

**Baluchistan
Language, Literature
and Archeology**



**BALUCHI ACADEMY
QUETTA.**

BALUCHI LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

BY: BASHIR AHMED BALOCH

Pakistan's biggest province of Baluchistan (area; over 347,188 Sq. kms. pop: 4.3 million) has a variety of geographical regions and climate ranging from snow capped mountains in the north to the sprawling deserts and sand dunes in the south west with more than 700 kms sea coast stretching from Gaddani to the Persian Gulf. Besides Pakistani Baluchistan, there is Iranian Baluchistan and Baluchi speaking areas of southern Afghanistan. In addition, there is a substantial population of Baloches in the gulf region across the Mekran coast. It may be of great interest to students of political science and literature that Baloches inhabit areas in different countries which are contiguous.

Due to scanty rainfall there is an acute scarcity of water both for human and animal consumption as well as for irrigation purposes. Vast tracts of virgin and fertile land remain uncultivated because of no perennial rivers in the province. In some valleys there is an irrigation system which is one of the oldest in the world. It is popularly known as the Karez — (underground water channels) a chain of series of wells inter-connected underground, the construction of which has been prevalent for centuries in Baluchistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Gulf states, Central Asian Republics of USSR and Sinkiang in China. A few perennial channels drawn from streams cannot provide enough work for farming by the people of the province. Therefore a large number of people depend on sheep and goat rearing, wandering from one area to the other in search of food for themselves and fodder for their animals. Thus a substantial part of the population of Balochistan has remained Nomadic. Sometimes there are no rainfalls for years together, forcing the people to migrate to adjoining areas of the Sind, Punjab and NWFP to find employment for themselves as well as grazing grounds for their herds. This might be the reason as to why the number of Baloches inhabiting Sind, Punjab and Frontier is much more than in Balochistan itself. In D.G. Khan and Muzaffargarh districts in Punjab and almost large areas of Sind province have Balochis who have preserved their language.

We cannot say that nature has been unkind to the people of Balochistan because the barren mountains of Balochistan

are full of precious minerals. Sui Gas was discovered in the burning deserts of Bugti territory as far back as 1952. Besides huge coal desposit the province has chromite, Marble, Copper, Baryte and Iron ores. Detailed surveys are in progress indicating that oil might be struck in commercial quantity in prospecting areas of the province.

Life generally is very hard and the people have to make strenous efforts to eke out their living. As such one has to see in the context of the area, the life style of the people and the literature which has been produced, portraying the life, the society, the customs, traditions and social and moral values dear the people of the province.

The people in Baluchistan usually lead a simple life. They are rustic, brave, bold, honest and straight forward people. Their literature portrays all these values abundantly. About the Baluchi language and its literature an orientalist Mr. Meyer has rightly said in the forward of his Balochi English dictionary compiled by him in 1906. He says "If brevity is the soul of wit Balochi language is the wittiest in the world".

Before some aspects of Balochi literature are discussed it is worth while to clear certain points about Balochi language itself. In the past there had been a genral impression that Balochi was a corrupt form of Persian because Balochi and Persian languages have many things in common. This theory has been dispelled by Scholars of repute both in Europe as well as in the orient on the basis of their findings and research through the historical documents and manuscripts available particularly the diciphering of old Achaemenian inscriptions. Prof. Geiger observes in his book "GRUNDRISS IRANISCHEN PHILOGIE" that of all the Iranian dialects Balochi is raised to pre-eminence of its own. It has preserved the old tenues in all positions even after vowels and liquids. In this respect it accordingly stands on a level with the older Pehlavi".

In this context Professor Grierson has rightly said in the linguistic survey of India 1901-Vol (10). He says "Balochi resembles like most other Iranian languages in showing a nearer relationship to the ancient language of Avesta than to the old Persian, the court language of the Athaemenians from which modern persian is directly descended" so we can say with certainty that the present Persian and Balochi languages are sister languages drawing their roots from the old Pehlavi

and also from Avesta.

Dr. Andreas of Kiel University is of the opinion that Balochi is a branch of Pehlavi.

Baloch people have remained nomadic through out their history. Even today a big chunk of the population remains so, we cannot expect enough literary treasures in written form as the pursuit of knowledge and its preservation demand that there should be seats of learning. However, like the Arabs there is a traditional way of recording the historical events and accounts of battles fought and bravery shown by the tribesmen in countering enemy attacks during inter tribal conflicts or external aggression. These are recounted in war ballads some of which date back to the 14th century. A poem of Baloch Gorgej of this period reads as follows.

He says "Mountains are the forts of the Baloch, the deep steep gorges are their storages. They drink the crystal waters of the hilly streams and sleep on hard rocks. White chaplis are their horses, blood thirsty swords are their nephews. The silvery spurs are their brothers. Bow and arrows are sons to Baloches".

The story of Baloch in verse is the account of a revengeful youngmen to regain his tribal honour by avenging the death of his brother slain for giving refuge to a widow. In it the wanderings of Balach are narrated in great depth. The running theme of all the lengthy poems is the resolve of Balach to avenge the murder of Doda, his elder brother.

The literature of earliest period preserved and available through the professional bards and minstrels are mostly the poems relating to the romance of Sassi and Punnu and the epic poems of Balach Gorgej. The Romance of Sassi and Punnu gained eminence when the Saint poet of Sind Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai based almost the entire theme of his compositions on it turning it into mysticism — He describes Kech, the HOTHES and the Camel riding Baloches in great length - The Kech valley with its date oasis still guards the old Fort of Punnu popularly know as Mirri.

The folk tale was overshadowed by the story of Hani and Shah Muried in which the character of villain was played by no less a person than Mir Chakar Khan Rind the then Chief of Baloches with his headquarters at Sibi. This folk tale is described in Chaste Balochi verse. It is very popular

throughout Balochistan and the Balochi speaking territories in Sind, Punjab and other parts of the world where the Baloches are living. Poems from Hani Shah Murid are sung by the professional bards with much gusto and zeal.

The orientalists have done a yeoman's service to Balochi language and literature as they were the people who started compiling the grammar, dictionaries and the most important of all compiled collections of the classical poems in various volumes. Rare books published by them speak of their efforts.

- a) A sketch of Balochi language published in the journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Calcutta in 1840 by Capt. Leech.
- b) Balochi poems published in a book - Sindh by R. Burton in 1877.
- c) A sketch of northern Balochi language published by M.L. Dames in 1980.
- d) Balochi Text Book published by M.L. Dames in 1891.
- e) Balochi poems published in the book entitled Legends of the Punjab, by Sir Richard Temple.
- f) Balochi Nameh published by Lala Hetu Ram from Lahore in 1907.
- g) Popular poetry of the Baloches by M.L. Dames published on behalf of R.A.S. London in 1907.
- h) A Grammar of Makrani Balochi by Mr. Mockler published in 1877.
- i) A grammar of Balochi language by H. Nicol published in 1912 from Lahore.
- j) Father T. Meyer published - A dictionary of English into Balochi.
- k) English Balochi, colloquial dictionary published by Mr. Gilhertson.

