

## CHAPTER 10

# Nationalism, Communication, Ideology

The nation-state is the bounded, territorial, legislative, military aspect of capitalist society. But the nation does not just have a political dimension, but also a cultural, ideological, and communicative one. Nationalism is a peculiar modern ideology that justifies the building and maintenance of nation-states. It creates a political and cultural outside. Those humans belonging to this outside are excluded from membership status of the nation. The existence of this outside justifies the inside. Nationalism plays a necessary role in the ideological reproduction of capitalism and class. This chapter asks: What is nationalism? How is nationalism communicated? It studies the relationship of nationalism, communication, and ideology. First, the chapter discusses what nationalism is (section 10.1). Second, the relationship of nationalism and racism is outlined (10.2). Third, right-wing authoritarianism, authoritarian capitalism, and fascism are analysed (10.3). Fourth, the focus is on the communication of nationalist ideology (10.4).

The approach to nationalism taken in this book is grounded in the works of Karl Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, the Frankfurt School, Eric Hobsbawm, and C.L.R. James. These are critical, Marxist approaches to the study of nationalism that stress the ideological character of nationalism. My book *Nationalism on the Internet: Critical Theory and Ideology in the Age of Social Media and Fake News*<sup>1</sup> offers a broad introduction to Marxist and critical theory approaches to the study of nationalism, including an engagement with authors such as Theodor W. Adorno, Kevin Anderson, Benedict Anderson, Étienne Balibar, Otto Bauer, Erica Ben-ner, Michael Billig, Partha Chatterjee, Vivek Chibber, Horace B. Davis, Mike Davis, Karl Deutsch, Michael Forman, Erich Fromm, Ernest Gellner, Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall, Eric J. Hobsbawm, C. L. R. James, Karl Kautsky, Vladimir I. Lenin, Michael Löwy, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Marx, Tom Nairn, Franz Neumann, Jyoti Puri, Karl Renner, David Renton, David Roediger, Edward W. Said, Anthony D. Smith, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Josef Strasser, Pierre-André Taguieff, Klaus

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<sup>1</sup> Christian Fuchs. 2020. *Nationalism on the Internet: Critical Theory and Ideology in the Age of Social Media and Fake News*. New York: Routledge.

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### How to cite this book:

Fuchs, C. 2020. *Communication and Capitalism: A Critical Theory*. London: University of Westminster Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16997/book45>. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0

Theweleit, Raymond Williams, and Ruth Wodak. The book *Nationalism on the Internet*, my book *Digital Demagogue: Authoritarian Capitalism in The Age of Trump and Twitter*,<sup>2</sup> the e-book *Nationalism 2.0. The Making of Brexit on Social Media*,<sup>3</sup> and some of my essays<sup>4</sup> present case studies of how nationalism and other authoritarian ideologies are communicated over social media. The chapter at hand presents the main aspects of the theoretical approach that I take for the analysis of nationalism and the communication of nationalism.

## 10.1. Nationalism

### *What is Nationalism?*

Nationalism is a particular ideology that tries to distract attention from capitalism, the class conflict, and the societal causes of social problems. Ideology is not purely based on economy and politics. A political-economic crisis does not necessarily lead to false, ideological, or critical consciousness as mass phenomena. Other factors such as struggles over ideology, class struggles, symbolic power, and the personal, everyday, and psychological experiences and desires of individuals play a role and interact with economic and political factors.<sup>5</sup>

Nationalism is not a natural feature of humanity and society. In English, the term ‘nationalism’ emerged in the 18th century and became commonly used during the 19th century.<sup>6</sup> The emergence of nationalism as a

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<sup>2</sup> Christian Fuchs. 2018. *Digital Demagogue: Authoritarian Capitalism in the Age of Trump and Twitter*. London: Pluto Press.

<sup>3</sup> Christian Fuchs. 2018. *Nationalism 2.0. The Making of Brexit on Social Media*. London: Pluto Press.

<sup>4</sup> Christian Fuchs. 2016. Racism, Nationalism and Right-Wing Extremism Online: The Austrian Presidential Election 2016 on Facebook. *Momentum Quarterly – Zeitschrift für sozialen Fortschritt* (Journal for Societal Progress) 5 (3): 172–196.

<sup>5</sup> Christian Fuchs. 2016. Red Scare 2.0: User-Generated Ideology in the Age of Jeremy Corbyn and Social Media. *Journal of Language and Politics* 15 (4): 369–398. Christian Fuchs. 2017. Fascism 2.0: Twitter Users’ Social Media Memories of Hitler on his 127<sup>th</sup> Birthday. *Fascism: Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies* 6 (2): 228–263. Christian Fuchs. 2018. Racism, Nationalism and Right-Wing Extremism Online: The Austrian Presidential Election 2016 on Facebook. In *Critical Theory and Authoritarian Populism*, ed. Jeremiah Morelock, 157–206. London: University of Westminster Press. Christian Fuchs. 2018. ‘Dear Mr. Neo-Nazi, Can You Please Give Me Your Informed Consent So That I Can Quote Your Fascist Tweet?’ Questions of Social Media Research Ethics in Online Ideology Critique. In *The Routledge Companion to Media and Activism*, ed. Graham Meikle, 385–394. Abingdon: Routledge.

<sup>6</sup> Raymond Williams. 1983. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York: Oxford University Press. Revised edition. pp. 213–214.

**Table 10.1:** The number of nation-states and empires with more than one million inhabitants.<sup>7</sup>

Year	Number
1700	24
1800	26
1900	87
1939	56
1989	130

phenomenon in society and as a common linguistic term coincided with the creation of the nation-state in modern society. In modern society, the nation takes on the form of the nation-state, the national economy, and cultural institutions that are organised within the nation-state. National spaces, such as the national economy, the nation-state, and national culture, have a boundary that defines the inside and the outside of the nation. This means that all nations define their membership. They include citizens and exclude others.

Table 10.1 provides an overview, for certain years, of the number of nation-states in which more than one million individuals lived. The building of new nations took off in the 19th century, which shows that the nation-state is a modern invention. The nation-state stands in the context of capitalism, imperialism, modernity, and imperialist warfare. Eric Hobsbawm speaks of the period between 1789 and 1848 as the Age of Revolution.<sup>8</sup> The French Revolution was the decisive political event during that time. Hobsbawm argues that politics at that time did not embrace nationalism and the idea of building nation-states based on the principles of ‘ethnicity, common language, religion, territory, and common historical memories’.<sup>9</sup> In the Age of Revolution, nations were understood as national economies. Hobsbawm argues that the modern nation-state emerged together with imperialism during the Age of Empire that started around 1875.

