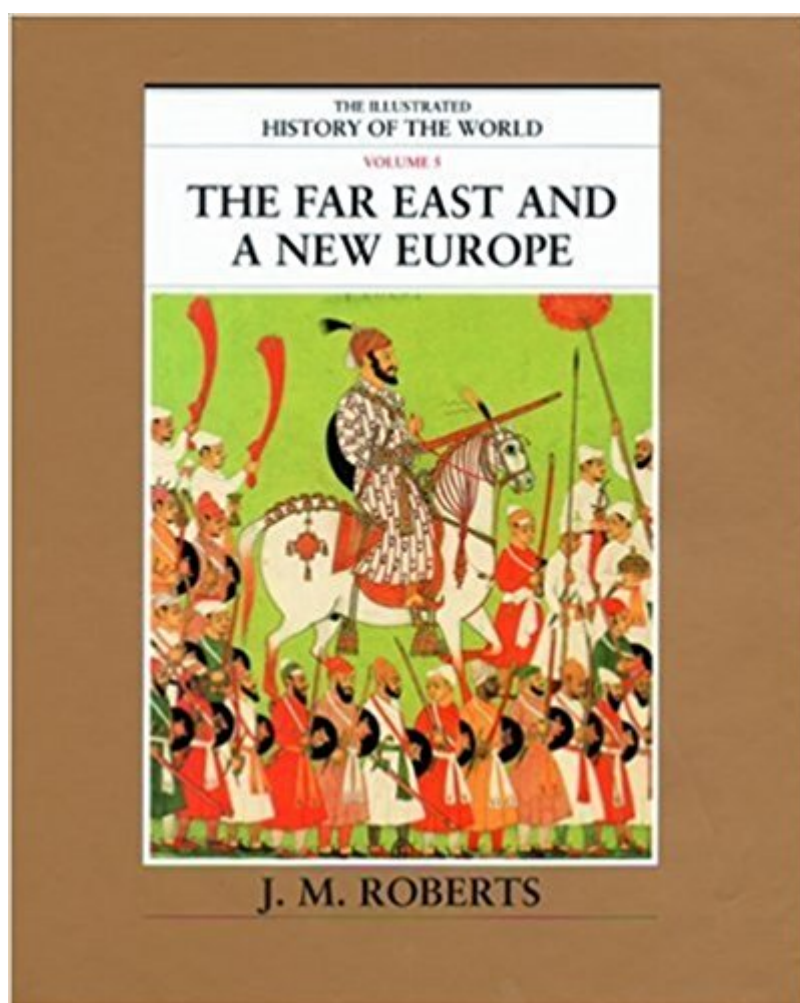


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The Far East And A New Europe (The Illustrated History Of The World, Volume 5)



Synopsis

The Illustrated History of the World is a lavishly illustrated edition of J. M. Roberts's bestselling History of the World. Now completely revised and updated, each volume of this comprehensive reference work traces the tumultuous story of humankind from prehistory to the end of the 20th century. The rise and fall of civilizations; the impact of powerful individuals on world events; the interplay of state and religion; the social and economic factors that influence societies--these are some of the themes of this masterful, sweeping narrative. Over 2,000 photographs in color and black-and-white present a unique visual panoply of the march of history. In addition, more than 200 maps and artworks in full color underscore important events. Fully integrated sidebars and feature boxes narrow in on key themes, providing an additional layer of interest. Each volume also contains a double-page, illustrated chronology of major events, plus a bibliography and detailed index. Authoritative, brilliantly written, and superbly illustrated, this outstanding and popular work of scholarship makes the whole sweep of history vivid and accessible as never before.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Far East and a New Europe is volume five of a ten volume series called The Illustrated History of the World. The first volume covered the origins of the human race through the first civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt. The second volume in the series reviewed the early cultures of India and China and then moved on to discuss Greek civilization. The third volume covered the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, from 800 BCE to 600 CE. The fourth volume surveyed the rise of Islam, the Arab empires, the decline of the Byzantine Empire, and the beginnings of modern Europe. This fifth

volume gives us a first look at Japanese, African, and American cultures. It also brings the stories of India, China, and Europe, begun in earlier volumes, up to the 18th century. The book is filled with beautiful color illustrations. Every page has at least one and most are photographs of artifacts, art works, or scenes. The text is well written and emphasizes brief summaries rather than scholarly examination. This makes it a good basic introduction and outline, but may be less useful to someone who wants to look at these subjects in greater depth. The lack of any bibliography of further readings is also a drawback for those wanting to seek more information. A two-page time chart of the period helps to put events in perspective. The chapter contents are confusingly placed at the end of the book, but they are well done and helpful for getting an overview of the author's approach. A two page listing of all the books in the series with their section and chapter titles helps to put the material into the broader view of all world history. The chapters on India and China pick up the thread of the story begun in Volume 2 of the series and bring both histories up to the 17th Century. One chapter is devoted to Japanese history up to the 17th Century. Another chapter briefly outlines African and American cultures. Then the second half of the book is devoted to European history from the "Middle Ages" through the 16th Century. All in all this is a great brief introduction to the first half of the second millennium. Although the emphasis is decidedly European, the coverage is global, at least as far as major civilizations are concerned. The type face is large and the lines are amply spaced. Couple this with the copious illustrations and the book is actually a very quick read for its size and length. It is a few steps above the approach of Dorling Kindersley books that are predominately illustrations with supporting text. With Roberts, the text is the major part, but the illustrations are definitely more than an after thought. This is a good introduction for the general reader. It is not going to be a lasting reference book that you will turn to again and again. Read it once and move on.

This book is the fifth volume in the wonderful Illustrated History of the World Series. This one covers India (from ~325 B.C. to ~1700 A.D.), China (also from ~325 B.C to ~1700 A.D.), Japan (from ~645 A.D. to ~1700 A.D.), Sub-Saharan Africa, Pre-Columbian America (mainly the Mayas, Aztecs and Incas), and Europe (from ~1000 A.D. to ~1500 A.D.). Along the way, the reader is treated to many colorful maps and pictures, and interesting sidebars. This book is very good, and a nice addition to a wonderful series. I found the book (particularly on India) to be very informative, and quite interesting. Overall, I liked the book, and highly recommend it.

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