

## Archaeological Sites of Kharan and their Present Condition A Script about Western Region of Balochistan

History

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### Abstract

*Kharan is a district of Balochistan which is very famous for its amazing and wonderful archaeological sites. The historic and pre-historic sites can be seen everywhere in the sandy and rocky areas of Kharan. The archaeological sites of this area are different than the other sites of Balochistan. It is full of ancient and strange Tombs, Great walls (may be ancient dams), forts, castles and large number of mounds and other kind of ancient belongings. But still this important heritage is concealed and hidden. This area is like a paradise for archaeologists, anthropologists and historians. This area was the capital of Nausherwani Nawabs during Khanate period of Kalat. This is mostly a sandy and rocky area and divided into two districts, one is called Washuk and the other one is called Kharan district. Both of these areas have very good and interesting archaeological sites. The objectives behind this work are; to display the historic and pre-historic sites of Kharan and their importance, and also highlight the present condition of these sites. This is an evocative work and a field study in nature.*

**Keywords:** Balochistan, Gabr Band (Zoroastrian Dams), Inscriptions, Karezes (Under-ground water channel), Kharan, Mounds, Nausherwanis, Rakhshan, Tomb of Galuga and others, Washuk,

### Introduction and historical background

Balochistan, which is divided among three countries, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, covers an area of 3,40,000 sq. miles. (*Baloch, 1987, P-19*) The area of Balochistan which is included in Pakistan is 3,47,190 sq. km.

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Kharan is situated in the north west of Balochistan. This is divided into two districts Kharan and Washuk. Kharan was notified as a district in 1951, and in March, 1952, the Deputy Commissioner Office had started its function. Deputy Commissioner controls and oversees all activities of all departments of the district. The total area of Kharan (Washuk and Kharan) is 48,051sq km: and the population was 20,69,09 in the census of 1998. The population of the area is mainly Baloch and Brahvi tribes.

Kharan was established as state during 17<sup>th</sup> century but it was a vassal state of Kalat, a position which stayed until 1940, on March 17, 1948, Kharan comply with Pakistan. After some months it joined the Balochistan States Union (BSU). The state was born on 14 October 1955 and it became a part of the province of Western Pakistan. After the fall of Dhaka, West Pakistan was divided into four Provinces in the year 1970. Balochistan became the largest province of the country and the former state of Kharan was changed into the Kharan District of Balochistan.

The early history of Kharan is obscure and not clear, with the history of Siestan, because in many books the names of towns and villages of this area have been changed and altered.

This area was under the Meers of Nausherwani Tribe during the period of the Khanate of Kalat, during 17<sup>th</sup> century after some expeditions it became a vassal state of the Khanate of Kalat. But, this is true that the conflict between Kharan and Kalat continued up to the emergence of Britain.

The following Nausherwani Chiefs (Nawabs) ruled over Kharan;

1. Mir Abbas Khan, 1810
2. Mir Azad Khan, 1833-85
3. Mir Nauroz Khan, 1885-1909
4. Mir Muhammad Yaqoob Khan, 1909-11
5. Mir Habibullah Khan, 1911-1955.

### **Archaeological sites of Kharan and their Importance**

Kharan is situated at a junction from where many roads lead to different cities and different sites. The ancient mound and other archaeological sites prove that from an early time Kharan is being used as a crossroad and a junction city into various kingdoms.

Many historians describe the word Kharan in different meanings. Some historians say that the word Kharan is related with the Sassanid ruler of Iran, the Behram Gaur, who was very interested in the hunting of Zebras (Gorkhar). So the area called Khuran or Kharan. (*Shahwani, 1978. Pp. 75-77*) But this opinion has no historical support. The true meaning and the reason of Kharan is different. Kharan is a desert and mostly a sandy area and no doubt it is a

continuous part of Iranian desert of Lut. Some parts of Kharan are stony and all the area is obscure. After the rainfall season different kind of bushes and afforests grow in the sandy and stony land, so, because of these bushes and afforests, the area was called Kharan. This means the unkempt land. For a long time Kharan was the part of Siestan, but at present the political and geographical boundaries divided it between Iran and Pakistan. During Arab reign the peak of Raskoh was called “Barfan”, which was one of the famous mounts of Siestan. (*Shahwani, 1978. P-29*)

The region of Kharan has a big cultural heritage and very different archaeological sites. Undoubtedly, the territory of Balochistan is full of such places which belong to past. Kharan is one of these places. But, the archaeological places and sites are unique than the other sites of Balochistan. These areas have many kinds of archaeological sites, like, mounds, graveyards, Gabr-Band (Dams), castles and forts and very amazing tombs. Such types of forts and castles are not available in the other areas of Balochistan. The archaeological sites of Kharan are in big quantity and they cannot be explained in limited pages. This topic needs a detailed work. The sites of Kharan are badly destroyed by the hands of Antique Mafia and smugglers. The brief information about these sites is given below:

### **Gabr Band (Dams) of Kharan**

Balochistan is the mother land of World civilizations and cultures on cultural and sociological basis. According to D.D. Kosambi that, Balochistan consists only of villages of the pre-historic era. The shortage of water was the reason that ancient inhabitants could not construct a big and metropolitan city. But the ancient population of Balochistan produced new techniques for recovering water for their agriculture and drinking purposes. They equipped Karzes (Under ground well channels) and formed great dams in the hilly areas of Balochistan; the area of Kharan is a most famous area for it. The present condition of these dams is not good. The bad weather and antique mafia is badly affecting them. The places need attention, protection, research and preservation. The details of some of these amazing dams are given below:

### **Stone Walls of Zird Valley**

Zard or Zird is a valley in Kharan. This area of district is very famous for its archaeological sites, especially for ancient time dams which are known as Gabr Band or Zoroastrian dams. Such kind of dams can be seen in the other mountainous areas of Balochistan. Balochistan is a kind of area where the ratio of rainfall is very low. Because of the lack of water resources, the ancient people of the area had solved their problems by constructing dams and karezes. In the dams they store water for irrigation and drinking. These giant dams are scattered

in the area of Zard or Zird in big quantity. At present time these are being destroyed by the heavy rainfall, bad weather and lack of protection. The local inhabitants are also destroying them for the search of treasure. The unawareness is another cause of the damage to these sites. In big quantity these ruins are still remaining. Very heavy stone blocks have been used in the construction of these dams. This important national heritage is vanishing. These dams can be seen in the many places of this area. In many places the height of these dams cross 12 feet and are in good condition. (*Shahwani.1978. Pp 225-26*) The most amazing thing is that these walls are situated in the plain area of Kharan and not in mountains. The stones which are used in the construction of these walls are very heavy, while there is no rock or mountain near them. These wonderful walls of Zird are still a question mark for archaeologists, anthropologists and historians. These are still mysteries and need further research.

### **Gabr Band of Nauroz Kalat**

Nauroz Kalat is one of most famous archaeological site of Kharan. This area is full of different kind of archaeological places like, dams, forts, mounds, karezes and tombs. According to Shahwani, the series of these dams start from Toskan and Nauroze Kalat. In this area these walls are known as Jinee Walls and Gabr Band. A Russian Physist, Matest, Agrest described in his book 'The Track of Discovery' "that these walls are made by Aliens who came from another planet. According to Abdul Qadir Aseer, Matest Agrest stayed here for short period and discovered a twenty feet long picture of an alien on a wall in a cave. He dedicated it to the aliens. (*Shahwani.1978. P-226*)

This is still a mystery that, thousands of years ago, when the man was very backward and had less resources, how he made these wonderful and amazing buildings?

The walls (dams) of Nauroze Kalat, Toskan and valley of Zird are real wonders on an obscure land, where climate and weather is not favorable, where the annual rainfall percentage is very less. Why these walls had been constructed? Is it just for irrigation and agriculture purpose, or these have some other secrets?

### **Other Dams**

Some other dams have been found in the areas of Klashnan and Airykallag, but these are not huge as the dams of Nauroze Kalat and valley of Zird. Some oral sources ascribes these to the former Nausherwani ruler family. According to inhabitants of the area these had been made by the early rulers of Kharan for the purpose of security. Many other writers like, Sir Thomas Holdich and Maulai Shedai don't accept these walls as Gabr Band or Zoroastorians heritage. According to them when the great Dam of Maarab of Jordan was destroyed,

then Amorites of Jordon left their dynasty and entered in the dynasties of Kerman and Mekran, and they build up these heavy Dams for irrigation and agriculture purpose. And Maulana Abdullah Dehrmani also supported this theory and moreover, they also consider the Amorites as the founder of Karezes in Balochistan. (*Fareedi, Pp 153*)

But the question is this that these walls or dams found in the central Balochistan in big quantity. Who were the builders of these? It can be solved after a deep research work on these speculations.

### **Karezes**

The shortage of water is a usual problem from early time in Balochistan. The ancient population of Balochistan also had faced this problem. So, they introduced some very effectual and long term technology and solved their problem successfully. They excavated underground water channels which are called Karez. This system was a successful solution for the storage of water in dry lands. It has been found everywhere in Balochistan, and Kharan is full of such kind Karezes. It was very effective technology for storage and use of water. These organized water channels are found in Besima, Mashkel, Iadgash, Washuk, Jhalwar and Rakhshan basins in large number. Some of these Karezes were functional some years ago, before the introducing of tube well system. These wonderful archaeological sites are still waiting for research and looking for experts.

