

**(B) Effects of Alexander's Invasion-1. Few and Unimportant Direct Consequences of Alexander's Invasion** – Alexander's invasion failed completely to produce any direct and permanent effect of great importance on the Indian culture. **Dr. V.A. Smith** has rightly remarked, "*India continued to live her life of splendid isolation and soon forgot the passing of the Macedonian storm.*" There were many causes responsible to this poor legacy of Alexander's invasion :

*(1) Premature Death* – Alexander was not a freeloater like Chingiz or Timur. He wanted to annex all the territories including the Indian provinces to his empire. It was with this aim in mind that he had divided his Indian territory in three provinces and made elaborate administrative arrangements. But his pre-mature death put an end to all his plans.

*(2) Short Stay in India* – Alexander stayed in India for a very short time, only for nineteen months, and he spent all this time in fighting. Under such war conditions neither the Indians could understand the Greeks nor the Greeks could understand the Indian culture.

(3) *Only a Frontier Raid* – Alexander's invasion was more or less like a frontier raid and most of the country remained almost untouched by the Greek invasion. He did not go beyond the Punjab and that is why no Indian book has even mentioned this invasion.

(4) *Indian Culture already well-developed* – Indian culture was already well-developed and Indian people were by no means backward than other peoples of the world. Thus there was nothing for the Indians that they could learn from the Greeks.

(5) *Rise of the Mauryas* – Soon after the return of Alexander all his Indian provinces came under the domination of Chandragupta Maurya. Consequently even the last remnants of the Greek influence were gone.

**2. Indirect Consequences of Alexander's Invasion** – Although Alexander's invasion failed to hellenize India and did not leave any direct effects of great importance yet it produced many indirect consequences, some of which are the following :

(1) *Help in the Rise of the Mauryas* – Alexander's invasion left the Punjab state and its war-like tribes so weak and impotent that it became very easy for Chandragupta Maurya to conquer them. Thus Alexander's invasion made Chandragupta Maurya's work much easier.

(2) *Paved the Way for Indian Unity* – Alexander's invasion indirectly paved the way for political unity of India. Had not Alexander weakened the Indian states, Chandragupta Maurya might not have achieved the high aim of uniting India, because then there was every possibility of prolonged wars with other states in which he might have to spend his whole life.

(3) *Direct Touch with the European World* – Alexander's invasion brought India in close contact with the European countries. Now four new routes (three by land and one by sea) were found by which Indian scholars, merchants and religious leaders began to go to European countries and other peoples too, began to come to this country of "strange folks and surpassing wealth". In this way trade relations between India and Europe were greatly improved.

(4) *Help in the Construction of History* – Alexander's invasion also proved helpful in the reconstruction of Indian History. The date of Alexander's invasion of India (*i.e.* 326 B.C.) has helped us a lot in solving the Indian chronology. It is, in fact, the sheet-anchor of Indian chronology. The different dates given in the Brahmanical, Buddhist as well as the Jain literatures are confusing and puzzling and here the definite date of Alexander's invasion comes to our help. We can calculate various events from this definite date. Again many Greek scholars who came to India in the war-train of Alexander and even after that (such as Megasthenes, Nearchos and Arrian, etc.) have left valuable accounts of India, which have proved very useful to the students of Indian History.

(5) *Foundation of the Greek States* – After Alexander's return those Greeks who were left behind established their independent states on the north-west frontier of India. It was with the establishment of these Greek states (Indo-Bactrian and Indo-Parthians) that a close relation between the Indians and the Greeks was established and both affected each other. The Indians learnt a good deal from the Greeks in the field of coinage, astronomy, architecture and sculpture. In the religious field the Hindu religion and philosophy affected the Greek a lot and many Greeks adopted the Hindu religion and Hindu names. The view that the Indian drama was also influenced by the Greeks is not now accepted by the historians.

**3. Alexander's Invasion, both Exaggerated and Under-Estimated** – Some western scholars, especially Greek writers like Italian and Curtius, are of the view that Alexander's invasion produced a great many effects on the Indian people and changed their way of life to a great extent. On the other hand many Indian scholars and some European historians, like Dr. V.A. Smith are of the opinion that Alexander's invasion did not influence the Indian people in any way. According to **Dr. V.A. Smith**, "*No Indian author, Hindu, Buddhist or Jain makes even the faintest allusion of Alexander or his deeds.*" But both of these views either exaggerate or under-estimate the influence of Alexander's invasion and do not present the correct picture. It is true that due to various causes Alexander's invasion did not leave any direct and permanent consequences of great importance but it did produce many indirect effects which should not be ignored. (Those effects have already been discussed above in detail and need not be repeated here once again.)