



# Postcards from Stanland: Journeys in Central Asia

*David H. Mould*

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**“An illuminating travelogue through Central Asia.... As a genial travel guide, Mould, an academic who doesn’t write like an academic, shows how one should resist the temptations to stereotype a culture too easily and understand it too quickly.” —*Kirkus Reviews***

Central Asia has long stood at the crossroads of history. It was the staging ground for the armies of the Mongol Empire, for the nineteenth-century struggle between the Russian and British empires, and for the NATO campaign in Afghanistan. Today, multinationals and nations compete for the oil and gas reserves of the Caspian Sea and for control of the pipelines. Yet “Stanland” is still, to many, a *terra incognita*, a geographical blank.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, academic and journalist David Mould’s career took him to the region on Fulbright Fellowships and contracts as a media trainer and consultant for UNESCO and USAID, among others. In *Postcards from Stanland*, he takes readers along with him on his encounters with the people, landscapes, and customs of the diverse countries—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—he came to love. He talks with teachers, students, politicians, environmental activists, bloggers, cab drivers, merchants, Peace Corps volunteers, and more.

Until now, few books for a nonspecialist readership have been written on the region, and while Mould brings his own considerable expertise to bear on his account—for example, he is one of the few scholars to have conducted research on post-Soviet media in the region—the book is above all a tapestry of place and a valuable contribution to our understanding of the post-Soviet world.

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