

THE WILEY BLACKWELL COMPANION TO  
**RACE, ETHNICITY,  
AND NATIONALISM**

EDITED BY

JOHN STONE | RUTLEDGE DENNIS  
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# **The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism**

Dedication: To the memory of Anthony D. Smith (1939–2016) and Walker Connor (1926–2017), two fine scholars of nationalism and ethnic conflicts, wonderful friends and generous colleagues.

## **Introduction: Global Trends in a Field of Increasing Complexity**

As we move toward the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century it is important to explore a series of inter-connected, but at times quite contradictory, trends in the global development of national, ethnic, and racial relationships. We are confronted by a series of complex factors working to re-define the ever-changing patterns of human relations throughout the world. Such changes can be seen as crucial in shaping the probable direction of world history as they have been in previous centuries. However, the particular evolution of such trends have posed some fascinating, and often completely unexpected, challenges to conventional interpretations of social, economic, and political changes on all five continents.

The current dispute between neo-Marxist and neo-liberal views of modernity is merely a continuation of the conflict between such thinkers as Karl Marx and Herbert Spencer. Not only are these two nineteenth century theorists ironically buried facing each other in Highgate Cemetery in North London, but they also symbolized the debate between capitalism and socialism that has endured ever since. During the twentieth century, different developments

have tended to underline the alternating fortunes of each ideological camp throughout the period and this division has persisted into recent times. The Bolshevik Revolution, The Great Depression, Two World Wars, Liberation struggles seeking to end colonialism, the Chinese Communist Revolution, the Cold War, and a second global Industrial Revolution at the end of the 1980s, have all provided ammunition for each ideological camp. These fundamental events have transformed global societies and released data that can be interpreted using either ideological perspective. By the twenty-first century, a new world order appeared to be settling into a model of stabilized global capitalism, albeit described by contrasting political labels, as globalization seemed to be increasing the integration of economic systems and, politically, most societies were linked by treaties and other types of agreements designed to mitigate severe political conflicts. Nevertheless, this neat balance showed signs of contradictory forces that might not be as severe as “the clash of civilizations” predicted by Samuel Huntington at the end of the last century but clearly had important consequences, whether linked to global terrorism, environmental destruction or the widespread appeal of populist nationalism. All these developments raise vital questions about the future of race, ethnicity, and nationalism in our current era.

In the First Section of the Companion, we explore the importance of some of the recent trends in the United States, the growing significance of populism in major societies around the world, and overall developments in race and ethnic relations and nationalism.

**Rutledge and Kimya Dennis** set out to explain the importance of the “Black Lives Matter” movement in the United States and how it fits within the on-going struggle for racial justice that has been constantly changing over

the past two centuries. After reviewing the history of black social movements in the United States and their contrasting strategies for advancing towards the goals of equal justice and social equality, the authors examine the evolution of the Black Lives Matter movement which both resembles and differs from previous civil rights strategies. The central role of women in the movement and the focus on a non-hierarchical leadership style are two of the most distinctive characteristics of this approach to racial justice. Underlying this unusual organizational structure is a resurrection of what the authors call “the art and theory of confrontational politics” which shares certain features of anarchist approaches towards social change and social order. An analysis of the Vision Statement of the movement reveals a range of controversial plans and radical objectives that some would regard as unrealistic and utopian, while others may feel are completely necessary if the American Dream is ever to achieve a non-racial fulfilment.

**John Stone and Polly Rizova** focus on shifts in American race relations highlighted by the changes reflected in two unanticipated political events. These were the arrival of America’s first African American president in 2008, and his re-election to a second term of office in 2012; and his successor, Donald Trump, in his equally unexpected political campaign in 2016. Stone and Rizova relate these dramatic and unexpected shifts in American race relations to wider global movements particularly those linked to the rapid expansion of economic and political aspects of globalization. Like so many other processes – modernity and technological innovations – the social and political implications of such transitions have proven to be enormously complex and unpredictable. While the spread of Facebook and other types of Internet connectivity were initially credited with the democratic revolutions of the

Arab Spring – at least in the minds of the optimistic young pioneers of such products in Silicon Valley – the subsequent collapse of these revolutions by autocrats who soon mastered the ability of technology to be used in counter-democratic directions, resulted in a more sober re-evaluation of such changes. The activities of Russian troll farms on the 2016 American election, and other Western democratic campaigns, raises once again the old adage “technology is neutral between good and evil”.

**Daniele Conversi** considers the variety of perspectives scholars have employed to understand the essence of nationalism and its links to views about modernity, industrialization, and developments in science and technology. He then looks at the connections between the forces of neo-liberal globalization and their complex impact on contemporary forms of nationalism. Finally, he speculates on the future trajectory of nationalist ideas and politics in a new era of unprecedented human impact on the planet – what has been called the era of the Anthropocene – and reveals the paradox that “as nationalism thrives, nations risk vanishing”.

