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Sommario/riassunto	First published in 1973.  This book describes the career of Sir George Macartney, who spent twenty-eight years at the turn of the nineteenth century as British representative in Sinkiang, China's most westerly province.  Macartney was in a unique position to observe political and diplomatic manoeuvres by the key players trying to establish a sphere of influence in China's strategically vital hinterland before and during the Chinese revolution.