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RESEARCH ARTICLE

“PERSIANS INVASION AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON INDIA”

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Abstract

The period of 4 to 3 century BCE in India, is defined as the period various imperialist activities. At that time, several of dynasties were flourishing in India. It is known as The Pre-Mauryan period in Indian history. It was time, when in middle India, Magadha Empire were establishing its power and in northern western part of India, Persian were appeared as invader. When the state of middle India were capturing by Mauryan dynasty, then northern western part of India was facing the situation of anarchy.

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Introduction

CYRUS-I (558-530B.C.):-About the middle of the sixth century B.C. we find the hordes of cyrusI(558-530B.C.) the founder of the achaemenian empire of Persia, knocking at the gates of India and destroying the famous city of kapisa near the junction of the Ghorband and panjsir river north-east of Kabul. Cyrus ruled from 558-530BC. He conquered bactria, media, babylonia, and Assyria. He even advanced towards India through gedrosia (mekran), but was not successful in his expedition. According to Strabo, cyrus had to abandon the enterprise, escaping with seven men only.” It appears that he could not establish his authority beyond the Kabul valley. according to pliny, cyrus destroyed the famous city of kapisa. It seems quite clear that cyrus had not demoralized by his previous failure. Ariane mentioned that “the Indians who were lived in middle region of Indus and Kabul River were under the Assyrian, median and later on Persian and they gave tax to resian king. Ashataka and ashvaka tribes were lived in that region, which adopted the dependency of cyrusI. Kabul district, west of the river Indus became tributary to the Persian and the name of Gandhara began to appear prominently among the subject nations in the early inscription of Darious (522-486B.C.), the most illustrious among the successors of cyrus. Cyrus I was succeeded by his son Cambyses but the latter was completely busy in the affair of Egypt and consequently no advance was made in the required direction.

Cyrus was died in the war against a derbike tribe of Caspian region. He was succeeded by his son camsyses but the latter was completely busy in the affair of Egypt and consequently no advance was made in the required direction.

DARIUS - I (522-486 B.C.):- Darious was the most illustrious among the successors of Cyrus. He was the third sovereign of Achaemenian dynasty and he ruled from about 522-486 BCE. Three of his inscription throws light on the relationship between India and Persian. In the **Bahistan rock inscription** dated 520-518 BCE. Gandhara or gandara is mentioned in the list of 23 subject countries, in this list shatagu and Gadara mentioned as Indian place. Shatagu defines as sapta sindu and Gadara defines as gandhara region. His **persipolis inscription** (518-515BCE.) Clearly, ment He followed up the earlier successes of his house by ions the Punjab as a part of Persian Empire. His third inscription of **naksi- rustam** also refers to the Persian empire. It is clear from above that the Indus valley conquered by darious, in which hindu define as lower Indus valley region.

Herodotus stated that out of 20 satrapies of Darius, the twentieth division was in India. It was the most populated place, from where Darius got third part of his region in the form of tax which was equivalent to the amount fixed at 360 talents of gold dust which is equivalent to a million pounds sterling. He also says that the Indians paid a tribute which was larger than all the rest. Again Herodotus mentioned that in about 517 BCE, Darius sent a naval expedition under Skylax, a Greek adventurer, to explore the lower Indus river where it falls into the sea. Skylax explored a route upon the upper waters of the Punjab river in the province of Gandhara and in the thirteenth month reached the sea. Going toward west of Indus river they reached a place, where Egyptian king, was sending Phoenicians to the tour of Libya. When they came from their tour, the Indus valley was annexed by Darius and a fleet was sent into the Indian Ocean. This expedition paved the way for the annexation of the Indus valley as far as the deserts of Rajputana. In this region a large part of Punjab were conquered.

According to Herodotus, Darius maintained a special Indian force which took prominent part in the wars between Greece and Persia. The Indian contingent consisted of infantry, cavalry and chariots and was commanded by a Persian general called Phanastrates. Its foot soldiers fought with cane-bows and arrows. Wild asses drew its chariots. Herodotus was impressed by the cotton dress of the Indian soldiers.

The time period of Darius defines as the climax of Persian period. Darius I succeeded by his son Xerxes.

