

Traces of Hinduism in Balochistan

(A study of the Hinglaj Mandir)

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DEDICATION

To the Baloch who have preserved the unwritten Baloch
history in oral form

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Preface

If I initiate this preface traditionally, saying that this book starts by introducing Lasbela and its geography, afterwards it discusses Hinglaj Mandir or the symbol of Swastika, then it would be a custom to follow, but the writer I have known since very day, does not follow things traditionally imposed in our lives. So let's begin by providing a general overview of the content upon which the book sets out to find a historical connection of Hinduism onto the heart of Baloch seashores.

The content discusses Hindu and Hinduism's traces in Balochistan from an archaeological perspective. Archaeology is a branch of historical analysis that studies things which the archaeologists find in caves and old cemeteries. It is sometimes called (Material History) because it brings forth histories by studying material objects and antiques. On the other hand, history studies events and phenomena in conceptual and abstract forms. So this book tries to unfold the history Hinglaj Mandir through decoding its material objects.

This book is an initiation of Hind and Hinduism's history and its arrival in Baloch hinterlands. In a surrounding contained of one God inkling and of a philosophy killing their fellow being for concerned concept of worship of single Deity, a book of such sort opens the space of polytheism and brings forth traces of Hindu and Hinduism, whom have had a

convincing impression on the world's academic philosophy and an impact on the lives of people with its strong myths. If one does not believe on about the impacts of Hinduism in our psychological evolution, then the one must consider the etymology of the word (Lasbela), which is a Sanskrit word and Sanskrit is the base language of Hinduism.

Hinduism cannot be put into a book, because that is quite lengthy and multifaceted. In the keeping with view, the book then discusses Hinduism in general and Hinglaj Mandir in particular, which lays out the foundational history and the arrival of Hinduism and Hindu in Balochistan. It isn't only that Hinduism came to Baloch, but also it had its impression on our mental evolution. Till today, one can come across names in Baloch society that sound like Hindu names. Though this book has not discussed the psychological aspects of Hinduism, but they do exist in our minds.

Hope, this will be a mesmerizing read in a sense for the first someone tries to break the deadlock.

Chapter: 1

Introduction

Balochistan, a barren land, has traces of one of the oldest settlements of human race. Several researches and anthropologists found out traces of about seven thousand years of history on the site of Mehrgarh. “The land of Balochistan has been the cradle of various civilizations since the beginning. This land bears a very important place in archaeology of South Asian. The historical traces of this land go back to seven thousand years” (Hussain 2014:8). Balochistan has a large number of archaeological sites in its different parts. In this context the region of Lasbela is one of the regions in which a number of archaeological sites have been discovered.

Lasbela is situated at the south-eastern coast of Balochistan. The word of “Lasbela” has been derived two from Sanskrit word “las” means “settlement” and “bela” means “sea’s shore”, The total area of Lasbela is approximately 10,000 square Km. This district separates Balochistan from Sindh by the Kirthar range and on the west by the Hala offshoot of the Pub range. On the south of it there situates the Arabian Sea. The history of Lasbela is scanty except Macedonian conquest and their successors. Alexander on his retreat, passed through Lasbela to reach Makuran. But on his death, his successor Selucus Nicator ruled his domains which included Lasbela. Afterwards, Nicator was defeated by Chandragupta when he crossed the Indus valley. Several provinces including Makuran and Lasbela came under his sovereignty in 303 BCE. Hereafter, the history of this land again becomes sparse but it is speculated that Lasbela must

have been part of Makuran which Sherman Malik from Hind conferred on his daughter when his daughter was married to Bahram-i-Gor (404 to 427 CE) that was the fourteenth sovereign of Sassanian Dynasty. Thence, for the next two centuries Lasbela must have been part of the Sassanian Empire (District Gazetteer of Balochistan 1997: 426).

The famous Irish traveler Sir Henry Pottinger on his visit to Balochistan in 1810 mentioned the state of Hindus in Lasbela and their religious freedom. He mentions that at the capital of Lasbela there were 250 to 300 Hindu families who enjoyed immense protection and security in their commercial occupations under the government of Jam of Lasbela (title of the ruling Aliani family) (Pottinger 1816: 296).

Hinduism, the oldest religion after Shamans, has a part of lost history in the region of Balochistan. This can be traced out with the help of researchers and archaeologists. Hindus and their old temples are found in various parts in this region such as, Sibbi, Kalat, Lasbela, Khuzdar, and Hingol so on and so forth. Most importantly, the Hinglaj and its temple are mentioned in the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism.

This holy cavern is believed to be the spot where Sati's head had fallen (Shakti Peeth) when Vishnu, divided Sati's corpse in 52 parts. The sacred text Kularnava Tantra says 18, putting the Hinglaj at third position; Kubjika Tantra enlists 42 with Hinglaj as fifth, to name a few (Reema 2014:22). Furthermore, there are few more traces of Ram's visit in this region on his 14-years of exile. Sindh history also mentions his visits to the cave.

Moreover, the temple of Hinglaj is 250 kilometers from Karachi. The Hinglaj temple is situated in the present Lasbela district of Kalat division. This area is best known for archaeological remains such as Shah Bilawal and Lahut e Lamakan; the cave dwellings at Gondrani; the shrines of Sassi Punnu and a lot more. Hinglaj is the best place of pilgrimage in Balochistan, situated in 35 degree North and 65 degree East, below the peak of the same name of the banks of the Hingol river (District Gazetteers of Balochistan 1997). The temple cave is 300 feet in length, 150 feet in width and 90 feet high in two tiers, renovated with bright halogen lights and an superimposed beige and pale ceramics, as per researcher field work is concerned.

The Hinglaj Devi is worshipped throughout India by variety of names, such as Hinglaj, Devi, Bibi Nani and Anita Devi. She is also termed as Ranna or Ranni Devi. This name is of great significance in view of the identity of the Hinglaj Devi, as “Ranna” or “Ranni Devi” as Devi of Hinglaj is worshipped in Gujrat, on festive occasion (K.M Munshi 2006:72).

