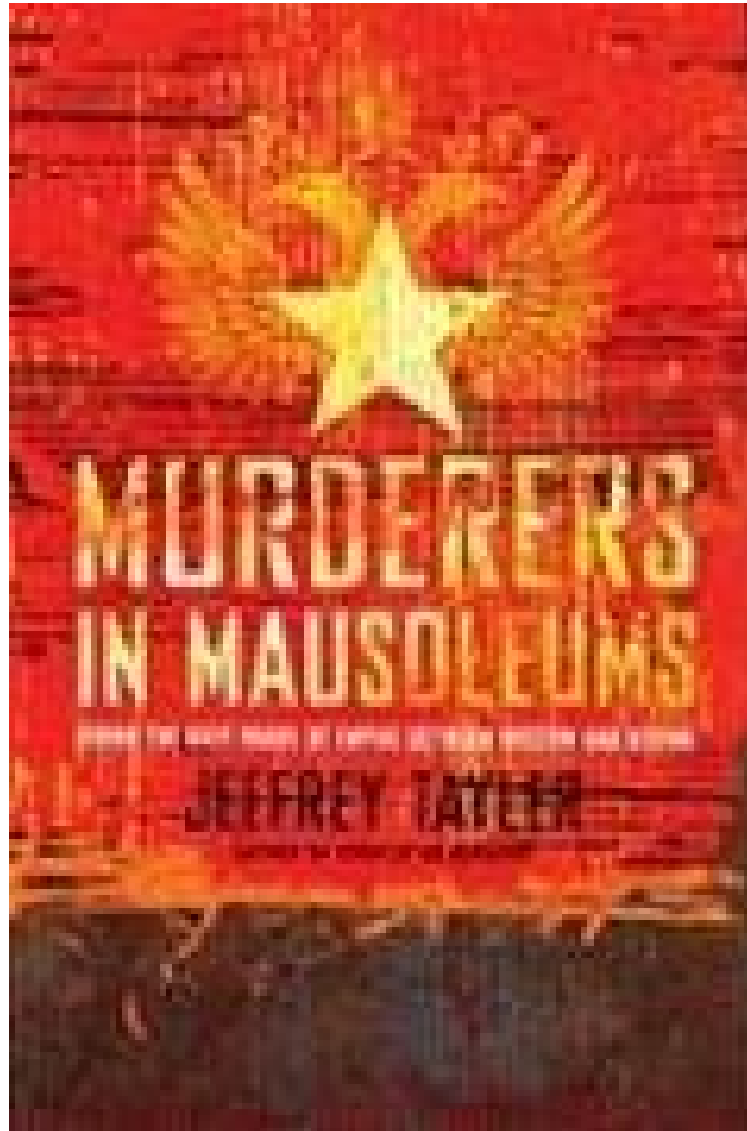


(Ebook pdf) Murderers in Mausoleums: Riding the Back Roads of Empire Between Moscow and Beijing

## Murderers in Mausoleums: Riding the Back Roads of Empire Between Moscow and Beijing

*Jeffrey Tayler*

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**Jeffrey Tayler : Murderers in Mausoleums: Riding the Back Roads of Empire Between Moscow and Beijing**  
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Murderers in Mausoleums: Riding the Back Roads of Empire Between Moscow and Beijing:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A timely book to read now that the Ukraine may explode into civil war  
By Alice Friedemann This was a very timely book to read while the crisis is unfolding now in the Ukraine. One of

