

INTRODUCTION

The Race of Nationalism

Mariana Ortega and Linda Martín Alcoff

In a world of nation-states, nationalism cannot be confined to the peripheries. That might be conceded, but still it might be objected that nationalism only strikes the established nation-states on special occasions. Crises, such as the Falklands or Gulf Wars, infect a sore spot, causing bodily fevers: the symptoms are an inflamed rhetoric and an outbreak of ensigns. But the irruption soon dies down; the temperature passes; the flags are rolled up; and, then, it is business as usual.

—Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*

THE MOMENTOUS EVENT that we have come to identify simply as “9/11” is still a “sore spot” that has not healed in the body-politic of the United States. It manifests itself in a variety of symptoms, such as delights in (and demands for) regular and excessive patriotic displays, a persisting paranoia about the “other” lurking within our midst, unceasing military violence against the enemy abroad, and acceptance of the “necessity” of torture—all for the sake of freedom, unity, and the homeland. Nationalism is, as Billig put it, “banal”; it is an everyday habit and the nation’s “endemic condition.”¹ But it also swells at moments of crisis and is politically exploited by varied political actors. Recall Joan Didion’s comment that 9/11 “had been seized—even as the less nimble among us were still trying to assimilate it—to stake new ground in old domestic wars.”² Not to mention the foreign wars that have already claimed the lives of untold numbers.

In the aftermath of 9/11, even after the flags have been rolled up, as Hurricane Katrina challenged the myth of racial equality in the nation, and as the election of President Obama opened new political possibilities, the United States continues to be in a color-coded alert, at war with an amorphously defined global “terror,” and still pushing its version of democracy abroad. Less overt is the project of self-rejuvenation it pursues

simultaneously—however quixotic and desperate—in the hope of attaining again the moral vanguard it achieved after World War II. The United States wants once again to feel morally righteous so that it can unite the population against the new evil—this time the evil of the “axis of terror.” The evil outside cannot be vanquished by a divided, demoralized, and dissipated nation. Indeed, as Samuel P. Huntington argued in his role as consultant to the Trilateral Commission, the real threat to the survival of Western culture comes from within, from a politicized, increasingly diverse electorate full of ungrateful immigrants who reject assimilation and deny the unity of American identity, the homogeneity of Western culture, and the moral superiority of the United States.³ For many who think like Huntington, 9/11 was a wake-up call that the internal threat to national unity can no longer be tolerated; thus the agitation over “illegals” has increased, no matter what part of the world they come from.

It is clearly a mistake to overlay the events of 9/11 or regard them as vicious attacks against a free, exceptional, benign nation. Far from new to U.S. soil, terrorism was the ordinary condition of life endured by African Americans who grew up under Jim Crow, and attacks on this scale are hardly unfamiliar in the world at large.⁴ Still, whether it is seen as a sign of an autoimmune disorder, as Derrida has claimed,⁵ or as an unbelievable, unforeseen, undeserved assault against an innocent nation, 9/11 remains a watershed moment in shifting the imaginary of U.S. nationhood, profoundly affecting countless individual lives as well as the social and political status of various ethnic groups for years to come. It thus remains a rich, discursive text that can be read as a complex and contradictory document about the cultural terrain from which U.S. nationalism constructs itself.

As Mindy Peden reminds us in her chapter in this volume, nations are not constructed *ex nihilo* but out of a preexisting cultural terrain. Nation-states sometimes have the earmarks of voluntary associations, and their laws of inclusion and exclusion—especially where there is a version of representative democracy—mimic the idea of a collective, intentional act of self-creation. In this way, nations are often contrasted with ethnic groups on the basis of their foundation in voluntary, intentional, and rule-governed practices, as against ethnic groups that are imagined to grow more organically and that develop their associated cultural practices in more arbitrary and less rational ways.⁶ Yet voluntariness and intentionality are neither exhaustive nor particularly descriptive of the truth about how contemporary nations have been constructed, or how their boundaries are in reality managed. Applying for the famous “green card” in the United States, for example, which is a key instance of border control marking the boundaries of the nation, is a Kafkaesque process in which the criteria are never fully explained and the end point can keep receding in the

