

Chapter 18: Race in world politics

- The making of the Atlantic world was crucial to the emergence of the West as the dominant regional force in world politics. And race was fundamental to this endeavour. Similarly race was fundamental to the subsequent expansion of European empires across the globe.
- Race cannot, therefore, be understood as separate from, adjunctive to, or derivative of the making of contemporary world politics. Rather, race is a fundamental ordering principle of world politics.
- Race orders world politics by adjudicating which groups have competencies to be fully human. This adjudication relies upon two calculi: the cultural calculus of race and the biological calculus of race. Each calculus determines the hierarchies and exclusions among peoples. Yet it is just as important to note that both calculi render the 'darker races' threats to the civilized race of white Europeans. And it is also important to note that each calculus took on new forms over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- Even if race has been used to categorize and subjugate peoples, these same peoples have utilized racial ascriptions to resist their subjugation. While this dual usage of race might appear paradoxical, it is important to keep in mind that race is not something that simply happens to peoples considered 'lesser races'. Rather, these peoples have always been actively involved in contesting the ordering principles of race, especially its hierarchies and exclusions that determine who is competently human.
- There are no 'race genes': race is not natural but rather socially constructed. Race might even be mutable for at least some people, some of the time. Nonetheless, the effects of racialization are no less real for being constructed; indeed, they can be deadly.
- The modern concept of culture and its associated logics of ethnic categorization are inescapably entangled with the production and practice of race. The contemporary critique of 'new racism' speaks to this crucial issue.
- Through the critique of 'white privilege' it is possible to understand how a white person might be anti-racist in principle yet still reproduce—and even benefit from—the hierarchical and exclusionary ordering principle of race. White supremacy is a structural condition, not an individual prejudice.
- Thus, while explicitly 'racist' discourse and practice might nowadays be rare in world politics, race remains a key ordering principle.
- The cultural calculus of race remains influential in world politics in so far as it provides the core premises informing 'new racism'. Practices of racialization now tend to proceed mainly through cultural rather than biological referents.
- For Western states, the premises of 'new racism' have helped to frame foreign policy concerns over the GWOT as well as domestic concerns over multiculturalism and immigration.
- The description of Israel as an apartheid state is contentious. Nonetheless, racialized policies associated with apartheid—population segregation, land occupation, granting of differential rights, and violent policing of divisions—continue in the present, and not only in Israel.

- The violence, dispossessions, and injustices through which the Atlantic world was formed have enduring legacies in world politics. They constitute a living past through which claims on global justice are made.