the reasons this area is a powder keg are the natural resources. “.energy resources and their conveyance to markets dominate the new Great Game unfolding in Central Asia. Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan recently announced plans to build a gas pipeline connecting with Russia’s network, for subsequent re-export to Europe, thwarting a U.S. project for a pipeline that would bypass Russia; in fact, Russia now controls all of Central Asia’s westward-flowing gas exports. Gazprom will soon be able to exert powerful political pressure over countries such as Ukraine... Central Asian oil will also strengthen Russia’s hand” especially Kazakhstan which has the world’s largest oil field discovered in the past 30 years, and where 40% of the people are Slavic and mostly Russian. Tayler suggests that China and Russia are natural allies: “China needs energy land and water, all of which Russia has in surplus. Might the two countries form an alliance?” He concludes that “One has to ask, Why shouldn’t Russia, China, and the countries in between form an anti-American alliance? What has the west offered them, besides criticism of their deficient human rights records, the expansion of a military alliance around their borders, and the prospect of facing ever-more-sophisticated weapons systems? Why shouldn’t Russia sell its fuel to China or use it to intimidate its rivals? What else does it have?” This is one of the many themes in the book. Just as America has Mexicans and other immigrants doing the dirty work, Russia has millions of immigrant laborers, many from Central Asia, a “pervasive, mostly illegal underclass that Russians do not want to see yet without which no yard stays clean, few food markets can function, and little trade accomplished.... These days public opinion is not tolerant. Central Asians are viewed as uncivilized Muslims, beggars, melon vendors, petty crooks, and Mafioso. Facing daily threats of extortion and even assault from the police during spot document checks, they lay low, making the news only when attacked by growing numbers of skinhead gangs whose slogan is “Russia for the Russians”. It is predicted that by the end of the century, the migrants will become a majority and turn Russia into a mainly Muslim country. We ignore the central Asian countries these migrants come from, these downtrodden people between Moscow and Beijing. The only country that can threaten the USA militarily is Russia (nuclear arsenal), the only economic power that could sing the USA is China. But we ignore the impoverished, mostly Muslim hinterlands on whose stability will affect Russia and China, if these nations can unite, they present the biggest threat to American and Western global dominance. Tayler travels across many countries and discovers a lot of ethnic hatred — this is a potential powder keg of hate, that seems vulnerable to endless civil wars and genocides if instability were to ever gain the upper hand. Other items of interest description of Russians: “Social engineering, now almost 2 decades discontinued, produced a New Soviet Human possessing traits favoring survival under direst duress: ingrained distrust of the government and the media; disbelief in justice as embodied in laws 9written of course to serve the elite), and consequently, a willingness to flout the law to get ahead; cynicism toward government officials (regarded as ever on the take); the spurning of piety, probity, and honesty as the attributes of naifs; and finally, the exaltation of deceit, the lionization of crooks, for only through cleverness could one succeed. The Soviet system, in sum, created a populace of survivors who would excel in stealth and criminality and yet be unwilling to confront their governments and demand what is owed them”. “Russia’s Hobbesian human jungles hone ruthless talents of survival, and its poverty anneals the masses to discomfort; whereas Westerners are spoiled, fragile, and spineless. A predatory government forces Russians to develop tactics of evasion and subterfuge, while Westerners indulge their fancies in law-bound societies that permit frivolous pursuits and childish dissent. these are gross generalizations, but in some ways they hold up; Russia is much stronger than it looks. Certainly the Nazis had underestimated Russia (weakened by Stalin beyond the point of no return they thought) and met their end here as a result”. A conversation with a Russian on a train: “She returned to her seat and upended her wine cup. “I hear Condoleezza talking about democracy and that retard Bush telling us how to live, and I say, ‘America, shove your democracy up your ass and stop lecturing us!’ You meddle in other countries and [swearword] them up and then scold us about human rights. Shove it! I once thought Americans were a great people. But what kind of great people elects a [swearword] retard twice as president? You can tell by the look on his face that he’s a moron, a brainless cretin, but you elect him anyway! Bush rigged the votes, so what? I know all that. But you didn’t protest, you didn’t fight back. Look, I’ll tell yo one thing and you’d better listen. Russia is getting stronger, Russia is rising, and you’re just going to have to get used to it. we’ve got thousands of clever people in this country, brilliant people, scientists and schemers, and make no mistake about it: they’re out-and-out bastards. We live like [swearword] , sure, but we don’t give a damn. Like it or not, we’re getting stronger, and we’re no [swearword] pansies. The Yeltsin days are over. We’re not taking any more orders from Bush or anyone else.” Tayler comments on this with: “Many now express views like hers, and not only in Russia. But in Russia, where strength and cleverness are revered above all else, they mattered. Disdain for an America perceived as weak and stupid would embolden Putin in his confrontation with the West. This is also a travel book that will take you places you’re very unlikely to go to. I used google images as I read the book to get a better picture of places which I highly recommend. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. He also judiciously selects groups such as Cossack leaders that sum up what the forces and feelings are like in these places. By J. Luis Madrid An enjoyable insightful look at Southern Russia the Caucasus and 3 ex-soviet republic "Stans". I have read a couple other travel books of this area but this one strikes me as by far the most accurate and authentic. The author garners a very visceral feel of these place through his knowledge of Russian and thus ability to talk to the average person on the street. He also judiciously selects groups such as Cossack leaders that sum up what the forces

and feelings are about in these places. In a nutshell Kazakhstan is an oil rentier economy that has spent huge amounts on gaudy buildings but whose government cannot deliver trains service-- you feel it's non substantial economy could probably come crashing down...The other 2 ex soviet republics or stans he = visits Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan; are places you would not enjoy lingering in due to poverty and violence. But read the book it gives you a really believable feel for the mood of the average man on the street and the styles of living you will find there. China in a nutshell has changed dramatically. ( While I read books like this I enjoy googling images of where I am in the book...a look at the skyline of Urumqi tells it all)... The only place where the book sort of left me bored was when the author becomes a bar clubber in Urumqi (Xinjiang) ... a 45 year old man drinking nightly with nightclub young singles---it was fascinating but just went on too long...could have been edited down to about a fourth the length and still given you the same feel and information.Recommend! Have also read Angry Wind (about Sahel) it too is very good. Intelligent accurate author.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. ExcellentBy cIEducational and intesting. The author explore's fascinating places and shares his perspectives as well as the perspectives of the locals.

