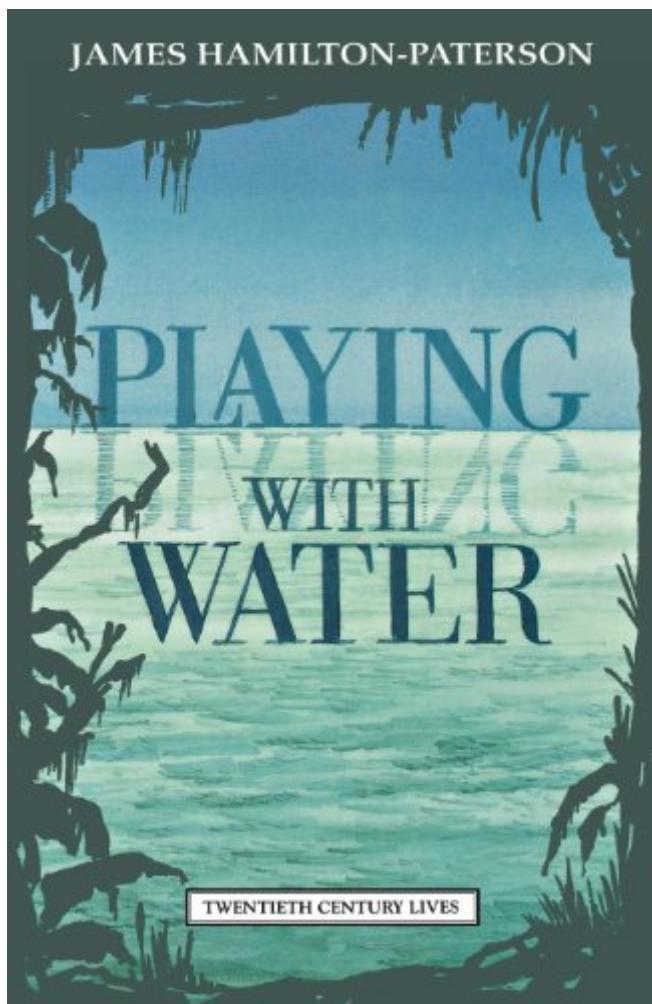


The book was found

Playing With Water: Passion And Solitude On A Philippine Island (Twentieth Century Lives)



Synopsis

James Hamilton-Paterson spends a third of each year on an otherwise uninhabited Philippine island, spear-fishing for survival. Playing with Water tells us why he does. Beyond that, it gives an account of life in that class-bound country as a whole. For it is in places like this rather than Manila of the international news reports that the underlying political and cultural reality of the Philippines may be seen.

Book Information

File Size: 1357 KB

Print Length: 299 pages

Publisher: New Amsterdam Books (April 21, 1998)

Publication Date: August 10, 2012

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B009LLAWRK

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #530,860 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #76 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > Asia > Far East #118 in Books > History > Asia > Philippines #243 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Asia > Southeast

Customer Reviews

Paterson is living on a small island in the Philippines and he is joining the natives in diving (i.e. fishing) for a living. We scuba-divers, as we only come for 1-2 week vacations, often are not experiencing the reality around our dive sites. Paterson's book was helping me understanding more of the countries I was visiting. Very instructive are his personal insights about ecology in a third world country and the connections to the economical and social structure. I found it very valuable that the insights do not follow the well known beaten paths about the third world but are rather well founded, personal observations. This makes this book a much more interesting read than any other book about the subject that I have ever read before.

i read this book so many years ago, but i can still remember how good it is. this book is not only about the underwaterworld but also about the goings-on in a typical barrio in the philippines. it has a socio-economic aspect to it that i found quite realistic, having been born and raised in that very same third world country. it amazed and pleased me that a foreigner like hamilton-paterson could, quite accurately, capture the very essence of filipino rural society---like the old woman who he suspects isn't so aloof and taciturn as she seems and the children of the barrio who frolick in the water and in their humble amusements, oblivious of the shortcomings of a third world upbringing. the book is an unusual stew of underwater adventure and an unpatronizing account of a life among barrio folk.

James Hamilton-Paterson is a very intelligent author and forces me to break out my dictionary every now and then, yet this book is about a very simple adventure. It is an experience we only dream of doing since it is impractical for most. Since we cannot take on an adventure like this on our own, we can at least read about the experience here. It is an account of living alone on an uninhabited island in the Philippines. There is contact with the locals on the mainland, which makes the book all the more enjoyable, because of the unique personality of the Philippine people. You will feel as if you are there as this is no imaginary experience, but very real one, right down to every beautiful detail.

This is a great book about personal introspection and, I would say, coming to terms with being a solitary person. I loved this book and his real attempt to understand the culture and motivations of the people in rural Philippines. It is a great read.

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