



ASIA



A CONCISE HISTORY

ARTHUR COTTERELL



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A CONCISE HISTORY

An extraordinary achievement! A Babylonian text about the flood, analysis of the layout of the ancient city of Mohenjo-daro, the erotic stallion ritual of the Indian Gupta dynasty, a Nestorian bishop in discussion with an Abbasid caliph, Chinese bureaucracy contrasted with Japanese military aristocracy, and China's enduring sense of vulnerability throughout the "period of modernization." This highly readable book gives structure to the vast history of Asia, and does so with an eye for revealing, memorable detail. Cotterell has not taken the lazy approach. Rather than focusing on the period of European domination and the twentieth-century creation of nation states, modern Asia is given its true place in a very long, rich history—and amazingly that history is told in a way that will stimulate both students and general readers.

Anthony Milner

*Basham Professor of Asian History
Australian National University*

Arthur Cotterell's concise history of Asia gives us a balanced and highly readable *tour d'horizon* of four millennia of human migration and attendant development across the Eurasian land mass. Mr. Cotterell has eschewed the traditional approach of addressing West, Central, and East Asia as separate entities. Instead, he has taken the more difficult and rewarding approach of packaging the stories of Eurasia's diverse civilizations into a seamless overview of the ebb and flow of the empires and cultures that brought those peoples into the twenty-first century. Tracing those journeys through Asia's long history, the author brings the readers into today's continued turbulence in the Middle East and the rise of China to reclaim its historical pre-eminence in Central and East Asia. In short, Mr. Cotterell's excellent work provides the historical basis needed to understand the many challenges facing modern Asia, and therefore the West, today.

Richard Gibson

Former American diplomat in Southeast and East Asia (1974-1996)

Arthur Cotterell writes in a most entertaining way by putting a human face on the history of Asia. Far too often, history books are dry and boring and it is refreshing to come across one which is so full of life.

Peter Church OAM

Chairman AFG Venture Group and author of A Short History of South East Asia



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