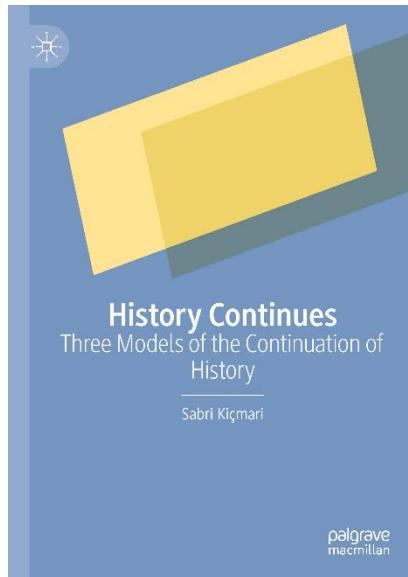


## BOOK REVIEW



### History Continues: Three Models of the Continuation of History

Author: Sabri Kiçmari

(2022, Palgrave Macmillan)

Reviewed By

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### About the Author

His Excellency Professor Dr. Sabri Kiçmari is the Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo to Japan and has been a significant public intellectual in his nation for many years. Before this position, he was the inaugural Kosovo Ambassador to Austria from 2008 to 2013 and Australia from 2013 to 2018. Kiçmari is also a distinguished author, having written six books, with his most recent publication, "Introduction into Diplomacy," released by Springer Nature in 2024. He earned a Ph.D. in political science and sociology from the Institute of Political Science and Sociology and completed his studies at the Rheinische-Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn, Germany.

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## About the Book

Kiçmari's "History Continues: Three Models of the Continuation of History" compellingly critiques Francis Fukuyama's "End of History" thesis. It argues that history, far from ending with the collapse of communism, is actively being shaped by three powerful ideological models: Russian ultra-nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Chinese socialism. The book meticulously examines each model, tracing its historical roots, analyzing its fundamental tenets, and assessing its implications for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Kiçmari's analysis is insightful and nuanced. He deftly avoids simplistic generalizations, acknowledging each ideology's internal complexities and contradictions. He masterfully integrates historical context and philosophical arguments, providing a rich and informative narrative. The book delves into each model's political, economic, and social dynamics, exploring their interactions with religion and nationalism. The author effectively demonstrates how these three models challenge liberal democratic norms, offering a sobering assessment of the ongoing ideological conflicts that shape the contemporary world.

History Continues is not just a scholarly critique; it's also a timely warning. Kiçmari highlights the potential for these ideologies to fuel instability, conflict, and even violence on a global scale. The book's strength lies in its rigorous scholarship, balanced approach, and ability to connect seemingly disparate events and trends.

The book is organized into eight chapters:

**Chapter 1**, "Introduction," of Kiçmari's History Continues, sets the stage for his critique of Francis Fukuyama's "End of History" thesis. Kiçmari begins by recounting Fukuyama's 1989 essay, noting the shift from a questioning tone ("The End of History?") to a declarative one ("The End of History and the Last Man") within three years, reflecting evolving geopolitical realities. The essay's optimistic prediction of liberal democracy's triumph, however, failed to anticipate the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of new ideological challenges. Kiçmari highlights that while ostensibly scholarly, Fukuyama's book employs a journalistic approach in its title and chapter headings, aiming for broader appeal. He emphasizes that despite the book's journalistic style, the underlying content is deeply rooted in scientific and philosophical analysis. The author's goal was to understand how Fukuyama's "end of history" concept is fundamentally teleological – implying a predetermined endpoint to historical development – and how this approach, while influential, might be incomplete. The introduction ultimately establishes that, while insightful, Fukuyama's thesis is too simplistic. Kiçmari prepares the reader for a more complex understanding of history, where the "end of history" has not yet

arrived, and several potent ideologies actively continue to shape global events. The subsequent chapters are positioned as an exploration of these countering narratives and their significance for understanding the ongoing evolution of history.

**Chapter 2**, “History Continues,” delves into the core of Kiçmari’s critique of Francis Fukuyama’s “End of History” thesis. Kiçmari challenges Fukuyama’s assertion that history concluded with the triumph of liberal democracy, arguing that history, while not ceasing, has entered a new phase. He meticulously traces Fukuyama’s intellectual lineage, showing how his arguments intertwine with the philosophies of Kant, Hegel, and Marx. Fukuyama’s concept of “the end of history,” Kiçmari argues, is fundamentally normative, not merely descriptive. He analyzes Fukuyama’s idea of “the struggle for recognition,” highlighting the differences between Hegel’s and Marx’s interpretations of class conflict and the implications for Fukuyama’s thesis. The chapter also examines Fukuyama’s contrasting portrayals of the “first man” and the “last man,” showing how these figures embody the contrasting stages of human history, from the struggle for recognition to the complacency of the post-historical era. Kiçmari further challenges Fukuyama’s view on the relationship between democracy, religion, and nationalism. He points out that Fukuyama’s assertion that liberal democracy is the final stage of political development overlooks the resurgence of both religious and nationalist ideologies. The chapter ultimately serves as a thorough dismantling of Fukuyama’s claim of historical closure, laying the groundwork for exploring the three countering ideological models in the subsequent chapters.

