The Spread of International Borders as a Prelude to
the Spread of
International Borders during COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes how Covid-19 has impacted borders and xenophobia. In particular, it looks at how four countries with generally right-wing politics, but not necessarily right-wing viewpoints, have used xenophobia to deal with Covid-19: The United States, Japan, Brazil, and Australia. This paper chronicles the expected rise in blaming other countries for the spread of Covid-19 with unexpected consequences. Rather than solidifying national borders and constituencies in the face of an international threat through xenophobia, right-wing countries have instead created a successful border creation process with little room to expand. The options seem to be a fragmentation of these countries into internal borders.

KEYWORDS: Covid-19, borders, bordering, nationalism, governmentality, democracy, The United States, Brazil, Japan, Australia.

INTRODUCTION

This article explores the consequence of the use of borders and xenophobia as a pseudo-cure for Covid-19. This article focuses mostly on countries characterized by right-wing politics, mainly in the iteration of right-wing populism that functions by demonizing immigrants, minorities, and bureaucrats (Mudde, 2004; Mudde, 2018; Müller, 2017). While the countries studied here, The United States, Japan, Brazil, and Australia, have had varying degrees of success or failure in curbing the spread of Covid-19, they all have turned to some form of displacement where Covid-19 occurs outside of a border. Borders are mentioned here as bordering, a process where politics and thought that sustain a border occur far away from a nation-state's borders, often in linguistic, visual, and cultural practices (Shachar, 2019; Amoore and Hall, 2010). Indeed, to understand borders, it makes sense to distinguish what most people think of fortified borders as "barriers" (Jones, 2012) rather than borders. For example, the U.S.-Mexico border fence and related technological surveillance is a barrier, whereas anti-Mexican nativism in Wisconsin is bordering. There is a border between the European Union and non-European Union nation-states, sometimes with clearly marked barriers in the form of fences. However, racist claims that undocumented African immigrants threaten European identity or even that the E.U. ought to maintain borders with non-European nation-states is bordering. Thus, borders are at once "barriers," something far from a nation-state's interior and thus separate from it. It also exists as a social practice within the interior of nation-states through bordering. Indeed, as Jones (2012, 3) explains, barriers are explained as responding to "external" threats but are created in response to internal issues. Bordering is where the consequences of peoples' ideas about borders reach immigrants and foreign countries and where the border's violence becomes real within nation-states.

Since traditional borders, barriers, and violent national practices are increasingly blurred, how could bordering could occur in a way that sets a prelude for how these us-vs.-them distinctions could set the stage for national dissolution? This paper argues that the initial responses to Covid-19 partially follow "governmentality." However, this is occurring in the context of an updating of what Foucault refers to as "governmentality." Updating governmentality is necessary because today's governmentality does not follow the same ethical ends. "Broadly, governmentality refers to institutionalized practices of administration and the frames of knowledge that inform them, designed to manage the conduct of individuals and populations toward some notion of the collective good" (de la Dehesa, 2017, 254). However, right-wing governments' responses to Covid-19 show that this international governmentality, the creation of groups by marking some populations as safe and others as threats, tunnels into the past in ways that regress toward brutality rather than order defined by the "the collective good."

THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

Scholarship about the politics of Covid-19 shares a few initial trends, regardless of recommendations or evaluations. The first has to do with how it treats space and time. Space is important to Foucault's work because Foucault's work deals with the distribution and control of people and populations over space (1977, 141). On the one hand, the academic scholarship may focus on a spatial analysis of Covid-19. On the other hand, it may focus on temporal analyses of Covid-19. Some articles may address both. Space and time are significant because Covid-19 affects people both spatially, that is, where it is and is not, and temporally with questions of how long it has taken to spread and how long it will last. A combined spatial and temporal consideration is necessary to understand Covid-19. A second issue is how much the literature highlights spatiality and temporality. Sometimes more extended time frames are suggested, whereas words that are about time are used in not obvious ways. In sum, a more obvious reference to combined space and time seems to be brewing within the academic scholarship about Covid-19 but could use more clarification.

Spatial analyses of Covid-19 may take the form of international comparisons or domestic analyses. International differences have occurred in the quickness of Covid-19 prevention responses, often determined by the price of life (Balmford et al., 2020). Successful Covid-19 policies across East Asia have often rested on a competitive regional nationalism (de Kloet, Lin, and Chow, 2020). Failed Covid-19 containment in Japan may be better addressed by increasing regional power rather than relying on the national government (Yamazaki 2020). Local actors, such as indigenous people or working-class organizations, have filled in the absence of Covid-19 mitigation policies in Brazil (Ortega and Orsini, 2020). In sum, studies have distinguished spatial differences within global, regional, and national spaces. These differences sometimes point toward the politics of inequality.

