

## BALUCHISTAN: PEOPLE AND CULTURE

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### ABSTRACT:

After 9/11 the rapid geopolitical changes took place in the world scenario. Being an alliance of super power Afghanistan and Pakistan particularly the province of Balochistan has been affected deficiently. The people are very much enthusiastic to know about the people and culture of Balochistan. Balochistan's history dates back with Mehrgarh civilization, which is 10,000 years old. So far, socially and culturally it is very rich. Various ethnic groups, languages, dress, food, living style etc. have developed a colorful culture in the area.

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan spreads over 347, 190 sq Km, and the population is around seventy five million, which is about 5% of the country. It has thus the unique characteristics having the largest area and least density Province of Pakistan. It is bordered with three provinces of the country, Iran and Afghanistan, on the North West. Balochistan has an interesting topography of widespread high mountainous ranges, vast plain land and the largest coastal belt of the country. The climate is temperate along the coast. The in land deserts and arid zones are hot, while the mountains region is cold.

In this research paper the traditional norms values and culture those are under practice with in their tribal laws are discussed, to give a clear picture about Balochistan, its people and culture.

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**INTRODUCTION:**

Balochistan, due to its geopolitical importance has always been an attractive place for local and foreigner tourists. It is the largest province in Pakistan, "with an area of 3, 47,200 square kilometers." (1) It is larger than the provinces of Sindh and Punjab combined. It is sparsely populated (358). The density is only 19 persons per square kilometer. (2) For a long time it oscillated between obscurity and prominence, but its geographic importance never slackened. Its importance seems to lie in the fact that it is close to the Middle East, central Asia, South Asia and the middle East. Lately Soviet intervention in Afghanistan has lent Balochistan a new importance, even though over past two millennium years. It has either hindered or facilitated, Passage of large armies, Iranian, Greek, Mongol & British among them and there by influenced world history.

After 9/11 event and change of regime in Afghanistan and nuclear war scenario in Rasko valley district Chagai. Balochistan became very famous at international level. Keeping in view its geo-political importance, the Federal Provincial Government has initiated mega projects like Gawadar port, Orangi Dam, Kachi Canal, University of Information technology and Balochistan University.

Every one is keen interested to know about the area, people and general characteristics of Balochistan.

**DESCRIPTION:**

Balochistan is bounded on the "west by 520 miles (867 km) long border with Iran and on the north by 720 miles (1200 km) border with Afghanistan, in the east provinces of Sindh and Punjab and a part of North West Frontier province (NWFP) in the North West. In the South it has 470 miles (783 km) coastline along the warm water of the Arabian Sea. Its extended seaboard running along the Sistan region of Iran ends up the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Balochistan lies in the commanding position vis-a-vis the straits of Hormuz are about 590 km from Gwadar port, one of the choke points of Indian Ocean and the World. (Ex. President of U.S.A. Ronald Reagan indicated sixteen choke points in the world.) The other important border is.



**NAME:**

"It's a tri-junction border in the northwest links Seistan (Iran) and Helmund (Afghanistan) with Chagai (Pakistan). Over looking the Zahedan-Chabahar highway, in the north east the inland constrictions the Khojak and Bolan pass (opposite Kandhar) are some of the major bottlenecks in the region from the geo-strategic point of view. In the past they were important for the Czarist Russia and England. In the future they will be for any possible contentions between Soviet Union and the indigenous power of the region. "Balochistan's political boundaries conform to its physical frontiers they vary widely and physically encompasses a large chunk of Iran, Afghanistan and parts of Punjab and N.W.F.P of Pakistan."(4) The Encyclopedia of Iran describes the geo-political boundaries of Balochistan." This includes the whole Country over which Baloch race is spread without respect to political boundaries."(5) The ethnic configuration of Baloch in the region shows that the Baloch inhabit part of Helmund (Afghanistan), Helmund (Iran), Sindh, Punjab, N.W.F.P and area of Pakistan Balochistan. Greek historian Herodotus had divided Balochistan into three parts, two of which by and large, conform to the description given by Encyclopedia of Islam.

