

# The Antagonists



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著者:

出版者:

出版时间:

装帧:

isbn:9780671206680

In these days of patriotic cynicism some readers may be inclined to disbelieve the behavior of the zealots of Masada. I direct the doubts of such unfortunates to more contemporary martyrs, say those of Hungary who defied Russian tanks with rocks, and those like the Czech Jan Palach, who chose to welcome the Russian invaders by self-immolation. Also present at the barricades have been the many wildly courageous North and South Vietnamese, Cubans, Africans, Russians, Frenchmen, Germans, Chinese, Greeks, Bulgars, and Japanese, who in one fashion or another decided life

was not worth living without what they personally conceived as freedom. These are the true Now people and there will unquestionably be more of them tomorrow.

In the loosely employed name of freedom man remains the only creature on earth to make war on his own species. Anyone who has convinced himself patriotism is dead has learned nothing from ancient history and does not know contemporary history.

I have been meticulously careful to insure authenticity throughout this book. Many facts were available, although nowhere near the quantity found in the usual research of a historical event. So if I have erred, it is not for want of trying. The works of Josephus were of course of inestimable value, but unfortunately he was not personally present to report the siege of Masada. The magnificent works and archeological research, plus the vicarious inspiration of Yigael Yadin, affected this writing more than any other single force. From his discoveries I have contrived a story.

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