



"The economic aspect of Kurdistan in the classical period, in the first millennium BC."

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Abstract: Classical sources are considered significant for the history of Kurdistan, particularly in the economic aspect, The economy has been a crucial factor in Kurdish life since the first millennium B.C., with the people of Kurdistan engaged in agriculture, industry, and livestock farming. Additionally, Kurdistan's wealth in natural resources and dense forests contributed to its economic strength. These factors played a key role in the development of trade. Moreover, Kurdistan's richness was a major reason for numerous external attacks throughout different periods in history.

Keywords: History, ancient history, History of Kurdistan, Economic aspects, classical sources, First Thousand B.C

Introduction

The peoples of Kurdistan possess an ancient history, having lived in their indigenous lands since the earliest periods of history. Their deep connection to the natural environment and geography of Kurdistan is evident. One of the most significant sources concerning the history of Kurdistan is classical sources, which, based on the evidence provided by classical historians, geographers, and researchers, discuss Kurdish history and civilization. These sources not only examine economic aspects through various factors but also shed light on the foundations and historical continuity of Kurdish society.

Regarding previous studies on this subject, our research stems from the recognition that certain aspects remain unexplored. Although some knowledge has been published on various websites and newspapers regarding the history of Kurdistan, particularly in relation to the regions between the two great rivers, much of it is in Arabic.

Research Methodology:

This study follows a historical and analytical approach, emphasizing economic factors such as agriculture, trade, and craftsmanship. By reviewing classical historical texts and translations, the study aims to identify the role of economic life in ancient Kurdistan.

By analyzing these sources, we aim to highlight the economic aspects presented in classical literature, followed by a detailed examination of Kurdistan's economic life in ancient times.



Objectives of the Study:

The primary goal of this research is to provide a clear understanding of Kurdistan's economic life throughout history. This is particularly valuable for historians and researchers specializing in ancient Kurdistan, emphasizing the need for further studies to highlight the historical and civilizational significance of the region.

Challenges and Limitations:

Despite the richness of classical sources, some challenges hinder the research. A major limitation is the language barrier, as most sources are in Arabic and English, and many historical references remain untranslated into Kurdish.

Structure of the Study:

The research consists of four main sections:

1. **Classical Historians and Their Works** – Discussing notable historians such as **Herodotus, Xenophon, Strabo, Polybius, and Diodorus Siculus**, whose works provide valuable insights into Kurdistan's history.
2. **Agriculture and Animal Husbandry** – Examining the economic foundations related to farming and livestock.
3. **Trade and Commerce** – Analyzing the role of trade in shaping Kurdistan's economic interactions.
4. **Craftsmanship, Mineral Resources, and Currency** – Exploring industries, resource exploitation, and early monetary systems in Kurdistan.

The study relies on primary sources, such as **Herodotus' *Histories*, Xenophon's *Anabasis* (The March of the Ten Thousand), Strabo's *Geography*, Polybius' *The Histories*, and Diodorus Siculus' *Babylon The Historical***. These works, along with other essential sources, contribute significantly to a comprehensive analysis of ancient Kurdistan's economic life.

Chapter First :Classical Historians

Several classical historians have documented Kurdistan's historical landscape, and some of their notable works provide valuable insights. Below are some of the most significant historians and their contributions:

1. Herodotus (c. 480–425 BCE)

Herodotus was an ancient Greek historian from Halicarnassus⁽¹⁾ (modern-day Bodrum, Turkey) in the 5th century BCE. There are different accounts regarding his birth, with some sources suggesting he was born in 489 BCE, while others associate his birth with the periods between the Greco-Persian Wars (490–479 BCE) and the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE). He is believed to have died between 430–425 BCE, likely due to the plague. His most famous work, *Histories* (*Historia*), is divided into seven books, covering various historical events⁽²⁾.



2. Xenophon (c. 429–354 BCE)

Xenophon, also known as Ksenophon or Xenophon son of Gryllus, was a classical historian from an aristocratic and wealthy family in Erchia, about 15 km east of Athens. He studied in Athens and participated in various military campaigns. Some sources date his birth to 430 BCE, while others suggest 435 or 444 BCE. His exact date of death remains uncertain, but he is believed to have died between 359–354 BCE in Corinth, in the Peloponnesian region. His most significant historical work, *Anabasis* (The March of the Ten Thousand), details his journey through Asia⁽³⁾.

