

A Study of Islamic History Introductory

The background of Islam-The Semetic Race

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Abstract: *In my earlier article I have detailed therein thread bear of Islamism based on the authenticity of Holy Quran. Herein I have tried to give in the history of Islam of the human races that contributed to the ancient civilization of the world of the semetic race was one of them. The Semetics occupied a special place in the history of mankind. Musa, the founder of Judaism, Isa the founder of Christianity and Muhammad the Prophet of Islam were the sons of this semetic race and the East was their homeland. Of these monotheistic religions Islam is the third and last. Arabia the birth place of Islam was the original home of the Semetic race. In case of time the semetic people migrated to different parts of the Fertile Crescent and became known as the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Phenicians and the Hebrews (Jews) in history. The ancestors of these people must have lived here for some time as one people before they become differentiated. Above 3500 BC one of the branches of the Semetic Race left their original home and settled permanently on the Tigris-Euphrates Community, the Sumerians. AS a result of their close association with the Semerians, there flourished a Greek civilization.*

Keywords: Conquest, Islam, Arabia, The Babylonians, The Hebrews & Heirs of the Hellenic Civilization.

1. Research Elements

The Research Element have been given in detail in the ongoing paragraphs.

With the conquest of Persia, by the Greek hero, Alexander, the Eastern civilization entered into Europe and the Greeks developed it in various ways. These grew up a new civilization called the Rellenic civilization. When the Romans conquered Greece (146 BC) they became the heirs of the Mellinic civilization. In the seventh century AD the Muslims conquered Persia and Rome and they, by virtue of their conquests became the heirs of these civilizations. So, it is necessary to know the civilization of these countries before we study the history of the Arabs.

Babylon and Babylonian Civilization

The fertile region lies between the two great rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, is called Mesopotamia. In ancient times the northern part of Mesopotamia was called Assyria and the southern part was known as Babylonia. The southern part or lower part was very fertile and as a result there grew plenty of crops. Long before the birth of Jesus Christ there lived a civilized nation in this region. Babylonia was divided into a number of petty independent city states. Each city state has its own God and was reeled by a prince baring the title 'King of Lord'. These city states were always at war with one another for political supremacy.

The Akadians

The Akadians (after the name of their capital Akkadu) were the first of the Semetic peoples who came and settled in the southern part of Mesopotamia. The founder of the Akkadians was the famous Sargon I (about 2800 BC) whose reign form a great land mark in the history of early Babylonia and united the whole valley under its scepter. He is said to have conquered Syria, "the land of the setting sun". Under this rule the state took on a systematic and centralized organization, which was to serve as a model for the future states.

The Amorites were the second group of the semetic peoples who came from Syria and established their supremacy over their Euphrates valley under the leadership of Hammurabi.

Hammurabi (2123-2081 BC) was the greatest ruler of Babylonia and one of the greatest rulers of the ancient world. By wars and conquests, he enhanced the power and prestige of his empire. He united the whole valley. Akkad and Sumeru and renamed it as Babylonia Hammurabi was a great administrator and a legislator. He collected the codified laws of ancient Babylonia. In 1901- 1902, M.de. Morgan, a French archaeologist, discovered at a place named Susa a block of stone upon which was prescribed the code of laws set up by Hammurabi. It is known as the code of Hammurabi.

The Code of Hammurabi

The code of Hammurabi is "perhaps the oldest and most notable set in laws that had yet been made and obeyed in the world". It deals with laws regarding rights and duties of all classes of people which made up the population of the Babylonia empire. The principle of punishment in the code was an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth. The code of Hammurabi greatly influenced the Roman laws and the modern European laws have been constituted on the basis of the Roman Laws. On the death of Hammurabi the political history of Babylonia became very obscure. Several tribes came and established the political supremacy in te valley. At last the whole of Babylonia was conquered by the Assyrians in the 8th Century BC.

Civilization of Babylonia

In the history of civilization, the contribution of ancient Bablonia were skilful and expert in agriculture. The excavated canals to irrigate lands in times of draught and made dikes to protect crops against flood. In industry and commerce they also made much progress. The Babylonian merchants discovered a new system of keeping accounts and a system of fixed weight and measure was prevalent among them. The people of antiquity derived their system of weights and measures from these merchants. For a period of nearly two thousand years Babylonia had been the centre of trade and commerce in the Tigris Euphrates Valley.

Religion

The Babylonians were the worshippers of may gods, namely, nature gods, local deities and a group of lesser gods. Mardul was their chief god and Ishtar was their god of love. The

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main features of their religion was a belief in spirits, particularly in civil spirits. Another feature of their religion was the fore setting of events by the movement of planets and stars. The Caledonian astrologers required proficiency in astrology and they were famous throughout the ancient world.

