



Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism

By Michael Ignatieff

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Until the end of the Cold War, the politics of national identity was confined to isolated incidents of ethnic strife and civil war in distant countries. Now, with the collapse of Communist regimes across Europe and the loosening of the Cold War's clamp on East-West relations, a surge of nationalism has swept the world stage. In *Blood and Belonging*, Ignatieff makes a thorough examination of why blood ties—in places as diverse as Yugoslavia, Kurdistan, Northern Ireland, Quebec, Germany, and the former Soviet republics—may be the definitive factor in international relations today. He asks how ethnic pride turned into ethnic cleansing, whether modern citizens can lay the ghosts of a warring past, why—and whether—a people need a state of their own, and why armed struggle might be justified. *Blood and Belonging* is a profound and searching look at one of the most complex issues of our time.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

To understand the current upsurge of nationalist tensions, Ignatieff (*The Needs of Strangers*) traveled through war-torn former Yugoslavia, then to reunited Germany, Ukraine, Quebec, Kurdistan and Northern Ireland. In a compelling mix of interviews, history, vivid impressions and sharp reportage, he argues that nationalism can be a constructive, welding force, but that, in its extreme, authoritarian form, it serves as a collective escape from reality, whose adherents, inhabiting a delusional realm of noble causes and tragic sacrifice, strait jacket themselves and other groups in the fiction of an irreducible ethnic identity. Ignatieff includes a firsthand look inside a Kurdish guerrilla camp in northern Iraq, a meeting with a neo-Nazi skinhead in Leipzig, an interview with octogenarian Yugoslav dissident Milovan Djilas (author of *Conversations With Stalin*) and encounters with Cree Indians of northern Canada who, adding their voices to the separatist chorus of French-speaking Quebecois, are demanding self-determination in an effort to stave off encroaching hydroelectric development. Photos.

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From Library Journal

This is an immensely impressive meditation on nationalism in the post-Cold War era. Ignatieff, a journalist and author of both fiction and nonfiction works, demonstrates a sublime understanding of the histories and politics of Croatia and Serbia, Germany, Ukraine, Quebec, Kurdistan, and Northern Ireland as he probes the origins and manifestations of nationalism in these disparate settings. In moving prose that is both powerful and subtle, Ignatieff introduces readers to the intellectual origins of modern nationalism as well as the often brutal results. While this book may lack some of the conceptual dimensions of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's *Pandaemonium* (LJ 5/1/93) or William Pfaff's *The Wrath of Nations: Civilization and the Fury of Nationalism* (LJ 11/15/93), it is nonetheless a remarkable work.

- *Joseph P. Parsons, Columbia Coll., Chicago*

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From [Booklist](#)

Companion to a six-part BBC-TV series PBS will broadcast this year, Ignatieff's probing analysis of the meanings and consequences of "the new nationalism" in Croatia and Serbia, Germany, the Ukraine, Quebec, Kurdistan, and Northern Ireland provides crucial insights into the fragility of "civic nationalism" and the "liberal virtues [of] tolerance, compromise, reason." Ignatieff, a supreme cosmopolitan himself--ethnically Russian and British, born and raised in Canada, a British writer and broadcaster for much of his adult life--has compiled a nuanced portrait of the post-Cold War traumas and terrors that contribute to the appeal and the violence of ethnic nationalism in the 1990s. His account explicates the international realities that frame the explosion of nationalism around the world and reminds believers in a global economy and a postnationalist world that a cosmopolitan tolerance of differences is a luxury likely to gain support only where a secure nation-state holds individual and tribal fear and vengeance in check. *Mary Carroll*

Users Review

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