3. Polybius (c. 200–120 BCE)

Polybius was a Greek historian born in Megalopolis, Arcadia, in the southern Peloponnesian region of Greece between 210 and 200 BCE. He actively participated in military campaigns alongside Roman forces and was known for his extensive historical writings. His death occurred around 120 BCE. Polybius' works focus on world history, and his most famous book, *The Histories*, originally consisted of 40 volumes⁽⁴⁾.

4. Diodorus Siculus (c. 80–21 BCE)

Also known as Diodorus of Sicily, he was a Greek historian from Agyrium (modern-day Agira, Sicily), born between 80 and 95 BCE. His most notable work, *Bibliotheca Historica* (Historical Library), is one of the most significant geographical and historical references, providing detailed accounts of ancient civilizations⁽⁵⁾.

5. Strabo (64 BCE – 19 CE)

Strabo, also referred to as Strabon, was a Greek historian, geographer, and writer born in Amasia (modern-day Amasya, Turkey), near the southern coast of the Black Sea. Little is known about his personal life and family, but he spent much of his time in Rome. His most important work, *Geography*, consists of 17 volumes, detailing the known world of his time⁽⁶⁾.

Chapter second :Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

1_Agriculture: A set of human activities involving the cultivation, protection, and supervision of various crops. These activities include planting, growing, and harvesting crops for food, trade, or processing. Agriculture is one of the most significant human innovations, forming the foundation of civilization and transforming human life. Kurdistan, with its suitable environment, has been a prime region for cultivating various crops such as wheat, barley, lentils, peas, and legumes. Archaeological evidence and historical records indicate that agriculture was first practiced and developed in Kurdistan, particularly in villages such as Bistan Sur Namrik and Jarmo ⁽⁷⁾. These agricultural advancements played a crucial role in shaping the economy and were among the earliest human revolutions based on nature ⁽⁸⁾.

The Greek historian **Herodotus** discussed the agricultural products of Kurdistan and Mesopotamia, particularly in the northern and Assyrian regions. He noted that despite certain



climatic challenges, the area was abundant in wheat production, with irrigation techniques used to support crop growth. The fertile lands near the **Tigris River** allowed for advanced irrigation methods, including canals and dams to regulate water supply, similar to the techniques used along the **Nile River** in Egypt. The northern Assyrian (present-day Kurdistan) region was renowned for producing wheat, olives, figs, and various trees, with wheat and barley flourishing in abundance. The region's proximity to high mountains contributed to its agricultural prosperity ⁽⁹⁾

Strabo, another historian, also emphasized the fertility of the region, describing its lush forests and abundant fruit trees. He highlighted the agricultural wealth of the **Hyrceanian Sea (Caspian Sea)** region and the **Zagros Mountains**, where olive and grape cultivation was widespread. The natural richness of this area provided high-quality olive oil and honey, with pine and fir trees growing abundantly ⁽¹⁰⁾.

The people of the Kardokhian and Kurduian regions constituted the cultural fabric of their society. Their cultural and agricultural products were among the main economic foundations of the region. Due to the geographical nature of the area and the presence of fertile plains along the banks of the Tigris River and its surrounding lands, the conditions were suitable for cultivating various types of crops such as wheat, barley, figs, and others. ⁽¹¹⁾ One of the reasons for the attacks by various states on the Kurduini was not only due to geographical factors but was also related to the region's wealth in culture and livestock ⁽¹²⁾.

Not only was the wealth of the Kurduini region based on agriculture and cultivation, but it was also rich in its natural forests and fruit-bearing trees. Archaeological evidence and ancient texts confirm this, indicating that the region was particularly abundant in surface crops, figs, and other produce, even in earlier historical periods ⁽¹³⁾ Xenophon, during his journey to the land of the Kardokhians, described it as follows:

"On the eastern banks of the Tigris River, there were numerous prosperous villages. The Karduchian people lived in the foothills and plains, and their villages were always inhabited and abundant with all kinds of food supplies... The Kardokhians wanted to save their families and themselves from the Greek army by escaping into the darkness of the night and crossing the river. However, they were eventually captured by the soldiers" ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Xenophon also clearly stated that there was an abundance of wine in the homes of the Karduchians, and it was widely available in their region. Their storage vessels were filled with wine, which was kept in their homes and stored underground in large containers. These vessels, made from the earth, were so well-crafted that their openings were level with the ground ⁽¹⁵⁾.

Advanced agriculture was widespread in the foothills of the Median region. Farming held great importance and was considered sacred within their society. Every member of the community was required to be knowledgeable in agriculture, livestock breeding, and general cultivation.

In the Median regions, a type of plant called saphium (Saphium plant) was cultivated. From it, a natural wine was produced. The people of the region had great expertise in its preparation and production. This type of wine could be preserved for a long time without undergoing any change in color or taste. It could be reused multiple times while maintaining its original flavor and color.