1. Aracosia, Comprising Kandhar and Quetta region.
2. Drangiana, including Helmund, Seistan and Chagai.
3. Gedrosia, Comprising (Pakistan and Iranian) Makran coast.

According to Sir Denys Bray, the large chunks of Eastern Southern Afghanistan and Pakistani Balochistan are so identical in geography and ecology that they form one natural region. Together they appear more central Asia than Indian."(6) The topography of Balochistan offers variety of area. It has lofty snow covered mountains, dry high desiccated deserts, small alluvial plain inlets, and long arid coastal plains. It may be divided into four distinct parts, that is, the Upper Highland, Lower Highland, the plains and the deserts.

The name "Balochistan" is derived from the words *Baloch* and *istan* and literally means place or home of Baloch people who inhabit most of the contemporary provincial area by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Balochistan as the name of area, but it was not the official designation of the region until the 19<sup>th</sup> century."(7) Chairman, Dept. of Social Sciences, University of Balochistan



**RULERS OF BALOCHISTAN:**

History Archaeological remains have confirmed that Prehistoric Balochistan passed through the stone and bronze ages. "The material of the Quetta, Togho, Kulli and Nal sites represent fairly widespread level of cultural achievement and indicate that Balochistan served as an intermediary link between the culture of South Asia and the Middle East. Little is known of the region's early history, but it may have been subject to the Assyrians and the Medes. It was subjugated and annexed as part of the 14<sup>th</sup> satrapy of the Persian Empire under Darius I (522-486 BC) but with the defeat of Darius by Alexander the Greek in 330 B.C the area became under the Greek Supremacy". (8) After the death of Alexander "The territories of Balochistan became a part or were under the political influence of the empires of Seleucus - I Nicator and Chandragupta Maurya (305 B.C) the Indo-Greek and the Parthians (3<sup>rd</sup> -2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC) the Scythians (100 BC-AD 200) and the Sassanids (3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Century AD) The Hephthalite Turks Controlled central and northern Balochistan. From A.D. 470 to 520, leaving the southern Coastal area to the Sassanids. As, Sassanid's power weakened during the 7<sup>th</sup> Century. The Brahmin rulers of Sindh extended their influence in to western Balochistan."(9) Balochistan emerges into recorded history with the advance of the Arab armies in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century. "With the final conquest by Muhammad Bin-Qasim in 711, almost of Balochistan became part of the Sind province of the Umayyad and Abbasid empires. From the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, the region fell under the control of various Power and formed part of the Mughal Empire from about 1595 to about 1638."(10) "The first Baloch people to arrive in Balochistan were mainly of the Brahvi group. They setup the principality of Kalat in the central portion of the region in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. In the 15<sup>th</sup> Century Kalat was overrun by the lost great migrating body of the Rind-Lashar Baloch."(11) "The Rind and Lashar moved on ward, the former founded the principality of Sibi with its Capital at Fatepur and the latter the principality of Kachhi with its Capital of Gandava. As a result of the 30-year Rind-Lashar war (1490-1520) most of the Rind and Lashar migrated further to the Punjab Sindh and Gujrat."(12) The Brahvi regained control of their principality. "The Khanate of Kalat, which became the further nucleus of Baloch Power, was founded in 1666, Nasir Khan (1750-93) welded together the region's, different ethnic Stocks, organized the military and socio-political institutions of the Baloch, aligned himself with



Nader Shah of Iran And Ahmed Shah Durrani of Afghanistan succeeded in Grating a political Unit in depended of neighboring Iran, and Afghanistan.”(13) “The British influence in Balochistan Commenced with the mission of the British administrator Sir Sandeman to Kalat on 1877.”The Territories acquired were consolidated into British Balochistan province and tribal Areas by 1890. Balochistan province became part of Pakistan in 1947 and Kalat acceded to Pakistan one year later. Balochistan was reestablished as a Separate province in its present form on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1970.

