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Nota di contenuto	Shadows of modernity -- I: Theoretical Explorations -- Compromise and closure: a theory of social dynamics -- The making of modern communities -- II: State-Building and Ethnic Conflict -- Who owns the state? Ethnic conflicts after the end of empires -- Nationalism and ethnic mobilisation in Mexico -- From empire to ethnocracy : Iraq since the Ottomans -- III: The Politics of Exclusion in Nationalised States -- Racism and xenophobia -- Nationalising multi-ethnic Switzerland.
Sommario/riassunto	Andreas Wimmer argues that nationalist and ethnic politics have shaped modern societies to a far greater extent than has been acknowledged by social scientists. The modern state governs in the name of a people defined in ethnic and national terms. Democratic

participation, equality before the law and protection from arbitrary violence were offered only to the ethnic group in a privileged relationship with the emerging nation-state. Depending on circumstances, the dynamics of exclusion took on different forms. Where nation building was 'successful', immigrants and 'ethnic minorities' are excluded from full participation; they risk being targets of xenophobia and racism. In weaker states, political closure proceeded along ethnic, rather than national lines and leads to corresponding forms of conflict and violence. In chapters on Mexico, Iraq and Switzerland, Wimmer provides extended case studies that support and contextualise this argument.
