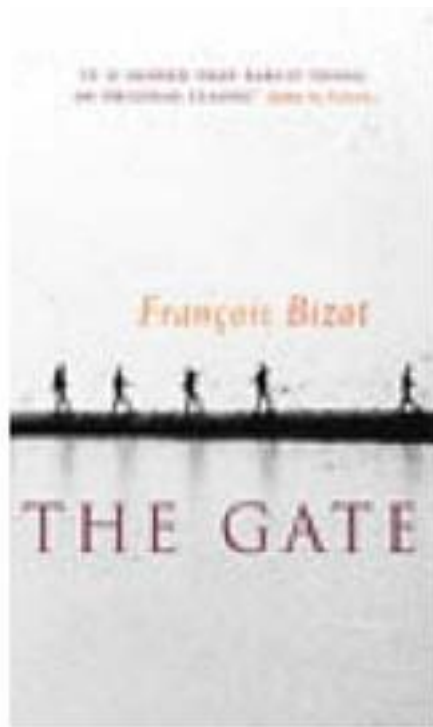


The Gate



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著者:francois bizot

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French ethnologist Francois Bizot's *The Gate* offers a unique insight into the rise of the Khmer Rouge. In 1971 Bizot was studying ancient Buddhist traditions and living with his Khmer partner and daughter in a small village in the environs of the Angkor temple complex. The Khmer Rouge was fighting a guerilla war in rural Cambodia; during a routine visit to a nearby temple, Bizot and his two Khmer colleagues were captured by them and imprisoned deep in the jungle on suspicion of working for the CIA. On trial for his life, over the next three months Bizot developed a strong relationship with his

captor, Comrade Douch, who would later become the Khmer Rouge's chief interrogator and commandant of the horrifying Tuol Sleng prison where thousands of captives were tortured prior to execution. The portrait Bizot gives of the young schoolteacher-turned revolutionary and their interaction is simultaneously fascinating and terrifying.

Finally freed after Douch had pleaded his case with the leadership, Bizot became the only Western captive of the Khmer Rouge ever to be released alive, but his story does not end there. On his return to Phnom Penh, due to his fluency in Khmer, he was appointed interpreter between the occupying forces and the remaining western nationals holed up in the French embassy. As the interlocutor at the eponymous gate, he relates with dreadful resignation the moment when the Khmer nationals in the compound were ordered out by the Khmer Rouge forces for "resettlement."

Bizot's is a touching and gripping account of one of the darkest moments in modern history and it is told with a unique voice. As a Cambodian resident, a lover of Cambodia and a fluent Khmer speaker, Bizot shows an understanding of the prevailing mood in the country that other Western commentators have failed to capture effectively, while as a Western academic he is able to see the forces at work and how Cambodia fits into the bigger picture of South East Asian conflict. What emerges is a tale of a land plunged into insanity and Bizot tells it like a eulogy for a dead friend and a confrontation of old demons. *The Gate* is a stunning book and a must for anyone interested in this grim period of Asian history. --Duncan Thomson

From Publishers Weekly

"It's better to have a sparsely populated Cambodia than a country full of incompetents!" The speaker of this chilling statement is Douch, the Khmer Rouge true believer who ran the camp that held French ethnologist Bizot for the closing months of 1971, several years before the Marxist revolutionaries unleashed massive bloodshed on the small Southeast Asian country. In 1975, the Khmer Rouge's chaotic occupation of Phnom Penh confined the small French community in the city to the premises of the French embassy, the portal of which supplies this volume with its title. Married to a Cambodian citizen, Bizot was an unusual Westerner there, in that once the terror started, he showed little inclination to flee the country. Bizot exploited his status as a rare Khmer-speaking Westerner not only to escape execution but also to extract a measure of autonomy for himself. He frequently showed remarkable defiance toward his heavily armed and ruthless captors. Bizot's account maintains a melancholy tone throughout. Despite his frequent heroic acts, Bizot emphasizes his own frailty and weakness-when he's not looking to set the record straight. He remains especially angry at Western leftists who insisted that the Vietnamese played little role in Cambodia despite ample evidence to the contrary. What's especially striking is the apparent contradiction between Bizot's sympathetic portrait of Douch and his description of the countless murders Douch committed in the name of the revolution. For many Americans, the senseless tragedy of Cambodia remains a mystery; this elegant volume helps outline the contours of that tragedy from a unique perspective. Maps. 40,000 first printing.

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作者介绍:

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书评

这本书是在金边中央市场前，从一个被地雷炸断双脚的残疾人手中买来的盗版书。印刷质量很差。当时花了10美元买了两本。但一直没读。直到最近。对于红色高棉的集中营和杀人工厂，或许多多少少都听过。但对于白人来说则是意外。作者是一位法国人类学家，当时正在吴哥窟搞野外考察...

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