#### ROUTES TO BALOCHISTAN:

It is probable that Iranian speakers were late in coming to Balochistan and the Southern and Eastern parts of Balochistan were predominantly non-Iranian until well after the Islamic conquests. “The Baloch probably entered Makran (i.e. western Balochistan) from Kirman about the time of the Saldjuk invasion of Kirman.”(15) “At the time of Hazrat Umar the Zutt or Diats were in Makran, which was conquered by the Arabs. At the time of Muawiya, (C.A. 44/664 A.D.) the towns of Makran were occupied and war was waged with the Meds along the coast, while raids extended as far as Sind.”(16) “In 711 A.D Hajaj Yousaf, the Governer of Iraq sent an expedition under his Son Muhammad -Bin-Qasim Came through Makran, humbled the King and conquered Sindh”(17).

#### THE POPULATION:

The Baloch and Pathan people constitute the two major and distinct ethnic groups. The mixed ethnic struck, mainly of Sindhi origin, forms the third group. There are minor ethnic communities of Meds along the coastal belt, lurs in the predominantly of Balochi area and Jats in the Sibi, Karachi, and Lasbala districts. The Pathan, divided into 13 subgroups, is believed to be of Turko-Iranian origin. Pathan traditionally claims the northern Balochistan immediately west of the Sulaiman Range to be their ancient home. And the Pathans are still concentrated in contemporary Zhob, Loralai, Quetta & Pishin districts.”(18)

Balochistan is a multi linguistic region, a Majority of its inhabitants are bilingual and there is a Sizable trilingual population. Baloch, Brahvi and Sindhi are the Principal Languages of the



Division. While Pashtoon, Balochi, Sindh and Seraiki are the main languages of the Quetta Division. The settlers speak Punjabi from the Punjab, mainly in the urban areas. While Urdu is used as a lingua franca."(19)

#### MIGRATION IN BALOCHISTAN:

The history is witness that, people wanted resources to feed their expanding population and in search of resources they migrate." The first Baloch migration from the Caspian sea region, most probably around 1200 B.C, most has been motivated by this general historical phenomenon."(20) "The Baloch movement from Kirman and Seistan to Makran and then Eastern Balochistan was not only result of the lack of sufficient productive forces to meet their demands, or insufficient grazing field for their flocks, because the area they migrated to was no better in natural than the area in which they had been settled for centuries."(21) There are many reasons for migration. The main reason was their political conflict with rulers and their own internal enmity. "Another factor most probably was the Mongolian invasion of Central Asia and the subsequent political anarchy in the whole region."(22)

#### ARIAN PERIOD:

The available evidences regarding migration of the Aryans in the area is established that by the beginning of the Christian era. The Baloch were one of the Major people inhabiting Iranian Balochistan, Seistan and Kirman. Their migration further east in to Makran must also be the result of Anushervan's (531-578 A.D) attack on them."(23) According to some legends, "it was at a later stage and was the result of a quarrel between the Kirman ruler and the Baloch Chief who was the successor to the most powerful leader Ismael Romi."(24)

#### CENSUS SITUATION:

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan. "The area is 43.6% of the total while the population is only 4.5% total population of the country."(25) We may sum up the demographic characteristics of Balochistan as follows.

1. The geographical area of the province is very large, while population is very small and scattered.
2. The population is increasing at the rate of 2.4%.
3. Social change and economic development is very slow.
4. People live in tribal system and having joint family system depending ratio on the whole is greater.
5. It's a male dominating society the female role on family is very minor.
6. Usually the families are unplanned, as population planning neither been accepted as a norm, it has succeeded in the stereotype of thinking.
7. Apart from general economic progress the majority of population living at subsistence level and income of common person are very low.
8. 90% of rural population is engaged with agriculture and livestock.
9. Migration of people from rural to urban area has been on a large scale in recent years mainly due to drought owing to economic considerations." (25)

The population increase during the different census can be observed in the following table:

#### POPULATION OF BALOCHISTAN

DESCRIPTION	1951	1961	1972	1981	1998	2001	2010
Population '000'	1167	1353	2428	4305	6511	7101	8300
Increase (%)	—	15.96	79.44	77.23	51.24	9.06	24.00
Annual Growth Rate	—	1.50	5.14	8.60	2.40	3.02	2.40



