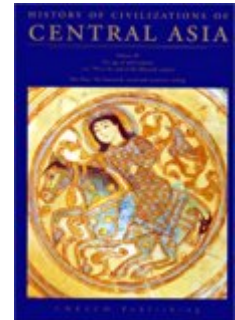


M. S. Asimov, C. E. Bosworth, eds.. *History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Vol. IV: The Age of Achievement: AD 750 to the End of the Fifteenth Century, Part One: The Historical, Social and Economic Setting*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1998. 485 pp. \$70.00, cloth, ISBN 978-92-3-103467-1.



**Reviewed by** Charles C. Kolb

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## *Background and General Assessment*

This volume is the fourth in UNESCO's compelling and comprehensive history series on Central Asia. Your reviewer was privileged to assess the third volume for H-Asia in January 1998, and the reader is directed to that review on the URL: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=12484885938191>.

The series entitled *History of Civilizations of Central Asia* is projected to span the prehistory and history of this significant geocultural region from the initial evidence of human occupation to the present. The initial volume in the series, *History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Volume I: The Dawn of Civilization: Earliest Times to 700 B.C.*, edited by A. H. Dani and A. M. Masson (535 pp.), published in 1992 is now "out of print." *Volume II: The Development of Sedentary and Nomadic Civilizations: 700 B.C. to A.D. 250*, edited by Janos Harmatta, B. J. Puri, and G. F. Etemadi (573 pp.) was issued in 1994, and *Volume III: The Crossroads of Civilizations, A.D. 250 to 750*, prepared under the editorship of B. A. Litvinsky, Zhang Guang-da and R. Shabani Samaghabadi (568 pp.)

was published in 1996 but became available in the United States only in 1997. To date, only the first of the two parts comprising the fourth volume has been issued and that initial part is herein reviewed. The American distributor for UNESCO, Bernan Associates, reports that there is no firm publication date for the second part, *Volume IV: The Age of Achievement: A.D. 750 to the End of the Fifteenth Century, Part Two: The Achievements*. Likewise, a subsequent volume in the series, *Volume V: Development in Contrast: From the Sixteenth to the Mid-nineteenth Century*, has no projected date for publication. However, *Volume VI: Towards Contemporary Civilization: From the Mid-nineteenth Century to the Present Time* is scheduled to be issued in late 1998 and has a list price of \$50.00.

Part One of the fifth volume begins with a "Preface" written by Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO, who provides an overview of the history of the United Nations' efforts to increase communication between peoples. He also summarizes UNESCO's efforts to publish area-based histories for the "lesser-known" regions of

the world. *The History of Scientific and Cultural Development of Mankind* (1968) was the initial undertaking and the first of a projected group of multi-volume regional series, *General History of Africa* (1970-1976), were the first publications to be completed. Plans were also developed for subsequent works on Central Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Islamic culture. As the membership of the United Nations expanded during the 1970s and 1980s, so did the scope of the Central Asian volumes. In its initial stage, the project incorporated the nation-states of Afghanistan, India, Iran, Pakistan, and southern portions of the Soviet Union. Following the admission of Mongolia and the People's Republic of China to the United Nations, Mongolia and the western regions of China were also included in the Central Asian prospectus. Former Soviet Central Asian republics are also active participants in the project. Therefore, the "heartland of Asia," stretching from the Caspian Sea in the west to the borders of China proper in the east, to the southern fringes of Siberia to the north, and the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf to the south, form the geographic-cultural boundaries for the Central Asian study.

A distinguished group of international scholars was assembled to synthesize the prehistory and history of this vast area for the period from about 700,000 years ago to the present. These archaeologists, prehistorians, art historians, ethnographers, historians, and museum curators, among others, have consulted a voluminous literature published in many Eurasian and Oriental languages, and often in small press runs. Volume IV, Part One was written by twenty-two contributors working under the editorship of Professor M. S. (Muhammad Seyfeydinovich) Asimov (former President of the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan, Dushanbe) and Professor Clifford E. Bosworth (Department of Middle Eastern Studies, The University of Manchester, UK). Professor Asimov served vigorously as President and Editor of Volume IV (Parts One and Two) when, at the age of 76, he was shot and killed by an unknown as-

sailant as he left his residence in Dushanbe on 29 July 1996. His tragic death leaves a void in the ranks of his nation's intellectual community and in the scientific committee that was charged with preparing the history of Central Asia. Bosworth completed the final work on the volume.