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<sup>7</sup> Data sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_population\\_in\\_1700](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population_in_1700), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_population\\_in\\_1800](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population_in_1800), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_population\\_in\\_1900](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population_in_1900), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_population\\_in\\_1939](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population_in_1939), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_population\\_in\\_1989](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population_in_1989) (accessed on 5 February 2019).

<sup>8</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm. 1992. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Second edition. Chapter 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Nationalism foregrounds that there are differences of culture, language, or 'race' in society. 'The basis of "nationalism" of all kinds was the same: the readiness of people to identify themselves emotionally with "their" "nation" and to be politically mobilized as Czechs, Germans, Italians or whatever, a readiness which could be politically exploited.'<sup>10</sup> Hobsbawm says that in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the rising influence of theories of social Darwinism and race advanced racism and anti-Semitism.

Theories of nationalism differ according to whether they see nationalism and the nation as necessary features of society and nature or as historical features of certain forms of society that are class societies and dominative societies. The first type of theories of nationalism are fetishist theories. The second type of theories are critical theories of nationalism. For fetishist theories, the nation and nationalism are natural aspects of society. For critical theories, the nation and nationalism are constructed, fabricated, illusionary, ideological, or invented. In nationalist ideology, a national group is fetishised. It is categorically distinguished from outsiders, enemies, immigrants, refugees, etc. who are seen as not belonging to the nation. Nationalism presents such outsiders of the nation negatively (for example as aliens, criminals, intruders, parasites, etc.) in order to deflect attention from class conflicts and inequalities.

'Nation' is not a simple word. Its meaning is not always clear. On the one hand, the nation is often understood as the territorial nation-state. But on the other hand, the notion of the nation also often refers to national identity. Nationalism is an ideology that operates on the level of national identity and defines who should be considered as belonging to the nation and who should be excluded. National identity is always defined and defended against outsiders. Essentialist approaches imply that war is unavoidable because the friend/enemy logic of the nation in the last instance leads to warfare. Such essentialist theories see humans as inherently negative, warmongering beings. Essentialising nationalism means a fetishism of militarism, destruction, and warfare. The idea of the defence of the nation has created arms races that threaten life on Earth with nuclear extinction.

Repression is a means for the reproduction of class societies. Slave-holding societies are characterised by slave-masters' private ownership of slaves, the means of production and the products the slaves create. Slave-holding societies' class structure is defended with physical violence and the right of the slave-master to kill the slave. Physical violence also exists in various forms in capitalism. But structural and ideological repression play more important roles in capitalism. Ideological repression fetishises and naturalises class structures. It

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<sup>10</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm. 1989. *The Age of Empire 1875–1914*. New York: Vintage Books. p. 143.

tries to persuade workers and others that their exploitation and domination is acceptable, natural, necessary, etc. Nationalism often tries to construct feelings of togetherness and a common national cause between the capitalist class and subordinated classes. Nationalism thereby diverts attention from class structures. Modern class societies *require* nationalist ideology to justify exploitation and domination.

The enemies that nationalism constructs are defined as inner enemies and/or outer enemies of the nation. Examples of inner enemies are immigrants, minorities, refugees, or socialists. Other nations and international groups are typically defined as outer enemies of the nation. As a consequence, nationalism legitimates not just the nation-state's class structure, but also the nation's wars and imperialism. Militarism, law and order politics, war and imperialism are often justified by the argument that they defend 'national security' or the 'national interest'. Another line of justification is that a certain nation is superior to other groups that are presented as being 'backwards', 'barbarian', 'primitive', 'uncivilised', 'underdeveloped', etc. Nationalism has an immanent potential to advance militarism and warfare.

### *Karl Marx on Nationalism*

Marx not only spoke of commodity fetishism in the economy, but was also a critic of political fetishism. Nationalism is one of the political and ideological fetishisms of modern society. Marx analysed how ideology diverts attention from class structures. In 1870, he provided an analysis of how nationalism distracts the working class from struggling against the capitalist class by spreading hatred against migrant workers and the colonies. He gave in this context particular attention to Ireland. His analysis of nationalism and xenophobia still holds true in contemporary capitalism:

Ireland is the BULWARK of the *English landed aristocracy*. The exploitation of this country is not simply one of the main sources of their material wealth; it is their greatest *moral* power. [...] And most important of all! All industrial and commercial centres in England now have a working class *divided* into two *hostile* camps, English PROLETARIANS and Irish PROLETARIANS. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who forces down the STANDARD OF LIFE. In relation to the Irish worker, he feels himself to be a member of the *ruling nation* and, therefore, makes himself a tool of his aristocrats and capitalists *against Ireland*, thus strengthening their domination *over himself*. He harbours religious, social and national prejudices against him. [...] This antagonism is kept artificially alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short by all the means at the

disposal of the ruling class. *This antagonism is the secret of the English working class's impotence*, despite its organisation. It is the secret of the maintenance of power by the capitalist class. And the latter is fully aware of this.<sup>11</sup>

Marx in this passage analyses many features of nationalism that can also be found today: the scapegoating of foreign workers for capitalism's social problems; the belief in national superiority and natural rights of nations; the ideological claim that not capital, but foreign workers are the cause of low wages; the distraction of attention from capital's interest in exploiting workers and lowering wages in order to increase profits; the claim that foreigners are socially, culturally, or biologically inferior; the role of the media in spreading nationalism; the working class' acceptance of the capitalist class' ideologies; and the deflection of attention and hatred from class struggles towards foreigners.

In *Capital Volume I*, Marx argues that emancipation requires solidarity between the exploited workers in different contexts, including issues of colour and geography. 'Labour in a white skin cannot emancipate itself where it is branded in a black skin.'<sup>12</sup> He points out that the formal abolishment of slavery in the USA helped advance more radical demands of the US working class movement, specifically the demand for the eight-hour working day. The point is that class solidarity that emancipates one group in one context is an impetus for class struggles and radical demands in other contexts. Different struggles can enrich each other through solidary action. This requires unity in diversity of social struggles.

