



Call for book reviews

The Resurgence of Identity Politics

Declaration of interest for reviewers by **1st Sept. 2014**

First submission due: **20th Nov. 2014**

Final version due: **20th Dec. 2014**

Length of reviews: 500-750 words per book

Contact: book.reviews@stair-journal.org

STAIR is a peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal of International Affairs, based at St Antony's College, University of Oxford. This edition of STAIR is examining the causes, consequences and facets of the resurgence of identity politics in the twenty-first century. To address these explorations, the book review editors are looking for short and insightful reviews of newly published academic books dealing with the phenomenon of contemporary identity politics.

For this issue STAIR has selected a list of books recommended for review. Please find the full list of books with descriptions at the end of this document. STAIR also welcomes other suggestions from reviewers related to current international affairs, either within the theme of the issue or for the general section.* Book reviewers are free to choose their books but we cannot guarantee that we can get hold of all of them. Potential reviewers might choose to review two books (1000-1250 words) if they think that is of added value.

If you are interested in writing a review, please send an e-mail with your name and institutional affiliation, preferred book, short bio and postal address. We will announce the outcome of our selection on September 10th, 2014.

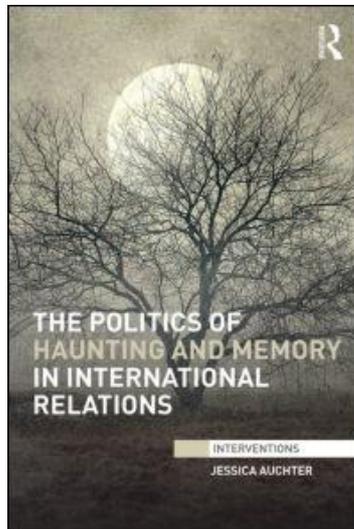
For further details please contact the book reviews editors at the address above.

* Please note that beyond the selection of books featured here the journal cannot guarantee supply of a review copy of the book, although we will try to.

List of recommended books:

Auchter, Jessica. *The Politics of Haunting and Memory in International Relations* (Routledge, 2014)

Description and picture from: www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415720397

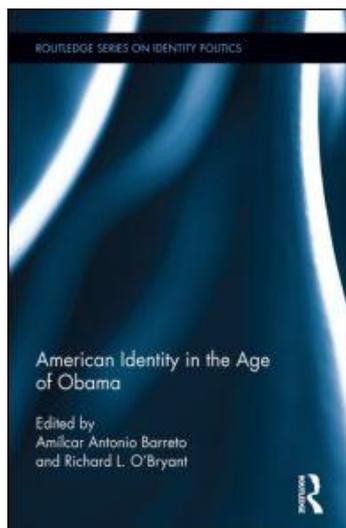


International Relations has traditionally focused on conflict and war, but the effects of violence including dead bodies and memorialization practices have largely been considered beyond the purview of the field. Drawing on Jacques Derrida's notion of hauntology to consider the politics of life and death, Auchter traces the story of how life and death and a clear division between the two is summoned in the project of statecraft. She argues that by letting ourselves be haunted, or looking for ghosts, it is possible to trace how statecraft relies on the construction of such a dichotomy. Three empirical cases offer fertile ground for complicating the picture often painted of memorialization: Rwandan genocide memorials, the underexplored case of undocumented immigrants who die crossing the US-Mexico border, and the body/ruins nexus in 9/11 memorialization. Focusing on the role of dead bodies and the construction of particular spaces as the appropriate sites for memory to be situated, it offers an alternative take on the new

materialisms movement in international relations by asking after the questions that arise from an ethnographic approach to the subject: viewing things from the perspective of dead bodies, who occupy the shadowy world of post-conflict international politics. This work will be of great interest to students and scholars of critical international relations, security studies, statecraft and memory studies.

Barreto, Amílcar Antonio and O'Bryant Richard (eds). *American Identity in the Age of Obama* (Routledge, 2013)

Description and picture from: routledge-ny.com/books/details/9780415722018



The election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States has opened a new chapter in the country's long and often tortured history of inter-racial and inter-ethnic relations. Many relished in the inauguration of the country's first African American president — an event foreseen by another White House aspirant, Senator Robert Kennedy, four decades earlier. What could have only been categorized as a dream in the wake of Brown vs. Board of Education was now a reality. Some dared to contemplate a post-racial America. Still, soon after Obama's election a small but persistent faction questioned his eligibility to hold office; they insisted that Obama was foreign-born. Following the Civil Rights battles of the 20th century hate speech, at least in public, is no longer as free flowing as it had been. Perhaps xenophobia, in a land of immigrants, is the new rhetorical device to assail what which is non-white and hence un-American. Furthermore, recent debates about immigration and racial profiling in Arizona along with the battle over

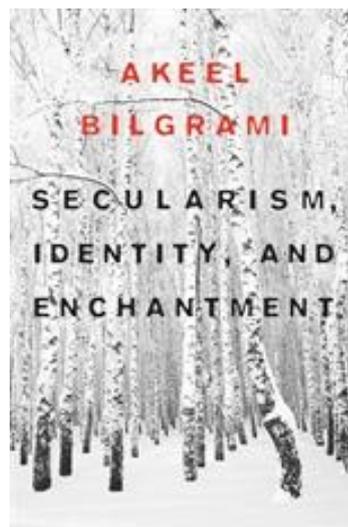
rewriting of history and civics textbooks in Texas suggest that a post-racial America is a long way off. What roles do race, ethnicity, ancestry, immigration status, locus of birth play in the public and private conversations that defy and reinforce existing conceptions of what it means to be American? This book exposes the changing and persistent notions of American identity in the age of Obama. Amílcar Antonio Barreto, Richard L. O'Bryant, and an outstanding line up of contributors examine Obama's election and reelection as watershed phenomena that will be

exploited by the president's supporters and detractors to engage in different forms of narrating the American national saga. Despite the potential for major changes in rhetorical mythmaking, they question whether American society has changed substantively.