Lengthy poem-Shers in Balochi mostly by unknown authors recount in vivid details the battles fought between the two main tribes Rinds and Lashars led by their two chiefs Mir Chakar Khan Rind and Mir Gwahram Lashari. It is said that this tribal conflict continued for thirty long years culminating in the mass migration of the Rinds into Sind and Punjab, leaving their adversaries the lasharis to stay on in the plains of Sibi and Kachhi. Mir Chakar is buried in Sathgarh in the Sahiwal district of the Punjab.

Besides the Romance of Sheh Muried and Hani the other important popular folk romances available in chaste verse are:-

1. Shahdad and Mahnaz.
2. Lallah and Granaz.
3. Dostin and Shirin.
4. Bebarg and Granaz.
5. Izzat and Mehruk.
6. Hammal and Mahganj.
7. Mast and Sammo.
8. Natha and Semuk.
9. Kiyya and Saddo.

Of all these, the story of Hani and Sheh Muried is the most popular and widely sung. Many plays have been written, based on it and numerous articles published. Lallah and Granaz is another tale which is also composed in verse by an unknown author. The language is the popular colloquial language of the masses and it is by itself a complete drama with Lallah the husband playing the role of the hero and Granaz his wife that of heroine separated from each other due to some misunderstanding but ultimately reunited.

These poems have also been collected from the bards and folk singers and published in a book form by the writer of this article. Dostin and Shirin, Hammal and Mahganj and Mast and Sammo have also appeared in book forms.

After this, one comes across the poetry of Jam Durrak Dombki. He was attached to the court of Mir Naseer Khan — Khan of Kalat from 1741 to 1796. Jam Durrak cast aside the old tradition of the classics and composed a few excellent ghazals full of beautiful and unique similes and metaphors. He gave new dimension to the thoughts and contents of Balochi poetry. Translation of his poem the "Laughing lightning" reads.

Lightening which appeared last night flashing and staggering like a drunken man from the direction of the west brought me news of my love which clothed my body with flowers. A rainbow in the south and by its side a purple storm cloud, it was like my love in every aspect.

I am a fool to struggle with my heart and my heart is a fool to fight with me. It weeps like an azure-faced babe, it struggles like a fierce marauding Turk and demands the beauty with long black locks from the thick clouds, who is the one in thousands.

Another piece from his poem "The Heavenly Fairies" The Fairies lit a fire on the top of the mountain. There the heavenly beauties gathered, clap dancing. I stepped ahead to seize one who resembled my beloved. As I came forward the heavenly Houris fled away. I was bewildered and stood like a bashful lover.

The heavenly fairies said to me "Oh foolish Faqir how foolish and mad art thou. No being of this world we are, we are the fairy spirit of the martyrs. One day when thy fate shall come upon thee and thou are prepared for thy funeral, we will sit at the cross roads and lift thy corpse up and quench the thirst of the foolish heart".

A collection of the poems of this great Balochi poet of the 18th Century was compiled nearly one hundred and fifty years after his time and published in a book by the writer of this article in 1963. With the advent of Pakistan, Balochi language and literature renewed strides. The introduction of Radio programmes in Balochi from Karachi in 1949, Balochi was given its rightful place as a regional language by Government of Pakistan. I should say with confidence and authority that the contribution of Radio programmes to the enrichment, development and promotion of Balochi language and literature is second to none. Actually the Radio broadcasts in Balochi were the harbinger of a new era for Balochi literature, music and folk lore. Through these broadcasts not only the folk literature of Balochi language has been projected to the listeners but it has also been preserved for present generation and posterity.

In this period we come across a host literary figures both poems and prose writers emerging from oblivion. Prominent poets of this period are Late Gul Khan Naseer, late Zahur Shah Syed, Ata Shad, Late Azat Jamaldini, M. Sabir, Malik Tauqi, G.R.Mullah, Late Jawan Sal Bugti, Ishaq Shamim, Ahmad Zahir, Isa Qamumi etc each one has published his selections in book form.

After independence a monthly magazine "OMAN" was published by the literary enthusiasts of Karachi in which

the poems and short stories of the contemporary writers appeared as well as some classics hither to unpublished. It is unfortunate that this journals had to cease publication due to financial stringency.

The Editor of monthly Oman Mulana Khair Mohammad Nadvi is Publishing a new monthly "Saughat" from Karachi which has a wide range of readership in the country as well as abroad.

Another magazine entitled "Balochi" was tarted by Azat Jamaldini from Karachi in 1956. Although it had a short span of life yet it really was instrumental in generating a general wave of literary activity. Later on, this magazine reappeared from Quetta but due to the death of Azat Jamaldini it ceased publication.

Now it is again being published by Mr. Abdul Wahid Bandig maintained a high literary standard and is very popular with the readers in Pakistan Iran and Gulf states.

"Zaman" Balochi has been another important Journal published first from Karachi and later on from Quetta for many years. It had attracted a large number of renowned writers within the country. It brought out special numbers on late Ghulam Mohammad Shahwani, Yousuf Aziz Magsi and Zahoor Shah Syed, Haji Abdul Qayyum has been editing the magazine for some times.

Recently another magazine entitled Bamssar has appeared from Karachi which is another welcome addition and has been well received by the literary circles.

Late Abdul Karim Shorish had been publishing a fortnightly "Naukin Daur" in Balochi for many years.

The tribal publicity organisation started publishing a monthly journal called "ULUS" form Quetta since 1960-61 which has brought out special annual numbers in which poems; articles short stories, plays and dramas etc have been appearing by prominent writers.

Another healthy sign has been the formation and establishment of a number of literary societies and organizations at different areas which are actively contributing valuable literary services.

Izzat Academy at Panjgur, Fazal Academy, Karachi, Sayad Hashmi Academy at Karachi, Labzanki Dewan and Labzanki

Sarchamag at Turbat, Pasni and Gwadar after establishment have come out with a member of Publications. Special mention is to be made of Baluchi Adabi Board at Karachi headed by Qazi Abdul Rehim Sabir and Saughat Publication, Karachi of Maulana Khair Mohammad Nadvi who have published a large number of very useful books both in Baluchi and Urdu. Similarly Azzat Jamaladini Academy Karachi under the guidance of Gulab Baluch has published life and works of late Azat Jamaladini, Late Mohammad Hussain "Unka" and Adam Haqni. Recently a collection of Poetic works of Akber Barakzai with an excellent get up and high literary standard has been released.

Sayad Hashmi Academy Karachi besides publishing his poetic works "Sichkanen Sassa" and "Shakkalen Shehjo" has come out with an excellent book by Sayad Hashmi in Urdu on the History of Baluchi Language and literature.

It has also published two collections of literary pieces both prose and poetry by contemporary writers, entitled Bramsh and Sanj.

Literary Societies have also been formed in the U.K. UAE and Bahrain for the promotion of Balochi Language and Literature and the one at UAE has published Mohammad Beg's Book "SHAKKAL-O-MAJIN" of Satirical articles.

