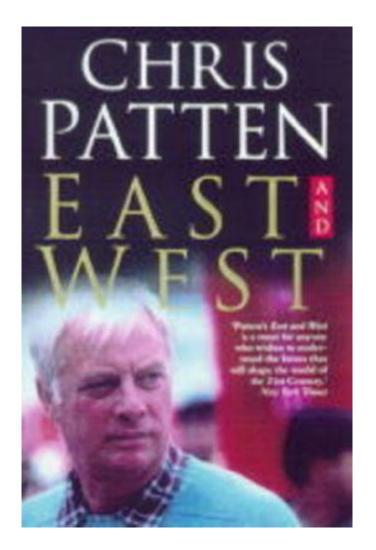
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East And West





Synopsis

In June of 1997, over a century and a half of British rule in Hong Kong came to an end. Chris Patten writes about his experiences as the last governor of the colony of Hong Kong. He explains why he adopted the stance that he did, and how he fought his battles.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An American friend in Beijing once said that anyone who hasspent time among the Chinese eventually concocts a "grandunified theory of China." To a remarkable extent, Chris Patten didn't. Patten was the last British governor of Hong Kong, and duringhis five years there he gained a reputation as a combativeopponent of the Chinese Communist government and as a championof Hong Kong's nascent democracy. One might expect, therefore, that his book would be anotherexample of the "China-bashing" so popular among those Westernopinion-makers who relish a fight with Beijing. Instead, Pattenoffers calm, non-alarmist advice, with the wise observation thatwe would be better off not treating China as a special case."The alleged uniqueness of China," he says, "blurscomprehension and mangles policy-making." He notes that one side of the how-to-deal-with-China debate isdominated by appeasement-minded "Old China Hands," while theother features hardliners who see China as "the last evilempire." Both outlooks are wrong, Patten says: "We are lured intothinking that there is a special, an exact way of dealing withChina - which turns out on close examination to be one partcorrect and four parts mumbo-jumbo." While both the confrontational and appeasement mindsetsdistort Western policy, what is even worse is the Westerntendency to oscillate between the two approaches.

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