Pilgrimage to this holy temple is organized annually in the month of April that continues for four days among which on the 3rd day the important ceremony is conducted. On this day the Pandit recites mantras to call upon maata to acknowledge the offerings of the pilgrims. The pilgrims offer three coconuts. Some pilgrims stay in the Mandir for complete four days, while some have a short stay there. Nanad Panthi Akhada is the place in Karachi where the pilgrimage commences. The pilgrim groups are headed by a

holy staff bearer called the chaadiar, authorized by the Akhada (a Hindu organization of sadhus). The sadhus (holy-men) belonging to this group are a very cohesive group of Hata yogis with ancestral genealogy of their own, and they also observe certain secret rites, the Pandit of temple told.

The pilgrimage also serves as gathering spot for doing community activity like gathering funds for the temple. Hundreds of volunteers assist in the organization. During the pilgrimage, pilgrims hold traditional red-colored banners and wear red-gold decorative head-scarves, which are associated with sanctuaries of Hindu goddesses (ibid). This was once a journey of more than 150 kilometers (93 miles) by foot through the desert from the nearest road, but it is now made easy by the Makuran Coastal Highway connecting Karachi with Gwadar. Therefore, the numbers of visitors and pilgrims have been increasing time by time.

The archaeological site of Hinglaj Mandir is an important site not only for Balochistan but for Hinduism as well. No one has done thorough research on these sites but some journalists and travelers have written some journals, articles and columns. Only some researches have been done on ritual perspective.

Roshan Dalal has written in his book, “Hinduism: An alphabetical guide”, that in Hinglaj the head of goddess Sati has fallen and a different legend states that Hingol and Sundra were the sons of king Vichitra who lived in the Terta Yuga. As they opposed the people, Sundra was killed by the god Ganesha, and the people then prayed to a Devi to kill Hingol.

She promised to do so, and followed him into a cave in Balochistan. Before she killed him, Hingol requested that the place be named after him and this was granted by Devi.

Ali Ahmed K. Brohi writes in his book, that it is just possible that this shrine was in existence before the days of Alexander the Great. On his retreat he followed the same route from Gidrosia to Kirman, because this is the only route alongside the sea coast. Nothing here has altered since his days. Those magnificent peaks and mountains which surround this sacred shrine of Hinglaj are indeed “everlasting hills”, and it was through them that he proceeded to make his way. It would be a matter of immense interest if one traces the record of Alexander’s retreat through Hinglaj. It may be that Alexander the Great may have chosen this difficult route exclusively for his visit to the sacred sanctuary of Nania, as he had traveled through Sahara Desert just to pay homage to Zeus on earlier occasion.

Moreover, Reema Abbasi mentions in her book “Historical temple in Pakistan” that one of the most celebrated pilgrimage sites for centuries, Hinglaj has hosted many imminent saints and sages such as Gora Khnath and Guru Nanak Dev. It was frequented by Rajput Kings before partition and pilgrims would travel for months through rough mountainous, unpaved paths, wilderness and rivers to reach it. Sufi sage and poet Shah Abdul Latif Bithai also came here on foot with a clan of ascetics.

Chapter: 2

History and Geography of Lasbela

This part of the study undertakes a deep glance at the historic developments and the evolution of Baloch history in Lasbela. The geographic and the geophysical structure of this belt is also taken in consideration as it is the geographic and distinctive climate of Lasbela that has given it a separate identity and kept it isolated from active global politics for most of the part of history.



Figure 1: The Map of Pakistan (Courtesy: Google)



Figure 2: The Map of Balochistan (Courtesy: Google)

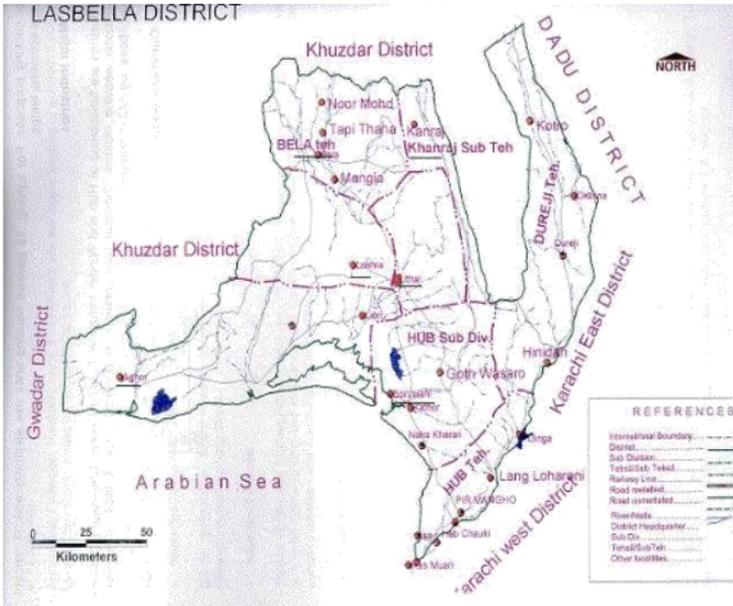


Figure 3: The Map of District Lasbela, Balochistan (Courtesy: Google)

Geography of Lasbela

Lasbela is a district, located in the division of Kalat. The word “Lasbela” is derived from two different words, “Las” and “Bela”. The word “Las” means “settlement”, because most of its areas are flat plain and “Bela” means “seashore”. The central part of the district is triangle, in shape having its base in the sea. According to the residents of the region, initially, the valley used to be the inlet of the sea and due to the extreme flatness all that happened into existing shape. The geography of Lasbela is placed at the south-eastern coast of Balochistan. The land of the region covers an area around 10,000 Square Km. the district of Lasbela borders the province of Sindh from the Kirthar range. In the west it connects Sindh from Pub range. The Arabian Sea is located at the south of Lasbela (Pottinger 1816: 288). The eastern boundary of the region was defined in November 1853 and August 1854. The district of Lasbela has very high hills from where the water flows to the rivers. The hill is located at the eastern boundary line and name of it is “Khirthar” or “Kirthar” from a pillar on this hill near Lop, the boundary crosses the valley in a westerly direction to a pillar on the Mehee (Mehi) hill following the rest of this hill to a pillar on the extreme southern end of the Bhedur range. In the southern side it connects the “Kalamat Bay” and at the north it borders Jhalawan, but the boundary with Jhalawan has still not been defined properly. The point at the northern side where the boundaries of Makuran, Jhalawan and Lasbela meet has yet to be properly demarcated. The Jam of Lasbela pointed out that the Makuran has extended its boundary to the Basol area (District Gazetteer of Balochistan 1997: 424).

