



BACTRIA: The History of a Forgotten Empire

H. G. RAWLINSON

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From inside book:

The object of this book is to investigate the history of the great Iranian province which formed the eastern portion of the Persian Empire, and which, after the Macedonian invasion, became an independent Greek kingdom. The valiant Greeks who ruled the country were afterwards driven over the Hindu-Kush, where they maintained themselves for nearly a century longer, finally succumbing to the tribes from the north which had originally displaced them. Thus it will be seen that the history of Bactria falls naturally into four divisions. Passing over the mass of legend which surrounds the earliest period, centred chiefly round the figure of Zarathustra Spitama, we find ourselves on more solid ground when we come to deal with Bactria as a satrapy of the Persian Empire.

After the overthrow of Persia by Alexander we enter upon the second phase in the history of the country — its subjugation and settlement by the Macedonians.

The third period begins with the revolt of Diodotus in 250 b.c, when Bactria assumes the role of an independent Greek kingdom, extending its sway not only over Sogdiana to the north, but over a great portion of the modern Afghanistan and the Panjab. The closing chapter of the history of the Bactrian Greeks commences with their evacuation of the country north of the Hindu-Kush, when they made Sagala their capital, and ends with their final persession by the Kushan monarchs.

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