distance for decades. Rather than rational or deliberate, the process is influenced by ideological distortions of one's country of origin and tribal prejudices against one's race or ethnicity. Individual applicants find themselves arbitrarily interpellated as insiders or outsiders, as credentialed professionals or unskilled workers, as safe bets to become loyal and hard-working or as more likely to become a burden or a threat. Stigmatized groups—such as those from countries marked as “evil” or just viewed as “backward”—find it nearly impossible to alter their ideological representation or, as a result, their political status.

When an event like 9/11 occurs, the social hierarchy of marginalized groups gets quickly shifted about with profound effects on individual lives. Aaron McGruder, writer of the comic strip *Boondocks*, famously celebrated this shift for African Americans with his Huey character chanting gleefully “We’re number 2!” Muslims, Arabs, and South Asians looking like Arabs quickly became the most vilified minorities in the United States, this in a country whose majority population has such a scant knowledge of world geography that a dangerously large and loose category of potential hate-crime victims was quickly created. In upstate New York, for example, a Sikh temple was burned to the ground by teenagers who mistook turban-wearing Sikhs for Muslims and assumed that the name of the Temple, Gobind Sadan, was a pro-Bin Laden slogan. Hate crimes as well as the practices of Homeland Security are less a rational response to real threats than a prompt, and alibi, for preexisting cultural chauvinisms and varied racisms. Stephen Sondheim’s succinct claim is still correct that “it’s okay to be in America if you’re a white in America,” but there have been shifting configurations of who is acceptable and who is not among the nonwhites in America.

Whether from misinformed teenagers or the federal government, responses to 9/11 reveal that the dividing line between “nation,” “ethnic group,” “race,” and “culture” begin to disappear when we look at the reality, as opposed to the idealization, of nationalism. In light of this fact, we set out in the turbulent period after 9/11 to collect a volume of theoretical analyses about the intersection between race and nationalism that would critique this culture’s conflation of race and national identity, a conflation that became increasingly overt as the number of victims increased, the lost were not found, and the pain, the anger, and the flags multiplied. In particular, we wanted contributors to address the following questions: What does it mean today to be an “American” when one does not represent or embody the norm of “Americanness” because of one’s race, ethnicity, culture of origin, religion, or some combination of these? What is the norm of “Americanness” today, how has it changed, and how pluralistic is it in reality? We offer this volume of chapters not as a reading of 9/11 or a cultural study of the United States, but as a theoretical response and rumination on

the political and cultural context of the nationalism we have all experienced since that time—from the pro-war students in our classrooms who mistake good citizenship with the refusal to consider critiques of the nation, to the daily barrage of a xenophobic media that encourages American exceptionalism and its false protestations of innocence in a sea of global corruption.

It is our view that philosophers and social theorists need a better understanding of the shifting terrain of the national political imaginary. The discourses of philosophy and social theory need to consider the real-world conditions of normative concepts and categories such as “rights,” “freedom,” “citizenship,” “unity,” and, as Monique Roelofs’s chapter included in this volume shows, “aesthetic value.” These topics should no longer be broached in abstract or ahistorical terms, as if unmediated by racial identity or culture or unmarked by their moment in history. This collection of chapters is meant to be a contribution toward a corrective of the tendencies toward unreflective abstractions about concepts of the nation, showcasing theoretical work that does not erase or pretend to transcend its context. If we want to analyze nationalism as a norm governing individual practices, assessing its meaning as well as its political effects, we must analyze it in the discrete and specific particularity of its (ever-shifting) context. This approach will show in particular, we believe, that in order to understand the cultural conditions of nationalism in the context of the United States today, the conditions that have forged the specific form of nationalism that we are experiencing as well as the variety of forms it can take, we must address the constitutive role played by race and ethnicity as well as other vectors of social identity (e.g., and especially, religion) in the construction of the imaginary community of the United States. As Peden puts it, riffing Stuart Hall, race is “the idiom through which the nation is subjectively experienced.”

