Inside Central Asia A Political And Cultural History Of Uzbekistan Turkmenistan Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan Turkey Iran Dilip Hiro | 12130ae37a860a2b81a8e1bfeb34dee

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Ferghana Valley
The Ferghana Valley can reasonably be said to lie in the heart of Central Asia. As such, the Valley has made an inordinate contribution to the history and culture of the region as a whole, as well as significantly affecting the economic, political and religious spheres. This book looks at the region over time, from its early history to the present. It embraces not just the obvious fields of politics, economics and religion, but also ethnography, sociology, and cultural history, and includes the insights of leading scholars from all three Ferghana countries. The book discusses various questions of identity relating to the region, showing how the identity of the Ferghana Valley relates to the emerging national identities of the three post-colonial states that are still gradually emerging from the demise of the Soviet Union, as well as how an understanding of the Ferghana Valley is key to understanding Central Asia itself.
In this comprehensive new treatment, renowned political writer and historian Dilip Hiro places the politics, peoples, and cultural background of this critical region firmly into the context of current international focus. Eurasian history writing has invariably focused on the civilizations of China, India, Persia, Arabia and Europe. Geographically these regions encircle the wide area of Central Asia, which appears as a sort of black hole in the middle of the world, the home of migrants, monks and mullahs and above all of barbarians. However, the outlying civilizations were formed and even defined through interaction with Central Asia. Therefore, the intent of this study is to demand due recognition of the centrally important role of Central Asians in the history of their neighbours and thus their place in world system history as a whole. From a critically acclaimed author-a comprehensive history of the part of the world currently making headlines The former Soviet republics of Central Asia comprise a sprawling, politically pivotal, densely populated, and richly cultured area of the world that is nonetheless poorly represented in libraries and mainstream media. Since their political incorporation in Stalin's Soviet era, these countries have gone through a flash of political and economical evolution. But despite these rapid changes, the growth of oil wealth and U.S. jockeying, and the opening of the region to tourists and businessmen, the spirit of Central Asia has remained untouched at its core. In this comprehensive new treatment, renowned political writer and historian Dilip Hiro offers us a narrative that places the modern politics, peoples, and cultural background of this region firmly into the context of current international focus. Given the strategic location of Central Asia, its predominantly Muslim population, and its hydrocarbon and other valuable resources, it comes as no surprise that the five Central Asian republics are emerging in the twenty-first century as one of the most potentially influential-and coveted-patches of the globe.
In Making Uzbekistan, Adeeb Khalid chronicles the tumultuous history of Central Asia in the age of the Russian revolution. He explores the complex interaction between Uzbek intellectuals, local Bolsheviks, and Moscow to sketch out the flux of the situation in early-Soviet Central Asia. His focus on the Uzbek intelligentsia allows him to recast our understanding of Soviet Central Asian politics, nationalities policies, Uzbekistan, he argues, was not a creation of Soviet policies, but a project of the Muslim intelligentsia that emerged in the Soviet context through the interstices of the complex politics of the period. Making Uzbekistan introduces key texts from this period and argues that what the decade witnessed was nothing short of a cultural revolution. The dismantlement of the Soviet Union also brought about the liberation of 6 Central Asian Muslim republics: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. This study offers an overview of the domestic problems in the region, such as acute econ. underdevelopment, absence of econ. and industrial communication and transport. infrastructures, and ecological problems. Also covers the activities of Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S. It maintains that the resurgence of overly assertive, if not aggressive, tendencies of Russia's foreign policy is a development likely to intensify the level of turbulence in an already troubled region. An epic history of the Mongols as we have never seen them—not just conquerors but also city builders, diplomats, and supple economic thinkers who constructed one of the most influential empires in history. The Mongols are widely known for one thing: conquest. In the first comprehensive history of the Horde, the western portion of the Mongol empire that arose after the death of Chinggis Khan, Marie Favereau shows that the accomplishments of the Mongols extended far beyond war. For three hundred years, the Horde was no less a force in global development than Rome had been. It left behind a profound legacy in Europe, Russia, Central Asia, and the Middle East, palpable to this day. Favereau takes us inside one of the most powerful sources of cross-border integration in world history. The Horde was the central node in the Eurasian commercial boom of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and was a conduit for exchanges across thousands of miles. Its unique political regime—a complex power-sharing arrangement between the khan and the nobility—rewarded skillful administrators and diplomats and fostered an economic order that was mobile, organized, and innovative. From its capital at Sarai on the lower Volga River, the Horde provided a governance model for Russia, influenced social practice and