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## **HINDUISM IN BALOCHISTAN: LITERARY AND CULTURAL IMPACTS OF PASHTOONS AND BALOCHS ON HINDUS OF BALOCHISTAN**

Dr. Sahibzada Baz Mohammad<sup>9</sup>  
Fehmida Baloch<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Chairperson, Dept. of Islamic Studies, University of Balochistan, Quetta

<sup>10</sup> Lecturer, Dept. of Islamic Studies, Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University, Quetta. <sup>13</sup>  
Lecturer, Dept. of Mangement and Engineering, University of Khuzdar,

### Sahibzada Baz Mohammad

#### Abstract:

Hindus of Balochistan play very significant role in promoting and strengthening trade and business for a long period. It is why names of many areas such as (Hindu Bagh now Muslim Bagh) , Bazars (Chaman, Bhag Naree) , Roads (Moti Ram road, Tola Ram road, Zonki Ram road), water channels / Fountains (Hindu Chena located in Kuchlak) and other places show their high role in every sphere of life.

In this paper an attempt has been made to study and analyze the advent of scattered Hindus in Balochistan besides their religious customs, and social life.

The writers are of the view that they (Hindus) have adopted some of the customs of the region where they dwell yet attached to Hinduism firmly and celebrate their annual festivals zealously. Moreover, this paper unearths the primary causes of decrease in their number. This paper is going to cover the over all status of Hindus and collective behaviour of the local population with them.

#### Introduction:

Prehistoric Geography refers to two names for Balochistan, the Grocia and Arakozia. From the hilly chain of Sind and Balochistan till Iranian Kerman province called Grocia (1) passing through which Sikandar of Greece had faced tough resistance(2) who had passed through this region in 325 B.C.(3) Where as Arakozia included Northern region the then Aryana known as Hirat of the present day. Other parts of Arakozia were called Drungiana. Actually kandahar used to be the centre of Arakozia and Drungiana were to be called either Siestan or Zabulistan(4).

Nevertheless, the then Grocia and Arakozia are now politically divided into three countries i.e. Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Iranian Balochistan covers 69,487 sq miles Afghani Balochistan constitutes 40,000 sq miles and Pakistan Balochistan extended to 1,34,000 sq miles.(5) This paper is going to unearth the Hinduism in Pakistani Balochistan.

The strategic and political significance of Balochistan can not be denied because since long it would be the passageway of western warriors and traders.

Prior to the creation of Pakistan three parts of Balochistan would directly control by A.A.G (Agent to Governor).He was responsible for the management of areas given as under.

After the second British- Afghanistan war which resulted in the Gandmak treaty. Afghan government relinquished specified belt of its territory which was latter named British Balochistan in 1887. British Balochistan included Chaman, Pishin, Sharag, Duki and Sibbi besides the territory acquired on Ajarah from Khan Kalat consist of Tehsil Quetta, Noshki, Bolan, Jhat Phat, Osta Mohd and (Naseer Abad) etc. Those territories awarded to British government by the chieftains included Zoab, Lorali (except Duki) Kohlu and Dalbundin and western Sinjrani. More over the tribal Muri and Bugti belts alongwith Khan of Kalat states, Kharan, Lasbelah and Mukran were also under his control.

All states of Balochistan formally affiliated with Pakistan after its establishment and lost its separate identity like other states **prehistoric religions of Balochistan:**

Archeologists estimated the era of the antiques of Mehargarh three thousand years old as compared to the civilization of sindh valley. Hence it may be considered the start point of Sind valley civilization but the influences of Sindh valley over mehargarh can also not be rejected when it was on its pinnacle. The discovery of statues of god and goddesses in the last period of Mehargarh civilization proves the very first identity of Hinduism in Balochistan which slowly and gradually developed and resulted in the formation of Hindu government over this region. In the patronage of the government Hinduism had been properly propagated and

established. It is why temples and shrines of Hinduism are found through out the region. A proverb is also popular in this regard.

SAR PAHAR STA DAIP HE, ATWAN HANGLAJ, KALI WO SAY KALAT MAY, MAHADEVE MASTUNG MAY, BUD HARAH JOGI SHAL MAY, PANI NATH BALONTH(6).

This poetic proverb indicates that the influences of Hinduism were not bound to a specific region of Balochistan but extended to every corner of it. The above cited quotation points out some of the famous and sacred places of Hinduism like stadeip ( located at the coastal areas of Balochistan, Hanglaj( lasbela)besides Kalat, Mustung and Shall(primitive name of Quetta) are included. Apart from it , a fountain in Kachi (Storan) is known as Nehad Harri Sar.(7).