### *Rosa Luxemburg on Nationalism*

Rosa Luxemburg analyses nationalism as a 'misty veil' that 'conceals in every case a definite historical content'.<sup>13</sup> She saw nationalism as 'a metaphysical cliché'.<sup>14</sup> Luxemburg opposed the idea that nations have a right to self-determination. She says that such an argument 'ignores completely the fundamental theory of

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<sup>11</sup> Marx, Karl. 1870. Letter of Marx to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt, 9 April 1870. In *Marx Engels Collected Works Volume 43*, 471–476. London: Lawrence & Wishart. pp. 473, 474, 475.

<sup>12</sup> Karl Marx. 1867/1976. *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy. Volume One*. London: Penguin. p. 414.

<sup>13</sup> Rosa Luxemburg. 1976. *The National Question: Selected Writings*. New York: Monthly Review Press. p. 135.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

modern socialism – the theory of social class.<sup>15</sup> Nationalists see the nation as ‘a homogeneous social and political entity’.<sup>16</sup>

Luxemburg argues that workers do not need a nation as fatherland: ‘The workers’ fatherland, to the defense of which all else must be subordinated, is the socialist International.’<sup>17</sup> ‘I feel at home in the entire world, wherever there are clouds and birds and human tears.’<sup>18</sup>

Luxemburg argues that the nation-state and nationalism are tools of imperialism and exploitation. Nation-states ‘are today the very same tools and forms of class rule of the bourgeoisie as the earlier, non-national states, and like them they are bent on conquest.’<sup>19</sup> The nation constitutes ‘a tool of domination (or control) and conquest.’<sup>20</sup> She points out the ideological character of nationalism. Nationalism helps the bourgeoisie to divert the attention of subordinated classes from their exploitation and domination. It constructs a fictive unitary interest of capital and labour by opposing them to enemies of the nation. The First World War made the dangers of nationalism evident. Nationalism fosters hatred between the members of nation-states and brings about terrible wars. Luxemburg wrote that the First World War was the ‘world’s explosion of nationalism.’<sup>21</sup> In capitalism, nationalism, militarism, and warfare are closely connected.<sup>22</sup>

### *Fictive Ethnicity*

By constructing the nation as a fictive community and mythic collective, nationalism diverts attention from class structures. ‘[R]acism and Anti-Semitism are substitutes for the class struggle.’<sup>23</sup> ‘[B]lood, community, folk, are devices for hiding the real constellation of power.’<sup>24</sup> Nationalism is a reactionary form of

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 135

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>17</sup> Rosa Luxemburg. 1970. *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*. New York: Pathfinder. p. 477.

<sup>18</sup> Rosa Luxemburg. 2013. *The Letters of Rosa Luxemburg*, ed. Georg Adler, Peter Hudis and Annelies Laschitza. London: Verso. p. 376.

<sup>19</sup> Luxemburg, *The National Question*, p. 172.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>21</sup> Translation from German [„Weltexplosion des Nationalismus“]: Rosa Luxemburg. 1918. Fragment über Krieg, nationale Frage und Revolution. In *Rosa Luxemburg Gesammelte Werke, Band 4*, 366–373. Berlin: Dietz. p. 370.

<sup>22</sup> Rosa Luxemburg. 1913/2003. *The Accumulation of Capital*. London: Routledge. Chapter 32.

<sup>23</sup> Franz Neumann. 1944/2009. *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism, 1933–1944*. Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee. p. 125.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 464.

collectivism that claims that it can overcome the problems posed and caused by capitalism and capitalist globalisation.

Étienne Balibar has in the context of the analysis of nationalism introduced the notion of *fictive ethnicity*.<sup>25</sup> Fictive collectives are constructed, in which humans are 'represented in the past or in the future *as if* they formed a natural community'.<sup>26</sup> Balibar distinguishes two types of fictive ethnicity.<sup>27</sup> In the first one, school, education, and other forms of socialisation construct a national linguistic community. In the second version, a fictive community based on blood ties is constructed, a racial community. This means that there are culturalist and racist-biologicistic versions of nationalism.

Nationalism's origins go back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It originated as an anti-Enlightenment movement. Nationalism is on the one hand a political movement and on the other hand an ideology. The biologicistic version of nationalism is inherently racist because it assumes the existence of different races that stem from blood-ties. Cultural nationalism is also essentialist because it assumes that nations necessarily exist and have to come into existence based on shared culture.

Nationalism appeals to the authoritarian personality. Nationalists feel empowered to give meaning to their lives by defining themselves against others. Nationalists expect psychological, economic, political, or ideological advantages from nationalist ideology. The reasons why individuals follow certain ideologies often have to do with alienation and anxieties. Following an ideology such as nationalism allows the channelling of aggression, discontent, and frustration. Nationalists derive pleasure from nationalist ideology. Ideology creates a kind of psychological 'wage', a psychological surplus used to compensate for the lack of satisfaction, desire, and pleasure. Ideologies such as nationalism are not just a wage because they can create surplus desire, they can also be sources of higher monetary income (economic wage), more political influence (political wage), or surplus reputation (cultural wage).

In imperialist nationalism, immigrants, minorities, or other countries are defined as the primary enemy. In anti-colonial nationalism, the imperial power is seen as the enemy. Imperialist nationalism includes the ideology of national superiority of one country over another country, region or group. But the danger of all nationalism is that it ideologically obscures class structures and can thereby easily justify class society. The danger of shifting from the dominance of one nationalism to another in one country is that one merely from the rule of one class to the rule of another one without questioning class society as such.

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<sup>25</sup> Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein. 1991. *Race, Nation, Class*. London: Verso. pp. 49, 96–100.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98–105.

