

Another Ghastly Groan

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 03 Aug 2001

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Alice Turner — 03 Aug 2001, 23:14

The new NYRSF presents, from one Henry Wessells, citing a biography of Mervyn Peake by G. Peter Winnington, the fact that Peake (1911-1968) spent nine of his first eleven years in China: "Parallels between the early life of the Boy-Emperor and Titus Groan as recounted in the first two of Mervyn's novels are numerous and striking."

Now I find that most intriguing. I was born in China, myself, but most of what I know about the Boy-Emperor is from Bertolucci's fascinating film. And now I think I see the weakness of the TV adaptation--it wasn't nearly weird *enough* with regard to Titus. The British character actors were really brilliant and off the wall, but every time it paused to focus on Titus it got snoresome (I was watching it in the wee hours) and I could hardly wait for someone, nearly anyone, else to appear. The movie, was, of course, paced and presented so very differently that it is hard to compare the productions, but what I remember is a great deal of weirdness in the treatment of the B-E's upbringing that might have pepped up the TV show. Perhaps this approach was deemed too kinky, and maybe that's true if it was envisioned as "family fare." (The Addams Family perhaps?)

-alga