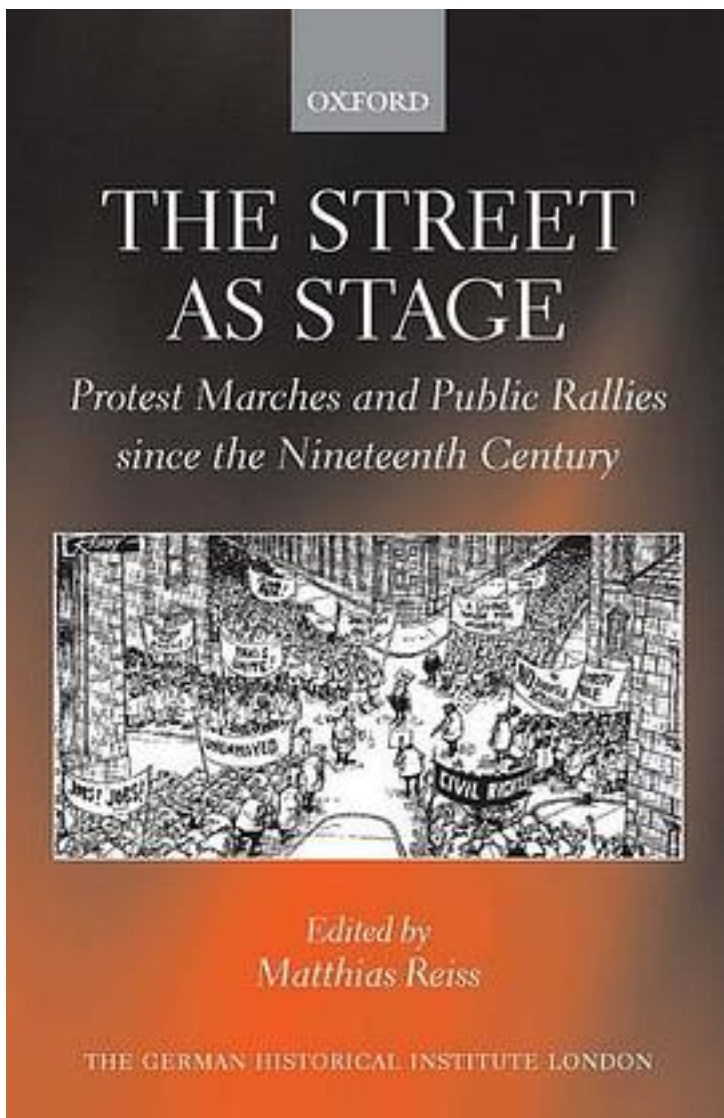


The Street as Stage



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著者:Reiss, Matthias 编

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Public protest marches and meetings have become a global and transnational phenomenon. Images of Asian Muslims protesting against cartoons published by a Danish newspaper are aired into living rooms in Europe and America. Coordinated mass demonstrations on different continents voice demands to 'Make Poverty History' or to stop the war against Iraq, while the process of economic globalization has created an equally transnational network of critics. Given the worldwide adoption of Western-style street processions and meetings with their familiar symbols and rituals, it is easily forgotten that this form of organized public protest only developed in the nineteenth century and was long regarded with intense suspicion. Until well after the Second World War participating in street processions and meetings was viewed by the elites as a challenge to their predominant role, and the protestors were regarded as unrespectable or worse. This volume examines the evolution of the protest march and its subsequent adaptation and use by different groups, such as nationalists, the labour movements, suffragettes, Communists, fascists, and peace and civil rights activists in Europe and the United States. The case studies focus especially on the use of symbols, rituals, traditions, public spaces and symbolic places, the interaction between the marchers, the state, and the public, the use of the media and the question of violence, as well as the success and legacy of the marches. Three further essays introduce the reader to the most important figures, questions, and the methodology of protest march studies in social psychology, sociology, and geography.

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