More temporally focused analyses focus on the Covid-19 crisis's origins, the Covid-19 era's characteristics, and potential futures. The origins of or at least past trends that enabled the spread of Covid-19 have been of particular concern. For example, Trump has been able to rise to power and manage Covid-19 the way he has because of a weakening of the U.S. Federal government since the 1980s (Agnew 2020). Covid-19 may intensify but did not create problems in liberal democracies that existed before Covid-19 (Galston, 2020). Potential failures of governments to deal with pandemics have been known for years, but not the possibility of it occurring with a right-wing populist in charge of the U.S. government (Maxmen and Tollefson,

2020). The abovementioned articles look at Covid-19 partially as an equally distributed illness by evoking national time. What then of how Covid-19 affects inequality? Some articles disaggregate the nation-state to look at events in time as they affected different class, ethnic, and racial groups. The wealthy elite transmitted Covid-19 to Brazil, with consequences far more severe for oppressed groups (Conde 2020). Latin America has a persistent, unacknowledged history of spreading viruses to oppressed racial groups during its colonial expansion (Hoffmann 2020). Another way to temporalize inequality in Covid-19 is to look at it as a specific era that negatively affects undocumented immigrants (Ventura Miller et al., 2020), albeit at the potential expense of not understanding how inequality against immigrants is persistent throughout U.S. history. To the latter extent, Grandin (2019) explains how the frontier, with the violent oppression of non-whites living there, has been the persistent fix to the United States' domestic problems. Determining origins is difficult at best, but perhaps its most successful use is in thinking about the impact of Covid-19 in terms of how long it may traumatize society and how society and politics are likely to change.

The future also comes into play in understanding the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, Covid-19 social distancing has affected the future of activism (Chenoweth, 2020). Covid-19 also makes urgent a break from neo-liberalism for policies more attuned to ecological issues (Milani 2020). Covid-19 is not the only recent event to influence thought about the future. Recent scholarship about the politics of the future has focused on climate change (Wainwright and Mann 2020), the fall of capitalism (Frase, 2016), and international politics after the fall of our current global order (Cerny, 2010). Deleuze's virtuality theory suggests multiple paths for the future, whatever may come (Smith, 2010). The upshot is that virtuality may become a reality (Smith 2010). A limit on virtuality is "potential," imposed by politics, and may inhibit a positive future (Berardi 2019). Thus, the future already exists, as it has been pre-planned. However, past failures may inspire future political change (Benjamin and Du Bois, in Shapiro, 2016; Guattari, 2009). The new turn to considering specific futures during Covid-19 and other traumatic situations may suggest a shift in how political science responds to current events. Analysis or prescription?

The literature reviewed thus far points towards a politics of nationalism at the international and national levels. Yet, how does national power lead to a seemingly contradictory dissolution of nation-states? At this point, one answer lies in Anderson's assertion that nationalism developed outside of national territories in colonies, where people began to imagine themselves as parts of national groups (Anderson, 2006). Thus, nation-states do not require territory. However, it may also be necessary to answer whether or not government agencies have always been used to solve their problems. It is essential to turn toward Foucault's concepts of governmentality, biopower, and discipline to understand this.

Governmentality is an area where power may operate outside of the government and the government (Gressgård, 2019, 14). Governmentality has been critiqued by Nmbembe Achille (2003) for assuming that death is simply an unintended consequence of power (Gressgård, 2019, 13). This sounds close to the use of paramilitary militias by the Trump administration. However, it is not always a destructive or violent force that disorders society. For example, "Scholars examining these transformations through the lens of governmentality have linked their growing importance to new rationalities of government that seek to mobilize the capacities of an active citizenry toward its own self-government. Such strategies rely on the biopolitical constitution of clearly bounded populations, seeking to optimize choices, desires, and even subjectivities." (de la Dehesa, 2017, 265, paraphrasing Bedford 2009, Bang and Esmark, 2009). Thus, governmentality has been used by scholars like de la Dehesa (2017) to describe how neoliberalism (Gressgård,

2019) and N.G.O.s have interacted with governments to fulfill governmental responsibility of H.I.V. management. Indeed, governmentality to these scholars has a clear role over life and death. However, in more conceptual terms, governmentality would differ from simply allowing non-governmental actors—ranging from militias to the N.G.O.s to the media to participate in, or fulfill, a government's functions.

For Foucault, the practice of creating populations enabled a less-severe liberal state to emerge. Within this "population…is the pivot which turned the transition from rule based on a sovereign authority to a 'governmentalized' rule which decenters the state under liberalism" (Curtis, 2002, 506). Furthermore, this is linked to the term "biopolitics." "Foucault maintained that there have been two major revolutions in power since the classical age: the development of biopolitical techniques aimed at the individual body and biopolitical techniques aimed at the collective or social body. Both sorts of techniques emerge from engagements with 'population'" (Curtis 2002, 506). Thus, population enables governmentality, which has the benefits of a hands-off state and a state that controls through other means.

Yet, Foucault's related idea "biopolitics" relates more to the way that populations are created.

