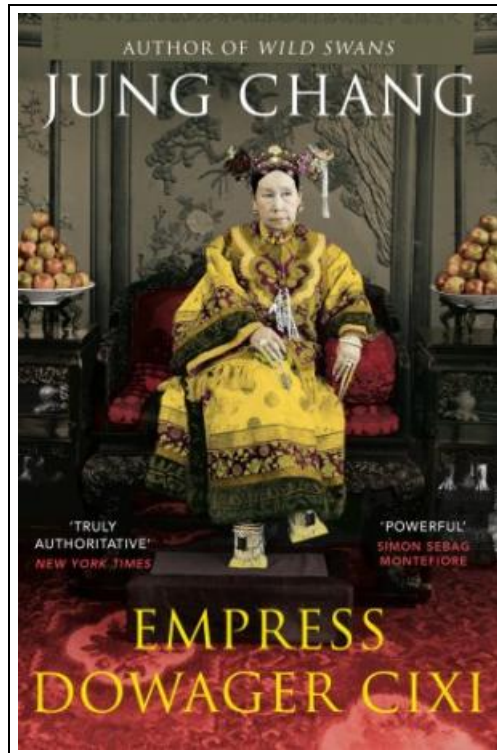


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Vintage Publishing, United Kingdom, 2014. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. From the bestselling author of *Wild Swans* and *Mao: The Unknown Story* In this groundbreaking biography, Jung Chang vividly describes how Empress Dowager Cixi - the most important woman in Chinese history - brought a medieval empire into the modern age. Under her, the ancient country attained virtually all the attributes of a modern state and it was she who abolished gruesome punishments like `death by a thousand cuts and put an end to foot-binding. Jung Chang comprehensively overturns the conventional view of Cixi as a diehard conservative and cruel despot andalso takes the reader into the depths of her splendid Summer Palace and the harem of Beijing's Forbidden City, where she lived surrounded by eunuchs - with one of whom she fell in love, with tragic consequences. Packed with drama, fast-paced and gripping, it is both a panoramic depiction of the birth of modern China and an intimate portrait of a woman: as the concubine to a monarch, as the absolute ruler of a third of the world's population, and as a unique stateswoman. `Powerful Simon Sebag Montefiore `Truly authoritative New York Times `Wonderful Sunday Times Shortlisted for the James Tait Black Biography Prize.



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