CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

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1.1 Introduction:

The Indian subcontinent, including the present India and Pakistan, with its special geographical conditions, has a deep root in producing the civilization which settled in the Punjab, Sind, Bengal and Deccan plateau. Everyone can see the traces of this civilization, in the richness of the museums at Calcutta, Lahore, and Peshawar, Mumbai, Hyderabad and other cities. As the studies show, in the ancient era, the people who were living in this region were Dravidians. ¹ With coming of the Aryans from the North – West of the Subcontinent, they were driven to the South.²

The Iranian plateau has also its special characteristics and traces of civilization which have been situated in south, south east, central part, south west Elam (Ilam) of Iran. The similarities between Iranian civilization and adjacent civilization, namely the Indian Subcontinent and Mesopotamia, indicate the existence of relations between them.

At the beginning of the second millennium B.C., the Aryan tribes entered the plateau of Iran, and conquered the indigenous people of Iran. They then formed a great civilization, especially in the period of the Achaemenians.

The Indus Valley (Harappan) Civilization, which is the oldest historically known Civilization in India, was contemporary to the Proto-Elamite civilization in Iran. The Indus people had trade links with parts of Afghanistan, the coastal regions of Iran, and the ancient civilization of Mesopotamia. At Susa in the western part of Iran, decorated pottery has been excavated which appears to be similar to those of the Kulli culture in the north-west of the Indian subcontinent. Indus seals have also been excavated at Kish, Sura and Ur. The Harappan culture in India is believed to have imported silver, copper, turquoise and lapis lazuli from Persia and Afghanistan, in return for ivory. In terms of linguistics, it has been theorized that the Indus people spoke a Dravidian language, and this language or its variants must have also spread to neighbouring areas: in the Balochistan region in the southeast of Iran and in the southwest of Pakistan, the Brahui people speak a language that is classified under the Dravidian family.³
Aryans\textsuperscript{4} were the people who came from Central Asia and divided themselves in two branches. One of them came to the Indian Subcontinent (named Ariya), and another to the Iranian plateau (named Airiah). Therefore, they have a common root. Then they prevailed over the local and indigenous people and settled in the Indian Subcontinent and the Iranian plateau.

At first they had many similarities in religious beliefs, culture, language and customs. Even the myths of the Veda and Avesta show that they had common gods. The root of the cultural connection and common religions of Aryans in Iran and India and other places, confirmed with the discovery of Boqaz koy inscription in Anatolia in 1957. This inscription, which belongs to 1400-1300 B.C. Mentions the names of gods Indra, Varuna, Mitra and Nasaita (Nahid). This indicates connection between the Aryans in the region from Anatolia to the Indian Subcontinent.

The languages of India, belonging to the Indo-Aryan family, are believed to have originated from the same source as the Iranian languages, namely the Indo-Iranian language family, which in itself is a member of the satem group of Indo-European languages. The Indo-Iranians were nomadic people originating from the Central Asian steppes, probably in the region of the Oxus river valley, pre-2000 B.C. They referred to themselves as Aryans, from which the word “Iran” originates (from “airyanam vaejo” meaning "Land of the Aryans"), and also the word “Arya” in Sanskrit and other Indian languages, signifying "noble". Ancient India was often referred to as Aryavarta, which means the same as "kingdom/domain of the Aryans".

The people of India and Iran, two ancient neighbouring civilisations, have enjoyed close historical links through the ages. They had a common homeland and share a common linguistic and racial past. Over the several millennia, they interacted and enriched each other in the fields of language, religion, arts, culture, food and other traditions. Today the two countries enjoy warm, friendly relations and cooperate in a wide range of fields.
Iran and India have emerged high in the realms of history, as the two culturally richest and the oldest civilizations. The two countries have had relations with one another since a long time. The origins of the two nations have been concurrent and are traced to the Aryans. Based on this, one can find abundance of similarities in customs, traditions, languages and other behavioural forms. On the other hand, the influence of Iranian culture on Indian in the last millennium is undeniable. In this connection, the late Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru writes: “Among the many people and races who have come in contact with and influenced Indian’s life and culture, the oldest and most persistent have been the Iranians’.

The emergence of the Achaemenid Empire in Persia, founded by Hakhâmanish (“Sakhamani in Sanskrit, meaning “one with friends or allies”) saw parts of northwest India come under Persian rule. Indian emissaries were present at the courts of Cyrus the Great or Kurush (590 - 529 B.C.), whose empire extended as far east as Gandhara and Sind. It is also believed that when Cyrus was threatened by Croesus of Lydia, he received military assistance from an Indian king. Under Darius I or Darayawus (521 - 485 B.C.), there were inscriptions referring to Persian relations with India. The Behistun rock inscription (ancient Bagastana "place of Gods" or Sanskrit “Bhagasthana”) dating back to around (518 B.C.), includes Gandhara in the list of his subject countries. Here Darius also refers to his language as Aryan. The Persepolis inscription mentions Punjab as a part of the Persian Empire. The epigraph of Nagsh-i-Rustam shows India as the 24th state of his empire. The Indian province of Darius was believed to be the richest in Darius's empire. Herodotus told us of the wealth and density of the Indian population and of the tribute paid to Darius. "The population of the Indians is by far the greatest of all the people that we know; and they paid tribute proportionately larger than all the rest – (the sum of) 360 talents of gold dust.” Herodotus also mentions the Indian contingent in the Persian armies consisting of infantry, cavalry, and chariots. Later, elephants are also mentioned. Under Xerxes I or Khashayarsha, the successor of Darius, it is believed that Indians (specifically from north-west India, Bactria and Gandhara) fought alongside the Persian army against the Greeks in the battlefields of Plateau and Marathon.
Achaemenian art and architecture also had a significant influence on India. Before the Ashokan period of history, there is not much evidence of epigraphy in India. It has been suggested that the idea of issuing decrees by Ashoka was borrowed from the Achaemenian emperors, especially from Darius. The pillars, with their animal capitals (fine examples of Mauryan imperial art), are influenced by Achaemenian pillars.

Trade expanded mainly because Achaemenians introduced coinage, which facilitated exchange. India exported spices like black pepper and imported gold and silver coins from Iran. The grape, introduced from Persia with the almond and walnut, was cultivated in the western Himalayas. One of the earliest Indian words for a coin is Karsa (also a small weight), which is of Persian origin.

In 330 B.C., Alexander defeated Darius III. In the decisive battle of Gaugamela, Indian soldiers with fifteen elephants fought for Darius against the Greeks. Alexander marched into India after defeating the Persians. Chandragupta Maurya, who founded the Mauryan dynasty, had friendly relations with the successor of the Macedonian conqueror in Persia. Seleucus Nicator, the Grecian ruler of Persia, sent Megasthenes as the envoy of Hellenistic Persia to the court of Pataliputra in India, the seat of the Mauryas. Persian nobles were also present in the courts of Mauryan kings. Tushaspa, a Persian, was present during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya. The Kharoshti script was introduced by the Persian officials in the northwestern frontier province and continued to be in use till the 4th century A.D.