After the revolution publications in Baloch Language started appearing from Iranian Baluchistan. An important one being a grammer of Balochi Persian by Zarrin Nigar and a magazine entitled Makran by Khaliq Dad Arya Baloch. Unfortunately there seems to be still some problems there which have hampered this process as no further issue of Makran after the first one has been received.

Maj. Foxton of the British forces at Oman Published a Balochi Poem with English and Arabic translation dealing with the bravery of the Baloch soldiers in the army of Sultan of Muscat in 1983. Earlier in 1980 he had published a dictionary of English, Balochi and Omani Arabic.

Another Book by N.A. Collett titled A Grammer, Phrase Book and Vocabulary of Baluchi as spoken in the sultanate of Oman appeared in 1983.

Baluchi Academy established in Quetta in 1961 has been collecting vast stock of literature so far unpublished. It has released a good number of books in Balochi, english and Urdu. Translation in Urdu verse of popular Folksongs rendered by Ata Shad and A. Salam has also been published. Dictionaries

and Grammars have been compiled and some rare manuscripts in Persian have also been published in book form. Persian poets of Balochistan by Dr. I.H. Kausar and the works of Gul Mohammad Natiq Makrani in Persian are rare and valuable publications. Besides folk stories and poetry have also been collected and published in many volumes.

Poetic works of Jam Durrak, Mullah Fazal Rind, Mast Tawakli Marri, Rahm. Ali Marri, Jwansal Bugti have been published. Three very important books "War ballads in Balochi and Romantic poetry in Balochi" Baluchistan as described by Poets written by Late Mir Gul Khan Naseer have been released, Life and Exploits of Mir Chakar Rind and Literary History of the Baloches in Three volumes, both by M.S. Khan Baluch have been published.

Traditions in Baluchi Poetry

By Abdullah Jan Jamaldini

Literature is the mirror of life. It reflects life. Life is influenced by environment. Hence it is natural that literature too should be influenced by the environment. Baluchi literature is the reflection of the life of Baluch people and therefore is influenced by its environment.

The ancient literacy heritage of the Baluchi language is in the form of poetry. The Baluchi people have lived in a tribal form of society for a long time and the conditions of tribal society have influenced Baluchi literature. Because the source of income of this people is pastoral they have lived far away from centres of culture, in remote mountainous areas. From time immemorial the Baluchi people have lived a nomadic life in search of pastures and as a result Baluchi literature developed in the form of poetry; nomadic life is not favourable to the development of prose literature. Old Baluchi poetry has lacked the facilities enabling it to be transcribed; it could only be preserved orally, learnt by heart. The loss of such literature is inevitable. Baluchi classical poetry used to be in the form of lengthy verses. These are narrative poems about tribal battles. Such poetry is the source of Baluch history and the poems inform us about the intellect of their creators. Their language is fluent and simple, flowing like mountain springs. Here, in beautiful lyrical language, scenic expression reaches its climax. The poems do not observe rhyme but rhythm is arranged beautifully throughout the poem. Such Baluchi ballads are unique.

It was customary among the Baluchs that the poet never recited publicly the poems he created. The poems were sung by dombs (hereditary bards). The dombs were the poets' means of publicity, they could sing even satiric songs about great men like Chakar and Gwahram as there were no restrictions placed on them. Thus the precious heritage of classical Baluchi poetry has been conveyed to us by such dombs. Baluchi literature is grateful to them. Available poems belong to that period when the Baluch tribes, under the leadership of Rind Sardars, roamed in pursuit of pastures for their large herds of cattle. Finally, at the beginning of the 15th century, these tribes, under the leadership of Chakar Khan Rind and Gwahram Lashari settled in the vast fertile plains of Sibi, Dhadar,

Kachi and Gandawah. Here, for the first time, Baluch tribes learnt how to cultivate the land and they started on agricultural way of life. This is considered as the Golden Age of tribal society. In the same period, i.e. the 15th century, the great and proud classical Baluchi poetry was created and traditions of Baluchi poetry were established. The poetry and social values of this period influenced the tribal society enormously.

The Lashar tribes were settled in Kachi and Gandawah. The lands of this area were more fertile than the lands of Dhadar and Sibi. Chakar was the head of the Rind tribes while Mir Gwahram was the head of the Lashar tribes. Chakar was very famous in the area for his strength and greatness. He was attracted by the fertile lands of Kachi and Gandawah. In one of his poems he expressed his dislike of Gwahram's superiority over the Lasharis: "Gwaharam is proud of his five flowing streams."

In fact the cause of enmity between the Rind and Lashar tribes was the fertile lands of Kachi and Gandawah. However, this enmity was aggravated by the beautiful and wealthy lady Gowhar Moheri who, after getting angry with Gwahram because he asked for her hand, had put herself under the protection of Sardar Chakar. Fuel was added to the fire when injustice was done to Ramen Lashari in the horse race: Ramen was winning in the horse race in Dhadar but the judges, who were Rinds, declared Rehan Rind as winner. The young Lasharis flared up at this evident injustice and on the return home to Gajan, they slaughtered the camels of lady Gowhar and broke the arm of a camel-herd. The Rinds were furious at this act of the Lasharis.

The upshot was the long war, known in Baluch history as the 30 years war, between the Rind and the Lashari tribes. This culminated in the evacuation of the Sibi and Kachi lands by a majority of the Rind and Lashar tribes who migrated to Sind and the Punjab.

In this underdeveloped society horses were very important both for war and peace. Regarded as more precious than one's own life, swift horses were a means of success in battle. No less was the importance of the sword and the bow; to live without a sword in tribal society was impossible. Thus the sword and the horse became the subjects of Baluch poetry. Swords and the various kinds of horses, i.e. brown, chestnut, red and black horses, were praised. Turkish,

Iranian and Arabic horses are mentioned everywhere in classical poetry. Egyptian, Indian and Shirazi (Persian) swords were praised and considered the best. Revenge, hospitality, keeping one's promise and giving one's life for one's neighbours are the highest values of a tribal society. All these traditions became the subjects of Baluchi poetry. Even today events involving these subjects are the traditions of Baluchi poetry. Similarly, traditions regarding Shae Murid-Hani, Dosten-Shiren, Bibarg-Granaz, Shahdad-Mahnaz etc. in classical poetry are the very soul of Baluchi poetry.

Bibarg is an exemplary lover in Baluchi poetry. Chakar is powerful, wise and capable of solving the most difficult problems. Nod Baandag was so generous that he was given the title of Zar Zawal (one who spends money extravagantly). Even modern poets allude to these personalities in their poetry.

The environment of the prominent 18th century poet Jam Durrak is different: by this time Baluchi society had entered the feudal stage. The values (norms) of the society were changing as was also poetic technique. The neighbouring languages, especially Persian, were influencing Baluchi language and poetry. Persian was also used as the court language of the Khans of Kalat. It is said that Jam Durrak had lived in the court of the great Khan Nasir Khani Noori, and the poetry of Jam Durrak confirms this as it contains many Arabic and Persian words. This is lyrical poetry and seems different from ancient poetry.