C.L.R. James was a Marxist humanist. He stood for socialist humanism and internationalism that fosters dignity, equality, and justice. Marxism stands for internationalism: ‘Mankind must leave behind the outmoded bourgeois class and all the obstacles which the national state now places in the way of an international socialist order. THAT IS MARXISM. It says: no longer the national political state but an international social order’<sup>28</sup>

### *Key Aspects of Nationalism*

There are some key features of nationalism:

- *Political movement and ideology, nation-state, and national consciousness:* Nationalism is both a political movement and an ideology. It aims at building and defending a nation-state that is a territory for national citizens. Nationalism has a spatial dimension (the nation-state) and an ideological dimension (national consciousness, national belonging). The spatial dimension is the claim to a certain environment organised as living space. Nations do not exist outside of nationalism and are always related to (actual or desired) nation-states.
- *Ideology:* As ideology, nationalism constructs a difference between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’. The ingroup is defined as a race or a cultural community, a common nation-state or a common national economy. Nationalism always claims control over a certain space to organise a national society, including a national economy, the nation-state, and a national culture. Nationalism needs to construct national and national identity as ideologies. Nationalism claims a certain homogeneity of society and thereby overlooks society’s complexity.
- *The dialectic of nationalism and xenophobia/racism:* There is an inherent connection between nationalism on the one side and xenophobia/racism on the other side.
- *Political fetishism:* Nationalism fetishises the nation and thereby distracts from class structures. Nationalism often scapegoats certain groups and steers hatred against outsiders.
- *Division:* Nationalism divides dominated classes so that they hate each other and tend to overlook their common opponent.
- *Distraction:* By constructing a national unity of opposing classes and steering hatred against outsiders, nationalism distracts attention from class structures.
- *Hegemony:* If oppressed and exploited groups or individuals follow nationalism, then they tend to advance the domination or exploitation of others and also often accept and agree to their own domination or exploitation.

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<sup>28</sup> Cyril Lionel Robert James. 2013. *Modern Politics*. Oakland, CA: PM Press. p. 92.

Nationalism is imposed from the top by powerful groups, but in order to work also needs hegemony from below, i.e. consent by the exploited classes and dominated groups. The imposition of nationalism from above is not always successful. It can only work if nationalism from above is combined with hegemony from below.

- *The media*: Uncritical media often support and advance nationalism.
- *The reproduction of capitalism*: Nationalism is a strategy for the legitimation and reproduction of the ruling class' interests.
- *Forms of nationalism*: Nationalism is directed against inner or outer enemies. Nationalism is inclusive when it aims at justifying exploitation. Nationalism is exclusive when it justifies extermination or exclusion. There is biological nationalism and cultural nationalism.
- *Militarism*: Nationalism often calls forth militancy and militarism. Militarism is directed against groups within society (internal militarism) or takes on the form of imperialist wars (external militarism).
- *Crisis*: A crisis means that the future of society is uncertain. In crises of society, nationalism and right-wing authoritarianism are likely to emerge or grow in the case that the political Left is weak.

Nationalism and racism are related concepts. The next section discusses their relationship.

## 10.2. Nationalism and Racism

One of the most frequently employed nationalist and racist claims is that immigrants destroy 'our' jobs and cause the deterioration of wages. This claim is a good example of how nationalism is connected to capitalism. Nationalism deflects from the need for class struggles by focusing attention on immigrants and other groups who are said to threaten the nation.

In certain forms of ideology, immigrants from the South and the East and Muslims are scapegoated. In biological racism and nationalism, biological differences are proclaimed. In cultural nationalism and racism, it is claimed that foreigners have a culture that is alien to national culture. It is then often concluded that because of biological or cultural differences, cultures should remain separate or that immigrants and refugees should be kept out or put out.

Étienne Balibar points out that nationalism and racism stand in a dialectical relationship.<sup>29</sup> 'Racism is constantly emerging out of nationalism [...] and nationalism emerges out of racism.'<sup>30</sup> Racism is nationalist in that it calls for the preservation of a nation's proclaimed biological or cultural purity.<sup>31</sup> Racism

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<sup>29</sup> Balibar and Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class*. p. 50.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

‘constantly induces an excess of “purism” as far as the nation is concerned: for the nation to be itself, it has to be racially or culturally pure.’<sup>32</sup>

Balibar identifies various forms of racism: internal racism (directed to groups within a nation), external racism (directed towards groups that stand outside a nation), auto-referential racism, hetero-referential racism, institutional racism, sociological racism, exclusive racism, and inclusive racism.<sup>33</sup> The goal of the ‘racism of *extermination* or elimination (an “exclusive” racism)’ is to ‘purify the social body of the stain or danger the inferior races may represent’. The aim of the ‘racism of *oppression* or exploitation (an “inclusive” racism)’ is ‘to hierarchise and partition society’.<sup>34</sup> Colonialism is a form of exploitative racism. Nazi-fascism is a form of exterminatory racism.

Inclusive racism plays in capitalism the role of suppressing wages. Exclusive racism steers desires to exclude or exterminate objects of hatred, which allows discontented groups and individuals to direct their aggression against minorities, which distracts from the causes of exploitation and domination. Both nationalism and racism are forms of political fetishism. Exploitation that is motivated and justified by racism operates close to the economy. Racist and nationalist ideology relates culture and the economy. Racism is a capitalist strategy that wants to ‘minimize the costs of production’ and ‘the costs of political disruption (hence minimise – not eliminate, because one cannot eliminate – the protests of the labour force)’.<sup>35</sup>

### *New Racism*

The distinction between biological and cultural forms of racism is sometimes signified by the use of the terms ‘racism’ and ‘xenophobia’. In these terms racism is defined as a purely biologicistic ideology. In contrast, Étienne Balibar uses the term ‘new racism’ for the cultural form in order to stress that there are continuities as well as differences between the culturalist and the biologicistic forms:

The new racism is a racism of the era of ‘decolonization’ [...] [It] fits into the framework of ‘racism without races’ [...] It is a racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences, a racism which, at first sight, does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others but ‘only’ the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions; in short, it is what P-A. Taguieff has rightly called a *differentialist racism*.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pp. 59–60.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 38–39.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

Balibar bases his understanding on Pierre-André Taguieff. Taguieff argues that racism fetishises difference ‘either by scientific biologization or by ethnicization or “culturalist” fixing.’<sup>37</sup> He differentiates between racism 1 and racism 2. Racism 1 proclaims the superiority of one ‘race’ over another because of biological differences. Racism 2 argues that there is a cultural incongruity of groups or nations and that differences should be preserved. ‘Naturalization is therefore either *biologizing* or *culturalist*’.<sup>38</sup> Both forms of racism often have similar conclusions, namely that borders should be shut, that migration should be discouraged and that the mixture of cultures is undesirable.