Source:  
 Federal Bureau of Statistics, Socio- Economic Trend 1983.  
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**BALUCHISTAN DIVISION AND DISTRICT POPULATION 1981-1998 CENSUS  
 AND PROJECTION FOR THE YEAR- 2010**

Area	1981 Population	1998 Population	Growth Rate	2010 Projected Population
Balochistan	4332376	6511358	2.42	8675386
Quetta Division	880618	1718708	4.01	2754883
Quetta	381566	759245	4.13	1233935
Pishin	202256	366163	3.55	556513
Killa Abdullah	176341	390738	4.79	685052
Chagai	120455	202562	3.10	292187
Zhob Div.	749545	997165	1.69	1219287
Loralai	235038	300028	1.45	356604
Musa Khel	91174	132411	2.22	172327
Barkhan	61684	99502	2.85	139406
Killa Saifullah	148362	188729	1.42	223522
Zhob	213285	276495	1.54	332149
Sibi Div.	305768	489708	2.81	682908
Sibi	98482	179654	3.56	271849
Ziarat	32196	32864	0.12	33340
Kohlu	71269	97786	1.88	122276
Dera Bugti	103821	180404	3.30	266348
Nasirabad Div.	699669	1055840	2.45	1411697
Jafarabad	265342	421082	2.75	583107
Nasirabad	129114	242689	3.78	678803
Jhal Magsi	68092	103970	2.52	140155
Bolan	237123	288099	1.15	330470
Kalat Div.	1044174	1433720	1.88	1792728



Kalat	209149	235758	0.71	2566
Mastung	132044	163548	1.27	1902
Khuzdar	276449	409164	2.33	53942
Awaran	110353	114427	0.21	11734
Kharan	128040	197418	2.58	26800
Lasbela	188139	313405	3.05	44949
Mekran Div.	652602	816217	1.32	955317
Kech	379467	409879	0.45	432568
Gwadar	112385	178989	2.77	24844
Panjgur	160750	227349	2.06	290375

(26 and 27)

**TRIBES OF BALOCHISTAN:**

Generally tribes are constituted from a number of kindred groups many sub-divisions or clans, who claimed to have blood relation with another through some ancestors. Such groups generally occupy under a headman (*Sardar*) who enjoys his authority but uses his powers through consent. The detail of Kanious tribes and Sub-tribes can observe in following table. (26 and 27)

Name of sub-tribe	Residing in District	Remarks
1. Gitchki	Panjgur and kej	Settled in Makran about century.  Is the most numerous tribe Claim affinity with tribe  Kharan is the head of this tribe.  Are supposed to be descendants of Ancient Sacae. Have 2 important branches
2. Gujar	Malan	
3. Hallada	Jau	
4. Hot	Central Makran	
5. Kalmatti	Kalamat and Pasni	
6. Kaudia	Kolwah and Dasht	
7. Mehmasani	Mshk	
8. Nurwari	Mushki, Jau, and	
9. Mirshirvani	Kolwah	
10. Rodahi	Panjgur and Kowah	
11. Saka	Kolwah	
12. Sangur	Greshar, in Mushki Malan and Bett	
1. Bizanju	Hills north of Las, and	



<p>s rani nis hal oli</p>	<p>West of the Minghal tribe Hills east of Zehri Hills near Khoadar Zehri Hills north of Las Hills near Khozdar Zehri</p>	<p>Amalari and Tambarari Are nomadic in habit.</p> <p>Have two great divisions, Shahizai, Pahlawanzai.</p> <p>Numerous and generally respected.</p>
<p>alzai ghi ghau mudshahi sani shani ani malari ekh Husaini irwani perra urari gar Minghal alhai chik ugh andarari uzh</p>	<p>Mastung At Ghazg Dasht- I-Bidaulat and Merv</p> <p>Mangochar</p> <p>Mastung</p> <p>Mastung and Shal Nushki Ashi Khan and Pudon Hills west of Khanak</p> <p>Mastung</p> <p>Gurghina</p> <p>Dasht Guran Nushki Lup Kirta Khajuri Rodbar Johan</p>	<p>Presumed to have come originally from Kurdistan; have numerous Sub divisions. Said to have been formerly slaves Of the Rinds, but enfranchised by The famous Mir Chakar.</p> <p>A branch of Sirperra</p> <p>Sav their forefathers came from Shirwan, near the Caspian Sea. Literal meaning of Sirperra, "Cutters off of heads." Ancestors supposed to have been The Sarapare mentioned by Pliny.</p> <p>These tribes are found in the</p>