state structure across Islamic cultures, disseminated sophisticated theories about the natural world, and introduced novel ideas of religious tolerance. The Horde is the eloquent, ambitious, and definitive portrait of an empire little understood and too readily dismissed. Challenging conceptions of nomads as peripheral to history, Favereau makes clear that we live in a world inherited from the Mongol moment. The balancing of competing interests and goals will have momentous consequences for Japan—and the United States—in their quest for economic growth, social harmony, and international clout. Japan and the United States face difficult choices in charting the paths ahead as trading nations. Tokyo has long aimed for greater decisiveness, which would allow it to move away from a fragmented policy system favoring the status quo in order to enable meaningful internal reforms and acquire a larger voice in trade negotiations. And Washington confronts an uphill battle in rebuilding a fracturing domestic consensus in favor of internationalism essential to sustain its leadership role as a champion of free trade. In Dilemmas of a Trading Nation, Miyea Solís describes how accomplishing these tasks will require the skillful navigation of vexing tradeoffs that emerge from pursuing desirable, but to some extent contradictory goals: economic competitiveness, social legitimacy, and political
viability. Trade policy has catapulted front and center to the national conversations taking place in each country about their desired future direction—economic renewal, a relaunched social compact, and projected international influence. Dilemmas of a Trading Nation underscores the global consequences of these defining trade dilemmas for Japan and the United States: decisiveness, reform, internationalism. At stake is the ability of these leading economies to upgrade international economic rules and create incentives for emerging economies to converge toward these higher standards. At play is the reaffirmation of a rules-based international order that has been a source of postwar stability, the deepening of a bilateral alliance at the core of America’s diplomacy in Asia, and the ability to reassure friends and rivals of the staying power of the United States. And we are witnessing an international leadership test dominated by domestic governance dilemmas. This book provides a profound geographical description and analysis of Central Asia. The authors take a synthetic approach in a period of critical transformation in the post-soviet time. The monograph analyzes comprehensively the physical and human geography as well as human-nature interactions of Central Asia with focus on Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Natural processes are described at a systemic scale, focusing on ecological consequences and contemporary human adaptations and organization. It also discusses in which ways the human organizations try to apply solutions for their needs such as security, territorial management and resources renewability, material and functional needs, identity elaborations, culture and communication. The Geography of Central Asia appeals to scientists and students of regional geography and interested academics from other areas such as social, political, economic and environmental studies within the context of Central Asia. The book is also a very useful resource for field trips into this area.

In this sweeping and richly illustrated history, S. Frederick Starr tells the fascinating but largely forgotten story of Central Asia's medieval enlightenment and its greatest intellectual treasure: its cities. Featuring tales of murder and abduction, intrigue and betrayal, extortion and corruption, this book explores how a president, Nursultan Nazarbaev, has been limited to that of providing a meeting place for other cultures. For over 100 years, between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, the armies of Genghis Khan and later Tamerlane passed through Central Asia, and as such, has been at the crossroads of relations between the two. In physical terms, this can be seen graphically in the trade routes of the Great Silk Road. In philosophical terms, it is an area where Western beliefs met and mingled with Eastern ways, often resulting in unusual and unique hybrids of thought and culture. Nor has the area's significance been limited to that of providing a meeting place for other cultures. For over 100 years, between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the armies of Genghis Khan and later Tamerlane spread from Central Asia to conquer and exert their influence over an area larger than the conquests of Alexander, Rome or Hitler. The repercussions of these conquests can still be seen today and serve as a reminder of the impact the region has had, and may again have, on world events.

When examining the ebb and flow of events in the region called Central Asia, one is struck by the magnitude of the impact that this area has had throughout history. Yet in spite of this record, very little is known about this part of the world today. Central Asia always has found itself wedged between Europe and Asia, and as such, has been at the crossroads of relations between the two. In physical terms, this can be seen graphically in the trade routes of the Great Silk Road. In philosophical terms, it is an area where Western beliefs met and mingled with Eastern ways, often resulting in unusual and unique hybrids of thought and culture. Nor has the area's significance been limited to that of providing a meeting place for other cultures. For over 100 years, between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the armies of Genghis Khan and later Tamerlane spread from Central Asia to conquer and exert their influence over an area larger than the conquests of Alexander, Rome or Hitler. The repercussions of these conquests can still be seen today and serve as a reminder of the impact the region has had, and may again have, on world events.