Auschwitz was a negative factory, where Jews were killed. ‘Auschwitz was a factory to “destroy value”’.<sup>39</sup> Anti-Semitism emerges in capitalism from the structure of commodity fetishism. Anti-Semitism is ‘a particularly pernicious fetish form.’<sup>40</sup> Fascist and Nazi ideology often defines finance capital as Jewish and distinguishes between productive capital (industry) and unproductive capital (finance, circulation). Anti-Semitism ideologically interprets this dualism by claiming that productive capital is national capital and unproductive capital is Jewish. Such an ideology sees capital and industry as productive and circulation and finance as ‘parasitic.’ The antagonism between capital and labour and the unproductivity of capital are denied by claiming that there are productive and unproductive forms of capital and biologising this proclaimed difference. Anti-Semitism is a short-circuited pseudo-critique of capitalism. It neglects capitalism’s totality and its class structure.

Authoritarianism and fascism are related to nationalism. The next section discusses these political phenomena.

### 10.3. Right-Wing Authoritarianism, Authoritarian Capitalism, Fascism

The Frankfurt School introduced the notion of authoritarianism to critical theory.<sup>41</sup> Authoritarians live and think hierarchically and have a sadomasochistic personality: They enjoy exerting power and domination over weaker groups

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<sup>37</sup> Pierre-André Taguieff. 2001. *The Force of Prejudice: On Racism and Its Doubles*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. p. 200.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>39</sup> Moishe Postone. 2003. The Holocaust and the Trajectory of the Twentieth Century. In *Catastrophe and Meaning. The Holocaust and the Twentieth Century*, ed. Moishe Postone and Eric Santner, 81–114. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press. p. 95

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>41</sup> Erich Fromm. 1936. Sozialpsychologischer Teil. In *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, 77–135. Lüneburg: zu Klampen. Erich Fromm. 1941/2001. *The Fear of Freedom*. Abingdon: Routledge. Theodor W. Adorno, Else

and individuals and subjugate themselves to leaders who are more powerful than themselves.

### *A Model of Right-Wing Authoritarianism*

Figure 10.1 presents a model of right-wing authoritarianism. It consists of four aspects:

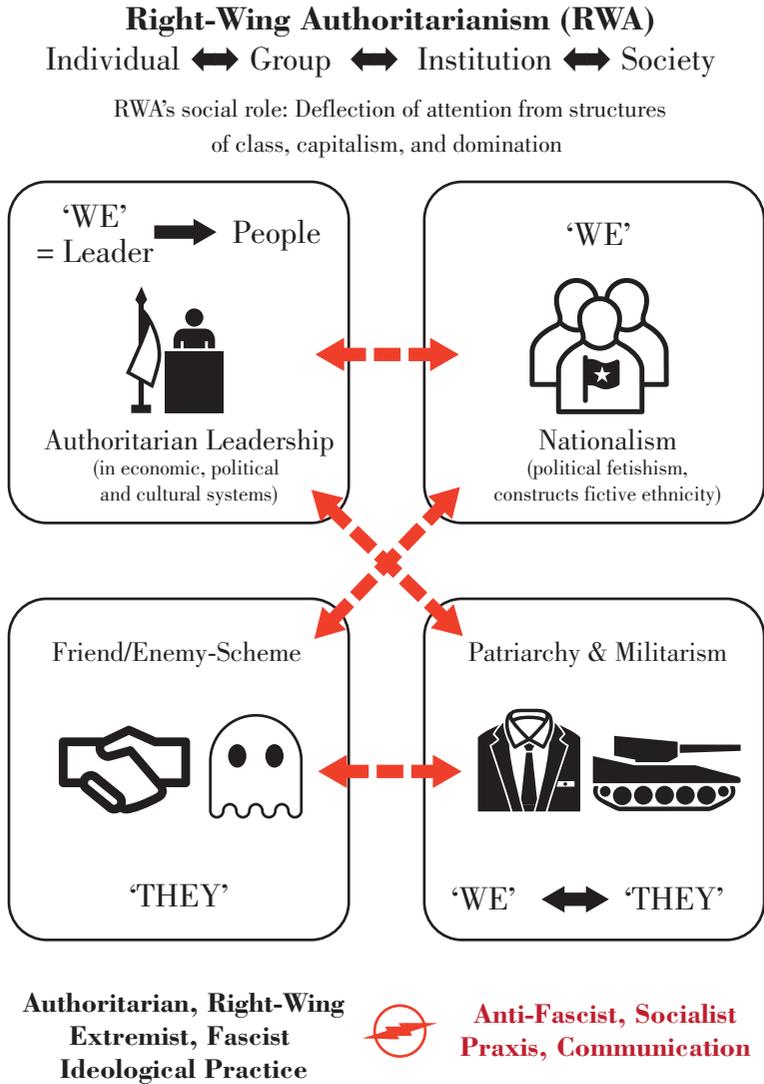
1. Authoritarian leadership: Right-wing authoritarianism propagates and uses top-down leadership by authoritarian figures;
2. Nationalism: Right-wing authoritarianism propagates the existence and superiority of a nation. It constructs a national 'Us' which deflects attention from class structures.
3. The friend/enemy-scheme: Right-wing authoritarianism defines the nation in opposition to outsiders whom it presents as enemies and danger. The friend/enemy-scheme is strictly dualistic and defines one side of the constructed divide ('Us', 'We') as friend and the other side ('Them') as enemy. The analysis of authoritarianism by Adorno et al. found out that 'ethnocentric hostility toward outgroups is highly correlated with ethnocentric idealization of ingroups.'<sup>42</sup>
4. Patriarchy and militarism: Right-wing authoritarianism is conservative. It propagates conservative gender roles and idealises soldiers and the army. The patriarchal dualism between strength and weakness is generalised as a principle of society. The soldier as a symbol of strength is defined as the ideal-type citizen. Society is presented as a realm full of dangers and as being under constant threat. As a consequence, it is proclaimed that the nation must be ready to defend itself with violence and warfare. In this ideology, there is often a fetishisation of nature and the body.

The four dimensions of right-wing authoritarianism interact. Right-wing authoritarianism uses nationalism and the friend/enemy-scheme in order to distract attention from class structures and the causes of inequalities. Nationalism is the construction of a fictive ethnic 'we'-identity. It defines the inner identity of the nation. Authoritarian leadership is the organisational principle of the nation. Top-down leadership is fetishised. In a right-wing authoritarian society, authoritarian leadership is often not only the organisational principle of the political system, but also of the economic system, cultural organisations and everyday life. The friend/enemy-scheme creates scapegoats and thereby relates the nation to an outside enemy. An 'Us'/'Them'-difference is constructed.

