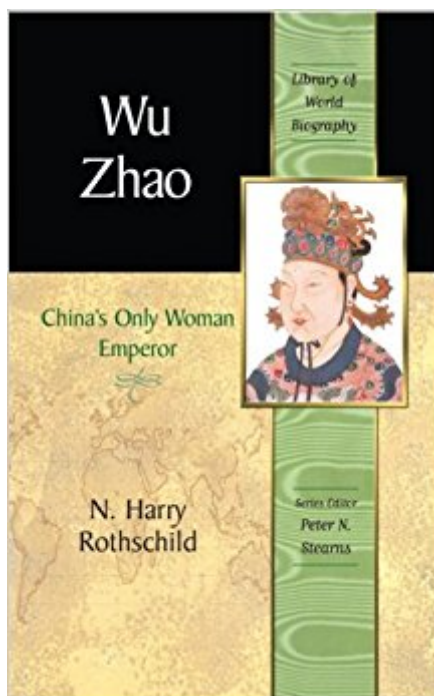


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Wu Zhao: China's Only Female Emperor



Synopsis

This new entry in the Longman Library of World Biography series offers the compelling story of Wu Zhao - one woman's unlikely and remarkable ascent to the apex of political power in the patriarchal society of traditional China. *Wu Zhao, Woman Emperor of China* is the account of the first and only female emperor in China's history. Set in vibrant, multi-ethnic Tang China, this biography chronicles Wu Zhao's humble beginnings as the daughter of a provincial official, following her path to the inner palace, where she improbably rose from a fifth-ranked concubine to becoming Empress. Using clever Buddhist rhetoric, grandiose architecture, elegant court rituals, and an insidious network of cruel officials to cow her many opponents in court, Wu Zhao inaugurated a new dynasty in 690, the Zhou. She ruled as Emperor for fifteen years, proving eminently competent in the arts of governance, deftly balancing factions in court, staving off the encroachment of Turks and Tibetans, and fostering the state's economic growth.

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Customer Reviews

This new entry in the Longman Library of World Biography series offers the compelling story of Wu Zhao - one woman's unlikely and remarkable ascent to the apex of political power in the patriarchal society of traditional China. "Wu Zhao, Woman Emperor of China" is the account of the first and only female emperor in China's history. Set in vibrant, multi-ethnic Tang China, this biography chronicles Wu Zhao's humble beginnings as the daughter of a provincial official, following her path to the inner palace, where she improbably rose from a fifth-ranked concubine to becoming Empress. Using clever Buddhist rhetoric, grandiose architecture, elegant court rituals, and an insidious

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The story of Wu Zhao is extremely interesting, however this author is awful. The only reason I got through this book without burning it or tearing my eyes out is because I had to write a history report and it was too late to change my book. The author's vocabulary is too limited and is found repeating the same phrases over and over throughout the whole book. Quite a bore, I would recommend finding a different author to tell the story of this intriguing woman.

excellent

Great condition great read

OK

This text really goes a long way to espousing cultural prejudice and really helping one understand in depth the sociopolitical climate that allowed a figure such as Wu Zhao to come to power. Unbiased and comprehensive, the book earns my strongest recommendation. It's also quite slim.

N. Rothschild has spent almost 20 years doing research pertaining to Wu Zhao. If anyone is interested in Asian history or sexy powerful females-(wink)-I recommend this book. It is well written and worth more than it is offered for. Rothschild is a man with a wealth of knowledge and a master story teller. Buy it. It is worth it.

A modern, even handed biography and analysis of one of the most under-rated rulers in human history. Emperor Wu has been compared to Stalin and Tamarlane by those who mistakenly take the texts of the ancient Confucian scholars who wrote the history of ancient China at face value. She was far from a monster, but she was a human being, with human shortcomings--and human virtues. Ruling a great empire is not for the weak-willed, squeamish, or weak minded. Wu was none of these. She was a remarkable human being who deserves to be understood in the context of her time. This Rothschild does extremely well.

Behind this fabulous tale of the rise of the daughter of a lumber merchant to the first and only female emperor of China is a probing study of power, politics, and gender. I was particularly enthralled by Rothschild's explanation of Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism in the Tang Dynasty and the ways in which they were variously used to invent a new language of symbols--indeed, to create a new political reality. This book is a tour de force filled with gruesome lore worthy of a historical novella by Tanizaki.

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