The nineteenth century is the period of the Mulla poets. The people were being better educated in the religious schools and the literate people could write poetry. Such literate people were called Mullas. The strong influence of Arabic and Persian poetry of this period is evident. The most famous poet of this period is Mulla Fazil. The early poets of the 20th century, Malik Dinar, Rahm Ali Mari, Mast Tokali and Jawan Sal, have observed the traditions of Baluchi poetry. The modern poets — Gul Khan Naseer, Muhammad Hussain Unka, Azad Jamaldini, Zahoor Shah Hashmi, Ata Shad and Bashir Baidar have maintained the traditions of Baluchi poetry.

In Baluchi poetry the pigeon, the dove and sometimes the parrot are addressed as messengers of love. The pigeon is the symbol of love. This is an important tradition in Baluchi poetry which has been maintained since the time of Shae Murid.

Many changes have taken place in Baluchi poetry with the passage of time. Apart from other kinds of verse, Baluchi poetry has successfully adopted ghazal and now Baluchi poetry is being written in rhyme. Modern Baluchi poetry has adopted free verse as another kind of poetry. Yet in spite of all these changes Baluchi poetry has still maintained its traditions.

Baluchi society is being influenced by international changes. While keeping its healthy traditions and breaking with obsolete ones, it is keeping pace with international changes. The young poets of our age are united with those poets of the world who raise their voice for peace, progress and liberty.

Baluchi Language and its Early Literature

By Niamatullah Gichky

Baluchistan is a part of the Iranian plateau. The Kirthar and Sulaiman ranges separate it from the Indus plain. Historically it has always been a marginal land, where the interests of many rival forces clashed. Because of its peculiar geographical and socio-political conditions it has seen many upheavals.

The development of literature has gone on side by side with the development of society. Baloch society never had the chance to develop from a nomadic form to permanent settlement. Thus its language and literature also remained under-developed. As such Baluchi has mostly remained a colloquial language. Unfortunately, until quite recently, it had been considered a corrupt form of Persian, even by its own speakers. No work seems to have been done on Baluchi till the arrival of Europeans in this area.

Baluchi appears to be more archaic than the Persian language. It resembles most other Iranian languages in that it shows a closer relationship to ancient Avesta than to Old Persian, the courtly language of the Achaemenians, from which Persian has definitely descended. Of all the dialects (Iranian in general) Baluchi has been raised to a pre-eminence of its own by virtue of the marked antiquity of its phonetics. It has preserved the old tenues in all positions, even after vowels and liquids². The intimate ties between the language of Avesta, especially in its early forms recorded in the Gathas and the language of the vedic hymns, furnish ample evidence that Ancient Iranian dialects were widely spoken among the people living in Gedrosia. These ties seem to date from the beginning of the first millennium B.C. and are evidence of close contact of the Aryans with the speakers of Avesta³.

Therefore, the opinion that Baluchi is a corrupt form of Persian does not hold. It is an irony of fate that Baluchi never got the chance to develop, while Persian, its close neighbour and sister tongue, which had the good luck to remain the court language from old times till today, has overshadowed Baluchi. So, viewing the scientific work done and the evidence available, it could equanimously be said that we might invert the common verdict and speak of Persian as being bastard Baluchi. At any rate this brings out the fact that Baluchi preserves a much more archaic form of the parent language than Persian⁴.

Baluchi is spoken predominantly in Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan and in geographically contiguous areas, as well as in the Gulf region. Its boundaries do not correspond with the present-day national and international political and administrative boundaries. Baluchi is bounded on all sides by Iranian and Indo-Aryan languages. Pashto lies to the North, Persian to the North-West and West, Sindhi, Punjabi and Saraiki (Lahnda) to the East. It has no linguistic border to the South, where it is bounded by the 470 mile long coast-line running from Bandar Abbas in Iran to Karachi.

Baluchi has in its bosom another language — Brahui — which belongs to the Dravidian group.

In such a vast, wild and mountainous area as that occupied by the Baluch, it is only natural that there should be many dialects and sub-dialects of the language. The main dialects are Eastern hill, Rakhshani, Kechi and Coastal, with many sub-dialects. Baluchi never managed to get courtly support or achieve a written form in the course of the centuries. No standard dialect could thus ever be imposed. But "if a choice of standard dialect were to be made for Baluchi, Rakhshani has a stronger claim to the position than any other group". A Baluch was illiterate. Whatever education he had was always in Persian or Arabic. The first Baluch who tried to write Baluchi could only do so in the script with which he was familiar. It was during the British era (nineteenth century) that European writers started collecting information on Baluchi and a written form of Baluchi was introduced. Roman script was generally used, but sometimes also Persian script.

This situation lasted till early this century, when Perso-Arabic script got the upper hand. At the present time Perso-Arabic is the script generally used for writing Baluchi. There have been sporadic, fanatic attempts in the recent years to introduce Roman script for Baluchi but the Persian character is now too firmly lodged to be displaced, and certainly not by individual efforts.

Baluchi possesses a rich literature, though in a very primitive form. This literature has not been reduced to a written form. The hard nomadic life, extreme and unpredictable climate and unfriendly environmental conditions have never allowed the Baluch to lead a settled, peaceful life, which is an essential pre-requisite for intellectual and literary development. The first indications of Baluchi writings occurred in MS form only the last century. It is a known fact that

many of the leading and literate Baluch wrote a certain form of Baluchi called Daftar. These were usually Baluchi versions of Persian and Arabic stories, narrations of events, poems and folk tales. But they were not preserved and were lost in the course of time.

There were no studies on Baluchi language and literature until the British started taking an interest in this region. "Studies on the language and the linguistic situation were conditional, as were those of an archeological and geographical nature, on the historical circumstances prevailing at the time when information on the area first spread to Europe". The reports on the ethnic and linguistic conditions of the area were prepared by civilian and military officers of the colonial administration. This was not by chance. All such people were engaged in gathering as much information as possible on all aspects of Baluch life and land.

For a general discussion on early recorded Baluchi literature I have divided it into two groups — the old Baluchi MSS written by Baluch and the collection and other works by Europeans, mostly the British. As we see, the first Baluchi written literature consisted of the Baluchi Daftar MSS. These were mostly written by the Baluch themselves. These were in PersoArabic script. Mr. Hughes Buller⁷ gives an account of some collections in the daftars of leading men in Western Baluchi, including an account of the rind migration, two poems giving details of Malik Dinar Gichki's fight with Taki Khan, Nadir Shah's general, another by Hothman Kalmati on the fight between Hammal-e-Jihand and the Portuguese and the description of a fight at Lashkaran Kor between Mir Mohim Khan Noshervani and Mir Gohram Gichki of Panjgur with Lal Khan and Zangi of Noshki. Geiger⁸ was perhaps the first to mention a collection of stories in Western dialect preserved in MS form in the British Library. Professor Elphenbein gives a detailed account of these MSS. Of the three MSS in the British Library, one by Kamalan Gichki has been printed by the Baluchi Academy. These MSS are contemporary with the British writers on Baluchi. The codex oriental Additional 24048 MSS in the British Library (translated by Professor J. Elphenbein) is believed to be the oldest. Although widely believed to have been written by Hothman Kalmati, according to Professor Elphenbein this MS was written around 1820 by several authors, probably none of whom were Baluch.

