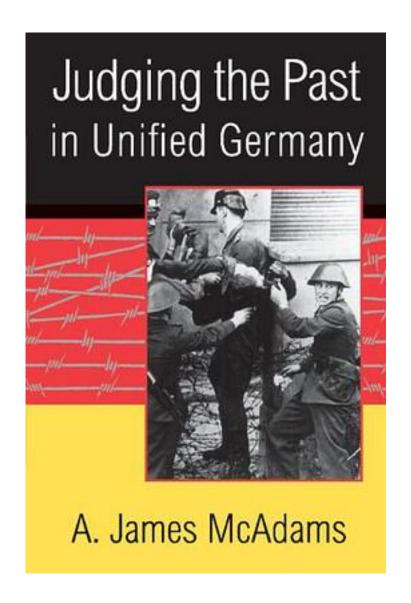
Judging the Past in Unified Germany



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著者:McAdams, A. James

出版者:Cambridge Univ Pr

出版时间:2001-4

装帧:Pap

isbn:9780521001397

In recent years, no modern democracy has taken more aggressive steps to come to terms with a legacy of dictatorship than has the Federal Republic of Germany with the crimes and injustices of Communist East Germany. In this 2001 book, A. James McAdams provides a comprehensive and engaging examination of the four most prominent instances of this policy: criminal trials for the killings at the Berlin Wall; the disqualification of administrative personnel for secret-police ties; parliamentary truth-telling commissions; and private property restitution. On the basis of extensive interviews in Bonn and Berlin over the 1990s, McAdams gives new insight into the difficulties German politicians, judges, bureaucrats, and public officials faced sitting in judgment on the affairs of another state. He argues provocatively that the success of their policies must be measured in terms of the way they used East German history to justify their actions.