XERXES (486-465 BCE):- The control over Persia over the Indian satrapy seems to have continued during the reign of Xerxes of Kshayarsha. This is amply proved by the presence of Indian forces in his army which was employed by him to invade Greece. Herodotus has given the following description of the Indian troops: the Indians, clad in garments made of cotton carried bows of cane and arrow of cane, the latter tipped in iron." It is possible that the control of Persia over the above Indian territories continued up to the time of Darius III.

Xerxes maintained some control over the Indian province, which furnished contingents to their army. Reference is made in certain inscriptions of Xerxes to the suppression of rebellion in lands (where, before, the Daivas I (the king) sapped the foundation." The Daiva-worshipping lands may have included the Indian satrapies. But the hold of the later Achaemenians on their eastern possessions gradually became weak, and towards the middle of the fourth century BCE the Indian borderland was parceled out among various small states, the rulers of which were practically independent.

The hill country north of the Kabul river, drained by the Kunar and the Swat, was occupied mainly by the Asvakas, a people whose name is derived from the Sanskrit *asva*, Iranian *aspa* (horse). Somewhere in this mountain region stood also the city of Nysa, alleged to have been founded by Greek colonists. The old territory of Gandhara was divided into two parts by Indus. To the west of the river lay the kingdom of Pushkalvati in the modern district of Peshawar and its east was the realm of Takshasila (Taxila) in the present district of Rawalpindi. Taxila was a prosperous kingdom governed by good laws. Its capital was a noble city which occupied the site of the present Bhiser mound near Saraikal, twenty miles north-west of Rawalpindi. It lay on the high road from central Asia to the interior of India, and the fame of its market-place spread to the distant corners of the civilized world. Great as an emporium of commerce, the city was greater still as a centre of learning. Crowds of eager scholars flocked to it for instruction in the three Vedas and the eighteen branches of knowledge. Tradition affirms that the great epic, the Mahabharata was first recited in this city.

The mountain territory just above the Taxila country was occupied by the kingdom of Urasa (Hazara district) and Abhisara (Punjab and Naoshera). To the south east of the Taxila lay the twin kingdom of Purus or Pauravas, a people already famous in the Vedic hymns. The territory of the prince mentioned by Greek historians as the elder Poros was situated between the Jhelum and the Chenab, while the principality of his nephew, the younger Poros, stretched from the Chenab to the Ravi. On the confines of the country of the Pauravas lay the territories of the Glaukanikoi and Kathaioi and the principality of Saubhuti. The southern part of the Jhang district with the contiguous portion of the lower valley of the Ravi was occupied by the Sibis and the Malavas, with whom were associated the Kshudrakas, while lower down the Chenab lived the Ambasthas. These tribes were autonomous and some of them are expressly mentioned as having a democratic government, upper Sind was divided among a number of potentates of whom the most important was Mousikanos, whose capital probably lay at or near Alor. In the Indus delta stood the city of Pattala which like Sparta, was governed by two kings and a senate of elders.

Xerxes died by one of his body guard in 465 BCE.

SUCCESSOR OF XERXES AND DECLINE OF PERSIAN EMPIRE:-

ARTAXERXES-I AND ARTAXERXES-II(465-425 BCE) :- After the death of Xerxes, his successor Artaxerxes I (465-425 BCE) and Artaxerxes II (425-359 BCE) taken place. In southern part of Persia Mausoleum name of Artaxerxes I, II and Sattagidai, Gandhara and Indus have been written in artistic style. Which indicates that the rule of

persians in this region remain as same . Ctesias was the royal apothecary of ataxerxes, who discussed about the gift of Indian to the prince.

DARIUS-III (360-330BCE):-Darius III was famous as the last ruler of Persian. It is possible that by the time of darius III, control of Persian over the Indian province must have grown weak and the whole of north-western India was parceled out into innumerable kingdom and republic who were fighting against one another. No wonder, they could not present a united front against Alexander. The Nandas of Magadha also did not try to bring the region under their control.

Ariane stated that in the war of Arbela (331bce) against greek emperor Alexander, Indian military of east and western region of Indus, helped darius III. It reflects that by that time Persian had their dominance in that region. Alexander defeated darius III in Arbela war very badly, by that defeat Persian sovereignty upon India gone accomplished.