Despite the prosperity of the more fertile and resource-rich Median regions, life in the mountainous areas was difficult due to harsh winters. As a result, the people relied on the natural resources of the mountains for survival. They harvested products from their trees, drying them for winter storage. Bread was mixed with almonds and consumed, and wine was aged in wooden barrels for later use⁽¹⁶⁾.

Strabo describes the lands of the Kardokhians and Kurduini in a way that highlights their significance:

"Their lands were rich in agriculture, and their fields remained green and fertile throughout the year. Various types of crops were cultivated in their region, particularly aromatic plants such as amomum. This plant was highly fragrant. Their lands had a great number of livestock and were extremely rich in crops and trees. The region remained lush and fertile, producing amomum, which was both a medicinal herb and a high-quality incense." ⁽¹⁷⁾.

From this description, it becomes clear that the Kardokhian and Kurduinians placed great importance on agriculture as an economic pillar to meet their daily needs. They were hardworking, active farmers and herders. Due to their relentless labor and physical endurance, they were able to generate substantial income and wealth within their households.

2- Animal Husbandry:

A significant aspect of Kurdish society in past eras was the breeding of livestock and domestic animals. Various species of animals were raised, including sheep, goats, horses, cattle, camels, mules, and donkeys. Due to the region's rich and fertile nature, which provided abundant pastures, trees, plains, mountains, and vast grazing lands, the people of Kurdistan focused on animal husbandry and shepherding to meet their essential needs, such as meat, dairy products, wool, and leather. The geography of Kurdistan ⁽¹⁸⁾ facilitated the breeding of various animal species, especially horses. Kurdistan became famous for breeding the best, strongest, and most beautiful breeds of horses. Since the first millennium BCE, horse breeding was widespread in the Kurdish regions, particularly in Media, where it was considered highly significant. One of their major economic sources was raising the finest horse breeds. The historian Diakonov noted:

"Horses were bred in the lands of Media and gained great fame. Because of this, the Assyrian kings used to take horses as tribute and royal gifts. The Aryan nobility had a deep connection with horses and chariots, which played a crucial role in Median society. This importance even led to the Median language being adopted as the general language for communication in certain periods." ⁽¹⁹⁾ These horse breeds in Media were also referred to by Herodotus as Nisean Horses, named after the Nisaeen Plain in Media, where the best breeds were raised to the extent that they were considered sacred due to their white color. The white hue of these horses had



religious and symbolic significance in Median beliefs⁽²⁰⁾. When Herodotus described the royal caravan of the Achaemenid King Xerxes I (485–465 BCE) on his way to Sardis, the capital of Lydia, before crossing the Dardanelles to wage war against the Greeks in 480 BCE, he wrote:

"Thousands of Persian cavalymen marched, among them hundreds of sacred horses, known as Nisean Horses, which were adorned with magnificent ornaments. These Nisean Horses, raised in the Nisaeen Plain of Media, were the finest and largest horses, unparalleled anywhere in the world. The royal chariot was also drawn by these exceptional Nisean Horses." ⁽²¹⁾

The historian Polybius also described the natural conditions of Media, its horse breeding, and the methods of raising and training them. Additionally, he highlighted the Median people's refined social customs, stating:

"These horses, bred in Media, are among the finest animals in all of Asia. Even after the Persians took power from the Medians, the vast horse-breeding plains remained under Median control due to their deep expertise in animal husbandry." ⁽²²⁾

Similarly, Strabo described the regions from the Median Gates to the Caspian Sea and the fertile plains, stating:

"The lands from the Median Gates to the Caspian Sea possess great natural wealth, producing an abundance of crops and pastures for livestock. These lands are particularly suited for breeding horses, and the best and strongest horse breeds were raised in this region." ⁽²³⁾

The Carduchian and Corduenean regions, due to their geographical location and the existence of fertile plains near the banks of the Tigris River, were also well-known for animal husbandry. The natural richness of their forests and grazing lands provided ideal conditions for breeding various animals, including goats, sheep, horses, and mules. Archaeological evidence and ancient texts confirm that the Carduchians and Cordueneans were wealthy due to their livestock and agricultural activities. Their economic prosperity was evident even in ancient trade and transportation systems ⁽²⁴⁾.

