1983; Smith, 1999, 2000, 2002; Forest and Johnson, 2002; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawn, 1990; Johnson, 1994). Much of this research has focused on how living individuals are taught to relate to the dead through particular sites and memorial practices (e.g. Bellah, 1967; Borghi, 2021; Dempsey, 2022a; Drozdzewski, 2014; Drozdzewski et al., 2016; Gordon and

Osborne, 2004; Jones and Garde-Hansen, 2012; Markwick, 2008; Marshall, 2004; McDowell, 2008; Muzaini and Yeoh, 2005; Paasi, 2016, 2020; Tamm, 2013; Till, 1999).

Far less attention has been given to the *future* in nationalism studies, even though references to it are found in most of the field's classic texts, which discuss how national imaginaries relate to the ideas of destiny, posterity, and the unborn. As Anthony Smith (2002: 20) writes in "When is a nation": "It is through a common public culture and education that the dead, the living and yet unborn are felt to be bound together into a single community of citizens." In part, the focus on the dead rather than the unborn in scholarship on nationalism may be because geographers as a whole have not given much attention to the future. And even where geographers have called for our discipline to engage more explicitly with the future, nationalism is rarely part of these calls or the broader literature on time-space (see e.g. Anderson, 2010; Anderson and Adey 2012; Ho, 2021; Jeffrey and Dyson, 2021; Kellerman, 1989; Kurniawan and Kundurpi, 2019; Lenntorp, 1999; May and Thrift, 2001; Merriman, 2012).

But taking the binary of past and future seriously, we can begin to see how nationalism's geographies of time are far more diverse than studies focused on memory and historical narratives suggest. In calling for more geographic research on the future over 10 years ago, Anderson and Adey (2012: 1533) encourage geographers to ask: "How might we attend to the future in its interrelations with past and present outside of an assumption of linear or cyclical temporality and in a way that attends to the multiple relations with the future?" This interweaving of time geographies is especially relevant for nationalism studies. The past and the future are deeply connected in all nationalisms, the primary purpose which Kaiser (2002: 232) suggests is "to construct and maintain the past, present and future images of nation and homeland within a set of mutually understood and accepted parameters over time, so that members of the nation and homeland being made perceive both as 'natural' and 'eternal.'"

The intertwining of past and future is invariably expressed spatially. This is exemplified in how developmentalist discourse is built through the tropes of nationalism. Whether nationalist visions of development involve education, high-modernist cities, or state-scale planning schemes, they spatialize particular visions of the future (e.g. Adaman and Akbulut, 2021; Akhter, 2022; Centeno and Ferraro, 2019; Dove and Kammen, 2001; Holston, 1989; Koch, 2018; Laszczkowski, 2016; Li, 2007; Olds and Yeung, 2004; Scott, 1998; Sneddon, 2015; Staeheli and Hammett, 2013; Woo-Cummings, 1999). A vivid illustration of future-oriented developmentalism is found in Soviet expressions of nationalism, which were above all defined by aspirational narratives of a glorious future (Buck-Morss, 2000; Mally, 1990; Stites, 1989). Marxist ideology, Giddens (1987: 303) argued, could "readily be adapted to messianic goals and is the *locus classicus* of historicity conceived of as linking the past to an immanent future."

The USSR's famous Five-Year Plans aimed to fulfill its goals for the future in the present through concrete development projects across the country's territory, such as through Joseph Stalin's renowned steel city, Magnitogorsk (Kotkin, 1995), Nikita Khrushchev's Virgin Lands campaign to bring Central Asia under intensive agricultural cultivation (Cameron, 2018), and even into the cosmos through the expansive Soviet space program (Andrews and Siddiqi, 2011; Siddiqi, 2010). While these projects aimed to achieve the future in the present, materially inscribing shining examples of Soviet strength in the national homeland, they also taught citizens how to see themselves as subjects striving to realize an alternative future : "Utopian visions, 'castles in the air,' are scientific, Lenin wrote, when they motivate a 'new people' to realize a revolutionary plan" (Buck-Morss, 2000: 67). The new Soviet man [sic] was not only a person to be crafted today, but also a person that living citizens had a duty to serve (Cheng, 2009).