> Foucault defines biopolitics/biopower as a *technology* of power, implying that it is invented in a particular time, can incorporate different particular techniques and inventions, can be deployed flexibly by any agency and transmitted as know-how. Biopower is for Foucault specifically the technology that enables the control of populations. It involves techniques as diverse as censuses, ballots, hydrography and insurance policies, encompassing governmentality.
>
> (Kelly 2010, 4)

As Kelly (2010) mentions, biopolitics is situated to understanding international politics beyond what the scholarship on N.G.O.s delimits. Biopolitical/biopower enables the population to be controlled by technologies that are different from blunt power.

Governmentality is fairly fluid in terms of techniques and definitions. For example, to refer to "a conjunction of ideas and practices," "government itself," in a "historically limited sense," or to mean "power in general" (Larner and Walters, 2004 in Kelley, 2010, 2). Yet, there is some consensus that it relates to both a set of practices and biopolitics itself. Foucault's definition of governmentality "…stresses the 'ensemble' of 'institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics' (Foucault, (2004/2007, 108) that made the functioning of this power-knowledge configuration possible" (French, 2015, 429). The combination of power and knowledge can create populations. For example, concerning Foucault's related idea of "biopolitics," there is a "…first step of enacting populations through statistical practices. I call this step biopolitical bordering: the delineation of the target population that is to be known" (Scheel, 2020, 573). In contrast to a nation-state marshaling power and knowledge to create a population, governmentality can be "government by inaction," where governments outsource removal of immigrants from Spain and Ecuador to N.G.O.s thus denying inclusion but not using the same blunt force as in the United States (Beyers and Nicholls, 2020, 635).

Yet, governmentality works with "visibility" to create knowable and controllable populations. For example,

> Actually, it is more on the side of making reality knowable that visibility works in modern governmentality, as Foucault indirectly suggests in his passages on the emergence of statistics, arguing that this latter "discovers and gradually reveals that the population possesses its own regularities". In fact, if visibility is conceived more broadly in terms of knowledge—a form of knowledge that makes things and subjects apprehensible and thus governable in some way—it could be argued that visibility is at the core of governmentality.
>
> (Tazzioli and Walters, 2016, 447, referring to Foucault, 2007)

Tazzioli and Walter (2016) thus link governmentality to Foucault's writing on the disciplinary society where visibility was more pronounced, hence Foucault's genealogical work. In the disciplinary society in *Discipline and Punish* visibility was about "surveillance." Thus, there is potential here to link governmentality back to the disciplinary society and perhaps to points before since more benign forms of governmentality harken back to disciplinary and further violent forms of governmental conflict management.

Combining this with the abovementioned discussions of governmentality, it can be seen that governmentality opens the way not simply for disciplinary power politics but also for people to be drawn into politics using various methods. At the same time, there is a persistent theme throughout the abovementioned research that suggests both governmentality and biopolitics/biopolitics use techniques that require competence. Right-wing populism generally relies on other reasons for promoting people than competence in bureaucratic management. So, what would governmentality under right-wing politics look like? Chances are it would constitute the population through lies and fake news and by blunt violence. This leaves open room to consider how power may play a role in governmentality, in particular, more manipulative violent power that characterizes the conflict over right-wing populism in general and Covid-19 in specific. Are we not in a reverse situation moving backward, away from biopolitics toward blunt sovereign power? Indeed, the intersection of race, ethnicity, and epidemics raises some troubling issues about the combination of knowledge and violence.

Research done before Covid-19, at least in hindsight, foreshadows some of the racist anti-immigrant policies in the wake of Covid-19. With a backlash politics return to anti-politically correct discourse, there were metaphorical justifications for closing borders that were persuasive and influential before the Covid-19 virus. The use of metaphors to describe immigrants in North America includes immigrants as bringers of disease (Adeyanju and Neverson, 2007), strange natural phenomena threatening a homeland (Santo Anna 2002.), or environmental pollutants (Cisneros, 2008). It is not that these are true or even good explanations, but instead, they have influenced the public to act.

THEORETICAL APPROACH

This article situates internal borders within the context of right-wing populism and other forms of right-wing governance in democratic governments. The term right-wing populism is used with some caution as a useful term to point to a shifting phenomenon though one with little potential to predict the exact nature of the evolving political realities. This article uses a theoretical approach based on genealogical situation, which is a "form of investigations that record the contingencies of power arrangement" showing that they are in flux and "the emergence of (among other things) new subjects" (Foucault, 2007, and 1978 in Shapiro 2016, 7). Politicians'

use of ethnonationalism as a quick-fix for the Covid-19 crisis portends that our era is in danger of producing a future where people will voluntarily accept authoritarianism.