The second group consists of the literature produced by British authors. This is distinctly of two categories, the

translation of Holy Bible into Baluchi and the collection of Baluchi vocabulary and text. The Bible translations were in Persian script, although later writers used also Roman characters. John Leydon of the College of fort William translated the Gospel according to St. Mork in 1810. Three other gospels are recorded as being printed in Baluchi in 1815. Three Gospels, Mathew, Mark, Luke were subsequently printed. A version of the Lord's Prayer in Baluchi appeared in *Journal Asiatique* No. XII (1833) p. 187 ff. Long after, in 1884, Léwis published a translation of St. Matthew's Gospel in Roman script. T.J.L. Meyer began a new series of Gospel translations starting in 1899.

A lot is known about the works of the early European writers of Baluchi. R. Leech wrote about the Baluchi grammar and vocabulary in 1838, followed by Lassen in 1842. Masson gives a list of Baluchi words in his journey book of 1843. A. Lewis reduces some Baluchi stories to written form in 1855. With these introductory contributions Baluchi finds a place among the other Iranian languages. H.G. Raverty penned out a baluchi vocabular in 1864.

C.E. Gladstone (1874), R.I. Bruce (1874), E. Pierce (1875), H. Hubschmann, (1879), E.A. Floyer (1882), E.W. Marston (1877-1888), T.H. Thornton (1885), W. Geiger (1889, 1893, 1898-1901), M.L. Dames (1891, 1907), T.J.L. Mayer (1900, 1903) are the pioneer writers in and on Baluchi.

By the beginning of this century a lot of work on Baluchi literature began to be published, Many European writers started writing in, on, and about Baluchi.

The long years of colonial rule gives birth to nationalism in the sub-continent. Baluch is no exception. Along with the national movement the culture and language caught also the attention of writers. Now, for the first time the Baluch, recognizing the identity of their language and literature, started writing and reading in Baluchi. Today Baluchi has a written literature with a large number of publications in the form of books, magazines and journals. Besides there are daily radio and TV broadcasts in Balochi from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and India. Programme contents include news, talks, features, plays and music. Though the language is not taught at primary or secondary school level, Baluchi classes are held at the University of Baluchistan.

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Nindowari, a 3rd Millennium Site in Southern Baluchistan

By Jean-Francois Jarrige

Nindowari is located in the Ornach valley, on the right bank of perennial river, the Kud, a tributary of the Porali, which it joins in the plain near Bela. Nindowari is about 80 km north of the town of Bela and 75 km south of Nal. The valley is about 1000 m above sea level. Despite the altitude, the winters are mild and the summers hot. The river is bordered by palm-groves and consequently dates are among the valley's most important resources. Wheat is cultivated in the fields irrigated by a Kaghez system and by small water channels. But cultivable land is limited to narrow stretches of alluvial soil between the extensive accumulations of stones and boulders which have rolled down from the surrounding mountains. Dwarf-palms also provide material for an active basket-making industry.

In a landscape where cultivable land is rather restricted to strips along the Kud river, one is struck by the size of the architectural remains of a 3rd millennium site near the modern village of the Bizanjo tribe. These architectural remains, mostly in standing stone, seem to be enclosed in a vast square representing a total surface area of about 20 hectares. South of this, a small site (less than one hectare) marks the location of a small fort with circular towers, surrounded by a few buildings, belonging to the beginning of the historical period.

Three seasons of excavations have been conducted at Nindowari by the French Archaeological Mission, under the direction of J-M. Casal, in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology of Pakistan (Casal 1966), in the winters of 1962-63, 1963-64 and 1964-65. The clearing out of the buildings was very slow due to the accumulation of fallen stone. Some of the blocks used in these are, in some cases, about 1 m in length and several kilograms in weight. Excavations have, therefore, been very partial and it is still very difficult to interpret most of the buildings. Nevertheless, from surface observation it can be determined that the structures from groups of complexes, sometimes enclosed by long rectilinear walls. At first glance most of these complexes of stone structures appear rather monumental and do not seem to correspond with the small private dwellings.

Work has been carried out at two of these complexes. The first one (ND.A) is a large mound of stone rising 6 m above a platform of clear earth, the second, (ND.B) is situated east of ND.A and its top is only 3 m above the same platform, but soundings show that several meters of stone structures are buried below the surface of this platform.

Mound ND.A is an impressive complex built with huge stone blocks, probably supporting mud-brick structures which have dissolved and have formed the flat platform at the base of the stone buildings. Platforms with substructures made of compartmented walls and stone-slab staircases lead up from the base of the building to its top are an indication that we are dealing with a single monument complex, though difficult to interpret since mostly only the substructures have been preserved.

Mound ND.B is to some extent in a better state of preservation, it is composed of small cells paved with slabs of schist with large passage ways between them. The presence of hundreds of grinding stones in the cells and on the stone platforms would indicate that these small square cells are part of a large granary complex. This structure, like the monumental platform system of ND.A, has been modified and its plan has been altered in the course of time. The main phases of occupation of the site have been isolated. The earliest is represented, so far, by a small sounding on the eastern side of the granary complex. The earliest stone structures here are associated to a ceramic assemblage related to the Nal pottery (monochrome and polychrome), with a few sherds in the Quetta style and grey ware of the Anjira style. The second phase is evidenced by a series of cell units in stone with schist-slab floorings (area ND.A 2). The pottery shows a great continuity with the earliest phase as far as the decorative motifs are concerned: brackets, pipal leaves, stylized tree patterns; but the paste become increasingly well levigated and baked to a pink or reddish colour, bright red slip is also often used. If bracketed motifs are still predominant, one sees the occurrence of fish motifs and other decoration representing an early style, with the long neck resting on the ground, these are very similar to representations from Mundigak IV as distinct from the subsequent humped bulls of the classic Kulli style. The third phase to which belong most of the structures so far exposed (the granary in stone and the monumental platform and staircase complex) is associated

with the classic Kulli pottery and the mature Harappan culture. Two seals with unicorn motifs and bearing Indus script were found in the granary. Harappan and Kulli cultural elements are in fact blended together in a composite style which also includes former traditions such as bracketed decoration. Terracotta female figurines and painted humped bulls have also been found in great number. This rather impressive complex of stone structures should be seen in the context of a well-developed system of **gobarband**. R. Raikes (1966) has already given a good description of the system of stone walls transversely cutting the dry tributary stream which emerges from the hills, creating terraces of cultivable land. Each **gobarband** around Nindowari would include two or three terraces maintained by walls made of huge boulders. The best preserved wall of the Goazi **gobarband**, near the archaeological area, has a thickness of 4 m at its base and a maximum height of 4.40 m. J. Dumarcay who has studied this system of **gobarband**, has collected a lot of evidence suggesting that several of these **gobarbands** (approx. 50 around Nindowari) were built in the 3rd millennium. Some were still in use around our era when the small fort of Kulliki was built, south of the 3rd millennium settlement. Pottery associated to this fort with the round sherd was also found in this context.

