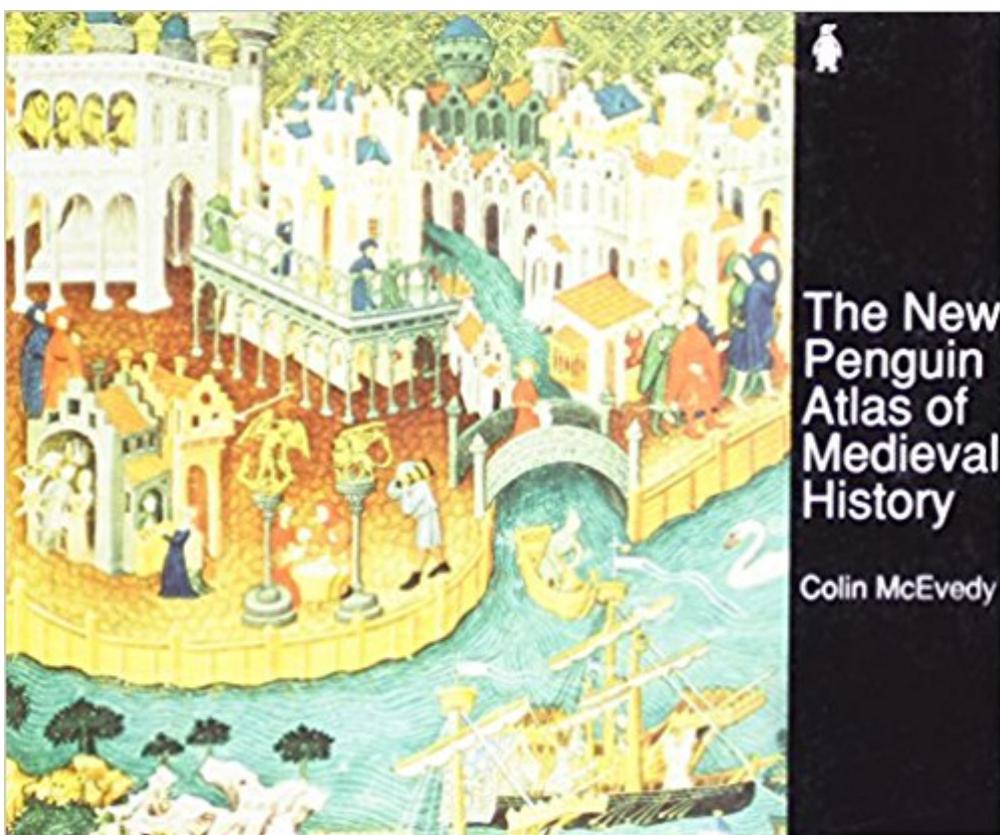


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The New Penguin Atlas Of Medieval History: Revised Edition (Hist Atlas)



Synopsis

This is a revised edition of "The Penguin Atlas of Medieval History".

Book Information

Series: Hist Atlas

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Customer Reviews

Colin McEvedy is the author of The Penguin Atlas of Ancient History; The New Penguin Atlas of Medieval History; The Penguin Atlas of Recent History (Europe Since 1815) and The Penguin Atlas of North American History. He lives in London, W6

I've actually owned all of McEvedy's Penguin atlases (Ancient, Medieval, Modern, Recent, US, African, and Population) for a long time and they are among my favorites. I bought the Ancient, Medieval, and Modern atlases as a graduation present for my grand-nephew who likes history. I like how each atlas is a series of maps for the same geographic area, showing how countries and cultures change over time. I also enjoy McEvedy's dry witty commentary. My only regret is that he has not done an Asian atlas.

The period from the reign of Constantine to the great voyages of discovery--or from the fourth to the fifteenth century--was once seen merely as the long, slow decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Yet, for Europeans, it is also a "supreme story of defeat turned into victory." Colin McEvedy's pioneering atlas, revised and expanded for this new edition, treats as one unit the Mediterranean, Europe and the nomads' steppeland to the East (the habitat of Huns, Turks and Mongols).

Illuminating maps and lively commentaries present the towns and trade routes, the changing population patterns, the boundaries of Christendom (and later Islam) and the ever-shifting political units. The result is a wonderfully eloquent picture, as Dr. McEvedy puts it, "of how old empires fell and new ones rose, and how, in Europe, a new society emerged which had the energy to break free from the geographical, intellectual and technical limitations that defined the medieval world."

Most historical atlases show one area, then another, then a third, and what you see are basically unrelated snapshots. This one shows the same area over time, as different culture groups invade, settle, expand, assimilate, and disappear. If you pick any page (let's say AD 771), you can see what happened before (from AD 737, the Swedes took over Gete territory, the Ummayads were replaced by the Abbasids except in Spain, Byzantium lost some of the islands in the western Med) and what came after (by 830, the Bulgar Khanate had replaced the Avars, and the Frankish Empire had expanded). Excellent.

History is not so hard to follow if you have these neat little guides at hand. They give such a good visual picture of the historical trends in European and Middle East history, making it much easier to absorb what is going on and put it in perspective. These are small books, concise, graphic, and just right for anyone trying to read history or historical literature and put what they're reading in a historical perspective. Asia Minor is included, but nothing east of that -- no Oriental history.

See my comments on The New Penguin Atlas of Ancient History. Though the area covered by McEvedy shrinks somewhat (and continues to do so in his subsequent atlases until he's pretty much focused on Europe alone), the fun-to-read text and wonderful ability to watch Europe change over time in his maps is still there.

This is probably the third time I've bought this book because everytime I loan it to someone they end up stealing it. Which I can't really complain about because, if I'm not mistaken, the first copy I had I stole from someone else.

This wonderful book provides so many insights into the history of the complex relationships of the many tribes and proto-nations that finally became modern day Europe. Instead of concentrating on a small segment, the authors show us how the various peoples grew or disappeared, where they came from. It's great to see visually the expansion or contraction of these political entities.

Gift for my son who loves medieval history

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