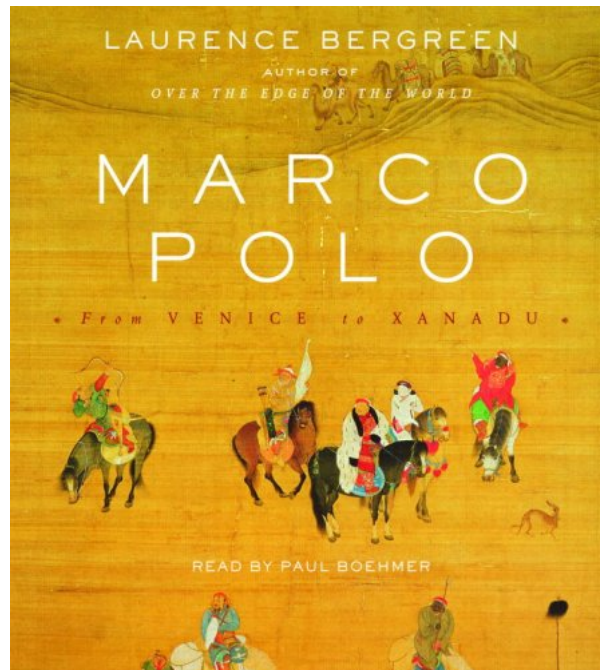
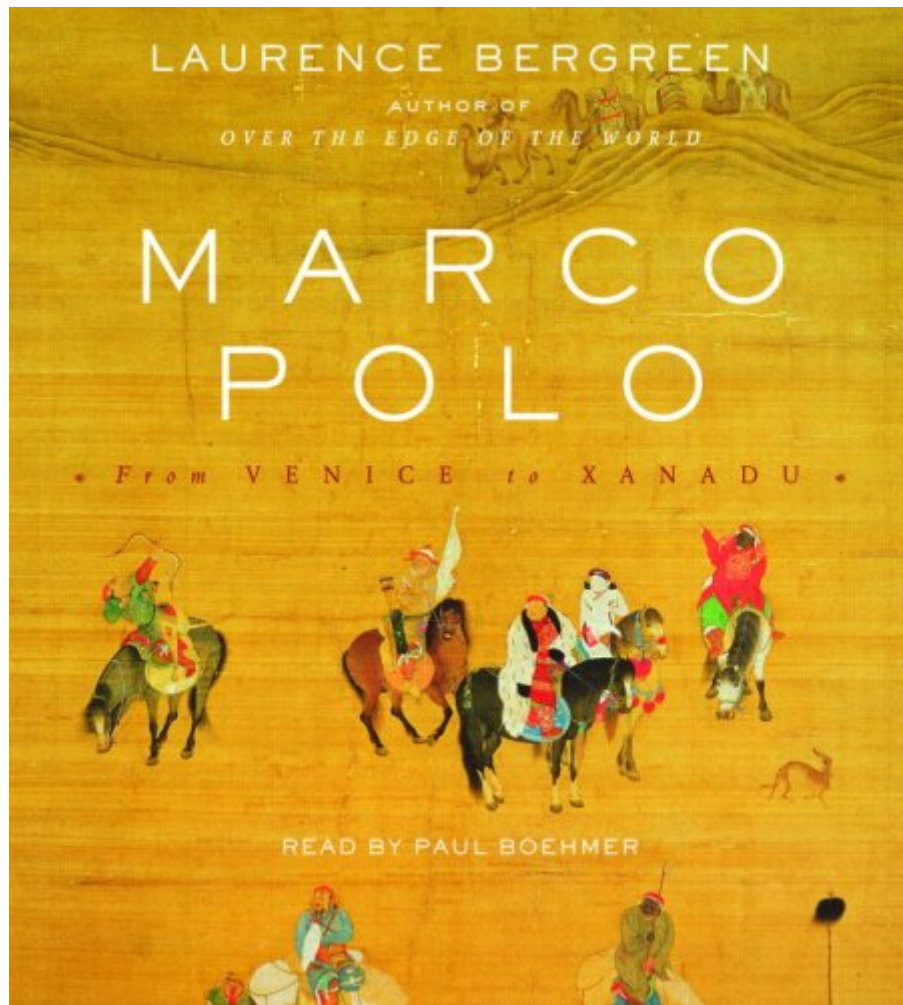


MARCO POLO: FROM VENICE TO XANADU BY LAURENCE BERGREEN



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As the most celebrated European to explore Asia, Marco Polo was the original global traveler and the earliest bridge between East and West. A universal icon of adventure and discovery, he has inspired six centuries of popular fascination and spurious mythology. Now, from acclaimed author Laurence Bergreen, comes the first fully authoritative biography of one of the most enchanting figures in world history. In this masterly work, Marco Polo's incredible odyssey—along with the Silk Road and through all the fantastic circumstances of his life—is chronicled in sumptuous and illuminating detail.

Drawing on original sources in more than half a dozen languages, and his own travels along Polo's route in China and Mongolia, Bergreen explores the lingering controversies surrounding Polo's legend, settling age-old questions and testing others for significance. Synthesizing history, biography, and travelogue, this is a timely chronicle of a man who extended the boundaries of human knowledge and imagination. Destined to be the definitive account of its subject for decades to come, Marco Polo takes us on a journey to the limits of history—and beyond.

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Most helpful customer reviews

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Travelog Without Maps

By Donald F. Kaminski

For a book targeting the journeys of the famous Venetian merchant traveler, I am mystified by the absence of maps. One reading this book must make an extra effort to procure maps from other sources, a major inconvenience. Unless a map of the areas Bergreen described are reviewed, one will have no idea of the magnitude and tribulations of the trek to Cathay. Where are the steppes of thin atmosphere (where no birds travel); what is the desert he crosses on his way to Shengdu; where is Cambulac; and most importantly, where is Quinsai? The absence of maps is so upsetting as to make the remainder of the material lackluster. If I were his history and geography professor at Harvard and this was a thesis Bergreen submitted, he would have gotten a big fat "F." I don't understand such a mistake in publication. Where were the editors? His book on Columbus, at least, does have adequate maps. Too bad for this otherwise interesting story.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Epic life, well told.

By L. Wilde

Epic life, well told.

I've read the author's other work and I appreciate that he is clear which portions are well-supported and which are speculative. Some other books rely only on well-documented facts and others delve into speculation without revealing the shaky ground beneath. This book (and his others) get it right.

There was a lot in this book that surprised me.

My one and only suggestion is for a bigger, clearer map with more locations marked on it. Even though the travel path is not exactly known, it would have helped me stay in the story.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

this book seems as long as Polo's adventures

By B. Crosby

This book basically tells us that Marco Polo was a sycophant liar who may start with the truth but then embellish and elaborate to entertain and prop himself up. It's an odd thing. I have a friend who was in the Army and has traveled all over America with great stories, so you would think he doesn't need to make stuff up but he does. In fact, when he relays a story about something that actually happened, he struggles, but when he relays a story that's made up, he's a great storyteller. That's how I know he's lying. We're the opposite. It was just a long book and slow read.

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