System of Writing

There was a new system of writings prevalent in Babylonia. It is called the cuneiform system of writings on account of its wedge-shaped characters. It is considered to be a more developed system than the picture writing in ancient Egypt. The Babylonians used four or five hundred syllable signs. Nothing is known about the use of paper. "The writing usually material of the Babylonia says Myers," was usually clay tablet of various sizes.

Astronomy

In the field of sciences the Babylonians made much progress. "In Astronomy they made greater advance than Egyptians". This was mentioned by P.V. N. Myers in "A history of Ancient times". The Babylonians "divided the Zodiac into twelve signs and named its constellations." It was the Babylonian astronomies who inventor the seen dial and the water clock. They used the calendar which was far more advanced than that of the Egyptians. They divided the year into 12 months, the day and night into hours, and hours into minutes and invented the seven- day week. In mathematics they made original contributions. They invented the decimal system in numbers and it is from that the system has come to the modern world.

Assyria and Assyrian Civilization

The next group of the sematic peoples who established their rule of the northern region of Mesopotamian valley were the Assyrians. The history over the Mesopotamian valley over the new story of the Aryan Kings. Through blood and cruelty of the Assyrians Kings conquered country after cruelty and established a powerful empire because of their cruelty they were called the scourge of antiquity. They made war for pillage and massacre of human life, and they found special pleasure in it.

Sargon II

(722-705 BC) was one of those cruel kings. He was a great conqueror. He captured Samaria (722 BC), the capital of the kingdom of Israel and carried away as captives the most influence men of the Ten Tribes. These captives are known as the Lost Ten Tribes, because nothing was heard of them anymore.

Culture of Assyria

The Assyrian culture was greatly influenced by the Babylonian culture. The chief characteristics of this culture was that though it was indebted to others for their civilization, the Assyrians culture spread to the whole civilized world. But the Assyrians were not mere imitators. In sculpture, architecture and paintings were made original contributions. Sennacheril was a great builder. He rebuilt the ancient capital, Ninevah and adorned it so beautifully that it looked like the Assyrians were called the Romans of Asia Like the Romans the Assyrians built up a vast empire by a series of campaigns and conquest before them, no people

established so vast an empire.

The Hebrews

Of the other Semetic peoples who established their supremacy over Syria and Palestine, the Phoenicians, the Arameans and the Hebrews were the most prominent. The Hebrews of Jews claimed Abraham as their ancestor. They were originally nomads who had left the Arabian Desert in search of a land and ultimately came to settle in cannan (later called Palestine) The Hebrews founded a kingdom of their own under the leadership of David, son of Jesse of the tribe of Judah. It was under his son and successor, Solomn (96-22) that the Hebrew kingdom reached the pinnacle of its glory. Solomon did many beneficial works for the country. He adored the Jerusalem, the capital of the Hebrews with magnificent buildings. He was a liberal patron of the arts commerce and learning. But after his death the Hebrew kingdom was divided into two parts namely, Israel in the north and Judah in the South. The Assyrians conquered the kingdom of Israel in 722 BC the Caldean King Necuchonessar in 566 BC.

Monotheism

The contributions of the Hebrews wee not important in the domain of arts and science. The old Testament out of which the New Testament arose was a unique literature of the Hebrews. But the Hebrews made great contribution in the field of religion while their neighbours worshiped many Gods and Goddesses, they believed in the oneness of God. They also developed a high moral code embodied in the Ten Commandants which their Jehova dedicated to Moses on Moient Sinai. It was the Hebrew monotheism which preceded Christianity and Islam two great religions of the world.

The Byzantine Empire

On the eve of the rise of Islam the two mighty powers-The Byzantine Empire and the Sasanthean Empire were railing over the territories of the Near and Middle East. The Roman Empire was called the Byzantine Empire. It consisted of Syria, Palestine, Egypt were a part of Europe. Byzantine was a part of Greek city on the Bosphorus and the Byzantine was named after this city. It was made the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire to 327 AD by Constantine the great. But was soon name of Constannople after his name Heraclius (610-641) was the gifted. Emperor of the Roman Empire.

Christianity

Christianity is one of the greatest religions of the world. It owes its rise to Jesus of Nazareth. As the age of 30 Jesus Christ appeared to public and was Antioch by St. Paul. His followers were first called Christians as a 'term of reproach'. It was due to the effort of St. Paul that Christianity spread from Asia Minor to Greece and Rome.