IMPACT OF PERSIAN EMPIRE ON INDIA:-

Clearer evidence of an Achaemenid presence in the frontier region is found in various aspects of the material culture, which are directly, associated with the exercise of political power. Yet political influence on India was less than cultural effects, which are as follows:-

(1) INFLUENCE ON COINAGE:- At Taxila is seen the diffusion of a **coinage** which is similar in technique and Weight to the silver bent-bar punch marked coinage of the Afghan region in the late Achaemenid period even though it is slightly different in shape. If this silver bent-bar punchmarked coinage seems to have been in use at Bhir Mound from Period IV, the earliest phase that means it actually developed only in the late Achaemenid period. The influence of this coinage on the form and technique of the local punch-marked coinage of Indian weight standard has been underlined by several scholars. The Achaemenid influence continued after the fall of the empire, and some of the coins from Taxila dated to the end of the third century B.C.E. still show on the reverse the image of a personage in the guise of an Achaemenid satrap. Simply, the contact between India and Persia must have influenced India in many ways. In the first place, perian coin were current in Indian dominions. The standard gold coin of Persia was daric. The silver Persian coin was called as sigloi or shelkels. Both gold and silver coins were imported into India.

(2) INFLUENCE ON SCRIPT:- At Taxila, Kandahār, and Hadda is seen the spread of the Aramaic language. This resulted in the birth of a syllabic writing system (**Kharoṣṭhī**), which is, without doubt, derived from the Aramaic script , although examples of the Aramaic language in northwest India all date to the post- Achaemenid period. The concept of writing, for the Kharoṣṭhī script as well as Brāhmī, can be derived from cultural contact with Persia. The direction of influence is indicated by the Iranian origin of the term *lipi*, with which the Indian grammarian Pāṇini defines the writing. Great emperor asoka two inscriptions, which found In the region of sahabajgadi and mansehra in pakistan are written in kharoshti script.

(3)INFLUENCE ON SEALS:- Also clearly due to the Achaemenid presence in northwest India are the “**Greco-Persian**” seals, which are a typical imperial Achaemenid production. The appearance of symbols such as the swastika or a taurine animal, which are sometimes paired together with characteristic Indian iconographies such as the zebu (large-humped cattle), suggests that these seals were produced locally.

4. INFLUENCE ON PILLAR:- the pillars of asoka with round bell-shaped abaci and bull or lion capital are of pure origin. The use of winged animals as capitals of pillars was borrowed from Persia. The style of the edicts of asoka seems to have been borrowed from Persia. An inscription from taxila is in Aramaic script and that shows the hold of Persian Slanguage.

5. INFLUENCE ON COMMERCE:- Indian merchants carried their goods to the various parts of the vast Persian empire and that added to the commercial prosperity of the country. Indian scholars and philosophers moved freely in the Persian empire and that led to closer relations with western countries in general and Greece in particular. Indian philosophers have been referred to as putting question to Socrates. They questioned Socrates about the object of his philosophy and his reply was that it was an inquiry into human affairs. The reply of the Indian philosophers was that “no one could inquire into human affairs if he was ignorant of divine ones.

6. INFLUENCE ON EMPLOYMENT:- the Persian nobles were employed by mauryan kings. This is amply proved by the mention of tushaspa, a Persian, as the governor of Kathiawar in the reign of Chandragupta maurya.

7. INFLUENCE ON TRADITION:- Chandra gupta maurya borrowed the hair-washing ceremony from the Persian kings. Likewise, the custom of burning sacred fire in the probably also borrowed from Persia.