In "Description of the project" (pp. 11-13), Asimov provides a synopsis of the project's plan of work, beginning with the General Conference held by UNESCO in Nairobi, Kenya in 1976 at which a resolution was passed to prepare a culture history of Central Asia. He observes that the project had two stages: an incipient phase during which emphasis was placed on archaeological and historical research, and the second during which modern aspects of Central Asian civilizations were considered. By 1980 a nineteen-member International Scientific Committee had been established which included members from the twelve countries of Central Asia. This committee functioned from 1980-1993, when a new group of eighteen members undertook the task of completing the six volumes that were planned.

The three-page "Introduction" (pp. 19-21) authored by C. E. Bosworth outlines the scope of the current work; the twenty chapters in this volume are a synthesis of the political, economic, religious, and cultural changes that took place from A.D. (e.g., C.E.) 750 to 1500. These eight centuries saw the rise of Islam and the founding, demise, and transformation of a number of chiefdoms, incipient states, and empires in Central Asia. He wrote that "these were also the centuries in which nomadic and military empires arose in the heart of Asia and then impinged on the history of adjacent, well-established civilizations and cultures China, India, Islamic Western Asia and Christian eastern and central Europe to an unparalleled extent" (p. 19). Richard N. Frye, a distinguished American scholar, provides an In piam memoriam honoring Professor Asimov (p. 22).

The twenty-two contributors to this work represent nearly a dozen nations: five authors are

from the Russian Federation, three are from Pakistan, and two each from the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Uzbekistan. Individual contributors are from the nation-states of India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the People's Republic of China, Tajikistan, and Turkey. The three members of the Reading Committee are Richard N. Frye and Denis Senior, both from the United States, and Janos Harmatta from Hungary (the latter is the senior editor of the second volume in the Central Asian series).

Chronologically the work begins with the rise of the new faith of Islam and considers its competition with older-established faiths as the word of Allah spread from the Arabian Peninsula into Iran and much of Central Asia. In addition, the expansion of peoples of what is now the region of Mongolia and the territories around Lake Baikal initially the Turks, then the Kitans, and more recently the Mongols was to have major international significance. The east to west migrations of Turkish tribal nomads had long-term effects upon the ethnic and sociocultural composition of the region from Afghanistan west through Iran and Anatolia. Turkish expansion south of the Oxus River (Amu Darya) into what are now Afghanistan, Pakistan, and northern India also had enduring political and cultural effects on these regions. Likewise, Mongol military expansion into Afghanistan and northwestern India were significant events, especially the Mongol invasions during the thirteenth century. Lamaist Buddhism became established in the Mongolian regions and in Tibet, while Islam was adopted by a majority of then Turkish-speaking peoples of Transoxania, southern Siberia, and Chinese Xinjiang. In eastern Europe, and particularly in Russia, the Turco-Mongol Golden Horde had an enduring influence on regional culture history.

### *Summary of Contents*

I shall next summarize the major points made by the authors of each chapter and then critique and assess the book in the light of other sources

published in English. As noted above, Asimov provided a "Description of the project" and Bosworth contributed the "Introduction" and a "Conclusion" (p. 421). The twenty chapters vary in length from eight to thirty-one pages and a majority of these essays (twelve of twenty) are authored by a single contributor.

In Chapter One, "Central Asia under the Umayyads and the early Abbasids" (C. E. Bosworth and O. G. Bolshakov), the authors consider initially the region of Central Asia on the eve of the Arab incursions, the appearance of the Arabs in A.D. 653-654, and the Abbasid revolution and its consequences through the fall of Abu Muslim in the year 751. Taxation policies, distinctions between Muslims and non-Muslims, and the opulence of the Abbasid court set the stage for a popular rebellion. Political, social, and sectarian dissents during the early Abbasid period are also characterized prior to the rise of al-Ma'mun and the achievement of some degree of sociocultural and political stability. Although the Abbasid empire had diverse ethnic and religious compositions, it maintained its unity, in the main, through a large, professional standing army.