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Frenkel-Brunswick, Daniel J. Levinson and R. Nevitt Sanford. 1950. *The Authoritarian Personality*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

<sup>42</sup> Adorno et al., *The Authoritarian Personality*, p. 113.



**Figure 10.1:** Model of right-wing authoritarianism.

Militant patriarchy militarises this difference by identifying violent means such as law and order policies, warfare, terror, extermination, or imperialism as ways for of dealing with the identified enemies. The closer these means are to terror and extermination, the more right-wing authoritarianism turns into fascism.

Right-wing authoritarianism is a principle for the organisation of human practices. It is an ideological practice that can take place at various levels of society: the individual, the group, organisation, institutions, and society as a

whole. The existence of right-wing authoritarianism on one of these levels is based on its existence on all underlying levels. When we talk about whether or not something is right-wing authoritarian, right-wing extremist, or fascist, we must always be clear about what level of society we are talking about. One must be clear whether one is referring, for example, to a fascist individual, a fascist political movement/party/group, a fascist institution, or a fascist society. So, for example, fascist individuals can exist in a democratic society.

The three fundamental levels of the organisation of right-wing ideology are the micro-level (individuals), the meso-level (groups/organisations/institutions), and the macro-level (the totality of society). Right-wing authoritarianism takes place at these levels. We can therefore distinguish between right-wing authoritarian individuals, right-wing authoritarian groups/organisations/institutions, and a right-wing authoritarian society. Right-wing extremism and fascism intensify right-wing authoritarianism so that new qualities emerge. Right-wing extremists justify violence against their enemies. Fascists favour practising terror and extermination as political methods. Fascism relies 'upon terror, i.e., the use of non-calculable violence as a permanent threat against the individual'.<sup>43</sup> Right-wing authoritarians do not necessarily favour the use of terror and building a violent police state, but right-wing authoritarianism has the negative potential to turn into fascism. A fascist society cannot exist without fascist individuals, fascist groups, and fascist institutions. For Franz L. Neumann, fascist society is the Behemoth, a monster that abolishes the rule of law and institutionalises violence that is used against identified enemies.<sup>44</sup>

### *Authoritarian Capitalism*

Authoritarian capitalism is a particular form of capitalism in which the state is used in a repressive manner to advance the interests of the capitalist class, which includes law and order politics, militarism, the destruction and repression of any opposition and critique, etc. The boundary between the state and capital is blurred. The state intervenes in the economy in the interest of capital. Fascism is always capitalist, it is a specific type of authoritarian capitalism. All fascisms are a form of authoritarian capitalism, but not all authoritarian capitalisms are fascist, although they have fascist potentials. Authoritarian capitalism limits political freedom, fascism destroys political freedom.

Authoritarian capitalism uses its authoritarian leadership structures and state power to shape the economy and society and enforce the interests of the capitalist class. Authoritarian capitalism is a society in which the aspects of right wing-authoritarianism (authoritarian leadership, nationalism, the friend/

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<sup>43</sup> Franz Neumann. 1957. *The Democratic and the Authoritarian State*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press. p. 245.

<sup>44</sup> Neumann, *Behemoth*.

enemy-scheme, militant patriarchy) are turned into principles for the organisation of society.

### *Right-Wing Extremism and Fascism*

The term 'a right-wing extremist society' is rather uncommon. One rather speaks of right-wing extremism at the level of political groups. Right-wing extremism is certainly an ideology and a type of political movement, but it is not a specific form of society. Right-wing extremism and fascism can both exist at the level of individuals, groups, institutions, and society. But only fascism can also be organised as a type of society. Right-wing extremists have a radical rhetoric and propagate repression as a method for dealing with political opponents. But their radicalness is mostly limited to communication, ideology, political style, and repression in symbolic forms. Fascists use physical violence and terrorism in order to harm their enemies. Fascism is a radicalisation of right-wing extremism, but the boundary between the two is blurred.

August Thalheimer was one of the leaders of the Communist Party of Germany (Opposition) (KPO), which was an anti-Stalinist split-off party from the Communist Party of Germany (KPD). The KPO opposed the Stalinists' politics of defining the Social Democrats as social fascists and as the communists' main enemy. The Stalinists thereby underestimated the danger of the Nazis. Thalheimer<sup>45</sup> defines fascism based on a reading of Karl Marx's 'The Civil War in France'.<sup>46</sup> He argues that fascism is a form of Bonapartism. Marx uses the term Bonapartism in his analysis of the reign of Napoleon III in France.<sup>47</sup> Napoleon III came to power in 1851 with the help of a coup. Bonapartism means that the state is absolute and 'seem[s] to have made itself completely independent'.<sup>48</sup> The absolutist state is not an exclusive feature of fascism, but can be found in a range of political systems, including for example the absolutist monarchy. In fascism, absolute state power is established by the use of repressive state apparatuses (the police, the military, paramilitary forces) to enforce capitalist rule with the help of terrorist means. Marx also stresses that nationalism plays a role in Bonapartism as an ideological mechanism that deflects attention from class structures: Bonapartism 'professed to save the working class by breaking down Parliamentarism, and, with it, the undisguised subserviency of Government to

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<sup>45</sup> August Thalheimer. 1930. On Fascism. In *Marxists in Face of Fascism*, ed. David Beetham, 187–105. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

<sup>46</sup> Karl Marx. 1871. The Civil War in France. In *Marx and Engels Collected Works (MECW)*, Volume 22, 307–359. New York: International Publishers.

<sup>47</sup> Marx, Karl. 1852. The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. In *Marx and Engels Collected Works (MECW)*, Volume 11, 99–197. New York: International Publishers.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

the propertied classes. It professed to save the propertied classes by upholding their economic supremacy over the working class; and, finally, it professed to unite all classes by reviving for all the chimera of national glory.<sup>49</sup> Bonapartism is a form of dictatorship that among other elements also uses nationalism. One of the possibilities of how the working class can react to Bonapartism is that it buys into, as Marx says, the 'chimera of national glory'.

Thalheimer understands Bonapartism as 'the autonomisation of the executive power'; it is 'the open dictatorship of capital' that results in 'subordination of all remaining social classes under the executive'.<sup>50</sup> Fascism always has a Bonapartist element, namely 'the political subordination of the masses [...] to the fascist power. [...] Fascism, like Bonapartism, seeks to be the benefactor of all classes'.<sup>51</sup>

Right-wing authoritarian ideology tries to appeal to individuals, groups, and classes who have experienced social downgrading in society or are afraid of downclassing. Such ideological appeals can be especially successful when the political Left is weak.

