In the Years of the Mountains: Exploring the World's High Ranges in Search of Their Culture, Geology, and Ecology

David Scott Gilligan
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For the past ten years David Gilligan has climbed all of the major mountain ranges in the world. His resulting narrative, "In the Years of the Mountains, takes readers to the highest places on four continents for an up-close consideration of the cultural, geological, and biological make up of mountains. From the Swiss Alps to the Himalayas, on to New Zealand, and then back to the North American cordillera, Gilligan treats readers to adventure mixed with science and history. <BR>This book is an ode to the essence of high mountains, but it is also about wishing desperately for a good picket placement on a steep snowfield, with a yawning crevasse just feet below; about watching a pious man offer burnt juniper to the gods; and about being alone on a crystalline white summit during a temperature inversion, with purple-gray clouds spreading out like an atmospheric ocean in all directions as far as the eye can see. <BR>From a master mountaineer, explorer, and university professor, "In the Years of the Mountains is an eye-opening look at mountains: a collision of the grand with the intensely personal.

David Gilligan teaches natural history at Prescott College in Arizona.
The mountains are the highest in the world, reaching almost 9,000 meters above sea level. The Himalayas separate the Indian subcontinent from the inner part of Asia. The word Himalaya means “home of snow”. 14 mountains are over 8,000 meters high, among them the K2, Nanga Parbat and Mount Everest, at 8,848 meter the world’s highest mountain. The mountains have been a natural barrier for thousands of years. They stopped people from China and the inner part of Asia to mix with the Indian population. Genghis Kahn, emperor of the Mongols, was stopped from expanding his empire to the south by the tall mountains. Most of the passes that cross the Himalayas are over 5,000 high. They are covered with snow during the winter period and almost impossible to pass.