CHAPTER-IV

CAVALRY

Cavalry had always been an important wing of army not only among the Muslims but also among the Hindu kings of India.¹ The Rajput rulers did not neglect the mobile capacity of horses and took great care to maintain a huge cavalry force. Earlier in the 7th century AD there are references to saddled horses in northern India in Harsacharit² and Kadambari³ and in Sind in Chachnamah.⁴ The use of saddle on horseback is indicative of the fact that they were made more suitable for the purpose of war.

Horse had a distinct place in four wings of army for certain functions in the war-field could only be well performed by cavalry troops. Nitivakyamrita states cavalry “The moving protection line, the rampart of the army (अश्ववलं सैन्यम् जङ्गमः प्राकार:) and advises that the task of making advance, retreat, attack, penetration and destroying the enemy’s rank could only be accomplished by cavalry.⁵ In Nitisara of Kamandaka (8th century AD) horses are stated useful in capturing the defeated enemy soldiers and to find out the directions and routes through forest tracts, to protect the supply line for provisions and for the support of allies, to follow the routed troops (of the enemy), and to perform swiftly other duties (of carrying messages and errands), to penetrate into the enemy formations and to strike down soldiers in front wing (koti) and at the

¹ The presence of horse in Indus valley civilisation is suspected, but the references to horse drawn chariots and horse sacrifices of Rigvedic Aryans clearly indicate that they used horse for domestic as well as for military purpose (P.L. Bhargava, India in the Vedic Age, p.256,260,261, R.C. Majumdar, Vedic Age, pp.18,27,356, 42.
² Harsacharita, tr. Cowell and Thomas, p.200.
³ Kadambari, tr. C.M. Ridding, pp.94, 167, 172.
⁴ Chachnamah, p.160.
⁵ “सर्वारुपं अवसर्लयम् अस्त्रकन्त पराक्रमके भंडरम् चच्चतात् तुरुप्रसंस्कारणम्।”
(Nitivakyamitra, pp.182, V.7, p.183, V.9)
rear (jaghana). In other words, due to their mobile capacity horses were able to make a swift advance and retreat in the army. *Manasollasa*, an encyclopedic work of Western Chalukya King Somesvara states “The cavalry is the key to fame, a king in possession of a strong cavalry need entertain no apprehension regarding his territory”.

Contemporary literary sources, epigraphic records and foreign accounts give picturesque statements about the position of cavalry maintained by the Rajput rulers of northern India. While praising the Gurjara-Pratiharas in this context, Arab traveller Sulaiman accounts, “The King of Juzr (Gurjara) maintained numerous forces and no other Indian king had so fine a cavalry.”

Again, the king Jayachandra of Kannauj and Prithviraja Chauhan of Ajmer are said to have a cavalry amounted to 80,000 and 70,000 respectively. While advancing against Hammir, the Chahmana King Vigraharaja is stated to have 1,00,000 horsemen. Similarly, the army of the

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6 “नारिन: मार्ग प्रवयो वीवभासासारम् ।
अनुवापसर्गो शर्धं कारताण्यायम् ।
दोनदुरुवासः कोमतं जयसत् च ।
इत्यय कर्म परेशर सर्वदा शर्भारम् ।”

(Nitisara, p.414, Ch.20, Pr.32, V.4-5)
also see p.419, V.15, Horses are stated useful in capturing the defeated enemy soldiers (तुर्गादैनं भिन्नाणि प्रतिग्रहयति यद्यतम्) and particularly capable of encircling captives of war (pratigraha).

7 Manasollasa, Vol.1, p.81, V.574.

Agni Purana also makes a similar statement that “horses should be purchased and collected for the purpose of virtue, enjoyment and furtherance of earthly possessions.” (Agni Purana, Ch.CCLXXXVIII, p.1060).