The ruins of Nindowari with hectares of stone structures and the impressive **gobarband** systems form a striking contrast to the small modern settlements of straw and palm-leaf houses around a few mud-brick buildings (houses of the ruling family and shops). It is understandable that in the 19th century visitors travelling along the rather desolate tracks of Baluchistan attributed similar large stone structures to a fabulous past; when the climate and circumstances would have been different. We now know that climate conditions have not altered to a very great extent in the course of time. The rather impressive development of southern Baluchistan in the second half of the 3rd millennium BC is probably closely linked to the climatic era of the Indus civilization in the plains, to which the Kulli culture is closely connected. There is little doubt that the social and economic structures of a site like Nindowari with its collective buildings, granary systems and **gobarbands** has to be interpreted in the general frame of the Indus civilization.

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Baluchistan in Prehistory: Reversing the Centre-Periphery Paradigm for a Future Generation of Studies.

By Maurizio Tosi

In the light of the most recent discoveries, Baluchistan would appear to be a true promised land for prehistoric archaeology, especially for that which regards studies on social formation and economic adaptation. Various factors of hyper-conservation (the aridity of the climate, the low density of human population and the millennial political marginality of the region) all combine to transform it into the richest natural laboratory in South East Asia. We are now able to draw conclusions from the results of the first long-term archaeological project centered in this area, which was conducted on both sides of the Hindu Kush. We therefore have an initial overview of the formative processes in which Baluchistan played a dominant role. Its contemporary condition as a poor and isolated borderland is an historically circumscribed phenomenon which, with few exceptions, recurs in the ancient sources beginning with Arrian's *Indika*. This confirmed paradigm doesn't seem to hold true for the region in the pre- and protohistoric periods, which are here arbitrarily limited at between the 8th and the 1st millennium BC. Fifteen years of archaeological research, concentrated in a few fractions of this vast territory, have sufficed to revalue the role played by Baluchistan in the formative processes of the Indian and east Iranian civilizations. As a borderland it is a point of primary elaboration for the experiences fundamental to the economic and civil development of the great historic entities. This process can be more clearly witnessed due to the growth of knowledge on the most remote past of Baluchistan.

Although Baluchistan was practically ignored by Oriental archaeology until the 1950s, during the dissolution of the "Mesopotamian Dream" (according to which knowledge and its means was disseminated from Babylon to the rest of the world), there existed precise and deeply-rooted ideas on it. These interpretive constructions boiled down, somewhat incongruously, asserted the concurrence of dependence and isolation; one on hand technology and cultural models were derived from the Near East and the Iranian highlands (Childe 1952.204-206; Gordon 1947. 1960; Piggot 1950. 129-130; Dyson 1965; Allchin and Allchin 1968.105; Fairservis 1971.102-105), on the other hand the whole area was treated as a border territory of

the Indus Civilization, subordinate and at the same time alien (Wheeler 1968.8-10; Sankalia 1960). For the most part, the data existing on Baluchistan was limited to some few hundred ceramic fragments which had been collected at sites near the major routes (Ross 1946; Gordon 1947; Piggott 1947) for these excavations had been limited in number and duration (Hargreaves 1929; Stein 1929, 1931). The notions of dependence and cultural backwardness were construed from the variability of the ceramic decorations, which, incidentally, was of subordinate interest to scholars when considering this or that historic entity, as it was supposed that between Indian and the Near East there was a gap filled with by-products from those two centres. How undynamic such a vision of the proto-historic evolution of Baluchistan is emerged as soon as the first stratigraphical excavations revealed the transformations in the material culture in the northern regions. (De Cardi 1959, 1965, 1967, 1970; Fairservis 1956) and in the Archosian plains (Casal 1961; Dupree 1963). This first stratigraphical series documented the continuity of the cultural sequences between the end of the 5th and the first half of the 2nd millennium BC. The elements of continuity in the typological evolution were so marked that would never have been explainable in terms of cultural subordination to remote regions. At last it was possible to redefine Baluchistan and the Hilmand basin as an autonomous whole in the cultural picture of the protohistoric Middle East between the 4th and the 2nd millennium BC. G.H. Dales was the first to champion Baluchistan's particularism, a task he accomplished with great distinction (1965).

The region circumscribed by Dales in his analysis of the Indo-Iranian chronology remained an isolated construction in terms of its geographic context: the great alluvial basins and the highlands which surround it on every side were, in archaeological terms, known even less as regards endowing the cultural picture of northern Baluchistan with proportion and relief. The first step in this direction was made between 1966 and 1977 when prehistoric research manifested a fresh interest in the regions to the west and to the north of Baluchistan. Independent nuclei of protourban development were discovered and explored in Sistan (Tosi 1969, 1973; AA.VV. 1977), in southern Turkmenia (Masson 1968; Masson and Sarianidi 1972), in Bactria (Sarianidi 1979) and in the Kerman region (Lamberg-Karlovsky 1970, 1971, 1973; Hakemi 1973). The convergence and particularism of these cultural regions, when compared to the Near East, were the object of critical consideration

which deemed them substantially autonomous inspite of the web of economic exchange weaving its way between eastern Iran and Mesopotamia at the end of the 4th millennium BC (Lamberg-Karlovsky 1972; Lamberg-Karlovsky and Tosi 1973; Tosi 1974a, 1974b). In general the model of development for these eastern regions of the Middle East reflects a minor dependence on urbanistic centralism with a tendency towards strong autonomy from long-distance trade in the production of goods (Constantini and Tosi 1977, 1978; Jarrige and Tosi 1981). The substantial cultural identity between the two main protourban centers in the Hilmand basin, Shahr-i-Sokhta in Sistan and Mundigak in Arachosia, suggests inserting them in a single historic matrix, the "Hilmand Civilization" and to verify the effective reality of this hypothesis in socio-political terms (Tosi 1969, 1973; Biscione 1974; Ciarla 1981, Jarrige and Tosi 1981). Between the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, there seems to be a particular intensity in relations binding southern Turkmenia to the Hilmand basin and northern Baluchistan; this is based on the strong similarities in all these material cultures. In order to have an overview of this convergence as a cultural whole, the term "Turan" was proposed which takes in a continuing area from north-eastern Iran, northern Turkmenia and the Hilmand to northern Baluchistan (Tosi 1977; Biscione and Tosi 1979). This area of interaction has not, however, been universally accepted and its status as a true historic entity is still under discussion. The convergence which emerged on the peninsula of Oman has proven to be very explicit and more universally accepted, particularly the culture of Umm an-Nar (Thorvildsen 1962; Frifelt 1975; Tosi 1975, 1976). The points of maximum integration are naturally registered by the valley of Bampur in periods IV-VI of the De Cardi sequence-type (1967) including all the second half of the 3rd millennium BC; as it isn't yet possible to structurally define the dominant social systems on the two shores of the Arabian Sea in this period, comparisons are still at a descriptive level. As a result, Baluchistan is solidly articulated with a cultural complex that spans, geographically, from the Caspian Sea to the Arabian Sea. The dominant axis of the trade system runs in a north-south direction and as a consequence favours Baluchistan which functions here as a true corridor for conveyance between Central Asia and the Indian Ocean. The history of Baluchistan therefore becomes that of the socio-political entities which surround it. The phenomenon of frontierization, which we already recognize

at the time of Alexander, is perhaps directly related to a crisis in this trade system in the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, followed by the shifting of the Middle East's demographic centres towards the Ganges plains and the Oxus valley.

