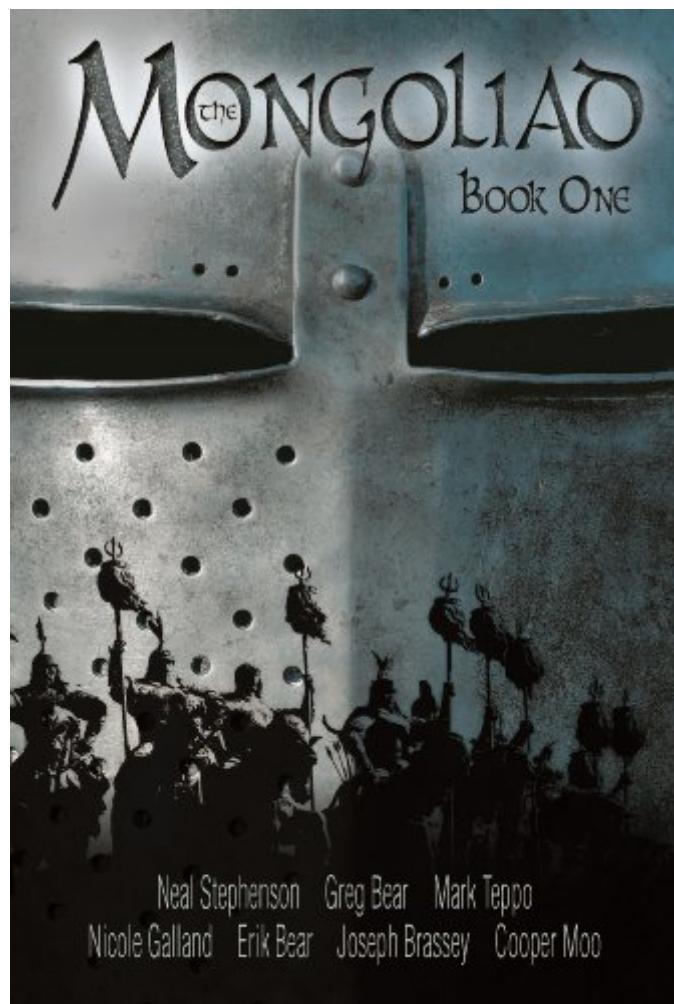


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The Mongoliad (The Mongoliad Series Book 1)



Neal Stephenson Greg Bear Mark Teppo
Nicole Galland Erik Bear Joseph Brassey Cooper Moo



Synopsis

With bonus material! This Kindle edition features extra content only found in the Collectorâ™s Edition of The Mongoliad: Book One, including an illustrated character glossary, a Foreworld map, and Sinner, a prequel to the Mongoliad series. The first novel to be released in The Foreworld Saga, The Mongoliad: Book One, is an epic-within-an-epic, taking place in 13th century. In it, a small band of warriors and mystics raise their swords to save Europe from a bloodthirsty Mongol invasion. Inspired by their leader (an elder of an order of warrior monks), they embark on a perilous journey and uncover the history of hidden knowledge and conflict among powerful secret societies that had been shaping world events for millennia. But the saga reaches the modern world via a circuitous route. In the late 19th century, Sir Richard F. Burton, an expert on exotic languages and historical swordsmanship, is approached by a mysterious group of English martial arts aficionados about translating a collection of long-lost manuscripts. Burton dies before his work is finished, and his efforts were thought lost until recently rediscovered by a team of amateur archaeologists in the ruins of a mansion in Trieste, Italy. From this collection of arcana, the incredible tale of The Mongoliad was recreated. Full of high adventure, unforgettable characters, and unflinching battle scenes, The Mongoliad ignites a dangerous quest where willpower and blades are tested and the scope of world-building is redefined. A note on this edition: The Mongoliad began as a social media experiment, combining serial story-telling with a unique level of interaction between authors and audience during the creative process. Since its original iteration, The Mongoliad has been restructured, edited, and rewritten under the supervision of its authors to create a more cohesive reading experience and will be published as a trilogy of novels. This edition is the definitive edition and is the authors' preferred text.