In Chapter Two, "Sectarian and national movements in Iran, Khursan and Transoxania during Umayyad and early Abbasid times" (F. Daffary), the author begins with an analysis of the Kharijite movement, a review of Shiism versus Sunni orthodoxy, the Kaysaniyya and Hashimiyya, and the documentation of heterodox Muslim and neo-Mazdakite movements (al-Muqanna and Babak, among others). The later development of Shiism, the Twelvers, the Zaydis, and the Ismailis are also recounted, as is the background for the disintegration of the Abbasid caliphate in the eastern part of Central Asia. The Abbasids survived as the spiritual heads of the Islamic world but no longer exercised political control. The appearance of Turkish dynasties during the eleventh century also served to restrain the resurgence of Persian culture.

Chapter Three is entitled "The states of the Oghuz, the Kimek and the Kipchak" (S. G. Agajanov). The discussion centers on the theories of origin and ultimate collapse of the ninth and tenth century Turkic Oghuz state and the rise and collapse of the nomadic principality of the Kimek (a federation of seven "tribes") during the ninth through eleventh centuries. The Kipchak, a not well-documented western branch of the Kimek tribal confederation, are known since the seventh century but during the eleventh through the thirteenth century became paramount as the Oghuz and Kimek states collapsed. Likewise, the Kipchak were able to compete with the powerful western Asian empire of the Khwarazm Shahs (discussed in Chapter Seven) before their dispersal across Central Eurasia.

Chapter Four, "The Samanid state" (N. N. Negmatov), is a summary of a key Central Asian polity, beginning with the creation of the Samanid state in Transoxania during the ninth and ten centuries, and the urban florescence of this strong, partly centralized state. The Samanid state was the successor to the Abbasid caliphate in present-day Iraq. The discussion of the system of government and political authority is especially valuable, but the descriptions of agricultural practices, the construction of irrigation systems, mining, craft production, domestic and external trade, and material culture are also illuminating. Wheat, barley, rice, and millet were grown, while iron, tin, silver, copper, mercury, rubies, lapis lazuli, and petroleum oil were exploited. Woollen and fine cotton textiles, paper (which replaced papyrus), and high-quality glazed ceramics were produced. Raw materials and finished products were distributed through established trade routes that included community and locality production specialization, caravanserais, and storehouses. Samanid intellectual life is reviewed, including the influence of two great polymaths, scholarship, and developments in literature and music. The Is-

maili movement and the ethnic composition of the state are also considered.

Chapter Five, "The Ghaznavids" (C. E. Bosworth), relates the late tenth century formation of the Ghaznavid amirate in what would become present-day Afghanistan. The author commences with a review of the prehistory, the rise of the Turkish general Sebuktegin and his expansionistic policies centered on the city of Ghazna (Ghazni), with the result that the Samanids were never again able to control the Ghaznavids. In 998 Mahmud succeeded as amir for 32 years and continued the augmentation of the empire, which included plunder raids into northern India and a gradual penetration into central India. Masud attempted to continue his father's policies in Iran and India but his Ghaznavid army was defeated by the Turkmens at Dandanqan in 1040 resulting in the loss of all of his western provinces. Bosworth writes that "the result of this battle, one of the most decisive in the history of the eastern Islamic world, was that the Seljuqs, now proclaiming their allegiance to the Baghdad caliph as their sole suzerain, were able within the next 20 years to take over the whole of Iran and make it the nucleus of the Great Seljuq empire" (p. 109). The composition and characteristics of the Ghaznavid sultanate with central and provincial administration, a vizir, an elite army, an elaborate cultural and intellectual life, and expansive trade and irrigation agriculture are also related. This chapter updates the earlier work of Barthold. More detailed but somewhat dated is Bosworth's *The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran, 994-1040*, 2nd ed. (1973, Beirut: Kayats; Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1st ed., Publications in History, Philosophy and Economics 17, 1963 [based upon his 1961 thesis].)

The contribution comprising Chapter Six, "The Karakhanids" (E. A. Davidovich), is based on secondary historical sources and numismatic evidence. Davidovitch states that their history "is one of the least studied periods in the history of Cen-

tral Asia and East Turkistan" (p. 119), and that Barthold's analysis from the 1920s is still the most reliable account. The chapter covers the conquest of Transoxania, including Turkish "tribal confederations," the adoption of Islam in the mid-tenth century, and an explanation of the complex political system and Karakhanid dynasties. The interpretations of early scholars such as Pritsak and Barthold are considered, as is territorial partition, the battles against the Ghaznavids and Seljuqs in 1040, and relations with the Kara Khitay and Khwarazem Shah. The structure of the state, the appanage system (assigning revenues from an estate), urban centers, and commerce are documented up to the eleventh century. Trade, bazaars, caravanserais, glazed ceramic and glass production, and epigraphy are also discussed.