Xenophon, during his journey through Carduchian lands, described them as follows:

"In the eastern valleys of the Tigris River, there were numerous prosperous villages. The Carduchian people lived between the mountains and plains, continuously building settlements that were rich in food supplies. Their villages were well-populated and full of agricultural resources. The Carduchians tried to escape the Greek army under the cover of darkness but were eventually captured by the soldiers." ⁽²⁵⁾

He also further emphasized:

"The Carduchian regions were rich in animal husbandry, particularly large livestock such as cattle, camels, and donkeys, which were essential for agriculture and transportation." ⁽²⁶⁾

Similarly, Strabo described the Carduchian and Corduenean regions, stating:



"These areas were mountainous, elevated, and naturally rich. They were always full of crops and greenery. Due to their wealth in animal husbandry, these lands were covered with dense forests, making them abundant in wildlife and domestic animals."⁽²⁷⁾

3- Tax: The historical development of taxation was based on economic changes, as state systems in different periods implemented their own economic policies on citizens. These taxes were not fixed but varied greatly depending on needs and the political and economic conditions of the time. Taxes and tributes have been collected from the people of ancient Kurdistan for thousands of years, especially during the Assyrian era, when they were required to be sent to the Assyrian capital. Taxes were imposed on land, trade goods, and commercial routes ⁽²⁸⁾.

After the fall of the Assyrians, the Medes and Achaemenids continued the same economic and financial system, implementing various types of taxes on the population. Additionally, the regions under Median rule were annually required to pay a specific type of tribute to the Median authorities in Ecbatana. After the establishment of the Median state and the collapse of the Assyrian Empire, the Medes took control of various regions (Syria, Lydia, Persia), and the tributes were sent to the Median capital, Ecbatana.

The Medes followed the Assyrian, Egyptian, and Babylonian policies of taxation and tribute collection, using a structured system that categorized taxes by type, amount, and form. Taxes on land were collected based on area and productivity, while individual taxes were paid in various forms, including gold, silver, livestock, food products, and other goods. These annual tributes had to reach the royal treasury in Ecbatana. Specific officials in each region were responsible for collecting and managing these taxes, with a portion of the revenue allocated to local rulers before being forwarded to the king ⁽²⁹⁾.

The wealth and resources of the Median territories were closely linked to their vast lands, and historical records indicate the prosperity of these regions. A large amount of tax revenue was sent to Persia after the fall of the Median rule. Annually, around 1,500 camels, 5,000 sheep, and 2,000 long-haired cattle were collected as tribute⁽³⁰⁾.

Chapter third: The Commercial Aspect

Ancient humans lived in caves, leading simple lives reliant on hunting and gathering. Over time, as commerce emerged, they adapted to using natural resources to meet their needs. Initially, obtaining certain products was difficult due to limited availability and lack of organized trade routes. As a result, people stored essential goods in clay jars buried underground for long-term preservation. Gradually, humans sought ways to increase food production and develop various economic activities, which led to the emergence of trade ⁽³¹⁾.

Archaeological's research reveals that internal trade connections existed within Kurdistan. This became evident through the examination of natural obstacles that impacted trade routes ⁽³²⁾.

During ancient times, multiple international trade routes passed through Kurdistan due to the region's numerous natural gateways formed by the Zagros Mountains. These routes facilitated significant commercial exchanges. One of the most prominent among them was the (Khanaqin-Kermanshah-Ecbatana) route, recognized as a major gateway to Asia. Another vital trade route



extended towards the eastern regions, passing through the Zagros Mountains via (Penjwin and Halabja), continuing southward through Eastern Kurdistan ⁽³³⁾.

Strabo mentions the economic activities of the Medes, highlighting their wealth from valuable minerals. Trade caravans from the region traveled to Syria, Assyria, bay, and Cappadocia, transporting goods such as grain and wine ⁽³⁴⁾. Another commercial route within the Median territory connected various regions, extending close to Central Asia, through the Caucasus Mountains, and even reaching certain parts of India. In particular, gold from Bactria and lapis lazuli from Central Asia were transported via Median trade routes. The Assyrians referred to the Demavend Mountain as a hub for lapis lazuli trade, which held significant value worldwide due to its use in various crafts ⁽³⁵⁾.

Another major trade route passed through Adiabene, crossing the Sinjar Mountains before reaching Karkemish (modern-day Tripoli). This route followed the Euphrates River and extended southward toward Palmyra, Damascus, and the Phoenician coastal cities on the eastern Mediterranean. Additionally, the Nineveh-Sinjar route connected Adiabene to Haran and various Syrian cities before reaching Asia Minor. The Nineveh trade route linked its cities with Kurdwini territory, forming part of the larger commercial network ⁽³⁶⁾.