Moreover, Lasbela was given the status of a district in 30 June 1954. In October 1955, the four provinces of the federation get unified under the platform of one unit. At the time the states union of Balochistan was formed into Kalat division, but after some times in 1960 it got the status of a separate district as a part of Karachi division. However, as the region historically and culturally belonged to Balochistan and its people were geographically from the land of Baloch that's why it was made one of the districts of Kalat division, and the headquarter of this is officially Uthal. Being one of the major districts of Balochistan, it has nine tehsils which are as, Bela, Uthal, Hub, Lakhra, Somiani, Lairi, Gaddani, Dureaji and Konnaj. Like the other parts of Balochistan, most of the people of this region spend their lives in villages. District Lasbela has total number of 293 villages (Ibid).

Climate

While talking about the climate of Lasbela, it seems to be finer than that of the Makuran region (Naseer 2010: 34). As compared to the interior part of the region, the coast belt is slightly wet. Overall the weather is nice. There happen to be only two seasons, summer and winter. The duration of winter continues for six months, from November to April. The coldness lasts from the month November to February. This is the duration in which the weather and atmosphere of the region appears to be great, enjoyable, cool, clear, dry and crisp (Pottinger 1816: 290). There comes a time during which coldest period of the year comes and that occurs in the duration of chilla that starts from the 21st December. The

summer lasts from the month of May to October (Naseer 1982: 43).

Rivers of Lasbela

As we know most of the Balochistan's areas is mountainous, hilly and desert like. There run a great number of long rivers from the land of Balochistan and Lasbela is no exception. The longest rivers that flow from Lasbela is Hub River and Porali River and the other smaller rivers that pass through the land of Lasbela are Kharari and the Windar. The other two rivers, Hingol and Phor which have their rising points from Jhalawan also shortly pass through the district of Lasbela. The two rivers, Hingol and Phor, passing through Lasbela, flow into the Arabian Sea. The Porali River from its entrance runs through the stony course and has low banks and when it passes through the Mangia to Sheh, it has its ways through the clay soil of Lasbela. At the point of Sheh, a dam has been built about five miles north of Sheh, a branch of Porali River known as the Titian River takes off; however, because of the silting of the main stream it now carries a great part of water. But at the later time a changed had occurred in the course of its and when the flood water gets high, it connects the river of Watto. Watto River is joined by the Kharari and it has its flowing into the Siranda Lake (District Gazetteer of Balochistan 1997: 430)

History of Lasbela

The history of any region can only be traced through the available signs and facts from which the researchers have to find out the possible history of any region, but when

someone talks on the history of Lasbela, hardly can find any solid evidence of the early history that is why it appears to be tough enough to trace the early history of Lasbela district thoroughly; however, with the help of limited available resources and materials I attempted to trace out the aspects of history of Lasbela. The traces of Lasbela's history are found at the middle of eighteenth century when the Aliani family from the Jamoot tribe rose up in the region. Aliani family that belonged to Jamoot tribe dated eighteenth century and the chief of the region known as Jam of Lasbela came from the Aliani family of Jamoot tribe (Swidler 2014: 107-108).

The historical significance of the region rises because Alexander the Great passed through this land when he was returning from India. According to Sir Thomas Holdich, Alexander marched from Sindh Patala towards land of Lasbela in 326 BCE. He marched through the region of Lasbela, but faced many difficulties when passing through long deserts and drought land of Balochistan (Ibid). When Alexander died, one of his generals, Seleukas Nickator, became the ruler of Central and Western Asia. The regions which General Seleukas Nickator controlled and ruled included sub-continent and Lasbela. After that for the centuries there is no traces of Lasbela's history, the reason may be that there occurred no such important or big event due to which the pages of history have nothing to discuss about the history of Lasbela in the duration of these centuries. Again the traces are found in the time of Mohammad bin Qasim when he was to invade Sindh and had his way towards the land of Lasbela as well (Baloch 1987: 32).

It is said that in seventh century the ruler of Lasbela was a Buddhist Sonami and Rai Sahiras, the king of Hind, gave him more importance due to his loyalty and devotion. At that time the name of Lasbela was Armanbel. Chach overtook the power of Rai dynasty in Sindh. After taking the power of Rai dynasty in Sindh, he moved towards the land of Bela in 636 AD. There were threats that he might invade Bela, but when he reached there, he was received with great respect by the ruler of the Bela. After getting such a respected welcome, he did not invade the region and had his way west towards Makuran (Swidler 2014: 180).

The Muslim conqueror General Mohammad Bin Qasim entered in Makuran region in 712 A.D. when he was going towards Sindh, he passed through the present district of Lasbela and the governor of Makuran accompanied him in coming towards Bela. At that time the governor of Makran was Muhammad Haroon who died in Bela and his tomb still exists in the region. The Arabs had their powers in the region until the end of tenth century after that they lost the power (Naseer 2010: 51).

Afterwards, the power of the region came under the complete influence of Sumras and Summas. When the Abbasid caliphs declined, the independence of Bela was announced and at the middle of eleventh century Sumras got the position of supremacy, however; their power was overtaken by the Sammas under Jam Umar in 1333 AD. Their rule lasted till 1523 AD and later on they were defeated by Shah Hussain Argon. The history after that is again not clear and later on the chiefs of Gujar, Ranjha, Gunga and Burfat

tribes are believed to enjoy a semi-independent status till the rise up of Aliani family. These tribes are still said to be settled in the district of Lasbela (Ibid).

