

Balochistan before Christ (BC)

The geological and archeological evidence show that the rainy era finished about 10,000 to 15,000 years ago. Since then the era of dryness and barrenness started. This so-called "dry" era which is still continuous has seen gradual decrease in rainfall associated with the rise in sea level and the degradation of the land. It is no wonder that the Balochi folklore is full of songs which celebrates the earlier years of plentifulness and rain. It seems that almost all generation of the Baloch have experienced this deterioration in their life-time.

Balochistan is one of the ancient inhabited land. The history goes back to around 15,000 years ago. Whether it was initially inhabited by the Balochi tribes or some other tribes is rather unclear. Last century French archaeologists discovered a new site in Balochistan at Mehrgarh (Mehregan), which is believed to be the earliest civilization in the world. It pre-dates the civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia. The site was occupied from 7,000 B.C. to 2,000 B.C. and it is the earliest Neolithic site where "we have first evidence of domestication of animals and cereal cultivation - wheat and barely - and also the centre of craftsmanship as early as 7,000 B.C."

Lapis Lazuli and sea-shells were used to make beautiful ornaments as found in large number of graves. The site later became a centre of production of beautifully painted pottery and human and animal figurines and such economical and social development helped to understand the process of formation of the urbanized civilization to the west of the Indus Valley in the 3rd millennium B.C. The site of Mehrgarh which is situated at the foot of the Bolan Pass also shows good evidence of contacts through trade exchanges with Afghanistan, Central Asia and Persia (Iran). Graves found at the site show that the dead were buried in flex position Children were buried separately and not mixed with the adults. He added Grave pottery was found in all the graves including ornaments of beads of high quality craftsmanship which showed connections with fishermen of Makran Coast.

There are many historical sites across Eastern Balochistan (politically part of Pakistan), Western Balochistan (politically part of Iran), and Northern Balochistan (politically part of Afghanistan). Evidence from these sites show a very clear deep rooted history of civilization.

Amir Tavakol Kambozia wrote that Copper was first discovered in Balochistan. It was transported from Balochistan to present day Iraq by water-borne vessels.

The names Baloch and Balochistan appears in literatures as old as 2000 years ago. However, other names have been used to describe the land of Balochistan. Old Persian literature refers to Balochistan as "Macka" or Mecca as well as Mackiya and Mackiyan. The Greek used to call it "Gedrosia" (pronounced as Gedroshia) or Gedrozia. Others used to call it Makoran or Makaran. Holdich believed that the word Makoran was originally Mahikhoran (Fish eaters i.e. those whose staple diet was fish). Throughout centuries the word "Mahikhoran" changed into "Makoran". MarcoPolo referred to Balochistan as "Kasmakoran" or Kasmehkoran".

During Sasanian era, King Ardeshir invaded Kerman and annexed it to its kingdom. He tried to do the same with Balochistan but was defeated by the Baloch. The Baloch also, from time to time, made excursions to Kerman. After the death of Ardeshir, his son, Shapoot I succeeded him. During the reign of Anosheervan, the tension between the Baloch and the Persian increased once again. Anosheervan who used to call himself Aadel (Just), planned to invade Balochistan. He gathered a very large army equipped and ready to fight. One

of the greatest battle of all time took place between Anosheervan's unjust Army and the Baloch. What was the extent of the victory for either side, nobody knows.

Omar, the second khalifat of Islam, who conquered Iran, sent two of his commanders to conquer Balochistan. Initially, the primary Arab armies were defeated. Once the Arab commanders learnt about the Balochistan and Beloshi people as they call it, they told their rulers that going into Balochistan is not wise for " there is scarce water, the deate palm trees are dried and dead, bandits are very brave and fearless. If you send a small Army, it will be defeated, if you send a large Army, they will die of thirst and hunger". During the first 100 years of Islam, the Baloch refused to accept Islam. However, throughout centuries they accepted Islam as the main religion.FPRIVATE "TYPE=PICT;ALT="

The next largest invasion of Balochistan was carried out by Joghtayeh Mogul (son of Gangiz Khan). He defeated Sultan Jalal-odin and looted Balochistan with little mercy.

Immediately after his crowning, Nader Shah Afshar dispatched more than 12,000 armed soldiers to conquer Balochistan. Initially they fought against 3000 armed men of Amir Mohabat Khan and Amir Imtiaz Khan (sons of Abdullah Baloch). This battle took place around Minaab and Jask which are part of Balochistan. Nadershah sent more troops towards the Kalat (Capital of the State of Balochistan). Another war broke out between the Baloch and the Persian. However, the real winner this time was King Ahmad Durani of Afghanistan.

The Ghajaar dynasty was toppled by the Reza Shah Pahlavi. Reza initially followed the path of his predecessors by suppressing the Baloch. Once again wars followed. Hundreds of thousands of the Baloch escaped from Balochistan. Most of them settled in Karachi and Sind. Reza Shah's war against the Baloch started from different fronts. He brought tens of thousands of troops from the north (Mashahad), north west (Kerman), Yazd, and from the west (Bander Abbass).

Balochi Sardars such as Doust Mohamed Khan Baragzahei started fighting against the fully equipped army of Iran which had been modernized by their masters i.e. the British. Eventually, the British helped Reza Shah to suppress the Baloch at all cost. The Baloch were the only nation in the region to have defeated the British. Hence, the British had a particular disliking towards the Baloch. Thousands of the Baloch and scores of tribal chiefs were executed in the aftermath of the war.

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