Unfortunately, for five centuries of Parthian history, there is no direct evidence and information about the relations between Iran and the Indian subcontinent. But some contexts show that there were relations between the two regions, as in the past. Mehrdad I, the king of the Parthian by invading Punjab, advanced the political and cultural relations between India and Iran.

One of them is the situation of Iran in the line of the Silk Road between China and India with the Mediterranean region. In this period, the Buddhist religion came to Iran.
from the eastern frontiers and affected the people of Khorasan and central Asia, and Taxila became the biggest center for Buddhism as well as the centre for Gandhara civilization. On the other hand, Christianity came to India from the West and then gradually penetrated the Indian subcontinent.

The Sassanian period in Persia (226-646 A.D.) coincided with the Gupta period (320-569 A.D.) in India. The civilization of the Sassanid, should be named the period of the combination of the neighbouring civilizations of Iran, namely India, Rome and Greece. The Indian civilization affected Iran in some fields such as literature, medical sciences, especially in the period of king Khosru I (Anoshirvan) (531-579 A.D.).

The Sassanian monarchs maintained relations with the Gupta Empire which was based in Pataliputra. Pulakesin II, the ruler of Badami is known to have sent an embassy to Khosrau II (Parviz) in 625 A.D.

Trade flourished as Persian merchants acted as intermediaries in the flow of goods between India and Europe. One of the murals in the Ajanta caves near Aurangabad depicts a Hindu king with men in Sassanian dress. In the 6th century, sandalwood, magenta, shells, corals, pearls, gold and silver are said to have been traded between India and Persia.

Bam, in south-east Iran, was a major commercial and trading town on the famous Spice Road, a major tributary of the Silk Road that connected trade routes from India through Iran to Central Asia and China.

Kushana and Gandhara art consisted of Parthian and east Iranian elements. Sassanian motifs are also visible in Gupta art. On the other side, the Indian peacock, dragons, cocks and spiral creepers adorn Sassanian monuments. The tiles of the Harvan monastery near Srinagar have Sassanian-influenced decorations, signifying the extent of Sassanian influence in the Kashmir valley.
According to the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi (11th century A.D.), the 5th century Sassanian king Bahram V requested Indian king Shangol to select 12,000 "gypsies", or Indian musicians, and introduced them to Persia. These gypsies are believed to be the ancestors of the Persian gypsies. They propagated Indian music and dancing in Persia, and may have travelled further west to Europe in the next four to five hundred years. It is possible that these "gypsies" are the ancestors of the modern Roman people in Europe. It is also believed that Bahram visited India in the 5th century A.D. Persian poet Hakim Nizami Ganjavi has alluded to the Indian wife of king Bahram in his famous work ‘Haft Paikar’ (seven figures) indicating instances of inter-marriage.  

During the reign of the Sassanian king Khosrau I (531-579 A.D.), the game of chess (‘Chaturanga’ in India) is believed to have been introduced to Persia (where it was known as ‘Shatranj’). Later, when Persia was conquered by the Arabs, the game quickly spread all over the Middle East and then to Europe. The original game was played on 64 squares (astapada) with a king piece and pieces of four other types, corresponding to the corps of the ancient Indian armies – an elephant (rook), a horse (knight), a chariot or ship (bishop) and four footmen (pawns). Under Khosrau, Jundishpur was developed as a leading centre of Persian medicine, in which the Indian Ayurvedic system was synchronized with the Greek system propagated there by the Nestorian Christians. Burzuya, the physician to Khosrau, was sent to India to bring back works on medicine and searched for the so-called "elixir of life". Burzuya on his return is said to have brought stories of the ‘Panchatantra’ with him. The Panchatantra is an ancient collection of Indian fables, and it was translated from Sanskrit to Pahlavi by Burzuya, who called it Kalila-va-Demna. Also in the field of medicine, the Charaka Samhita, the famous Indian medical text by the physician Charaka was translated to Persian and then to Arabic in the 7th century. In the field of astronomy, an early Pahlavi book Zik-i-Shatro Ayar, which was an astronomical work based on Indian texts was translated into Arabic by Al-Tamimi. 

After the suppression of Sassanian dynasty that is to say the end of the government of Yazdger III the last king of this dynasty, the formal religion which
was Zoroastrian was replaced with Islam. Those who immigrated to India after the domination of Arab on Persia were princes and well to do members of high class family.\textsuperscript{18}

1.2 Chapter –plan:

The purpose of this study is to explain in details the above-mentioned relationship between Iran and India in ancient times, especially in the Sassanian period.

The \textit{chapter-plan} of the thesis is as follows:

\textbf{Chapter I:} Introduction of the research topic, statement of purpose, scope and importance of the study, discussion of the primary sources.

\textbf{Chapter II:} This chapter will review the earliest phase of Indo-Iranian relationship. The Indo-Iranian relationship could be traced back to the tribal phase. The archaeological evidence also indicated the Indo-Iranian connection during the Age of Harappan civilization. The relationship continued in the Vedic phase also. The similarities between Sanskrit and Avesta and Pahlavi languages and interconnections between the Rig- Veda and Avesta are historically significant. The chapter will discuss all these aspects.

\textbf{Chapter III:} This chapter will review the developments during the Achaemenian Era (549 B.C. - 312 B.C.). In the 6\textsuperscript{th} century B.C., the Iranian empire of Cyrus and Darius expanded to north-western regions of India and included Sindh province and a part of western Punjab. Darius divided the Empire into 20 provinces (‘Shahrban ‘) or ‘Satrap’ and ordered all provinces to pay a definite amount to the royal treasury, a third of which should have been provided from India. This phase was very significant due to the cultural interactions. It is a known fact that many constructions in Ashokan period showed the Iranian influence. The chapter will discuss at length all these aspects.

\textbf{Chapter IV:} This chapter will review the developments during the era of Parthian (Ashkanian) (Arsacides) (250 B.C. – 226 A.D.) dynasty in Iran to which
belonged the rulers such as Ashk(Arsac)I, Ashk II, Mehrdad I. This phase, contemporary to Mauryan and post-Mauryan/Kushan periods in India, is culturally very significant. It witnessed the fusion of Hellenic, Iranian and Buddhist arts. There was also the exchange of religious ideas as indicated by Kanishka’s coins. The chapter will analyse all these aspects.

**Chapter V:** This chapter will review the developments during a very important phase known as Era of Sassanid dynasty. The political, commercial and cultural relationship between India and Iran continued and was strengthened during this phase. A number of sources are available for the study of this period. The pre-Islamic phase of Iranian civilization came to an end with the Sassanids. It was followed by the rise of Islam and migrations of Zoroastrians to India. All these developments will be analysed in the fifth chapter.

**Chapter VI:** This will be a concluding chapter giving the summary and research findings. This chapter will be followed by *Bibliography.*

**1.3 Importance of the study:**

Iran and India have emerged high in the realms of history, as the two of the culturally richest and the oldest civilizations. The two countries have had relations with one another since a long time. The origin of the two nations have been concurrent and are traced to the Aryans. Based on this, one can find abundance of similarities in customs, traditions, languages and other behavioural forms.

