

## Document D: Marakanda

**Note:** after crossing the Gobi and Taklimakan deserts, travelers on the Silk Road's northern route had to traverse through the rugged Pamir Mountains before arriving at this bustling city.

The precious merchandise of many foreign countries is stored here. The soil is rich and productive and yields abundant harvests. The forest trees afford a thick vegetation and flowers and fruit are plentiful...Horses are bred there. The inhabitants' skill in the arts and trades exceeds that of other countries. The climate is agreeable and temperate and the people brave and energetic.

**Source:** A description of the Kushan Empire city of Marakanda in *Great Tang Records on the Western Regions*, a book about the Silk Road written by Xuanzang (shweng-zang), a Buddhist pilgrim, in 646 C.E.



**Source:**  
artist's  
rendition  
ancient  
Marakan

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**Analysis:**

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1. What mountain ranges did westbound travellers have to cross to reach Marakanda?
2. According to Xuangzing, Marakanda was a very prosperous city. After reading the source, why do you think it was prosperous?
3. How would the geographical location of Marakanda contribute to its success as an important Silk Road city?

**Writing Journal Entry #4:** Label your journal entry "Marakanda, July 23, 200, Afternoon."

You just arrived in the thriving city of Marakanda this morning. Once you leave, you will be on the long road west to Antioch, the western end of the Silk Road. What is your impression of Marakanda? How do you plan to spend your time there? Review your map of the Silk Road. What do you expect from the rest of your journey? Take a few moments to write down your thoughts and concerns in your journal.