Bilgrami, Akeel. *Secularism, Identity, and Enchantment* (Harvard University Press, 2014)

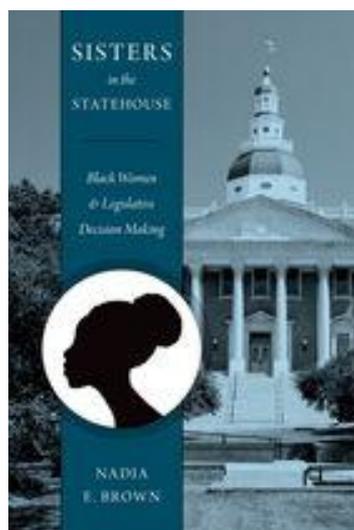
Description and picture from: www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674052048

Bringing clarity to a subject clouded by polemic, *Secularism, Identity, and Enchantment* is a rigorous exploration of how secularism and identity emerged as concepts in different parts of the modern world. At a time when secularist and religious worldviews appear irreconcilable, Akeel Bilgrami strikes out on a path distinctly his own, criticizing secularist proponents and detractors, liberal universalists and multicultural relativists alike. Those who ground secularism in arguments that aspire to universal reach, Bilgrami argues, fundamentally misunderstand the nature of politics. To those, by contrast, who regard secularism as a mere outgrowth of colonial domination, he offers the possibility of a more conceptually vernacular ground for political secularism. Focusing on the response to Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, Bilgrami asks why Islamic identity has so often been a mobilizing force against liberalism, and he answers the question with diagnostic sympathy, providing a philosophical framework within which the Islamic tradition might overcome the resentments prompted by its colonized past and present. Turning to Gandhi's political and religious thought, Bilgrami ponders whether the increasing appeal of religion in many parts of the world reflects a growing disillusionment not with science but with an outlook of detachment around the rise of modern science and capitalism. He elaborates a notion of enchantment along metaphysical, ethical, and political lines with a view to finding in secular modernity a locus of meaning and value, while addressing squarely the anxiety that all such notions hark back nostalgically to a time that has past.



Brown, Nadia. *Sisters in the Statehouse: Black Women and Legislative Decision Making* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

Description and picture from: ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780199352432.do



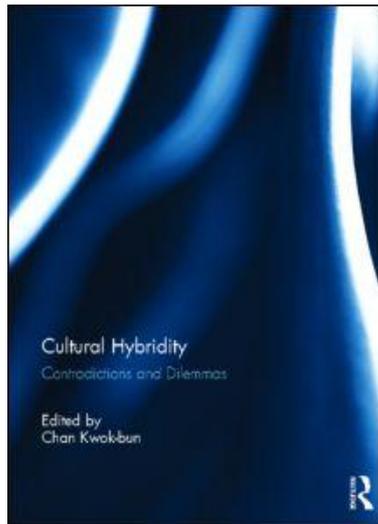
Descriptive studies of women in office have well documented the ways in which the gender and race of legislators affects policy preferences. However, descriptive studies of female legislators tend to treat identity as constant over time and context and so fail to account for the substantive work of legislators. As *Sisters in the Statehouse* shows, it is not enough to disaggregate women from Blacks. While scholars have long advanced the notion that African American women as a group exhibit specificities informed by the intersection of race and gender that provide them with a unique worldview, it is necessary to further explore differences among Black women. This book addresses this gap by utilizing humanistic inquiry to examine the connection between descriptive and substantive representation in the case of Black women legislators. This link hinges on how such legislators see the effects of their own race-gender identity on their legislative work. By combining humanistic and social science techniques, including feminist life

histories, elite interviews, and participant observation in conjunction with legislative case studies and bill sponsorship data, Nadia E. Brown presents a fuller description of how identity informs Black women state legislators descriptive and substantive representation. Linking personal

narratives to political behaviour, Brown elicits the feminist life histories of African American women legislators to understand how their experiences with racism and sexism have influenced their legislative decision-making and policy preferences. *Sisters in the Statehouse* is a groundbreaking inquiry into how an intersectional approach can enhance our understanding of political representation.

Chan, Kwok-Bun. *Cultural Hybridity: Contradictions and Dilemmas* (Routledge, 2012)

Description and picture from: www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415697989

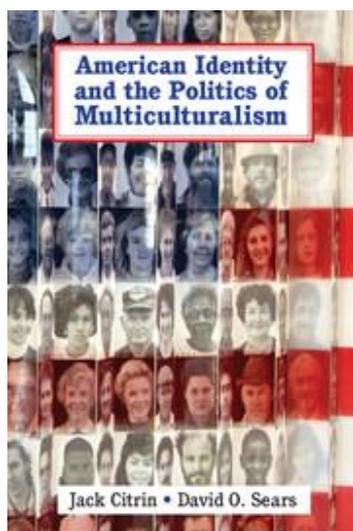


This book brings together a group of scholars from diverse disciplines to interrogate everyday life events in various interpersonal and organizational contexts so as to answer an age-old question: what happens when (carriers of) cultures meet, or, when East meets West? The contributors to this volume argue that, rather than assume clashes of civilizations, assimilation, conversion and essentialism to be the expected outcomes of cultural encounters, we should focus our analytical attention on processes rather than outcomes; on emergence, dialectics, contradictions, ironies and paradoxes, and complexity. We should focus on attempting to learn and grow, to synthesize and integrate, to create and innovate, to change and transform, at personal, micro, macro and global levels. Or, in one word: hybridity. Contexts of cultural encounters analyzed in this book range from business organizations, through individual travels, to personal philosophies, and from mechanical models to complex

systems as social imaginaries. This book is based on a special issue of *World Futures: The Journal of General Evolution*.