		northeastern hills of Sarawan, known as the Kirta district.
1. Bughtis	Hills east of Lehri, at Sing Saioh and Teriki	Are of the Rind tribe, strong predatory Propensities.
2. Dumbkis		Rind tribe
3. Homarari	Lehri	"
4. Jakranis	Tambu	"
5. Jallui	Lehri	"
6. Jamali	Sanni	"
7. Lashari	Rojan	"
8. Maghzis	Gajan	"
9. Marris (Doda Marris)	At Jhal	Had but four families.
10. Utanzai	Eastern hills  Suran.	Are Rinds, and are lawlessness.

(A.W.Hughes28)

In the northern areas of Balochistan, the following tribes and sub tribes residing in this belt known as Pashtoon area.

Tribe	Sub tribes	Places
Abdual (Durani)	Popalzai Alikozai Barkzai	Scattered (Northwest of Pakistan)
Achakzai	Hamidzai Ghabzai Mulazai Usmanzai Kakozai	Gulistan, Chaman Bostan, Bolduk



Sherani	Holly Khel Husan Khel Ader Khel	Zhob
Beber	Lbrahim Khel Ismail Khel Shod Khel	Zhob
Kaker	Mando Khel Senzer Khel Khabzai Dumer Jogazai Mosa Khel Safi Merazai Abdullahzai Bazai Materzai Panizai	Zhob Zhob Loralai Killa Safiullah Muslim Bagh  Pasih Tuba Kakari Makhter Khanozai Bostan
Ghalzai	Hotak Toke Nasar Karote Sulaman Khel Ali Khel Tarakai	Quetta Kuchlak Loralai Killa Abdullah
Barrech	Sherani Shellehzai Akozai Alikzai Amanzai Thorzai Samizai Zakozai	Quetta Panchipai Noshki Dalbandin
Kasi	Arbab Khel Malik Khel	Quetta (Samagulli, Qotwall)
Tareen	Tor Tareen Speen Tareen Bor Tareen	Zairat Dulei

(Shreen Khan, Nasir 29)

The significance and idea of race, call, creed and caste, primary and ethnic groups, ethnocentrism etc; are imparted to a person through .

culture. Culture is the totality of life of people culture is the environment that is the creation of man, we can say, "Culture is a shared and transmitted knowledge both existential and non-existential symbolized in act and artifact." (30, Defined by 'G.P. Murdock') Culture is a totality of standardized and patterned ways of living and doings of man, inherited from the past including both material and non-material-object. In short it includes dress, jewelry, food, custom, traditions, ceremonies and way of life of a group or community. Keeping in view the above definition the following aspects of culture can be discussed.

### **HOUSING:**

The Baloch family lives in a large and open house. The members of the family usually live within the same premises. Houses are built on a wooden framework with long slender poles, bent and curved towards each other. For temporary they build tents and glass is installed inside it.

### **DRESSES:**

The Baloch wear a (Jamag) long shirt down to heels, loose fitting, a turban (pag) and shoes made of leather or (sawas) made of P (piss). The shirt has side pockets. The waist-coat which is embroidered in different colour is used by noble persons. Women wear loose shirt or gowns and trousers primitive women use only a long shirt which covers her from neck to the feet and usually wears a turban. The shirt has a large front pocket. The shirt arms are also embroidered. She uses a (chadir) to cover her self. Young and widows usually wear black and white dress with out embroidery they do not use jewelry. A widow uses embroidery dress it is an indication that She intends to marry. Some times Baloch are influenced by their neighbors. In about a century back, the Baloch wore Persian frockcoat and trousers. Female had also similarity with Persians dress." (31)

### **JEWELLERY:**

The history of to use the jewellery is very old. "In ancient times the customs of burying the dead with garments and ornaments was probably the most archaic use of jewellery. Purely decorative jewellery had existed since the beginning the Christian era. The use of jewellery has



with the Aryan's trace from the archeological findings."(32) The women usually wear earrings, rings, in nose necklace, bracelets, rings in hand and feet fingers the also wear bangles and ornaments of various kind are fixed on the hair.

