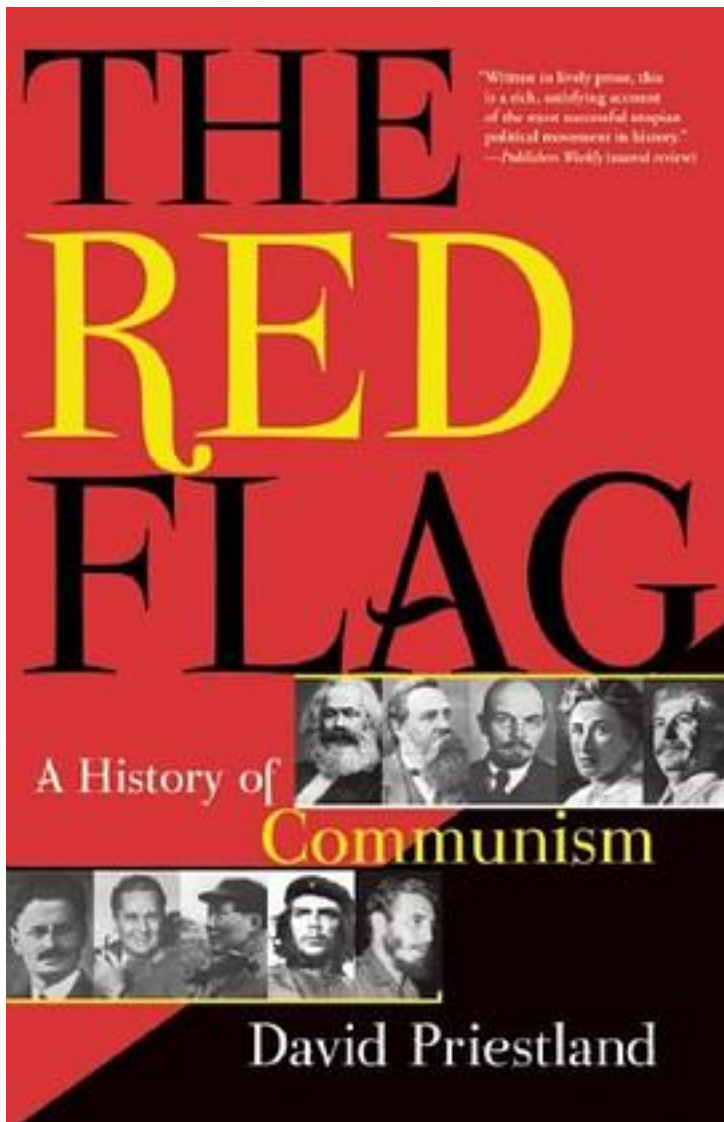


The Red Flag



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Communism was one of the most powerful political and intellectual movements of the modern world; at the height of their influence Communist regimes controlled more than a third of the earth's surface. Given its rapid rise and extensive reach, its sudden and wholly unpredicted collapse after 1989 seems all the more astonishing and in need of explanation.

In *The Red Flag*, David Priestland tells the extraordinary story of a movement that took hold in many societies and countries throughout the world. He examines the ideas and motives of its principal thinkers and leaders: from Marx to Mao, and from Stalin to Che Guevara. Priestland asks what it was about Communism that inspired not only its leaders but also the rank and file - whether the militants of 1920s Russia, the guerrilla fighters of China, or the Marxist students of Ethiopia. And he explores the experience of what it meant to live under Communism for its millions of subjects.

The Red Flag looks at Communist regimes' efforts to build new states and industrial economies, but also explains their grim failures and, in some cases, their capacity to inflict extreme violence. He shows how varied a phenomenon Communism was and the manifold nature of its appeal across different societies: in some it flourished as a response to internal inequalities - economic, political and cultural; in others it became the blueprint for catching up with the 'modernized' West. And yet, while eagerly destroying old structures of privilege, Communist regimes simultaneously built new ones, and it was this dynamic, together with its widespread economic failure and an escalating loss of faith in the system, that destroyed Communism in much of the world.

Now, when a seemingly triumphant globalized capitalism is itself in crisis and the world enters a new phase of political and economic uncertainty, *The Red Flag* is essential reading.

作者介绍:

David Priestland has studied Communism in all its forms for many years, in both Oxford and Moscow State universities. He is University Lecturer in Modern History at Oxford and a fellow of St Edmund Hall, and the author of *Stalinism and the Political of Mobilization*.

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标签

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History

评论

历史事实的部分不予以评价，因为不是特别了解，这也算是我读的第一本系统的共产主义的历史的书。但是言语叙述中充满了浓重的西方中心主义。最后一章的结语是全书最大的败笔-在前面历史叙述部分尚能兼顾到共产主义发展的外部因素（如western capitalism），到结论部分这部分却消失不见，对communism做了一个discontextualised的评价。

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书评

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