The lands of the Kardokhians and Kurdwenians were rich in natural resources, including fertile lands, forests, and abundant wildlife. Consequently, they became centers of commerce and craftsmanship. However, due to their strategic location, they were frequently subjected to invasions aimed at controlling trade routes. During the Assyrian period, the (Ashur-Nineveh-Nisibis) and (Ashur-Nineveh-Mardin-Amed) trade routes connected Assyria to Anatolia, playing a key role in commercial exchanges. The Kardokhian and Kurdwenian regions remained important economic centers during the Median period, linking the heart of Media to its frontier territories, extending as far as Central Anatolia ⁽³⁷⁾.

One of the significant ancient trade routes in Kurdistan was the (Armis-Harir) route. It began between two rivers and extended toward Ecbatana, crossing the highlands of Media and the Zagros Mountains, eventually reaching Hamedan and Kermanshah. From Media, two routes emerged—one leading northward toward the Caspian Sea and Khurasan, while the southern route extended through Hamedan to Ahvaz, reaching Fars and Kerman. Another branch continued eastward toward the Hindu Kush (Sulaiman Mountains) and into India and the Indus Valley. These interconnected trade routes facilitated commerce between the East and West. The most significant commodity traded along this route was silk (Armis), which originated from India, giving the route its name ⁽³⁸⁾.

The Kardokhian and Kurdwenian territories in Adiabene played a crucial role during the Achaemenid period, particularly in the establishment of the Royal Road. This route connected Susa to Sardis (the capital of Lydia) in central Anatolia, not only serving as a commercial passage but also facilitating military, administrative, ⁽³⁹⁾ and postal services for the empire ⁽⁴⁰⁾. Herodotus mentions that this route extended through Kurdweni lands, linking them to Persia. The Royal Road stretched from Sardis to Susa, following the modern-day Iraq-Iran border and continuing eastward ⁽⁴¹⁾.

Additionally, the ancient trade route from Erbil to Kirkuk is highlighted in historical accounts, indicating its importance. British historian Stephen Lloyd describes the route in detail, noting the presence of numerous villages, rivers, and cities along the way ⁽⁴²⁾. During this period, Kurdweni's significance increased, as part of the (Armis-Harir) route passed through its



southern territories. This network of trade routes facilitated commercial exchanges between Upper Mesopotamia and Kurdistan, drawing the attention of various ruling powers who sought to control these routes for economic gain. As a result, Kurdweni territories often became battlegrounds for competing empires ⁽⁴³⁾.

In ancient Kurdistan, trade was not limited to land routes; river trade also played a crucial role. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, along with their tributaries, formed an essential part of the transportation network. The Assyrians developed river trade by constructing boats to facilitate commerce, taking advantage of the rivers' navigability and cost-effectiveness. Special guilds operated in Kurdistan, organizing trade along the Tigris River, transporting goods from Nineveh to southern Iraq ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Furthermore, specific types of boats resembling rafts were used for short-distance trade and local crossings. Some boats were covered with woven canopies or wooden planks, pulled by ropes along the riverbanks. It is unclear whether these methods were widely adopted or only depicted in ancient reliefs. However, small boats were definitely used for crossing rivers and canals ⁽⁴⁵⁾.

Waterborne trade along the Tigris and Euphrates, along with their tributaries, connected river routes with overland trade networks. One major riverine route began in Kirkuk, following the Tigris toward Nineveh, eventually reaching Amida before continuing toward Armenia. This connected with the overland trade route (Adiabene-Kardokhian-Kurdweni). The Euphrates River also facilitated broader trade, particularly for bulk goods ⁽⁴⁶⁾.

The Kardokhian and Kurdwenian regions had multiple bridges designed for military and commercial use, ensuring the smooth passage of caravans. These bridges were also strategically used by armies, including Roman legions, to secure trade routes and borders. The economic significance of Kurdweni territories extended beyond commerce, making them a crucial point in imperial military strategies ⁽⁴⁷⁾.

The Kurdish regions had both dry and water routes due to the presence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and their tributaries. Especially during trade periods, merchants traveling south used these routes efficiently, utilizing boats for the transportation of goods and commercial items⁽⁴⁸⁾. Herodotus also mentions this in his writings and confirms the reality of this trade⁽⁴⁹⁾.

In ancient Kurdistan, commercial goods were transported for various reasons (necessities). Some were used for long periods, while others, such as horses, mules, and boats, facilitated the movement of goods along both dry and water routes. A large number of caravans traveled together for trade, overcoming many natural and human obstacles along the way. Another important means of transportation was carts, which developed over several stages. Additionally, another significant transport method was rafts crowning, which were placed on rivers to facilitate the movement of goods⁽⁵⁰⁾.