Importantly, it is no coincidence that both of the editors of this volume are from Central America (Nicaragua and Panama)—a region that has suffered more from U.S. military interventions than anywhere else in the world with the exception of Southeast Asia. Both of us are in the United States today in part because of a confluence of transnational relations that evolved from these military actions, including covert operations, neocolonial dependence, and full-scale invasions. Although we have indeed found shelter here, it remains difficult as Central Americans by birth to adopt without ambivalence the embrace of the “colossus of the North,” no matter how welcoming. The different analyses of the intertwining of race/culture/ethnicity and U.S. nationalism provided in this volume are contributions by various theorists and scholars who, like us, are culturally marginal within the United States and who thus might notice more than others—if one follows standpoint theory—the cultural imprint that affects the political debates about immigration, about rights, about security, and

about whether torture is truly “American.” Coming from Lebanon, India, Colombia, the Netherlands, Argentina, Iran, and numerous minoritized communities within the United States, the authors here offer critical yet nuanced analyses of the intersections of race and nationalism that are rarely visible in the mainstream.

We now turn to the three central areas by which the chapters in this volume have been organized: freedom, unity, and homeland. These are surely three of the most powerful tropes deployed to construct, revitalize, and maintain U.S. national identity and nationalistic practices in a period of heightened alert and fear of terror. The chapters here provide pointed critical analyses of these ideas as tropes but also as sets of practices, as normative ideals, and as embedded within political theories and institutions. They also make pointed but constructive suggestions about how to improve our national culture.

Freedom

History has not revealed a deeper irony than the destruction of the spirit of democratic liberty in the name of devotion to it, which we have witnessed in this nation in the past five years.

—Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*

In the first chapter, “Cultural Affirmation, Power, and Dissent: Two Mid-century U.S. Debates,” Elizabeth Kassab explores the concept of freedom as manifested in U.S. cultural self-understanding and national identity during the 1947 Inter-American Congress of Philosophy and the 1952 *Partisan Review* symposium “Our Country and Our Culture.” Kassab’s historical exploration into the philosophical reflections on the relationship between nation and culture at two important moments—after the war and at the onset of McCarthyism—reveal the growing pains of a nation that was still insecure about its global position, but that had nonetheless adopted the task of becoming the new world leader with the responsibility to guard democracy from the threat of internal and external communism after the collapse of Europe. Through her analysis of an earlier period of nationalist self-consciousness, Kassab reveals a striking similarity between these discussions regarding freedom, power, leadership, nationalism, and dissent, and discussions in the aftermath of 9/11—thus she begins her chapter with Niebuhr’s quote, as his comment is as relevant today as it was in 1952.

Yet this striking repetition underscores how diminished our current climate of dissent and critique has become while the sense of amnesia and a belief in the fundamental innocence of the nation lives on. In the earlier period, there was a surprising reflexivity by philosophers of that generation

about the relationship of nation to culture; they seemed to recognize that the United States' new postwar status in the world would inevitably affect its humanistic disciplines. Following through on this idea, Kassab presses us to consider how North American philosophy itself is affected by its context, not just as a global leader, but as the leading *imperial* nation. Her chapter thus invites us to wonder, if nationalism is built out of a preexisting cultural terrain, what of philosophy? Surely it is plausible, and not a vulgarity of reductionism, to argue that the United States' changing position in the global political economy since World War II has affected its growing disaffection from European philosophy, and has enhanced its ability to overcome its previous cultural insecurity vis-à-vis the superiority of "old" Europe. If this seems clear enough, what other internal movements within philosophy as it is done in the United States are also affected by the shifts of cultural position? To paraphrase from one of the United States' more influential "epistemologists" (Donald Rumsfeld), what else do we not know that we do not know?