**FOOD:**  
The food of the people consists of bread made of inferior grain with buttermilk. Sheep and goat milk and curd are eaten as a relish or accompaniment with bread and rice. In Makran and Lasbala, camel's milk is obtainable in large quantities and used with bread, rice dates and salt fish. In Mastung area division winter meal is composed of dried plums and apricots. Among all classes of the people asafetida (*hing*) a plant so repugnant to European taste, is largely employed in flavorings dishes. In the Pashtoon area (landhi) the roast mutton is also used during the winter.

#### LANGUAGES:

In Balochistan generally, Balochi and Pashto are used very commonly. While, Brahvi Hazarvi and sindhi is also spoken. In the provincial capital Quetta Urdu is very common. Urdu is declared as an official language of the province. The Makrani Baloch is the dialect spoken by the people living in the eastern and southern parts of Balochistan. It limits on the sea coast are the malan mountains on the east, and a line drawn about fifty miles west of Chahbar on the west. The Makrani Baloch is a dialect of Persian mixed up with a great many words of Indian origin."(33) In the central Balochistan, "The Balochi dialect is spoken among several of the Jhalawan (khuzdar, kharn) tribes, such as Minghals and Bizanjus and it is used also by a portion of the Rind tribes."(34) The Brahvi dialect, as spoken in Kalat, kharan, Mastung and Khuzdar contains a fair amount of both Balochi and Persian, but a very little Pashto mixed up with it. The Balochi cannot be called a written language. However the Urdu alphabets are used in writing.

#### MARRIAGE CUSTOMS:

In the Northern areas every man marries when he attend the age of puberty. "But the necessity of paying bride price (*walwar*) compels many to wait till middle age." Among the well-to-do families a man does not

usually marry before the age of 25, the bride is generally five to ten years younger. Some time the age of groom is double than the age of bride. The amount and procedure of bride's price (walwar) payment is very important factor for all matrimonial arrangements. Now days with increasing education and awareness, the walwar is taken as a marriage custom. In some tribes a token money is paid. While in some tribes its' rate varies from two to five hundred thousands.

#### CEREMONIES:

On the occasion the birth child is marked with much singing. Food and sweets prepared and distributed. Among some tribes ceremony is performed on the birth of a girl. Marriage ceremony is performed including music, dancing and distribution of food. Men arrange to a closely kens, family. Expenses of food prepared on home side is bears by the bridegroom. To meet the expenses an amount of bride price (lab in Baloch areas) is given by the bridegroom. Traditionally every one who is invited in the marriage they have to give according to their status, sheep, cows, goat or camels are also presented as salami. Bride also collects bijjar called glwari at the time of barz.

#### HOSPITALITY:

The Baloch are traditionally hospitable. The guest is treated with respect. Even the enemy once entered in the home would be treated as an honorable person. The well-to-do person has a separate house for the guests.

#### ECONOMY:

Balochistan is rich in minerals. There are several known reserves of metallic and nonmetallic minerals. Its minerals potentials have not been fully investigated nor has the technical and economic feasibility of their exploration been adequately assessed. "The discovery of natural gas fields at Sui in 1953 and of Pirkoh in 1982 and Likewise the discovery of copper belt at Saindak in 1962 by satellite images hint at the possibility of finding even richer reserves of minerals Balochistan." (35) The sector of gas supply at production well and at main distribution head works is of great important. Many incidences have been happening in the gas





Nowadays, India has very close diplomatic relations with the present Afghan regime. India is assisting in many communication and Physical structural developmental projects. This is an alarming situation for the security of the area and Pakistan. For the prosperity of the area and to over come the problem of national integration, bigotry and religious persecution promotion of education and development communication means are unavoidable.

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