### **Mounds of Kharan**

Kharan is full of ancient mounds like other sites and areas of Balochistan. These all mounds are still not excavated, so, nobody can make and suggest any opinion about these sites. Kharan is a sandy and stony area so, the stone blocks can be found in the construction of the buildings of these mounds. The mounds of this area are big and cover a huge area. The heights of these mounds are about 40 to 70 feet, and these are situated near each other. In many areas the dozens of mounds are situated very near to each other and looks like a colony of mounds. Many of these mounds have boundary walls. As described already that Kharan is a sandy and stony area and in mountainous sites the mounds are camouflaged and look like a part of mountains and rocks, as like the mounds of Khuzdar. So, the identification of these is not easy. In the following lines some of famous mounds of the area are being described.

### **Shahi Damb (Shahi Mound)**

Shahi mound is situated in the east of Kharan at a distance of seven kilometers from the Kharan city. This is a great and huge mound which is being destroyed for the lack of protection as like the other mounds of Balochistan. This site is

badly destroyed by the hands of antique mafia, lack of interest by the higher authorities and bad weather. According to the local people, they found expensive and ancient objects and antiques from here, which they sold for profit. Major part of this mound is under threat by the hands of antique mafia and it needs protection and excavation.

### **Damb Siaho Zai (Siahozai Mound)**

This mound is situated near Besima and not excavated as the other mounds of Kharan. Undoubtedly, the area of Besima is big laboratory for archaeologists, because, this area have a large number of sites. Different kind of archaeological terracotta objects have found from the surface of these mounds.

### **Pizozai Damb (Pizozai Mound)**

This famous mound is situated in the area of Zik in Kharan. This is a big mound which is badly disturbed by the hands of Antique Mafia and thieves. They found a big quantity of important archaeological objects. These groups are always active in search of treasure, so in the end, the archaeological and cultural heritage of the area is plundered which needs attention by the higher authorities.

### **Damb-E-Tagzai (Tagzai Mound)**

This mound is situated near Pizozai mound and very famous among the people of the area for treasures and legendary stories. This is also destroyed by the hands of Antique Mafia, but still a big area is safe and is good for excavation and research.

### **Mound of Hargok**

A series of mounds is situated 20 miles in the east of Kharan near the bank of Saraap rivulet. This is a long and wide area in which dozens of mounds are situated near to each other. A big mound is situated amongst dozens of mounds. Perhaps it was the central city of all of these mounds, and maybe it was the place of ruler of the area. An ancient Karez is also here, which is called Karez-e-Garak. This Karez and Saraap stream were the main resources of water of inhabitants of the mounds, but now these are dry. The Sorgaz and Pulkian sites are also found here. It proves that this area and site had been a much populated area in the past. Building constructions can also found in the all of these mounds of Hargok, Sorgaz and Pulkian. This very standardized mounds are waiting for excavation and research.

### **Galuga Mound Mashkel**

This great mound is situated in the sandy area of Mashkel. Human bones, potteries and other kind objects were found from here. But the sandy weather is destroyed and it is nearly buried. This mound is a big laboratory for archaeologists. Big information about the past is waiting for researchers. Moreover, countless of other mounds are discrete in various areas of Kharan and every mound has its own Historical, Cultural, Sociological, Anthropological and Geographical importance. Every mound is only one of its kind. Many series of mounds are situated in Jhalawar, Kharan City, Gohri, Soro, Mashkel and other areas of Kharan. (*Shahwani, Pp 340-41*)

### **Ancient Inscriptions**

Inscriptions can be found everywhere on the rocks in mountainous Balochistan, like the inscriptions of Lasbela District, (*Marri, 2000, P 44*) Inscription of Londo Baghbana and Pir Lakha Mula Tehsil in Khuzdar District. (*Baloch, 2009 Pp11-13 & 21*) Kharan is also rich in these kinds of ancient inscriptions which have found in the rocks of different areas. Some of these are described in the books, but still many more sites are left over and not defined in any text. First of all during British period (in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century) the British Government collected the information about the various areas of Balochistan and accumulated the Gazetteers, then these inscriptions were documented. These are vital to understand the history of the area. These inscriptions are not only four or five lines sayings, but these are the big resources for historians. The historians can write extensively about these some words and lines.

Fort of Jhalawar is one of the famous places of Kharan. Some Arabic (Kofi) inscriptions have been found in northern rocks of Jhalwar. These are in good condition and can be read easily. According to Balochistan District Gazetteer series "Kharan" district:

1. و اکبر عمر اصان دنکو سبع عشر سه ماه

### **Translation**

1. Umar, Asan, Danku., repeated the takbir for seventeen years (and) died

2. اللهم الغفر للحسن ابن الحسين بن امير سعد بن عمر بن عبد  
العزیز الحسن و حر فی يوم الاحد ل احد و عشر بقين شهر لا محر  
مالا حراء  
صدره بخطه  
ستته فی اربع مائته

**Translation**

2. *O (Allah) Forgive al Hassan Ibn Amir Sahl Ibn Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz Al Hassan Ibn Al Husain Written on Sunday when eleven days were remaining of the sacred month of Muharram and he wrote it in his own hand, in the year 406 (H)*

3. بتاها ابی موسیٰ رکع بن محمد المسعودی سنته احد و خمسين و  
تلثا نته انتھی

**Translation**

3. *(Built by) Abu Musa Ruka Ibn Muhammad Al Mas-ud-di the year 351 (H)*  
4.

