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Abstract

از گروه آموزش زبان و ادبیات فارسی

مربوط به مقاله

«سند در شاهنامه»

Sind. according to Shahnameh

Sind, according to Iranian and Arab geographers was a vast land, a territory which far exceeded the region associated with the River itself.

The author of *Hodud-ul Alam*, the oldest text on geography written in the Persian language, describes the extent of the territory of Sind as follows:

‘It is a region surrounded by the River Mehran on its East, and the Indian Ocean on the south; the province of Kerman on the west; and on the north a desert, reaching the boundaries of Khorasan.’

He, then, makes reference to the fourteen towns which were supposed to be situated between Mansooreh (Barahmanabad) probably located in the Hyderabad region, and Moshki near Kerman.

On the whole, the ancient geographers define Sind as a region situated on the western bank of the River Indus.

In the *Shahnameh* on which our discussion is based, it is not clearly specified which part of the subcontinent was

attributed to Sind, however, it is certain that it was considered a territory distinct from India.

References made to Sind, in the Shahnameh are to be found in four instances:

- (1) During King Kaikhosrow's first battle against Turan. At the outset the Iranians face a defeat, but the scene changes with Rostam entering the battle-field. It is during this war, that King Afrasiyab asks for help from the Kings of different countries, including India and Sind, to fight against the Iranian Army, but ultimately the Iranians win.
- (2) Alexander's invasion of India. Here India and Sind are referred to as two neighbouring countries. Alexander crosses the River Indus, and reaches the city of Meelad. The King of that city saves his Kingdom from disaster by sending four precious gifts to Alexander. From there Alexander marches towards Quonnuja city situated on the bank of River Jhelum. Kills its King and takes possession of his land.
- (3) The third instance occurs during the reign of the Sasanian King Bahram V. Bahram goes to the royal court of King Shingal of India, under the guise of an Iranian Ambassador. Bahram visits the country and also marries Shingal's daughter. It is only at the last moment, when Bahram intends to return to Iran, that King Shingal comes to know that his son-in-law is none other than the Emperor of Iran.
- (4) The last detailed reference to India and Sind comes in the Chapter pertaining to the Empire of King Anushirvan. Here too, reference is made to a King who rules over a territory starting from Quonnuj

and extending to the River Indus. He is the one who presents the game of chess to King Anushirvan. The Latter, in return sends him the game of 'Back Gammon' invented by his Grand Vizir Bozorgmehr.

A last reference to Quonnuj is made while narrating the story of "Kaleeleh va demneh": King Anushiravan commissions a prominent physician named Borzuyeh to travel to India on his behalf to bring him the "Herb of Life", which was supposed to be found there.

Borzuyeh, after a great pursuit, realises that the Herb of Life is nothing but the "plant of wisdom" hidden in a book named "Kaleeleh va Demneh".

Thus he brings with him the famous book to Iran. This symbolically states that the life of a human being is fulfilled only through knowledge and the essence of this knowledge is preserved in this book.

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