Citrin, Jack and O. Sears, David. *American Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism* (Cambridge University Press, 2014)

Description and picture from: <http://www.cambridge.org/gb/academic/subjects/politics-international-relations/american-government-politics-and-policy/american-identity-and-politics-multiculturalism>

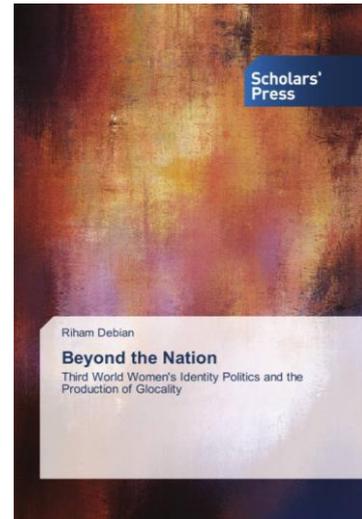


The civil rights movement and immigration reform transformed American politics in the mid-1960s. Demographic diversity and identity politics raised the challenge of *e pluribus unum* anew, and multiculturalism emerged as a new ideological response to this dilemma. This book uses national public opinion data and public opinion data from Los Angeles to compare ethnic differences in patriotism and ethnic identity and ethnic differences in support for multicultural norms and group-conscious policies. The authors find evidence of strong patriotism among all groups and the classic pattern of assimilation among the new wave of immigrants. They argue that there is a consensus in rejecting harder forms of multiculturalism that insist on group rights but also a widespread acceptance of softer forms that are tolerant of cultural differences and do not challenge norms, such as by insisting on the primacy of English.

Debian, Riham. *Beyond the Nation: Third World Women's identity Politics and the Production of Glocality* (Scholar's Press, 2014)

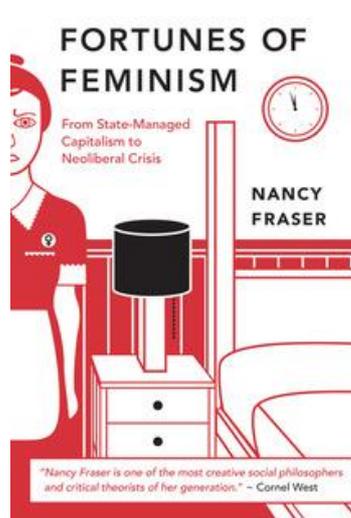
Description and picture from: www.scholarspress.com/catalog/details/store/ru/book/978-3-639-71087-8/beyond-the-nation

Beyond the Nation deals with Third World women's literary and cinematic intervention in the gendered discourse of the nation through a multicultural feminist reading of Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2004) and Marziyeh Meshkini's film *The Day I Became a Woman* (2000). The book argues for the texts' production of the discourse of post-gendered nationalism and glocal national identity through subverting the binary logic of nationalist/fundamentalist and imperialist discourses, and charting a synthesis between silence/ speech, private/public, feminine/feminist and local/global.



Fraser, Nancy. *Fortunes of Feminism: From Women's Liberation to Identity Politics to Anti-Capitalism* (Verso Books, 2013)

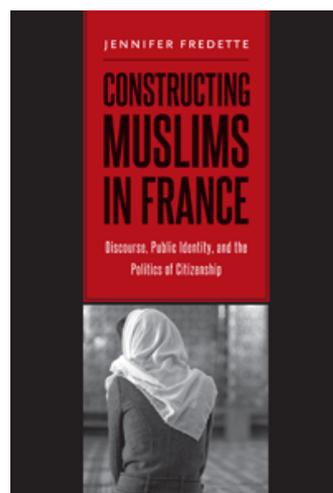
Description and picture from: www.versobooks.com/books/1173-fortunes-of-feminism



Nancy Fraser's major new book traces the feminist movement's evolution since the 1970s and anticipates a new—radical and egalitarian—phase of feminist thought and action. During the ferment of the New Left, “Second Wave” feminism emerged as a struggle for women's liberation and took its place alongside other radical movements that were questioning core features of capitalist society. But feminism's subsequent immersion in identity politics coincided with a decline in its utopian energies and the rise of neoliberalism. Now, foreseeing a revival in the movement, Fraser argues for a reinvigorated feminist radicalism able to address the global economic crisis. Feminism can be a force working in concert with other egalitarian movements in the struggle to bring the economy under democratic control, while building on the visionary potential of the earlier waves of women's liberation. This powerful new account is set to become a landmark of feminist thought.

Fredette, Jennifer. *Constructing Muslims in France: Discourse, Public Identity and the Politics of Citizenship* (Temple University Press, 2014)

Description and picture from: www.temple.edu/tempresstitles/2272_reg.html

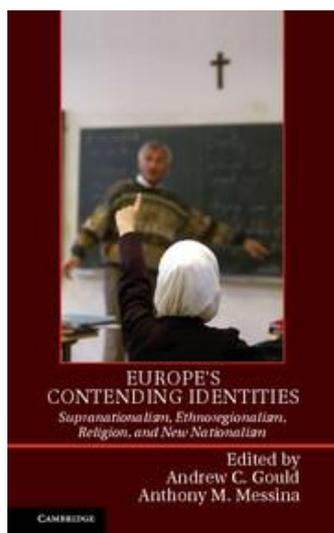


The standing of French Muslims is undercut by a predominant and persistent elite public discourse that frames Muslims as failed and incomplete French citizens. This situation fosters the very separations, exclusions, and hierarchies it claims to deplore as Muslims face discrimination in education, housing, and employment. In *Constructing Muslims in France*, Jennifer Fredette provides a deft empirical analysis to show the political diversity and complicated identity politics of this relatively new population. She examines the public identity of French Muslims and evaluates images in popular media to show how stereotyped notions of

racial and religious differences pervade French public discourse. While rights may be a sine qua non for fighting legal and political inequality, Fredette shows that additional tools such as media access are needed to combat social inequality, particularly when it comes in the form of unfavorable discursive frames and public disrespect. Presenting the conflicting views of French national identity, Fredette shows how Muslims strive to gain recognition of their diverse views and backgrounds and find full equality as French citizens.

