



Land Beyond the River: The Untold Story of Central Asia

Monica Whitlock

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Along the banks of the river once called Oxus lie the heartlands of Central Asia: Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Catapulted into the news by events in Afghanistan, just across the water, these strategically important, intriguing and beautiful countries remain almost completely unknown to the outside world.

In this book, Monica Whitlock goes far beyond the headlines. Using eyewitness accounts, unpublished letters and firsthand reporting, she enters into the lives of the Central Asians and reveals a dramatic and moving human story unfolding over three generations.

There is Muhammadjan, called 'Hindustani', a diligent seminary student in the holy city of Bukhara until the 1917 revolution tore up the old order. Exiled to Siberia as a shepherd and then conscripted into the Red Army, he survived to become the inspiration for a new generation of clerics. Henrika was one of tens of thousands of Poles who walked and rode through Central Asia on their way to a new life in Iran, where she lives to this day. Then there were the proud Pioneer children who grew up in the certainty that the Soviet Union would last forever, only to find themselves in a new world that they had never imagined. In Central Asia, the extraordinary is commonplace and there is not a family without a remarkable story to tell.

Land Beyond the River is both a chronicle of a century and a clear-eyed, authoritative view of contemporary events.



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