



Ancient China and its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Power in East Asian History

By Nicola Di Cosmo

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This comprehensive history of the northern frontier of China through the first millennium B.C. details the formation of two increasingly distinct cultural areas: the sedentary Chinese and the northern nomads. Nicola Di Cosmo explores the tensions existing between these two worlds as they became progressively more polarized, with the eventual creation of the nomadic Hsiung-nu empire in the north, and of the Chinese empire in the south. Di Cosmo investigates the origins of the antagonism between early China and its "barbarian" neighbors.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Throughout the second century B.C., the world of East Asia was divided between two great superpowers, the Han Chinese and the Hsiung-nu, facing off against each other sometimes peaceably and sometimes antagonistically. In Ancient China and Its Enemies, Nicola Di Cosmo provides a magisterial survey of the rise of the lesser known of these two powers, the nomadic Hsiung-nu. This book is invaluable not only for understanding the relations between ancient China and its major enemy, but also for understanding either of the powers individually." Edward Shaughnessy, University of Chicago

"...the author deserves praise and gratitude for producing and invaluable piece of work. This book is a masterpiece of scholarship. It will rank as an indispensable tool for anyone studying foreign relationships in ancient China and beyond for years to come." Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies

"...I am certain that anthropologists, political scientists, and others will find much here of interest. Di Cosmo writes well and offers fascinating anecdotes at just the right times." History

"...a carefully researched and superbly presented history of the northern frontier of China from 900 to 100 B.C...a fascinating, detailed, scholarly, and very strongly recommended historical survey and analysis." Library Bookwatch

"This outstanding work of scholarship demonstrates a magisterial command of the sources, asks important questions, and provides measured, finely nuanced answers."

Peter B. Golden, The International History Review

About the Author

Nicola Di Cosmo is Senior Lecturer in Chinese History at the University of Canterbury (Christchurch, New Zealand).

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