

[PDF] The Last Mughal: The Fall Of A Dynasty: Delhi, 1857 (Vintage)

William Dalrymple - pdf download free book

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly In time for the 150th anniversary of the Great Mutiny, the uprising that came close to toppling British rule in India, Dalrymple presents a brilliant, evocative exploration of a doomed world and its final emperor, Bahadur Shah II, descendant of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. Bahadur, more familiarly known as Zafar, was a reluctant revolutionary: the mutinous sepoys who had murdered every Christian in Delhi proclaimed him their commander, an honor he hadn't sought. British besiegers took the capital in September 1857, followed by massacre, purges and destruction. Zafar died five years later in penury and exile. Dalrymple (*White Mughals*), however, is primarily concerned with compiling "a portrait of the Delhi he [Zafar] personified, a narrative of the last days of the Mughal capital and its final destruction." In this task, he has been immeasurably aided by his

discovery of a colossal trove of documents in Indian national archives in Delhi and elsewhere. Thanks to them Dalrymple can vividly recreate, virtually at street level, the life and death of one of the most glorious and progressive empires ever seen. That the rebels fatefully raised the flag of jihad and dubbed themselves "mujahedin" only adds to the mutiny's contemporary relevance. 24 pages of illus., 16 in color; 2 maps. *History Book Club featured selection.*(Apr. 1)
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From The year 1857 in India, referred to as the Mutiny or the Uprising by historians, is at least agreed to have been a pitiless war. From that point of consensus, Dalrymple expands on the implacable violence that destroyed Delhi and uncouned thousands of people in the course of fighting between the British and their Indian allies, and the complex cast of insurrectionists. Dalrymple's account is an original, important contribution to the controversies of 1857, for it draws on an archive "virtually unused" by historians; it includes papers generated by the anti-British forces during their temporary control of the city. After killing most of the Europeans and Christians in reach, they rallied around Delhi's figurehead Mughal ruler, the octogenarian Bahadur Shah Zafar II. Dalrymple presents Zafar as a kindly but indecisive soul who was flummoxed by the surrounding atrocities. Surviving the bloodbath the vengeful British inflicted, Zafar, exiled to Burma with his dynasty extinguished, earns Dalrymple's sympathy. His riveting narrative will engross readers of the annals of British imperialism. *Gilbert Taylor*
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