4. ابی سهیل ابوالقاسم (خ) عمرو احمد بن عمر ابن سهیل کتبه بخطه

**Translation**

5. *Abi Sahl Abul Kasim Amr (And?) Ahmad Ibn Amr Ibn Sahl. He wrote it with his own hands.*

*Moreover, on the rocks of Garak, which is situated near Raskoh, some inscriptions can be seen. The text seems like this; Some other inscriptions can be seen on the tiles of the different tombs of the area. That will be discussed in the description of tombs. (District Gazetteer of Balochistan Kharan, 1997, Pp 362-63)*



### **Tombs or Gumbad**

*“Domed Mausoleum, known as Gumbal or Gumbad, and generally built of burnt bricks, are numerous and as they have never yet been visited and examined by an expert, the following list of the places where they are situated is given below.*

*Washuk (5), Mashkel or Degwar (9) Hurmagai (10) Regi (20) Jhalwar (3), Gwash (3), Kallag (11) Shimshan and SalamBek (08), Sarawan (6) and the total Gumbad are 57. (District Gazetteer. Kharan, 1997, P 358)*

The districts Gazetteer of Balochistan Kharan, (1997 P-359) explain these tombs in detail that similar tombs exist in Panjgur and at Jalk in Persian Mekran. Their General form is that of the ordinary Persian tomb, i.e. a square chamber surmounted by a dome, and most of them have only one storey; some however, possess two storey. Those at Gwachig, for instance, are all double storey and so are the Malik Shaho tombs of Sarwan. The best preserved are those at Gwachig in Dehghwar or Mashkel and, as they are fairly typical of those in other parts of the country, they are here described in some detail. All the mausoleum at Gwachig, of which there are 9, are double-storey, the entrance being on the east steps, panel with bricks, lead to the upper storey, which contains a single burial chamber, the entrance to the lower storey are level with the surface and lead either to a single large chamber capable of containing several corpses, or to separate small chamber in each of which one corpse, or more could be placed. In the Gumbad-e-Malik Shahoo at Nauroz Abad, the lower storey contain a passage with 4 vaults, 2 on either side, each of which might contain three or four bodies. The domed roofs are supported on pendentive. The walls of the upper storey 2.5 to 3 feet thick, they are made of burnt bricks about 10 inches square and 2 inches thick. The buildings appear not to be set exactly north-east and south-west. At each corner of the interior bottoms of which are 2 or 3 inches from the floor and the height about 8 or 10 feet, they are 10 inches to 1 foot in depth. In this I suspect there is a curious resemblance to the Bahrain tombs of Phoenician origin, in the Persian Gulf. On the outside and between projecting ledges of the curiously fashioned bricks cut in diamond and other symmetrical patterns, are large burnt clay slabs bearing images of Peacocks with snakes in their bills, bullocks, leopards, camel with their colts, horses, hand mills and imitations of human hands and feet. These ornamental slabs are not universal, but most of the mausoleums contain them. An exception is to be found in the mausoleum near Magehi Chah in Jhalwar.

Balochistan District Gazetteer further explains the tombs in the following words;

“On the floors of the main chamber of the buildings, one or more elevated sepultures are to be seen. The system of sepultures however, which was followed in the case of the double storey buildings, appears to have been different form that restored to in the case of the single-storey tombs, for the sepultures in the double storey buildings are raised above the floor in tow tiers in the lower of which the corpse was inserted in cross of time, some of these sepultures have been opened and hence they are now surrounded by heaps of bones and human skulls, while, here and there, are pieces of the shrouds in which the dead had been wrapped. In the single storey mausoleum, the corpse was apparently buried in the ground, after which a sepulture was raised above it, beneath a domed roof. The lower storey of the two storey building are not more then four feet above he surface and contain sepulture vaults, as described above in which super-terrene sepulture appears to have taken place. These vaults still contain bones ad skulls. Local accounts state that the corpses were in good preservation in the early past of the last century and even now (1904) a corpse in one of the traps at Gwachig, an account of which is given below, retains its dried skin and a mummy like appearance. On being moved uncrushed barley is said to have fallen from the stomach of this corpse. The skeletons are further said to have been lying on bedding and carpets, and to have been clothes in brocade and silks, which were removed by the people. Much damages is alleged to have been done to the contents of the tombs, and many beads, jewels and valuables to have been removed by and Afghan Faqir several years back, his examples being afterwards followed by the local Rekis. Bangles worn by one of the corpses have been obtained and also some pieces of sagged cloth, which were presumably used as shrouds.” **(District Gazetteer. Kharan, 1997 P 359-60)**

