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0521812550 - Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict: Shadows of Modernity

Andreas Wimmer

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Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict

Wimmer goes above and beyond the debate on whether nationalism and ethnicity are modern or ancient phenomena. He shows that nationalist and ethnic politics are not only by-products of modern state formation, but that they provide the basis for modernity itself. Democratic participation, equality before the law and national self-determination are offered only to the ethnic group in a privileged relationship with the modernising state. They are denied to those who do not belong to the state-embodying nation. According to the varying geometries of power, these dynamics of exclusion take on different forms. Where nation-building is 'successful', immigrants and ethnic minorities are excluded from full participation. In weaker states, political closure proceeds along ethnic, rather than national lines. In his chapters on Mexico, Iraq and Switzerland, Wimmer provides extended case studies that support and contextualise this argument.

Andreas Wimmer is Professor of Political and Cultural Change, and Director at the Center for Development Research of the University of Bonn.

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