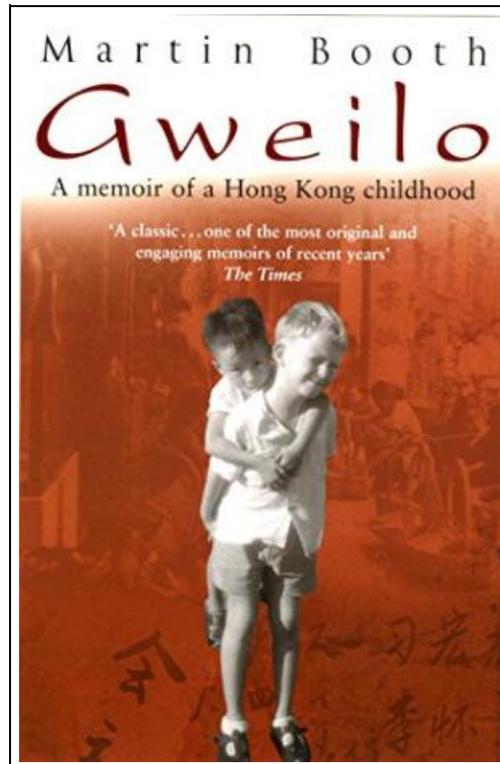


Gweilo: Memories of a Hong Kong Childhood



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Reviews

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GWEILO: MEMORIES OF A HONG KONG CHILDHOOD



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Transworld Publishers Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Gweilo: Memories of a Hong Kong Childhood, Martin Booth, Martin Booth died in February 2004, shortly after finishing the book that would be his epitaph - this wonderfully remembered, beautifully told memoir of a childhood lived to the full in a far-flung outpost of the British Empire. An inquisitive seven-year-old, Martin Booth found himself with the whole of Hong Kong at his feet when his father was posted there in the early 1950s. Unrestricted by parental control and blessed with bright blond hair that signified good luck to the Chinese, he had free access to hidden corners of the colony normally closed to a Gweilo, a 'pale fellow' like him. Befriending rickshaw coolies and local stallholders, he learnt Cantonese, sampled delicacies such as boiled water beetles and one-hundred-year-old eggs, and participated in colourful festivals. He even entered the forbidden Kowloon Walled City, wandered into the secret lair of the Triads and visited an opium den. Along the way he encountered a colourful array of people, from the plink plonk man with his dancing monkey to Nagasaki Jim, a drunken child molester, and the Queen of Kowloon, the crazed tramp who may have been a member of the Romanov family. Shadowed by the unhappiness of his warring parents, a broad-minded mother who, like her son, was keen to embrace all things Chinese, and a bigoted father who was enraged by his family's interest in 'going native', Martin Booth's compelling memoir is a journey into Chinese culture and an extinct colonial way of life that glows with infectious curiosity and humour.



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