Chapter Seven, "The Seljuqs and the Khwarazem Shahs" (A. Sevim and C. E. Bosworth), begins with an essay by Sevim in which he reviews the evidence of the obscure origins of the Seljuqs and characterizes their expansion in the region of the Aral and Caspian seas to the year 1055. This chapter relates to materials also considered in Chapters Four and Six. The Seljuq defeat of the Ghaznavid army in 1035 and 1040 are related, as is the siege of Balkh and the placement of Khwarazem under a Seljuq governor. This marked a politico-religious schism with the sultan as a secular ruler and the caliph-imam as the moral and spiritual leader. Bosworth's contribution to the chapter summarizes the complex period of consolidation of the Seljuq sultanate (1055-1118) under Togril, Malik Shah, and Masud III. The structure of the Seljuq state in the east, the founding of Islamic colleges, and the importance of constituting a standing, professional army are related. Another essay by Bosworth considers the florescence of the Eastern Seljuq Sultanate (1118-1157) and the appearance of the Mongols (1097-1219), including the sixty-year reign of Sultan Sanjar. Diplomacy, punitive expeditions, and state structure are documented, including the alliance of Sultan Shah and the "pagan" Kara Khitay,

as is the appearance of Chinggis Khan's forces in 1218.

In Chapter Eight, "The Ghurids" (K. A. Nizami), the author reviews the historical and cultural development of the people of Ghur, a mountainous region located east and southeast of Herat. The Islamization of the Ghurids, who were ironworkers, horsebreeders, and slave merchants, was a slow process begun by the Samanids in 979 and was continued by the Ghaznavids. In 1146, the Ghurids developed as an expansionist, independent power under the seven sons of Izz al-Din Husayn. Political intrigues, the destruction of Ghazna (including the burning of its buildings and libraries), the expansion into northern India (introducing an intellectual heritage of scholars and books), and the Bamiyan amirate are summarized. The decline of the Seljuqs and Ghaznavids created a political vacuum that was filled by the Ghurids and Khwarazem Shahs. The patriarchal tribal political and social organization and the change from nomadic to urban life, and other cultural developments are reviewed.

Chapter Nine, "The Uighurs, the Kyrgyz and the Tangut (eighth to the thirteenth century)" (D. Sinor, Geng Shimin, and Y. I. Kychanov), is divided into three parts, individually authored. Denis Sinor considers initially the Uighurs in Mongolia and the Kyrgyz, known in China since the early seventh century A.D. In 744 three tribes (the Kailuk, Basmil, and Uighur) allied into a chiefdom in 744 in order to rebel against Turkish rule. The international trade of Uighur horses for Chinese silk, Sino-Uighur marital alliances, and the complexities of five Kyrgyz cultural groups are related. Authorities are uncertain how much territory the latter actually controlled. Shimin documents the Uighur Kingdom of Kocho, the destruction of the Uighur Khanate in 840, migrations, to the Turfan region, and the Kocho under the western Liao during the twelfth century. In this region the fusion of Buddhism and Manichaeism lasted nearly 450 years. In the third essay, Kychanov considers

the Tangut Hsi Hsia Kingdom of the Ordos region during the period 982-1227 (the era of the Sung dynasty). The succession of rulers, political reforms, Buddhism, and woodblock printing are discussed. The multinational Tangut "state" based on livestock and irrigation agriculture fought wars with the Mongols in 1207-1208 and from 1214-1224.

In Chapter Ten, "The western Himalayan states" (A. H. Dani), the author reviews the trans-Himalayan states south of Chinese Turkestan. Dani notes (p. 215) that the British sometimes "made up names" for various Turkish ethnic groups. He documents the Trakhan Dynasty of Gilgit, the Maglot ruling family of Nager, the Ayash of Hunza, the Kalor royal family of Chitral, and the three ruling families of Baltistan (the Makpons, Amachas, and Yabghu). Relations of these peoples with Tibet, Kashgaria, the Trans-Pamir, and Kashmire are also revealed. Cultural divisions are based, in the main, on linguistic and sociocultural distinctions. Islamization of this region was a gradual process.

