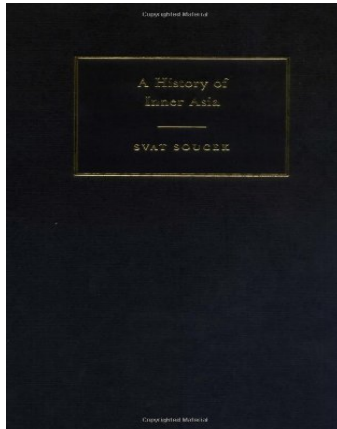


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Svat Soucek's book offers a short and accessible introduction to the history of Inner Asia. The narrative, which begins with the arrival of Islam, charts the rise and fall of the different dynasties right up to the Russian conquest. Dynastic tables and maps augment and elucidate the text. The contemporary focus rests on the seven countries which make up the core of present-day Eurasia, that is Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Sinkiang and Mongolia. Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, renewed interest in these countries has prompted considerable political, cultural, economic and religious debate. While a divergent literature has evolved in consequence, no comprehensive survey of the region has been attempted. Soucek's history promises to fill this gap and to become an indispensable source of information for anyone studying or visiting the region.