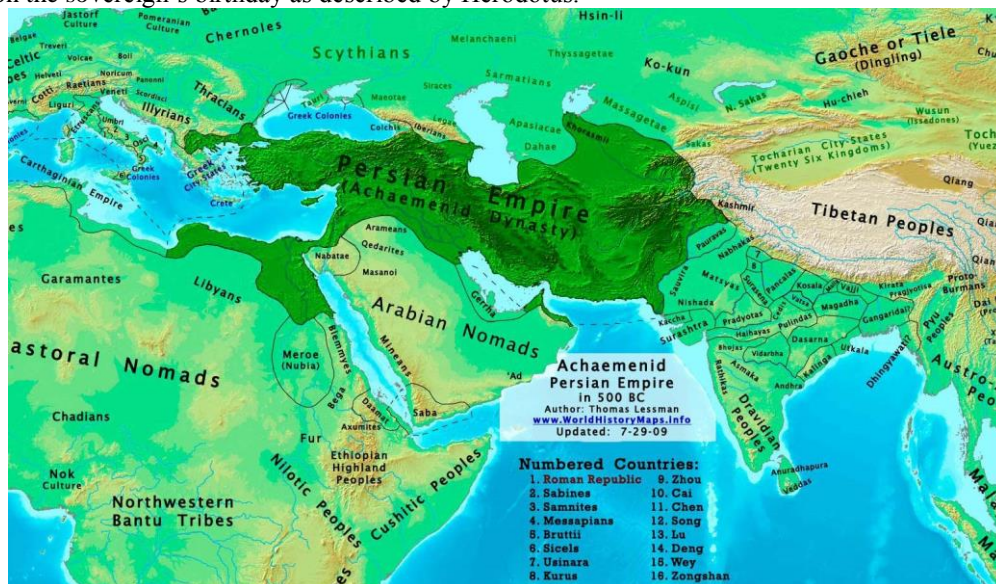
8. INFLUENCE ON WOMEN CONDITION:- Persian women (yavanis) were employed by Indian rulers as their bodyguards and that must have brought many families from Persia to India in search of fortune.

9. INFLUENCE ON TECHNIQUE:- the Persian taught the Indians the technique of giving lustrous polish to stone. Hellenistic influence on Indian art was received through Persia.

10. INFLUENCE ON UNIFICATION:-the example of the great empire perisa must have been given birth to the idea of the unification of northern India.

The view of **prof. R.D. Banerjee** is that the long occupation of the north-western provins by the Persian left a permanent mark. Persian clerks introduced the use of Aramaic script and an inscription in that scrip has been discovered at taxila. Aramaic script was partly changed and adapted for the writing of Indian dialects and this new script is called kharoshti. It is derived entirely from the Aramaic proto-type and contains aspired consonants which are required in Indian language. The kharosti script became the principal script of Turkistan, bactria, afganistan and Punjab and sindh. It remained in use in these countries till third century A.D. when it was finally driven out by the Indian brahmi. Persian architecture was introduced by the Persian governors and was used by the Indian emperor of the mauryan dynasty. The pillars of asoka with round bell-shaped abaci and bull or lion capital of pillars and pilasters are of pure Persian origin. The use of winged animals as capitals of pillars and pilasters was introduced by Persian architects and remained in use till th ened of the first century B.C.persian noblemen were employed by the maurayan emperor and one of them tushapa was the governor of kathiawad.

At the end, we may conclude with the following observation of V.A.Smith, “ the continuance of strongpersian influence upon India is Indiated by vinces near the forontier, by the long continued use of the persain title of satraps, by the form of the asoka of the asoka inscription and by the architetecture. Some small particulerars which happen to be recorded are sufficient to snow that in the time of the first mauryan emperor, the court was affected by Iranian practices. The arthashastra rule that the king, when consulting physician and ascetics , should be seated in the room where the sacred fire has been kept, seems to be an indication that the Persian ritual was honoured at the maurayan court. We are told also that ceremonial washing of the king’s hair was made the occasion of a splendid festival when the countries offered rich presents to the king. That observance recalls th epersian hair-washing ceremony on the sovereign’s birthday as described by Herodotus.”



MAP OF PERSIAN EMPIRE AND CAPTURED INDIAN PLACES



CLEAR VIEW OF PERSIAN EMPIRE ON NORTH-WESTERN PARTS OF INDIA

LIST OF THE PERSIAN EMPEROR

SR. NO.	NAME OF THE EMPEROR	TIME PERIOD	CONQUERED REGION
1.	CYRUS-I	558-529 B. C.	BACTRIA, KABUL, SOME PARTS OF INDUS
2.	CAMBYSES	529-522 B.C.	SAME AS PRIOR
3.	DARIUS-I	522-486B.C.	SAPTA SINDU, GANDHAR, LOWER INDUS VALLEY, MAJOR PARTS OF PUNJAB REGION
4.	XERXES	486-465 B.C.	SAME AS PRIOR
5.	ARTAXERXES-I	465-425B.C.	SAME AS PRIOR
6.	ARTAXERXES-II	425-359 B.C.	SAME AS PRIOR
7.	DARIUS-III	359-330B.C.	SAME AS PRIOR

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