created such a body for the region as part of his religious reforms during World War II, he acknowledged that the Muslim faith could enjoy some legal protection under Communist rule. From a skeletal and disorganized body run by one family of Islamic scholars out of a modest house in Tashkent's old city, this muftiye acquired great political importance in the eyes of Soviet policymakers and equally significant symbolic significance for many Muslims. Relying on recently declassified Central Asian archival sources, most of them never seen before by historians, Eren Tasar argues that Islam did not merely “survive” the decades from World War II until the Soviet collapse in 1991, but actively shaped the political and social context of Soviet Central Asia. Muslim figures, institutions, and practices played a role in defining the social and political reality of Communist rule. Through an analysis that spans all aspects of Islam under Soviet rule—from debates about religion inside the Communist Party, to the muftiye’s efforts to acquire control over mosques across Central Asia, changes in Islamic practices and dogma, and overseas propaganda targeting the Islamic World—Soviet and Muslim offers a radical new reading of Islam's resilience and evolution under atheist rule. Central Asia remains both stable and unpredictable after 20 years of its reemergence. The states here continue to undergo complex nation-building processes, which is far from complete, but they firmly remain insulated by Russia and but more increasingly so by China. Only Kyrgyzstan has so far uniquely followed a liberal polity, but this young country had to cope with two revolutions before achieving a parliamentary democracy in 2010. However, the institution of democracy remains weak because of some difficult and intricate internal and external challenges i.e., economic, ethnic, Islamic, narcotic along with convoluted strategic games played by major powers in Kyrgyzstan. It is the only country in the world that hosts military bases of both Russia and the United States. The country retains strong Chinese economic influence. The book is an attempt to provide an overview of political and strategic practices in the region by building and asserting their own authority. Spector’s findings have relevance beyond the region of the world, China, the United States, and the Future of Central Asia explores the delicate balance of competing foreign interests in this resource-rich and politically tumultuous region. Editor David Denoon and his internationally renowned set of contributors assess the different objectives and strategies the U.S. and China deploy in the region and examine the impact of those policies on another for influence in Central Asia. While the US is focused on maintaining and supporting its military forces in neighboring states, China has its sights on procuring natural resources for its fast-growing economy and preventing the expansion of fundamentalist Islam inside its borders. This book covers important issues such as the creation of international gas pipelines, the challenges of building crucial transcontinental roadways that must pass through countries facing insurrections, the efforts of the US and China to encourage and provide better security in the region, and how the Central Asian countries themselves view their role in international politics and the global economy. The book also covers key outside powers with influence in the region; Russia, with its historical ties to the many Central Asian countries that used to belong to the USSR, is perhaps the biggest international presence in the area; and other countries on the region’s periphery like Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, and India have a stake in the fortunes and future of Central Asia as well. A comprehensive, original, and up-to-date collection, this book is a wide-ranging look from noted scholars at a vital part of the world which is likely to receive more attention and face greater instability as NATO forces withdraw from Afghanistan. Order at the Bazaar delves into the role of bazaars in the political economy and development of Central Asia. Bazaars have been the economic hubs of Central Asia for centuries, regarded as mafia-governed environments that are largely populated by the dispossessed. By immersing herself in the bazaars of Kyrgyzstan, Regine A. Spector learned that some are rather best characterized as islands of order in a chaotic national context. Spector draws on interviews, archival sources, and participant observation to show how traders, landowners, and municipal officials create order in the absence of a coherent government apparatus and bureaucratic state. Merchants have adapted Soviet institutions, including trade unions, and pre-Soviet practices, such as using village elders as the arbiters of disputes, to the urban bazaar by building and asserting their own authority. Spector’s findings have relevance beyond the bazaars and borders of one small country; they teach us how economic development operates when the rule of law is weak. A major history of Central Asia and how it has been shaped by modern world events Central Asia is often seen as a remote and inaccessible land on the peripheries of modern history. Encompassing Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and the Xinjiang province of China, it in fact stands at the crossroads of world events. Adeeb Khalid provides the first comprehensive history of Central Asia from the mid-eighteenth century to today, shedding light on the historical forces that have shaped the region under imperial and Communist rule. Predominantly Muslim with both nomadic and settled populations, the peoples of Central Asia came under Russian and Chinese rule after the 1700s. Khalid shows how foreign conquest knit Central Asians into global exchanges of goods and ideas and forged greater connections to the wider world. He explores how the Qing and Tsarist empires dealt with ethnic heterogeneity, and compares Soviet and Chinese Communist attempts at managing national and cultural difference. He highlights the deep interconnections between the "Russian" and "Chinese" parts of Central