It is precisely the notion of a contrived innocence—innocence in the sense of infantilization and an inability to engage in judgment, reflection, and critique—that is explored by Kyoo Lee in chapter 2, "When Fear Interferes with Freedom: Infantilization of the American Public Seen through the Lens of Post-9/11 Literature for Children." Lee provides a critique of post-9/11 U.S. culture by way of an examination of children's post-9/11 literature as an allegorical mirror that reflects the nationalistic re-*bildung*, the ideological and homogenizing project of educating U.S. youth not to ask questions and thus remain innocent. Lee shows that when fear interferes with the process of growth and maturation—the process of becoming a self-reflective being—the necessity for comfort and protection from those dark "others" inside and outside our borders whose motives remain opaque to us begins to dominate other impulses. Thus, the national project of *bildung* spills into a "color education" that, while pretending to offer a multicultural approach and a respect for all colors, neatly divides the nation into a simplistic black and white binary of "'they' who terrorize versus 'we' who are terrified." Lee's chapter recalls Susan Sontag's declaration regarding the suffering of others: "No one after a certain age has the right to this kind of innocence, of superficiality, to this degree of ignorance, or amnesia."⁷

In "Muslim Women and the Rhetoric of Freedom" (chapter 3), Alia Al-Saji explores how the binary logic of "us and them" works through constructions of "oppressed" and "liberated" women. Al-Saji's chapter exposes the gendered and racialized dimensions of a national discourse that calls for the freedom of the oppressed veiled Muslim woman. The appeal for the liberation of the oppressed feminine other is part and parcel of a discourse that requires a representation of a fundamentalist and oppressed other

in order to forge a representation of a politically enlightened, culturally unified United States. The liberation of the veiled Muslim woman thus symbolizes not only the liberation of women from oppressive masculinist forces but also serves to reinforce the idea that Islam is intrinsically and irrevocably fundamentalist. Al-Saji further shows how the veiled woman suffers from a double othering as she becomes other both to enlightened Western men and to liberated Western women; she is the other as a Muslim and also she is the other as an oppressed woman without the “freedom” (or coercion) to bare her body in public. Her veil itself becomes racialized, essentialized, and ultimately reduced to a metonym for Islam and the oppression of women. In revealing the structures that sustain the Western representations of the veiled Muslim woman, Al-Saji exposes how Western feminist discourses can fall into the trap of “cultural racism” and neocolonialism, paradoxically in the name of freedom. The discourse of feminism itself can all too easily be recuperated by both American exceptionalism and U.S. imperialism when it assumes decontextualized concepts of freedom and of embodiment.

Unity

“United We Stand” brings me no comfort. . . . “United” since when? For what cause? Under whose terms? I feel a moral obligation to grieve the tragic loss of human life at the same time that I denounce the multifaceted political reality leading up to this horrible (inter)national tragedy. In doing so, I am brought back to one elemental truth about cultural memory: it can become what we need it to be in times of incomprehensible suffering—part reality and part fiction, depending on memory’s most familiar tropes of race, gender, and nationhood.

—Chana Kai Lee, “Memories in the Making and Other National Fictions”

This section starts with María Lugones’s and Joshua M. Price’s “Faith in Unity: The Nationalist Erasure of Multiplicity” (chapter 4) a moving reflection on patriotic unity prompted by 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the May 1, 2006, immigrant marches, three key events that manifest the intertwining of race and nationalism. Lugones and Price make a connection between post-9/11 practices to achieve patriotic unity—such as “the war on terror,” militarization of the border, the USA PATRIOT Act, and new forms of racial profiling—and “cognitive practices” of what they term “structural monoculturalism” that call for certainty, simplicity, unity, and compromise and that privilege Eurocentric knowledge and languages. Lugones and Price are particularly interested in the recent shift in structural monoculturalism from (supposedly) rational negotiations that aim for compromise to the establishment of dogmatic claims by way of faith,

which they see as signaling a shift toward a process of conversion in which American unity is achieved through the identification with a politicized conservative Christianity. This new monoculturalism, according to Lugones and Price, further strengthens certainty and simplicity through faith while construing alternative accounts of the world as invalid and unimportant, and even dangerous and antagonistic. From the perspective of this new, simplified version of monoculturalism, structural multiculturalism begins to appear to be “nonsensical, impossible, chaotic, politically suspicious, and divisive” and the hard-won cultural support for multiculturalism is eroded.

