# History of Civilizations of Central Asia

## Volume II - The development of sedentary and nomadic civilizations: 700 B.C. to A. D. 250

*History of Civilizations of Central Asia. Volume II - The development of sedentary and nomadic civilizations: 700 B.C. to A.D. 250. Editor: János Harmatta; Co-Editors: B. N. Puri/ G. F. Etemadi. Paris: UNESCO Publishing 1994.*

Readers will discover through this six-volume work cultures that flourished and vanished from the dawn of civilization to the present time and how the history of the ancient and medieval world was shaped by the movements of peoples in this heartland of Eurasia, stretching from the Caspian Sea to the borders of China.

Volume II presents an account of various movements of populations and the interrelations of their cultures in the heartland of Eurasia between 700 B.C. and 250 A.D. During this period, Central Asia saw the emergence of important nomadic tribal cultures, particularly the Kushans who overthrew the Greeks from Bactria and North-western India. Contacts between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indus Valley were reinforced by the campaigns of Alexander the Great and, under his successors, the progressive syncretism between Zoroastrianism, Greek religion and Buddhism gave rise to a new civilization instituted by the Parthians, known for its varied artistic creations. Ar the same time, during Kushan rule, Central Asia became the crossroads of a prosperous trade between the Mediterranean and China through the Silk Route.

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## Summary:

The emergence of the Achaemenid Empire, the invasions of Alexander the Great and the nomadic and sedentary civilizations are described in detail. With the rise of the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom, the civilizations of Central Asia underwent a fundamental change through a progressive syncretism between Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Greek religions. The Kushan Empire overthrowing the Parthians in the East gave rise to a rich and prosperous trade through the Silk Roads linking China to the West.