8 Elliot & Dowson, Vol.1, p.4.

9 Prithvirajraso, p.873.

10 Kharataragacchabrihadgurvavali, p.31.

11 Dashrath Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.213.
Chandella King, Vidyadhara (AD 1010-1025), resisting Mahmud’s invasion is stated by the Muslim historians to have included 36,000 cavalry troops.\textsuperscript{12}

The title *hayapati* mentioned in the Chandella inscription\textsuperscript{13} for Devapala Pratihara most probably meant “lord of horses” and therefore signifies the maintenance of strong and excellent cavalry by him. *Vadnagar Prasasti* of the Chalukya King Kumarapala refers that Bhima of Gujarat occupied Dhara, the capital of the Paramaras by a cavalry force, which was “supremely skilled in accomplishing the five paces (*dhara*).\textsuperscript{14} The Paramaras even on the verge of their extinction had thirty to forty thousand cavalry and a large infantry force.\textsuperscript{15} In *Yasastilaka*, the army of a king of Ujjaini named Yasodhara is praised for having speedy horses.\textsuperscript{16} *Saptasatabhumi*, the kingdom of Nadol was also regarded a mine of horses.\textsuperscript{17}

In order to investigate the types and breeds of horses we must glean into the references from contemporary Indian literary texts, which provide an account of horse nomenclature mainly by places of their origin and colours. *Harsacharita* of Bana speaks of King’s favorite horses, came from Vanayu, Aratta, Kamboja, Bhardvaja, Sind and Persia. In colour they are stated, red, dark, white, bay and chestnut, dappled like part ridges.\textsuperscript{18} *Nitivakyamrita* of Somadeva Suri (10th

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Ibn-al-asir accounts 56,000 as the number of horses in the Vidyadhara’s army while Gardizi, Nizamuddin and Firishta agree on the number 36,000. (See Yogendra Mishra, *The Hindu Shahis of Afghanistan and Punjab*, (AD 865-1026), p.201).
\item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p.77.
\item \textsuperscript{15} D.C. Ganguly, *History of the Paramara Dynasty*, p.245 cf. S.K. Bhakari, p.34.
\item \textsuperscript{16} K.K. Handiqui, *Yasastilaka and Indian Culture*, p.68.
\item \textsuperscript{17} S.K. Bhakhari, p.57.
\item \textsuperscript{18} *Harsacharita*, tr. Cowell and Thomas, p.50. Previously, *Arthasastra of Kautilya* also mentions the horses from Kamboja, Sindhu, Aratta, Vanayu as of best breeds while the Bahlika, Papeya, Sauvira and Taitala breeds of middle quality (Ch.30, Section 47, Kangle II, V.29, p.172).
\end{itemize}
century AD) refers nine places named Tarjika, Sthalana, Karokhara, Gajigana, Kekana, Pushtahara, Gahvara, Saduyara and Sindhuara as the birth places of the horses of special breed.19

Yuktikalpataru,20 a work ascribed to the great Paramara king Bhoja (10th century AD) mentions to Tajita, Khurshala, Tushara horses as best and to Gojikana, Kekana21, Pronahara of middle quality and to those of Sindh (Sindhudara) of low quality (कणीसस ). The horses born in other countries are described of worse quality (नीच).

In Manasollasa22 (1130 AD) in a separate chapter on "वाजिवायालीविनोद" (the game of Indian Polo), the King is advised to examine the different kinds of horses of different breeds and

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Amarkosa (AD 500-800) also refers to Vanayuja, Parsika, Kamboja, Valhika and Saindhav (Sindh) horses. (Kanda II of Amarkosa ed. N.G. Sardesai and H.D. Sharma, p.185, V.46. (जनपुजः पारसीकः काम्बोजः वालिकः निंदुः काशुः निंदुः हयः: 1).  
20 "माजितः तुरिसाश्रयं तुरिसाश्रयं हयः: 1  
गोविकानश्रयं कोकः: प्रदीद्राःश्रयं मध्यमः: 11  
ताद्रः उत्तासश्रयं राजः शुचियाः मध्यमः:।  
सन्धः सत्यः (1) वासाश्रयं सिन्धुःश्रयं: कणीसस: 11  
अन्यद्वेशोपयोगः ये च ते वै नीच: प्रकृतितिः:।"
(Yuktikalpataru, p.182, V.26-27)  
The terms Tajita = Tarjita, Gojikana = Gajigana, Pronahara = Pushtahara, Kekana, Sindhudara are identical in both the sources. It indicates that this terminology was highly used in the 10th century AD.  
22 "काम्बोजः यवनाससोजः काल्हीक्षवातासतः ।  
तोढ़ताकः सक्काकाः नथ तौरः तमः:। 11  
पोद्दुः काळज्ञानाः योद्धनाः बाजोः यकः। 1  
वनपुजः पारसीकः मेठे चोताः हयः।। 11  
शैविनाः वस्त्राश्रयं कालश्रयं सत्यत्वः।। 11  
साधिनाः पारसीयाः कालश्रयं साधिनाः।। 11  
तेजसुक्तिर्याहरः सारस्वतजुद्वकः।। 1  
जुमुरैतीः वाहसुः मध्यमः: परिकृतिः।। 11  
मेडः आनुवायाः तैंगाः गुरुरसतः।। 1
colours brought before him by the officer in-charge of the horses. The King was to understand their kind by the places of their origin. In this context, the names of different places from where they had their origin are described in a categorised manner.