With the advent of social and political changes and the loss of joint geographical borders between the two countries, relations between the two nations reduced drastically. Today at the beginning of the third millennium (A.D.) and with the endorsement by the U.N.O. of the viewpoints of His Excellency Mr. Sayed Mohammad Khatami, the former President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, expressed in his “Dialogue among Civilizations”, the cultural studies in the universal expanse has received added importance.19
Man has realized that he should lead a peaceful life along with one another and the basic requirements for that kind of living are the proper recognition and understanding of one another. And to achieve this, the educated class and the scholars of the world should venture upon uninterrupted dialogues and detailed discussions based upon irrefutable documents and to present their findings to the interested sections at such gatherings.

1.4 Research Methodology:

The general research methodology in history has been used for the research with special emphasis on the following:
1. Search for and critical examination of source materials mainly available at/in archaeological sites, museums, archives and libraries (Heuristics and Hermeneutics).
2. Interdisciplinary analysis wherever possible.
3. Comparative study of India and Iran.

1.5 Discussion of the primary sources

A variety of primary sources are available in archives, museums and libraries. Along with these sources, the secondary sources such as related books and articles published in Iran, India and abroad will also be used. Some of the important sources are listed below:

5.1 Iranian (Persian) primary sources
5.2 Indian primary sources

5.1 Iranian (Persian) primary sources

5.1.1 Written spiritual heritage
5.1.2 Inscriptions and ancient works
5.1.3 Iranian and non-Iranian primary books
5.1.1 Written spiritual heritage

5.1.1.1 Avesta

The Avesta is the primary collection of sacred texts of Zoroastrianism. Although some of the texts are very old, the term Avesta itself only dates to the second century A.D. The term's etymological roots are the middle Persian Abestāg, old Persian Upastāvaka, "Praise [of God]."

The texts of the Avesta were collated over several hundred years. The most important portion, the Gathas, in Gathic Avestan, is the hymns thought to have been composed by Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) himself, and date linguistically to around 1000 B.C. The liturgical texts of the Yasna, which includes the Gathas, is partially in Older and partially in Younger Avestan. The oldest portions may be older than the Gathas, later adapted to closely follow the doctrines of Zoroaster. The hymns of the Yasht, which are also attributed to Zoroaster but were almost certainly not composed by the prophet, are in Younger Avestan and thought to date to the Achaemenid era (648–330 B.C.). The Vendidad, which is also in Younger Avestan, was probably composed even later, during the Parthian era (141 B.C. - 224 A.D.). The Visperad contains the youngest portion of the Avesta, which are in middle Persian and date to Sassanid times (226-651 A.D.).

Early transmission

Some Avesta texts are thought to have been transmitted orally for centuries before they found written form. The Book of Arda Viraf, a work composed in the 3rd or 4th century A.D., suggests that the Gathas and some other texts that were incorporated into the Avesta had previously existed in the palace library of the Achaemenid kings (648–330 B.C.). According to the Shatroiha-i Airan, the palace library was lost in a fire caused by the troops of Alexander the Great. However, neither assertion can be confirmed since the texts, if they existed, have been lost.

Nonetheless, Rasmus Christian Rask concluded that the texts must indeed be the remnants of a much larger literature, as Pliny the Elder had suggested in his Naturalis...
Historian, where he describes one Hermippus of Smyrna having "interpreted two million verses of Zoroaster" in the 3rd century B.C. As Peter Clark in ‘Zoroastrianism An Introduction to an Ancient Faith’ points out, it is unlikely that the Gathas and older Yasna texts would have retained their old-language qualities if they had only been orally transmitted.

According to the Dēnkard, a semi-religious work written in the 9th century, the king Volgash (thought to be the Parthian king Vologases IV, 147–191 A.D.) attempted to have the sacred texts collected and collated. The results of this undertaking, if it occurred, have not survived.

In the 3rd century, the Sassanian emperor Ardashir I (226-241 A.D.) commanded his high priest Tonsar (or Tansar) to compile the theological texts. According to the Dēnkard, the Tonsar effort resulted in the reproduction of twenty-one volumes, called nasks, in the Avestan language (though not in the original Gathic Avestan), subdivided into 348 chapters, with approximately 3.5 million words in total.22

One final reduction took place under Shapur II (309-379 A.D.). The Avesta, as used today, is essentially the result of that revision, although important sections of the text have been lost since then, especially after the fall of the Persian empire, after which Zoroastrianism was supplanted by Islam.

European scholarship

The texts became available to European scholarship comparatively late. Abraham Anquetil-Duperron travelled to east India in 1755, and discovered the texts in Parsi communities. He published a French translation in 1771, based on a modern Persian language translation provided by a Parsi priest.

Several Avesta manuscripts were collected by Rasmus Rask on a visit to Bombay (now Mumbai) in 1820, and it was Rask’s examination of the Avestan language that first
established that the texts must indeed be the remnants of a much larger literature of sacred texts of ancient Persia and Bactria.

Rask's collection now lies in the library of the University of Copenhagen. Other manuscripts are preserved in the East India House and the British Museum in London, the Bodleian library at Oxford and at various university libraries in Paris.

The Zend

The word Zend or Zand, meaning "commentary" or "translation", refers to late middle Persian and Pazend language supplementaries in Pahlavi script. These commentaries from the early Sassanid era were not intended for use as theological texts by themselves but for religious instruction of the (by then) non-Avestan-speaking public. In contrast, the texts of the Avesta proper remained sacrosanct and continued to be recited in Avestan, which was considered a sacred language.

The use of the expression Zend-Avesta to refer to the Avesta, or the use of Zend as the name of a language or script, is relatively recent and popular mistakes. In 1759, Anquetil-Duperron reported having been told that Zend was the name of the language of the more ancient writings. In his third discourse, published in 1798, Sir William Jones mentions a conversation with a Hindu priest who told him that the script was called Zend, and the language Avesta.

The confusion then became too universal in Western scholarship to be reversed, and Zend-Avesta, although a misnomer, is still occasionally used to denote the older texts.23

Rask's seminal work, A Dissertation on the Authenticity of the Zend Language (Bombay, 1821), may have contributed to the confusion. N. L. Westergaard's Zend-Avesta or the religious books of the Zoroastrians (Copenhagen, 1852-54) only propagated the error.
Structure and content

In its present form, the Avesta is a compilation from various sources, and its different parts date from different periods and vary widely in character. The 21 nasks mirror the structure of the 21-word-long Ahuna Vairya prayer: each of the three lines of the prayer consists of seven words. Correspondingly, the nasks are divided into three groups, of seven volumes per group. Originally, each volume had a word of the prayer as its name, which so marked a volume’s position relative to the other volumes. Only about a quarter of the text from the nasks has survived until today.

The contents of the Avesta, that is, the contents of the nasks supplemented by other (semi-)theological texts, are generally divided into five categories. These divisions are topical (even though the organization of the nasks is not) and are by no means fixed or canonical. Some scholars prefer to place the five categories in two groups, the one liturgical, and the other general.

