

makes a compelling case for Inner Eurasia as a meaningful unit in world history. At the same time his work convincingly demonstrates that there is an interactive Eurasian history that goes beyond Silk Roads and barbarian invasions.

Big picture history requires energy, openness, and risk taking, a willingness to escape from the well-worn grooves of academe. By ignoring traditionalist spatial and temporal boundaries Christian has effected a great escape; hopefully this will encourage others to go over the wall and find out what is on the other side.

THOMAS T. ALLSEN
The College of New Jersey

The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia. By JOHN GLENN. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999 and New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999. xii, 198 pp. \$65.00 (cloth).

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, there has emerged a large literature on the newly independent states of Central Asia. John Glenn's book is part of this literature. This reviewer is a historian with an interest in Central Asia, not a researcher into Central Asian affairs, nor a specialist in international relations, so I have tried to assess this book mainly as an introduction to some of the problems faced by Central Asian states today. And in many ways, this is a very impressive introduction indeed!

Glenn focuses on the problems posed for Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizstan, Tadzhikistan, and Turkmenistan by the many forms of ethnic and cultural divisions that persist within them. As Glenn puts it: "the objective of this book is to outline one of the main problems that confront the newly independent states of Central Asia: societal cohesiveness" (p. 7). The theme is explained clearly, though it is a shame that there is little discussion of the economic problems which very often provide the context and explanation for what appear to be cultural or ethnic divisions. The book's greatest strength lies in its theoretical discussions. The first two chapters explain with great clarity a model of "quasi-states," or ex-colonial states created less by internal forces than by international pressures. This model stresses the artificiality of the territorial boundaries of most former colonial states and the consequent difficulties they face in creating a sense of national unity that can override pre-existing tribal, clanic, ethnic, or cultural divisions. As a result, the main threats to the stability of such states are internal rather than external. Their internal divisions may be intraethnic (clanic or tribal divisions, for example), supraethnic (religious loyalties such as those to Islam or broader ethnic loyalties such as, in the case of Central Asia, to "Turkistan"), or ethnic. The problems caused by such divisions constitute the "insecurity dilemma," which is faced by most "Southern" states. The book sets up a contrasting ideal-type, that of the "Northern" state, which was normally built on an already emerging sense of national identity and cohesion. The theoretical discussion is handled with efficiency, clarity, and precision, and for those (like this reviewer) who are not familiar with contemporary International Relations theory, these chapters offer a very good introduction to recent debates about nationalism and state-building.

Chapters 3 to 6 use these models to explore some of the problems of state-building faced by Central Asian states. These chapters offer a clear and efficient overview of the pre-Soviet history of these states, their creation as states during the Soviet period, and the problems they face today. For those new to the field these chapters will provide a very good introduction, though scholars with more familiarity with Central Asia may sometimes feel that the treatment of ethnic differences is too cut and dried. As

in the introductory chapters, the issues are posed with clarity and precision. In prerevolutionary Central Asia, there existed many overlapping ethnic, tribal, and supraethnic identities, as well as a number of political organizations that attempted to mobilize around some of these identities. The Soviet government, like the colonial powers in Africa, demarcated state boundaries in ways that ignored many of these identities, while highlighting others. There emerged, in this way, a number of favored “titular” nations, whose sense of ethnicity was focused and heightened by long association with a territorial entity. The central question explored in chapter 4, on the Soviet period, is the extent to which these new identities provided the basis for the emergence of stable national identities. Did the Soviet government engage in a successful process of “nation-building” in Central Asia? The answer offered in chapter 5, on contemporary Central Asia, is that the process of “nation-building” did not progress far in the Soviet period. Paradoxically, Uzbekistan, the national group least apparent in the prerevolutionary period, seems the most firmly established national entity today. This is partly as a result of the successful myth-making that took place during the Soviet period, including the elevation of the pre-Uzbek ruler, Timur, to the status of a national hero. At the other extreme, in Tadjikistan, internal conflicts have led to a prolonged civil war which threatens to embroil Uzbekistan and Kirghizstan.

The final chapter discusses the prospects for democracy in the region. Given the book’s main themes, the central question is whether democratization will mitigate or intensify internal divisions. Glenn rightly refuses to offer a clear answer.

In conclusion, this book offers a fine introduction to the ethnic and cultural divisions that threaten state stability in contemporary Central Asia. However, readers who want to pursue the subject further should go on to more detailed studies with more space for the subtle nuances of ethnicity in the region. They should also explore the many economic problems that also threaten political stability in Central Asia.

DAVID CHRISTIAN
Macquarie University, Australia

Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet: Religious Revival and Cultural Identity. Edited by MELVYN C. GOLDSTEIN and MATTHEW T. KAPSTEIN. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998. x, 207 pp. \$40.00 (cloth); \$15.95 (paper).

This book is based on recent research in Tibetan regions of China, including areas formerly ruled by the Dalai Lama, equivalent to today’s Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and Amdo and Kham, which now are part of Qinghai and Sichuan provinces. As Orville Schell’s “Foreword” notes, the book refrains from polemic and nostalgia, which characterize much of the popular literature on Tibet. Instead it addresses core issues in understanding the region. One such issue is how Tibetan cultural unity has been engendered and sustained—despite regional, sectarian, and linguistic differences, exacerbated in the past by class divisions, great distances, and poor communications. A second issue concerns why religious revival has been less problematic in Sichuan and Qinghai than in the TAR, where it has become politicized and subject to government restrictions.

The book consists of six chapters: an introduction, a conclusion, and four chapters which present new field materials, plus a brief foreword. Two of the chapters draw