Chapter Eleven, "The Kitan and the Kara Khitay" (D. Sinor), concerns the rise of the Kitan peoples of mineral-rich northern China during two centuries. The Kitan were a "conglomerate" of people held together by economic or political rather than cultural interests. Political alliances against the Turks, relations with the Uighurs, contact with a Persian delegation in 924, and the revolt by the Tunguz Jurchen peoples in 1100 are summarized. The reconstruction of the Kara Khitay, Sinor notes, is "tentative" since Chinese and Muslim sources are often contradictory and the language that the Kara Khitay spoke is uncertain. The origin of the Prester John legend of 1141 is revealed, as are palace coups, armed clashes, conflicts with the Mongols and the Khwarazem Shah, and their ultimate political fate. Linguistic and cultural elements survive in contemporary Kalmuck culture. Notably, the term "Cathay" (a synonym for China) is a Kara Khitay name.

Chapter Twelve, "The Mongols and their state in the twelfth to the thirteenth century" (Sh. Bira), has a somewhat environmental-deterministic overtone. The role of mountain-steppe geography is seen as vital in shaping the unique history and civilization of the Mongols, particularly in pastoralism and commerce. Bira traces the Mongols from the fourth century A.D., documenting sociopolitical structure (the "decay of the primitive clan system" into social stratification and the evolution of tribal confederations into a state-like confederation or ulus). The role of the Chin dynasty, the rise of Chinggis Khan (reportedly born in 1162, or 1155, or 1167; he died in 1227), the reunification of the Mongols (1189-1206), civil and military administrative reorganization (1206-1211), and the founding of the Mongol state are elaborated. The author notes that the early history of the Mongols is romanticized but the era following 1198 is well documented. Chinggis codified laws (Yeke Jasa) and founded the capital city of Karakorum in 1220. Campaigns of conquest are summarized briefly.

Chapter Thirteen, "Central Asia under the rule of Chinggis Khan's successors" (B. Akhmedov, revised by D. Sinor), considers the liquidation of the Tangut state of Hsi Hsia, the Khwarazem Shahs, the Kara Khitay empire, and Transoxanian region. The characteristics of the Great Hoard, the succession of rulers, administrative reforms instituted by Kebek Khan, irrigation agriculture, and transit trade are documented in the essay. The impact of revolts and internecine warfare that occurred in 1238, 1326 ff., and 1340-1370--ultimately leading to rule by nomadic feudal lords--are also reviewed. The authors contend that these events set the stage for the incursions by Timur (better known to the West as Tamerlane).

Chapter Fourteen, "The Delhi Sultanate" (Riazul Islam and C. E. Bosworth) is divided into two parts. The Part One, Professor Islam begins his analysis in A.D. 646 and provides background for the establishment of the sultanate in the thir-

teenth century. Three large and separate feudal-like kingdoms, the lack of central authority, and "endless and purposeless internecine warfare" (p. 269) characterize the early years during Arab expansion. The accomplishments of seven sultans are detailed for the period 1206-1316, during which the army was reorganized and expanded, Turkish supremacy was terminated, and Mongol invasions were repulsed. Agrarian, economic, social, and administrative information is provided, documenting land reforms, market regulations, income levels, urbanization, and craft production. In Part Two, Bosworth synthesizes the history for the period 1316-1526, detailing territorial expansion under the Tughuqids (1320-1412), more than twenty rebellions, political decline, and the disintegration of the sultanate to the Delhi region alone - "a capital city without an Empire" (p. 285), and the sacking of Delhi by Turco-Mongolian armies. The history of the "unremarkable" Sayyids (1414-1451) and their dynamic successors, the Lodis (1451-1526), is also recounted. The Lodis were an Afghan dynasty originally from Ghur and excelled in diplomatic and military skills, and served as patrons of scholarship and music. However, the lack of a centralized political system, rebellions by Afghan commanders, fierce Sunni orthodoxy, and intolerance toward Hindus combined to shatter the sultanate by 1526.