When the British Raj began to expand its colonies in the region of sub-continent and the other neighboring areas, the Kalat state as well came under its colony. At that time in the region of Lasbela Jam Mir Khan-II had very strong political influences over political affairs. As the British occupied the state of Kalat on 13th of November 1839, the British Raj had to face many rebellions (Swidler 2014: 164). Likewise the third resistance took place in 1869, it was the time when Jam was marching towards Kalat with his large force, but a clash took place between the Jam of Lasbela and the British forces when a British political officer intervened. The negotiations to tackle the situation failed due to which the Jam of Lasbela was banned from entering British India. However, in December 1876 an agreement was signed according to which Jam Mir Khan was released from the confinement of British India. In the beginning the Jam of Lasbela decided to handover the responsibilities to his son, Jam Ali Khan, but later on he himself took the charge of the government. The Jam of Lasbela passed away in January 1888 and after his death his eldest son Haji Jam Ali was appointed in Bela as the British political Agent to Governor General in Balochistan by Sir Robert in 1889. The grave of sir Robert is in Bela, he died in Bela in 29 January 1892. His tomb was erected in Bela garden (Ibid).

The British political Agent to Governor General in Balochistan, Haji Jam Ali Khan passed away in 1894 and

after him he was replaced by his son Jam Mir Kamal Khan, who subsequently ruled over the state for 50 years. Afterwards, his sons ruled the state but no such event happened that could come under the notice until Pakistan came into existence. After the creation of Pakistan, Kharan, Kalat along with Lasbela state became part of Balochistan province (Dashti 2012: 178).

Tribes of Lasbela

The current residents of Lasbela are mostly from the Lasi tribe who anciently belonged to Sindh and the Lasi claim to be the descendants of the Sumras and Sammas (Naseer 1982: 206). If the names of Sumras and Sammas are looked into deeply, they resemble to Hindu names which indicates that they had their origin from Hindu region. The Sumras and Sammas originally lived in the boundary of Sindh. The term Lasi refers to the geography and it is used for all those tribes who reside in this region of Lasbela except for Baloch and Hindu. The Lasi tribe has five sub groups that all together combine the Lasi tribe. The total five tribes of Lasi are as followed, Jamot, Ranjha, Sheikh, Angaria and Burraf (Ibid). These all tribes are as well named as Panjraj which means five tribal confederacies. There reside some other residents like that of Afghan nomads and the Gichkis who have very close relationships with the Jam of Lasbela. As for the Hindu they live in a great number in the areas of Uthal, Bela and Hub. Hindus are not very much strict in following the religion and many of their population changed their religious way of life and some other have totally converted themselves into the customs of others residing in their

neighboring. Some other tribes have also settlements in the district of Lasbela. They are, Babbar, Gadras, Langhas, and Koris(Pottinger 1816: 298).

Archaeological sites and historical monuments

The tomb of General Muhammad-Ibn-Haroon, who accompanied Muhammad-Bin-Qasim, is a place of historical importance in the town of Bela. On the west-side of the Purali River, the tomb of Sir Robert Sandeman made of granite and white marble is surrounded by beautiful gardens, bears a testimony to the cultural heritage of this town. The Jamia Masjid is an exemplary accomplishment of Islamic architecture. The caves at Mai Goudrani, hewed out of solid conglomerate rock situated 20 km to the north of Bela town, are worth visiting (Janmahmad 1987: 10).

The Shrine of Shah Bilawal is situated in Shah Bilawal village, west of the Tira Hub stream. Lahut-i-Lamakan is another shrine of repute, which is frequented by devotees in all seasons. It is situated 6 km south of Shah Bilawal. The tomb at Himidan is situated near the confluence of Himidan rivulet and Hub River about 85 km from Karachi. The cemetery in which these tombs were placed contains a considerable number of Muslims graves. There is a spring called Sassi Waro-Chodo (Sassi's spring) the heroine of the romance of Sassi and Punnun. This place is situated near Paboni Naka, about 68 km from Karachi. Kumbh shirin spring is on the western slope of the Haro or Hala hills on the route between Awaran and Karachi, which passes through Lasbela

over the Jau-Lak. Here is also the tomb of Shireen and Farhad; they are buried in one grave (Pottinger 1816: 290).

Chapter 2

The pilgrims and importance of Hinglaj Mandir (Temple)

The settlement of such a huge and historical Mandir in Balochistan's region of Lasbela shows and signifies the richness of this land in terms of absorbing the faith of the minorities sitting in the area. This Mandir is believed to be hundreds of years old and it has never been affected by the other majority, settled in the region of this historical site. As we know this fact that this region is largely populated with the Muslims, but interestingly this historical Mandir never received any threat from Muslims and throughout the history it didn't become the victim of any sectarianism and other religious exploitation. Though the well-known conqueror of Muslim world Muhammad bin Qasim passed through this historical place and at that time this Mandir also existed but surprisingly it didn't experience any type of destruction from the Muslim conquerors. This fact justifies that this region has always been free from religious discrimination.

Hinglaj Mandir

The ancient shrine of Hinduism that is named as Hinglaj Mata or Naani Hinglaj is situated in Balochistan. This shrine is located in the mountainous region of Lasbela and is 180 miles away from Karachi. It is one of the most famous places for the pilgrimages and shows the large extension of the Hindu polytheism. The name of Naani may be in

proximity of of Nanea, the mother goddess that is widely worshipped in Pakistan, India, Syria, Persia, Armenia, and other regions of Asia in the pre-Islamic duration. In the Puranic literature of the Hinduism, the mother goddess is referred and the “Devi Bhagavat” is totally in the devotion for the mother goddess. The worship of mother goddess is experienced in all over India with many different names such as Hinglaj, Devi, Bibi Nani, and Anita Devi. She is as well dubbed with the name of Ranna or

Ranni Devi. This name has great importance because Ranni Devi is worshipped in Gujarat on the occasion of religious festive. In the regions of Indo-Pak subcontinent, the Hindus have worshipped it with the name of Devi and it is also called as “Bibi Nani” by the Muslims.

