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Sommario/riassunto

The historic myths of a people/nation usually play an important role in the creation and consolidation of the basic concepts from which the self-image of that nation derives. These concepts include not only images of the nation itself, but also images of other peoples. Although the construction of ethnic stereotypes during the "long" nineteenth century initially had other functions than simply the homogenization of the particular culture and the exclusion of "others" from the public sphere, the evaluation of peoples according to criteria that included "level of civilization" yielded "rankings" of ethnic groups within the Habsburg Monarchy. That provided the basis for later, more divisive ethnic characterizations of exclusive nationalism, as addressed in this volume that examines the roots and results of ethnic, nationalist, and racial conflict in the region from a variety of historical and theoretical perspectives.