More over two main Hindu families ruled over Balochistan which includes Ray family of Sind and Sewa family of Balochistan(8). It is also said that before the arrival of Muslim victors there had been a place of worship in Kalat the idol of which called zorak. Mir Gul Khan Nasir says “ researchers are of the opinion that Zorak is the Same idol called Shewa in Hinduism”(9). Beside the influences of Hinduism in Balochistan the traces of Bhudism is also observed. It may be memento of the period of well known Hindu preacher Astoak. Evaluation of primitive religions in Balochistan proves the presence of assorted rulers and warriors in the region hence Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Zoarism got significance in their respective periods but came to an end after the arrival of Islam.

### **Hinduism before division of sub continent:**

Prior to the division of sub-continent Hindus were settled in most of the cities of Balochistan. Hindus lived in district Quetta and Pishin also known Shalkoti Hindus are less in number. Most of them belong to Arora clan. They settled here from Dajal Kachi of Dera Ghazi Khan and Sind.

Earlier than the British occupation Hindus would not act upon the religious customs but strictly followed their cast system. According to the 1901 census report Arya Samaj (1893) of Quetta is divided into two groups, the vegetarian and college group. The first group seems to be very strong. Both have a weekly sessions of worshipping (poja pot). Sometimes Ufdeshak come from India to deliver lectures here. The Brahman Samaj of Quetta is branch of Calcutta Sadhran Brahman Samaj and established in 1882. It believes in the teachings of all religions but is strictly against the rituals of poja pot. They don't believe in cast system. According to the census of 1901 there were total 180 Hindus and Siks in district Zoab. They all believed in

Arya Samaj. Before the British government in Balochistan Some of the hindu families shifted from Dehwr (Derah Ghazi Khan) doing business but after the construction of Fort Sandeman some of them returned their homes while others shifted to the Fort Sandeman. So therefore all of them belong to Arya Samaj and have a separate temple.

Hindus of district Sarwan shifted here from Dera Ghazi Khan, Kachi and Shikar Pur. Less number of Sikhs are also with them. As per the census report of 1901, both male and female were 841 in total, out of which 439 were male and 348 were femle. Most of them dwelling in Kalat, Mustung and Manguchar. there are few temples of Kali Devi in Johan, Paring Abad, Terri, Kalat and Kanak. All of them used to be trading particulary in summer. They come to sell in Dhadar, Sunni, Marwarh, and Bhag cultivated areas(10).

With respect of 1901 census the total number of Hindus is 10784.5684 male and 5100 female hindus. All of them belong to Arora cast. The famous tribes/sects called Bajaj Barhaman whose faith is amalgamation of Sikhism and idolatry but influenced by the Islamic system. They believe in Muslim's shrines whole heartedly and take children to cut/ erase the hair at shrine. They are having usually the same habits and customs as other Hindus of Balochistan.

According to the record of the 1901 census there were just 381 Hindus in district Jhalawan. Most of them temporarily live here and come from Kechi and Sindh . They are doing business in Khuzdar, Nal, Wadh and other specific places. Local teirth called Asia poori is near Khuzdar where there is a fountain on which they celebrate Noroz in besaki.

Similarly the 1901 census report shows that only Arora hindus dwell in Lasbela, Chaghi, Kharan, Murri and Bugti districts. Although they have conservative thoughts yet unlike other hindus they neither abide by the religious rites nor having prejudicial thoughts. Many of the customs regarding their daily routine have been changed. Like Aroras of the other districts their religion is also amalgamation of Sikhism and idolatory while hindus of Shikar pur worship darya peer and don't follow religion strictly. Most of Hindus of this region have been observed drinking water in the pot of muslims but after forming and strengthening relations with Hindus of India, cast system is developing.(11)

District Gwadar total population of hindus, as per 1901 census recorded 279, Gawadar 200, pasni 41, Kalamat 5, Kolova 10, kech valley and dusht 20, Panjgoor 3 but they do not live here permanently and leave for Hindustan in old age. They are settled here since four generations shifted from Sind yet having relations with them. Married men rarely migrate outside Gwadar(12).