Multiculturalism itself in its various U.S. incarnations looks woefully inadequate from the perspective of the rich debates currently going on by postcolonial theorists in Latin America, who are introducing the idea of *interculturalidad*: an ongoing counterhegemonic process in which, in Catherine Walsh’s words, as quoted by Lugones and Price, there is a “reciprocal translation of knowledges in the plural.” Against the “juxtaposed silos” imagery of multiculturalism, this idea foregrounds the mutual exchange *and change* that occurs when cultural variety is actually valued. In light of this, Lugones and Price call for an epistemological shift toward a multivoiced solidarity in place of a univocal simplicity, a solidarity exemplified by the heterogeneity of the participants in the May 1, 2006, pro-immigrant marches. They also call for a non-ornamental multiculturalism and *interculturalidad* that will be respectful of plural epistemologies and the epistemic privilege of those whose knowledge has been subordinated.

While Lugones and Price concentrate on the cognitive practices of structural monoculturalism that foster patriotic unity, in “Muslim Immigrants in Post-9/11 American Politics: The ‘Exception’ Population as an Intrinsic Element of American Liberalism” (chapter 5), Falguni A. Sheth emphasizes the role played by the American political ideology of liberalism in maintaining unity. Liberal, democratic societies create unity, Sheth argues, by creating an exception population that is subject to the law but not legally entitled to its protections and rights. She shows how in the aftermath of 9/11 Muslims have become this exception population. According to Sheth, the process of outcasting a particular population is dependent on a dual (ontological and normative) interpretation of the term “person,” which in turn leads to a vacillating interpretation of constitutional protections of human rights. In an analysis of American immigration law, Sheth shows how a “legal person” is understood not just as a human but as a “human-like-us,” and how constitutional rights are selectively interpreted as natural or inalienable rights only for members of the group. Since Muslims are not deemed “human-like-us,” they are consequently not worthy of constitutional rights. According to Sheth, liberalism’s appeal to universal rights and equal protection paradoxically works to legally and

politically segregate particular populations that threaten the cultural homogeneity and political unity of the United States. In this way, liberalism's pluralist ideal of equality has managed to coexist with a long practice of very divergent treatment for "exception populations."

Sheth wonders productively if we can anticipate the warning signs of U.S. liberalism's tendency to create exceptions to the rule of equality under the law and fair treatment. But she plausibly maintains that the material problems of exclusion and abjection cannot be solved at a metalevel or simply by tweaking the terms of liberal political theory. The construction of exception populations is not ultimately caused by an inadequate theory, and therefore it cannot be decisively avoided by a theoretical maneuver. Sheth's analysis suggests that there is no avoidance of contextual analysis and public debate over specifics, such as the specifics of the political implications of Islam, of Christianity, or of fundamentalism in any form.

