

PROLEGOMENA
TO THE SOURCES ON THE HISTORY
OF PRE-ISLAMIC CENTRAL ASIA

Edited by

J. HARMATTA



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COLLECTION OF THE SOURCES
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J. HARMATTA

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TO THE SOURCES OF THE HISTORY
OF PRE-ISLAMIC CENTRAL ASIA

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PROLEGOMENA

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Authored by the top scholars of many lands, these studies provide an introduction to the problems of the historical sources of pre-Islamic Central Asia and elucidate some problems of the Greek, Latin, Byzantine, Old Iranian (Old Persian and Avestan), Middle Iranian (Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Saka), Old Indian, Aramaic, Syrian, Arabic, Chinese, Tibetan sources as well as those of the numismatic and archaeological source materials.

In 1966, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a resolution to launch a project for the study of the civilizations of Central Asia as this territory — across which the peoples, states and civilizations of East and West as well as those of North and South came into contact one with another — played an important role in history. Because her geographical position favoured the exchange of commodities and cultural goods as well as the interpenetration of different ethnical elements and cultures during long epochs, the study of the civilizations of the area may well enrich the cultural identity of the various peoples living there today. Thus, the collection, publication and interpretation of the historical sources — be they literary, epigraphic, numismatic or archaeological — are indispensable. This source material presents, however, great difficulties. Many epigraphic and literary texts written in over twenty languages are not yet published or deciphered. Similarly, numismatic and archaeological source materials are kept partly unpublished and dispersed throughout the world.

The principal aim of this volume is to put forward the problems connected with the sources, to outline the geographical and chronological limits, and to define the methods of their collection.



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