It has often been claimed that far-right groups, movements, and parties represent and are made up by individuals from the so-called middle class that some also term the petty bourgeoisie, but fascists and the far-right have always also tried to appeal to blue-collar workers and other groups in society. Ideologies such as nationalism and racism try to mobilise a broad following by constructing a broad unity under the ideological flag of nationalism and advancing hate against imaginary enemies so that political attention is distracted from class structures. All forms of right-wing ideology and practices try to hinder working class struggles by advancing nationalism. There is no anti- or non-nationalist right-wing ideology.

Fascism is a form of dualistic ideology and politics that aims to exterminate one side of the proclaimed dualism. So, for example, the Nazis constructed a dualism between Aryan industrial capitalism that they presented as productive and Jewish financial and circulation capital that they presented as unproductive.

Anti-fascism challenges the ideology and practices of fascism, authoritarian capitalism, right-wing extremism, and right-wing authoritarianism. It is a form of praxis, which is to say a form of socialist practice. Socialism is consequently the only answer and counter-power to fascism and all other forms of right-wing authoritarianism. Socialism has the potential to uncover and deconstruct the true causes of society's problems and to get rid of these problems by overcoming class, capitalism, and domination.

Because right-wing authoritarianism tries to deflect attention from the true causes of society's problems by nationalism and the friend/enemy-scheme,

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<sup>49</sup> Marx, *The Civil War in France*, p. 330.

<sup>50</sup> Thalheimer, *On Fascism*, p. 189.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

socialism is the adequate praxis-oriented response that sheds light on the root-ness of social problems in power, exploitation, and domination, and offers perspectives that transcend capitalism, domination, and class.

Nationalism needs to be communicated in order to be effective. The next section deals with the communication of nationalism.

#### 10.4. The Communication of Nationalist Ideology

Nationalism can only be effective by being communicated in public. The communication of nationalism requires specific events, practices, symbols, and communication systems. The communication of nationalism takes place both in everyday life and as the staging of extraordinary events (parades, commemorations, wars, etc.).

Nationalism is communicated with a dialectic of content and form. The communication of nationalism has at the level of content a particular structure of ideology. Nationalist ideology is communicated in certain social forms. Table 10.2 presents various types of nationalist ideology that operate at the level of content. There is biological nationalism, economic nationalism, political nationalism, and cultural nationalism. All nationalist ideology is based on the distinction between the nation ('Us') and an enemy of the nation ('Them'). The typology presents ideal types. Concrete expressions of nationalism often combine various types or elements of these types.

##### *Social Forms of Communicating Nationalism*

In chapter section 6.1 of chapter 6, Marisol Sandoval's typology of communications was introduced. In table 10.3, this typology is applied to the communication of nationalism.

Marisol Sandoval distinguishes between five types of communication that correspond to five ways in which nationalism is communicated. The table also identifies examples of nationalist entities, nationalist social relations/practices, and nationalist events. It relates these social forms to the five types of communications. By entities we understand particular systems, namely human beings, social systems, and non-human systems, that enter into the communication process. All of these entities play a role in the social relations between humans, in which humans communicate and produce the social and society. Events are routinised social practices and routinised social relations that take place at particular points of time at specific places. Such events tend to be regularly repeated. Entities, practices, and social relations are necessary features of the communication of nationalism. Nationalism is not necessarily communicated on the occasion of particular events, but is rather also part of everyday life. But nationalist events are public symbols where nationalism is expressed in

**Table 10.2:** Types of nationalism's ideological discourse structure. Communicating Nationalism: Types and Structures of Nationalist Ideology.

Type	Definition	Examples for nationalist we-identity	Examples for nationalist other-presentation
Biological nationalism	Nationalism that relates to biology, nature, blood and soil. It proclaims the superiority of and pride in an invented national 'race' and the inferiority of other 'races'.	'Our people are by nature hard-working, decent, peaceful, rational, winners, inventive, creative, superior, etc.'	'They look different from us', 'They are by nature aggressive, dirty, criminal, lazy, noisy, smelly, ill-adapted, violent, etc.'
Economic nationalism	Nationalism that relates to society's economic system and resources. It proclaims the superiority of and pride in aspects of the national economic system (labour, capital, commodity types and industries, productivity, technologies, entrepreneurship, etc.) and the inferiority of competing economies.	'Our economy is particularly competitive', 'Our workers are decent and hard-working individuals proud of their skills and industriousness', 'Our companies and entrepreneurs are particularly inventive and creative', 'German jobs for the German people!', 'Buy British!'	'They take away our jobs/benefits/houses/educational or health care opportunities/etc.', 'They degrade our social system/wages/education system/pension system/welfare system/health care system/housing system, etc.'
Political nationalism	Nationalism that relates to society's political system and power structures. It proclaims the superiority of and pride in aspects of the national political system and the inferiority of other political systems.	'We are proud of our political values of freedom and our long political history of freedom and human rights', 'We are proud of our heroes and army who have fought for the defence of our nation', 'We are proud of our government/head of state/political system/monarch', 'We have to fight for and maintain our independence and sovereignty from foreign political influences', 'I love my country and my flag. I'd die for them'	'They come from an authoritarian country that shapes their political worldview and behaviours', 'They do not know/respect Western political values', 'They are used to a political system dominated by crime', 'They are criminals/do not follow our laws'

(Contd.)

**Table 10.2:** *(Continued)*

Type	Definition	Examples for nationalist we-identity	Examples for nationalist other-presentation
Cultural nationalism	Nationalism that relates to society's cultural system. It proclaims pride in and the superiority of national culture and the inferiority of foreign cultures.	'We can be proud of our traditions, arts, artists, language, intellectuals, scientists, achievements in sports, celebrities, philosophy, education system, cuisine, etc.' 'We have won the World Cup.' 'We can be proud that our team won and because of its superiority defeated the others'.	'They have different values and morals', 'In their culture it is usual to...,' 'They speak a different language/have different habits/ways of behaviour/ mentality/symbols/traditions/etc.,' 'They destroy our language/culture/traditions/character/etc.,' 'They come from a culture of aggression/laziness/criminality/etc.,' 'They have a different lifestyle,' 'They do not want to adapt', 'It is customary in their culture to treat women badly,' 'They have too many children,' 'They wear strange clothes,' 'They have bad food tastes/habits,' 'Their food stinks,' 'Their religion does not belong here and threatens our culture. It is inherently disrespectful, violent, terrorist, etc.'

