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Review of the book Historical dictionary of Turkmenistan

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■ Social & Behavioral Sciences

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Abazov, Rafis. **Historical dictionary of Turkmenistan.** Scarecrow, 2005.
240p bibl afp ISBN 0810853620, \$65.00

Beginning with a chronology (2000 BCE-2004 CE) and a long introductory essay, the author provides 272 articles covering people, places, events, and institutions in Turkmenistan, past and present. Topics range from well-known politicians (e.g., President Saparmurat Niyazov, or *Turkmenbashi*) to specialized subjects such as archives and libraries, to timely issues such as "Terrorism" and "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan." Most articles are brief; only a few ("Education," "Foreign Policy") exceed two pages. Cross-references are indicated by boldface, and there are *see* and *see also* references, but no index. Although Abazov (author of *Historical Dictionary of Kyrgyzstan*, CH, Sep'04, 42-0036) supplies entries for several prominent writers, there is no overall article on Turkmen literature, nor are there entries for the USSR, Stalin, or Gorbachev (although each is mentioned in the introductory essay). The 38-page bibliography, which covers a wide range of scholarly articles and monographs in English, Russian, and Turkmen, is well chosen, and translations are given in brackets for non-English titles. Appendixes include 10 tables of economic and educational data, as well as a listing of geographic name changes since independence (1991). There is no comparable, up-to-date reference book for Turkmenistan. **Summing Up:** Recommended. All academic and public libraries.—*J. A. Drobnicki, York College, CUNY*