At this stage of the Covid-19 pandemic, it does not seem prudent to attempt to make causal links between things happening and bordering. Many of the governments analyzed here are known for obscuring information. It seems to be easier to make some generalizations about public opinion, discrimination, and employment. However, since Covid-19 was less than a year old at the time of writing, these generalizations are somewhat mercurial. It is not just that recommendations for dealing with Covid-19 or even basic facts have changed rapidly. Still, public opinion seems to have a short shelf-life in ratio to changing situations. Therefore, this article takes a more genealogical approach, looking at things and events that bordering is situated in (Shapiro, 2016). Matching different xenophobia and internal bordering stages happening now to Foucault's ideas of different eras of power helps uncover the impact of current internal bordering. Put another way, Foucault follows a linear development of power, yet internal bordering suggests a reversion to previous stages of power identified by Foucault. Hence, for Foucault, contemporary security is not about restriction, like discipline societies; security "lets things happen" (2007, 45). Security, in contrast to "discipline," is not complete but rather "a matter of maximizing the positive elements, for which one provides the best possible circulation, and of minimizing what is risky and inconvenient, like theft and disease, while knowing they will never be completely suppressed" (Foucault, 2007, 19). However, restrictions or encouragement of movement during Covid-19 revert to earlier times that Foucault mentions. In particular, the internal borders amidst calls to return to work, shop, and attend schools with neither vaccination nor cure to Covid-19 suggest an earlier function of the police that Foucault (2007) mentions: ensuring economic competition between nation-states (337) and agricultural profits and labor (342). While much of the work done today is not agricultural, the governments mentioned are reverting to something similar by not enabling but restricting people for profit. Thus, understandings of governmentality and discourse should leave room not just for forms of knowledge and its effects on power but also for brute force and the reversion to practices from less democratic times. The first stage in this is the reversion from globalization to xenophobic nationalism occurring in many democracies.

This paper looks at how discourse sets the stage for future developments. However, I do not claim to know the future. Instead, this paper identifies the potential for the future of right-wing governments' management of Covid-19. Potential here differs from its positive, casual, everyday sense. That is, "he has the potential to be a great artist." Instead, potential is often a constraint on more radical futures (Berardi, 2019). A constraint does not mean that more radical futures, better frameworks will not arise. But instead, following Berardi (2019), governments set a potential that constrains futures that need to happen. In short, rather than assuming that the treatment of oppressed populations during Covid-19 are isolated incidents, it is likely that these scenarios may continue or worsen. Therefore, they can be theoretically seen as setting the stage for future developments of bordering. This potential future is likely if these scenarios continue along their current trajectory. Other alternatives may arise, though, within the temporal framework of this paper, they have not. An analysis of authoritarian government's ethnonationalism provides perspective on the potential trajectory and long-term consequences of what may happen if right-wing democracies continue their current engagement with authoritarian-style ethnocentric scapegoating in the Covid-19 era.

Authoritarian governments may self-describe as oppressed to gain active citizen-support to oppress less powerful groups. Thus, rather than military or police intervention,

governmentality may be a tool of authoritarianism. One way authoritarian leaders shore up power is using ethnicity. which has the dual function of placing people in a hierarchy (even if ethnicity is voluntary) (Bretell, 2007, paraphrased in Toohey, 2012) and the buy-in of a group who can feel a sense of continuity (Hall, 1996). The People's Republic of China has solidified power (of the dominant Han ethnicity) over regions bordering the Korean peninsula by undermining the ethnic-based power of Korean diaspora and immigrant populations (Bourdais Park 2017). In the Western half of China, the Han ethnicity's territorial power has been solidified through genocidal practices against Uyegers and Tibetans and by claiming a threat from the indigenous populations there while at the same time amplifying the narrative that China was a victim of colonization (Anand, 2019). This is an example of an authoritarian regime using a real, though finished, history of colonial victimization simultaneous to an ethnonationalist politics that colonize others. There are echoes of this in right-wing democracies that simultaneously push a narrative of the victimization of the dominant national group while victimizing oppressed ethnic groups. Many right-wing democracies mix narratives of "the people" being oppressed by perceived outsiders simultaneously to internal racism, sexism, homophobia, and violent foreign policy. Another issue that Bourdais Park (2017) mentions is that ethnonationalist pressure to disavow identity may exist even where formal rules promote territorial autonomy for oppressed identity groups. Thus, ethnonationalism offers a temporally shifting, unreliable protection for oppressed minorities. Thus, the duration of benefits and hostilities suggests inconsistency in how ethnonationalism interacts with less powerful groups.

In the Middle East, ethnic minorities that will lose status following democratization may support authoritarian regimes, even though they are not in the majority (Belge and Karakoç. 2015). Many Egyptian and Christians chose whether or not to align with a seemingly protective Muslim-dominated, authoritarian governments based on various factors other than religious identity (Farha and Mousa, 2015). In this way, ethnic groups that seem to be receiving little in return at first glance may support authoritarianism. Both authoritarian and democratic Egypt has consistently supported neoliberalism by combining appeals to secularism and the conservative Islamic identity (Sobhy, 2015). This involved the self-directed activities of Egyptians rather than top-down state directives (Sothby, 2015) and is, therefore, governmentality. Yet, Egypt's governmentality is not purely ethnonationalist. This governmentality engages with ethnoreligious minorities. During the initial waves of democratization, the Coptic Orthodox Church engaged in governmentality with diaspora communities (Brinkerhoff, 2019). This engagement augmented the majority-Muslim Egyptian government's reach outside of Cairo (Brinkerhoff, 2019). Governmentality's support of authoritarianism, or authoritarian elements of democracy, does not prevent voluntary participation. Ethno-nationalist governmentality may be successful outside of the dominant ethnic or religious group that it promotes. Moreover, ethnonationalist governance may impede official democratization or persist into a democratic government.

