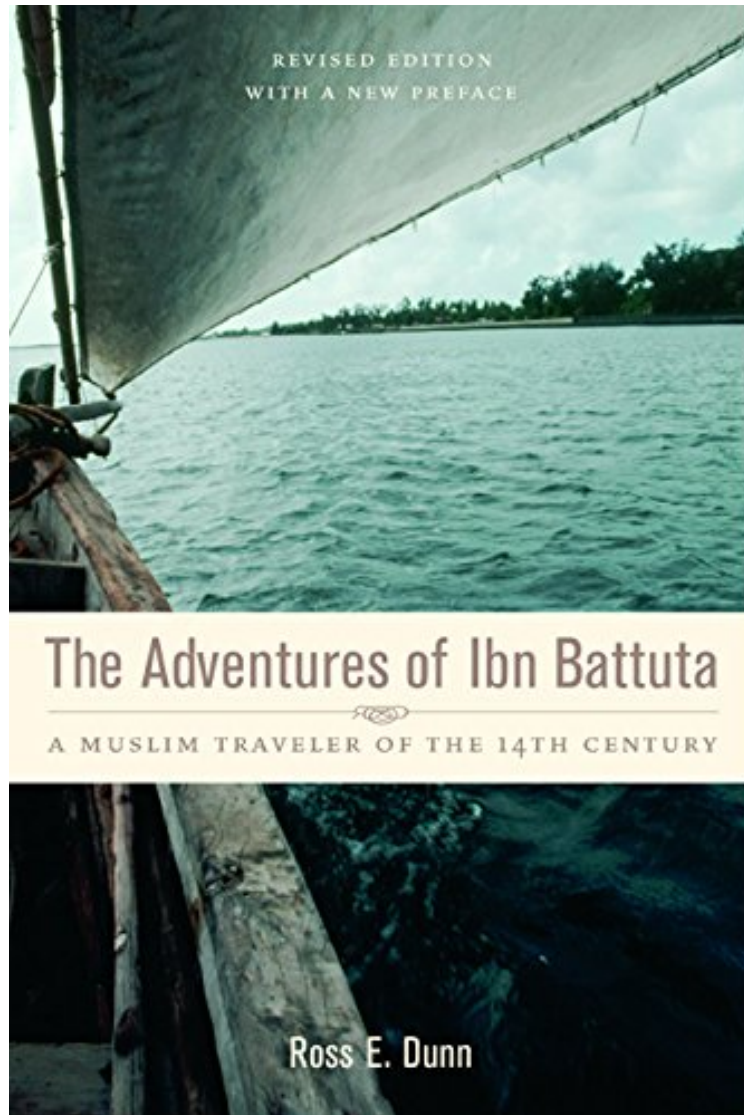


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The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century

Ross E. Dunn

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Ross E. Dunn : The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good account of a world traveller I had never heard ofBy Trainman95630I liked this book and read it within several months of reading The Adventures of Marco Polo. Both

men travelled Asia in approximately the same time frame (Battuta was appx 30 years later). I found this book to be somewhat better than the Marco Polo book. Mr Dunn provided great background on the historical forces that Battuta was encountering as he travelled. I felt like I got to know the character of Battuta more so than Polo. On the other hand some more excerpts from Battuta's rihala would have made the book better. Would have liked to have read more of his views and descriptions of the customs of the people he visited. Overall a good read though. 12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Easily one of the best nonfiction books i've ever read! By jeff wade This should almost be required reading in colleges, especially with the current geopolitical situation. It isn't just a translation of Ibn Battuta's book, it's at least 50% background material on the places he visited the people he met with considerable historical info from before, during, and after Ibn's travels. The writing is excellent and easy to get through. It easily ranks next to Plutarch (in a good translation) and Gibbon for it's grand overview of a largely unknown area of history the world (at least in the West). This was such a good book, I bought and started the Dover Pub. version of the actual text. Big mistake. That is such a dated translation offered so little extra compared to Ross' version (not to mention being being very hard to follow, even though I'm much more knowledgeable about the muslim world than your average American), that I gave it away to a Palestinian acquaintance after reading the 1st 50 pages. Maybe the 2nd or 3rd time I haven't finished a book, ever, no matter how little I was enjoying it. Stick with this version unless you really feel the need to read Ibn's actual words try a non-Dover version if you do. That's a little tough anyway because most of the others only cover parts of the book. Even if you do try another version, I really recommend you read this one first to make the real work more meaningful and understandable unless you're an expert on the Islamic world. My only complaint is that it might have had a little more of Ibn's actual words instead of paraphrases and summaries, but I feel this is actually a plus after trying to read the real text. Ibn was a contemporary of Marco Polo who actually travelled further and did most of his travels as an insider in muslim societies (at least at the government level), so he got to know the society better and was accepted as a co-religionist. Like Polo, Ibn however, suffers from the same flaws in the actual text. There's a lot of "I went to x, the people follow religion y, the climate is z, I saw building a, the local produce is b...". Ross' version cuts out all the dry midaeval travelogue filler and makes all the information crystal clear. Do yourself a favor and try this book. Ross is an Islamic Studies professor who obviously knows his stuff has practiced a few thousand times in a classroom setting on presenting it in a way that makes for interesting and easy reading. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A great story (pinch of salt provided)... By Larry N. Stout Ibn Battuta, like Marco Polo, was a great traveler who saw, described, and experienced far more than most people of his age (or any other). That in itself makes their respective travelogue-retrospectives worth reading. Unfortunately, neither of these prodigious wanderers had scruples about inclusion of gross exaggeration and invention in their writings: no one, quite obviously, had the means for checking their stories, and they well knew it! Fortunately, modern scholars have ways to distinguish what's almost certainly true, what's at least plausible, and what's patently false. Accordingly, this authoritatively annotated "rihla" of Ibn Battuta, providing a wealth of useful historical context, is must reading for anyone and everyone interested in world history.

Known as the greatest traveler of premodern times, Abu Abdallah ibn Battuta was born in Morocco in 1304 and educated in Islamic law. At the age of twenty-one, he left home to make the holy pilgrimage to Mecca. This was only the first of a series of extraordinary journeys that spanned nearly three decades and took him not only eastward to India and China but also north to the Volga River valley and south to Tanzania. The narrative of these travels has been known to specialists in Islamic and medieval history for years. Ross E. Dunn's 1986 retelling of these tales, however, was the first work of scholarship to make the legendary traveler's story accessible to a general audience. Now updated with revisions, a new preface, and an updated bibliography, Dunn's classic interprets Ibn Battuta's adventures and places them within the rich, trans-hemispheric cultural setting of medieval Islam.

It is not surprising that this book was required reading.