The texts are preserved in two languages: the more ancient in the Avestan language, the oldest attested Indo-Iranian language still very closely related to Sanskrit and the younger texts in Middle Persian with Pahlavi script.

5.1.1.2 The Yasna

The Yasna (middle Persian yazišn "worship, oblations", cognate with Sanskrit yajña), is the primary liturgical collection. It consists of 72 sections called the Ha-Iti or Ha. The 72 threads of lamb’s wool in the Kusti, the sacred thread worn by Zoroastrians, represent these sections. The Yasna includes all of the 21st nask (the seventh and last volume in the third and last group), which in turn includes the Gathas, the oldest and most sacred portion of the Avesta,24 and believed to have been composed by Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) himself. The Gathas are structurally interrupted by the Yasna Haptanghāiti ("seven-chapter Yasna"), which makes up chapters 35-42 of the Yasna and is almost as old as the Gathas, consists of prayers and hymns in honour of the Supreme Deity, Ahura Mazda, the Angels, Fire, Water, and Earth. The structure of the Yasna, though handed
down in prose, may once have been metrical. Six of the nasks from the first group of nasks, which are commentaries on the Gathas, also belong to the Yasna category.

5.1.1.3 The Visparad

The Visparad (middle Persian vîspe Ratavo, "all lords") is a collection of supplements to the Yasna. The Visparad is subdivided into 23 karda (sections, singular: kardo), which deal with a description of the angels, and the worship thereof. Faravahar, believed to be a depiction of a Fravashi, as mentioned in the Yasna, Yashts and Vendidad.

5.1.1.4 The Yasts

The Yašts (yešti, "worship by praise"), of which there are twenty-four, are hymns in honour of various divinities, many of whom also have days of the month dedicated to them (see Zoroastrian calendar). The hymns are an important source of Persian mythology, and were incorporated by Ferdowsi, with due acknowledgement, in his Shahnameh epic. Among the divinities to whom special Yašts are devoted we find Ardvi Sura, the goddess of waters; Tishtrya, the star Sirius; Mithra, the divinity of light and truth; Fravaši, the guardian spirits; Verethragna, the genius of victory; and the Kavaya Hvarenah, "kingly glory", the divine light illuminating the ancient kings. The Yašts are for the most part metrical in structure, and some hymns show considerable poetic merit, an attribute that is not common in the Avesta texts. The older Hôm Yašt is part of the Yasna and is not counted among the twenty-four Yašts.

5.1.1.5 The Vendidad

The Vendidad (or Vidēdvāt, a corruption of Avestan Vî-Daēvō-Dāta, "Given Against the Demons") is an enumeration of various manifestations of evil spirits, and ways to confound them. The Vendidad includes all of the 19th nask, which is the only nask that has survived in its entirety. The text consists of 22 Fargards, fragments arranged as discussions between Ahura Mazda and Zoroaster. The first fargard is a dualistic account of creation, followed by the description of a destructive winter on the lines of the
deluge of mythology. The second fargard recounts the legend of Yima (Jamshid). The remaining fargards deal primarily with hygiene (care of the dead in particular) [fargard 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 19] as well as disease and spells to fight it [7, 10, 11, 13, 20, 21, 22]. Fargards 4 and 15 discuss the dignity of wealth and charity, of marriage and of physical effort, and the indignity of unacceptable social behaviour such as assault and breach of contract, and specify the penances required to atone for violations thereof. The Vendidad is an ecclesiastical code, not a liturgical manual, and there is a degree of moral relativism apparent in the codes of conduct. The Vendidad's different parts vary widely in character and in age. Some parts may be comparatively recent in origin although the greater part is very old. 27

Other materials

All materials in the Avesta that is not already present in one of the other four categories fall into the fifth category. This category does not have a name, and is generally considered to include shorter texts and prayers (as included in the Khordeh Avesta), the five Nyaishes (worship and praise of the Sun, Moon, Mithra, Water, and Fire), the Sirozeh and the Afringans (blessings). 28

5.1.1.6 The Khordeh Avesta

The Khordeh Avesta, literally meaning abridged Avesta, or a selection of Avesta prayers, is a selection of texts from the Yasna, Visparad and Yasht, as well as minor texts and brief prayers, such as the five Nyaishes. The collection, taken together, is considered the prayer book for general daily use. Translation and interpretation of Khordeh Avesta to Persian language for the first time was carried out by Master Poor David and was published in the year 1931 in Bombay.

Other Zoroastrian religious texts

Although the Avesta is by far the most important of the Zoroastrian theological texts, other works, in both middle and modern Persian, are also included in the sacred canon. The most notable among the early middle Persian texts are the Dēnkard ("Acts of Religion"), dating from the 9th century; Bundahishn, ("Original Creation"), finished in
the 11th or 12th century, but containing older material such as the navaks; the Mainog-i-Khirad ("Spirit of Wisdom"), a religious conference on questions of faith, and the Arda Viraf Namak ("Book of Arda Viraf"), a sort of Zoroastrian Divina Commedia, which is especially important because of its account of the Persian ideas concerning the future life. Later Zoroastrian literatures in modern Persian include the Zartushtnamah ("Book of Zoroaster"), the Sad-Dar ("Hundred Doors, or Chapters"), and the Rivayats (traditional treatises).

5.1.1.7 Literature of Pahlavi

Pahlavi Literature is divided to three parts:
1. Pahlavi version (translation) of Avesta which is generally named as ‘Zend-Avesta’.
2. Pahlavi texts on religious subjects.
3. Pahlavi texts on non-religious subjects.

1. Pahlavi translations of Avesta texts

It includes several major Pahlavi texts which are translation of Avesta Texts. It includes also some Afringan, Yasht and Niyayishn.

Some major Pahlavi books of this kind are:
- Vendidad
- Afringan-i Gahanbar
- Yasna
- Haptan Yasht
- Nirangistan
- Srosh Yasht Hadokht
- Vishtasp Yasht
- Sirozak I, II
- Visperad
- Frahang-i Oim-evak
- Khurshet Nyayish
- Ahuramazd Yasht
2. Pahlavi texts on religious subjects

It includes several major Pahlavi texts about different Zoroastrian religious subjects such as cosmogony, cosmology, eschatology, creation of the world, ceremonies, rituals, Andarz, Pandnamak, Patit etc. Major 9th-century texts include the encyclopedic Denkard; Manushchihr's Dadestain-i Denig ("Religious Decisions") and Epistles; the treatises of Manushchihr's heretical brother, Zat-Sparam; and Bundahishn ("Original Creation").

Some other Pahlavi books of this kind are:

- Rivayat accompanying
- Shikand-gumanic Vichar
- Shayast ne-shayast
- Dana-i Menog Khrat
- Arta-Viraf namak
- Jamasp namak
- Bahman yasht
- Matigan-i Yosht-i Fryano
- Matigan-i gujastak Abalish
Matigan-i mah Fravartin roz Khurdat

**Denkard**

The Dēnkard is the largest encyclopedia of Zoroastrianism. It was written in the 9th century and originally contained nine volumes, but the first two and part of the third are missing. 29

**Epistles of Manushchihr**

When High-Priest of Sirjan (near Kerman in center of Iran), Zad-Sparam told certain new precept about purification in Zoroastrianism, the unsatisfied People of Sirjan complained to his older brother, Manuschchihr, who was High-Priest of Kerman about new precepts.