Dineshchandra Sircar in his book “The land of Kambojas” identified the name of “Bibi Nani” as survival of ancient Suzerain goddess “Annie”, which in fact is not impossible when it may be recalled that “Ambadevi” or “Uma” already, in the Kushana coins, is called “Nana” and is associated with Shiva. Hinglaj Devi has also been known as a “Kambojini” Devi presiding over the Kambojas, a people well documented located in western Afghanistan,” (Brahvi 2005: 51). The reason why the literature about this historical site is very less, may be that the Indo-Pak scholars who tried to trace the links of Hinglaj Nani, mostly focused on the frontier and Afghanistan regions. The scholars completely evaded the Sindh-Makuran, coastal belts and Lasbela regions where the main links of mother goddess exists. In the surrounding of Hinglaj there exist many of important places such as Kenner

Jo Kot-Cambodia, Kot-Bankar, Kot-Balwant, Kot Kinyaro Bello, Katyaro Kot-Supt Kot and mounds of Karyo and Kinnraj. These important places have further signified the value of this historical site, but the matter remains that the researches may find it difficult to move in this place for the purpose of conducting research due to security reasons because this region does not have a peaceful environment. There happen to be sectarian, religious and political issues that do not provide a peaceful platform for the outside researchers and scholars to have their ways in the region. I, being a resident of this region, faced many of difficulties while doing the field works for my research because there is no proper arrangement of security for researchers who wish to visit and conduct research in this valley. The area is too big and there is no network of communication that's why outsiders may find hard to move from one place to another for research.



Figure 4: The Researcher during his course of interaction with the Pundit of Hinglaj Devi. (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 5: The Hingol River- (Photo Credit: Researcher)

The Hingol River that flows near the Nani Mandir is also called Aghor River and the mendicants who most often visit this place are called “Aghori”. In Sindhi language the word “Aghori” means “deep or bottomless” pit and in Hindi the word means someone without shelter.

Pilgrimage to this holy temple organizes ritual ceremony annually in the month of April continues for four days; on the 3rd day of the ritual festival the important ritual ceremony is conducted. On this day the Pandit recites mantras to call upon maata to acknowledge the offerings of the pilgrims. The pilgrims offer three coconuts. Some pilgrims stay in the Mandir for complete four days, while some have a short stay there. Nanad Panthi Akhada is the place in Karachi where the pilgrimage commences. The pilgrim groups are

headed by a holy staff bearer called the chaadiar, authorized by the Akhada (a Hindu organization of sadhus). The Sadhus (holy-men) belonging to this group are a very cohesive group of Hata Yogis with ancestral genealogy of their own, and they also observe certain secret rites, the Pandit of temple narrated.

Furthermore, the pilgrims perform the religious ceremony systematically and worship the holy places step by step. In ancient times, it took the pilgrims one year to complete their religious ceremony. The pilgrims start the ceremony from Sawami Narayan Temple. Here they gather to begin their journey. This place is situated at Jinnah road Karachi. Teerat Yatra starts from here and the pilgrims move towards holy Chandar Goop, situated in Balochistan. Some of them go on foot while the others use vehicles to reach the place. On the way to it there comes a high mud volcano and the pilgrims move up to it. Beside this big volcano, there exist some other mud volcanoes in the nearing areas, but they are smaller in size. These volcanoes are approximately twenty to twenty five kilometers far from the sea. It is twenty kilometers far from Gwadar coastal highway. Most of the youths climb on it with speed and the other old ones move slowly. The pilgrims reach the top of this and step down from the other side. According to the Hindu traditions, the mud volcano came into existence as a result of god, Shewa's tears. Shewa wept over the death of his wife. The Hindus believe that the god Shewa at the time was in deep grief and could not control his emotions which resulted in emergence of a huge mud volcano at the point which exists to date. The other small volcanoes that exist near the main volcano have stopped functioning, however; the main volcano continues to be in

function and the water still boils in it. The Hindus believe that it does not stop its functioning after centuries because of the fact that Shewa's love for his wife was very powerful and real, the local people apprised the researcher.



Figure 6: Chandra Goop, the mud volcano, which emerged when Shiv's tears fell on the ground, 30 km far from Mandir- (Photo Credit: Researcher)

The next step of ceremonial festival takes place at the "Aghor River". The pilgrims take bath in the river as part of their religious performance, believing that they make themselves pure. That they move to "Assapuri" (rest house), to make themselves relaxed. It is the place where they put their belongings and get ready for further step "Assapuri" is near to the main temple. The rest house that has been built for the worshipers is insufficient because the number of people

who arrive at the place in the annual festival is very big. The pilgrim faces difficulties due to lack of proper facilities on the site. Very less attention is paid on the side of government in fulfilling the requirements of the pilgrims and that shows how sincere the government is in saving and securing the historical sites of Balochistan.



Figure 7: Rest-house for pilgrims-(Photo Credit: Researcher)

After taking a rest, the pilgrims move towards “Kali Mata Asthan” in order to satisfy their soul. This is the place where Naani came in the shape of Kali Mata and the people believe it was the Kali Mata who saved them from the Hingol (king). It is put in a small cave for the purpose of making it save and secure from damage and destruction. The main temple of Kali Mata is situated in Balochistan’s region of Kalat and it is carved in a stone. In Hingol just the picture of Kali Mata is placed. The Kali Mata holds a head which is said to be the skull of Hingol. The people find it hard to move to

Kalat to worship Kali Mata that's why they perform the ritual offerings in Hingol.



Figure 8: An idol and painting of Kaali Maata- (Photo credit: Researcher)

Now they have their way towards “Jharoka” where the footsteps of Ram and Seetha are found and a small Mandir exists at this place. The people at this place pray for their children health and other wishes. As a sign of their presence, they set a fire at the point and erect stones systematically, believing that this would be a place for them in “Swarg” (Paradise). The berry trees which are found in a large number at the place have a great value for Hindus because they believe that when Ram, Seetha and Laxman came here they used berry trees as their food. For this reason the berry tree is

religiously valued. After that they come across another footprint, but that is still not clear whose footsteps they are and nothing exactly can be said about this.