Gould, Andrew and Messina, Anthony (eds.). *Europe's Contending Identities: Supranationalism, Ethnoregionalism, Religion and New Nationalism* (Cambridge University Press, 2014)

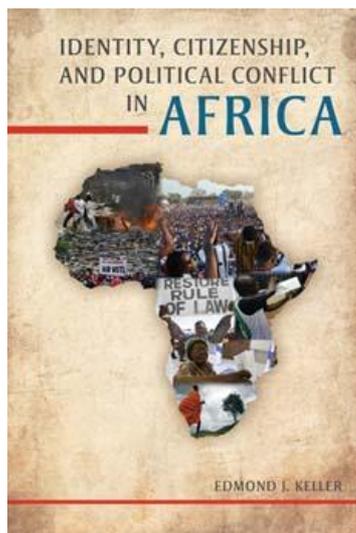
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How “European” are Europeans? Is it possible to balance national citizenship with belonging to the European Union overall? Do feelings of citizenship and belonging respond to affiliations to regions, religions, or reactionary politics? Unlike previous volumes about identity in Europe, this book offers a more comprehensive view of the range of identities and new arguments about the political processes that shape identity formation. The founders of European integration promised “an ever closer union.” Nationalists respond that a people should control their own destiny. This book investigates who is winning the debate. The chapters show that attitudes toward broader political communities are changing, that new ideas are gaining ground, and that long-standing trends are possibly reversing course.

Keller, Edmond. *Identity, Citizenship and Political Conflict in Africa* (Indiana University Press, 2014)

Description and picture from: www.iupress.indiana.edu/product_info.php?products_id=807088



Reflecting on the processes of nation-building and citizenship formation in Africa, Edmond J. Keller believes that although some deep parochial identities have eroded, they have not disappeared and may be more assertive than previously thought, especially in instances of political conflict. Keller reconsidered how national identity has been understood in Africa and presents new approaches to identity politics, intergroup relations, state-society relations, and notions of national citizenship and citizenship rights. Focusing on Nigeria, Ethiopia, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya and Rwanda, he lays the foundations for a new understanding of political transition in contemporary Africa.

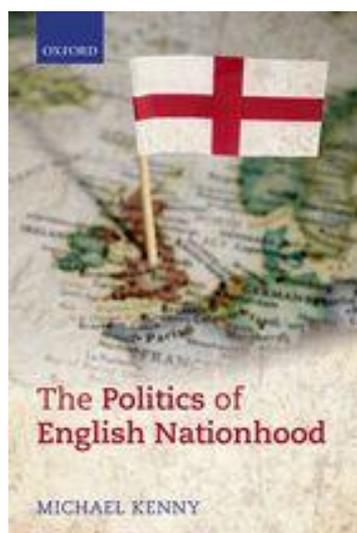
Kemoklidze, Nino *et al.* (eds.) *Many Faces of the Caususus* (Routledge, 2014)

Description from: www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415739672

Studies of the Caucasus in the West have been dominated by issues of security and ethnic conflict based on Eurocentric theoretical paradigms. By contrast, this volume offers contributions from researchers working within a range of disciplines, including history, social anthropology, sociology and cultural studies as well as international relations and security studies. Some of the contributions demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the region from 'inside', while others explore the issues within a wider Eurasian and global perspective. The volume examines the politically-defined division of the region into the North and South Caucasus, the evolution of national identity and citizenship, and the role of the NGOs in the development of civil society in the post-Soviet period. Its content demonstrates the advantages of an area studies inter-disciplinary approach to the study of the region and the importance of collaboration between Western and local researchers. It highlights the importance of the Caucasus as a geographical, political and civilisational entity and examines the historical, cultural, political, religious and psychological factors behind the region's particular susceptibility to territorial and ethno-religious conflict. The book will be of benefit to scholars and students researching the Caucasus, Russia and the post-Soviet space. It will also appeal to policy-makers, NGO activists, journalists and a wider audience interested in this fascinating region.

Kenny, Michael. *The Politics of English Nationhood* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

Description and picture from: ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780199608614.do

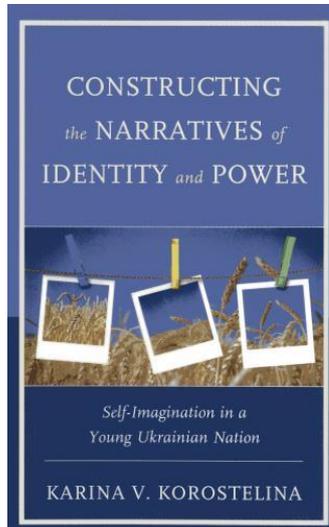


The Politics of English Nationhood supplies the first comprehensive overview of the evidence, research and major arguments relating to the revival of Englishness, exploring its varied, and often overlooked, political ramifications and dimensions. It examines the difficulties which the major political parties have encountered in dealing with 'the English question' against the backdrop of the diminishing hold of established ideas of British government and national identity in the final years of the last century. And it explores a range of factors —including insecurities generated by economic change, Euroscepticism, and a growing sense of cultural anxiety - which helped make the renewal of Englishness appealing and imperative, prior to the introduction of devolution by the first Blair government, a policy which also gave this process a further impetus. The book therefore provides a powerful challenge to the two established orthodoxies in this area. These

either maintain that the English are dispositionally unable to assert their own nationhood outside the framework of the British state, or point to the supposed resurgence of a resentful and reactive sense of English nationalism. This volume instead demonstrates that a renewed, resonant and internally divided sense of English nationhood is apparent across the lines of class, geography, age, and ethnicity. And it identifies several distinct strands of national identity that have emerged in this period, contrasting the appearance of populist and resentful forms of English nationalism with an embedded and deeply rooted sense of conservative Englishness and attempts to reconstruct a more liberal and civic idea of a multicultural England. This volume also includes a wide-ranging analysis of the culturally rooted revival of Englishness, drawing out the political dimensions and implications of this re-emerging form of national consciousness.