Manushchihr wrote three epistles in this issue:
- Reply to the complaining people
- An expostulation with his brother
- A public decree

All three epistles severely condemned the new precepts of his younger brother, Zad-Sparam, as unlawful innovations. The first epistle is dated on March 15, 881 A.D., the third is dated June-July 881 A.D. This book contains almost 9000 words. Manushchihar is the author of another major Pahlavi book named 'Dadestan-i Denig'.

**Bundahishn**

Bundahishn is a Zoroastrian text from Persia of the 7th century which treats the nature of creation and gives a history of Persia's dynasties including the chronicling of the Arab invasions of the period.

When the sovereignty came to Yazdgird, he reigned twenty years; then the Arabs entered Iran in great numbers. Yazdgird did not contend with them in battle. He went to Khurasan and Turkistan and asked for the assistance of horses and men. They killed him there.
Yazdgird’s son went to India and brought an army and troops. He was slain before coming to Khurasan. The army and troops were destroyed and Iran remained with the Arabs. They promulgated their own laws of irreligion, dissolved the bonds of the institutions of the men of old and weakened the Mazdaean religion. They brought into use the washing, burying and eating of polluted matter. From the beginning of creation till this day no evil more grievous than this has come, since by reason of their evil deeds distress and desolation and lamentation have made their abode [in Iran]. By reason of their wicked laws and wicked faith, [there is] pestilence and want and other evils. It is stated in the Religion that there shall come an end of their accursed rule. 30

3. Pahlavi texts on non-religious subjects

It includes several major Pahlavi texts which fall within the categories of Pahlavi glossaries, stories, poems, Geography etc.

Some major Pahlavi books of this kind are:
Matigan-i Hazar Datistan (Judicial code)
Cities in the land of Iran
Karnamak-i Artaxshir-i Papakan
Vizarishn- i Chatrang ud nahishn-i new Ardashir (invent of chess)
Yatkar-i Zariran
Drakht-i Asurig
Khusro-i Kavatan and his Page
Frahang-i Pahlavig
Wonders of the land of Sagastan
Forms of Epistles

We have to add several other Pahlavi books which are missed today and we are only aware of them through Arabic and Persian books where some information is written about them. Like Ayyatkar-i Anushirvan of which the Arabic translation could be found in 'Tajarob-al Omam' of 'Ibn-i Muskuye' or 'Khvatay Namak' that is missed completely. 31
Matigan-i Hazar Datistan

The Matigan-i Hazar Datistan was the judicial code of the Magistan, the imperial Parliament of the Arsacid Dynasty of the Parthian Empire (150 B.C.–226 A.D.) and, for a while, of the Sassanid Empire (226–650 A.D.). The Matigan-i Hazar Datistan was a compilation of the social, moral, civil and criminal laws of the time. Although the name suggests a thousand chapters or laws (Hazar: thousand), it is not known whether the code really had that many, and may simply mean 'a significant number'.

Karnamak-i Artaxshir-i Papakan

The Kārnāmag î Ardashîr î Babagân or Book of the Deeds of Ardashir, Son of Babag (in Persian: کارنامگ اردشیر پاپکان), is a mythological Pahlavi (Middle Persian) tale written sometime during the Sassanid Empire of Persia (Iran). The book tells of the epic adventures of Ardashir, the founder of the Sassanid Empire. The story relates how Papag dreamed that his pastor, Sassan, was born Ardashir. When Ardashir was born he spent his childhood in the court of Ardavan of Parthia and then ran away with a 'kaniz' (servant) of Ardavan, the last king of the Parthian Empire. After several wars with Ardavan, Ardashir defeated and killed him and founded a new Empire and dynasty who later was named Sassanian (Sassanid) by historians, from his grandfather's name, Sassan.

Drakht-i Asurig

Drakht-i Asurig is an Iranian poem, from the Parthian (Arsacacid) era. It is framed as a dialogue between a goat and a palm tree. It is one of the oldest existing texts in Arscacacid Middle Persian, and of the few remaining examples of the Parthian language.

Frahang-i Pahlavig

Frahang-i Pahlavig is a dictionary of (mostly) Aramaic language ideograms with middle Persian translations and transliterations in Pahlavi script. The glossary is also known as the Farang-i mna-xvatay, a name derived from the first two (Aramaic) words of the first entry. The Frahang-i Pahlavig should not be confused with the Frahang-i Oimevak, which is a glossary of Avestan language terms.
The glossary is believed to have been developed to assist Sassanid era (226-650 A.D) court officials in their duties, which occasionally required an understanding of the terms used in the documents of the previous Achaemenid (648–330 B.C.) and Arsacid (253 B.C.-226 A.D.) dynasties. The Achaemenids had maintained their records in Imperial Aramaic, while the Arsacids had used both Aramaic and middle Persian.

The oldest surviving example of a Frahang-like text is a one-page fragment that is believed to date to the 9th or 10th century A.D.. Several complete manuscripts exist in Bombay, Oxford, Paris and Copenhagen, but the oldest of these dates to the 15th century.

In the earliest edition made available to European scholarship, the Frahang is arranged serially, that is, according to the shape of the Aramaic characters. That edition, obtained by Abraham Anquetil-Duperron in the mid-1700s, is today in the Bibliothèque national, Paris. In 1867, Hoshangji Jamaspji Asa and Martin Haug published a transcript of a manuscript that was arranged thematically by chapter.34

Chatranga Namak or book of chess

The book states that Divsharam, the king of India sent Chess game with beautiful and valuable gift for Anoushirvan and demanded for his statement about game. The brilliant talent Minister of Anoushirvan named Bozorgmehr found its mystery and then discovered Backgammon (Takhteh Nard) and sent with same conditions to King of India and after 40 days, since they could not solve the mystery, then holds to pay relative levies.35

5.1.2 Inscription and Ancient Works
5.1.2.1 Works in the Achaemenids
1. Aryan Ramneh Inscription (640-590 B.C.)
2. Arsham Inscription (590 -559 B.C.)
3. Inscription of the Great Cyrus (559 -530 B.C.)
4. Inscription of the Great Darius (522-485 B.C.)
5. Achaemenid Royal Inscriptions: empire list from Susa
6. An inscription of Darius the Great from Rumania
7. Inscription of Darius on the Rock of Behistun
8. Darius' Suez Inscriptions
9. Darius’ building inscription from Susa
10. Darius the Great: building inscription from Persepolis
11. Xerxes Inscription (486 -465 B.C.)
12. Artaxerxes I Inscription (465-425 B.C.)