Progress of Christianity

In spite of the opposition, made by some of the Roman Emperors, namely, Nero and Diocletian the Christians, the Christians began to draw the attention of the state. With the accession of the Constantine, Christianity achieved a great success in Rome. He gave legal recognition to the new faith and made it a state religion.

The Sasanian Empire

It was probably before 1500 BC that some Aryan tribes came to settle on the plateau of Western Iran. "The immigrants that settled in south near the Persian Gulf, became known as Persians, while those of that took possession of the mountain regions of the north-west called Medes".

The Sasanian Empire which marked a new epoch in the history of Persia came into being in 226 AD as a result of national revolt led by Ardeshir against the Greek Prathian Rule. Ardeshir, son of Papak of Fars attacked his vassal king who revolted against the sovereign. Ardeshir was succeeded by his son, shahpar I as in 240 AD Shahpur was a great soldier and a successful administration. His sculpuures and other buildings which he founded at Shuster and elsewhere, prove his devotion to arts of peace. After him the sasanians dynasty produced a series of relating weak monarchs.

Nonshirwan was a Jew

The most illustrious monarch of the dynasty was Nowshirwan the just who was the throne of Persia in 531 AD. He was a great general and conqueror. The religion of the Persians was more than any other religion to the culture of the world. It was not only the religion of the Persians but it also left a profound impression on the religions of the Jews and Christians. The idea of Judaism and Christianity that good and evil are equal and permanent adversaries is probably derived from Zoro as tribalism.

Condition of Arabia at the advent of Islam

The period preceding the rise of Islam is commonly known as Jahilya or "Age of Ignorance". The period was so called the political, religions and social conditions of Arabia were the worst order. The pre-islamic Arabs had no inspired Prophet no revealed book no clear cut flesh, he covers who his skin, the covers himself with his doing he uses as fuel. The camel is so necessary to the Arabs that umar that upon and I once said, "The Arabs prospers where the camel prospers". (P. K. Hitti, History of Arabs). It played an important part of the earliest in the early conquests of the Muslims. The Arabian horses are the finest in the world. In the 8th Century Arabia used to export horses into different parts of the world. Goats and Sheep are the Chief property of the Bedouins.

Condition of Arabia of the Advent of Islam

The period proceeding the rise of Islam is commonly known as Jahilya or "Age of Ignorance". The period was so called, because the political, religious and social conditions were of the worst order the political, Economic, Cultural, Religious, Social and Moral, IN the age of darkness the Arabs were endowed with the courage dogged tenacity, wonderful memory, sense of self-respect for the tribe and the tribal leader of simplicity, generality and lost but not the least of knock for poetry. But these good qualities were outweighed by the bad ones. During this dark age, the firmament of Arabia was over clouded with injustice, vice and eyepustion.

Abstract

There was the code of Hammurabi, the greatest realer of the ancient world Babylonia. They were Skilful and expert in agriculture. They were worshippers of many Gods namely nature Gods, local deities etc. There was a new system of

writing prevalent in Babylonia. In the field of sciences the Babylonian made much progress. In Astronomy they make greater advancement than the Egyptians. The Contributions of the Hebrews were more important in the domain of art and culture.

Key Elements/ Features of Communications Summary and Conclusion

- 1) Utilization and Geography-Developed between the Tigries and Euphrates reverse allowing for irrigation-based agriculture which provided food surpluses that supported population growth and city development, Major cities included Wrik, Urj and Babylonian.
- 2) Political structure: Organized into city states governed by kings who held power, often considered divine or representatives of Gods.
- 3) Advanced Cities: More than just large populations, these served as hubs for trade, administration and public works.
- 4) Specialized workers: Food surpluses allowed individuals to move away from farming to become artisans, priests, traders or solders.
- 5) Complex Institutions: Structured systems like government, military, and religion- maintained order, enacted laws, and organized labour.
- 6) Record Keeping: The development of writing systems (like cuneiform) to fact taxes, laws, trader and history.
- 7) Advanced Technology: Innovation such as irrigation systems, pottery and metal tools (bronze) that improved efficiency.
- 8) These traits often appearing together, allowed early societies to organize, grow and manage resources efficiently.

References

- [1] Islam
- [2] Human Races
- [3] Prophet of Islam
- [4] Arabia.
- [5] The Babylonians.
- [6] The Asarayins.
- [7] The Phenomenicians.
- [8] Conquest of Persia.
- [9] The Akadians.
- [10] The Code of Hammurabi.
- [11] The System of writing.
- [12] Astronomy.
- [13] Surgeon II.
- [14] The Hebrews.
- [15] The Monotheism.
- [16] The Byzantine Empire.
- [17] Christianity.
- [18] The sasanian Empire.
- [19] The Advent of Islam.