

In the three years that have elapsed since its cut-off date (1969), he has published four more studies, has seen the appearance of the second revised edition of his *Illustrations in Roll and Codex* (1970), and has sent fourteen articles—two more than the number published in the present book—to the printer. All this happened between his sixty-fifth and sixty-eighth years. At this rate his *Studies* should be the first among several volumes reflecting his unity of purpose and ever-youthful willingness to reach out for new material.

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CENTRAL ASIA: TURKMENIA BEFORE THE ACHAEMENIDS. By V. M. Masson and V. I. Sarianidi. Translated and edited by Ruth Tringham. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1972. 219 pp. \$12.50.

Surveys in English of the culture, history, and archeology of Soviet Central Asia in the historic period (from the time of the Achaemenid Empire) have appeared in recent years by Aleksandr Belenitsky (*Central Asia*, Cleveland and New York, 1968) and Gregoire Frumkin (*Archaeology in Soviet Central Asia*, Leiden, 1970). Neither of these useful volumes, however, gives more than brief and cursory treatment of the prehistoric period. Extensive field work in postwar years has recovered a wealth of data showing that the course of development in earlier times is no less interesting and significant. Now at last two of the most active and competent Soviet archeologists in this field have provided an up-to-date account of man's efforts and successes in exploiting the deserts and mountain valleys from the first Pleistocene traces to the middle of the first millennium B.C.

The area covered is Soviet Central Asia in the strict sense (excluding Kazakhstan), but inevitably the bulk of the book is devoted to southern Turkmenia, where the most significant developments took place and the remains are most abundant. Similarly, it is the village farming cultures and early urban manifestations that receive major attention. The book is designed for the nonspecialist or interested general reader but contains sufficient detail to be useful to the serious student or to serve as assigned reading for an advanced course. It is well illustrated and has selected chapter bibliographies through 1969, which include relevant Western publications and give Russian titles in translation.

In prehistory, as later, the area was an outlier of the Near East for the most part, with far-flung relations and trade links, which contribute to our understanding of the larger picture. But the area also followed its own course and poses its own problems, such as the unexplained fading away of the promising early development of urbanism. Prehistoric Soviet Central Asia is thus of interest in its own right to students of human cultural history.

The authors' treatment of their subject is sophisticated and devoid of the parochialism affecting some Soviet scholarship. They are fully aware of the outside relations, and at all times view the area in its larger setting. As much as possible they endeavor to stress cultural processes and evidence of socioeconomic life, rather than material objects for their own sake, although the necessary evidence is provided.

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