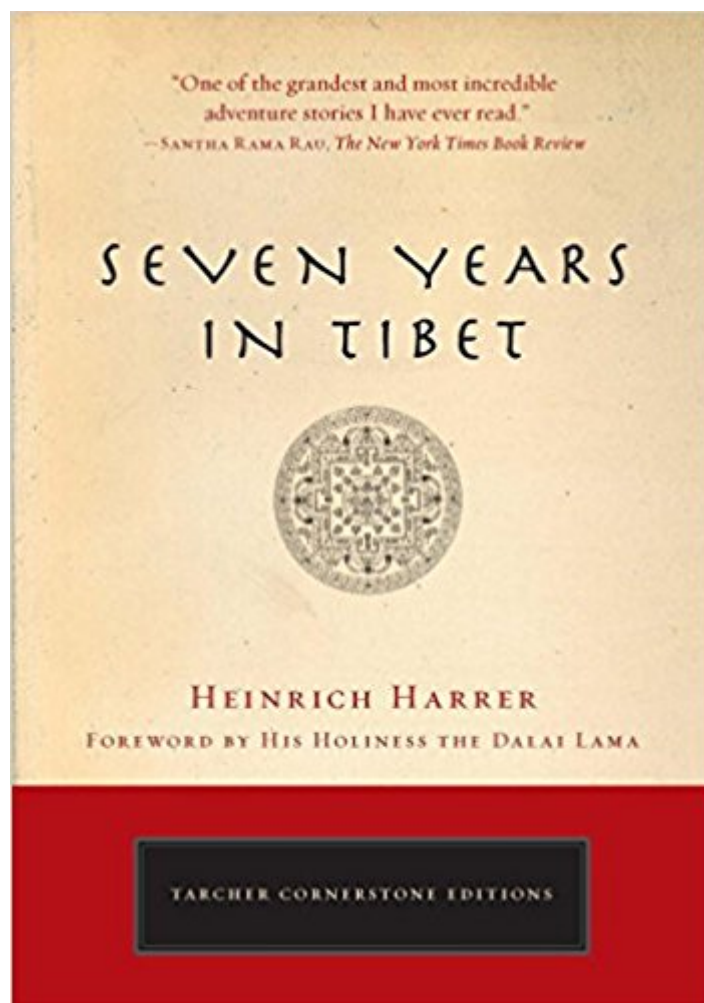


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Seven Years In Tibet (Cornerstone Editions)



Synopsis

The astonishing adventure classic about life in Tibet just before the Chinese Communist takeover is now repackaged for a new generation of readers. In this vivid memoir that has sold millions of copies worldwide, Heinrich Harrer recounts his adventures as one of the first Europeans ever to enter Tibet and encounter the Dalai Lama.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (208 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The story of a dramatic escape by Heinrich Harrer and his climbing associate Peter Aufschnaiter from an Indian internment camp after their arrest by the British when they were attempting to climb Nanga Parbat, at the outbreak of World War II. The book details their journey across Tibet including their near demise with the Khampas, before reaching Lhasa and in my view, discovering a way of looking at life very different to our own. The book then goes on to cover Heinrich Harrer's relationship with the Young Dalai Lama and the Dalai Lama's enthusiasm to learn more about the world he lived in. The book also provides an insight into life in Lhasa before the coming of the Chinese. Finishing with the onset of the Chinese occupation and the flight of the Dalai Lama, I found this to be a very well written book and it can be seen throughout the book how the very personality of the author changes from how I would describe as something not too far short of arrogance at the beginning to someone who cared very much about a people who just wanted to be able to get on with a way of life that had lasted for centuries and which to a great degree they were content with, but due to circumstances beyond their control, they were unable to do. I read this book after visiting

Tibet myself in 1998 and the contrast between the Tibet described in the book and that which I saw was a sharp one. Heinrich Harrer himself returned to Tibet in 1982 and observed the changes himself (detailed in 'Return to Tibet', more of a thesis than a story, but nevertheless essential reading after 'Seven Years in Tibet'), noting the loss of much he had held dear when he was there in the 1940's.

Three months after finishing and putting down the book, I'm still so inspired by the whole Heinrich Harrer tale and his experience in Tibet. This is the coming about of the second review of the book. The book starts off at the outbreak of World War II. Heinrich Harrer and his mountain climbing associates, while attempting the Nanga Parbat mountain, were arrested by the British and were imprisoned in Indian internment camp located near the border with Tibet. After securing enough life necessities and supplies, Harrer and his friend Peter Aufschnaiter escaped and set out for the Indian-Tibetan border. The road to Lhasa was strenuous, arduous, and painful. Harrer and Aufschnaiter struggled with winter blizzard, depleting supplies, mountain sickness, and even risk of robbers. They had to obtain license upon arrival in unexplored territory. They risked the refusal to enter Tibet without a permit. They risked their life as their supplies won't last for the trip. Upon arrival into the country, they were greeted with curiosity, meticulousness, guard, and warmth. They were housed in government mansion; treated sumptuous Tibetan meal; tailored expensive hand-crafted embroidered wardrobe. From day to day throng of visitors came visit these newly-arrived foreigners. Heinrich Harrer lived in Lhasa for almost 5 years. He performed plumbing and other technical services for his friends and government officials. He taught children how to read and write English. He introduced ice-skating to Tibetans by sticking a knife underneath the boots. The most significant portion of this book is the detailed yet sentimental description of Harrer's relationship with the young Dalai Lama.

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