



The Return of History: Conflict, Migration, and Geopolitics in the Twenty-First Century (CBC Massey Lectures)

By Jennifer Welsh

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In 1989, as the Berlin Wall crumbled and the Cold War dissipated, the American political commentator Francis Fukuyama wrote a famous essay, entitled "The End of History." Fukuyama argued that the demise of the confrontation between Communism and capitalism, and the expansion of Western liberal democracy, signaled the endpoint of humanity's sociocultural and political evolution, the waning of traditional power politics, and the path toward a more peaceful world. At the heart of his thesis was the audaciously optimistic idea of "progress" in history.

But a quarter of a century after Fukuyama's bold prediction about transcending the struggles of the past, history has returned. The twenty-first century has not seen unfettered progress toward peace and a single form of government, but the reappearance of trends and practices many believed had been erased: arbitrary executions, attempts to annihilate ethnic and religious minorities, the starvation of besieged populations, invasion and annexation of territory, and the mass movement of refugees and displaced persons.

This book will both illustrate and explain this return of history, and it will also argue how the reappearance of things deemed "barbaric" or "medieval" has a modern twist.

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Editorial Review

Review

Welsh offers an engaging and thought-provoking argument that history has not ended but, in fact, has returned with a 'modern twist.' (*National Post*)

This is where Welsh's unusual perspective serves her well and distinguishes this book from other return-of-history jeremiads. Not only is she exceptionally fluent in the debates and histories of political science, but she has a unique understanding of the actual workings and breaking points of the formal international order and its failings. (*The Globe and Mail*)

Insightful, frighteningly timely, and highly accessible. . . . a seamless, finely honed argument deserving of broad readership and study. (*Publishers Weekly, STARRED REVIEW*)

Of the authors who have contended with Fukuyama's intellectual legacy, Jennifer Welsh is in the company of the most reasonable and reflective. (*The Literary Review of Canada*)

Outright inspirational . . . Whether you are interested in history, political science, economics, or are simply concerned about the state of the world, this book will force you to think long and hard. (*Quill & Quire, STARRED REVIEW*)

Welsh mounts a forceful moral argument. (*Maclean's*)

About the Author

JENNIFER WELSH is Professor and Chair in International Relations at the European University Institute in Florence (Italy) and a Fellow of Somerville College, University of Oxford. From 2013 until 2016, she was the Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary General on the Responsibility to Protect. She co-founded the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict, and has taught international relations at the University of Toronto, McGill University, and the Central European University (Prague). Welsh is the author, co-author, and editor of several books and articles on international relations, the changing character of war, and Canadian foreign policy. She was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan, and is of Metis descent. She now lives in Italy, with her husband and two children.

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