Korostelina, Karina. *Constructing the Narratives of Identity and Power: Self-Imagination in a Young Ukrainian Nation* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014)

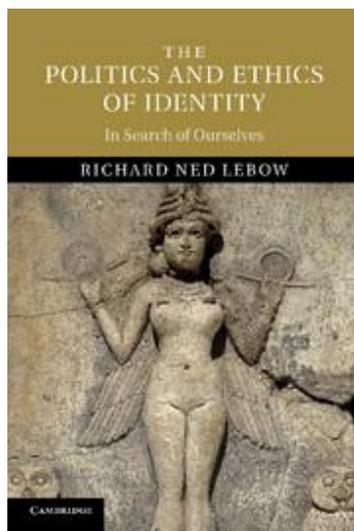
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Twenty years ago Ukraine gained its independence and started on a path towards a free market economy and democratic governance. After four successive presidents and the Orange Revolution, the question of exactly which national model Ukraine should embrace remains an open question. *Constructing the Narratives of Identity and Power* provides a comprehensive outlook on Ukraine as it is presented through the views of intellectual and political elites. Based on extensive field work in Ukraine, Karina V. Korostelina describes the complex process of nation building. Despite the prevailing belief in a divide between two parts of Ukraine and an overwhelming variety of incompatible visions, Korostelina reveals seven prevailing conceptual models of Ukraine and five dominant narratives of national identity. *Constructing the Narratives of Identity and Power* analyzes the practice of national self-imagination. Karina V. Korostelina puts forward a structural-functional model of national narratives that describes three major components, dualistic order, mythic narratives, and normative order, and two main functions of national narratives, the development of the meaning of national identity and the legitimization of power. Korostelina describes the differences and conflicting elements of the national narratives that constitute the contested arena of nation-building in Ukraine.

Lebow, Ned. *The Politics and Ethics of Identity: In Search of Ourselves* (Cambridge University Press, 2014)

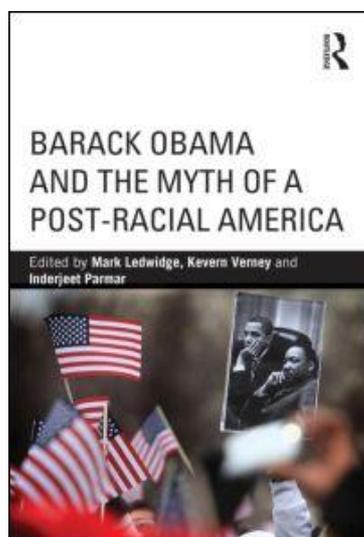
Description and picture from: www.cambridge.org/gb/academic/subjects/politics-international-relations/political-theory/politics-and-ethics-identity-search-ourselves?format=PB



We are multiple, fragmented, and changing selves who, nevertheless, believe we have unique and consistent identities. What accounts for this illusion? Why has the problem of identity become so central in post-war scholarship, fiction, and the media? Following Hegel, Richard Ned Lebow contends that the defining psychological feature of modernity is the tension between our reflexive and social selves. To address this problem Westerners have developed four generic strategies of identity construction that are associated with four distinct political orientations. Lebow develops his arguments through comparative analysis of ancient and modern literary, philosophical, religious, and musical texts. He asks how we might come to terms with the fragmented and illusionary nature of our identities and explores some political and ethical implications of doing so.

Ledwidge, Mark *et al.* (eds.). *Barack Obama and the Myth of a Post-Racial America* (Routledge, 2014)

Description and picture from: routledge-ny.com/books/details/9780415813945

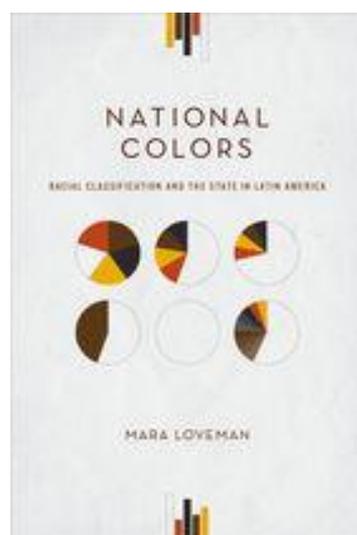


The 2008 presidential election was celebrated around the world as a seminal moment in U.S. political and racial history. White liberals and other progressives framed the election through the prism of change, while previously acknowledged demographic changes were hastily heralded as the dawn of a "post-racial" America. However, by 2011, much of the post-election idealism had dissipated in the wake of an on-going economic and financial crisis, escalating wars in Afghanistan and Libya, and the rise of the right-wing Tea Party movement. By placing Obama in the historical context of U.S. race relations, this volume interrogates the idealized and progressive view of American society advanced by much of the mainstream literature on Obama. *Barack Obama and the Myth of a Post-Racial America* takes a careful look at the historical, cultural and political dimensions of race in the United States, using an interdisciplinary analysis that incorporates approaches from history, political science, and sociology. Each chapter addresses controversial issues such as whether Obama can be considered

an African-American president, whether his presidency actually delivered the kind of deep-rooted changes that were initially prophesised, and whether Obama has abandoned his core African-American constituency in favour of projecting a race-neutral approach designed to maintain centrist support. Through cutting edge, critically informed, and cross-disciplinary analyses, this collection directly addresses the dimensions of race in American society through the lens of Obama's election and presidency.

Loveman, Mara. *National Colors: Racial Classification and the State in Latin America* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

Description and picture from: ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780199337354.do

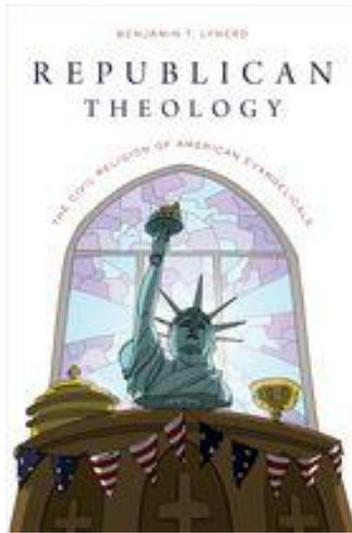


Through a comprehensive analysis of the politics and practice of official ethn racial classification in the censuses of nineteen Latin American states across nearly two centuries, this book explains why most Latin American states classified their citizens by race on early national censuses, why they stopped the practice of official racial classification around mid-twentieth century, and why they reintroduced ethn racial classification on national censuses at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Beyond domestic political struggles, the analysis reveals that the ways that Latin American states classified their populations from the mid-nineteenth century onward responded to changes in international criteria for how to construct a modern nation and promote national development. As prevailing international understandings of what made a political and cultural community a modern nation changed, so too did the ways that Latin American census officials depicted diversity within national populations. The way census officials described

populations in official statistics, in turn, shaped how policymakers viewed national populations and informed their prescriptions for national development—with consequences that still reverberate in contemporary political struggles for recognition, rights, and redress for ethn racially marginalized populations in today's Latin America.