5.1.2.2 Works in Parthian (Arsacides)
1. Crockery inscription in the city of Nesa
2. Tile and Crockery Containers of Ancient Marv.
3. Inscription of the Blash V
4. Kal Jangal Birjand stone Inscription
5. Arsacides Coins and Seals

5.1.2.3 Works of the Sassanids
1. Artaxerxes Babakan Stone Inscription
2. Abnon Stone Inscription
3. Inscription of Shahpour I
4. Inscription of Shahpour II
5. Inscription of Kertir Mobedan in Sassanid’s era (Head of Holy Men)
6. Nersi Inscription (276-293 A.D.)
7. Solouk Inscription
8. Inscription of Mehr Nersi
9. Sassanids Coins

On coins of this period, the image of kings in front side and image of fire place and fire flame were observed. In some coins image of two holy persons are standing along side of both holy fire place and in some coins, terms of Afzoun and Far depicted and back of all coins name of Azar or Fire or name of king were entered. These coins are valuable for recognition of all Sassanid kings and about ancient history.
5.1.3 Iranian (Persian) and non-Iranian Written sources

5.1.3.1 Shahnameh Ferdowsi:

Hakim Abol-Ghasem Ferdowsi Toosi (940-1020 A.D.) was born in the Iranian province of Khorasan, in a village near Tus (Baj). He composed ‘The Shâhnâme’ (Persian: شاهنامه Šāhnāmah - "The Book of Kings" or "The Epic of Kings"; alternative spellings are Shahnama, Shahnameh, Shahname, Shah Nama, etc.) . The Shahnameh or The Epic of Kings is one of the definite classics of the world. It tells heroic tales of ancient Persia. The contents and the poet's style in describing the events take the reader back to the ancient times and make him/her sense and feel the events. Ferdowsi worked for thirty years to finish this masterpiece. 38

An important feature of this work is that during the period that Arabic language was known as the main language of science and literature, Ferdowsi used only Persian in his masterpiece. As Ferdowsi himself says: “I suffered during these thirty years, but I - the Ajam - have revived the Persian language; I shall not die since I am alive again, as I have spread the seeds of this language ...”39

There is an ongoing controversy among scholars about the sources of the Shâhnameh. Ferdowsi's epic is probably based mainly on an earlier prose version which itself was a compilation of old Iranian stories and historical facts and fables. However, there is without any doubt also a strong influence of oral literature, since the style of the Shahnameh shows characteristics of both written and oral literature.

Some of the characters of the Epic are of Indo-Iranian heritage, and are mentioned in sources as old as the ancient Avesta. The Shâhnameh itself was written in Pahlavi Persian, which at the time was looking towards a bleak end. 40

The Shâhnameh of Ferdowsi, an epic poem of over 60,000 couplets, is based mainly on a prose work of the same name compiled in the poet's earlier life in his native Tus. This prose Shâhnameh was in turn and for the most part the translation of a Pahlavi work, a compilation of the history of the kings and heroes of Iran from mythical times
down to the reign of Khosrau II (590-628 A.D.), but it also contains additional material continuing the story to the overthrow of the Sassanids by the Arabs in the middle of the 7th century. The first to undertake the versification of this chronicle of pre-Islamic and legendary Persia was Daqīqī-e Balkhī, a poet at the court of the Samanids, who came to a violent end after completing only 1000 verses. These verses, which deal with the rise of the prophet Zoroaster, were afterwards incorporated by Ferdowsi, with due acknowledgements, in his own poem.

As Jalal Khaleqi Motlaq, a well-known scholar of the Shahnameh, has said in one of his essays about Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, “the Khudaynamehs, compiled or written by the historians and the Zoroastrian priests (mobads) in the time of the Sassanian dynasty, consisted mainly of historical records about the kings and of dry reports of wars, with some differences, such as Keyumars (Gayumarth) being introduced by the Zoroastrian priests as the first man (Adam) and by the court historians as the first king.” 41

5.1.3.2 Al-Biruni
Abu Rayhan Biruni (Persian: ابوزینبکانیبورعیان; Arabic: أبو يمن بروني) (September 15, 973–December 13, 1048 A.D.) was a Persian mathematician, physicist, scholar, encyclopedist, philosopher, astronomer, astrologer, traveller, historian, pharmacist, and teacher, who contributed greatly to the fields of mathematics, philosophy, medicine, and science. Al-Biruni crater, on the Moon, is named after him. He was the first Muslim scholar to study India and Brahminical tradition.

He was born in Khwarazm (formerly north-eastern part of the Persian Samanid dynasty) presently in Khiva, Uzbekistan. He studied mathematics and astronomy under Abu Nasr Mansur.

He was a colleague of the fellow Persian Muslim philosopher and physician Ibn Sina, the historian, philosopher and ethicist Ibn Miskawayh, in a university and science centre established by prince Abu Al Abbas Ma'mun Khawarazmshah. He also travelled to
South Asia with Mahmud of Ghazni who also became his patron, and accompanied him on his campaigns in India (in 1030 A.D.), learning Indian languages, and studying the religion and philosophy of its people. There, he also wrote his Ta'rikh al-Hind ("Chronicles of India"). Biruni knew the Greek language, the Sanskrit language and possibly Syriac and Berber. He wrote his books in Persian and Arabic, but his native language was Khwarezmian. Biruni's works were more than 120.\(^{42}\)

**Some of his works include:**

1. Critical study of India, *Tahghiqhe Mal Hind* (Arabic تحقیق ما للهند من مقولہ معقولة في العقل أم مرذولة) - a compendium of India's religion and philosophy
2. The Remaining Signs of Past Centuries (Arabic الآثار الباقیة عن القرون الخالیة) - a comparative study of calendars of different cultures and civilizations, interlaced with mathematical, astronomical, and historical information.
3. The Mas'udi Canon (Persian قانون مسعودي) - a book about Astronomy, Geography and Engineering, named after Mas'ud, son of Mahmud of Ghazni, to whom he dedicated
4. Understanding Astrology (Arabic التفهیم لصناعة التنجیم) - a question and answer style book about mathematics and astronomy, in Arabic and Persian
5. Pharmacy - about drugs and medicines
6. History of Khawarazm

5.1.3.3 Fa-Hien (Fahien): The travelers like Fahien, Hiuen Tsang and Itsing give us a lot of useful information. These travelers “made the long and toilsome pilgrimage to the scenes of the Master’s life and labour” and left valuable accounts about what they saw. Fa-Hein Traveled in India and Ceylon in (399–414 A.D.). He was a Chines Buddhist monk and historian. He was the author of ‘A Record of Buddhist kingdoms’.

5.1.3.4 Ebne Asir: He was born in 1177 A.D. (555 A.H) in an Island near to Tigris river in border of Iran and Iraq and deceased in 1252 A.D. (630 A.H.). His famous work is Alkamelol-Fi- Tarikh or Tarikh- Kamel written in Arabic language and talks about world events from beginning to creation up to 1250 A.D. (628 A.H.). All his writing is about
ancient Iran about stories and specially about Sassanid dynasty. In 1815 A.D, his book was republished in London by Thornberg.