*Figure 9: The figure of Goddess Seetha and Hanumaan-
(Photo Credit: Researcher)*



Figure 10: Commemorative Footprints of Ram and Seetha Maiya- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 11: Hindus erect stone structure which ensures them a house in heaven- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 12: In order to show their presence the Hindus set fire- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 13: The footprints of the Ganesh god (Photo Credit: Researcher)

The next place is “Aneel Kundh” where the pilgrims take bath and serve food to the fishes. It is believed that, while Laxman became thirsty and the Ram fired an arrow into the mountain which made a hole from “Aneel Kundh” to Ganga in India. The water is too much polluted because of lack of proper facilities. The pilgrims take water with them as gift for the family and relatives. While going through this way, the pilgrims also worship the temples of Ram, Setha and Laxman. Moving from the worship places, the pilgrims reach the “Amrit Kundh” where water flows. This water flows from “Aneel Kundh” and here people drink water because they have the belief; it is the place where Laxman drank water, therefore it has importance for the people who believe in Hinduism.



Figure 14: Ram’s arrow stuck this point and water rose from earth- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 15: A pilgrim bathing from this sacred bath- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 16: The pilgrims feeding flour to fishes- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 17: The point from where Ram throws an arrow on the Land and water rose on the surface- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 18: A pilgrim paying attendance to Ram- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 19: The valley from where the Matta Devi passed and killed the Hingol king (Photo Credit: Researcher)

Lastly, they reach to the main point where the Naani Mandir is situated. The overall duration of performing this religious ceremony can be approximately of six hours. Actually, the main temple of Naani is not situated far from the main gate and it can take only a few minutes to reach the place, but the pilgrims enter the gate and move into the parts of mountain where the other religious places exist that the Hindus visit as a part of their worship. The people other than the pilgrims do not take much time to reach the main temple because the temple of Naani is only three to five minutes away from the main gate. Only the pilgrims take much time to reach the temple of Naani because they believe that until and unless the places are visited, their religious performance is

incomplete and their soul does not get satisfied. The place where main temple is placed is in danger because the mountain is eroding gradually which in future may become the cause of harming the Mandir. Initiatives need to be taken for its safety.



Figure 20: Pandit of Mandir, Maharaj Gopal Giri, basically from Sindh- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 21: Nani with her chief commander- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 22: The Location of Mandir under the eroding mountain- (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 23: The façade of the cave temple (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 24: The shivling at front view of the temple (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 25: Hawan kund the place for ritual practices during the course of pilgrimage (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 26: The replica of the Durga Mata setting on the goat (Photo Credit: Researcher)

The Muslims (Zikri sect) also visit this site for the purpose of praying and getting their wishes fulfilled. The Zikris come for praying because they have strong belief in this religious site. In order to get their desired wishes fulfilled, they also sacrifice goats.

The Hinglaj Mandir has popularity not only in national level but it is very famously known in all over sub-continent, particularly in India because the majority of Hindus live there. Almost sixty to seventy thousands people visit the Mandir every year in order to perform religious ceremony. The people from India have great faith in this Mandir and they need to visit this Mandir after performing the religious ceremony in “Ganga” otherwise it is said their religious ceremony is incomplete. The Hindus in India have great will to visit this historical site every year for the purpose of performing the religious ceremony, however; due to instability of Indo-Pak relations, they face problems in getting visa. So, for this reason they fail to get visit of this historic religious site. If both countries manage to allow them, this site can be a great source of economy and it can further be a better place for tourism which in return increases the importance of this region. But sadly saying when I visited the site, I could hardly find the needs and other facilities required for the facilitation of the people who visit it yearly. The people do face the shortage of water because there is almost no facility of clean water for the pilgrims. The responsible authorities have not understood the importance of this historical place and have not provided any security and other required facilities. The people could be more interested in visiting the place once it had been facilitated by the concerning authorities, but

unfortunately we have not valued this precious piece of land as much as it should have been. Moreover, due to current rise of sectarianism in Balochistan, this historical Mandir may remain the victim and we will be made deprived of such an important and historical site.

Chapter 3

The History and Myths of Hinglaj Mandir

To justify whether Alexander used the route of Hingol, it would be vague henceforth the historical pages have almost nothing about his passing route, however, it is clear that Alexander had to pass through this region and the area of Hingol seems to be the only possible way which Alexander had to pass, that is why it can be said Alexander the great passed through this route, possibly from Hingol to westward. There happens to be huge and scary hills in the surrounding of Hinglaj through which he had his way. He didn't have his direct route from the Hinglaj Mandir rather he may have left this particular route and had his way from the windings of Hingol River that's particularly somehow forty miles from the point where the rivers meet. Using this specific route, he reached the coastal region (Holdich 1901: 426). That it is just possible that this shrine was in existence before the days of Alexander the Great. On his retreat he followed the same route from Gidrosia to Kirman, because this is the only route alongside the sea coast. Nothing here has altered since those days. Those magnificent peaks and mountains which surround this sacred shrine of Hinglaj are indeed "everlasting hills", and it was through them that he proceeded to make his way. It would be a matter of immense interest if one traces the record of Alexander's retreat through Hinglaj. It may be that Alexander The great may have chosen this difficult route

exclusively for his visit to the sacred sanctuary of Nania, as he had traveled through Sahara Desert just to pay homage to Zeus on earlier occasion (Brohi 1998: 32). The Hinglaj Mandir is thousands of years old and it even existed before Alexander the Great. While Alexander was to invade India, he had to pass through this land; however, Alexander suffered military loss while going through this site. Despite the fact that there is no available literature of any settlement in the region, but the fact as well cannot be denied that existence of such a big and historical Mandir can't come into existence without any population. The other thing is that the Hingol River never gets dried and flows continuously which may be the reason that the settlement came into existence. Historically, we can find such settlements near the big rivers in the nearing regions of such sites, such as Kech River where Meeri Kalat exists. The reason why the settlements vanished can be that the river changed its route which compelled the people to migrate to another place or the other reason can be the conquerors had their ways from this region which compelled them to move from this region (Saeed 1971: 130).

