



Nationalism (Short Histories of Big Ideas)

By R.J.B Bosworth

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Why do many of us swell with pride at the sound of the national anthem or sight of the national flag? Why do we use our nationalities to describe who we are? Why do politicians claim to stand for 'national values' above all else?

In his new critical study of nationalism, R.J.B. Bosworth explores the origins and purpose of the division of human kind into national groupings. The book explores the history of nationalism, arguing that the present is seeing a dangerous growth of what might be called 'national fundamentalism'. Bosworth suggests that nations work best when they possess the ability to criticize their nationalism. They become menacing when they demand the nationalization of people's empathy, lauding 'national values', for example, rather than humane or civilized ones. *Nationalism* demonstrates how the globalizing world is seeing a renaissance and adaptation of ideas that were prevalent in the inter-war period, and challenges us to decide whether we should reject nationalist fundamentalism in a civilized world.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A stunning account of how Europe... came to embrace nationalist attachments to land and flags and anthems and ancestry... Bosworth's grim tale of avaricious patriotism and chauvinist fealty gone feral is told with ironic grace and deftness."

David Lowenthal, Professor Emeritus, *University College London*

"Nationalism is a fresh and refreshing exploration of this seemingly inextinguishable phenomenon that deserves to be widely read and its message taken very seriously. [I]t is [both] deeply learned and unobtrusively analytical, [as well as] openly personal, spikily argumentative and; yes, critical of a current of ideology, culture and politics the author considers neither natural nor, over time, beneficial to the human species."

Martin Blinkhorn, Professor Emeritus of Modern European History, *Lancaster University*

"This is an intellectually stimulating and playful volume which many readers will find satisfying."

Atsuko Ichijo, *Kingston University*

From the Back Cover

So you think you know what makes the world go round? Read about the ideas that revolutionized the 20th century.

The twentieth century was a period of seismic change on a global scale, witnessing two world wars, the rise and fall of communism, the establishment of a global economy, the beginnings of global warming and a complete reversal in the status of women in large parts of the world.

Many of these changes were brought about thanks to powerful ideologies - 'big ideas' that irrevocably altered the way humans viewed their world. *Short Histories of Big Ideas* are brief, easy-to-understand introductions to the ideologies that shaped the twentieth century. Each volume explains the key aspects of an idea and provides a concise history of its growth and influence on our world perspective.

"Nationalism is a fresh and refreshing exploration of this seemingly inextinguishable phenomenon that deserves to be widely read and its message taken very seriously. [I]t is [both] deeply learned and unobtrusively analytical, [as well as] openly personal, spikily argumentative and; yes, critical of a current of ideology, culture and politics the author considers neither natural nor, over time, beneficial to the human species." Martin Blinkhorn, Professor Emeritus of Modern European History, Lancaster University

Should nationalism be rejected in a civilised world?

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R.J.B. Bosworth is the author of twenty books, the most recent of which, *Mussolini* (2002) and *Mussolini's Italy* (2005), have been multiple prize winners in his native Australia .

About the Author

R.J.B. Bosworth is Professor at the Department of History, University of Western Australia.

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