It is impossible to reach an overall evaluation of the role of Baluchistan in protohistory, a direction which had characterized the first studies on the region, one should instead aim at isolating and defining its characteristics at a subregional level. A new attempt at synthesis has been undertaken by J.C. Shaffer in the light of a new series of excavations in southern Arachosia (1978). Setting out with a careful revision of existing data Shaffer brings to light dominant aspects of local tradition which are beyond any interaction with the surrounding regions and, in particular, the alluvial plains. The significant failure of all attempts at explaining Baluchistan's cultural characteristics in terms of diffusion and dependence underlines its liveliness as an area for re-elaboration. The originality of certain formulations emerges very clearly from the cultural contexts of the 5th and 6th millennium BC, contemporaneous to and preceding the emergence of urban society in the Sind and on the Hilmand. The high degree of material well-being and the intensity of population bears witness to ecological relationships calibrated by a long process of adaptation. A determining aspect for future research would clearly lie in these ecological relationships and how they result in the superstructural traits which have survived until today. The environmental conditions of Baluchistan, with areas of strong ecosystemic contrast on the extremes of a continental climate with monsoonal interference, can't have but imposed a filter of tradition over the flow of external innovation. The irregular orography, the instability the waterways, the compression exercised on the whole system by the surrounding desert mass, the influence of the ocean and the monsoons are the most salient aspects of the environmental conditioning which, although they have hindered a strong dependence on agriculture, tend to parcel the adaptive traits of the human cultures into forms of extreme specialization. Baluchistan's economy is a mosaic of intermediate phases in the continuum between captioving stock-raising and the intensive cultivation at the oases. The population of the coasts of Makran is characterized by an economic adaptation which is among the most extreme in its dependence on marine resources, which serves as a counterweight in the fabric of the kinship relationships of the interior (Pastner and Pastner 1982). Interdependence and not

confrontation between these different phases in the continuous becoming, favoured by the mobility of the population, seems to have been a response to the historic scarcity of resources in Baluchistan. This articulation between hyperspecialized forms of production appears as fully realized at the end of the 4th millennium BC preceding the emergence and the conditioning of the urban societies of Sind and on the Hilmand.

In the conclusion of his book, Shaffer quite rightly suggests the palaeoeconomic approach as the most suitable path for archaeological research in the reconstruction of the prehistory of Baluchistan (1968.169). This methodology is, in synthesis, the analysis of plant and animal remains, through multidisciplinary means, to attain an evaluation on a microregional scale of ecological relationships, not to say the interpretation of the material culture as an extrasomatic instrument in the transformation of nature (Biscione et alii 1975; Constantini and Tosi 1975). The originality of the Baluch experience upstream of the urban revolution in Middle Asia and its likely influence on the development of society in the alluvial plains, are the most pressing postulates of protohistoric research in recent years. Those aspects of marginality and scarcity of production, so manifest today in the regional economic picture, would derive from the originality of an ancient answer some 5000 years old. If we interpret urban society as an implosive phenomenon, characterized by the integration of people and resources by a very broad geographical area, the vastness of which would be directly related to the degree of acceleration transmitted to its economic development, we must then conclude that Baluchistan must have conditioned its own formation in many ways. It isn't necessary, either, that this conditioning be limited to the material environment. Shaffer had already emphasized the archaic diffusion of the bovine cult in Baluchistan during the 4th millennium BC, basing his assertion on coroplastic remains (1974).

The importance of the Baluchistan phenomenon clearly emerged as soon as field research was finally directed to the study of the most ancient periods, the 8th and the 6th millennium BC, corresponding here, as in the Near East, to the formative phases of productive economy. This programme was begun by the *Mission de e'Indus* of the French CNRS with excavations at Mehrgarh on the Bolan under the direction of J-F. Jarrige with a great deal of involvement (Jarrige and Lechevallir 1979). The first results already revealed the

vastness of this phenomenon which emerged as long as observations were limited to the 4th and the 3rd millennium BC. The excavations revealed a continuity of occupation dating back to the 8th millennium BC, bringing to light the remains of an aceramic culture fully engaged in the exploitation of those same plants and animals that would be the economic bases of late state compages (Jarrige and Meadow 1980; Lechevallier and Quivron 1981). With intensive raising of bovines and capriovines we find the presuppositions for the ideological construction which was to dominate the Subcontinent (Meadow 1981). Plant remains indicate an agriculture based on domestic barley (*Hordeum vulgare* Var. *nudum*) as the identification from thousands of sees and straw imprints in unbaked clay bricks and plaster indicates (Constantini n.d.). The custom of burying animals in graves has provided documentation, in the form of the skeletons of kids and lambs associated to the most ancient burials of Mehrgarh, not only of the initial mutations in individuals born in capacity, but also the origin of a usage destined to remain up until the graves of Shahr-i-Sokhta in the 3rd millennium (Pipeerno 1979). The graves at Mehrgarh synthesize the attributes of a society which is fully in control of the Baluch territory as a whole to an extent where resources were being conveyed to a single point from all over the country: lapis lazuli, turquoise, sea shells, ivory and the bitumen found in the grave goods of more ancient periods.