There exists a myth about the Naani that narrates that she got birth as Nania 6,000 years ago known to be the goddesses of love and war that was also respected by the people of Mesopotamia and Persia. In 2280 BC Erech had to face invasion from king of Elam in Mesopotamia and after the invasion Elam as well looted her idol. The king Assurbanipal went on a mission sixteen hundred years after that invasion in 645 BC in order to get the revenge of the injustice that had been committed against the then king. He invaded fourteen Elamite towns. After the successful invasion of the towns he

restored the deity to the exact place from where that was looted by the king of Elam because it was one of his main missions of invasion to restore the deity to its original place and he did it successfully. Nania is known to be one of the world's oldest legends that survive to date, spanning 4,300 years. One of the archeologists Mark Kenoyer states that the survival of Nani is the reason of goods and crafts that were exchanged and the people who traveled from here to Mesopotamia. It can be stated that her story is the precedent of attack that took place against Erech and the traders spread the popularity of her from Indus valley to the west (Reema 2014: 39).

Nani came here for the sake of preaching Islam in the region because the people in the region used to worship fire and the Nani wanted them to be converted into Islam. She was accompanied by her brother. The region was under a ruler and when he came to know about the arrival of Nani and her brother, he conveyed the order of arresting them and presenting them before the court. When Naani and her brother came to know about this, they planned to escape because they didn't want to be arrested. So Naani and her brother had separate ways to escape and her brother went towards Bolan Pass and mysteriously went missing into the scary and hilly narrow passages of that mountain and the famous recreational site at Bolan "PirGaib" is believed to be his eternal abode. This story connects the tale of ancient spring of warm water which is known as the miracle of Shiva and it contains sulphur. The Muslims have strong belief in it who visits the place of PirGhaib to pray for good health, told a local Shashook.



Figure 27: Amrit Kundh: Lakshman drank water from here (photo Credit: Researcher)

The researcher tries to build the history through the myths that exist while discussing the religion of Hinduism. When the researcher surveyed the whole-region where the Mandir exists, there happened to be no such plain area where we can trace the existing of settlements. For the survival of settlement, it is necessary to find out the traces of agriculture and the agriculture requires plain area which cannot be found at the site. The present settlement in Lasbela widely depends on agriculture; however, agricultural sector is not enough to fulfill their overall needs and requirements. According to the concept of ethno-archeology, to get their needs fulfilled, the settlement, not only depends on agriculture, but they have sea from which fishing is one of the sources of economy. There exists a small population of approximately 200 to 300 families

in Kund Malir (Near Hingol). The only source of economy for the residence of Kund Malir is fishing. Therefore, it can also be said that the ancient settlements may have depended on the fishing sector for the sake of survival. The researcher had very limited resources in order to cover the complete region for the sake of conducting the research because the total mountainous area of Hingol can be between fifty to sixty kilometers, due to which it became tough to examine the total area. Besides this, the current situation of Balochistan is not in support of the researchers because it faces many different issues of security which does not provide a safe ground for the ones who wish to conduct their researches in the troubled province and this region is no different from the others, stated as per the researcher fieldwork.



Figure 28: Mountains of Hingol (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 29: Current Settlement of Hingol (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 30: Current Agricultural Pattern in Hingol (Photo Credit: Researcher)

Here the example of Monjodaro can be taken where the people migrated because of the fact that the river changed the route and the source of people's living was only agriculture. When the river changed its route, the shortage of water left no way open for the residents other than to leave the place and search a better place for their survival. Moreover, the Muslim conqueror Mohammad Bin Qasim used this route to reach Sindh and its traces are found in shape of the graves which are believed to be that of Mohammad Bin Qasim's caravan. The graves of Mohammad Bin Qasim's soldiers still exist near the Hinglaj Mandir, however; there exist no evidence that what caused the death of soldiers. Besides this, the ancient traders used this route for the business purpose. Alexander called the Makuran region, "Gidrosia" which means the gateway that's why it can be said that this particular route remained a source of business for the traders who transferred the goods and other materials from one region to another (Usman 2002: 66).



Figure 31: Tombs of Mohammad Bin Qasim's Soldiers
(Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 32: Islamic Verses on Stones of Tombs of Mohammad Bin Qasim's Soldiers (Photo Credit: Researcher)



Figure 33: Designs on Tombs of Mohammad Bin Qasim's Soldiers (Photo Credit: Researcher)

Myths about Hinglaj Mandir

While giving views about the Hindu religion, we can't escape the myths which have always been the basic pillars of Hinduism and that has given an ancient base to the religion. Like the same when we go in search of historical roots of Hinglaj Mandir, we find its existence in the myths that have been jotted down in the pages of the Holy book of Hinduism or the pundits who look after the Mandir, share the ideas on the basis of told myths. The Mandir is no doubt centuries old and no one has written much about it in detail and with full evidence that's why we have to rely on the myths while trying to know how this historical Mandir had been brought into existence. Some of the myths that have been very popular about the Hinglaj Mandir will be discussed.

It has been a popular concept in Hinduism that the head of Sati is in Hingol. The myth goes like this that the Shiva marries the daughter of Prajapati Daksha. The daughter of Shiva was Sati, but the father of Sati didn't want this marriage to happen and was not happy with the marriage. Prajapati arranged a great Yajna but did not invite his daughter. When Sati came to know about this she went to the place where Yajna was arranged, but her father didn't give any importance to her and completely ignored her. On the other hand her father began to portray Shiva as a bad person so that the other people should have a negative opinion about him. Seeing all this insult of her husband she couldn't tolerate because she loved her husband and was very happy to be his life partner. She could not do anything else, but jumped into the fire and sacrificed her precious life for the sake of her

husband. Commonly, the body burns when it is put in the fire, but to a great surprise, the fire didn't burn her body, however; she lost her life. When Lord Shiva came to know about this shocking incident, he went out of mind because it was too hard for him to bear the loss of his love. Lord Shiva blamed Sati's father for her death and made him responsible. Shiva was very much emotional at the time so he slew the father of Sati, but later on he felt pity on him and gave him the life back. Shiva went crazy and couldn't tolerate the death of his wife and didn't know how to release his emotions. In order to ease his tension he picked up the corpse of Sati and had the round of the complete universe. It is said if Shiva dances, the world comes to an end. The god Vishnu was worried about this that taking the dead body of Sati and taking the round of universe can make Shiva emotional at any stage that's why Vishnu decided to scatter the body of Sati into pieces and he divided the body into fifty two pieces and all those pieces scattered on the earth, but the main part of the body means, the head fell down in Hingol. This is how Hingol means a lot whenever and wherever we talk of Hindu religion and this is why Hingol has always been considered a historical site (Dalal 1998: 112).