**Best Horses:**


**Middle Breeds:**


**Inferior/low Breeds:**


Somesvara in the same work also mentions to some separate horse names giving a particular description of their colours and castes (वर्ण & जाति). They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Caste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. कक</td>
<td>श्वेत</td>
<td>विप्र</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. कतल</td>
<td>शुक्ल अथवा श्वेत</td>
<td>''</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. काल</td>
<td>कृष्ण</td>
<td>शूर</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. कपाल</td>
<td>रोहित</td>
<td>क्षत्र जाति</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. सेराह</td>
<td>कान्वनाभ</td>
<td>वैरय</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. चोर</td>
<td>सिस+रोहित</td>
<td>वैरय</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. नील</td>
<td>सिस+कृष्ण</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

various colours of horses and different names by which they are called:24

1. *Chakravaka*, having white feet and white eyes.

2. *Syamkarna*, which is white all over its body and had one of its ears black.

3. *Astamangala*, whose feet, tail, chest, head and forehead are white.

4. *Kalyanapanchak*, a horse whose feet are white and which has a white spot resembling the moon on its forehead.

Before describing the distinctive horse names on the basis of colours, Bhoja stated that the horses are generally found in seven colours white (सित), red (रक्त), yellow (पील), सांगा (?), खंड (?), खंड (?), खंड (?), (Salihotra of Bhoja ed. Chanath Dattaraya Kulkarni, p.1)

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24 “सितोरक्तस्तवः सीत: सांगतः: खंडः: खंडः: खंडः: खंडः: खंडः: मुद्रः:।
जीत: कृष्णाः सर्विः स्वेतः: श्रेष्ठ: श्रेष्ठः: मुद्रः:।”
Blue (नील), black (कृष्ण). Among all these the horse of white colour is regarded as best.25

_Asvasastra_ of Nakula reveals twenty-five varieties of horses, in a detailed manner.26

They are:

(1) _Kamboja_ (2) _Vahlika_ (3) _Vanayuja_ (4) _Gandhara_ (5) _Arattaja_ (6) _Saindhav_ (7) _Tai Ja_

(8) _Kulaja_ (9) _Upkulaja_ (10) _Mechaka_ (11) _Upamehaka_ (12) _Traigartta_ (13) _Yaudheya_ (14)

This work gives out a clear picture of horse lore current in the Paramara kingdom of Ujjain.


26 Nakula, the author of _Asvasastra_ was one of the five Pandavas of _Mahabharata_ period. But the references to Arabian and Persian breeds of horses like _Tajika_, (Tajik is the name of a republic of Russia formed in 1924 out of the former regions of Bukhara and Turkistan), _Khurasana_ (Khurasan is a province of north east Persia) and _Kamboja_ etc. undoubtedly reveal the fact that the work must had been compiled after the tradition of the import of Arabian and Persian horses introduced in India (See P.K. Gode’s article on History of _Canaka_, etc. in _Studies in Indian Cultural History_, Vol.I, pp.218-231). _Amarakosa_ (AD 500-800) presents the earliest reference to Persian horses. Ibid., p.227). _Bombay Gazetteer_ mentions the period (AD 250-640), as the period of Persian alliances and Persian settlements in India (probably on the Thana coast) and the period between AD 700-1200 of Musalman trade relations and settlements from Arabia and Persia. The gazetteer also mentions that during the reign of Nosherman (AD 531-578) Persia had close relations with western India. But there is no mention of the importation of horses in the list of articles of trade imported to India from Persia before AD 819-1260, the period during which Silaharas of Konkan ruled _Bombay Gazetteer_, Vol.XIII (Thana), Part II, p.403). The Gazetteer observes that “the chief trade in animals was towards the close of the period (1290),” and the great demand for horses seems to have risen from the scare among the Hindu rulers of the Deccan caused by the Musalman cavalry” (Ibid., p.431).