These rafts were placed on rivers to facilitate the transportation of goods. Shipbuilding saw significant advancements during the Assyrian era, marking a notable development. Merchants in Kurdistan transported various types of goods along these rivers using boats, reaching southern and central Iraq as well as other regions⁽⁵¹⁾.



The people of ancient Kurdistan, around the first millennium BCE, engaged in both domestic and international trade. They traded various goods, including agricultural products, livestock products, natural resources, handicrafts, artisanal works (such as weaving and pottery), minerals, precious metals, wine, slaves, timber, and other commodities⁽⁵²⁾.

Throughout history, commercial caravans in Kurdistan faced attacks, raids, ambushes, theft, confiscation, and looting. From the Akkadian period to the Sassanian and Byzantine eras, these challenges had a negative impact on trade in Kurdistan. However, despite these difficulties, commercial activities continued⁽⁵³⁾.

Chapter Four: The Craftsmanship and Wealth of the People of Kurdistan:

Kurdistan was a wealthy land, famous for its diverse sources of income and essential mineral resources. Part of the people of Kurdistan engaged in craftsmanship, agriculture, and trade, while others worked in vital industries that provided for their daily needs, including food and shelter. There was a prominent focus on both rural and urban work, with agriculture serving as the primary source of income, followed by other trades in handicrafts, pottery, and trade. Since ancient times, these methods were linked to economic prosperity, as evidenced by their continuous use and development.

At the beginning of the first millennium BC, private mining practices were prominent, followed by an increasing variety of industries, which produced significant goods. The most notable minerals, such as gold and silver, were used in the production of tools and decorative items. These included fine pieces of furniture, jewelry, weapons, and art. This trade became increasingly sophisticated, and it was clear that the resources were being systematically exploited⁽⁵⁴⁾. The products were widely traded, and the craftsmanship flourished.

The people of Kurdistan continued to innovate in many crafts, from creating intricate metalwork to the construction of durable, functional homes and items. These materials contributed to local production and economic development. The quality of products, such as coins and decorative items, showed the success of these activities⁽⁵⁵⁾.

Polybius discusses the natural wealth of Kurdistan, describing its various precious treasures when depicting the city of Ecbatana and its style of construction and decoration. He states:

"Sound, columns, roofs, doors, and the foundation of the royal palace, as well as gold, silver, and precious gems, were used in it. After Alexander of Macedon captured the city, it lost its former beauty and decoration as if it had faded away..."⁽⁵⁶⁾ This reference indicates that during the Median period, precious treasures were present, and the rulers used these treasures for their own purposes and needs. According to Strabo, when describing the economic aspects of the Median region and their way of life, he states:

"The Medes were rich in various valuable treasures such as gold and silver, which many houses used for construction and ornamentation. These treasures were considered



valuable assets for their maintenance, and they were clearly identified as gold and silver, which were used not only for sustenance but also for luxurious and more attractive purposes." ⁽⁵⁷⁾ In the northern region of Media and around the Caspian Sea (Qazvin), the presence of gold and silver was limited among the people of these areas. However, there were places where gold was still found within their homes. This is important for understanding the strength of the Median power, as it allowed a significant portion of the population to access wealth and resources. This contributed to the prosperity and the well-being of the people ⁽⁵⁸⁾.

Zainaphon, in his account of the Medes, describes how the wealth of the Median households was accumulated and displayed:

"In the households of the Medes, there were valuable items such as gold and silver, which were used for various purposes, including travel. Additionally, in their homes, luxurious items made of red stone were crafted. The treasures and income were carefully stored and preserved within these homes." ⁽⁵⁹⁾ Zainaphon continues his account:

"The Greeks did not alter their luxurious items, which were cherished by them. These items were seen as a means of protecting their wealth, and they ensured that their treasures remained untouched, so that they could be revealed only when necessary. The Greeks' primary goal was to pass through the regions peacefully, and their military forces were instructed to maintain cooperation and peace during their passage." ⁽⁶⁰⁾

The Greeks took their wealth with them and did not take any belongings or engage in plundering. This is evidence of the peaceful passage of the Greek army through the Kurdish lands. Even on the way, several bronze shields from the Greek army were observed. Near the point where the Tigris River meets the Diyala, these shields were strong and resistant, and they were marked as belonging to soldiers who had passed through. This is one of the many signs confirming the passage of the Greek army through the heart of Kurdistan ⁽⁶¹⁾.

