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Pita Kelekna
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THE HORSE IN HUMAN HISTORY

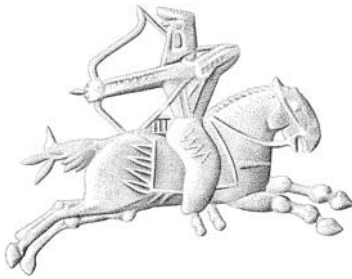
The horse is surely the “aristocrat” of animals domesticated by man. This book documents the origins of horse domestication on the Pontic-Caspian steppes some 6,000 years ago and the consequent migration of equestrian tribes across Eurasia to the borders of sedentary states. Horse chariotry and cavalry in effect changed the nature of warfare in the civilizations of the Middle East, India, and China. But, beyond the battlefield, horsepower also afforded great advances in transport, agriculture, industry, and science. Rapidity of horse communications forged far-flung equestrian empires, where language, law, weights, measures, and writing systems were standardized and revolutionary technologies and ideas were disseminated across continents. Always recognizing this dual character of horsepower – both destructive and constructive – this work discusses the politico-military and economic importance of the horse in the rise of Hittite, Achaemenid, Chinese, Greco-Roman, Arab, Mongol, and Turkic states. Following Columbian contact, Old and New World cultures are contrastively evaluated in terms of presence or absence of the horse. And Spanish conquest of the horseless Americas is seen as the model for subsequent European equestrian colonization of horseless territories around the planet.

Pita Kelekna holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of New Mexico. Early fieldwork in indigenous societies of the Americas and later research conducted across the Middle East, Central Asia, and East Asia have well equipped her for this worldwide analysis of the importance of the horse in human society. She is a member of the New York Academy of Sciences and the American Anthropological Association.

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*To
my sons,
John and Tiran*

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Pita Kelekna. The horse is surely the 'aristocrat' of animals domesticated by man. This book assesses the impact of the horse on human society from 4000 BC to AD 2000, by first describing initial horse domestication on the Pontic-Caspian steppes and the early development of driving and riding technologies. Horse-chariotry and cavalry in effect changed the nature of warfare in the civilisations of the Middle East, India, and China. Beyond the battlefield, horsepower also afforded great advances in transport, agriculture, industry, and science. Rapidity of horse communications forged f The Age of the Horse: An Equine Journey Through Human History. By Susanna Forrest. Grove Atlantic; 432 pages; \$27.Â Over the past century horses in the West have evolved from labourers into what Mr Raulff calls a "part-time job as a recreational item, a mode of therapy, a status symbol and a source of pastoral support for female puberty". (Although, as Ms Forrest points out, in 2011 60% of all horses and 95% of donkeys were working in the developing world, with the money generated for each animal being sufficient to support a family of up to 20.) In the developed world they have been replaced with machines. The irony is hard to miss: humans tamed horses and put them to work until they invented something the Horse-chariotry and cavalry in effect changed the nature of warfare in the civilizations of the Mid The horse is surely the "aristocrat" of animals domesticated by man. This book documents the origins of horse domestication on the Pontic-Caspian steppes some 6,000 years ago and the consequent migration of equestrian tribes across Eurasia to the borders of sedentary states. Horse-chariotry and cavalry in effect changed the nature of warfare in the civilizations of the Middle East, India, and China.Â On horseback, humans could move rapidly, and travel long distances. The Horse in Human History, by anthropologist Pita Kelekna, is a mind-altering book. It describes our turbulent 6,000 year relationship with domesticated horses. Few readers were raised in tribes of nomadic pastoralists.