From this latter statement P.K. Gode had to observe that horse trade from Persia and Arabia must have been started sometime after the conquest of Sind by the Arabs in AD 712 (P.K. Gode _op.cit._, p.231-32). The King Pulkesin II of Deccan also sent an embassy to Khusrau II of Persia in AD 625. Ajanta Fresco painting also has the picture of the return embassy sent by Khusrau to Pulkesin. These good relations between Persia and India must also had developed into some trade relations (P.K. Gode, _op.cit._, fn., p.223, Smith, _History of India_, p.426).

The references quoted from Indian literary sources like that of _Harsacharita_ clearly indicate that import of horses from Arabia and Persian had already started in the 7th century AD in Northern India.

Nakula in chapter II of his another work Asvachikitsit mentions the Tajika (Arabian) Khushana (Khurasan), Uttara (variant Tushara) as the best breeds. The other breeds mentioned by him are Gojikana, Kekana, Prodhahara, Bhandaja, Rajshula Gohvara, Shavara, Sindhupara.27

Kuvalayamala, a Prakrit text of AD 1200 makes mention of eighteen varieties of horses, namely, mala, hayana, kalaya, khasa, tanka, tankana, sarira, sahajana, huna, saindhava, chittachala, cancala, para, paravaya, hansagamana and vatthavyya.28 Further there is a reference to three kinds of horses named vollaha,29 kayatha and seraha. Kanhadade Prabandha (15th century AD) enumerates mainly thirty six kinds of horses among which the following were stated available at Jalor (Marwar) at the time of the invasion of Alauddin Khalji:

Khurasani, Turki, Tezi, Kekana, Bharija (Turki pack horses), Sindhuya (of Sindhu), Panithana (of Maharashtra), Undiras (of Uttaradesh), Kulatha (Kannauj), Mahuyada

27 The author of Asvasasstra mainly named the horses on the basis of the places from where they were brought as twenty one names in this list are identical with those mentioned by Somesvara in the twelfth century AD (See the list of horses in Manasollasa, Vol.II, pp.211ff., V.V.69-74).

In this list of eleven names eight names are identical with those referred by Bhoja Paramara in his Yuktiyalpataru (see the list of horses mentioned in the latter source, Supra, p.132). Bhoja in the Asvayukti section of Yuktiyalpataru also mentions the name of Nakula. Therefore, the former seems to have quoted in his work from Nakula's work. If Asvayukti section is regarded real work of king Bhoja, the date of Nakula's work should be regarded earlier to Bhoja (AD 1050). (P.K. Gode in Studies in Indian Literary History, Vol.II, SJG, No.38, p.166).

28 Kuvalayamala, text, p.23. In this list only the Tankana (also mentioned in Harshacharita), Saindhava, Paravaya (Paraya of other sources is also known from other sources. (See the foregoing lists of horses). The horses named Huna makes its first appearance in this source (AD 1200). The author must have mentioned the other names owing to the prevalence of common nomenclature during 10th century AD in Gujarat either on the basis of colour or some physical characteristic features.

29 The first mention of vollaha is found in Samaraicchakaha of Haribhadra Suri (8th century AD) (Kuvalayamala, II, Notes and Explanation, p.119).
(Madhyadesh), Devagira (?) Tunkakana (Tankana), Gangetiya (originated in the region of Ganga river).³⁰

A careful study of horse nomenclature from the foregoing passages reveals that the serviceable war horses were obtained from some places in India as well as from outside the main find places of horses were Sind, Kashmir, Kandhar³¹ (Gandhar north-west frontier), Avanti, Traigarta (the region of Kangra) Saurastra and Vatsa. Besides these horses were also brought from some forest and mountainous regions (vanayuj and parvateya) and also from the places located in the neighbourhood of Savitri and Sarvasvati river beds. Horses from Sind which find a foremost place in the list of Harsha’s favourite horses were famous for their strength.³² Sind had been a centre of trade in horses.³³ Sind horses valued high even amongst the Arabs. Chachnamah refers that when “Muawiya appointed Abdu-lla-din Swariya to the government of Sindh, he informed him that in the country of Sindh there is a mountain which they call Kaikanan. There the horses stand very high and are well made in all their proportions. They have before this time been received among the spoils taken from that tract”.³⁴ Being a trade centre Sindh also provided horses of Arabian breed in a large number such as Barachi and Tatari.³⁵ Harshacharita (7th century AD) and Nilivakyamrita (10th Century AD) place the Sindh horses as best while Manasollasa of Somesvara (AD 1130) and Yuktitkalpataru of Bhoja (10th century AD) referred