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Customer Reviews

While there are seven authors, the voice of Neal Stephenson is unmistakable at times. His narrative is often more along the lines of Cryptonomicon than Snow Crash, which depending on your taste may or may not be to your liking (I definitely preferred the latter to the former). I say this because there is considerable "situational dialog", for lack of a better description, where characters have discussions and the reader is slowly brought up to speed. While I found his presence obvious, there are times when it vanishes so I believe this was a good collaborative effort. The story begins in 1241. Ogedei has succeeded Genghis as Khan of the Mongol Empire and his hordes are ravaging Eastern Europe while the new Khan is seduced into court life and overindulgence. The Mongol horde is loose and ravaging Eastern Europe as the population descends into terror. A band of heroes decide a military victory is impossible and there is only one solution; so they set out on an impossible quest. One character I found interesting was Istvan, who they refer to as a "Madjar", which I assumed to be a nomadic Magyar since he is a highly skilled horse archer. One reviewer was put off by the suggestion of the Mongols being depicted as too brutal. I disagree. Having read all the English-written historical source material on this subject I personally think not a single fiction author has come close to depicting it. The Golden Horde which devastated north and west led by Jochi & Batu left very little living in their wake. It was a war of extermination and in 1241, the beginning of The Mongoliad, Batu was about to overtake Vienna. The devastation he left behind tells of mountains of human skulls and remains, a vast desolate wasteland; the results of Nazi style cleansing-efficiency.

Generally I try to avoid books that list a multitude of writers since they often come across as having been edited by committee and you have several voices trying to make their portions of the work stand out rather than a single voice that tries to make the entire book stand out. At least The Mongoliad manages to avoid those particular sins, though it manages to find others that are almost

as egregious. Take, for example, the idea of exposition. It's not one of the seven deadly sins, so it's OK to use it on occasion. It's one thing for an author (or authors, in this case) to drop you in the middle of the action on the opening pages; but to plop you in the middle of the action without even the tiniest hint of whenever and wherever the heck you are only serves to confuse and frustrate readers who aren't scholars of Medieval history and/or never heard of the on-line version of Mongoliad before reading about it in some of the reviews. Likewise, it was difficult to figure out where the action takes place since there were no modern place names used in the book. I was beginning to think the story took place in some fantasy alternate universe until I figured out that Rus meant Russia. I can't entirely blame the authors for this. Even if it had been published with maps (as apparently the "deluxe" version will be) reading maps on a Kindle is nearly impossible. There are some interesting passages in The Mongoliad, but they ended up being sandwiched between sections that lean toward the tedious. For example, in one portion of the book there is a description of one-on-one combat between two contestants in the Khan's Circus of Swords. I appreciate the level of realism with which this is depicted, but the battle continues over three friggin' chapters!

I will not go over a lot of topics covered already except to say I agree with many of the critical comments. Medieval soap opera, way too many characters, too many writers perhaps? But no body has made the following comment so its here. One massive clanger did it for me and so I was unable to even finish the book. The modern girls can do anything stuff is now inserted into most fantasy and adventure novels. You have these tiny pretty girls who are killing machines with an attitude. You also have the untrained female character who decides enough is enough and trains hard for, well it varies, maybe a week, a month several months? and then emerges able to regularly take down professional soldiers who are 40% larger and twice as strong at least. These men-at-arms have trained in the military arts since they were apprenticed at 12 or so. It is so wrong that it is in your face for the whole book saying "this is just a fairytale". The view is not misogyny. It would be like one of the knights having a glock. Just kills it for me. It seems it is now embedded in almost all of this type of fiction. An example is the tiny female Chinese courtier at the Kagan's court. She decides to learn to defend herself. She gets archery lessons from one of the Mongol nobles. Of course Mongol men are renowned for their tolerance for women especially non mongol women. It ignores that anyone touching a weapon who has not earned the right through the initiation process is severely punished. In any case she picks up the bow and after a few hints she draws the bow three times and had a burning sensation in her biceps but that will go away in time as she gets used to it. For real. Anyone who has tried to bend one of these powerful bows for the first time is shocked at

the pull weight.

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