

Ian Mitchell's Russia-related (video)
BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

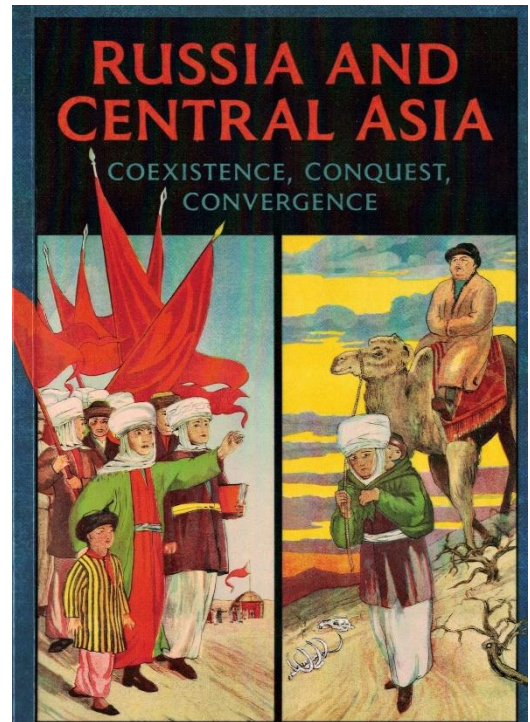
57 – *Russia and Central Asia*
(27 July 2020)

RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA:
Coexistence, Conquest, Convergence

Author: Shoshana Keller

Publisher: [University of Toronto Press](#), 2020
(available on Amazon, click on cover image for link)

Descriptor: History of Central Asia from ancient times to modern ones



RusRoL relevance: *How Imperial tolerance (or indifference) gave way to Soviet fascism and forced conformity, which is still present today in modified form.*

“Western-style democracies depend on the rule of law that regulates checks and balances among power centres. These concepts, much less their realisation in practice, were alien to most Central Asians.” (p. 249)

Reason to read: This history of Central Asia is readable and accurate, and implies the point that what destroyed the tolerance (due to indifference) of the Tsarist authorities to practical day-to-day freedom of ordinary people in remote parts of the Empire was STALIN and, through him (this is the general civilisational point) BUREAUCRACY. You cannot manage a multi-cultural national community by bureaucracy as bureaucracy always has to standardise, while the essence of multi-culturalism is diversity (i.e. no standardisation).

YouTube video link: [57 - Central Asia - YouTube](#)

Overall recommendation level: HIGH-ish

See: *YouTube channel: “Ian Mitchell’s Book Recommendations”*

About the reviewer: Ian Mitchell is the author of four books, including *Isles of the West* and *The Justice Factory*. He is writing a comparative study of Russian and Western constitutional history to be called *Russia and the Rule of Law*—hence the “RusRoL Relevance” section at the top. He can be contacted at: ian@ianmitchellonline.co.uk.

For other reviews in this series, see [Ian Mitchell’s Book Recommendations](#).