

<<天子>>

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前言

Throughout China's long history the life of emperors living in the imperial palace has remained a mystery. How were they able to ascend the throne? What did they do all day, everyday? How were their emotional experiences different from others'? What were their values and how did they behave? There were many concubines - rumored to be more than 3,000 for one emperor alone - what was their life like? These questions have aroused a lot of curiosity among the people of more modern eras. This book intends to help shine a little light on this history by examining several of the most representative figures among these monarchs. This book describes 12 of the most famous emperors in Chinese history. From the perspective of how they ruled, readers can see that, in a great and unified patriarchal society, the feudal monarchs operated in a way approximating a family type political system: the throne was inherited according to the priority of family members; and an emperor and his courtiers jointly formed a governmental system to control the country. In this system, the imperial power was sovereign, and it was regarded as an ideal condition when an august emperor and his sagacious ministers cooperated harmoniously. However, the emperors had continuously arrogated all powers to themselves until they turned into their opposites: this over centralized power resulted in corruption and degeneration within the government at the highest level, leading to collapse of the dynasty eventually. Before a new social structure came into being, in other words, fatalistic emperors seemed to continuously play this scenario out dynasty after dynasty. Each of the 12 emperors described in this book, most of them established a dynasty, had made great contributions. They were all-powerful, wielding their power, each in turn, and leaving an indelible impression on Chinese history. Through their experiences, readers will see the earth-shaking dynastic changes and how common people, even a Buddhist monk who were begging, became an emperor. In China, there is a saying, "The times produce their heroes." It was history that brought them their golden opportunities. They were good enough to be regarded as the most outstanding talents and the greatest heroic figures because they had crushed their enemies by winning decisive victories. Among the emperors discussed in this book some simply built on the achievements of their predecessors while others revived a nation. These emperors were well educated, versatile and outstanding. The full development of economy and culture provided necessary objective bases for them and they were required to play important roles in their time and make glorious achievements.

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内容概要

This book describes 12 of the most famous emperors in Chinese history. From the perspective of how they ruled, readers can see that, in a great and unified patriarchal society the feudalmonarchs operated in a way approximating a family type political system ; the throne was inherited according to the priority of family members ; and an emperor and his courtiers jointly formed a governmental system to control the country.

书籍目录

Chapter One : Qin Shi Huang Part One : The Historical Background of Qin Shi Huang Part Two : Qin Shi Huang ' S Life Experience and Palace Turmoil Part Three : Completing the Great Goal of Unification Part Four : Establishing a System Which Was Passed on for All Time Part Five : Brutal Control over China , Downfall After Two Generations Chapter Two : Emperor Gaozu of Han Part One : The Uprising That Overthrew the Qin Dynasty Part Two : Coming Back to Pacify Sanqin Part Three : The Conflict Between Chu and Han Part Four : Lightening Corv6e and Reducing Taxes Chapter Three : Emperor Wu of Han Part One : His Early Years Part Two : Sole Adherence to Confucianism Part Three : Governing the Country Part Four : WfdrwiththeHuns Part Five : Misfortune Caused by Witchcraft Chapter Four : Emperor Guangwu of Han Part One : BOrn in Troubled Times Part Two : The Battle of Kunyang Part Three : Quelling a Rebellion in Hebei Part Four : Resurgence During the Reign of Guangwu Chapter Five : Emperor Wen of Sui Part One : Usurping the Power of Northern Zhou and Founding the Sui Part Two : Putting Down Chaos Within the Country Part Three : Building Systems and Revitalizing the Country Part Four : Arbitrary Killing and Blind Faith in Buddhism Part Five : A Mistake in Changing the Crown Prince Chapter Six : Emperor Taizong of Tang Part One : Sweeping Across the Country Part Two : The Mutiny at Xuanwu Gate Part Three : The Reign of Zhenguan Part Four : Pacifying China Chapter Seven : Emperor Wu Zetian Part One : Emperor Taizong ' S Imperial Concubine Part Two : Empress of Emperor Gaozong of Tang Part Three : The Mother Dowager of Emperor Ruizong Part Four : Emperor of Zhou Chapter Eight : Emperor Taizu of Song Part One : Being Acclaimed the Emperor Part Two : Dismissing Generals with a Cup of Wine Part Three : Putting Down Chaos Within the Country Part Four : Strategy for State Administration Chapter Nine : Emperor Shizu of Yuan, Part One : Administering the Areas South of the Gobi Desert Part Two : Going on an Expedition to Dali Part Three : Being Enthroned as the Great Khan Part Four : Unilying the Country Chapter Ten : Emperor Chengzu of Ming Part One : The Jingnan Rebellion Part Two : Administering the Coun时 Part Three : A Long Voyage Part Four : Territorial Expansion Chapter Eleven : Emperor Shengzu of Qing Part One : Displaying His Ability for the First Time Part Two : Being Diligent in Work and Eager to Learn Part Three : Putting Down Civil Strife Part Four : Resisting Foreign Assaults Chapter Twelve : Emperor Gaozong of Qing Part One : The August Monarch in a Flourishing Age Part Two : Efiective Civil Administration Part Three : Ten Military Achievements Part Four : Heshen Playing with Power

<<天子>>

章节摘录

插图：

后记

Most of the 12 emperors described in this book are well-known, while some are little known, such as Emperor Guangwu of Han and Emperor Wen of Sui. However, their positions in Chinese history can not be ignored. Because this book does not include another famous emperor, Genghis Khan, the readers may feel surprised. This is because the Mongols had never dominated the Central Plains during the era of Genghis Khan and it was Emperor Shizu of Yuan, Kublai Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan, who had really founded the Yuan Dynasty and became the first-generation emperor of the Yuan in Chinese history. Genghis Khan also had a temple title, Taizu of Yuan, but it was posthumously given to him by Kublai Khan many years after his death. When Genghis Khan swept through Europe and went on a punitive expedition to Western Xia, the regimes in China were the Northern Song and the Jin dynasties. Therefore, it still requires further consideration as to whether Genghis Khan can be regarded as a Chinese khan or not. In order to be cautious, this book does not include him for the time being, and hereby reminds the readers.

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编辑推荐

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