These tombs called Nausherwani tombs which are a set of nine tombs. According to district Gazetteer of Kharan (1906) there were nine tombs of which two have been collapsed in 2004. The District Gazetteer writes that one of these tombs had a inscription with the following words, “*Mazar-e-Nikodar or Mausoleum of Nikodar*”. Nikodar family belonged to the Arghan mongols and they accepted Islam and assumed the name Sultan Ahmad Khan in 681 Hajri. The detail of the Mausoleum at Gwachig is given below:

1. Malik Nausherwani-gumbad is a double storey building, 21 X 2<sup>1</sup> 2 the entrances to the lower storey are close to the surface and lead to separate vaults or comporments. Entrance can only be affected by crawling. In the upper storey are two mud built tombs surrounded by heaps of bones and human skulls

mixed with pieces of shroud. On one of the bricks outside, the words

مزاري نكودر (Mausoleum of Nikudar) have been engraved.

2. This building has no particular name and measures 15<sup>1</sup> 10” X 15<sup>1</sup> 5”. In the upper storey is a single large mud built tomb, the lower storey contains heaps of bones.

3. Is almost in ruins and measures 20<sup>1</sup> 5 X 19”.

4. Is known by the name of Gumbad-i-Shahri and measures 15<sup>1</sup> 6” square. It contains heaps of bones and pieces of shroud.

5. A vault 21’ square is particularly interesting as it contains a well-preserved corpse in the upper storey which appears to be that of a woman. From the top of the head to the toe the body measures 5 feet. Excepting the nose and the parts below the navel, the reminder still bears the dried skin, all the figures and one of the ears being quite un-damaged. A blue thread has been passed through the right ear. The Skelton is quite marked. The local people have moved it from time to time placing it sometimes upright and sometimes in a recumbent posture. In doing so a good deal of uncrushed barley is said to have fallen from the stomach. When seen in 1904 it was lying against the tomb in the center of the building.

6. Is 20<sup>1</sup> 3” square and has one big mud built tomb in it on the bricks over the arch of the entrance leading to the upper storey, are small engraved designs some what like a fish-hook or key.

7. Is 20” square, and has to mud built tombs round which there are heaps of bones.

8. Measures 20<sup>1</sup> 6” square, and had three mud built tombs I the upper storey. In a similar building 12” square:

9. “The people themselves know nothing certain about the origin or the builders of these tombs. Sykes attributes those which he saw in Jalk to the saffarid Maliks who ruled in Siestan from about the ninth to the thirteenth Centuries, and this theory receives support from several of the names which appear in the list given above. One the mausoleum at Washak, for instance, is attributed to Bahram Shah, who ruled in Siestan from 1215 to 1222, and 5 of those at Huramagi are assigned to Shah Utman which is the local pronunciation of Shah Usman, another Malik mentioned in history. Malik Shah, another name which will be found the list above was a brother of Bahram Shah. The fact that the tombs bear pictures of animals and even of human hands and feet, does not necessarily militate against their Mohammadan origin, for the objection to such images was a development o the doctrines of Islam of later date than that assigned above.”(District Gazetteer. Khara, 1997 P 362)

The Gazetteer gives further information in the following words,

*“At the same time the mausoleum probably can not all be assigned to the same builders and date, but were presumably built at different times, the earliest going back perhaps to the ninth or tenth century. For the tombs in the Shimshan with Salambek niabat bear the names of the brothers Hala and Ruho and their sister Bibi Baso, the first two of whom are famous in Brahvi Ballads as having taken parts in the great Brahui-Jagdal war in the Jhalawan country, the date of which must be placed in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. As mentioned above, on one of the bricks in the gumbad of Malik Nausherwan at*

*Gwachig the words **مزار نیکو دار** (Mazar-e-Nakudar i.e) mausoleum of Nikodar are engraved. This may of course only refer to the builder or to the person interred within, but, in view of the facts related in the section on history about the Nikudrians who were defeated in the plains of Kharan by Timur’s son in 1383, the occurrence of the word Nikudar is certainly remarkable. Until however, expert opinion has been obtained, these remarks must be regarded as conjectural only. (District Gazetteer. Kharan, 1997 P 362)*

### **Forts of Kharan**

Beside other kinds of archaeological sites Kharan has also ancient and medieval period forts and castles. This area is full of such kind of sites. These forts have been built in different times. Some of them had been prepared and built by Baloch Nausherwani rulers of the area, but others are ancient than Nausherwani rule. The details of these forts are given below;