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³⁰ Kanhadade Prabandha, pp.19-20.
³¹ Gandhara horses are mentioned best in Vayupurana, Cf. B.C. Law, Tribes in Ancient India, p.17.
³² Harshacharita, Cowell & Thomas, p.50, S.P. Narang, Dvasrayakavya, A Literary and Cultural Study, pp.34-35.
³³ Rehla, tr. Mehdi Hussain, p.5.
³⁴ Elliot & Dowson, op.cit., p.21, Chachnamah, tr. op.cit., p.61.
³⁵ Barani’s Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi in A.A. Rizvi’s Adi Turk Kalin Bharat, p.161.
them respectively of middle quality and of low category in comparison to the Arabian and Persian bred horses.  

Sind horses were famous for their special breed from as early as the Buddhist period. Jatakas refer that “the thorough bred Sind horses sheathed in mail were used for war purposes”. Again they are referred “milk white, thorough bred, white as lilies, swift as the wind and well trained.” while referring about the high prices paid for vollaha and Sindh horses Jataka No.4 and 5 accounted that “A high bred foal (probably Sind or Volah) was sold at Benares at a high price, separate price was paid for the foal’s four feet, for its tail, for its head…. This horse could run at such a high speed that nobody could see it at all.”

The references from Jatakas clearly reveal that the horses from Sindh were considered best during Buddhist period. At that early period the tradition of the importation of foreign breeds such as Kamboja etc. was quite unknown and hence they were highly praised among other breeds of Indian horses. Owing to their old status and fame, they continued to find a place even among fine Arabian and Persian horses. But with the passage of time, when the import of Arabian and Persian horses became a common practice, this breed began to lose its place in the category of fine horses and came to be considered of middle and of low category (kaneeyas).

Gaudvaho, a Prakrit kavya written about the 8th century refers to the war horses of king Yasovarman produced from the region of Himalaya. The authors of Manasollasa and

36 Jatakas also refer that Sindh horses were available in Benares and were used as the royal horses of ceremony (Jataka, II, p.287). (B.C. Law, Tribes in Ancient India, p.17, P.K. Gode, History of Canaka, op.cit., p.238, fn.4).


38 Ibid.

39 Jatakas Nos. 4,5,23,254 & 547, Bharhut III, Pl.XXVI, Fig.136. Cf. B.C. Law, loc. cit.

40 Gaudvaho, p.78, V.261.
Asvasastra while referring to parvateya (mountainous) horses would have undoubtedly meant the horses from the region of Himalayas.\textsuperscript{41} The horses bred in this region were specially termed as kohi.\textsuperscript{42} The region of Himalaya continued to provide a good breed of horses till the 16th century AD for the imperial Mughal stable.\textsuperscript{43}

Soreth (a place in Gujarat) is also said to be famous for valuable horses.\textsuperscript{44} The great Rajput ruler Prithviraja Chauhan had horses in his stable from Kachh.\textsuperscript{45}

Although good breeds of horses were available in the region of Sivalik, around Sanam, Samana, Tabarhind, Thanesvar and the camps of the Khokkhars, in the territories of Jats and Mandahirs but these places of north-western India were providing horses to the rulers of Delhi Sultanat in the 13th century AD and there is no evidence of the importation of such horses by the Rajput rulers of India.\textsuperscript{46} These places must have remained a good source for supplying war-horses before the Muslim conquest of India for Indian Kings. Lakhnauti\textsuperscript{47} and Nadiah\textsuperscript{48} in

\textsuperscript{41} Manasollasa, II, p.69-74, Asvasastra, pp.77-78.

\textsuperscript{42} Amir Khusrau refers that horses surrendered by the Rai of Aarangal (Warangal) to Alauddin Khalji included kohi breed. Simon Digby opines that these horses must have been from the region around Himalays or beyond them or from the north-east of the subcontinent because, afterwards, some centuries later south India befall to be recognised as the good breeding ground. (Simon Digby, op.cit., p.42).

\textsuperscript{43} Abul Fazl, who wrote at the close of the 16th century writes that “in northern mountainous district of Hindustan (i.e. in the Himalayas), a kind of small but strong horse is bred, which is called gut” (See Simon Digby, op.cit., pp.46-47).

\textsuperscript{44} Rasmala, I, p.39.