Asia that endure to this day, and demonstrates how Xinjiang remains an integral part of Central Asia despite its fraught and traumatic relationship with contemporary China. The essential history of one of the most diverse and culturally vibrant regions on the planet, this panoramic book reveals how Central Asia has been profoundly shaped by the forces of modernity, from colonialism and social revolution to nationalism, state-led modernization, and social engineering. This book considers the applicability and use of civil society, both as a concept and in practice, in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The volume examines whether civil society organisations (CSOs) are a progressive force for change, or a safety net. Various forms of CSOs are investigated: NGOs and community-based organisations, trade unions, political parties and religious groups, as well as more long-standing Soviet and traditional institutions and practices. The book contains lessons and perspectives about civil society growth across time, and considers future directions. Religion and security play an important role in traditional Societies. In South and Central Asia, traditional and moderate Islamic beliefs and practices with strong indigenous and Sufi content are diametrically opposed to radical Wahabi and Talibani brands of Islam intolerant of other cultures and groups. The emergence of radical extremist and violent Islamist movements poses serious challenges to the secular and democratic polity, inter-religious harmony, security and territorial integrity of states in the region. As such, religious extremism, terrorism, drug trafficking and arms smuggling are viewed by various countries in South and Central Asia and also in the West as the main threats to their security. Against this backdrop, this book provides local perspectives on religion, security, history and geopolitics in South Asia and Central Asia in an integrated manner. Presenting a holistic and updated view of the developments inside and across South and Central Asia, it offers concise analyses by experts on the region. Contributors discuss topics such as the resurgence of the Taliban in
Afghanistan, the politics and practice of Islamist terrorism in India, and the security challenges posed by religious radicalism in Bangladesh. The book makes a significant contribution to South and Central Asian Studies, as well as studies on Regional Security. This open access book features various studies on democratization, transformation, political and economic development, and security issues in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) geographical region and beyond. Written by experts and academics in the fields of human rights, security, transformation and development, particularly in post-Soviet and communist countries, it examines the status quo of regime development in various member states of the OSCE; their economic, security and human rights performance; institutional reforms and transformations and the challenges that these countries and their societies face, including the USA, Canada, Germany, Macedonia, Russia, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Mongolia. This is the 2019 edition of this Compilation Series of the OSCE Academy. The OSCE works to promote Minority Protection, Security, Democratic Development and Human Rights guided by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and to enhance securitization and development policies in Eurasia, Europe, Central Asia, and North America. Since being founded in 1993, the OSCE and its agencies and departments have attracted a wealth of academic research in various fields and disciplines, ranging from economic development and election monitoring to enhancing global principles of human rights and securitization. About the OSCE Academy in Bishkek: Founded in 2004, the Academy offers post-Doc research fellowships and runs two Master Degrees, one in Economic Governance and Development and one in Politics and Security in Central Asia. The Academy's regular academic programs and conference contributes to developing human professional capital in the sectors of particular importance for Central Asian states and societies. The Academy's graduates and visiting researchers contribute to economic development, governance and policy in Central Asia and the OSCE region. The OSCE provides technical and financial assistance to help Central Asia and the OSCE region develop their economies, political systems, and cultural life across Central Asia and how it has changed in the post-Soviet era. For its citizens, contemporary Central Asia is a land of great promise and peril. While the end of Soviet rule has opened new opportunities for social mobility and cultural expression, political and economic dynamics have also imposed severe hardships. In this lively volume, contributors from a variety of disciplines examine how ordinary Central Asians lead their lives and navigate shifting historical and political trends. Provocative stories of Turkmen nomads, Afghan villagers, Kazakh scientists, Kyrgyz border guards, a Tajik strongman, guardians of religious shrines in Uzbekistan, and other narratives illuminate important issues of gender, religion, power, culture, and wealth. A vibrant and dynamic world of life in urban neighborhoods and small villages, at weddings and celebrations, at classroom tables, and around dinner tables emerges from this introduction to a geopolitically strategic and culturally fascinating region. