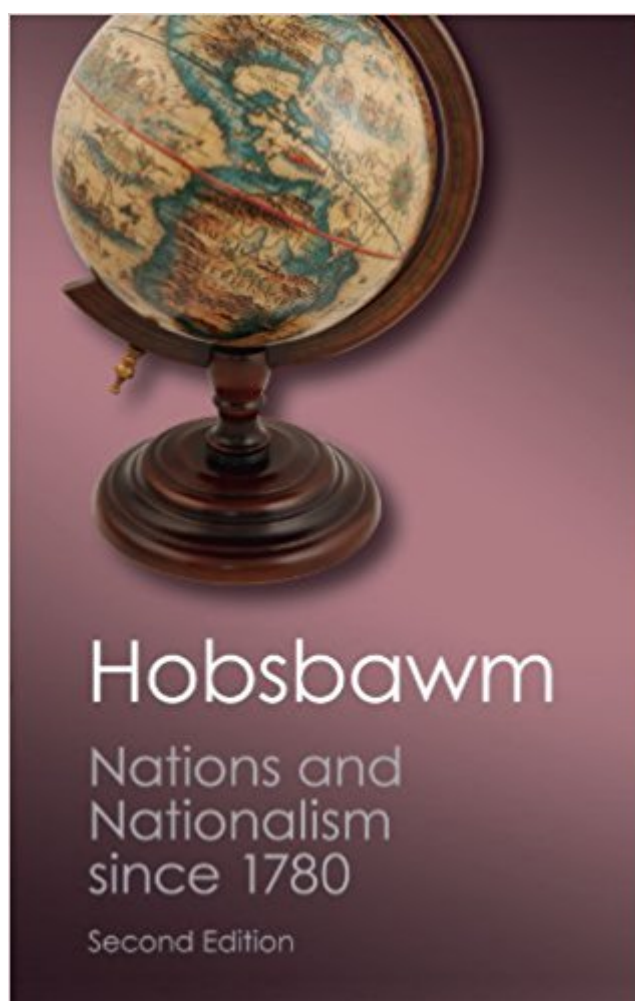


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Nations And Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality (Canto Classics)



Synopsis

An update to the classic text, perfect for those interested in global politics and nationalism! Nations and Nationalism since 1780 is Eric Hobsbawm's widely acclaimed and highly readable inquiry into the question of nationalism. Events in the late twentieth century in Eastern Europe and the Soviet republics have since reinforced the central importance of nationalism in the history of the political evolution and upheaval. This second edition has been updated in light of those events, with a final chapter addressing the impact of the dramatic changes that have taken place. Also included are additional maps to illustrate nationalities, languages and political divisions across Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"...no serious historian of nations and nationalism can be a committed political nationalist...Nationalism required too much belief in what is patently not so. As Renan said: 'Getting its history wrong is part of being a nation.' This bold and principled comment, which is duly qualified in the ellipsis I left out, is near the beginning of one of the most liberating books on modern nationalism. This is a vital book which puts nationalism into its historical context, and it reminds us of the vital truth that Yugoslavia and Rwanda were not doomed by something called "irreconcilable ethnic strife," to fall into the hell that the First World has done its part to condemn them to."The basic characteristic of the nation and everything with it is its modernity." Even the very vocabulary of nationality is relatively new. Especially invaluable is Hobsbawm's chapter on popular

proto-nationalism as he discusses all the elements that supposedly "cause" nationalism and finds them all insufficient. Many Central and Eastern European peasants did not view themselves so much as members of particular nationalities but as peasants. The term "Estonian" for instance only came into use in the 1860s. Languages appear stronger, yet dialects were so common up until the late nineteenth century that only half of the French in 1789 spoke the language, while only 2.5% of pre-unification Italy spoke what is now Italian. Nationalists often had to write their own grammars and dictionaries, and in the process the various Yugoslav groups turned three major dialects into the language we now know as Serbo-Croat. And where "there are no other languages within earshot, one's own idiom is not so much a group criterion as something that all people have, like legs.

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