### **The Fort of Nawab Azad Khan Nausherwani**

This famous fort is situated in the south of Kharan city. This fort has been built by Nawab Azad Khan Nausherwani in 1880. Nawab Azad Khan Nausherwani has prepared and built many forts in his dynasty for security purpose and this one which is situated in Kharan city, it was the central fort in which the ruler and his family resided. This central fort was designed by Iranian engineers. The bricks have been used in the construction of this fort. The fort is double storey and has many rooms and halls. It covers a big area and the height of boundary wall is not less than 35 feet. The Bado River was the major source of water during the construction work. The main entrance was on eastern side and near the central gate; the halls, soldier’s rooms, weapon stores and other rooms were constructed. The fort was also used for security forces after the emergence of Pakistan and the annexation of Kharan with Pakistan. But, now this is not in use and without protection, it is being demolished. An old Mosque is situated near the main gate outside from fort,

which is also a heritage and needs protection. While, the graveyard is situated behind the fort, in which Nawab Azad Khan, Mir Nauroze Khan the ruler of Kharan is getting rest in an old tomb.

### **Jhalwar Frot**

Jhalwar pass is situated in Raskoh range. This has played a big role in history of the region. Many forts, mounds and written inscription can be found here. This area has two forts which indeed not belong to Nausherwani period. In present time the ruins of these forts are not secure due to bad weather and at hands of Antique Mafia.

### **Fort of Sheereen Zeh**

This wonderful fort is situated in the valley of Shereen Zeh Rakhshan. The height of boundary wall is more than 25 feet. This fort is small in size and has only four rooms, in which two were used as bedroom, one was a kitchen and in one room has a well for getting water. This fort was a check point in which small numbers of soldier stayed. An old Karez is situated behind the boundary wall of the fort, but, now that is dry and not in use.

### **Fort of Pullaintak**

The ruins of an old fort are situated in the area of Pullaintak, Kharan, Mir Azad Khan Nausherwani rebuilt it on the foundation of another old fort. The ruins of both forts old and new can be found here, but now these are receding badly.

### **The Forts of Ladgasht**

These are two forts in the area of Ladagsht which were built by Nausherwani rulers of Kharan. These are in good condition, but they can not be saved well because of bad weather and by the hands of Antique Mafia

### **Fort of Nazar (Nazar Kalat)**

This is an ancient fort in which some walls are still remaining, otherwise the total fort has been changed into ruins, but, the foundation is still remaining. This is a good site for further research.

### **Fort of Nauroze (Nauroze Kalat)**

This very famous fort is situated in the town of Nauroze Kalat, which is very popular in the history of Kharan. This area is also famous for its other kinds of archaeological sites like, ancient dams, mounds and so on. This fort has been built by Nawab Azad Khan Nausherwani during 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the conflict has started between Kalat State and Kharan and dedicated it to his beloved son

Nauroze Khan. This area was called Balkh before the construction of this fort, but, when Nawab Azad Khan Nausherwani built a fort and changed the name of area. The Baddo River flows near its walls. This fort is still in good condition but, it needs protection preservation and more research.

### **Fort of Gorjag**

This mud fort is covered more than 60 thousand square feet and situated on a mount. A dry stream is situated near the fort.

### **Fort of Shahana**

This fort is situated in Mashkel area near the Sabz Koh on the peak of a mount. This fort has been destroyed, only ruins are remaining. From south and west the mount is covered with rocks. This is very far away from highway and not big in size. It has a deep well inside. The information about this fort is little without some oral statements.

### **Other Forts of Kharan**

Many more forts are situated in the different areas of Kharan, which actually played significant role in history. But, these cultural heritages are facing their difficult moments because of non-protection. The following forts can be found in the different areas of Kharan: Fort of Kotan, Fort of Kalagan, Fort of Galuga, Fort of Jawad, Fort of Gazzil Fort of Shahzad, Fort of Sarwan, Fort of mashki, Forts of Ladgasht, Forts of washuk, Fort of Kalag, Fort of Kuhak, Fort of Pulaintak and many others. (*Shahwani, Aseer Abdul Qadir, Pp 344-55*)

Undoubtedly, these forts have big importance in the history of Kharan and Balochistan. These are a great heritage, which can prove the area and the people about their cultural history, but at the present time what is the condition of this heritage? So, it is the need of time to protect and preserve this heritage on priority basis. Very famous Spy of Great Britain, "Henry Pottinger" also traveled in the area of Kharan. He gives the following statement about this area.