The blurring of contradictory categories in ethnonationalism is not simply limited to Muslim-majority countries. These contradictory categories exist in the politics of countries that are at least nominally democratic. For example, in Serbia, ethnonationalism was used as a "schizoid border" that simultaneously confronts and supports capitalist globalization (Musabegovic, 2019, 374). Legal systems, a hallmark of democracy, have been used for anti-Muslim politics in democratic countries such as India and authoritarian countries; this is to some extent an after-effect of colonialism that has been "reassembled" after the Cold War (Koch and Vora, 2020, 2). Thus, anti-democratic practices have long histories and potentially long futures that are hard to undo.

Authoritarian and democratic strategies have blurred in right-wing democracies' responses to Covid-19 (Toohey, 2021). One aspect of this is using ethnonationalist tropes to sidestep democratic processes by drumming up support to ignore public opinion. The potential of linking the oppressed minorities in struggles to stop right-wing populism or to create democratization may thus be limited. These limitations can be seen in ethnonationalist politics in Authoritarian countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and the People's Republic of China.

Ethnonationalism in Authoritarian countries may not differ so much from racism in countries like America. Violence against people because of ethnicity is similar to racist violence in its conceptualization and execution (Balibar, 1991; Toohey, 2012). Moreover, racism has long since stopped relying on old White-supremacist frameworks like biology and eugenics (Miles 1987) and thus can claim not to be racist when criticized. Therefore, ethnonationalism in Authoritarian countries, which many right-wing democracies claim to be a threat, is conceptually similar to emerging right-wing populism. Thus, short-term uses of ethno-nationalist governmentality are not simply quick fixes to the current Covid-19 crisis, i.e., a necessary evil that would not be used in better times. The groups that are the target of this Othering are placed on a lower rung of national hierarchies. As per everyone in these countries, targetting of oppressed ethnic groups and political enemies build upon past policies and are a potential that limits the ability of people in the future to move beyond ethnonationalism.

SCAPEGOATING FOREIGN COUNTRIES: THE BEGINNING OF INTERNAL BORDERS IN THE COVID-19 ERA

Japan, Australia, Brazil, and the United States have had varying degrees of success in dealing with the spread of Covid-19. Australia has been successful, whereas Japan appears successful, and the United States and Brazil are not. All four countries are more similar in their overall motivation that politicians may have for resorting toward xenophobia and borders. Right-wing politicians in these countries either have rhetoric or policy that does just that. Japanese, Australian, and U.S. citizens often distrust how foreign countries and institutions are handling Covid-19. Within this context, an appeal to bordering is not surprising.

Japanese peoples' fears of economic problems do not differ during the Covid-19 crisis compared with the 2008-2009 economic downturn (Mordecai and Schumacher, 2020). In Japan, the economy has been bad since the early 1990s. According to the Pew Research Center (Mordecai and Schumacher 2020), 85% of people were critical of the Japanese economy in 2008 and 2020. Japan's static view of the economy differs from Australia, which views the economy much more negatively, and the United States, where most people view the economies slightly more positively (ibid). However, all three countries have negative views of the economy. Japan differs from the United States because the opposition party was in power during the 2008 economic recession, whereas the conservative Liberal Democratic Party is in power during the Covid-19 crisis. This difference may influence a focus on the economy at the expense of the Covid-19 crisis, as may the fact that the current ruling party does not have to fix the economic crisis; it just has to provide the illusion of doing so.

Indeed, the Covid-19 Crisis can easily be blamed on foreign countries. In a speech, then Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe said Covid-19 came from China, the United States, and Europe (Abe, May 14, 2020). Abe later stressed the uniqueness of Japan's strategies, explained that citizens of many other countries would be prohibited from entering Japan, critiqued "the strict lockdowns in Europe and the United States," and said Japan's economy could not recover

without the global economy recovering (Abe, May 25, 2020). Merely blaming the United States would not fit the Japanese peoples' perspective on how well other countries are handling Covid-19. For example, 55% of Japanese people think Japan is doing a good job handing Covid-19 well, versus 15% for the United States, 24% for the World Health Organization, 34% for the European Union, and 16% for China (Summer 2020 Global Attitudes Survey in Wike, Fetterolf and Mordecai 2020). Australia gave similar scores for the U.S. handling of the Covid-19 crisis and 94% positive ratings for its own policy versus relatively low marks for the European Union, World Health Organization, and the Peoples' Republic of China. The median positive rating for the United States was 15% (ibid). The median positive rating for peoples' own countries was 74% (ibid). Therefore, Japan had an average negative rating for the U.S. handling of Covid-19 and a lower than usual positive rating for its handling of Covid-19. In many ways, politicians in Japan had something to gain by criticizing foreign countries' handling of Covid-19 since their citizens gave the Japanese government a mediocre evaluation compared to other countries' citizens. These statistics do not prove motives on the part of the Abe Administration, just a potential benefit of appealing to xenophobia. As per the Australian government, xenophobic aspects of quarantine have not correlated with public criticism of its Covid-19 policy. Instead, the Australian Covid-19 policy received high marks from its citizens. But what of the United States?

