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Situating Eurasia in Antiquity: Nomadic Material Culture in the First Millennium BCE

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The cultures and societies of ancient Eurasia are rarely given prominence in their own right. Too often, the region is treated as a crossroads of goods and ideas originating in the sedentary states to the south of the steppe. In many respects, the marginalization of Eurasia as an engine of history goes back to literary traditions penned by sedentary outsiders who described the diverse inhabitants of the steppe as stereotyped barbarian nomads, lacking the major achievements of city-based civilization. The following Special Issue of *Arts* aims to reevaluate the cultural dynamics of ancient Eurasia by exploring ritual and everyday material practices beyond the purview of literary representation. The contributions are structured around case studies focusing on the distinctive archaeological and artistic legacies of the Eurasian steppe in the first millennium BCE, from the permafrost tombs of the Altai mountains to the kurgans and hillfort sites of the northern Black Sea region. Dealing with exciting new discoveries as well as legacy data, “Situating Eurasia in Antiquity” develops a framework that highlights the varied forms of organization in the region by calling on evidence of mobility and interaction and the generative role of material culture in shaping social relations.

