

# INNERMOST ASIA

DETAILED REPORT OF EXPLORATIONS IN  
CENTRAL ASIA, KAN-SU AND EASTERN ĪRĀN

CARRIED OUT AND DESCRIBED UNDER THE  
ORDERS OF H.M. INDIAN GOVERNMENT BY

SIR AUREL STEIN, K.C.I.E.

INDIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY



VOL. I TEXT

WITH DESCRIPTIVE LISTS OF ANTIQUES BY F. H. ANDREWS  
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TO THE MEMORY OF  
GENERAL SIR HENRY RAWLINSON, BART.

WHOSE LABOURS IN THE FIELD AND STUDY  
ILLUMINATED THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF ASIA

THIS RECORD IS INSCRIBED IN  
GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE AND  
SINCERE ADMIRATION FOR  
THE EXPLORER, THE SCHOLAR, AND THE MAN

Sir Aurel Stein's name is notably associated with the extensive excavations and explorations in Central and Innermost Asia. Trained as an Orientalist and archaeologists, he planned several expeditions to the interior of Asia and used Sanskrit, Persian, Chinese, Turkish, Greek and Latin as scholarly tools to unlock the geographical puzzles, in the process making valuable topographical surveys and penned down his experiences in his famous books.

Innermost Asia constitute the story of his rediscovering the ancient silk route from the passage land of westernmost China across the Tarim basin to the uppermost reaches of Oxus and to Iran and Hindukush valleys. During his explorations he unearthed numerous long buried sites in the desert sands of Central Asia, exposing a long forgotten civilization and ancient remains and culture of a very rich people. His discoveries proves to the present day scholar the fact that the growth and development of civilization had a very close link between China and India on the one hand and beyond China to Mongolia, Russian Turkistan, Pamirs, Kashgar and upper Oxus down to Bokhara and Samarkand on the other hand.

The finds and relics of his extensive explorations include numerous antiquities, silk paintings, manuscript remains in Sanskrit and Prakrit, Kharosti documents recovered from the sites of Niya and Lou-Lan, ancient textiles analysis of remains of prehistoric painted pottery and porclains, Coins, Tapestries, stone impliments; Description of Chinese painting found in the tombs and caves and other discoveries of historical interest. The narration is of much interest from geographical and anthropological point of view as he describes in detail the nomadic tribes and clans he examines on his tours. Sir Stein was very ably assisted by a number of scholars who examined and described the large number of antiquities and other allied objects brought back by him.

The set is complete in five large size volumes. The first two volumes contain descriptive Text in 30 chapters besides Appendices and Inscriptions. Volume 3 contains 505 large pictures of geographical and historical descriptions while volume 4 has 200 plates of antiquities, arts and other objects found during the expeditions. Volume 5 has 56 maps of Chinese Turkistan and Kansu from surveys made during the explorations.

It is hoped that the publication of this set will be a source of great satisfaction and joy for the scholars interested not only in Indology but history, geography and anthropology of this vast area.

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