A gripping journey through some of the planet's most remote and challenging terrain and its peoples, in search of why democracy has yet to thrive in lands it seemed so recently ready to overtake Across the largest landmass on earth, in lands once conquered by Genghis Khan and exploited by ruthless Communist regimes, autocratic and dictatorial states are again arising, growing wealthy on petrodollars and low-cost manufacturing. More and more, they are challenging the West. Media reports focus on developments in Moscow and Beijing, but the peoples inhabiting the vast expanses in between remain mostly unseen and unheard, their daily lives and aspirations scarcely better known to us now than they were in ColdWar days.Tayler finds, among many others, a dissident Cossack advocating mass beheadings, a Muslim in Kashgar calling on the United States to bomb Beijing, and Chinese youths in Urumqi desiring nothing more than sex, booze, and rock 'n' roll—all while confronting over and over again the contradiction of people who value liberty and the free market but idealize tyrants who oppose both. From the steppes of southern Russia to the conflict-ridden Caucasus Mountains to the deserts of central Asia and northern China,Tayler shows that our maps have gone blank at the worst possible time.

From Publishers WeeklyTayler (Siberian Dawn) takes readers on an extraordinary adventure across the largest landmass on earth, from Russia through the Caucasus into South Ossetia and Georgia, on to Central Asia and Kazakhstan, and across Xinjiang and Mongolia. Equal parts history, politics, economic theory and anthropology, he brings into sharp focus the ordinary lives behind the news headlines. Of particular interest are two recurring discoveries he makes—replacing totalitarian dictators with democratically elected (often U.S.-backed) leaders opens the door to enormous corruption, and that where there is electricity, there is always a disco. Tayler marshals hundreds of years of history, from the conquests of Genghis Khan through the dislocation caused by WWI and WWII to the Chinese Communist revolution and the glossy, urban China of today. While the author's approach to exploration is haphazard at times, his impressive ability to build instant rapport and cull local knowledge in a remarkably short span of time gives his journey steady momentum. Tayler conveys his encounters in prose that is as richly textured as the stories he gathers in some of the remotest places imaginable. (Jan.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistTayler, a talented journalist with the soul of an intrepid nineteenth-century explorer, is particularly fascinated by the world's most remote borderlands (the Sahel in Angry Wind, 2005; Siberia in River of No Reprieve, 2006; among others). Here, the author covers the lands conquered by Genghis Khan in a 7,200-mile overland journey, from his home in Moscow south through the Caucasus to the Caspian Sea, then east across the deserts of Kazakhstan and Inner Mongolia, all the way to Beijing. It's a harrowing journey, characterized by bad roads, bribe-seeking officials, and harsh climes (not to mention the liver-destroying local hospitality), but the author is fortified with historical knowledge of the region and a desire to witness firsthand the new geopolitical frontiers of Central Asia. And so, through encounters with taxi drivers, Cossack patriots, club-going teenagers, and a few affectionately described female guides, Tayler documents the lingering effects of the Soviet era, the chaotic emergence of modern capitalism, and the persistent stirrings of tribalism. Part sociopolitical inquiry, part adventure story, this selection brings an often-overlooked region to life. --Brendan Driscoll Tayler (Siberian Dawn) takes readers on an extraordinary adventure across the largest landmass on earth, from Russia through the Caucasus into South Ossetia and Georgia, on to Central Asia and Kazakhstan, and across Xinjiang and Mongolia. Equal parts history, politics, economic theory and anthropology, he brings into sharp focus the ordinary lives behind the news headlines. Of particular interest are two recurring discoveries he makes—replacing totalitarian dictators with democratically elected (often U.S.-backed) leaders opens the door to enormous corruption, and that where there is electricity, there is always a disco. Tayler marshals hundreds of years of history, from the conquests of Genghis Khan through the dislocation caused by WWI and WWII to the Chinese Communist revolution and the glossy, urban China of today. While the author's approach to exploration is haphazard at times, his impressive ability to build instant rapport and cull local knowledge in a remarkably short span of time gives his journey steady momentum. Tayler conveys his encounters in prose that is as richly textured as the stories he gathers in some of the remotest places

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