Similarly, Zainaphon continues describing the situation and states:

"The Medes' forces were composed of large battalions. The Greeks fought them, using their weapons and strategies to pass through the mountainous lands of the Medes, which were difficult to navigate." ⁽⁶²⁾

Strabo mentions a specific aspect of the Kardokhian region:

"A rare and important type of mineral existed in the Kardokhian region, known as 'Amomum' (Hagas Stone), ' (Black Kahraman) ⁽⁶³⁾, which had a distinctive color and was feared by living beings due to its properties⁽⁶⁴⁾. Additionally, naphtha, clay, and bricks were produced from this region and were used as construction materials. ⁽⁶⁵⁾"

This serves as evidence that these areas were only rich in natural resources played a significant role in the craftsmanship and industry of the time.



In the era of Zainaphon, the Medes' armor was widely used, but after the fifth century BCE, it became less common. However, it was still employed by various military groups, including the Romans, ⁽⁶⁶⁾ who made use of these designs during their campaigns in Kurdistan. The Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus notes that the Romans used different types of shields and armor, including those of Celtic and Gallic origin, which were used by the Medes. These materials, along with other treasures, served as evidence of the Medes' wealth and craftsmanship.

The Romans in Kurdistan constructed several fortifications, and these advanced building techniques highlight the importance of both strategic defense and military preparation. In particular, the Medes' expertise in creating well-crafted, sturdy armor and their ability to maintain superior military skills were critical to their strength and success. The use of such armor, especially in the context of warfare and travel, helped the Medes achieve their dominance during this period ⁽⁶⁷⁾.

Herodotus, in his account of the crafts of Kurdistan, specifically mentions the following:

"The people of the northern part of Assyria (the northern region of Kurdistan) are known for their craftsmanship and the use of their tools for river navigation. They made use of trees and wood to build boats and other items. This skill was passed down by two individuals who played significant roles in this craft... These boats would travel to the southern regions, but they did not venture into the northern areas. This practice continued for many years, especially during the winter months, when goods were exchanged and trade routes were reopened." ⁽⁶⁸⁾

Diodorus, in his description of the wealth and prosperity of the Kurdish region, states:

"In Arbela (Adiabene), during the reign of Darius III, Alexander's army stayed in Arbela for three days. The region was known for its wealth, prosperity, and the variety of precious treasures, goods, and foods. These items were obtained from nearby areas and were considered valuable, especially gold. The people of the region were prosperous and well-off. The Macedonian army felt at ease while in the region. Alexander, on his way to the Median territories, took nearly 700 of his soldiers from Arbela to secure the fortifications and protect the region." ⁽⁶⁹⁾

This shows that Arbela was one of the wealthiest regions in terms of treasures and resources. The people of Arbela, as described, had a good relationship with the Macedonians, though the Macedonians were not always successful in their campaigns due to the resistance they faced.

In reference to the system of commerce and trade in ancient Kurdistan, it is stated:

"The system of trading and currency exchange in Kurdistan was not only a difficult process but also a well-established practice. It was used to determine the value of goods and establish clear pricing systems for items being bought and sold. As time passed, precious metals like gold and silver became the main mediums of exchange. In the era of the Assyrians, units such as shekels and talents were used as standard units of measurement for currency and trade ⁽⁷⁰⁾. These units were employed in Kurdistan and widely distributed throughout the region ⁽⁷¹⁾."



Regarding the currency (Shekel), it is noted that until the peak of the Medes' rule in the Kurdish region around 1000 BCE, certain coins or money were not yet in use, and no official currency had been created. However, some references indicate the use of small-scale currencies during the Median period, and there are mentions of a type of coin with four corners that was specific to the region, although there was no clear indication of its design or symbol. It is believed that during the Median era, certain forms of currency began to circulate, particularly associated with trade in the region⁽⁷²⁾, with Lydian influence visible in the creation of coins.

The Median people used this currency system primarily for trade and transactions, though it was not seen as a central requirement in their economy. The system of currency, likely introduced by the Lydians, was seen as a significant development, though it did not yet become widespread across all areas of Median governance⁽⁷³⁾.

In the time of the Achaemenids, a type of coin called the "Daric" was introduced and used⁽⁷⁴⁾. After that, during the reign of Alexander the Great and the Seleucids, their currency also came into use. Similarly, during the Parthian and Roman periods, Parthian, Roman, and Armenian coins were widely circulated. Additionally, in the regions of Western Armenia and Kurdistan, coins with unique designs were used by local rulers such as the kings of Adiabene and Sophene⁽⁷⁵⁾. It is believed that coins were used in these regions as a form of local currency, although no records have yet confirmed the exact types of coins used in Kurdistan up until the early periods⁽⁷⁶⁾.