Lynerd, Benjamin. *Republican Theology: The Civil Religion of American Evangelicals* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

Description and picture from: ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780199363568.do



As an electoral bloc, contemporary white evangelical Christians maintain a remarkable ideological and partisan conformity, perhaps unmatched by any other community outside of African Americans. Historically, evangelicals have supported various political parties, but their approach to civil religion, or the way that they apply the spiritual to the public realm, has, as Republican Theology argues, been consistent in its substance since the founding of the nation. Put simply, this civil religion holds that limited government and a free-market are essential to the cultivation of Christian virtue, while the livelihood of the republic depends on the virtue of its citizens. While evangelicals have long promoted conservative moral causes, from temperance and anti-obscenity in the nineteenth century to abstinence education in the twentieth, they have also aligned themselves on many other seemingly unrelated agendas: in support of the Revolution in the 1770s, on antislavery in the 1820s, against labor unionism in the 1880s, against the New

Deal in the 1930s, on assertive anticommunism in the 1950s (a major theme in Billy Graham's early sermons), and in favor of deregulation and lower taxes in the 1980s. As Benjamin T. Lynerd contends, the rise of the <"New Right"> movement at the end of the twentieth century had as much to do with small-government ideology as with a recovery of traditional morality. This libertarian ethos combined with restrictive public moralism is conflicted, and it creates friction both within the New Right alliance and within the church, particularly among evangelicals interested in social justice. Still, it has formed the entire subtext of evangelical participation in American politics from the 1770s into the twenty-first century. Lynerd looks at the evolution of evangelical civil religion, or <"republican theology"> to demonstrate how evangelicals navigate this logic.

McKnight, Utz. *Race and the Politics of the Exception: Equality, Sovereignty, and American Democracy* (Routledge, 2013)

Description and picture from: routledge-ny.com/books/details/9780415827607

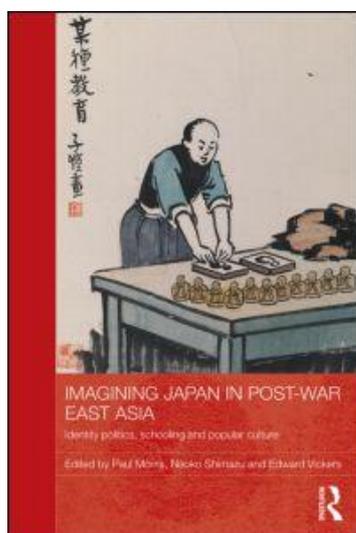


The traditional assumption today about race is that it is not political; that it has no political content and is a matter of individual beliefs and attitudes. In *Race and the Politics of the Exception*, Utz McKnight argues that race is in fact political and defines how it functions as a politics in the United States. McKnight organizes his book into three sections, beginning with a theoretical section about racial politics in the United States. Using theorists such as Benjamin, Agamben, and Schmitt, McKnight discusses how the idea of racial communities went from being constituted through the idea of racial sovereignty and a politics of the exception that defined blacks as the internal enemy, to being constitutionally defined through the institutions of racial equal opportunity. In the second section, McKnight further develops his critical race theory by exploring in more detail the social use of race today. The election of President Obama has brought the politics of racial equality to a critical point. In spite of a very powerful set of political tools to define it

as a thing of the past, race matters. In the final section, McKnight engages with important African American fiction from each of the three major periods of racial politics in the US. Earlier descriptions of political theory are used throughout these analyses to refine the argument for a new critical politics of race.

Morris, Paul *et al.* (eds). *Imagining Japan in Post-war East Asia: Identity Politics, Schooling and Popular Culture* (Routledge, 2014)

Description and picture from: www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415713993

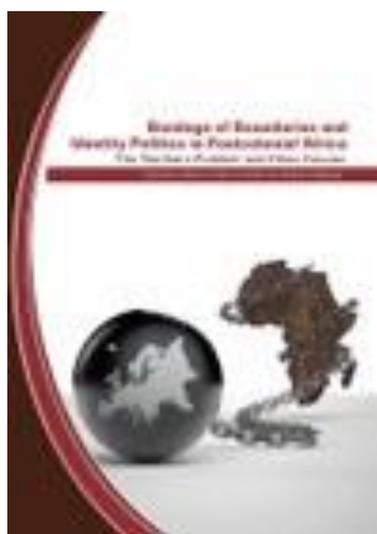


In the decades since her defeat in the Second World War, Japan has continued to loom large in the national imagination of many of her East Asian neighbours. While for many, Japan still conjures up images of rampant military brutality, at different times and in different communities, alternative images of the Japanese 'Other' have vied for predominance – in ways that remain poorly understood, not least within Japan itself. *Imagining Japan in Postwar East Asia* analyses the portrayal of Japan in the societies of East and Southeast Asia, and asks how and why this has changed in recent decades, and what these changing images of Japan reveal about the ways in which these societies construct their own identities. It examines the role played by an imagined 'Japan' in the construction of national selves across the East Asian region, as mediated through a broad range of media ranging from school curricula and textbooks to film, television, literature and comics. Commencing with an extensive thematic and comparative overview chapter,

the volume also includes contributions focusing specifically on Chinese societies (the mainland PRC, Hong Kong and Taiwan), Korea, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore. These studies show how changes in the representation of Japan have been related to political, social and cultural shifts within the societies of East Asia – and in particular to the ways in which these societies have imagined or constructed their own identities. Bringing together contributors working in the fields of education, anthropology, history, sociology, political science and media studies, this interdisciplinary volume will be of interest to all students and scholars concerned with issues of identity, politics and culture in the societies of East Asia, and to those seeking a deeper understanding of Japan's fraught relations with its regional neighbours.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Sabelo and Mhlanga, Brilliant. *Bondage of Boundaries and Identity Politics in Postcolonial Africa* (Africa Institute of South Africa, 2013)

Description and picture from: www.africanbookscollective.com/books/bondage-of-boundaries-and-identity-politics-in-postcolonial-africa