### **Arrival at district Loralai and conversion of faith:**

According to the data of 1901 census, there were total 3261 Hindus including 326 Sikhs in Loralai, out of which 1772 had been counted while following the standard goshwaras, most of them belong to Sindh and Punjab. According to the family census out of 1489 families most of them were hindus. These 1489 were scattered in Sanzvi 15, Musa Kheil 99, Bori 232, Duki 444 and in Barkhan 699. Dwelling hindus were almost in Durg (Musa Kheil), Meikhtar, Cheena Alizi (tehsil Bori) Duki Habib Killa, Thal, Numki, Chutiali (Duki tehsil), Chohar Coat, Haji Coat Baghaw (tehsil Bharkan) areas.

They lived before the British occupation. Like other hindus they were also doing business of high profit. Some of them got lands like Mutia Karez of Mutia Swarezi (hindu) digged in 1894, is one of the properties of hindus. Some of the Hindus of tehsil Duki were affiliated with business of wheat and wool, at large scale. They traveled Duki from Lehri, Hard, Dajal and Mugrota, (Dera Ghazi Khan). They are of Arora cast. Assorted Brahmans and faqeers (poors) make this group and follow an amalgamated belief of Sikhism and idolatory. Those who live in Bharkan belong to a secret sect locally known as Dewiya Andar Marg, the changed name of Bam Marg. Women are not allowed to have belief of this sect. Some of the known identities of this sect are usage of drugs and openly eating meat. The hindus of Dera Ghazi Khan are disciples of Gosain Lal Jee(13).

The present scenario; District Jhal

### **Magsi:**

According to the 1981 census report Jhal Magsi district population comprises on 97% Muslims and the remaining are Hindus. They follow their assorted creeds. Religious and spiritual leader of them is called Bhawa or Bhmaban. A Bhmaban is commonly known as Brahman. Bhawa is imam of a specific temple called Mohri. Their proper festivals include Shew, Holli, Dasarah, and Deewal which are celebrated prescheduled in February, March and October respectively. There are two sects, the herbivorous hindus (using just vegetables as their food) and the carnivorous hindus (those using meat also)(14). **District Lasbellah:**

The Hindus of Lasbellah and Uthal celebrate the festivals of Holli and Deewali and attend temples properly. Relationship among all sects is very close and they extend cooperation in their religious and social life.(15)

### **District Naseer Abad:**

After the independence of Pakistan distinct decrease has been observed in the population of Hindus in this district. Olden days witnessed a gigantic population while most of them migrated to Sindh and India. Hindus of this territory travel to Jacob Abad for participating in religious gathering where a huge number of hindus is still present.

Religious feuds rarely occur as compared to the familial and tribal clashes. In the result of martyrdom of Babari mosque some of them were killed and looted in various cities of the country but not in Naseer Abad(16).

**District Bolan:** A large of Hindus dwell in Bolan particularly in Bhag sub division. **District Dera Bugti:**

Only one percent of the total population of district Dera Bugti are Hindus which include Sikhs and Christians as well. It is also not mandatory for a Bugti Baloch to be muslim. yet they are very less in number hence any of the persons of non-muslims may participate with Bugties and can show identity of being a member of Bugti tribe(17).

**District Jaffar Abad:**

Hindus are well populated in this district specially in Dera Alla Yar and Usta Muhammad. They are considered local residents and can fluently speak local languages of the area while most of them speak Sinhi. They celebrate Deewali and Holli. Jaffar Abad also observed the decline in hindus population which might be the result of enormous migration to India and Sindh.

Tribal and familial clashes are more as compared to the religious and sectarian feud. Religious feuds rarely occur. Any how hatred developed against them on the martyrdom of Babari Mosque(18). **District Chaghi:**

Very few Hindus live in district Chagi and participate in their annual festivals of Deewali, Holli and Besaki. Besaki is celebrated on 13 April on which Hindus of Nushki and surrounding areas offer Haj on Javakran valley 22 kilometers away from Nushki.(19) **District Mastung:**

Hindus of Mastung participate in Deewali and Holli festivals. Believers of all sects cooperate among themselves during religious and other social occasions and have close relations with other people of the same sect.

**District Keich:**

Majority of the district population is muslims as per 1981 census record. Minority includes Christianity, Amadies, Hindus, Persians, and Sikhs but Zikries had not been mentioned in this record who are in large number which might be the reason that Zikries call themselves Sunni Muslims. Sunni Muslim deny the statement because their belief and way of worshipping is contrary to that of Muslims.

**District Kalat:**

Though Hindus are in minority in this district yet they have complete independence in offering the religious rites. There is a temple of Kali Deewi in Kalat which is a popular place of worshipping for hindus. They also zealously participate in the annual festivals Deewali and Holli.