\textsuperscript{45} Pritavirajraso, p.436, V.32.


\textsuperscript{47} Minhaj-us-Siraj in his Tabakat-i-Nasiri refers that in the cattle market of Lakhnauti there was an average of the sale of one thousand five hundred horses per day. (Tabakat-i-Nasiri, tr. Raverty, Vol.1, p.567).

\textsuperscript{48} Muhammad-i-Bakhtiyar came to invade this place with a few horsemen without molesting anyone in such a manner that the residents of that place thought them a party of merchants who had brought horses for sale (Ibid., p.557).
eastern India were the well known markets where the merchants from different places came to sell their commodities.

A popular breed of horses known as *tangana* had remained a centre of attraction for the court poets and historians. This breed of horses got special praise in Bana’s *Harsacharita*.\(^{49}\) Again *Kuvalayamala* while mentioning the eighteen varieties of horses also states about *tankana* horses.\(^{50}\) Even the Muslim chronicler *Mihaj-us-Siraj* referring to the importance of Lakhnauti, as a market place for horses states that the *tangana* horses were brought for sale in large numbers at the cattle market of that place.\(^{51}\) Again he comments “From the territory of Kamrud to that of Tirhut are thirty five mountain passes by which they bring the *tanganan* horses in to the territory of Lakhanawati”.\(^{52}\) Indians too, judged the quality of horses from their speed\(^{53}\) and mobility therefore the thorough bred\(^{54}\) foreign horses were regarded excellent. Such thorough bred horses were largely brought from Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, Torkomania (Central Asia) and the

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49 Bana States “old people sang the praises of *tangana* horses which by the steady motion of their quick footballs provided a comfortable seat” (*Harshacharita*, tr. Cowell and Thomas, p.201).

50 *Kuvalayamala*, text, p.23.


52 Ibid, p.547.

53 *Salihotra* of Bhoja remarks that the speed of a horse should primarily be considered than anything else and that an unsteady or slow horse should be regarded useless, even endowed with other five characteristic features like high breed, complex etc.

> “गुणानामिह सवेष्ट गुणो वेगे मयोदित।
> तस्यात सवेष्टवेगे वेगे व वायुलक्षणम्।
> कुणात्ता गतिरक्षण सत्यं वर्ण: सत्येष वर्तम्।
> जावहिनेच वाहस्य सवेष्टत्वनिर्वक्षम।”
> (p.6, V.V.35-40).

*Sukraniti* mentions that a horse which goes hundred *yojana* in a day should be regarded best (*Sukramti*, p.103, v.12), also see *Manasollasa*, II, p.217, V.V.33-34).

steppe lands of southern Russia known as Tatars.\textsuperscript{55} Thus, Arabian and Persian bred horses were regarded the best.\textsuperscript{56}

About the import of Persian horses to India Morco Polo writes “In this country of Persia there is a great supply of fine horses, and people take them to India for sale”.\textsuperscript{57} Horses from Persia were carried through all the islands of Persia known as Katif, Lahsa, Bahrein, Hurmuz, Kulhatu.\textsuperscript{58} Dealers carried these horses upto the important Indian coasts where an agency was established by an Arab chieftain, \textit{Malikee-i-Islam-Jamal-ud-din}, ruler of Kis and later the former general of Persia,\textsuperscript{59} where they were purchased by merchants who directly carried them for sale to Indian markets.\textsuperscript{60}

Rashiduddin and Wassaf stated that in the reign of Atabek Abu Bakr of Persia 10,000 horses were annually exported from these islands to Ma'bar, Kambayat (Cambay in Gujarat) and other ports in their neighbourhood.\textsuperscript{61} In South India at the mouth of Tamrapani in the gulf of Manar near Korkai, Kayal was a port of great importance.