**Chapter 3**, “The Totalitarianism of the Twentieth Century: Nazi Fascism and Communism,” examines the rise and fall of 20<sup>th</sup>-century totalitarian regimes as a crucial backdrop for understanding the ongoing challenges to Fukuyama’s “End of History” thesis. Kiçmari begins by highlighting the pessimism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contrasting it with the optimism of the 19<sup>th</sup>, and attributes this shift to the devastation wrought by World Wars I and II. He argues that World War I weakened Europe, paving the way for the rise of new actors, including the United States, and setting the stage for the rise of totalitarian ideologies. The chapter delves into the defining characteristics of totalitarianism, drawing on the work of scholars like Carl Friedrich, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Hannah Arendt. It underscores the crucial role of ideology and terror in maintaining totalitarian rule and the pervasive nature of violence inherent in such systems. The chapter then compares Nazi fascism and communism, highlighting their similarities (e.g., the use of ideology, terror, and the cult of personality) and their differences (e.g., their respective ideological goals and their approaches to private

property). Kiçmari's analysis concludes that while both Nazi fascism and communism ultimately failed to establish lasting global dominance, their legacy of violence and political repression profoundly impacted the 20th century. This failure further undermines Fukuyama's thesis, demonstrating that history's trajectory is far more contingent and complex than he posited. The chapter serves as a historical bridge to Kiçmari's subsequent analysis of contemporary ideological challenges.

**Chapter 4**, "Fukuyama in the Vortex of Theories of International Relations," situates Fukuyama's "End of History" thesis within the broader context of international relations theory. Kiçmari contrasts Fukuyama's optimistic vision of a liberal world order with realism's pessimistic and power-centric perspectives. Realism, which emphasizes state power and the anarchic nature of the international system, sees the pursuit of power as the primary driver of state behavior. Fukuyama's focus on liberal ideology and the eventual triumph of democracy directly contradicts this realist perspective. Kiçmari explores Fukuyama's apparent shift from a purely ideological stance to a more pragmatic "Wilsonian realism," where the US is essential in promoting liberal values globally. However, even this revised approach deviates significantly from traditional realist principles. He further compares Fukuyama's views with constructivism, a school of thought that highlights the socially constructed nature of international relations and emphasizes the role of ideas and norms in shaping state behavior. Ultimately, the chapter highlights Fukuyama's unique position within international relations theory. His optimistic, almost teleological, view of history starkly contrasts other schools of thought's more cautious and often pessimistic perspectives. Kiçmari argues that Fukuyama's bold prediction, while ultimately inaccurate, represents a valuable attempt to connect political philosophy with international relations, an attempt that his subsequent critique will refine and expand upon.

**Chapter 5**, "Ultra-Nationalism as a Model of Continuation of History," examines the resurgence of ultra-nationalism as a significant challenge to Fukuyama's "End of History" thesis. Kiçmari argues that ultra-nationalism, while distinct from patriotism, represents a powerful force shaping contemporary geopolitics, particularly in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. He defines ultra-nationalism as pursuing national recognition and dignity that often prioritizes power and expansion over economic development or human rights. The chapter focuses primarily on Russian ultra-nationalism, tracing its historical roots from the Russian Empire's expansionist policies to the current assertive foreign policy of Vladimir Putin. Kiçmari details Putin's ideological alignment with figures like Alexander Dugin and analyzes the implications

of Putinism for regional stability. The chapter also discusses Serbian ultra-nationalism, highlighting its role in the Yugoslav wars and its ongoing influence in the Balkans. Kiçmari explores the ideological underpinnings of ultra-nationalism, emphasizing the role of historical narratives and the construction of “enemies” in justifying aggressive actions. He contrasts the patriotic aspirations of the Baltic states, who sought integration into the European Union, with the expansionist aims of Russia and Serbia. The chapter demonstrates how ultra-nationalism, fueled by a sense of historical grievance and a desire for national dominance, actively shapes geopolitical events, thus contradicting Fukuyama's assertion of a historically determined outcome. This serves as a crucial case study in demonstrating the ongoing dynamism of history and the enduring power of competing ideologies.

**Chapter 6**, “Islamic Fundamentalism as a Model of Continuation of History,” examines the rise of Islamic fundamentalism as another powerful counter-narrative to Fukuyama's “End of History” thesis. Kiçmari argues that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ensuing shift in the international system created a fertile ground for this ideology's emergence, characterized by its rejection of liberal values and its readiness to employ violence to achieve its goals. The chapter distinguishes between various forms of Islamic fundamentalism, highlighting the differences between political Islamism (which seeks to establish Islamic states through political action) and Islamic fundamentalism (which emphasizes strict adherence to religious principles, often rejecting state involvement). The analysis focuses on the contrasting approaches of Al Qaeda and ISIS, demonstrating how these groups represent different strategies for achieving their ideological objectives. Al Qaeda employed a decentralized network strategy, while ISIS attempted to establish a territorial caliphate. Kiçmari explores the ideological roots of Islamic fundamentalism, tracing its intellectual lineage and analyzing its appeal to various segments of the Muslim world. He critically examines the role of religion in shaping political behavior, highlighting the justifications used to legitimize violence against those deemed “unbelievers.” The chapter concludes by arguing that despite the setbacks suffered by groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS, Islamic fundamentalism remains a potent force influencing global politics and posing a significant challenge to Fukuyama's optimistic vision of the future. The enduring power of this ideology, despite its failures, undermines Fukuyama's claim of historical finality.