Hindus celebrate a fair in Kali Deewi temple for which Hindus from all over the country take part.(20)

### **Existing: financial condition of Hindus in Balochistan**

Hindus are basically divided into four casts.

(1) Brahman (2) Weish (3) Khashtari (4) Shoodar

All of them have specific principles, rules and regulations which are mandatory to be followed.

Out of four casts of Hindus there is only Weish settled in Balochistan whom main business is farming and trading etc. Most of them in Balochistan are associated with general business (parchoon) whereas some Hindus are government employees also.

Selling sweets, Samosey, and Pakoray in reris and gur, Garam Masala on foot paths of shops besides working on private medicals as compouder etc.

Apart from it some of them, run properties which include shops, medical stores, shopping centres, vedios shops etc.

Interest and wine are halal in Hinduism hence some Hindus are dealers of wine and giving interest on debt to the poor Muslims and receive huge amount after a due period. It is worth to mention that Hindu women support them to earn livelihood by teaching in private, govt schools or tutoring and some of them assist their males doing embroidery, stitching and making papur.

If the financial condition of a hindu family is weak then whole hindu community support it on the orders of Panchaiat until the financial condition of the said family becomes strong.

In brief , their business is improving day and night which are surely results of their collective efforts. **Current social condition of Hindus in Balochistan:**

A man is known by the company he keeps and by the way relations are extended .Similarly Hindus maintained brotherhood amongst themselves and always help each others in Herculean tasks.

They keep good relations with Muslims and participate in all sorts of occasions of Muslims.Hindus are known for keeping relations properly.They also invite Muslim buddies on their Marriages ceremonies and manage a Muslim cook for them. Muslims are also invited on religious festivals and offer them gifts which are sometimes send to their homes as well.Such manners strengthens brotherhood in the region.

They also contribute to the national celebrations like day of independence, 23<sup>rd</sup> March and other national festivals which proves their identity as true Pakistani.

Hindus of this province decide their internal conflicts through PANCHAIAT headed by MAKHIA who is responsible to resolve such clashes by consulting with PANCHAIAT.

PANCHAIT assist them at every corner of life.It(PANCHAIT) reaches SHAMSHAN GAT for cremation (to burn the dead body) and funeral file.The Hindus of Balochistan fully support for restoring daily life in an affected territory(21).

### **Books( of Hinduism) taught in the temples of Balochistan:**

Like in other religions children are taught elementary religious books, Hindus also teach their children basics of religion through religious texts which mean to learn and act himself first then convey and propagate to others. It is considered good act in a religion.

The following booklets and books are taught in the temples of Balochistan.

- (1) BAL BOODH (booklet)
- (2) REDH
- (3) JEP SAHEB (It comprised the initial chapter of the sayings of SHARI GORO NANUK) (4) PANJ GARTHI
- (5) JANAM SAKHI ( The biography of SHARI GORO NANAK).
- (6) SHARIMAT BHAGHUT ( The biography of SHARI KARSHAN JEE )
- (7) SHARI RAMAIN JEE (The biography of SHARI RAM CHANDAR JEE)
- (8) SHARI MAT BHAGWAT GEETA ( Includes 18 chapters of assorted titles)
- (9) SHARI GORO GRUTH JEE (Includes the sayings and principles framed by 10 GOROS called UPDEISH (22)

### **Daily prayers of Balochistani Hindus:**

Daily routine prayers of Hindus in Balochistan are divided into two parts ,i.e PRATKAL and SAINKAL. PRATKAL is Hindi word means the prayer of the dawn.

After getting up early in the morning they take ablution and directs to temple for worshipping POT POJA. After having reached they say worship GATERI MANTAR, JEP SAHEB MANTAR, SAKONI SAHEB. Latter on they return home and spend day time in handling business.

SAINKAL is also Hindi term means the prayer of night.

As soon as, sun sets ,Hindus gather in a temple so that to offer night prayer where they worship RAHRAS,ANNUND SAHEB, and KARTHAN SOHALA and say BAJAN(hymn) as well.When ever they finish worshipping, a collective pray is made after which KAIRTAN BHAJAN is also said collectively and it is considered the SAMAPAT (end) of the night prayer followed by a PARSHAD (charity) in the already present worshippers prayer. (23)

## SACRED PLACES OF HINDUS IN BALOCHISTAN\*<sup>11</sup>:

There are many sacred places of Hindus in Balochistan some of which are given below.