Mindy Peden revisits this tendency of the United States to claim unity while at the same time being exclusionary when she recalls Frederick Douglass's words: "Fellow citizens, above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! . . . What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July?" In "Situating Race and Nation in the U.S. Context: Methodology, Interdisciplinarity, and the Unresolved Role of Comparative Inquiry" (chapter 6), Peden takes up the question of the intersection between U.S. national identity and race as this is manifested within the disciplines of philosophy and political science. While there have been various attempts within these disciplines to address nationalism and the concept of the nation, Peden questions why race itself ("the idiom through which the nation is objectively experienced") has not been foregrounded as an object of study itself rather than merely as a variable that helps explain nationalism. She explains this failure as the effect of two problematic trends in the literature: the trend toward viewing the United States as so essentially specific and exceptional that structural critiques don't apply, and the trend toward mimicking scientific methods that overgeneralize cases, thus obscuring more literary and philosophical approaches that might reveal the context and particularities of the construction of U.S. nationhood. These trends may seem to be at cross-purposes—the one emphasizing particularism and the other downplaying it—yet they both have the effect of side-stepping race. To illustrate the problems with these trends Peden analyzes the work of Anthony Marx and Karl Deutsch. From this analysis she suggests that, if we are to provide rich, contextual analyses of the relationship between U.S. nationalism and race and thus avoid the pitfalls of previous scholars, we need to use an interdisciplinary approach. Interdisciplinarity will counteract the tendency to nationhood as a transhistorical category, and it will also make possible the incorporation of writings by those from the margins, such as Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, Alain Locke, and

W. E. B. Du Bois, that will “subvert assumptions of homogeneity and [show] how racial construction and exclusion have accompanied the U.S. national project since its inception.”

Peden also calls for a national discussion about “the various cultural conditions . . . that allow ordinary people to experience the nation as such.” Eduardo Mendieta’s “Citizenship and Political Friendship: Two Hearts, One Passport” (chapter 7) takes up precisely this discussion in a personal and reflexive analysis of what it means for him to be an American in light of the racial exclusion and racial injustice perpetrated in the very midst of the mythology of a “united America.” In describing his “two hearts,” Mendieta explores his ambivalence toward the United States, a country where he is both welcomed and also shamed because of his race. He develops a complex account of the relationship between citizenship and public affect, what he calls “public somatology,” arguing that citizenship is not merely a collection of rights and duties but also includes affects—particularly the loyalty and trust that makes possible political friendship and solidarity. To make his case about the importance of affect in the production of law, Mendieta discusses Ogletree’s and Bell’s analyses of *Brown v. Board of Education*, and to clarify his notion of political friendship, he examines the work of Aristotle, Kant, and Cicero. He ultimately appeals to a notion of political friendship that involves both freedom of judgment and trust in our co-citizens in order to produce conditions without which it would be impossible to have national pride or self-respect. To Chana Kai Lee’s question posed earlier—“‘United’ since when? For what cause? Under whose terms?”⁸—Mendieta provides the following answer: unity is achieved through the conditions of political friendship but this will be possible only when the United States becomes a nation that does not shame and humiliate its citizens. As he states, “A nation that labors intently on humiliating many of its most ‘faithful citizens’ —in Bell’s words—calls forth not just their skepticism, but their disloyalty. And a society in which neither self-respect nor national pride are possible can neither improve itself or imagine itself as a country whose moral character is yet to be forged.” Remaining hopeful, however, Mendieta prompts us to imagine U.S. citizenship as a postnational American identity that recognizes its history of racial injustice and commands our loyalty without requiring humiliation and dishonor.

Homeland

O, let my land be a land where Liberty
 Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,
 But opportunity is real, and life is free,
 Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,
Nor freedom in this "homeland of the free.") . . .

O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas
In search of what I meant to be my home—
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea,
And torn from Black Africa's strand I came
To build a "homeland of the free."

—Langston Hughes, "Let America Be America Again"

This section problematizes the notion of the cherished "homeland" by showing how an imperial nationalism makes its presence felt even in those spaces we might deem most progressive or, at least politically neutral and unfettered by ideology: the arena of resistant scholarship (in this case, postcolonial scholarship) and the area of aesthetics.