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the achievement of independence by its republics created an unprecedented situation. For the first time in its history Central Asia was a “diaspora” which numbered about 25 million people. Now a recipient of immigrants, the Russian Federation took more than eight million former Soviet citizens between 1990 and 2003, mainly “ethnic” Russians from other former Soviet republics. Central Asia was the primary provider of these migrants: of these eight million individuals, half came from the five Central Asian republics—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—which were home to more than one third of this Russian “diaspora.” Russians made up nearly 20 percent of the total population of these five states: some 9.5 million individuals in 1989. But their presence was not evenly distributed, and each state faced a unique domestic situation. Whereas the titular population dominated in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, with approximately 80 percent of the total population, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan were home to large non titular minorities. The Kyrgyz accounted for only 65 percent of the population of their republic. The Kazakhs would not cross the majority threshold until the 1999 census (53 percent of the population). Though their situations were diverse, the five states nonetheless had to manage a similar problem: how to affirm a “de-Russified” national identity in the wake of local economic collapse, which occurred as bonds among the former Soviet republics broke, and how to integrate these large populations into their Central Asian, Russian, and international socio-cultural life. It is in the long term, the present article focuses on post-Soviet migratory flows of the Russians of Central Asia in the direction of Russia. I attempt to define the motivations for emigration and provide sociological profiles of the migrants in the 1990s, to disassociate declarations of intent from the act itself, and to question the ambiguous rapport of the migrants with their two “homelands”–Central Asia and Russia. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, unlike the other republics, did not organize a census during 1999-2000; thus, quantitative information remains fragmented at various points. I will revisit neither the terminological stake of the definition of “Russian” nor its ambiguities, both of which constitute subjects of research unto themselves. Additionally, I analyze several fundamental issues, such as dual citizenship, professional discrimination, the status of the Russian language, Russian-language education, and access to Russophone media. I seek to demonstrate that, since the turn of the 21st century, the “Russian question” has progressively disassociated itself from the actual Russophobia issue. The massive migratory flows of Central Asians seeking work in Russia force local governments to maintain legal, linguistic, cultural, educational, and informational links with the old imperial center. These governments also seek to satisfy the rights of their Russian minorities, but to benefit from the economic growth of the Russian Federation. The Russians of Central Asia thus find themselves in a paradoxical position: a discriminated minority seeking to profit from a new rapprochement with Russia in which they are neither principal actors nor principal beneficiaries. This is an important analysis of a key but little-known region, in the wider context of world politics. Central Asia has huge oil and gas resources, divided between five independent states - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan - each with their own problems and interests. The region is energy-rich and, being situated between Russia and China and close to Afghanistan and other potential trouble-spots, it has acquired immense geo-strategic importance. History is seen and felt everywhere. Old legacies, whether they go back to Genghis Khan or stem from the recent Soviet past, have a profound effect on contemporary issues and political choices. Concentrating on today's problems against a complex historical background, the book draws on the author's extensive involvement with the region. Considerable attention is paid to Central Asian Islam, human rights issues in the region, and Central Asia's place in the 'war against terrorism'. This study examines the life of Arminius Vambery, the nineteenth-century Hungarian writer, intellectual, and informal diplomat who traveled extensively throughout Central Asia. It uses his experiences to explore the identity politics of the period and the political and intellectual concept of Orientalism. A penetrating look into the unrecognized and unregulated links between autocratic regimes in Central Asia and centers of power and wealth throughout the West, corrupt, and politically unstable, the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are dismissed as isolated and irrelevant to the outside world. But are they? This hard-hitting book argues that Central Asia is in reality a globalizing leader with extensive involvement in economics, politics and security dynamics beyond its borders. Yet Central Asia's international activities are mostly hidden from view, with disturbing implications for world security. Based on years of research and involvement in the region, Alexander Cooley and John Heathershaw reveal how business networks, elite bank accounts, overseas courts, third-party brokers, and Western lawyers connect Central Asia's supposedly isolated leaders with global power centers. The authors also uncover widespread Western participation in money laundering, bribery, foreign lobbying by autocratic governments, and the exploiting of legal loopholes within Central Asia. Groundbreaking and important, this book exposes the global connections of a troubled region that must no
[In recent years, the U.S. Army has paid increasing attention to the conduct of unconventional warfare. However, the base of historical experience available for study has been largely American and overwhelmingly Western. In Russian-Soviet Unconventional Wars in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Afghanistan, Dr. Robert F. Baumann makes a significant contribution to the expansion of that base with a well-researched analysis of four important episodes from the Russian-Soviet experience with unconventional wars. Primarily employing Russian sources, including important archival documents only recently declassified and made available to Western scholars, Dr. Baumann provides an insightful look at the Russian conquest of the Caucasian mountaineers (1801-59), the subjugation of Central Asia (1839-81), the reconquest of Central Asia by the Red Army (1918-33), and the Soviet war in Afghanistan (1979-89). The history of these wars—especially as