\textsuperscript{55} K.S. Lal, \textit{Early Muslims in India}, p.78, also see the foregoing list of horses mentioned earlier.
\textsuperscript{56} Prithviraj Raso, mentions to the presence of big Iraqi and quick Arabian horses, (pp.415, (V.49), 452, (V.11). \textit{Kadambari} (7th AD) refers to a horse imported from Persia which was swift as Garuda or mind. (tr. C.M. Ridding, p.62). . . . . \textit{Chachnamah} refers to Arabian horses as best (p.136, also see Mohd. Habib’s Introduction to \textit{Elliot & Dowson}, Vol.II, p.46). Hemchandra in his \textit{Dvasraya Kavya} mentions the horses from Samanid or Persia as \textit{nihsamanads} (S.P. Narang, op.cit., pp.34).
\textsuperscript{57} Henri Yule, \textit{The Book of Ser Morco Polo}, Vol.I, Ch.XV, p.83.
\textsuperscript{58} Elliot & Dowson, III, pp.34,93. The ports mentioned by Morco Polo are Kais, Hurmuz, Dofar, Aden, Soer (Sohar, the former capital of Oman) ref op.cit., p.341.
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{The Book of Ser Morco Polo}, p.158.
\textsuperscript{61} Elliot & Dowson, Vol.III, pp.34,93, \textit{The Book of Ser Morco Polo}, Vol.II, Ch.XVII, p.348-49.
Horses from Kamboja\(^6\) are praised in the literary texts of our period for their excellent breed.\(^5\) Having high forehead, broad hips, shoulders and chest, long neck and face, big and strong feet, long legs, strong hoofs, circular knees and thighs, big body, hairy tail, big eyes and spiked ears, these horses were very swift in speed.\(^6\) They were mostly found in white and bay colours.\(^6\) Among Persian horses Morco Polo brings special praise to the *Kataghan* breed of horses from Badakshan and Kunduz but he continued to say that they were not imported to India because of the liking of the Afghans to them.\(^6\)

Horses bred in Karain (north-western part of Yunan) and Karazan (a province of Yunan) were also brought to India.\(^6\) Morco-Polo referring Turkomania for the excellent breed of horses, states that the fine mules of this breed were sold at high prices.\(^6\) Turki bred horses were famous for their spirit and hardiness in eastern India.\(^6\) They were regarded noblest in the whole of Central Asia and surpassed all other breeds in speed and endurance. These horses were tall with a long narrow body, large thin legs and neck. It is said that the Turkomans often cover 650 miles.

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\(^5\) The region of Hindukush mountain separates the Giljit valley from Balkh and probably upto the little Tibet and Ladak was known as Kamboja (see V.S. Apte, *Practical Sanskrit – English Dictionary*: Appendix-III).


\(^6\) *Asvasastra*, p.68, VV.14-19.

\(^5\) Ibid., p.68, V.15, K.K. Handiqui, *Yasastilala and Indian Culture*, pp.26. Indian literary texts also describe the horses of white colour as best among the horses of all other *varnas*, which might have been the horse of Kamboja stock (see *Salihotra* of Bhoja).


\(^6\) Ibid., p.223.

\(^6\) Ibid.

in the waterless desert in five days. Arabian horses were brought from Bahrain, Yaman and Iraq.

Indian monarchs spent a huge sum on the import of foreign-bred horses. Morco Polo comments on the import of Persian horses in Ma'bar while stating, "Here no horses are bred, and thus the great part of the wealth of this country is wasted in purchasing horses". About the value of these horses he continued to state that one such horse will fetch 500 saggi of gold, worth more than 100 marks of silver." Nearabout 2000 Persian horses were imported every year to Ma'bar. Wassaf states that the price for each horse was 220 dinars of red gold and the value of those died in the voyage was also extracted from the royal treasury. Though Wassaf had written this account for the Pandyan kingdom, the Rajput rulers should also be supposed to follow the same medium and they must have been familiar with this sea borne trade. Al Umri also writes about the high prices paid for Arabian horses.

Foreign travellers put blame on the Indians for being ignorant of the art of cross-breeding, and for rearing the foreign bred horses quite improperly without providing any training.

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71 Shihabuddin al-Umri in A.A. Rizvi, Tughaq Kalin Bharat, Vol.I, p.313, Amir Khusrau states, "among the horses from Ma'bar there were Yamini and Shahini horses".
73 Ibid., Ch.XVII, p.341.
74 Ibid., p.341.
75 Elliot & Dowson, Vol.III, p.34,93, The Book of Ser Morco Polo, pp.348-49.
77 Ibid., p.31.

