

Empress Dowager Cixi Jung Chang

Empress Dowager Cixi, born Yehenara, was a powerful and influential figure in Chinese history. She ruled China for nearly 50 years, from 1861 to 1908, as co-regent with her adopted son, Emperor Guangxu. Cixi was a complex and controversial figure, known for her intelligence, ambition, and ruthlessness.

Cixi was born into a Manchu noble family in Beijing in 1835. She was chosen as a concubine for Emperor Xianfeng in 1852, and gave birth to his only son, Zaichun, in 1856. When Xianfeng died in 1861, Cixi became co-regent with her eight-year-old son, who took the throne as Emperor Guangxu.

As co-regent, Cixi wielded immense power. She was responsible for handling foreign affairs, military campaigns, and domestic policy. She was also a patron of the arts and culture, and oversaw the construction of several major buildings in Beijing, including the Summer Palace and the Old Summer Palace.



Empress Dowager Cixi by Jung Chang

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 48318 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 497 pages



Cixi's rule was marked by both progress and turmoil. She implemented a number of reforms, including the abolition of foot binding, the establishment of a modern education system, and the of Western technology. She also led China into the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894, which resulted in a humiliating defeat for China.

Cixi's reign was also marked by political instability. She was constantly facing challenges from within the imperial court, including from her own relatives and from foreign powers. In 1898, she launched the Hundred Days' Reform, a series of radical reforms aimed at modernizing China. However, the reforms were met with resistance from conservative officials, and Cixi was forced to abandon them.

In 1900, Cixi supported the Boxer Rebellion, a violent uprising against foreign influence in China. The rebellion was eventually crushed by foreign troops, and Cixi was forced to flee Beijing. She returned to the capital in 1902, but her power was greatly diminished.

Cixi died in 1908, at the age of 73. She was succeeded by her adopted son, Emperor Puyi.

Cixi was a complex and controversial figure. She was a powerful and intelligent ruler, but she was also ruthless and ambitious. She made significant contributions to China's modernization, but she also made mistakes that led to China's decline.

Cixi's Personality

Cixi was a complex and multifaceted personality. She was intelligent, ambitious, and ruthless. She was also a patron of the arts and culture, and she enjoyed a luxurious lifestyle.

Cixi was a strong believer in tradition and authority. She was also a devout Buddhist. She believed that she was chosen by heaven to rule China, and she saw herself as a defender of the Manchu dynasty.

Cixi was also a skilled politician. She was able to maintain her power for nearly 50 years by playing off different factions within the imperial court. She was also able to successfully navigate the challenges of foreign relations.

However, Cixi was also known for her ruthlessness. She was willing to use any means necessary to achieve her goals. She was also known for her temper, and she would often fly into rages when things did not go her way.

Cixi's Legacy

Cixi's legacy is a complex one. She was a powerful and influential figure who made significant contributions to China's modernization. However, she also made mistakes that led to China's decline.

Cixi's supporters argue that she was a strong and capable ruler who did her best to modernize China in the face of great challenges. They point to her reforms, her patronage of the arts, and her leadership during the Boxer Rebellion as evidence of her accomplishments.

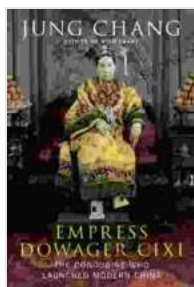
Cixi's detractors argue that she was a ruthless and ambitious tyrant who was more interested in preserving her own power than in serving the

interests of China. They point to her suppression of dissent, her extravagance, and her failures in foreign policy as evidence of her shortcomings.

Ultimately, Cixi's legacy is a mixed one. She was a complex and contradictory figure who was both capable of great good and great evil. Her reign was a turbulent period in Chinese history, and her impact on China is still debated today.

Additional Information

- Cixi was the first Chinese woman to rule China in over 2,000



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