**Table 10.3:** Social forms of nationalism (media types, entities, social relations/practices, events).

<b>Primary media</b> (human body and mind, no media technology for production, distribution, reception): theatre, concert, performance, interpersonal communication	<b>Entities (examples)</b> National heroes, soldiers, national mottos, head of state, president, prime minister, ministers, government, parliament, ministries, public authorities, national performing artists, national celebrities, entertainers and athletes, national museums, national sports teams, national anthem, national flag, formal national language/print language, typical national dishes, folk dance, folk music	<b>Social relations and social practices (examples)</b> Teaching, learning, and speaking the formal national language (print language), participation in national events, basic military service, conscription, fighting as a soldier in a war; the work of parliament, parliamentary committees, ministries, and other public institutions; participation in elections, attending and organising sports events, attending and organising artistic performances, attending and organising national museums/exhibitions, singing the national anthem, speeches on the occasion of national events, government campaigns, flag rituals, cooking and eating typical national dishes, folk dancing, listening to or performing folk music	<b>Events (examples)</b> National events (ceremonies, commemorations and festivals), national day, wars, bank holidays, parliamentary sessions, elections and election campaigns, state opening of parliament, sports events, national theatre and other art performances, national food festivals, national price ceremonies, folk dance festivals and events, folk music events and festivals, art exhibitions, etc. Press reports on national events, national sporting events, parliamentary sessions, national political events, national artistic or other cultural events, national economy, etc.; national fine arts exhibitions; public reading events
<b>Secondary media</b> (media technology for production): newspapers, magazines, books, technically produced arts and culture	National flags, national emblems and symbols, military and other national uniforms, national monuments, national artworks, public buildings, coins, bank notes, national money, stamps, national seals, national badges and medals, passport, maps, government publications, national literature and philosophy, national press, national history books, national language text books and dictionaries, national encyclopaedias, national visual and fine artworks, national museums, libraries and archives	Writing for the national press (journalists), reading the national press, reading of national literature and government-publications, waving the national flag; wearing national uniforms, emblems, symbols, badges, medals, etc.; using one's passport at border controls, working in or using government buildings, building or looking at national monuments, use of national currency/coins/bank notes for commodity purchases, organising or attending exhibitions of national fine arts, reading national literature and philosophy	Press reports on national events, national sporting events, parliamentary sessions, national political events, national artistic or other cultural events, national economy, etc.; national fine arts exhibitions; public reading events

(Contd.)

**Table 10.3:** *(Continued)*

<b>Tertiary media</b> (media technology for production and consumption, not distribution): CDs, DVDs, tapes, records, Blu-ray disks, hard disks	<b>Entities (examples)</b> Recordings of national politics, national economic developments and national culture distributed on storage media	<b>Social relations and social practices (examples)</b> Production and consumption of contents focused on national politics, national economic developments and national culture distributed on storage media	<b>Events (examples)</b> Events where recordings of national politics, national culture or national economic developments are shown (e.g. cinematographic presentation of the newest movie of an acclaimed national filmmaker, national film festivals, etc.)
<b>Quaternary media</b> (media technology for production, distribution and consumption): TV, radio, film, telephone, Internet	National radio and television (state broadcaster; public service broadcaster), national film, national telephone and Internet infrastructure, web pages operated by national institutions and nationalists	Producing and consuming broadcasts on national radio and television, use of national telephone and Internet infrastructure; production, distribution and consumption of national institutions' and nationalists' web content	Broadcast of national events, national sporting events broadcasts, broadcasts of parliamentary sessions, broadcast news about national events, broadcast of national artistic or other cultural events, web content created by national institutions on the occasion of national events, etc.
<b>Quinary media</b> (digital media production technologies, user-generated content): Internet, social media	Nationalist and nation-related user-generated web sites, blog posts, wikis, pages and groups on social networking sites, threads on discussion boards and mailing lists, videos distributed on video platforms, micro blog posts, images spread via image sites, memes, etc.	Online production, distribution and consumption of user-generated nationalism and nation-related user-generated content	User-generated nationalist content on the occasion of national/nationalist events

a particular intense manner. When nationalism is communicated, nationalist entities, nationalist practices or nationalist events act as symbols of nationalism. The communication of nationalism often operates as banal nationalism that uses nationalist symbols in everyday life.<sup>52</sup>

## 10.5. Summary and Conclusions

We can summarise this chapter's main results and conclusions as follows:

- Nationalism is an ideology that came into existence with the rise of imperialism from 1875 onwards. It essentialises an invented biological or cultural community that is distinguished from outsiders/aliens who are defined as enemies of the nation. Nationalism is a political form of fetishism. It fetishises biology and cultural differences. Nationalists produce and reproduce fictive ethnicity. Nationalism is both an ideology and a political movement.
- There is a biologicistic and a culturalist version of nationalism. Nationalism and racism stand in a dialectical relation. Both inclusive and exclusive racism play a role in capitalism. Nationalism and racism help create and justify realms of super-exploitation, where migrant workers are exploited. And they distract attention from capitalism and class by scapegoating foreigners.
- Right-wing authoritarianism is an ideological and political form that combines authoritarian leadership, nationalism, the friend/enemy-scheme, patriarchy and militarism. Right-wing extremism and fascism are intensifications of right-wing authoritarianism. Fascist society puts the dimensions of right-wing authoritarianism into practice by using terror as its method. Right-wing politics is organised on different levels: individuals, groups/movements, institutions, society. An upper level presupposes the preceding ones, whereas a lower level does not determine the upper levels. For example, there can be fascist individuals, parties and movements in a non-fascist, democratic society.
- The communication of nationalism is based on a dialectic of content/ideology and social form. At the level of content, nationalism takes on a particular semiotic and linguistic discourse structure. At the level of the structure of ideology, we can distinguish between biological, economic, political, and cultural nationalism. Nationalism is communicated through different social forms and operates on the levels of symbolic entities, social relations and practices and events.

Nationalism stands in an antagonistic relation to globalisation. Capitalist globalisation has advanced and deepened social problems, to which nationalism is an ideological reaction. The next chapter discusses the relationship of globalisation and communication.

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<sup>52</sup> Michael Billig. 1995. *Banal Nationalism*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, p. 6.