In chapter 8, "On the Limits of Postcolonial Identity Politics," Namita Goswami sounds a warning note about the ways in which counter-hegemonic theoretical projects can be recuperated to serve American exceptionalism once again. She analyzes the pitfalls of postcolonialism as practiced by Indian American postcolonial scholars who, in trying to achieve the "American" Dream by way of class advancement, reinforce U.S. nationalism and foreign policy premised on exceptionalism. Goswami argues that postcolonialism naturalizes both the dominance and the innocence of the United States and obscures its own colonial practices. She suggests that, while claiming to be victims of racism and on the side of the U.S. underclass, this new Indian American "model minority" promotes the Anglocentrism and Eurocentrism of the U.S. academy at the expense of U.S. African American, Native American, and Latin American scholarship in ethnic studies departments. Goswami also claims that this group becomes "native informants" of their original homeland for U.S. neocolonialist practices. Paradoxically, Goswami's analysis summons a picture of postcolonialism as a passage into neocolonialism. Following Spivak, Goswami asks postcolonial theorists to think about the condition of possibility for their migrant history, which should allow them to see how they themselves can be agents of domination. She also encourages them to see themselves as Americans that make up part of the American homeland, not in the sense of being "Anglo-clones," but as first world hyphenated Americans, since "America *is* hyphenated."

The volume concludes with Monique Roelofs's "Theorizing the Aesthetic Homeland: Racialized Aesthetic Nationalism in Daily Life and the Art World," in which she alerts us to the ways in which taste, race, and nationalism merge to form a sense of an aesthetic homeland. This racialized

aesthetic nationalism constructs a homeland by disowning and abjecting spaces that are racially other. Roelofs argues that the relationship between aesthetics and racialized nationalism is not new; rather, it has its roots in the history of aesthetic theory, specifically the work of Shaftesbury, Hume, Kant, and Addison. She points to the ways in which racialized aesthetic nationalism creates a proprietary conception of visual culture at the level of everyday experience and thus gives rise to a sense of being at home in one's "own" cultural environment, an environment that needs to be constantly affirmed and protected. She provides examples of racialized aesthetic nationalism at the level of the everyday in the aftermath of 9/11: the U.S. government's means of cultural surveillance and its injunction to go shopping as well as the *New York Times*' commemorative vignettes about victims of the 9/11 attacks. Roelofs further connects the workings of racialized aesthetic nationalism at the level of the everyday to the level of the art world by providing an analysis of the critiques of the work of Colombian artist Fernando Botero by Rosalind Krauss and Arthur C. Danto. She argues that Danto's interpretation of Botero's *Abu Ghraib* series is particularly suffused by assumptions about race and nation that inhibit his ability to read the work as what it is, a powerful, political indictment of U.S. military policies and practices.

Roelofs's analysis brings us back to the question of what we do not know that we do not know about our own national culture. If the assessment of Fernando Botero's art by our leading philosopher-critics is so disabled by a racialized and nationalist blindness, then where is there cause for hope? If race is truly the idiom through which the nation is subjectively experienced, how can nationalism itself be made nonexclusionary? As we hope this volume reveals, the answers to these questions do not lie in further abstractions from race and identity, in which theorists try to downplay and ignore the color and cultural origin of citizens, but rather, precisely through a mobilization of the experiences, perspectives, and theoretical insights of the true diversity that makes up this nation.

Notes

1. Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995), 6.
2. Joan Didion, *Fixed Ideas* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2003), 12.
3. For an interesting assessment of Huntington's argument, see David Palumbo-Liu, "Multiculturalism Now: Civilization, National Identity, and Difference Before and After September 11," in *Identity Politics Reconsidered*, ed. Linda Martín Alcoff, Michael Hames-García, Satya P. Mohanty, and Paula Moya (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 126–141.
4. Susan Neiman, *Evil in Modern Thought: An Alternative History of Philosophy* (Melbourne, Australia: Scribe, 2002).

5. Giovana Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror, Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

6. See, for example, Jorge J. E. Gracia, *Surviving Race, Ethnicity and Nationality: A Challenge for the Twenty-First Century* (Lanham, MD.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005).

7. Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 114.

8. Chana Kai Lee, "Memories in the Making and Other National Fictions," *Signs* 28, no. 1 (2002): 439.