In a parallel analysis to Conversi’s assessment of nationalism, **John Solomos** reviews the theories and research focusing on racism and ethnic forms of identity over the past half century. Drawing on his work as a co-editor of the journal *Ethnic and Racial Studies* for the past three decades, he demonstrates the varying emphases of influential ideas and models in this field. These include the paradoxical use of so-called “postmodern racism” that employs the language of anti-racism and multiculturalism to construct new forms of xenophobic national identity in the name of defending the nation against a variety of supposed enemies. The “slippery nature” of contemporary racisms and the characterization of racism as a “scavenger

ideology” reveals the nebulous nature of modern xenophobia.

In his chapter, **Rogers Brubaker** examines the fundamental question of “Why Populism?” Seeking to explore the various meanings of populism as it has been used in both the academic and general literature, he focuses particularly on recent European and North American trends. Examining the concept itself and whether it is appropriate to apply it to the recent political developments on either side of the Atlantic is another critical issue. Using the repertoire metaphor, he seeks to account for both “the democratic energies populism may harness and for the anti-democratic dangers it may represent.” As usual, Brubaker’s concern with clear definitions and conceptual clarity adds important understanding to these increasingly important social and political phenomena. He shows the complex and diverse character of contemporary forms of populism that may emanate from both the right and the left along the political spectrum; he demonstrates how there are often both a vertical (elite versus “the people”) and horizontal (“us” versus “them”) dimensions in populist rhetoric leading to the intersection of the two axes of hate; and he reveals the multiple definitions of who “the people” actually are. Taken together these ideas and questions refine our understanding of populism in the world today.

**Ian Law** considers many of the issues concerning our understanding of racism from a very broad comparative and historical perspective. Using the concept of polyracism he sets out to challenge the more conventional assumptions concerning the “linear development of Western racisms” into a global pattern of racial hierarchy. Drawing on a vast range of sources, both historical and archeological, Law suggests that we need to move beyond an emphasis on Western modernity to fully appreciate the multiple origins

of race and racialization, and to grant greater agency to actors and states outside the West.

In the Second Part of the Companion we switch our attention to some major regional variations in race, ethnicity, and nationalism and how these have been influenced by the global changes outlined in the first section.

In her chapter, **Xiaoshuo Hou** considers the blurring boundary between nationalism and globalism in contemporary China under the leadership of Xi Jinping. On the one hand, a nationalist discourse is created around the “China Dream” and the resurgence of Chinese nationalism. On the other hand, the “one belt, one road” initiative aims to recreate and reinvent the Silk Road by connecting more than sixty countries across Asia, Europe, and Africa with both a physical and digital infrastructure. How these two developments will work out in practice will be a major influence on nationalism and the global order in the twenty-first century.

The huge population groups, constituting almost one fifth of the number of human beings on the planet, and the major societies in the East Asia region receive careful analysis by **John Lie** and **Jeffrey Weng**. Focusing on three of the most important societies in the region, China, Japan, and Korea, they explore the complex history of each societies’ relationships with diverse peoples within their ever-shifting political boundaries. Many of the current concepts of nationalism and ethnic identity resulted from political pressures introduced into the region by outside colonial and imperialist forces during the nineteenth century and the subsequent ever-changing political balances of power during the twentieth century. The authors conclude that the shifting notions of belonging in all three societies have resulted in “one of the great



historical ironies". That is to say, the very idea of a nation-state has become closest to being "attained and widely believed" to be true in this part of the world, rather than in societies of the West, where modern ideas of nationalism have been most vociferously advocated.

In his chapter, **Kit Man** traces the development of the idea of a specific Chinese nation in the early twentieth century writings of Liang Qichao. Known by some as "China's Gobineau", Liang struggled to formulate a concept of the Chinese nation at a time when Western and Japanese imperialism was seen as a major threat to a society undergoing fundamental internal transformations. The ideas and debates generated by Liang's influential writings at the outset of the twentieth century shed important light on contemporary concepts of Chinese society as it emerges as one of the critical world powers of the twenty-first century.

Another example of yet other forms of identity is discussed in **Jennifer Murtazashvili's** chapter on Central Asia. Viewing the region for some two centuries, from the time of Russian Czarist influence, to the era of Communist policies following the Russian Revolution, and then into the post-Soviet years, she points to the importance of the concept of *qawm*. This very flexible idea of group solidarity is based on a variety of characteristics and can be associated with membership in a range of groups including kinship, tribe, clan, region, language, or other aspects of ethnicity. As a result, this makes for a highly fluid system, but one profoundly influenced by the Soviet nationalities policies that had interesting unintended consequences for the post-Soviet era. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early nineteen nineties, the three major states of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan failed to descend into major group conflicts as many outside observers had predicted. In fact, the post-Soviet era saw the emergence of