

The Cambridge Illustrated History of China

By Patricia Buckley Ebrey

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Amazon.com Review
To compress 8,000 years of a civilization's life into a single volume is a daunting task, but University of Illinois historian Patricia Ebrey does the job with authority and considerable flair. Writing with an eye to explaining recurring themes in Chinese history, she discusses ideas of order and statecraft, resource allocation and use, imperialism and population growth. Along the way she makes interesting asides, noting, among other things, that the Mongol conquerors of China monopolized the bamboo trade because they did not want the ethnic Chinese to make weapons, and she gives stimulating overviews of such matters as the manufacture of silk, hardwood furniture, and ceramics.

Review
"Patricia Ebrey's Illustrated History of China is a fine book....With great economy of text, it outlines the major elements and changes in four millennia of Chinese history and social life; the art work and photographs, skillfully chosen and admirably reproduced, both illuminate the text and supplement it." Jonathan Spence, Yale University

"Of all the general histories of China written to date, this book is among the most comprehensive, objective, and well-balanced, and it will surely be a welcome addition to the bookshelves of teachers, students, and anyone else interested in understanding the broader evolution of Chinese civilization." China Review International

"...Patricia Buckley Ebrey masterfully synthesizes more than four thousand years of Chinese history in a single volume....The Cambridge Illustrated History of China provides an excellent introduction to the study of China and Chinese civilization. It offers a straightforward, yet complex account of historical events and issues that is well supported and augmented by the supplementary special-topic sections and illustrations....In the foreword, Kwang-Ching Liu expresses his belief that this book will eventually be regarded as a classic....Professor Liu's confidence in this matter certainly seems justified." China Review International

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