Chapter Fifteen, "The regions of Sind, Baluchistan, Multan and Kashmir: the historical and economic setting" (N. A. Baloch and A. Q. Rafiqi), is also presented in two parts. Baloch writes about the rulers of the Sind, Baluchistan, and Multan for the period 750-1500. He discusses three phases of political history: 1) the Abbasid period and the Fatimid interlude (the mid-eighth to the end of the tenth century), including a succession of amirs and rulers in four regions; 2) the period of the Ghaznavid and Ghurid Sultanates (the eleventh and twelfth centuries), and 3) the era of independent states (the thirteenth to early sixteenth century). The merchant-mariner-based sultanates of Makran and Samma (located on the

Arabian Sea) had commercial connections with East Asia, particularly to spice-rich Java. For the years 700-1500, the polities of Multan, Langah, Sumara, and Samma the latter two in the Sind region are reviewed, and the Baluch peoples, their migrations, and gradual Islamization are also recounted. A. Q. Rafiqi's contribution to the chapter details the military and political history of Kashmir under the Shah Mir dynasty (1339-1561). His essay begins in 713 with the Arab and then the Turkish invasions of Hindu Kashmir, considers the legends of the ancestry of Shah Mir, the rise of the ruler Rinchana from refugee to sovereign and his conversion to Islam. The salvation of Kashmir by Sikander in 1398 during Timur's invasion of India is also summarized. Administrative reforms, codified laws, scholarly patronage, craft production, and the succession of rulers are documented, as is the subsequent civil war and period of anarchy (1484-1532) during which Muhammad Shah was declared sultan on four different occasions. The final result was that Persian and Central Asian cultural elements were introduced into Hindu Kashmir and it became a part of that politico-religious sphere rather than a part of the Subcontinent cultural realm.

Chapter Sixteen, "Central Asia under Timur from 1370 to the early fifteenth century" (K. Z. Ashrafiyan), documents the expansive military empire of Timur which encompassed Transoxania, Khwarazem, the regions around the Caspian Sea, Iran, Iraq, a portion of the southern Caucasus, present-day Afghanistan, and northern India. The "empire" was a conglomeration of states and tribal territories whose peoples belonged to many different cultures and represented varying social and economic statuses. The author begins the history with Kebek Khan in 1318 and traces the rise of Timur of the Barlas tribe of Mongols (born in 1336) from contemporary written histories. Political intrigues, the Sarbadar movement, and the history of the cities of Balkh and Samarkand are reviewed. In 1370, the latter became Timur's capital. The essay recounts the reorganization of the

military (the Golden and White Hordes), strategies and tactics, and the raids, revolts against the Mongols, and military campaigns. "The purpose of Timur's conquests was not merely to acquire loot but to gain control of the lucrative major international trade routes" (p. 332). By 1393 the conquest of Iran was completed and the invasion of India begun (culminating with the battle for Delhi and slaughter of Hindus in December 1399), followed by a protracted campaign in Asia Minor. A projected expedition against China was interrupted by Timur's death at the age of seventy in 1405. The remainder of the chapter contains accounts of political and socioeconomic conditions under Timur; urban development, craft production, and commerce; Timur's relations with the rulers of several west European polities (for example, Byzantium, France, Castile, and England); and the succession struggle from 1405-1442.

In Chapter Seventeen, "The Timurid states in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries" (R. G. Mukminova), the aftermath of Timurid's death, the collapse of the realm, and fragmentation of the empire are reported. Ulugh Beg (1409-1449) assumed control in Turkistan and attempted to reunite the realm, developed domestic trade and foreign commerce with India and China, and made the city of Samarkand a center of scientific thought. After 1450, the Timurid realm split into two sections, Khurasan and Transoxania. The author then documents in detail the division and assignment of lands; subsistence activities (irrigation agriculture, livestock breeding, and hunting); and presents a lengthy analysis about land ownership and taxes. A shorter contribution recounts urbanization, craft production, and commerce in common products, foods, and exotic goods. "In the fifteenth century, Samarkand was the largest Central Asian trading town and played a major role in the circulation of goods between East and West" (p. 359) as well as with Kabul (Afghanistan) and Hindustan (the Indian Subcontinent). Local revolts during the early fifteenth century led to the disintegration of the polity of Transoxania and its

ultimate conquest by a federation of small tribes under Shaybiri Khan in 1486 and by Dasht-i Kipchak rulers who took Khwarazm, Balkh, and Herat by 1507.

Chapter Eighteen, "Popular movements, religious trends and Sufi influence on the masses on the post-Abbasid period" (K. A. Nizami), begins with the statement that popular movements often had political objectives that were camouflaged by religious masks, while others had religious objectives that were expressed through political movements. Nizami characterizes religious groups in early Islamic times: the Nestorian Christians, Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism. The rise of Sufism and the Sufi orders, teachers, and scholars in Central Asia after the eleventh century are well documented as are socioreligious and politicoreligious movements (the Ayyar, Sarbadar, and other sects). A short essay recounts Sufi orders in India and the Indian Mahdawi movement.