Donald Trump frequently makes highly critical comments about China, blaming it for spreading the Covid-19 pandemic in the United States. Data shows that Americans were primed to receive this type of message before Covid-19. China's unfavorable rating amongst Americans has risen from 35% in 2005 to 73% in 2020 (Silver, Devlin, and Huang, 2020). The unfavorable rating toward China is more prevalent amongst Republicans and Americans over 50 years old (Silver, Devlin, and Huang, 2020). This, however, does not mean that Americans necessarily believe that China, not Trump, is responsible for the handling of Covid-19. More Americans trust the Centers for Disease Control than the Trump administration for information about Covid-19 (Survey of U.S. Adults Conducted Aug. 31, Sept. 7, 2020, in Jurkowitz, 2020). These relatively positive evaluations of The Center for Disease Control may or may not signal a decline in right-wing populism as "the news media in general" received slightly lower scores than "local news media" and The Centers for Disease Control" (ibid). The Center for Disease Control was the only institution surveyed in America to receive more than 50% public confidence on the issue of Covid-19 (ibid). These statistics present a mixed message regarding Americans' confidence in its government's handling of the Covid-19 crisis, which simultaneously supports and contradicts right-wing populism.

Donald Trump, a quintessential example of a right-wing populist leader, received low amounts of trust; however, a slight majority of Americans trusted the experts at The Centers for Disease Control, which, in a right-wing populist narrative, would be the Other, the elite. The news media similarly received more trust than Trump, but not a majority. Therefore, the upshot is that blaming China has not convinced most Americans, but only a slight majority trust expertise. In a context where a slight majority of Americans have typically decided U.S. elections and where the Trump Administration only aims to convince about 20% of Americans, this does not suggest U.S. right-wing populism's demise. Moreover, it does not suggest that the Trump administration would be motivated not to blame China for the spread of Covid-19 in the United States.

In sum, one aspect of public opinion that may promote bordering is unfavorable views of other countries, especially regarding their handling of Covid-19. Japanese people gave a

mediocre appraisal of their domestic Covid-19 policies, coupled with generally bad views of other countries and the World Health Institution. Thus, not surprisingly, Japan has blamed other countries. The issue of a sluggish economy, which Covid-19 could ruin, has made it more likely that scapegoating foreign countries, rather than national quarantines, are preferred policies. Australian politicians seem to risk little from xenophobic or nationalist fallout from its Covid-19 policies, even if they increase international borders. While Americans may not trust Trump overall on his Covid-19 policy, most do not like China's policy. However, the latter varies with generational divides. Thus, for the time being, bordering may be an expected option for these three countries to deal with Covid-19.

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**SCAPEGOATING OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES
AS SOMETHING BEYOND SHIFTING THE BLAME**

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It may be useful to ask why is bordering in the face of Covid-19 significant? After all, it is somewhat expected. Right-wing countries tend to demonize an enemy; the governments studied all promote distrust of immigrants and undocumented immigrants. Therefore, it is hardly unexpected that they would look toward a foreign threat to cover-up Covid-19, which very few countries have managed to control. However, this sets the stage for a few problems.

The first problem is Covid-19 has continued to rise in these countries even after the international scapegoats have left. Therefore, the question becomes what to do? If these countries remain on the same policy track, governmentality must proceed in a different direction. If Chinese tourists are a visible presence in American or Japanese cities, they are an easy target for politicians. Chinese tourists do not vote in American or Japanese cities and do not necessarily visit upon the expectation of being liked. In sum, politicians are given a population to scapegoat with a low risk of retaliation, at least at the voting booths. When borders are closed, and travel restrictions are in place, there ceases to be a completely foreign threat to blame. Yet, right-wing governments look for a threat with different characteristics than the privileged part of the population, which is where one of the dangers lies. As Achille Mbembe mentions, scapegoating foreign populations under anti-terrorism members can be satisfied even if it does not find the precise perpetrator: a resemblance is enough (2016, 53). In sum, there can be a quick transition from Chinese tourists who recently arrived from an area with a high Covid-19 infection rate to Chinese Americans who may have never been to China to Japanese Americans and other Asian Americans. For the sake of analysis, another ethnic or racial group can be substituted for Chinese Americans. Suffice to say, the scapegoating of foreign people leads to the scapegoating of citizens within the country. These citizens are scapegoated based on stereotypes with no factual basis, which is standard fare for right-wing governance. However, these are the nation-states' citizens within the nation-states' territory, and the implications are a tolerated breaking up of the nation-state's citizenship privileges.