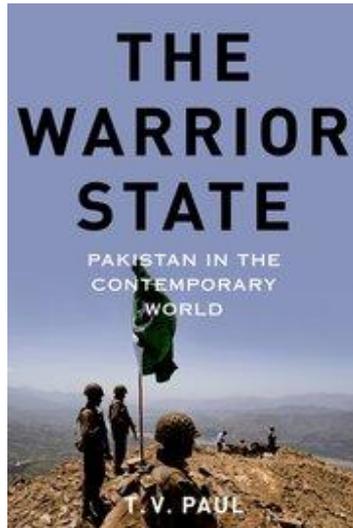
What has confounded African efforts to create cohesive, prosperous and just states in postcolonial Africa? What has been the long-term impact of the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 on African unity and African statehood? Why is postcolonial Africa haunted by various ethno national conflicts? Is secession and irredentism the solution? Can we talk of ethno-futures for Africa? These are the kinds of fundamental questions that this important book addresses. Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Brilliant Mhlanga's book introduces the metaphor of the 'northern problem' to dramatise the fact that there is no major African postcolonial state that does not enclose within its borders a disgruntled minority that is complaining of marginalization, domination and suppression. The irony is that in 1963 at the formation of the OAU, postcolonial African leaders embraced the boundaries arbitrarily drawn by European colonialists and institutionalised the principle of inviolability of 'bondage of

boundaries' thereby contributing to the problem of ethno-national conflicts. The successful struggle for independence of the Eritrean people and the secession of South Sudan in 2011 have encouraged other dominated and marginalised groups throughout Africa to view secession as an

option. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Mhlanga successfully assembled competent African scholars to deal exhaustively with various empirical cases of ethno-national conflicts throughout the African continent as well as engaging with such pertinent issues as Pan-Africanism as a panacea to these problems. This important book delves deeper into complex issues of space, languages, conflict, security, nation-building, war on terror, secession, migration, citizenship, militias, liberation, violence and Pan-Africanism.

Paul, T. V. *The Warrior State: Pakistan in the Contemporary World* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

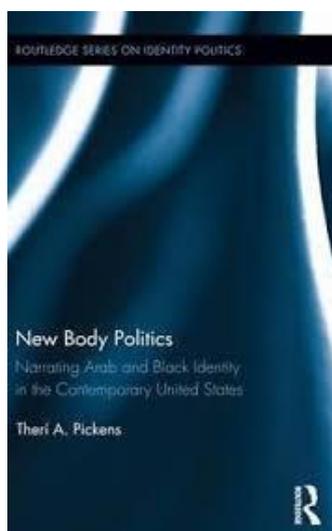
Description and picture from: global.oup.com/academic/product/the-warrior-state-9780199322237



Seemingly from its birth, Pakistan has teetered on the brink of becoming a failed state. Today, it ranks 133rd out of 148 countries in global competitiveness. Its economy is as dysfunctional as its political system is corrupt; both rely heavily on international aid for their existence. Taliban forces occupy 30 percent of the country. It possesses over a hundred nuclear weapons that could easily fall into terrorists' hands. Why, in an era when countries across the developing world are experiencing impressive economic growth and building democratic institutions, has Pakistan been such a conspicuous failure? In *The Warrior State*, noted international relations and South Asia scholar T.V. Paul untangles this fascinating riddle. Paul argues that the "geostrategic curse"--akin to the "resource curse" that plagues oil-rich autocracies--is at the root of Pakistan's unique inability to progress. Since its founding in 1947, Pakistan has been at the center of major geopolitical struggles: the US-Soviet rivalry, the conflict with India, and most recently the post 9/11 wars. No matter how ineffective the regime is, massive foreign aid keeps pouring in from major powers and their allies with a stake in the region. The reliability of such aid defuses any pressure on political elites to launch the far-reaching domestic reforms necessary to promote sustained growth, higher standards of living, and more stable democratic institutions. Paul shows that excessive war-making efforts have drained Pakistan's limited economic resources without making the country safer or more stable. Indeed, despite the regime's emphasis on security, the country continues to be beset by widespread violence and terrorism. In an age of transnational terrorism and nuclear proliferation, understanding Pakistan's development, particularly the negative effects of foreign aid and geopolitical centrality, is more important than ever. Painstakingly researched and brilliantly argued, *The Warrior State* tackles what may be the world's most dangerous powder keg and uncovers the true causes of Pakistan's enormously consequential failure.

Pickens, Therí. *New Body Politics: Narrating Arab and Black Identity in the Contemporary United States* (Routledge, 2014)

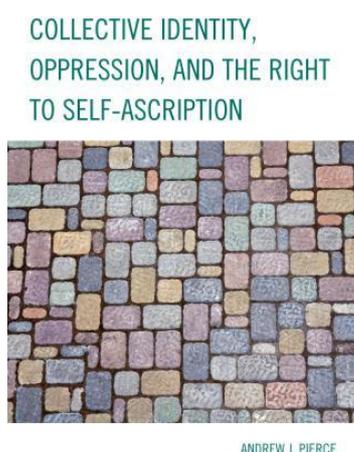
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In the increasingly multi-racial and multi-ethnic American landscape of the present, understanding and bridging dynamic cross-cultural conversations about social and political concerns becomes a complicated humanistic project. How do everyday embodied experiences transform from being anecdotal to having social and political significance? What can the experience of corporeality offer social and political discourse? And, how does that discourse change when those bodies belong to Arab Americans and African Americans? Therí A. Pickens discusses a range of literary, cultural, and archival material where narratives emphasize embodied experience to examine how these experiences constitute Arab Americans and African Americans as social and political subjects. Pickens argues that Arab American and African American narratives rely on the body's fragility, rather than its exceptional strength or emotion, to create urgent social and political critiques. The creators of these narratives find potential in mundane experiences such as breathing, touch, illness, pain, and death. Each chapter in this book focuses on one of these everyday embodied experiences and examines how authors mobilize that fragility to create social and political commentary. Pickens discusses how the authors' focus on quotidian experiences complicates their critiques of the nation state, domestic and international politics, exile, cultural mores, and the medical establishment. *New Body Politics* participates in a vibrant interdisciplinary conversation about cross-ethnic studies, American literature, and Arab American literature. Using intercultural analysis, Pickens explores issues of the body and representation that will be relevant to fields as varied as Political Science, African American Studies, Arab American Studies, and Disability Studies.

