



Secret Lives of the Dalai Lama: The Untold Story of the Holy Men Who Shaped Tibet, from Pre- history to the Present Day

Alexander Norman

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Secret Lives of the Dalai Lama: The Untold Story of the Holy Men Who Shaped Tibet, from Pre-history to the Present Day Alexander Norman The Complete Story of the Dalai Lamas

His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama is known to the world for his efforts to preserve Tibetan culture and for his inspiring spiritual teachings. Often unnoticed, however, is the long, colorful history from which this most beloved of holy men has emerged. In *Secret Lives of the Dalai Lama*, Alexander Norman tells this story in full for the first time, from Tibetan Buddhism's foundational narratives to the present-day crisis faced by Tibet.

And what a story it is. Along with dedicated monks selflessly serving the Tibetan people, among His Holiness's spiritual forebears there are a Dalai Lama who waged wars, a womanizing and inebriated poet, and several who wound up dead following disputes over temporal power. Also, while Western practitioners focus on Tibetan Buddhism's liberating vision of enlightenment, it simultaneously contains ritual practices of prophecy and magic, as well as a vivid pantheon of deities and demons.

In the end, although Tibet falls short of the Western myths of a Himalayan utopia, by illuminating the historical struggle toward compassion and selflessness embodied in the Dalai Lama lineage, *Secret Lives of the Dalai Lama* ultimately reveals a reality that is vastly more compelling than any romance of "Shangri-La" and provides deeper reasons for admiring Tibetan tradition.

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