Chapter Nineteen, "Socio-economic development: food and clothing in eastern Iran and Central Asia" (N. Kasai and S. Natsagdorj), is a short chapter with two essays. The written sources used in this composition include Arabic and Persian documents and, for later periods, the writings of Europeans envoys and travelers (Clavijo and Marco Polo). The initial contribution, written by Kasai, recounts the eastern Islamic lands from Iran through the frontiers with China and includes a discussion of what is known about foods, diet, and dress for several regions (Khurasan, Sistan, Khwarazm, and the steppes) and cities (Balkh, Ghazna, and Samarkand). The information about the preparation and use of wine, beer, and milk are especially enlightening. Natsagdorj's 3.5-page contribution on Mongolian shelter, dress, crafts, food, and diet emphasizes the nomads' livestock-breeding activities and oral traditions.

Chapter Twenty, "Coinage and the monetary system" (E. A. Davidovich and A. H. Dani), is a specialized, two-part topical essay on the minting of coins and circulation of monies in the major sub-



regions of Central Asia from the eighth through fifteenth centuries. Davidovich characterizes Central Asia following the Arab conquest to the eleventh century, commenting on "Kufic" coins, different legal standards, coexisting coinages, monetary reforms, and scientific studies of coins (for example, the results of atomic absorption spectrometry analyses which may indicate fluctuations in fineness standards and the debasing of precious metals). A second contribution documents the eleventh through the beginning of the thirteenth century, the so-called "silver coin crisis," exchange rates, minting gold coins, and hoards; a third essay documents the coinage and circulation of money under the Mongols from the thirteenth through fourteenth centuries (dividing the period into four stages). Lastly, a section deals with coinage and money in Transoxania under Timur and the Timurids from the late fourteenth through fifteenth centuries (in five stages). Increased money supplies and number of mints, fractional coins, weight standards, and copper coinage are discussed. In Part Two, Dani writes about coinage and monetary systems in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and northern India. Arab-Sasanian, Ghaznavid, Ghurid, Delhi sultanate, Bengali, and Tughluqid coinage are also discussed. This chapter presents particularly valuable scholarship on numismatics but should be supplemented by more than the 37 coins illustrated in three figures.

In a one-page "Conclusion" (C. E. Bosworth), the author remarks that the fifteenth century marks "a profound change in the balance of power between the sedentary peoples and cultures of Central Asia and Inner Asia and the nomad elements there" (p. 421). This sets the stage for the advent of powerful states that arose along the western and southern fringes of Islamic Central Asia. Among these were the Christian Muscovite principality, Safavid Iran, and Mughal northern India.

#### *Final Assessment*

This volume is structured in a different manner when compared to its predecessors in the series. For example, *Volume III: The Crossroads of Civilizations: A.D. 50 to 750* (568 pp.) has seven maps, 170 figures, 1,032 footnotes, and 1,175 entries in the "Bibliography and References," in contrast to *Volume IV: A.D. 750 to the End of the Fifteenth Century: Part One: The Historical, Social and Economic Setting* (455 pp.) which has one table, eight maps, only three figures, 238 footnotes, and 664 items in the "References and Bibliography." Both of these works have twenty chapters. In the main, the twenty-four authors and seven collaborating specialists who prepared the third volume are archaeologists, prehistorians, and historians, while the twenty-two contributors to the fourth book are historians and specialists on languages and literature. Collectively, the authors of the 750-1500 volume employ archaeological, ethnohistoric, and historic documents, and primary and secondary sources. Nonetheless, with twenty chapters and twenty-two authors, some contributions are better organized than others despite the authors' intentions and editorial assignments, and the availability and quality of resources. A majority of the individual contributions are extremely detailed and well documented; the chapters, therefore, may make for difficult reading because of the profusion of proper nouns and must be read carefully. There are only a few essays that are general in coverage, some treatments are uneven (emphasizing political and military events to the near exclusion of cultural, economic, and subsistence activities or basic lifeways). A few chapters would benefit the reader if headings, sub-headings, or other internal organizational divisions had been incorporated. The inclusion of a holistic chronological chart for the period 750-1500 illustrating the geopolitical or regional divisions, polities, and religious and cultural phenomena would also aid the reader's comprehension of this complex body of material. There is only one table depicting the genealogy or succession of rulers (the Karakhanids in Chapter Six);

