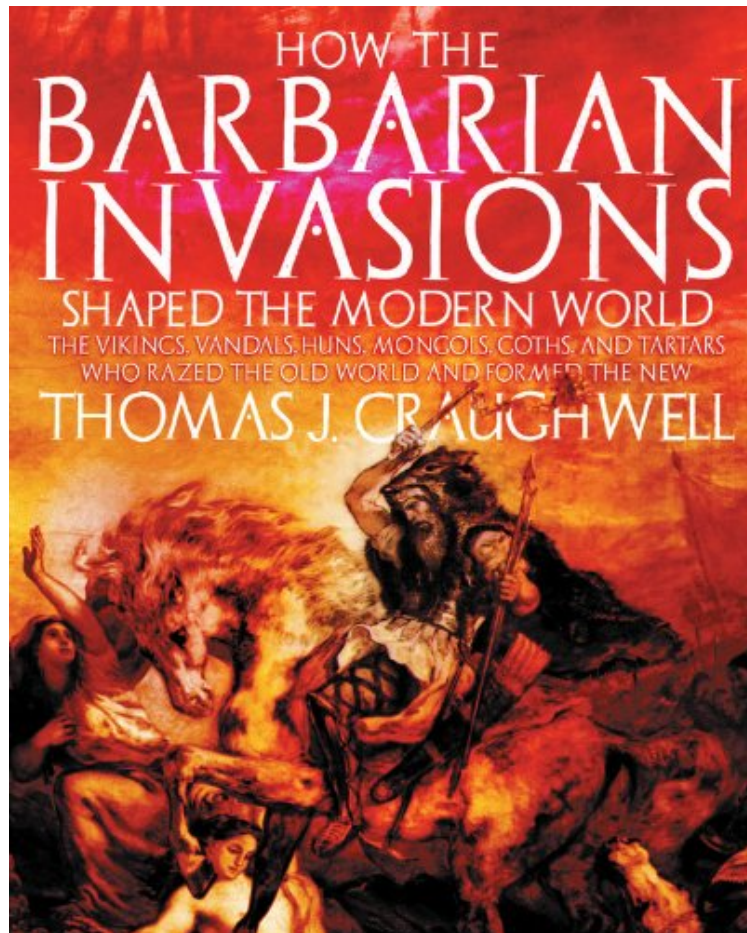


(Mobile pdf) How the Barbarian Invasions Shaped the Modern World: The Vikings, Vandals, Huns, Mongols, Goths, and Tartars who Razed the Old World and Formed the New

How the Barbarian Invasions Shaped the Modern World: The Vikings, Vandals, Huns, Mongols, Goths, and Tartars who Razed the Old World and Formed the New

Thomas J. Craughwell

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21 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Young Person's Book -- not for HistoriansBy David M. DoughertyThis is an attractive, well produced book evidently aimed at junior high school readers, with many, many fancy illustrations from classical and modern artists, good and relatively accurate reference maps, double-spaced type, and many, many vignettes like those in textbooks to hold the reader's interest. The prose is ninth grade, and there are

zero (nada, zip) footnotes and end notes -- yet the author makes sweeping opinion statements throughout as if they are fact. As an example, the author states on page 60, "Their (the Romans) commander was the Roman's finest military strategist, Flavius Aetius." Wow, and here I thought that Julius Caesar, Scipio Africanus, Lucullus, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius or Constantine might have been in the running for this accolade. I think the author meant to add "at the time" but it's not there. The author also says, "No one knows what became of the Huns." Well, there are several good studies of the Huns, but for whatever reason the author chose to fire for effect rather than present solid scholarship. This is probably all junior high school students can handle anyway, but anyone reading this as an historical treatise will be disappointed. My copy of the book is officially softbound (produced in Singapore), but had a very stiff cover with fold-out ends to display Thomas Cole's "The Course of Empire -- Destruction", his depiction of the Vandal sack of Rome. Of course the author goes to great lengths to discuss that the Vandals did not actually vandalize Rome -- as it that made any difference. There are many other short descriptions that leave much to be desired -- for example the Battle of Liegnitz. Where did the burning naphtha come from? What were the Mongol tactics? Oh well, it was enough to say the Mongols collected nine sacks of right ears cut off from those slain. All that being said, the book does have many redeeming features, particularly for a reader who knows nothing about the Barbarian invasions from Alaric's sack of Rome in 410 to the Mongols of the thirteenth century. The author skips over the earlier invasions that Rome contended with throughout its existence (the Gauls sacked Rome in 390 BC and the Marcomanni in 178 were a dangerous threat handled by Marcus Aurlius) which should have been covered since they substantially affected Roman history. The coverage by the author does impart a modicum of knowledge, however, mostly a broad understanding of events and their effects. If nothing else, this book is a good primer to popularize the study of barbarian invasions, including the effects of the Vikings on history from Northern Europe to the Mediterranean. I was particularly impressed that the author had included the Kievan Rus, Olga, (one of history's most successful warrior queens), and the eventual spread of Christianity in Russia in opposition to the Jewish Khazars (although the author forgets to mention that they were Jewish.) All in all, I gave the book three stars for filling a niche in the literature. If this book helps promote study into its subject, then everything will be to the good. Just don't expect superior scholarship and a detail study. This book is long on glitz and short on substance.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An OK ReadBy Mark ComerInteresting history but very repetitive. Reads/feels like a coffee table book

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Quick ReactionsBy clare bishopFantastic book, beautiful layout, nice collection of facts, covers basics with great photos/pics too. It is pitched at good general knowledge, do not Expect a PhD thesis.Lovely layout too.

This richly detailed chronicle brings to life the personalities of Attila the Hun, Alaric the Goth, Genghis Khan, and many other barbarian kings and chieftains whose rampages across Europe, Asia, and North Africa changed the course of history. In this highly readable and authoritative book, author Thomas J. Craughwell draws upon the latest historical and archaeological research to reveal the impact of the barbarian invasions on the modern world: from the establishment of the English language, to the foundation of world capitals such as Dublin, to the introduction of gunpowder to Europe. Illustrated with more than 100 archival images gathered from around the world.

"Most of us in the western world might enjoy tracing our cultural roots to the classic glories of Greece and Rome. But deep down we suspect that our mythic ancestors are really those so-called barbarians who broke things and created the modern world. With rarely a wasted word Thomas J Craughwell tells the stories of history-changing invasions of the Goths, Vandals, Vikings, Mongols and other marauding bands. He gives us the expected scenes of rape and pillage, but also an appreciation of the invaders' strategy, motives and their often-overlooked gifts and innovations. And he reminds us, with a fine sense of story and anecdote, that "barbarians" are what someone else calls an exotic, dangerous stranger. No one is a barbarian to him-or her-self. Handsomely illustrated with imaginatively selected historical paintings, drawings and maps. -- David Willis McCullough, author-editor of *Chronicles of the Barbarians and Wars of the Irish Kings*.