### **The Travel of Henry Pottinger in Kharan**

According to Dr. M.A Stein:

"The search for the more interesting ruins which Pottinger had seen on his third march south of Noshki, proved for more difficult. From certain topographical indications I concluded that on his way into Kharan he must have followed the route crossing the range of mountains south-west of Noshki by the Tafui Pass. But the country being in Pottinger's days quite as devoid of permanent inhabitations as it is now, and of course un-surveyed, his narrative does not supply such local names or other indicia by which his line of route or the site referred to could be fixed with precession on the modern map. Nevertheless,

the close agreement of Pottinger's description with the ground seen by me on the Tafui route, as well as his mention of the Bel stream (his Bale) make me now feel certain that he actually traveled by this route. The information gathered from some Brahvized Hindus coming from Kharan, the only travelers we met en-route, pointed to the existence of ruined mounds near the route some miles to the north of Nauroze Kalat. This was confirmed by what was known to some nomadic Brahvi shepherds we picked up at our second encampment near a well in the dry Bed of the Bel". (**District Gazetteer of Balochistan, Pp 365-66**)

He further explains that: "Under the guidance of one of these shepherds I proceeded in the morning of the third day to the ruined site spoken of. It proved to be situated by the left Bank of the board river bed which is formed by the junction of the Bel with the Baddo river, coming from the mountains to the north-east and known in its upper course as Lijji or Chiringi. The old site known like all ruins of this region by the general term of "Kona Shahr" so familiar to me from Turkestan, lies about 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> miles below the junction just referred to, marked by the Ziarat Sheikh Husain. It occupied the angle formed between the bed of the united Bel and Baddo rivers and a small dry nullah known as Toji which joins it from the north east. The distance from Noshki which by the map as well as by an approximately accurate road estimate was shown to be about 65 miles, agreed remarkably well with Pottinger's indication but through there were the "several large mounds of earth and stone sheltered over the desert "to which his description refers, not trace could be found of the "every extraordinary tombs of a quadrangular shape, each surrounded by a low wall of curious open free stone work, "which he mentions at a distance of circ. 400 yards from the western bank of the river. The remains actually seen by me at this Kona Shahr" at Toji were briefly these. Before ascending the high bank to the east of the river bed I noticed one of those ancient Dams which are known in Kalat territory as Gabr Bands, i.e. bands of the Gabrs or fire worshippers and which must have served to form storage tanks at periods when cultivation was carried on in parts of the country now devoid of all permanent settlements. It consisted of an embankment circ. 40 yards long and about 20 feet broad at the base built at right angles to the of the dry river bed and showing a core of massive masonry of unseen stones. Above this band the gravelly ground was thickly strewn for several hundreds of yards with rough stones once apparently used in buildings and with fragments of plain pottery while small oblong mounds of unseen stones unmistakably marked graves. The latter may possibly be of relatively modern date and belong to the nomadic Brahvis who still visit these parts during the summer for grazing purposes. But the burial ground is no longer used now. Crossing the Toji Nullah to the south close to its junction with the river bed, I found in the angle between the two a debris-strewn mound

measuring circ. 100 yards from north to south and about as broad as its northern face. The North West corner rises steeply circ. 35 feet above the river bed. There some recent digging had exposed short lengths of two walls meeting at right angles. The masonry of these walls, circ. 3 feet in thickness, showed masonry of small un-hewn slabs arranged in carefully adjusted courses and undoubtedly old. The walls appeared to have enclosed a small square room and to continue both to the south and east in the debris covered ground. Remains of walls are similar construction, circ. 4-5 feet in height, are traceable on the spots where they may have served to form terraces. Plentiful old potsherds, among them fragments decorated in simple brown patterns on red ground, covered top of the mound and its slopes. A second but smaller mound, which occupies a little plateau to the south separated by a shallow ravine, shows similar pottery and much debris of rough stone material, but no intact remains of walls. Where the two mounds are nearest to each other, remains of an old band survive, built across the small ravine, with a thickness of circ. 8 feet. That the ruins just described are of some antiquity may be considered as certain in view of the deserted condition in which this tract has been since long centuries like most of the rest of Kharan. The masonry of the wall, too, bears an ancient look and cannot possibly have been the work of Brahvis in their present stage of culture. But, in the absence of datable remains and in view of the extreme dearth of reliable historical information concerning these parts of Balochistan in earlier periods, it would be useless to attempt any estimate of age in regard to these mounds and a similar one, I passed some six miles to the north-east in a portion of the wide bed of the Baddo known as Toskans”  
**(District Gazetteer of Balochistan, Pp 366-68)**

Dr. M.A Stein describes in district gazetteer of Balochistan, (P 368) that remains such as Pottinger describes might be their style and structural character have supposed some clue to the period of their origin and thus of the earlier occupation of their vicinity. But of such remains we could discover no trace on either bank of the river through round lay quite clear and open before us sloping down towards, Nauroze Kalat some four miles to the south. In a region with so dry a climate and so sparsely inhabited, it is difficult to believe that substantial ruins with carved stone work could within a century have disappeared without leaving some trace. I am rather inclined to believe in the possibility of some error in Pottinger’s road estimate and of the ruins being really about situated some distance further south. Yet neither the Hindus who had come from Kharan and whose information about the Toji mounds had proved quite exact nor my actual guide knew any thing of ruined structures between Nauroze Kalat and Kharan. What of time did not allow me to make a personal research beyond Nauroze Kalat and consequently I must content myself with the hope that some further visitors whose attention may be called by these lines to



Pottinger's interesting notice, will succeed in tracking the ruins. Whatever their character may have been Pottinger called trace nothing whatever Mohammedan or Hindu also about their style and had judicious doubts also about their having served as Zoroastrian place of worship their existence would prove a far higher state of civilization than these tracts have known for centuries.

