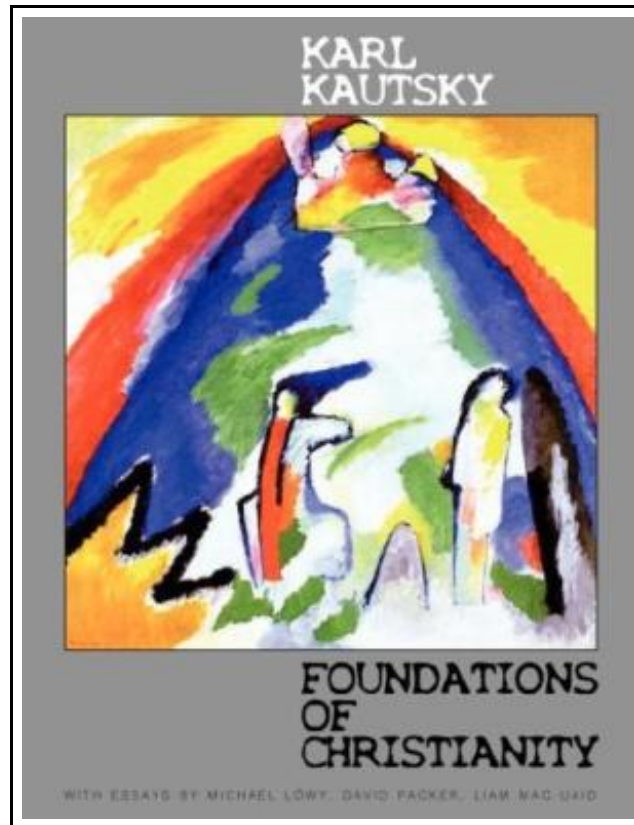


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Reviews

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IMG Publications. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 288 pages. Dimensions: 9.5in. x 7.2in. x 0.9in. Karl Kautsky is probably the first Marxist to interest himself both in the movement and the enigmatic personality of the crucified prophet. His 1908 book *The Foundations of Christianity* is a rather impressive attempt at a Marxist analysis. The book is rather original, innovative and has been translated into nine languages. Kautsky made his *Foundations of Christianity* into one of the most popular Marxist theoretical works. Its popular success is probably due to the interest of socialist militants to see a vision of the origins of Christianity which permits the modern workers movement to appropriate to itself the figure of Jesus as a prophet and martyr for the proletarian cause. Kautsky wanted to interpret early Christianity as a precursor of the contemporary working class socialist movement. His friend, and later his opponent, Rosa Luxemburg, in an article of 1905 called *The Church and Socialism* insisted that the first Christian apostles were Communists who denounced injustice and the cult of the Golden Calf. He counterposed a materialist account of the new religion against the Christian mythology and showed the capacity of the Marxist method to give an account of a complex historical process, interpreting a religious phenomenon in terms of the class struggle. The book is divided into four sections: 1) Society at the time of the Roman Empire: the slave economy, the absolutist forms of the state, the different manifestations of cultural and religious crisis. 2) Judaism: the class conflicts of Israelite society and the various political-religious currents (Sadducees, Pharisees, Zealots and Essene. 3) The beginnings of Christianity: the early Christian communities, the idea of the messianic Christ and Christian communism. 4) The fourth section is dedicated to the personality of Jesus. According to Kautsky, what...

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