additional tabulations would be useful to the reader. Anthropological terms, such as clan, tribe, chiefdom, confederation, state, and empire, are used inconsistently rather than in a standardized manner. What one author may call a tribe is another's chiefdom; or an empire may be a confederation. Only a few of the writers use Islamic dates along with A.D. dates; I personally prefer C.E. (Christian Era) citations rather than the use of A.D. terminology. In the main, Volume IV, Part One is a political and military history that documents the Islamization process in Central Asia. This highly specialized reference volume has eight maps clustered into an appendix but the book would benefit from the inclusion of additional illustrations (the only ones are in the chapter on numismatics). The maps are particularly useful documents and are, in the main, accurate.

The volumes in UNESCO's Central Asian series are quickly becoming the paramount reference work for the region, much as the Cambridge Ancient History, 18 vols. (1954-1989), and The Cambridge History of Iran, 7 vols. in 8, (William B. Fisher et al. (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968-1991), particularly J. A. Boyle (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol. 5: The Saljuq and Mongol Periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968) constitute the standard references against which research and syntheses are assessed. A major in-progress reference work edited by Eshan Yarshatar, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 8 vols. to date [A-Education] (1983-date, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers), provides details on Iranian history.

For topics related to religion, readers may wish to refer to entries in The Encyclopaedia of Islam, new ed., 10 vols. to date [A-Tahrir] (Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. J. van Donzel, and W. P. Heinrichs (eds.), 1986-1998, Leiden: E. J. Brill). In addition, *The Cambridge History of Islam, Vol. 1: The Central Islamic Lands* and *Vol. 2: The Further Islamic Lands, Islamic Society and Civilization* (Peter M. Holt and Ann K. S. Lambton (eds.), 1970,

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) remains as an especially valuable resource. The contents of the second volume are relevant to topics and regions covered in the UNESCO volume being reviewed.

There are several general works on Central Asian history that may be compared to this UNESCO volume, although Asimov and Bosworth's edited volume is the most current synthesis of a complex region for the period C.E. 750-1500. Bosworth's *The Medieval History of Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia [640-1500]* (1977, London: Variorum Reprints) remains a significant synthesis. Three works by Richard N. Frye deserve recognition: *The Golden Age of Persia: The Arabs in the East [640-1256]* (1975, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson; New York: Barnes and Noble), *Islamic Iran and Central Asia (7th-12th Centuries)* (1979, London: Variorum Reprints), and *The Heritage of Central Asia: From Antiquity to the Turkish Expansion* (1996, Princeton, NJ: Markus Weiner Publishers, Princeton Series in the Middle East). These remain as especially significant scholarly sources. Now dated, however, is the classic by Rene Grousset *L'empire des steppes: Attila, Gengis-Khan, Tamerlan*, 4th ed. (1952, Paris: Payot), translated in 1970 by Naomi Walford as *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press). Likewise, Luc Kwanten's *Imperial Nomads: A History of Central Asia, 500-1500* (1979, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press) is a less desirable synthesis. David Christian's *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia, Volume 1: Inner Eurasia from Prehistory to the Mongol Empire* (in press [estimated publication in January 1999]; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers) has yet to be assessed. Meritorious, meticulous works by Denis Sinor, including his *Inner Asia and Its Contacts with Medieval Europe* (1977, London: Variorum Reprints), the edited *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia* (1990, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press), and his most recent contribution, *Studies in Medieval Inner*

*Asia* (1997, Aldershot, Hampshire, UK and Brookfield, VT: Ashgate), are still vital resources for the historian and inquisitive scholar. Nonetheless, Barthold's classic works, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, 3 vols. (Vasilli Vladimirovich Bartol'd [W. Barthold; V. and T. Minorsky, trans.], 1956-1962, Leiden: E. J. Brill) and *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, 4th ed., (W. Barthold; T. Minorsky, trans.; C. E. Bosworth, ed.), 1977, London: E. J. Gibb Memorial Trust) are still significant studies of the period and region.

This volume of *Civilizations*, like its predecessors, is a compelling and valuable reference work that should be acquired by specialists on Eurasian archaeology and history. Asimov and Bosworth are to be applauded for preparing this indispensable synthesis for the very dynamic and complex period C.E. 750-1500. It is lamentable that Professor Asimov did not live to see this volume published.

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