### **Conclusion**

Balochistan is the birth land of civilizations and it was a very popular area in pre-historic era. If we count the ancient mounds and places of the area of Balochistan, these are more than all the villages and towns. The ancient inhabitants of Balochistan were connected with Sind Valley Civilization, Middle East and Central Asia by trade and culture. (*François Jarriage, Catherine Jarriage 1986 P-33 & Yahya Amjad, 1989 P-234*)

According to some authentic sources that the civilization of Balochistan had started nearly 9000 B.C at Mehr Garh near Bolan Pass. The Mehrgarh formed many more settlements in the surrounding areas of present Balochistan and the neighbor countries. It was at that time when man left hunting and cave life and settled on the bed of the earth and started living in the huts or mud houses .So, after Mehrgarh many more areas of Balochistan changed into human settlements. Quetta valley culture, mounds of Kachhi, sites of Khuzdar, Kalat, Soorab, Mastung, Kharan, Loralai, Zhob, Kohlu, Awaran, Mashkhel, Nal, Mekran, Lasbela, Chagai are the best examples of it. The experts and researchers come here for their research purposes and the government and institutes protect them on priority basis for research and new discoveries. The foreign scholars officially visit us and excavate our mounds with the permission of higher authorities and the local people of the area. Every thing which they find they display it in their own countries. They have their own modern museums and scientific laboratories. They experiment upon our heritage and create results. They write books on our lost culture. While we are not aware of our cultural heritage. As a result of such kind of foreign excavation the mounds and other places are being destroyed, because after the excavation of mounds and graveyards, they complete their work and leave the excavated place open and un-secure. The common people understand the importance of archaeological objects nowadays after the unlawful acts of Antique Mafia. They do not excavate, but they dig them badly from every side. Large number of mounds have screened out, others are badly damaging. In many areas of Balochistan like, Kachhi, Kharan, Gandawah, Khuzdar and Soorab large number of mounds have been mislaid, now these are not animate. Many more mounds and historical places are destroyed by thieves, who need only gold and such like expensive things. At present time in various cities of

Balochistan, the activities of Antique Mafia are increasing. This danger Mafia is buying the Antiques and objects for some rupees and smuggling them outside the country. So, the poor and un-employed local people are digging the mounds and other archaeological sites quickly. As a result, till now a lot of mounds and other places have been destroyed and many of these are badly damaged. Thousands of Potteries, bull figurines, mother goddess statues weapons, Jewelleries, stone ornaments, tools, coins and other objects illegally have been exported to foreign countries. On the other side nature is destroying them, the rain, snow fall, thunders and harsh weather is slowly but badly destroying these sites because of the lack of care. Still past is alive in many places, but in which speed Antique Mafia is working, it is to hope that we donot lose our past.

The detail of archaeological sites of Kharan is very long. This area of Balochistan has a ancient and different kind of heritage. The cipher of many nations can be found here. Ancient Iranians, Medians, Aschamanids, Greeks, Arabs, Turkmen and Mongols, even every ruler of Siestan and Central Asia ruled here. But, still many facts are in dark. As origin of the name is not clear, the true history of the area and secrets of the archaeological sites are un-known. These sites are in big number, and discrete in a huge area. These are divided into many kinds of archaeology. A big budget will be needed for the preservation, protection and further research work, which is not possible for provincial government or Federal Government, and as well as University of Balochistan. But, at present many educational and research donor groups, companies and institutes are working in this field in many areas of the world. It is to hope that such groups will take interest in the archaeological sites of Balochistan.

The condition of this regional heritage has been discussed in above pages. These are not in good condition. The protection of them is very necessary. Areas of Balochistan have big number of archaeological places, which are like academies for researchers, historians and archaeologists. These places can be found everywhere in Balochistan. Majority of these sites are still not discovered and un-seen by experts. Every person who understands the field and education of archaeology, history and anthropology, can understand the importance of these places and objects. The foreigners many time visited the various areas of Balochistan. They brought many main places under their excavation and thousands of objects they reserved. But on National and Provincial basis the work is nill. So, in these circumstances it is very necessary that the higher authorities of the federal and provincial governments, Higher Education Commission and other concerned departments play a positive role for preservation, protection, safety, security, excavation and conduct more

research upon these sites on priority basis. There is no time, if we did not do any thing for our heritage, then we will lose an indispensable part of our culture and past.

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