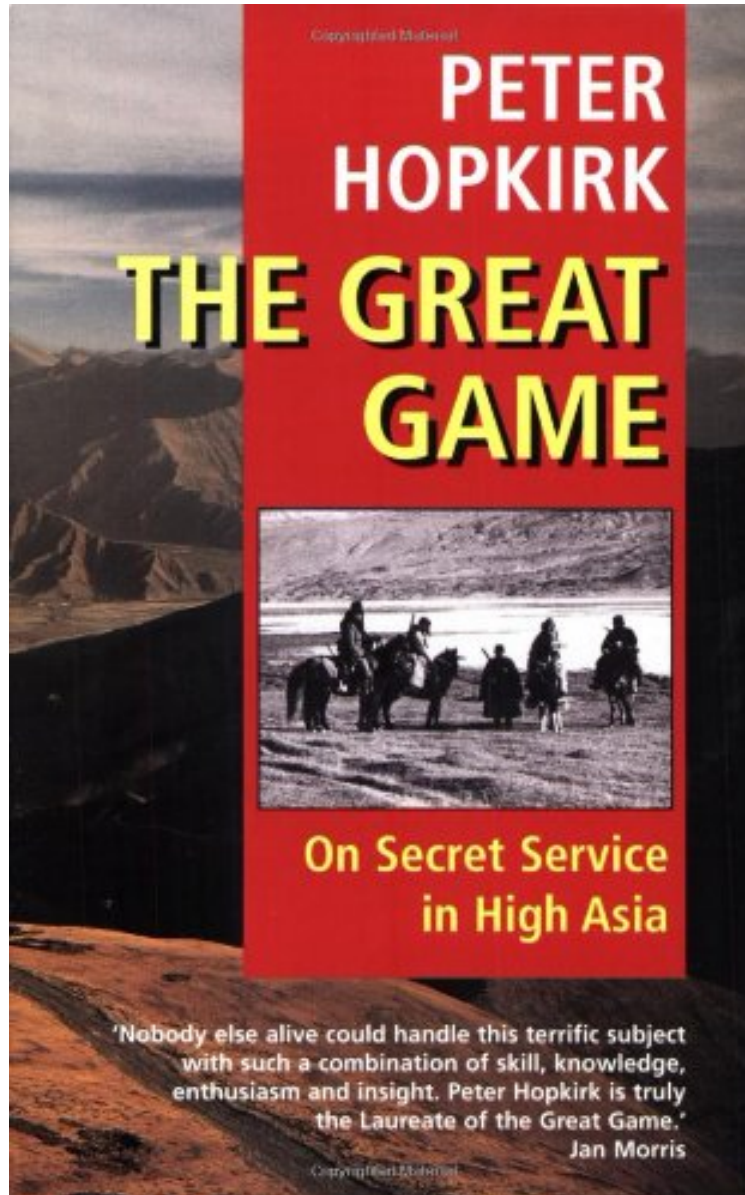


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The Great Game - On Secret Service in High Asia

Peter Hopkirk

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Peter Hopkirk : The Great Game - On Secret Service in High Asia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Game - On Secret Service in High Asia:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. More fun than anything I've read for a while By Biffle French More fun than anything I've read for a while. The history of Russian expansion in Central Asia during the 19th century and

