



The Imprisoned Traveler

Joseph Forsyth and Napoleon's Italy

by Keith Crook

DESCRIPTION

The Imprisoned Traveler is a fascinating portrait of a unique book, its context, and its elusive author. Joseph Forsyth, traveling through an Italy plundered by Napoleon, was unjustly imprisoned in 1803 by the French as an enemy alien. Out of his arduous eleven-year “detention” came his only book, *Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters during an Excursion in Italy* (1813). Written as an (unsuccessful) appeal for release, praised by Forsyth’s contemporaries for its originality and fine taste, it is now recognized as a classic of Romantic period travel writing. Keith Crook, in this authoritative study, evokes the peculiar miseries that Forsyth endured in French prisons, reveals the significance of Forsyth’s encounters with scientists, poets, scholars, and ordinary Italians, and analyzes his judgments on Italian artworks. He uncovers how Forsyth’s allusiveness functions as a method of covert protest against Napoleon and reproduces the hitherto unpublished correspondence between the imprisoned Forsyth and his brother.

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Keith Crook taught for many years at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK, where he is now an Honorary Fellow, specializing in eighteenth-century literature. His main publications are on Samuel Johnson and Swift. He published the standard scholarly edition of Joseph Forsyth’s *Italy* in 2001.

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