The mention of the Archaeological dynasty in the context of the region near Batman and the coinage of the Armenian king Artavasdes II (55-34 BCE), during the time of King Tigranes the Great⁽⁷⁷⁾, is significant in understanding the coinage in Kurdistan. The Armenian king Monobazos, who ruled in Adiabene, minted a special coin in bronze. This coin featured his own image and had a distinctive design, with symbols such as a lotus flower and two stars around the border. Additionally, the coin bore Greek inscriptions, with the name "Monobazos" written on it. The dating of the coin to the Seleucid year 332 BCE ties it to the historical period of Seleucid influence. During the time of the Kurdish kingdom of Adiabene, this coin was used as part of the regional economy, and some of these coins circulated in Kurdistan, further highlighting the integration of Adiabene into broader regional trade networks⁽⁷⁸⁾.

Sure, here's the translation of the text into English without any additional details:

"Indeed, the use of coins in various regions of Kurdistan, such as Media, Adiabene, and Kurdistan, was noted. However, the classical historians of that era did not often emphasize these coins, which may be due to their lack of documentation. This could explain why these coins were not prominently featured in historical records, even though they played a role in the interactions of the people in these regions."



Conclusion

In the second stage of the research, some results were reached:

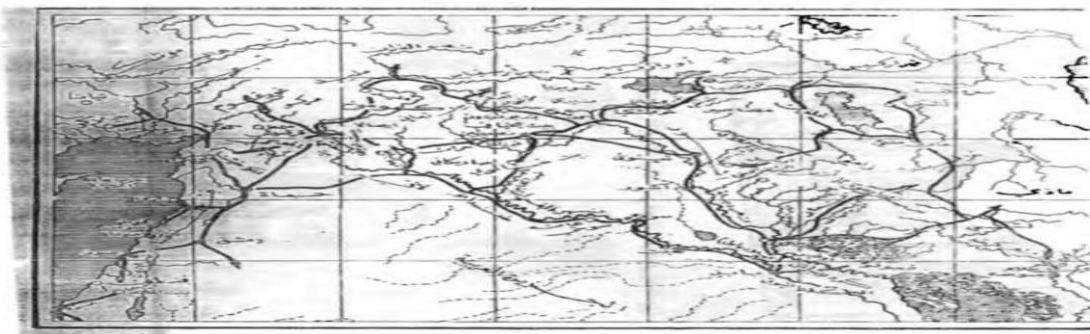
1. A significant portion of the history of Kurdistan has been documented in books, manuscripts, and in the works of historians, geographers, leaders, and Greek and Roman philosophers, who wrote, collected, and preserved these works.
2. Certainly, the classical knowledge and writings about the history of Kurdistan have been gathered and remain an important source for the historical narrative of the region, as they provide essential documentation about the race, ethnicity, and existence of the Kurdish people in their homeland, which has been a vital and strategic part of history for a long time. This also highlights the political, regional, and foreign influence on the Kurdish areas, with many wars occurring in the region, resulting in both material and human losses.
3. As a result, it is clear that classical sources and writings help in identifying the important aspects of the Kurdish region, with all economic and social factors making it a valuable and prominent area in history.
4. The geopolitical and strategic importance of Kurdistan, located in the middle of the world, has influenced the economic and trade policies of the region. Consequently, several significant economic routes have developed in the heart of Kurdistan, which plays an important role in improving the living standards of the Kurdish people.
5. The natural resources of Kurdistan, including its fertile lands, mountains, forests, and plains, are rich in valuable resources, such as oil, gas, and minerals. These have been used to improve the local economy and provide essential products for its people, while also contributing to its role in international trade and cooperation.



The statue of the god Ashtar in Erbil.

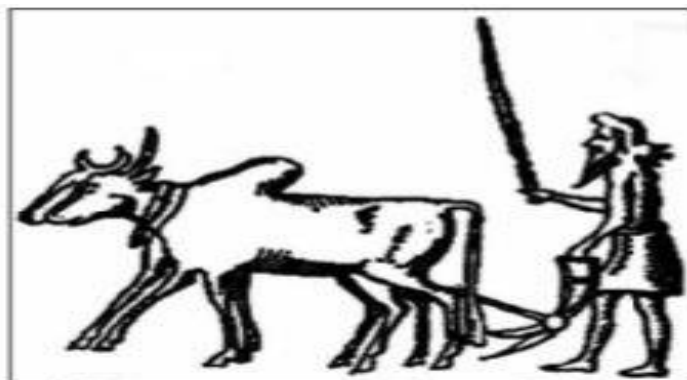


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