Pierce, Andrew. *Collective Identity, Oppression, and the Right to Self-Ascription* (Lexington Books, 2013)

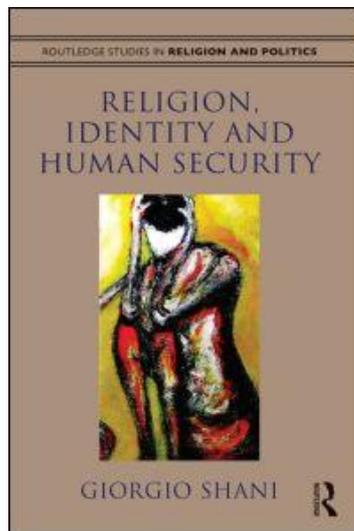
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Collective Identity, Oppression, and the Right to Self-Ascription argues that groups have an irreducibly collective right to determine the meaning of their shared group identity, and that such a right is especially important for historically oppressed groups. The author specifies this right by way of a modified discourse ethic, demonstrating that it can provide the foundation for a conception of identity politics that avoids many of its usual pitfalls. The focus throughout is on racial identity, which provides a test case for the theory. That is, it investigates what it would mean for racial identities to be self-ascribed rather than imposed, establishing the possible role racial identity might play in a just society. The book thus makes a unique contribution to both the field of critical theory, which has been woefully silent on issues of race, and to race theory, which often either presumes that a just society would be a raceless society, or focuses primarily on understanding existing racial inequalities, in the manner typical of so-called “non-ideal theory.”

Shani, Giorgio. *Religion, Identity and Human Security* (Routledge, 2014)

Description and picture from: www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415509060



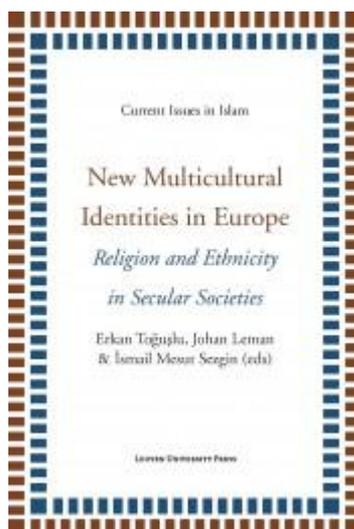
Religion, Identity and Human Security seeks to demonstrate that a major source of human insecurity comes from the failure of states around the world to recognize the increasing cultural diversity of their populations which has resulted from globalization. Shani begins by setting out the theoretical foundations, dealing with the transformative effects of globalization on identity, violence and security. The second part of the volume then draws on different cases of sites of human insecurity around the globe to develop these ideas, examining themes such as:

- securitization of religious symbols
- retreat from multiculturalism
- rise of exclusivist ethno-religious identities post- 9/11
- state religion, colonization and the 'racialization' of migration

Highlighting that religion can be a source of both human security and insecurity in a globalizing world, Shani offers a 'critical' human security paradigm that seeks to de-secularize the individual by recognizing the culturally contested and embedded nature of human identities. The work argues that religion serves an important role in re-embedding individuals deracinated from their communities by neo-liberal globalization and will be of interest to students of International Relations, Security Studies and Religion and Politics.

Toguslu, Erkan *et al.* (eds). *New Multicultural Identities in Europe: Religion and Ethnicity in Secular Societies* (Leuven University Press, 2014)

Description and picture from: upers.kuleuven.be/en/book/9789058679819

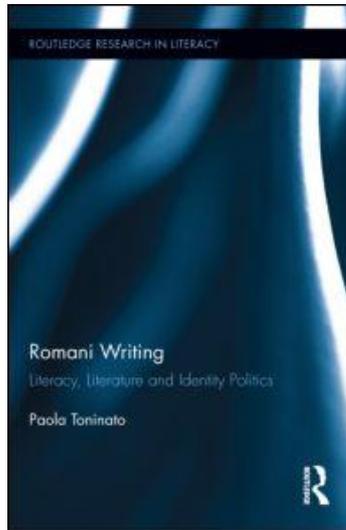


How to understand Europe's post-migrant Islam on the one hand and indigenous, anti-Islamic movements on the other? What impact will religion have on the European secular world and its regulation? How do social and economic transitions on a transnational scale challenge ethnic and religious identifications? These questions are at the very heart of the debate on multiculturalism in present-day Europe and are addressed by the authors in this book. Through the lens of post-migrant societies, manifestations of identity appear in pluralized, fragmented, and deterritorialized forms. This new European multiculturalism calls into question the nature of boundaries between various ethnic-religious groups, as well as the demarcation lines within ethnic-religious communities. Although the contributions in this volume focus on Islam, ample attention is also paid to Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism. The authors present empirical data from cases in Turkey, Germany, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, Poland, Norway,

Sweden, and Belgium, and sharpen the perspectives on the religious-ethnic manifestations of identity in the transnational context of 21st-century Europe.

Toninato, Paola. *Romani Writing: Literacy, Literature and Identity Politics* (Routledge, 2014)

Description and picture from: www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415805902



The Roma (commonly known as "Gypsies") have largely been depicted in writings and in popular culture as an illiterate group. However, as *Romani Writing* shows, the Roma have a deep understanding of literacy and its implications, and use writing for a range of different purposes. While some Romani writers adopt an "oral" use of the written medium, which aims at opposing and deconstructing anti-Gypsy stereotypes, other Romani authors use writing for purposes of identity-building. Writing is for Romani activists and intellectuals a key factor in establishing a shared identity and introducing a common language that transcends linguistic and geographical boundaries between different Romani groups. Romani authors, acting in-between different cultures and communication systems, regard writing as an act of cultural mediation through which they are able to rewrite Gypsy images and negotiate their identity while retaining their ethnic specificity. Indeed, *Romani Writing* demonstrates how Romani authors have started to create self-images in which the Roma are no longer portrayed as "objects", but become "subjects" of written representation.