Malcolm in History of Persia, (Vol.II, p.516), refers that the Persian horses were sold in India for 1500 to 2000 rupees. (P.K. Gode's "History of Canaka", p.233). Rehla of Ibn Battuta mentions the name of two saddled horses, which were sent by the author himself to sadr-i-jahan, one of the value of six hundred dinars and the other of 800 dinars together with their saddles (Rehla, tr. A. Mahdi Hussain, p.147).
and exercise. Wassaf comments about the manner in which Indians treat a foreign bred horse, "They bind them for forty days in a stable with ropes and pegs, in order that they may get fat, and afterwards, without taking measures for training and without stirrups and other appurtenances of riding, the Indian soldiers ride upon them like demons... In a short time, the most strong, swift, fresh and active horses become weak, slow, useless and stupid. In short they all became wretched and good for nothing... there is, therefore, a constant necessity of getting new horses annually".\(^78\) Al Umri also writes that if horses stay for long in India, their feet become wretched.\(^79\) But, these remarks may not be regarded true in the light of the study of contemporary dynasties and the kings belonging to them, who were quite alert in providing good training\(^80\) and daily physical exercises\(^81\) in order to keep them fit and swift. Even, so much care was imparted to horses that separate dispensaries were provided for ill horses and they were not allowed to be kept even for a moment in the company of normally healthy horses.\(^82\)

\(^78\) Elliot & Dowson, Vol.III, p.34,93.

Morco Polo also writes about the mismanagement of horses and the faulty way of Indians for treating a horse (see Book of Ser Morco Polo, Vol.II, Ch.XVII, p.341).


\(^80\) In Kuvalayamala, there are references to Asvasiksha or (horse training) (Kuvalayamala, p.22).

\(^81\) Salhotra of Bhoja prescribes that the owner of a horse should ride it everyday and make all the efforts to keep it quite alert and to maintain a high standard of speed:

\[\text{आयोहणं हन्ते खण्ड्यं तस्मिन्यं ज्ञातिंद्र सा} \]

(\text{Introd.XIV, text, p.6, V.38, see also Manasollasa, Vol.I, p.81})

\(^82\) "न च भागाः: कण्मगं रोगाः: कल्पसात्मनाः\]

(\text{Samaranganasutradhara, Vol.I, p.195})

\[\text{कन्त्यानामपिर रोगाः: स्वप्नो रोगिस्मासाभासाः} \]

(Agnipurana also mentions to various diseases of horses and their treatment through different Indian medicines (Asvaayurveda), (Agni Purana, pp.1066-1071).

\[\text{तेषां विकिर्यते कर्क्सम्पायुक्त तोपुरिः:} \]

(\text{Manasollasa, Vol.I, p.81}).

(Medicines should be provided immediately to an ill horse and their treatment should be taken up by the experts in that field).
In fact, it will be right to observe that the Indians had taken as much care to the rearing of horses as they could. Possibly, their manner to treat a horse must have been quite different from that in which they were treated in their birth-lands and to what they were habitual of. The mode of riding them by Indians must have also been somewhat different.  

The climatic factors also must have played quite an important role. Secondly, the changed Indian diet could have been resulting to get them fat. Morco Polo states that the horses of Tartars (Tatari horses from Central Asia) were fed upon grass above and do not require barley or other grain. In contrast to this Indian diet comprised barley (मक्खन) and meat broth (मांसपान). The statement of Morco Polo that “there is no possibility of breeding horses in Ma’bar” does not appear exactly true for horse breeding was so much well known in south India that the poet Chandraraja after studying scientifically (c.AD 1079) the subject of horse breeding wrote a treatise on it in Kannada. Thus it may be said that although our texts do not present any direct reference to the prevalence of the method of cross-breeding, horse breeding in India was quite well known.

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83 Alberuni states about the mode of riding by the Indians’ “They ride without a saddle, but if they put on a saddle, they mount the horse from its right side” (Alberuni’s India, Vol.I, p.181). Here Alberuni seems to have been commenting on the habits of a very few Indians to whom he must had seen riding in that way.


86 See Mahamandalesvaras under the Chaulukyas of Kalyani, p.379.

Rasmala also mentions the name of a horse-breeder, Bhaud, who made valuable additions to the stud of a king named Vikramaditya and the latter gifted him the city of Mudhoomawati (in Soreth, Gujarat district) (Rasmala, Vol.I, p.9). Simon Digby remarks north-western India as the best Indian breeding ground. He also suggests that “the horse breeds with difficulty or feeblly in extreme south of Indian peninsula” (Simon Digby, op.cit., p.26).
The above discussion results in the observation that in spite of being an important wing of army of the Rajputs cavalry did not attain such a high standard of performance as under the Turks and the Muslim rulers of India partly owing to a shortage of the foreign breeds as they were more expensive and partly to the manner of rearing them.