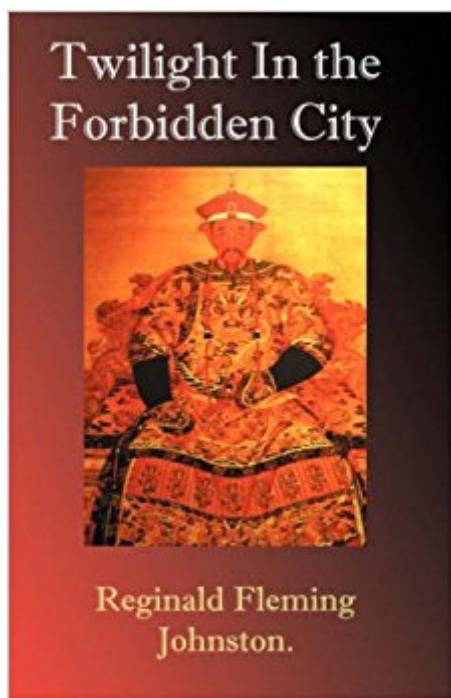


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Twilight In The Forbidden City



Synopsis

As part of China's 2008 Olympic welcome to visitors Xiaomina Press, presents this book about the last emperor of China. This book is essential reading for all visitors to China The Author Sir Reginald Fleming Johnston was a Scottish diplomat and the tutor of Puyi, the last emperor of China. Johnston was eye witness Chinese events in the crucial years of the 1920s and 1930s. Johnston was the only foreigner in history to be allowed inside the inner court of the Qing Dynasty. The author carried high imperial titles and lived in both the Forbidden City and the New Summer Palace. In 1934, Johnston looked for a residence in Scotland to retire to. He found a house on Eilean Righ, a small island in Loch Craignish, some 9 miles (15 km) NW of Lochgilphead. He moved there with his enormous library, which included a Chinese Encylopaedia in 1734 volumes and a complete collection of Buddhist scriptures in 1500 volumes. Twilight in the Forbidden City is very much a history of an entire period and not an exclusive portrait of the last Emperor of China. Twilight in the Forbidden City is prefaced by the Emperor Hsuan-Tung himself in the year 1931 Chosen by Dowager Empress Cixi while on her deathbed, Puyi ascended the throne at age 2 years 10 months in December 1908 following his uncle's death on November 14. Puyi's introduction to emperorship began when palace officials arrived at his family household to take him. Puyi screamed and resisted as the officials ordered the eunuchs to pick him up. His wet-nurse, Wen-Chao Wang, was the only one who could console him, and therefore accompanied Puyi to the Forbidden City. Puyi would not see his real mother again for six years. Puyi's upbringing was hardly conducive to the raising of a healthy, well-balanced child. Overnight, he was treated as a god and unable to behave as a child. The adults in his life, save his wet-nurse Mrs. Wang, were all strangers, remote, distant, and unable to discipline him. Wherever he went, grown men would kneel to the floor in a ritual kow-tow, averting their eyes until he passed.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Johnston's book *Twilight in the Forbidden City* (1934) describes his experiences in Beijing and was used as a source for Bernardo Bertolucci's film dramatisation of Puyi's life *The Last Emperor*. He was portrayed by Peter O'Toole in the film. This book describes the last of the Manchu Dynasty whose power had been crumbling for nearly a hundred years due to foreign wars and internal revolts and China lay helpless at the feet of foreign powers. Today with rapid its economic leaps forwards and a place in the UN Security Council and its huge powerhouse of an economy - China is on its feet again. The days of the Manchu's are a distant memory and the army of courtiers and eunuchs that serve the emperors of the middle kingdom are long forgotten. The book is fascinating as it takes on back to a bygone age and culture. However everyone needs to read this book to understand the China that was. Only from its past can one understand the China today in its true historical perspective. The book is great if you are of Chinese heritage or if you are just thinking of visiting China or just interested in history of this ancient land and its people.

be advised this book is a reprint. It looks like they photocopied (badly) the original book and then printed from that. The text varies tremendously in readability and density. I should have noticed that the title text on the cover isn't even centered over the illustration. So just don't expect it to appear as a brand new, newly set book. It isn't

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