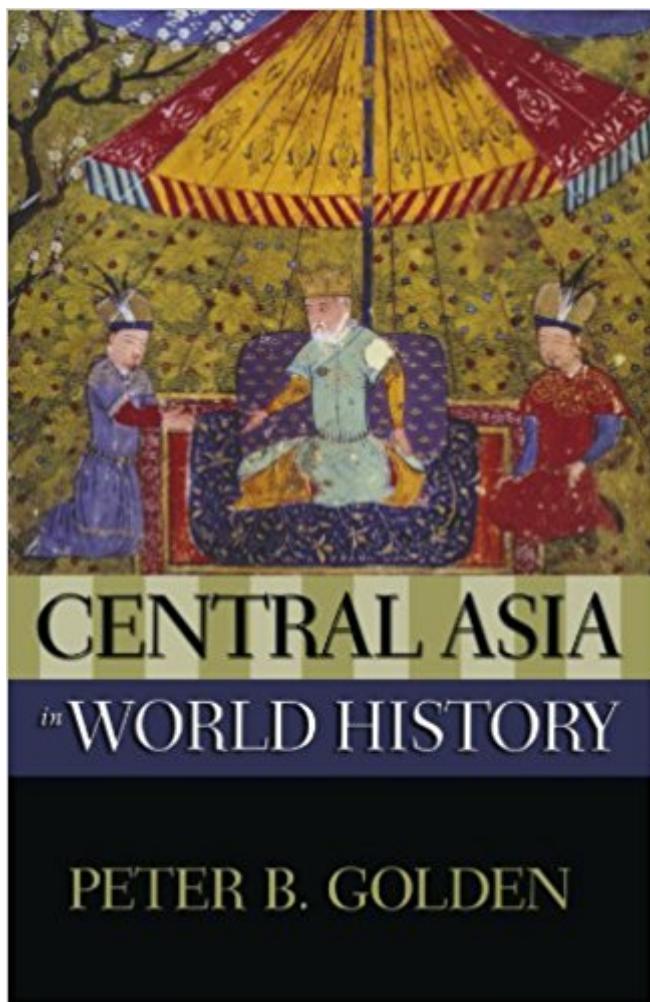


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Central Asia In World History (New Oxford World History)



Synopsis

A vast region stretching roughly from the Volga River to Manchuria and the northern Chinese borderlands, Central Asia has been called the "pivot of history," a land where nomadic invaders and Silk Road traders changed the destinies of states that ringed its borders, including pre-modern Europe, the Middle East, and China. In *Central Asia in World History*, Peter B. Golden provides an engaging account of this important region, ranging from prehistory to the present, focusing largely on the unique melting pot of cultures that this region has produced over millennia. Golden describes the traders who braved the heat and cold along caravan routes to link East Asia and Europe; the Mongol Empire of Chinggis Khan and his successors, the largest contiguous land empire in history; the invention of gunpowder, which allowed the great sedentary empires to overcome the horse-based nomads; the power struggles of Russia and China, and later Russia and Britain, for control of the area. Finally, he discusses the region today, a key area that neighbors such geopolitical hot spots as Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China.

Book Information

Series: New Oxford World History

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (February 2, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195338197

ISBN-13: 978-0195338195

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 0.4 x 6.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 23 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #321,689 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 in Books > History > Asia > Central Asia #543 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Asia #618 in Books > History > Asia > China

Customer Reviews

This concise but comprehensive textbook outlines the transformation of Central Asia from prehistory to the collapse of the USSR. ... The scope is ambitious ... the book is chronologically, spatially, and thematically wide-ranging without sacrificing the level of detail in the narrative. * Jagjeet Lally, *Journal of Global History* *

Peter B. Golden is Professor Emeritus of History and Director of the Middle Eastern Studies Program, Rutgers University.

Central Asia is often overlooked in history - or told from the view point of outsiders and enemies. This book helps to remedy that problem by focusing on Central Asian history from the inside. The book is very short and easy to read through (139 pages of text). Some of the chronological historical chapters can be a bit dense (due to the huge amount of information packed therein). None of the subjects are treated in depth because the point of the book is to be an overview. If readers would like more depth, the book includes sufficient detail to know what to look for in monographs or more specific books (including names of leaders, tribes, cities, regions, and dates) but for readers unfamiliar with the region or wanting to read a solid introduction, this is the book. Central Asia in World History is a great entry into the history of central Asia and hopefully will inspire many people to learn more about this important region.

A broad overview of Central Asian history that skimps on certain themes and cultures, many rushes through the modern age. The author also has an interesting pro-China bent, which leads him to present historical alliances in a way that isn't always entirely accurate. More maps and perhaps a tree of how all the different Central Asian people's are related would have been much appreciated. Overall - good for a glance at regional history, but shouldn't be used a definitive guide.

This history is broad and enlightening while being short enough for a quick read. True to its introduction, it does indeed describe the role of this large, but poorly understood region, in the development of world trade (e.g., the Silk Road), military technology (e.g., the composite bow) and modern nations (e.g., Turkey and the Stans). The history is authoritative naming leaders, tribes and cities with extensive notes for further study. Nevertheless, given the strangeness of the names and remoteness of the places cited, the book could be improved significantly with one or more maps per chapter to chart the ebb and flow of the competing peoples.

This is a short survey of the history of Central Asia. Since the history is complex this is good place to start before trying something more difficult. I don't think that Ban Chao reached the Caspian and the Russian army did not march across Siberia.

I've read a few other concise history books, and used to read History Magazine and Military History

Magazine. I can say without a doubt that this is the poorest written thing that I've ever read. I cannot begin to count the number of run-on sentences, where side bar information, that could have been in another sentence, is part of a really long sentence, that the author wrote. I hate to say that what I've read on Wikipedia on Central Asia was better written. It's not that the author isn't presenting sufficient facts. It's simply the aesthetics of the presentation. By the way, "Peter B. Golden" is an awesome name.

TMI and tedious. In fairness this book offers lots of history wound around countless names, places and events. But, you'll want to have maps, the index, a glossary, etc. close at hand for each page.

Lots of names and dates but very interesting and comprehensive summary of an area that had a significant impact on world socio-economic and political growth and development.

Excellent introduction to the field. Clear & highly readable. Experts may find this a bit superficial.

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