5.1.3.5 Ebne Nadim: He was born in 919 A.D (297 A.H) in Baghdad. His famous work is Al- Feherest and his book is about list of published books up to his time. Alfehrest is only Islamic book tell in details about different written scripts in Iran before Islam and the writer also depicts some of them.

5.1.3.6 Ebne Gheytabeh: 835-898 A.D” (213-276 A.H). He was Iranian and. His book named “Oyoun Al akhbar and Adabol Al kateb val maref” present sufficient information about victory of Arabs over Iran and lands of Yemen, Sham and Heyreh.

5.1.3.7 Ebne Vazeh: Known as Yaghoubi. He was Iranian from Isfahan and deceased in 906 A.D (284 A.H.). His work was published in two volumes named history of Yaghoubi about commander of Syria in Ashour, Babel, Indian, Roman and Greece and specially Iranian in ancient period. His data about division made by Sassanid dynasty is important.

5.1.3.8 Hamzeh Esfahani: He was born in 892 A.D.( 270 A.H.) in Isfahan. His historical work is “Saniol -Al Molouk- Al Arz -Val Anbia” and includes ten chapters. First chapter is about history of Iran before Islam and describes complete details of each Sassanid kings.

5.1.3.9 Tabari: The History of the Prophets and Kings (Arabic: تاريخ الرسل والملوك Tarikh al-Rusul Va- Al-Muluk, popularly Tarikh al-Tabari) is a history by Persian author and historian Ibn Jarir al-Tabari (838–923) from the Creation to A.D. 915, and is renowned for its detail and accuracy concerning Arab and Muslim history. An English translation in thirty-nine volumes, published by the State University of New York Press from 1988 through 1998.

The main purpose of Tabari was to write about all traditions which he could lay his hands on, without deeming it necessary to express any opinion on their value or
reliability. Thus one easily perceives that some of his traditions are less reliable than some others. We might perhaps excuse his use of a method that would not be acceptable today. At least he has provided others with a great deal of information. A careful scholar would be able to distinguish the sound traditions from the fabricated ones by studying the Isnad. 48

5.1.3.10 Gordizi: He was born in first half of 5th century. His work named Zinol Akhbar or history of Gordizi which published in 1064A.D. (442 A.H.) and includes chapters of Torkan, India and general history of ancient Iranian kings. The book was published by Zakhav in 1878. 49

5.1.3.11 Masoudi: He was born in third century in Baghdad. He travelled to Iran and India in 925A.D. (303 A.H.). He was one of the rare Islamic historians who noticed religion of other traditions including Christian, Indian and Jewish. He has written more than 30 volumes of books named Moravejol Zahab, Maadenol Johar as a historical and geographical book about different nations and lands. Moravejol zahab after the History of Tabari is one of the most important source of Iranian History. The book was published in 1893 by efforts of Dakhouyeh.

5.1.3.12 Soalebi: His book named Ghorarol Al Akhbar- Moloukol Al Fars 1107-1043A.D.(385-421 A.H.) is important. Most of his books are about Iranian national stories.

5.1.3.13 Herodotus: of Halicarnassus was a Dorian Greek historian who lived in the 5th century B.C. (484 –425 B.C.) and is regarded as the “father of history”. He is almost exclusively known for writing “The Histories”, a collection of inquiries about the places and peoples he encountered during his wide-ranging travels around the Mediterranean. The theme for this work was the conflict between the ancient Greeks and the Persians or 'Medes'. The Histories were divided by later editors into nine books.
Herodotus has passed on to us a large amount of the information concerning part of the world that was current in his own day. For example, he reports that the annual flooding of the Nile was said to be the result of melting snows far to the south, and comments that he cannot understand how there can be snow in Africa, the hottest part of the known world. Of course, we know that this is, in fact, not the actual cause; but if it were not for Herodotus' method of comparing all theories known to him, we might never have discovered that such hydrological speculation existed in ancient Greece. He also passes on reports from Phoenician sailors that, while circumnavigating Africa, they 'saw the sun on the right side while sailing westwards'. Thanks to this brief mention, which is almost an afterthought, modern scholars have been able to establish that Africa was indeed circumnavigated by ancient seafarers—for this is precisely where the sun ought to have been.

The first six books deal broadly with the growth of the Persian Empire. The tale begins with an account of the first 'western' monarch to enter into conflict with a 'eastern' people—Croesus of Lydia attacked the Greek city-states of Ionia, and then (misinterpreting a cryptic oracle), also attacked the Persians. Croesus was defeated by Cyrus the Great, founder of the Persian Empire, and Lydia became a Persian province. The sixth book describes the very first Persian incursion into Greece, an attack upon those who aided the Ionians and a quest for retribution following the attack upon Sardis, which ended with the defeat of the Persians in 490 B.C. at the battle of Marathon, near Athens.

The last three books describe the attempt of the Persian king Xerxes to avenge the Persian defeat at Marathon and to finally absorb Greece into the Empire. The Histories end in the year 479 B.C., with the Persian invaders having suffered both a crushing naval defeat at Salamis, and near annihilation of their ground forces at Plataea. The Persian Empire thus receded to the Aegean coastline of Asia Minor, still threatening but much chastened.
5. 1.3.14 Xenophon: (427–355 B.C.), son of Gryllus, of the deme Erchia of Athens, was a soldier, mercenary and an admirer of Socrates and is known for his writings on the history of his own times, the sayings of Socrates, and the life of Greece. Xenophon participated in the expedition led by Cyrus the Younger against his older brother, the emperor Artaxerxes II of Persia, in 401 B.C. In his advance against the Persian king, Cyrus used many Greek mercenaries left unemployed by the cessation of the Peloponnesian War. Xenophon's record of the entire expedition against the Persians and the journey home was titled Anabasis ("The Expedition" or "The March Up Country"). It is worth noting that the Anabasis was used as a field guide by Alexander the Great during the early phases of his expedition into Persia.

5.1.3.15 Ctesias: Ctesias of Cnidus (in Caria), was a Greek physician and historian, who flourished in the 4th century B.C. In early life he was physician to Artaxerxes Mnemon, whom he accompanied in 401 B.C. on his expedition against his brother Cyrus the Younger. Ctesias was the author of treatises on rivers, and on the Persian revenues, of an account of India (which is of value as recording the beliefs of the Persians about India), and of a history of Assyria and Persia in 23 books, called Persica, written in opposition to Herodotus in the Ionic dialect, and professedly founded on the Persian royal archives.

The first six books treated the history of Assyria and Babylon to the foundation of the Persian Empire; the remaining seventeen went down to the year 398 B.C. Of the two histories we possess abridgments by Photius, and fragments are preserved in Athenaeus, Plutarch and especially Diodorus Siculus, whose second book is mainly from Ctesias. As to the worth of the Persica there has been much controversy, both in ancient and modern times. Although many ancient authorities valued it highly, and used it to discredit Herodotus, many people consider Ctesias's account of little historical value. People argue that this is due to the fact that Ctesias's account of the Assyrian kings does not reconcile with the cuneiform evidence. The satirist Lucian thought so little of Ctesias' historical reliability that in his satirical “A True Story” he places Ctesias on the island where the evils were punished. Lucian wrote that "The people who suffered the greatest torment
were those who had told lies when they were alive and written mendacious histories; among them were Ctesias of Cnidos, Herodotus, and many others.”

