



Invented History, Fabricated Power

The Narrative Shaping of Civilization and Culture

By *Barry Wood*

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An examination of more than twenty cultures and how kings, empires, religions and societies have enhanced their authority

By focusing on the way political elites have used constructed narrative as a way of validating their claims to power, the author offers a fresh and convincing analytical framework for understanding the emergence of powerful leaders from ancient times to the present.

The author offers a convincing argument that power needs to be considered as something less tangible than mere control of economies or military systems. Historians should also consider power as an invention of elites who for millennia have used artists and story tellers to weave narratives to 'convince' people of the legitimacy of claims to power being made by political elites.

In *Invented History*, the author reminds us that for millennia history has essentially been a narrative shaped by legions of storytellers and artists, who have used their narrative skills to offer explicit validation for the claims to authority and leadership made by political elites.

This book examines more than twenty cultures, both ancient and modern, Eastern and Western, emphasizing how kings, empires, religions and societies have enhanced their authority and power through fictional histories, claims of divine origins, fabricated genealogies, and miraculous events presented in literary works and forged doctrines.

About the Author

Barry Wood has degrees from the universities of Toronto and British Columbia, and an interdisciplinary doctorate in English and American literature, humanities and religious studies from Stanford University. He teaches British and American literature at the University of Houston. His previous books include *Malcolm Lowry: The Writer and His Critics*.

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