the resulting conflict with Britain. If you've ever wondered how Kazakhstan became part of the Soviet Union then this book will give you the answer. Along the way you'll be introduced to some of the bravest, toughest and occasionally unluckiest men who ever served her Majesty. I couldn't put it down.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One of the most enjoyable, educational and fascinating books I've read in a long, long time!By Jeff "The Great Game", by Peter Hopkirk, is one of the most enjoyable, educational and fascinating books I've read in a long, long time. I enjoyed it so much that I'll likely be reading the remainder of Hopkirk's tomes over the next few years (of which there are quite a few). This has been on my reading list for a long time, but I wish I read it long ago. "The Great Game" is essentially a spy story played out on the Central Asia/South Asia continental area over the course of an entire century between the Russian and British Empires. It reads like the best of Cold War spy fiction. Indeed, the Great Game was the Cold War of the 19th Century - one that very few people are familiar with today, but which still echoes in importance with the current situation in Afghanistan. It is the story of many different men from both Britain and Russia, explorers and adventurers all. The overall theme is the conflict between the two Empires as they merged closer and closer to each other in Central Asia, each constantly alarmed by the moves of the other. The micro-theme, played out in each chapter, is the story of individuals who played the Great Game. Their stories are remarkable. While the book could have used more maps to follow the little known geography, I simply recommend an Atlas of Central Asia to accompany the read. I cannot recommend this book enough. You will not be disappointed!1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Stories of daring from 19th-century central AsiaBy J W HuttonDuring the 19th century, Russian expansion into central Asia had the authorities in London and Calcutta worried about the safety of India, the jewel in the imperial crown. This expansion spurred surveys/intelligence-gathering missions into the remote, unmapped regions north of India where outsiders often ventured at their peril. While some of explorers succeeded and won gold medals from the Royal Geographical Society, others such as Stoddart and Conolly or Burnes met with violent ends.The book is told from the British side in a relatively neutral tone, although the Russians tended to be duplicitous, denying everything like any good schoolboy does while being, in fact, guilty as charged; but there is also an instance of chivalry when Colonel Yanov, in true bourgeois style, is all apologies for deporting Younghusband from (alleged) Russian territory. To be fair to the Russians, the various rulers of the central Asian states were probably even more devious and untrustworthy.It doesn't matter whether the story is told from the British or Russian side because it remains a fascinating tale of derring-do under frequently difficult circumstances. The British Empire seemed to have no end of highly talented officers who were quite happy to head off on missions from which there was a good chance they would not return.Although the body of the book remains unchanged from its original year of publication (1990), there is a new foreword from 2006, which looks back to the failed Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and the Anglo-American assault on the country in 2001. The Great Game, it seems, isn't over.

For nearly a century, the two most powerful nations on earth - Victorian Britain and Tsarist Russia - fought a secret war in the lonely passes and deserts of Central Asia. Those engaged in this shadowy struggle called it 'The Great Game', a phrase immortalized in Kipling's "Kim". When play first began, the two rival empires lay nearly 2,000 miles apart. By the end, some Russian outposts were within 20 miles of India. This book tells the story of the Great Game through the exploits of the young officers, both British and Russian, who risked their lives playing it. Disguised as holy men or native horsetraders, they mapped secret passes, gathered intelligence, and sought the allegiance of powerful khans. Some never returned.

.com In a phrase coined by Captain Arthur Connolly of the East India Company before he was beheaded in Bokhara for spying in 1842, a "Great Game" was played between Tsarist Russia and Victorian England for supremacy in Central Asia. At stake was the security of India, key to the wealth of the British Empire. When play began early in the 19th century, the frontiers of the two imperial powers lay two thousand miles apart, across vast deserts and almost impassable mountain ranges; by the end, only 20 miles separated the two rivals. Peter Hopkirk, a former reporter for The Times of London with wide experience of the region, tells an extraordinary story of ambition, intrigue, and military adventure. His sensational narrative moves at breakneck pace, yet even as he paints his colorful characters--tribal chieftains, generals, spies, Queen Victoria herself--he skillfully provides a clear overview of the geographical and diplomatic framework. The Great Game was Russia's version of America's "Manifest Destiny" to dominate a continent, and Hopkirk is careful to explain Russian viewpoints as fully as those of the British. The story ends with the fall of Tsarist Russia in 1917, but the demise of the Soviet Empire (hastened by a decade of bloody fighting in Afghanistan) gives it new relevance, as world peace and stability are again threatened by tensions in this volatile region of great mineral wealth and strategic significance. --John StevensonFrom Publishers WeeklyChronicles the imperial struggle for power in Central Asia between Victorian England and Czarist Russia. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. ` from previous edition `Nobody else alive could handle this terrific subject with such a combination of skill, knowledge, enthusiasm and insight."Jan Morris