5.1.3.16 Vincent: (1739-1815 A.D.) (The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea):

He talked about what was said by Megastens in his book named ‘Ashoka’. His description is same as painting curtain about Chandara Goupta, grand father of Ashouka and is very important about history of India.

Vincent here gives an account of the modes of navigation practiced by the ancients. In a detailed analysis of the two works, he writes first about the voyage taken by Nearchus, strongly questioning the authenticity of several points. Nearchus, the principal officer in Alexander the Great's army, made the journey when retreating from India, sailing from the head of the Persian Gulf to the Isthmus of Suez, circumnavigating Arabia. While the journey surely took place, Vincent systematically corrects errors and points out impossibilities in the descriptions using his current scientific and geographical knowledge. Of interest are his scientific discussions of the early use of the compass, the ships used by the early sailors, and the measurement of distances. He describes the natives inhabiting the coasts, their ignorance and barbarism, their dress and mode of life.

He writes about whales and turtles, foods of the sea and how homes were built from whale bones. The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea is a work of uncertain date and authorship, which describes the coasts of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Vincent details these trade routes, illustrating the dangers of the various ports. He focuses on the commerce of the region, including the imports and exports such as ivory and unmilled cloth, and how the goods were conveyed to ships in boats and rafts where there were no ports. Vincent (1739-1815), well known distinguished classical scholar, served as Dean of Westminster, and later as President of Sion College. His major area of interest was ancient geography, and he was the first to translate Arrian's work into English. 
5.2 First Hand Indian Sources

5.2.1 Literary Sources

With regard to the non-familiarity of the researcher with Sanskrit and Indian languages, he is forced to use translations in Persian and English languages as first hand Indians sources. But to point out these sources also is important.

5.2.1.1 Vedas: Vedas include Rigveda, Samveda, Yajurveda and Atharveda. Indians know these books as holy books and believe that Brahma gifted it to Rishin (sages, poets) and were meant for memorization. Vedas were preserved for many centuries through oral tradition. After the development of the script, they were given the written form. Max Muller, a German scientist and researcher knows it as an initial words and statement that Aryan people talk about it. Professor Venitz also knows that according to Vedas, the commencement of literature returns to 2500 or 2000 year B.C. Vedas are from roots of ‘Vid’ known as ‘to learn’ and in fact is a set of valuable knowledge and information that combines poems, mottos, sacrifice ceremonies, magic and beautiful statements about nature. Rig Veda is the most ancient and initial Vedic book. This book talks about human thinking and beautification of nature and its beauty.  

5.2.1.2 Upanishads: Most of the contents are in verse and contain information of poems. In these books, we can find that initial instructors are mystic people and affiliated to the commander of that time. Upanishad is the last and major part of Vedic literature. The Upanishad is important ploilosopical texts.

5.2.1.3 Ramayana: Ramayana includes is the oldest world epic and in this regard known as Adi Kavya. Written by sage Valmiki, it narrates the story of king Rama. Rama`s ultimate victory symbolizes the triumph of truth and Goodness in the world.

5.2.1.4 Mahabharata - Epic Book: This book is referred to by this name due to its volume and size and full knowledge of education, literature and life. Mahabharata includes 100,000 verses and talks about social, religious and ethical position of ancient India. It
narrates the story of Pandavas and Kauravas and depicts the victory of truth and Goodness over the evil.

5.2.1.5 **Puranas:** According to Dr. Winternitz, the Puranas are valuable to the historian and to the antiquarian as a source of political history on account of their genealogies, even though they can only be used with great caution and careful discrimination. The Puranas can also be used for the purpose of building up the history of ancient Indian geography. In them, we come across the names of many cities which existed in those times.\(^{55}\) The Puranas are full of Indian mythological stories.

5.2.1.6 **The Buddhist Literature:** The Buddhist Literature gives a lot of information regarding the period which immediately preceded the accession of Bimbisara. The Buddhist literature is found in two languages, viz., Pali and Sanskrit. \(^{56}\)

5.2.1.7 **Jain Literature:** Jain Literature also contains a lot of historical information.

5.2.1.8 **The Mudrarakshas of Vishaka Datta:** This play gives the story of Chandragupta Maurya and Chanakya. It explains how the Nanda kings were overthrown and Chandragupta became the king of Magadha. \(^{57}\) It is a literary source which is to be used with caution.

5.2.2 **Archaeology**

Archaeology has contributed a lot to the history of ancient India and its importance cannot be over-emphasized.

5.2.3 **Inscriptions**

Under the heading of archeology, we may discuss the information derived from inscription, numismatics and monuments. Some specimens of magical inscriptions are found in the Indus seals which were used as amulets and contained magical formulae on them. Religious and didactic inscriptions deal with religious and moral matters. The
inscriptions of Asoka are the best specimen of the religious and didactic inscriptions. The edicts of Asoka are appropriately called Dhamma-Lipi. 58

5.2.4 Numismatics

A study of the Indian coins enlightens us a great deal regarding the history of ancient India. Coins help us to build up the history of the country in many ways. 59

5.2.5 Monuments

The ancient monuments like building, statues of stones or metals, give us a lot of useful and reliable information. The excavations of the sites of the old towns like Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Taxila etc., have given us a lot of information hitherto unknown and changed our conception of the history of ancient India. 60

5.2.6 Foreign Accounts

We get a lot of useful information from the writing of foreigners. Herodotus and Ctesias got their information through the Persian sources. Herodotus in his “Histories” gives us much information about the Persian and Greek Wars and Indo-Persian relations. He also tells us about the political condition of North-West India in his time. The Greek author of the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea made a voyage to the Indian coast about 80 A.D. and he has left to us a record of its ports, harbours and merchandise. Ptolemy, in second century A.D. and Pliny in First century A.D. give us information about India. Chinese travellers like Fahien, Hiuen Tsang and Itsing and the Iranian Author, Alberuni visited India and have given us useful information. 61
Notes and References


2. There is no unanimity of opinions among the scholars regarding the Dravidians, Aryans and their conflict. It is a matter of debates. Considering the theme and scope of the present thesis no attempt has been made to go into the details of those debates / controversies.


4. There is a controversy regarding the origin of Aryans. If one decides to go into the details of that controversy, a separate chapter will be required for that, which is not the purpose of the present research. A recent view regarding that controversy could be summed up in Romila Thapar’s words: “The Aryan is identified now not by race but by language.”

-Romila Thapar (ed.), Recent Perspectives of Early Indian History, Bombay, 1995, p. 88.

5. Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India, London, 1992, p. 120.


8. Ibid.


12. A L Basham, The Wonder that was India, New Delhi, 1983, p.49.


15. Tara Chand, op.cit., p.10.


56. Ibid., p.13.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid., p. 16.
59. Ibid., 18.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid., p. 20.