The second reason that the scapegoating of foreign countries can cause a national dissolution is that the scapegoating does not start from the most unwelcome group. Some Japanese and Americans may recent tourists from China, yet unlike undocumented immigrants, The U.S. Immigrant and Customs Agency does not hunt down and deport Chinese tourists. Indeed, in the United States and Japan, they are encouraged to come and are valued for contributing to tourist economies. Likewise, many of these countries want some international prestige. In short, this sets precedence to go beyond the simple racism embedded in the politics of The United States, Japan, Brazil, and Australia, which devalues immigrants and minorities.

Thus, there is a precedent for a conflict with people who are slightly different but with a recognized contribution to society. Scapegoated people do not pose a long-term source of conflict. They may only be around for two weeks. Thus, this spatial cleansing, the setting up of governmentality over a group of people likely to leave in a short period of time, though not before noticeably contributing to the economy, sets the stage to be less tolerant of citizens from different identity groups and political persuasions who will be around permanently.

Though more speculative, the idea of using borders to make us safe from an outside disease becomes more problematic if we cannot use a foreign border. Permanent, foreign borders are not the only type of borders. Indeed, borders need be neither permanent nor of long duration. The U.S.-Mexico border has changed significantly since the U.S.-Mexico War in 1848. This border shifted slightly in terms of territory, though significantly in terms of indigenous groups with the 1854 Gadsden Purchase. But border structures—walls, gates, etc.—shift in subtle ways with seismic forces, decay, and the passage of time (see Nail, 2016, 6). Borders may also be internal in how people process borders far away from the border, which is anti-immigrant sentiment or support of borders thousands of kilometers away from a border (Amoore and Hall, 2010; Shachar, 2019; Jones, 2012). Borders also exist between racial groups in physical ways, such as creating parkways that further divide cities into White and African-American neighborhoods (Caro, 1975) or the redlining of African American neighborhoods using red pens on maps, which have created racial poverty. In sum, to elicit international borders to deal with the anxiety and misery of Covid-19 is not merely to lash out at foreign nations. It is the potential to spread border conflicts within nation-states. These borders need not be barriers perse but can be municipal boundaries marked on maps or social ideas of an inside or outside that function in ways similar to bordering.

Coupled with the abovementioned shift from scapegoating people from foreign countries to citizens whose ancestors immigrated from these disfavored countries, to even people who are welcome, borders created by blaming other countries for Covid-19 can spread within nation-states. National borders' inability to protect against the spread of Covid-19 sets the stage for a potential spread of border-logic within the confines of national borders (Toohey, 2021). In the face of politicians' failures to find a solution to Covid-19, borders become a go-to solution. This go-to solution is the potential that is likely to be utilized in the absence of a foreign scapegoat, that is, the remainder when right-wing governance cancels out, more substantial solutions. Thus, those that seem foreign—be it ethnically, racially, or politically, become the scapegoat. However, rather than strengthening governmental power, this process potentially dissolves the nation-state.

Determining populations by national citizenship is similar to Foucault's biopolitics and biopower (Kelly, 2010) and governmentality (Dehesa, 2017, 265, paraphrasing Bedford 2009, Bang and Esmark 2009).). Foucault criticized governmentality and discourse for creating oppressive power structures that sort and control populations and create power through normalcy. However, the responses to Covid-19 do not rely on normalcy. Indeed, they succeed with a certain amount of destabilization in the context of "disorder words" that characterize Trumpism (Toohey, 2018). Thus, the violence of citizens, rather than the hypocritical negative peace (see Galtung, 1990) of nation-states, enforces the horizon of international scapegoating and its potential for the internal divisions of nation-states.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has argued that scapegoating foreign countries and citizens to solve Covid-19 has caused something akin to Foucault's governmentality but less about solidifying national unity. Scapegoating foreign countries, that is, blaming China or another country for the spread of Covid-19, seems to be an obvious go-to solution for right-wing governments. This behavior is part and parcel of the right-wing populists' us-vs-them playbook (Mudde, 2004, Mudde, 2018; Müller, 2017). However, the implications are not so obvious, at least in comparison to these governments' bellicose nationalist rhetoric. Instead of a national coming together, albeit with some unhappy losers, the scapegoating of foreign countries and international populations sets the stage for the scapegoating of minorities, which may seem obvious, but also more unexpectedly for the scapegoating of more privileged people of different political persuasions.

The first stage of this process is to set tighter borders and even ban travel from certain countries with high degrees of Covid-19 infections to criticize people who may look like citizens of a disfavored country with a high infection rate. However, unlike these ethnic minorities, these groups, usually tourists, are valued because of their economic contributions to tourist economies and usually short stays. To point this out is not to say that they should be valued, whereas immigrants should not. What is at stake here is two things: 1) once these foreign tourists leave, it is easy to blame people from the same ethnicity, hence rising anti-Asian-American xenophobia in the face of Covid-19, and 2) it is easy to blame people who are different but not causing noticeable problems. The upshot of the second stake is that it is easy to say that people coming from politically progressive cities may bring Covid-19 to rural areas. While this may be medically so, the fact of being an urban resident has not been the only reason Covid-19 spread. In many areas, Covid-19 has more recently spread exponentially in rural areas where people may not have taken necessary preventive measures (partially due to thinking there was some sort of border that made them safer than in urban areas). In a possible Post-Covid future, the stakes for this are that ethnic divisions strengthen hierarchies based on identity (Bretell 2007).

