



Crooked Timber of Humanity :: Chapters in the History of Ideas

Isaiah Berlin

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"Out of the crooked timber of humanity, no straight thing was ever made." ---Immanuel Kant
Isaiah Berlin was one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century---an activist of the intellect who marshaled vast erudition and eloquence in defense of the endangered values of individual liberty and moral and political pluralism. In *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, he exposes the links between the ideas of the past and the social and political cataclysms of our own time: between the Platonic belief in absolute truth and the lure of authoritarianism; between the eighteenth-century reactionary ideologue Joseph de Maistre and twentieth-century Fascism; between the romanticism of Schiller and Byron and the militant---and sometimes genocidal---nationalism that convulses the modern world.

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