



## The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas, Second Edition

By 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 plurality. 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.

This new edition features a revised text that supplants all previous versions, a new foreword in which award-winning novelist John Banville discusses Berlin's life and ideas, particularly his defense of pluralism, and a substantial new appendix that provides rich context, including letters by Berlin and previously uncollected writings, most notably his virtuoso review of Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy*.

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#### About the Author

Isaiah Berlin was a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. He was renowned as an essayist and as the author of many books, among them "Karl Marx, Four Essays on Liberty, Russian Thinkers, The Sense of Reality, The Proper Study of Mankind," and, from Princeton, "Concepts and Categories," "Personal Impressions," "The Crooked Timber of Humanity," "The Hedgehog and the Fox," "The Roots of Romanticism," "The Power of Ideas," and "Three Critics of the Enlightenment." Henry Hardy, a Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, is one of Isaiah Berlin's literary trustees. He has edited several other volumes by Berlin and is currently preparing Berlin's letters and remaining unpublished writings for publication.

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