Similar messianic visions have underpinned the geography of time in American nationalism. In *A Republic in Time*, Thomas Allen (2008) challenges the established focus on spatial aspects of early U.S. nationalism, which does not adequately address the role of time geographies in colonial narratives about westward expansion and "manifest destiny." He excavates a 1839 article in the *Democratic Review,* "The Great Nation of Futurity," written by John O'Sullivan years before the idea of "manifest destiny" was coined. In the essay, O'Sullivan writes that "American patriotism is not of soil," but that it is defined by the future: "The expansive future is our arena, and for our history" (quoted in Allen, 2008: 17). Allen suggests that the inherent spatial contradiction of the American settler colonial project – the fact that the nation's supposed homeland was not unfolding on a blank slate, but on the land of Indigenous people subject to

genocide – is what the "The Great Nation of Futurity" and related temporal narratives tried to resolve, "by making time the medium for an effusive nationalism, in which the future itself would become American territory. The viability of the young Republic lay in this process of expansion through time" (Allen 2008, 23).

Re-reading early colonial nationalism in the U.S. with a focus on the future is insightful because it shows how fundamental temporal imaginaries are to nationalist discourse. Time geographies are not about prioritizing time over space, but rather centering the relationship between time and space, as well as the relationship between different temporal imaginaries. In the development of early U.S. nationalism, the political negotiation of the boundary between past and future was also a negotiation of the boundary between space and time. Asking how past/future and space/time boundaries are drawn and made relevant, or irrelevant, could be a useful way of rethinking our assumptions about many nationalisms around the world.

Interrogating these boundaries is also important for understanding how nationalist imaginaries are shifting with the contemporary climate crisis, as all visions of environmental futures are rooted in context-dependent discourses that prominently include nationalism (Conversi, 2020b; Conversi and Friis Hau, 2021; Dalby, 2020; Koch, 2014, 2022, forthcoming; Ridanpää, 2022). Scholarship on the geographies of nationalism and the future (and the past/future binary) could thus join the growing body of research on "anticipatory politics" and the situated environmental imaginaries that they draw upon and inscribe (Anson, 2020; Barker, 2020; Cassegård and Thörn, 2018; DeBoom, 2021; Ferdoush and Väätänen 2022; Ferry, 2016; Granjou et al., 2017; Grove, 2021; Groves, 2017; Horn, 2018; Methmann and Rothe, 2012; Swyngedouw, 2010, 2013). But as this work shows, the temporal geographies that are invoked and imagined as relevant in discussions about climate change do not negate the relevance of a past/future divide, but rather politicize that boundary – often in a high-stakes manner, as it is called into negotiations of guilt and responsibility for addressing today's most pressing environmental challenges. National identities continue to be hegemonic in today's geopolitical architecture of territorial states, so geographers can offer valuable insights about how environmental futures are imagined and contested through nationalist frames in ongoing debates about climate change.

Conclusion

Binaries do not just constrain our understanding of nationalism; they also inform it. Binaries can be dangerous when scholars wield them uncritically, but we also have a responsibility to interrogate the work that they do in the world. That is, when the people and institutions we study use binaries, it is incumbent upon us to analyze how they do so and with what effect. In this review article, I have focused on several key binaries that have long defined the study of nationalism – inclusive/exclusive (geographies of community), love/hate (geographies of emotion), and past/future (geographies of time). These dualisms are important in defining the literature on the geographies of nationalism, but they are also important in defining how ordinary people experience and imagine their identity as part of a "nation." By taking such binaries seriously, nationalism scholars can open up broader questions about the geographies of community, emotion, and time that are built through drawing – and contesting – the conceptual boundaries that are part of the shifting terrain of identity politics around the world.

Attending to the diverse expressions of binaries and asking *who* participates in constructing conceptual dualisms also requires close attention to the spatial and material effects of nationalist discourse. The nation as an imagined community is never confined to the imagination alone, but touches down in specific places and on specific bodies and at specific times. But places, bodies, and times are never singular. Just as all nationalisms are multidimensional, so are their spatialities. Reducing multiplicity to a binary is a political act, and one that deserves closer scrutiny from geographers and other scholars of nationalism. And in this work, "we" also need to be wary of methodological nationalism, and take care not to assume that "they," our subjects, are the only ones who use binaries uncritically to interpret the world. The geographies of nationalism are, after all, geographies that none of us can escape as subjects of today's state system.

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