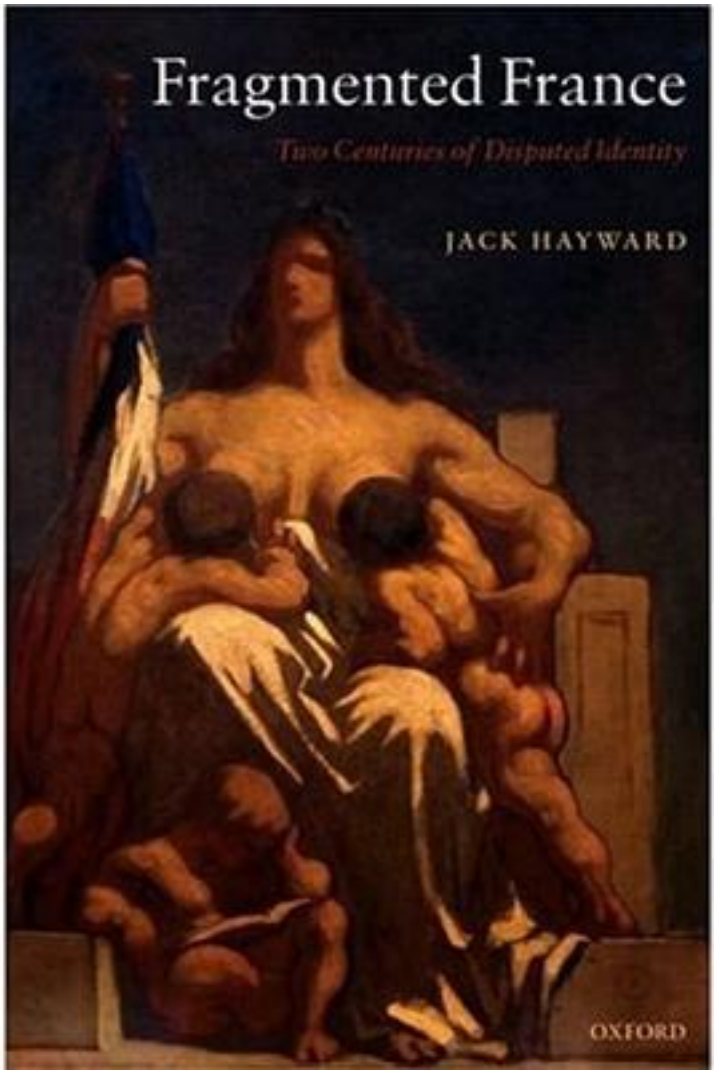
Fragmented France



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For a thousand years France has struggled to impose unity upon its diverse components. For most of the time its leaders have sought to define its identity by opposition to the 'Anglo-Saxons': first England, then Britain and the USA. The prologue explores France's self-image by contrast with the Anglo-American counter-identity. Part one deals with the unfinished Revolution from 1789 to 1878 when the Third Republic achieved relative stability. After examining the variety of symbolic representatives of Frenchness in the search for democratic legitimacy and national unanimity, the enduring divisions in French society are explained in their ideological, social, religious, territorial and political aspects. Emphasis is given to the role of writers and intellectuals in expressing these cleavages before analysing how parliamentary democracy was established by the Third Republic. Part two starts by relating French political paralysis to the slowness of socio-economic modernisation before turning to the polarizing role of intellectuals in perpetuating varieties of Left and Right battles over who personified anti-France . The adversarial character of French party politics is then considered as it fluctuated up to the present in terms of the fragmented Left and Right, between the rhetorical revolutionary and reactionary extremes and the conservative or timidly reformist realities. The colonial and international role of France is described, stressing Franco-German European Union leadership. The protectionist aversion to competitive global capitalism results in reluctant adaption to forces beyond French control.

作者介绍:

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