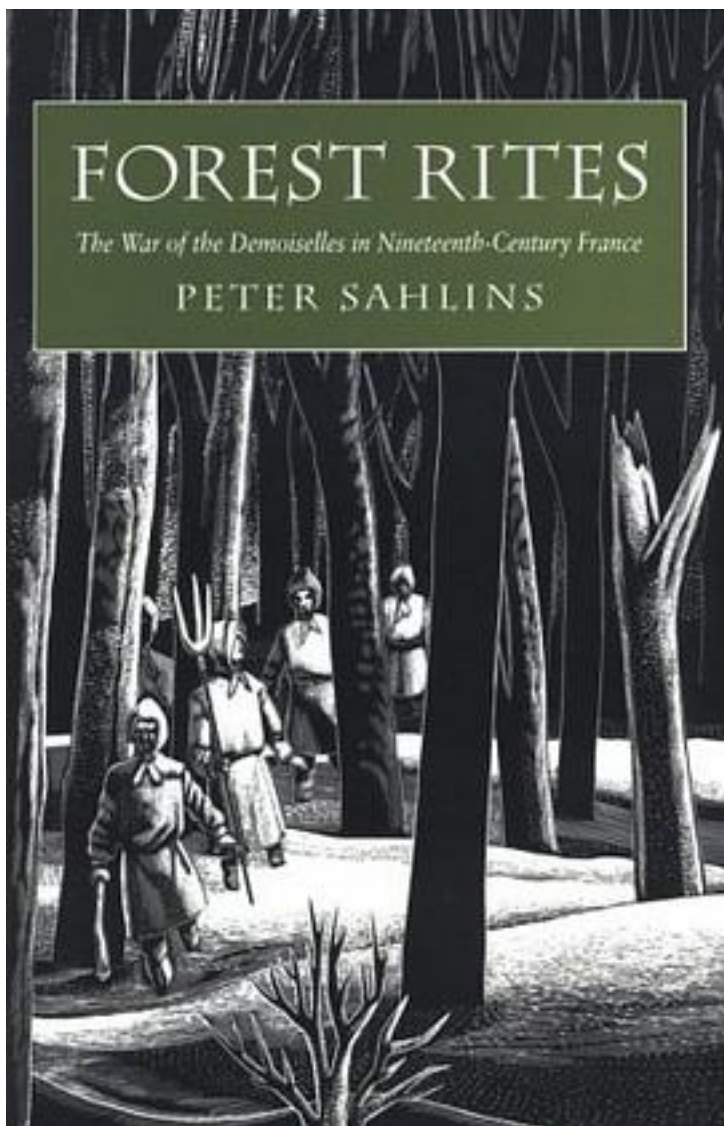


Forest Rites



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In May 1829, strange reports surfaced from the Ariège department in the French Pyrenees, describing male peasants, bizarrely dressed in women's clothes, gathering in the forests at night to chase away state guards and charcoalmakers. This was the raucous War of the Demoiselles, a protest against the national French Forest Code of 1827, which restricted peasants' rights to use state and private forests. Peter Sahlin unravels the fascinating story of this celebrated popular uprising, and in his telling captures the cultural, historical and political currents that swept the countryside during France's July 1830 Revolution. Sahlin explains how and why the Ariège peasants drew on the practices and rituals of folk culture, as well as on a revolutionary tradition, to defend their inherited rights to the forest. To explore these rights and their expression, he delves into the history of forest management, of peasant conflicts with the state, and of popular culture - particularly the disputed history of Carnival and of local rituals of justice. Sahlin also sheds new light on the French revolutionary tradition and the "Three Glorious Days" of July 1830. The drama and symbolism of the War of the Demoiselles have inspired nearly a dozen plays, novels, films and even a comic book. Using the concepts of anthropology and cultural studies as transport, Sahlin moves from this rich event to the wider worlds of peasant society in France. Focusing on the years from 1829 to 1832 but drawing on sources since the 16th century, his book should captivate social, cultural and political historians of both early modern and modern Europe.

作者介绍:

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