- (1) Only in Kalat district there are five temples. One of which is KAALI DEEVI temple. During the reign of SEEWA, the then ruler of Kalat, the places to which Hindu's names were given are still the same. There are only two temples of KALLI DEEVI in the world, one in KALKUTA (India), the other is in Kalat (Balochistan).
- (2) There is another temple in the suburb of Mastung called SHEVA JEE TEMPLE. A unique tree known as BAHAMA BASHNO MAHESH bearing three branches is grown along with the temple. Once a person tried to cut it but soon observed water, blood and milk flowing from its three branches separately.
- (3) Another temple is located in Lasbeela built on a valley where Hindu's from other parts of the country come to celebrate and participate in an annual fair held in the said temple.
- (4) There are two temples of Hinduism in Quetta. Both of them are of ARYA SAMAJ. One is called GURDWARAH MANDAR on Masjid road in which both Hindus and Sikhs perform their religious rituals. Here GORO GRANTH SAHEB is taught which consist of the teachings of GORO NANAK. The next temple is located on Shawak Shah road known as TEMPLE OF KARSHNA.
- (5) Temple in Bhag is known as SANT MADHOODAS TEMPLE.
- (6) An annual fair is celebrated in Usta Muhammad from Jan, 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> every year.
- (7) GONDHAM temple is in Kolpur built on a valley and is a branch of SAMADH ASHRAM of Shikarpur.
- (8) SNATHAM DAHRAM is another temple in Loralai.
- (9) A fountain in Bolan known as MAHADEV.

**CULTURAL IMPACTS OF PASHTOONS AND BALOCHS:** Hindus in Balochistan by religion does not mean that they all belong to specific tribes as in India but the Hindus of Balochistan also includes the followers of local tribes. They include people from kakar's one the top majority tribes of Pashtoon in Balochistan. It is why, they do not feel the local tradition strange. Due to this the life style and behaviors of Balochistani Hindus has been quite changed. They adopted some of the rites and customs of the people where they live. In this connection it is observed that Hindus living in Balochi Belt fluently speak Balochi and put on Balochi dress and seem a typical Baloch. Where as Hindus living in Pashtoon territories developed Pashtoon's characteristics besides dressing like Pashtoons and having built up their customs in own communities.

There are more than fifty Hindu families in Chaman, all of them look like an ordinary Pashtoon.

Another example of the religious harmony is that long before names given to a place, area, city or road are still the same like Chaman, Moti Ram road, Gordat Singh road, Patail road, Zonky Ram road, Jamiat Ray road, Hindu Mohla, Hindu China (Hindu fountain), but Hindu Bagh.

Sanzari Hindu is a tribe of Kakar Sanzar Kheil Hindus and are still rigid followers of Hinduism. They are originally Pashtoon belong to one of the largest tribes of Pashtoons but believe in Hinduism which is a distinct example of religious harmony in Balochistan.

Hindus of Chaman had been dwelling here before partition of sub-continent and are still living there. As per my personal information there are more than fifty houses of Hindus having business in the city.

Apart from this the amalgamation of Hindus with local tribes in Balochistan has their impacts on literature of both languages. As in one of Pashto folkloric genres it is said that:

يار مي هندو زه مسلمان يم  
د يار دپاره درمسال جارو كومه

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**Translation:** My beloved in Hindu where I am Muslim  
I sweep Darmasal for him

<sup>11</sup> Some of the temples are still left and not mentioned yet like in Chaman, Sibi and many other cities

In another Tappa deep affection with his Hindu friend is expressed:

يار مي هندوزه مسلمان يم  
له كليمي سره رام رام هم يادومه

۶۲

**Translation:** My friend is Hindu and I am Muslim

I say Ram Ram along with Kalima

It reflects the pluralistic approach of the local people. They have respect for religion and culture of neighboring nations.

**Conclusion:** Keeping in view the population of hindus in Balochistan for a long period shows that except special circumstances they had led a peaceful life. As they are in minority and the policies of Indian government against Muslims and Pakistan sometime cause panic for the hindus of this regions whereas; the local environment is still conducive for them.

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### **An Analytical Study of British Interests in British Balochistan**

Muhammad Asif <sup>16</sup><sup>12</sup>

Dr. Asghar-Iqbal **Abstract:**

*The histories of Balochistan are rich in several trustworthy view points, but all in cannot be explore in a single task. Here the British rule in Balochistan is focused in a sense of political awakening in the region. Moreover, this paper has additionally discussed the questionable diffusion of*

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<sup>12</sup> M.Phil. Scholar and lecturer, Department of History, University of Baluchistan, Quetta. <sup>16</sup> Assistant

Professor, Department of Kashmiriat, University of Punjab, Lahore.