**Chapter 7**, “Chinese Socialism as a Model of the Continuation of History,” analyzes the rise of China as a significant global power and its challenge to Fukuyama's “End of History” thesis. Kiçmari argues that China's unique blend of authoritarian rule, a one-party

system, and market-oriented economic policies directly contradicts Fukuyama's prediction of liberal democracy's inevitable triumph. The chapter traces China's remarkable economic growth, increasing global influence, and assertive foreign policy. Kiçmari examines the historical context of China's development, including the impact of the Cultural Revolution and the Tiananmen Square protests. He highlights the role of nationalism in consolidating the CCP's power and shaping China's identity and its relationship with internal and external actors. He discusses the concept of "socialism with Chinese characteristics," arguing that it represents a distinctive governance model, combining socialist ideology with market mechanisms. The chapter explores several critical aspects of Chinese society, including its complex relationship with democracy, human rights record, approach to religious freedom, and the challenges of balancing economic growth with environmental concerns and social inequality. It concludes that China's success in combining authoritarian governance with economic growth presents a significant alternative to Fukuyama's model, demonstrating that history has not ended and the future remains open to various ideological trajectories.

**Chapter 8, "Conclusion,"** Kiçmari summarizes his central argument: Fukuyama's "End of History" thesis, momentarily triumphant in 1989, ultimately failed to account for the resurgence of powerful counter-ideologies. The three models analyzed—Russian ultra-nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Chinese socialism—demonstrate that history continues, shaped by competing visions for the future. While liberal democracy achieved a significant victory in 1989, it did not achieve total dominance. Kiçmari emphasizes the enduring influence of Russian ultra-nationalism, particularly in Eurasia, where Putinism presents a considerable challenge to liberal norms. He highlights Islamic fundamentalism's continuing appeal, despite the setbacks of groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS, and underscores the resilience of Chinese socialism, demonstrating the limitations of Fukuyama's model in explaining China's success. The author emphasizes that while the "end of history" may not have arrived, its concept is a product of a specific historical and ideological context. He argues that global politics will continue to be shaped by the clash of civilizations, cultural differences, and the competing demands of state power. He rejects Fukuyama's simplistic optimism and clash-of-civilization theorists' equally simplistic pessimism, advocating for a more nuanced understanding of the ongoing dynamic interplay between diverse ideological models. Ultimately, Kiçmari stresses the need for a more historically and contextually informed approach to understanding the complexities of the ongoing historical process.

## Review

Kiçmari's "History Continues: Three Models of the Continuation of History" is a compelling and insightful work of scholarship that uniquely challenges Francis Fukuyama's "End of History" thesis. The book transcends a straightforward refutation of Fukuyama's arguments, providing a profound exploration of 21st-century history, focusing on three influential ideological models: Russian ultra-nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Chinese socialism.

### Significance and Appeal

**Depth and Breadth of Analysis:** Kiçmari's analysis goes beyond superficial assessments. He delves deeply into each ideology's historical roots, core tenets, and socio-political ramifications, offering readers a rich understanding of their historical contexts and complexities. This avoids the pitfalls of simplistic interpretations and promotes a nuanced perspective.

**Comparative Analysis:** The comparative examination of these three distinct ideological models is particularly insightful. By juxtaposing and contrasting their strengths and weaknesses, the book fosters a sophisticated understanding of the intricate dynamics shaping the modern world, moving beyond single-perspective analyses.

**Timely Relevance:** The book's engagement with contemporary events—the war in Ukraine, the ongoing spread of Islamic fundamentalism, and China's growing assertiveness—makes it highly relevant and timely, offering critical insights into major global issues.

### Academic and Professional Value

**Enhanced Analytical Skills:** History Continues significantly enhances critical thinking and analytical skills. Its rigorous approach to comparative analysis equips readers with invaluable tools for navigating complex political and ideological landscapes, benefiting students and scholars across diverse disciplines, including political science, history, and sociology.

**Expanded Knowledge Base:** The book expands readers' knowledge of modern global history, ideologies, and politics. This detailed exploration is precious for students and professionals seeking a deeper understanding of these crucial topics.

**Improved Global Awareness:** Kiçmari's work fosters a more sophisticated understanding of contemporary global dynamics. This nuanced perspective is essential for

professionals in many fields, especially those in international relations, political science, and diplomacy.

In conclusion, *History Continues* is a valuable and engaging read for academics and professionals interested in history, political science, and international relations. Its rigorous scholarship, nuanced analysis, and insightful critique of Fukuyama's thesis make it significantly contribute to the field. The book's timely relevance and focus on contemporary global challenges make it essential reading for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of our increasingly complex world.

## References

Kiçmari, S. (2022). *History Continues: Three Models of the Continuation of History*. Palgrave Macmillan.