

PABLO BATALLA CUETO

Graduate in History from the University of Salamanca, translator and essayist, his main fields of interest and writing are religion; the survival of its archetypes and mentalities in contemporary politics; the thresholds of eras and revolutions; the history of conservative, reactionary and fascist thought; and, finally, that of 'real socialism' in Eastern Europe, with a special interest in everyday life. Pablo is the author of five essays and several collective books. He publishes a column in *Público*, contributes to *La Marea*, and has published articles in *El País* and *Nueva Sociedad*, among other media outlets. .



'There is no such thing as non-politics, everything is politics', say two characters in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*. This idea is the starting point for *The Flag on the Summit: A Political History of Mountaineering*.



The Flag on the Summit *A Political History of Mountaineering*

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Pablo Batalla compiles stories about how all the ideologies and great social movements of modernity have passed through high altitudes, giving rise to hiking groups, inspiring expeditions, serving as metaphors in their discourses, or turning the summits into true loudspeakers for ideas.

Eight ideologies, seven social movements and three religions give their names to the eighteen chapters of the book. Each one focuses on its relationship with the mountain, exploring what they sought in it, the images they extracted and the experiences of their main leaders. Batalla explores almost twenty ways of approaching and loving the mountains.

Its pages feature striking sherpas, suffragettes on the summit, anarchists speaking Esperanto, vegan or trans mountaineers waving banners, busts of Stalin in the Caucasus and camps for children in Allende's Chile. The mountain thus becomes a stage for struggles and dreams, but also for contradictions.

Each chapter is self-contained, allowing the reader to jump from one to another and observe how different epics talk to, argue with or correct each other... The book proposes intersectionality as the key to understanding this diversity of narratives, with a critical and passionate gaze that understands the mountain in its broadest sense.