Peoples' worst fears of authoritarianism may or may not happen in right-wing democracies. However, a comparison with theories of ethnonationalism elsewhere suggests that current authoritarian-style ethnonationalism may have a long life, regardless of how effectively right-wing politicians are. Ethnonationalism can persist, even with the active support of oppressed ethnic groups (Belge and Karakoç, 2015; Brinkerhoff, 2019; Bourdais Park, 2017; Sohby, 2015). Nation-states, democratic or otherwise, are based on shared ethnicity, even when not framed race, particular ethnic group, or religion. This generalized national ethnicity can apply to diverse nation-states, e.g., "being American" is not just for white Christians. But the absence of racist calls to national identity does not mean a less racist or ethnocentric national identity (Miles 1987). What is happening is, even though Covid-19 can infect anyone, certain groups now have more right to be in specific spaces based on their national affiliation, ethnicity, or place of residency. Rather than phrasing these rights in ethnonationalism or racist terms, they are described as ways to protect people from Covid-19, without, or in addition to, more effective medical practices. Nonetheless, like ethnonationalism and racism, people in these spaces generally either look the same or have the same customs. Political rhetoric in right-wing democracies frequently uses these appearances to avoid providing effective counter-measures to Covid-19.

Like most scapegoating, this scapegoating exists within the context of a near-inevitable political failure. These countries are suffering both a pandemic and resultant economic decline rather than returning to a bright era promised by right-wing governments. Most countries, regardless of their political configuration, do not know what to do. However, right-wing

governments need a show of strength and control, even in its absence. Scapegoating and heightening the power of borders provides the potential to give this show. Indeed, Trump's border wall does not necessarily stop undocumented immigration along the U.S.-Mexico border, even if it were possible to construct along the entire U.S.-Mexico border (The Washington Post Editorial Board, 2019). In short, scapegoating provides a show. However, no matter how racist right-wing governments have been, their rhetoric goes beyond ethnic and racial minorities to elites (Mudde, 2004, Mudde, 2018; Müller, 2017). The Other in right-wing governments include those they disagree with, hence progressives, liberals, etc. Therefore, beyond mere borders, ethnic groups, or countries they hate, there is room for others to be scapegoated based on whether they live in cities or have different political beliefs. Since borders have failed—and right-wing populists do not necessarily conduct racism by complete obliteration of disfavored racial groups—the horizon can move on to other enemies and other borders within countries. This phenomenon has happened in all four countries studied (Toohey, 2021).

This paper contributes to Foucault's theories by showing that the process of using a definition of a population to shore up power does not necessarily lead to an unchanging group controlled through stable, albeit unpleasant ways. Indeed, this paper brings in the idea of population, which can be misinterpreted as stable and unchanging, to a more consistent frame of Foucault's genealogy, which accounts for change. Moreover, by incorporating Berardi's (2019) idea of current political potentials limiting the horizons of the future, this paper renders Foucault's ideas easier to use in interpreting current events. The expected scapegoating of foreign populations during Covid-19 has unusual characteristics: the simultaneous use of biopolitics, governmentality, and discipline potentially dissolves national territory and national populations.

This potential dissolution has precedent but is unusual because there is a shift to make people want it. Indeed, the creation of a nation—what Benedict Anderson (2006) termed an imagined community—does not imply national unity in the face of a threat to national prosperity and survival. People in a right-wing country do not relate to each other as a population after harsh national and international borders have been set to curb the spread of Covid-19. This border is failing, and, sans any vaccine, cure, or sufficient economic/work change, another border will likely be sought. As Grandin (2019) has said, there are no more frontiers to cross, and the only place for the U.S. to look is inward. This inward gaze may be more longstanding in other right-wing countries as international travel and migration come to a standstill. All that pent-up anti-immigrant energy is potentially turned inwards in the absence of credible alternatives and solutions to right-wing governance and its failure to deal with Covid-19. Yet, this is not a rational direction that people will necessarily seek on their own. Instead, some power intervention will enforce it, and governmentality and discourse, which focus on order, may not be sufficient. Neither may the ramblings of right-wing politicians, which often fail to explain. Many of these ramblings bear a similarity to proclamations of ethnonationalism by dominant groups in authoritarian countries that lack legal, ethical, or political consistency and vary in duration. A focus on governmentality spotlights how the solution to this lies not only in governments and institutions but also in how peoples' ability to create a less authoritarian future is being limited by right-wing democracy's use of ethnonationalism as a quick-fix to the Covid-19 crisis.

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