it relates to the battle tactics, force structure, and strategy employed in them—offers important new perspectives on elements of continuity and change in combat over two centuries. This is the first study to provide an in-depth examination of the evolution of the Russian and Soviet unconventional experience on the predominantly Muslim southern periphery of the former empire. There, the Russians encountered fierce resistance by peoples whose cultures and views of war differed sharply from their own. Consequently, this Leavenworth Paper addresses not only issues germane to combat but to a wide spectrum of civic and propaganda operations as well. This collection provides a broad analysis of Afghanistan and its neighbors in recent decades and investigates the various historical and political contexts into which the region has been placed. It examines the legacy of Soviet intervention, patterns of cooperation and conflict among regional states, and recent US strategic initiatives. Historian Dilip Hiro offers us a narrative that places the modern politics, peoples, and cultural background of this region firmly into the context of current international focus. The struggle between Russia and Great Britain over Central Asia in the nineteenth century was the original “great game.” But in the past quarter century, a new “great game” has emerged, pitting America against a newly aggressive Russia and a resource-hungry China, all struggling for influence over the same region, now one of the most volatile areas in the world: the long border region stretching from Iran through Pakistan to Kashmir. In Great Games, Local Rules, Alexander Cooley, one of America’s most respected international relations scholars, explores the dynamics of the new competition for control of the region since 1911. All three great powers have crafted strategies to increase their power in the area, which includes Afghanistan and the former Soviet republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. Each nation is pursuing important goals: basing rights for the US, access to natural resources for the Chinese, and increased political influence for the Russians. However, overlooked in all of the talk about this new great game is fact that the Central Asian governments have proven themselves critical agents in their own right, establishing local rules for external power involvement that serve to fend off foreign interest. As a result, despite the extensive involvement from the United States and China, Central Asia remains a collection of fragmented states, and the external competition has merely reinforced the sovereign authority of the individual Central Asian governments. A careful and surprising analysis of how small states interact with great powers in a vital region, Great Games, Local Rules greatly advances our understanding of how global politics actually works in the contemporary era. The studies in this volume mark a new phase in the development of scholarship on Sufi traditions of Central Asia, expanding and deepening the source base, recontextualizing basic frameworks for understanding Sufi history, and challenging received assumptions and narratives. A seminal introduction to the rise of Central Asia, covering Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, The Resurgence of Central Asia is Ahmed Rashid’s seminal study of the states that emerged in the aftermath of the breakup of the Soviet Union: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. All have Muslim majorities and ancient histories but are otherwise very different. Rashid’s book, now with a new introduction by the author examining some of the crucial political developments since its first publication in 1994, provides entry to this little-known but geopolitically important region. Rashid gives a history of each country, including its incorporation into Tsarist Russia, to the present day, providing basic socioeconomic information, and explains the diverse political situations. He focuses primarily on the underlying issues confronting these societies: the legacy of Soviet rule, ethnic tensions, the position of women, the future of Islam, the question of nuclear proliferation, and the fundamental choices over economic strategy, political system, and external orientation that lie ahead. 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. Negative views of the United States abound, but we know too little about how such views affect politics. Drawing on careful research on post-Soviet Central Asia, Edward Schatz argues that anti-Americanism is best seen not as a rising tide that swamps or as a conflagration that overwhelms. Rather, “America” is a symbolic resource that resides quietly in the mundane but always has potential value for social and political mobilizers. Using a wide range of evidence and a novel analytic framework, Schatz considers how Islamist movements, human rights activists, and labor mobilizers across Central Asia avail themselves of this fact, thus changing their ability to pursue their respective agendas. By reframing our analytic gaze away from high politics, he affords us a clearer view of the slower-moving, partially occluded, and socially embedded processes that ground how “America” becomes political. In turn, we gain a nuanced appreciation of the downstream effects of US foreign policy choices and a sober sense of the challenges posed by the politics of traveling images. Most treatments of anti-Americanism focus on politics in the realm of presidential elections and foreign policies. By focusing instead on symbols, Schatz lays bare how changing public attitudes shift social relations in politically significant ways, and considers how changing symbolic depictions of the United States recombine the raw material available for social mobilizers. Just like sediment traveling along waterways before reaching its final destination, the raw material that constitutes symbolic America can travel among various social groups, and can settle into place to form the basis of new social meanings. Symbolic America, Schatz shows us, matters for politics in Central Asia and beyond.

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