The discoveries at Mehrgarh give substance to the hypothesis that Baluchistan played a dominant role in the shaping of urban civilization on the Subcontinent. Within the frame of the data that such a project is capable of furnishing, it is possible to construct experimental procedures and theoretical premises in order to verify the impact of the "Baluchistan phenomenon". This, however, is only the first step. Future research shall be directed to the study of other areas, since in order to give evidence of the dynamics of the region, it is necessary to explore the palaeoeconomic particularities of the principal geographic divisions of the Baluch country. The Mehrgarh area is the proluvial-alluvial basin of the Nariand Bolan rivers and it extends into the desert plain of Kachi. Here one encounters that concentration of contrasting ecosystems which characterizes the foothills areas throughout the Middle East and which seems to be particularly favourable to the development of the transitional protoneolithic economies (Flannery 1965). This enormous conoid fills an orographic gulf

which is formed by the imperfect junction of Baluchistan's two principal mountain ridges, Khirtar and Suleiman; a natural area of transition from the alluvial plain of the Indus to the true plateau. The study of prehistoric ecological relationships in this geological connection therefore becomes paradigmatic for the analysis of the economic development of both regions. The exceptionality of the ecosystemic condition of Mehrgarh and all of Kachi renders the study of Baluchistan's internal divisions even more necessary. More importantly, the plain is connected to the regions of elevation which directly overhang it, like the Quetta and Loralai valleys. One should consider the relationships of integration/ecosystemic contrast, over the whole section, as having an approximate WNW-ESE direction along the 30° through northern Baluchistan from Registan to the Sind plain. Of the seven ecological bands which can be articulated across this transversal section, only three are even minimally documented from the archaeological point of view: the intramontane valley of Quetta (Fairervis 1956), the foothill band of the Khirtars along the course of the Bolan (Jarrige and Enaut 1973; Jarrige 1981) and the peridesert fringe of Kachi (Jarrige et alii 1979). An analysis of the structural interdependence will allow an evaluation of the growth of determined economies alongside others and will also enable the principal economic aggregates to be singled out among the relationships between cultural forms and typology of the exploited resources. Neolithic economy should not be observed as either the beginning or the "cradle of Indian civilization"; rather it should be viewed as the outcome of a selective process. The wealth of the country in biological and mineral resources was the result of a fabric of inequality to the detriment of other populations yet to be isolated.

Emphasis in future research will be placed on those ecologically particular and still unexplored regions. Among these are the coastal band, the interior of Makran and the Chagai region, the principal mineral bearing district of Baluchistan and the area of maximum production growth in the Hilmand civilization (Costantini and Tosi 1977; Jarrige and Tosi 1981). Similar phenomena of interface with the urban societies can be studied on the coast of Makran, where a chain of outlet ports connected to the main fluvial drainage axes were established by the Indus civilization towards the end of the 3rd millennium BC (Dales 1962, 1974) as part of a strategy designed to economically control the entire Arabian Sea (Tosi n.d.). The political heart of historic Baluchistan, the Kalat plain and

the Jhalawan valleys, are poorly documented by brief and sporadic exploration (De Cardi 1965; Raikes 1968). It is possible that already in the protohistoric times the regional elites flowed into these areas developing the redistributive knots of prototribal trade. It is to be hoped that in the near future it will be possible for scholars to undertake new research projects that will throw light on the formative phases of the Nal culture, astride the protourban period of Sistan connected by fragments of the typical polychrome pottery found in the most ancient levels of Shar-i-Sokhta in contextual association with protoelamite tablets and seals (Amiet and Tosi 1978.14-15).

In conclusion we should like to list the four most actual operational directions which, in our opinion, should be proposed for the prehistoric research for the evaluation of the results obtained to date from both the interior and the exterior of Baluchistan:

1. The domestication of plants and animals and the cultural transformations of the primitive accumulation. The particularism of Neolithization in the region encompassing all the Hindu Kush with relation to both mutations induced in raised and cultivated species and in the forms of material culture;
2. The organization of work and the process of formation of craft specialization. These are very precocious phenomena in the Turanic and Baluchistan areas which manifest themselves in the allocation of large areas for manufacturing processes in the interior and on the peripheries of centers (Tosi 1983). Jarrige informs us that areas of this type appear at Mehrgarh already at the end of the 5th millennium BC with macroscopic concentrations of ceramic kilns and production refuse (private communication).
3. The coastal and oceanic aspects of Baluchistan, going by a detailed reconnaissance from Gwadar to Somniani, the area ascribed in Arrian to the *Ichthyophagoi*. In the light of the experience gathered on the coast of Oman, which faces Baluchistan, the archaeological sites for such populations are small mounds of shells placed on calcareous terraces or ancient beach lines (Durante and Tosi 1977). To date only one settlement of this type has been mentioned in archaeological literature, that at Take-dap, near Gwadar (Stein 1931. 76-77). The excavations carried out by G.H.

Dales to the north of Somniani, documented a continued exploitation of resources, from both the sea and the coastal mangrove swamps, since at least the middle of the 4th millennium BC with a significant increase in off-shore fishing during the Harappan period of the site (Dales 1974, 1979; Durante 1979). The development of marine navigation in the Harappan period is further suggested by discoveries made at Bahrain, in the Arabian Gulf (e.g. Ratner 1981) and, more recently on the Oman Peninsular (Cleuziou n.d.; Tosi n.d.) which complement that which has been known for some time from the excavations at Lothal (Rao 1965, 1981). In this case it can also be presumed that the sub-Neolithic populations installed on the Makran coast participated in the developmental process of this proto-Indian seamanship which seems to have reached the maximum technical vertices of antiquity (Johnstone 1981.171-184). This study, however, is framed within a problematic quite different from that of agrico-pastoral side of Baluchistan.

4. Phenomena of interface and frontierization. These are concentrated between the end of the 3rd millennium BC and the first half of the 2nd millennium BC and represent one of the most promising aspects for gleaning a real historical perspective in relation to the Indo-Iranian epic religious sources. Once again the **Mission de l'Indus** anticipated this problematic with interventions on the Kachi plain. The chronological span of between 2500 and 1000 BC is covered by four sites; Mehrgarh VI-VII, Sibri, Nowshahro and Pirak (Jarrige 1981; Jarrige et alii 1979; Santoni n.d.). Elements of both Bactro-Margianian cultures of Namazga VI tradition and of the Indus civilization equally intervene in the region, clearly intruding into its material complex. The Kachi plain seems to be compressed by the two parties as an area of conflict, being the cause/effect of the process of frontierization (Jarrige n.d.). The Indus civilization appears as the principal destabilizing factor of the region with the establishment of settlement visibly characterized by the material culture of the plains, it covers the entire orographic span from Bactria (Francfort and Potter 1978) to Makran marking a clean line of limes with a series of settlements along

the eastern side of Baluchistan. Among these is Nowshahro, which is shortly to be investigated by the **Mission de l'Indus** (Jarrige 1979).

To what extent the frontierization of Baluchistan near the end of the 3rd millennium BC, between Central Asia, the Hilmand civilization and the Indus civilization, is a definable historic phenomenon certainly can't be established in the light of the very few facts offered by archaeological documentation. The panorama subsequent to this period, between 1700 and 1000 BC, is surer as it is eminently documented by the excavations of Pirak (Jarrige et alii 1979). The results of bioarchaeological investigations (Costantini 1981; Meadow 1979) indicate a true renaissance of agriculture, enriched by the introduction of new plant species (rice, sorghum and millet) and new animal species (horses, camels) spreading to the most remote regions. The material culture seems to neglect the intrusive elements from the preceding period, re-establishing itself on models of northern Baluchistan, and more generally, the Turanian tradition of the 3rd to the 4th millennium BC (Jarrige 1979.98-102). We may now consider this as evidence of the vitality of a Baluchistan entering as protagonist also in the elaboratory phase of historic India.