Moreover, Hinglaj is the combination of two different words "Hing" and "Laj". The word "Hing" refers to the indigenous people who lived there and "Laj" means "honor". Naani Mandir is also called Hinglaj Mandir. There is as well a myth about Hingol in the traditions of Hinduism that there lived a king named Vichitra, who had two sons, Hingol and Sundar. They had the complete control of the region and they were the kings. That's why there is still the Hingol River

which has been named after his name. People had to obey them at any cost otherwise they had to bear the worse punishment. Both of the sons were very much cruel to the people and the people wanted to get rid of them in one way or the other because resident couldn't tolerate the tyranny in the kingdom of Hingol and Sundar. Their father, Vichitra lived in the Treta Yuga (second of four yoga). To save the people from the cruelty, a god named Ganesha came and slew Sundar and freed the people from his tyrant rule. The king Hingol drank wine and demanded for the beautiful girls of the area. Wherever his people saw a beautiful and attractive girl, they took her to him in order to fulfill the sexual desires of Hingol. The resident couldn't even resist because they didn't have such power to fight the powerful ruler that's why they remained silent and didn't say anything. The ones, who raised their voice against the cruelty, were put behind the bar as punishment. There existed a river from where people caught fishes and did agricultural works, but they had to pay heavy taxes to the king. Those who refused to do so, were punished cruelly and tortured for not obeying the orders of the king. To make the victimized people free from the tyrant rule of the king, people prayed to the Devi Matha for help and asked Devi Matha to save their honor and respect because they couldn't tolerate the brutality of king anymore. Devi Matha accepted the request and came down to earth in shape of sixteen years old beautiful princesses and landed in the garden of king where she began to pluck flowers. When the king saw her, he remained shocked because he had never seen such a beautiful girl in his entire life that's why he followed her wherever she went in order to get closer to her. The princesses kept walking and the king followed her. The girl went into the

Mandir and made herself a “Morti” of stone. When the king went, he found that there was nothing except the laid down Morti. The girl had laid herself down as if she was sleeping. The king once left the place and went but soon he came back. When he came again, he found the Sheran Wali Morti emerging with swords. The king knew that he had to face the tough times that’s why he apologized and asked for forgiveness whatever the wrongdoings he had done, but Devi Matha refused to forgive him saying that he was the ruler of the area and the girls were like his daughters. How possible it is, a king could do such disgusting acts to one’s daughter that’s why Devi Matha said he should not be forgiven and he had to die for disrespecting the young girls and exploiting the people. King was trying to ask for something and the Matha said you can ask for anything except life. He said the whole people had come here from many different places so this place must be given the status of “Othum Yatram” (one of the most valued places for worship, like that Khana-e-Kaba of Muslims). The Matha gave the answer in yes. The second thing he demanded was that he asked her to convert herself into a “Morti” so that the people worship her. And the third thing he asked for was that when the people of any religion visit her to fulfill their wishes, she should fulfill the wishes. The great Devi Matha accepted three of his wishes and at last Matha took out her sword and beheaded him. That’s why the people named her “Hinglaj”, means someone who saves the honor and for this reason this Mandir is called “Hinglaj Mandir”. The commander Yugni came out from the earth, when his head came out of earth; Naani asked him to stop there and ordered Yugni to become a “Morti”. Till today Yugni’s head can be seen in Naani Mandir and other part of

body is missing. She was the Devi Matha who saved the honor and reputation of the people who lived there that's what makes "Hinglaj Mandir" one of the most valued and well-reputed Mandirs of Hinduism, the Pandit of temple described.

When Ram killed Ravin, he repented on his committed mistake and went to Naani to offer apology (Reema 2014: 18). In this regard, there happens to be a popular myth about the Ram and in Hinduism Ram is famous for this extraordinary myth. The myth points out that Laxman and Ram were present in the region of Hingol and there was shortage of drinking water or else there was no water. Being present at the site of Hingol for long time, Laxman got thirsty and he was in dire need of water. There happened to be no sign of water so Ram had to do something in order to overcome the thirst of Laxman. There was no simple or easy way to get water, but Ram had power through which he could overcome the thirst of Laxman in one way or the other. Ram had arrows with him and he had spiritual powers given by the god. He fired one arrow with full strength and it struck one of the points of mountain. The powerfully fired arrow made a hole into the mountain which created its way from Hingol to Ganga and suddenly water started flowing from the point where arrow of Ram struck. Laxman drank water and till today the water flows from that exact point. Ram is known for this outstanding power and he is reputedly remembered for his great work (Personal Fieldwork).



Figure 34: The cave where Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai stayed for a Chilla

The great Sofi Shah Abdul Batai also had the visit of this worthy place. When he entered in Mandir, he saw Matha and Nani. He looked at Naani and asked her why she is sleeping and asked her to drink milk. At that time, the Morti of Naani was straightly lying down, but when she heard the words of Shah Abdul Batai, she turned her face towards him and drank all the milk from the bowls. The pundits, who were sitting in Mandir, asked Shah Abdul Batai to be in Mandir so that they can worship him. But Shah Abdul Batai was not ready to accept this offer and ran away from there. Her entered into a hole and came out from Tatta, an area of Sindh. After spending a lot of time in Sindh, Shah Abdul Batai visited the Mandir once again and performed a “Chilla”. Shah

Abdul Batai had great love, respect and belief for this Mandir of Hingol, the Pandit said in an interview.

Chapter 4

Traces of Hinduism in Balochistan

The word Hindu is believed to be taken from the Indus. Many scholars are of the view that basically the word is Sindhu which with the passage of time changed into Hindu. Some are of the opinion that Greeks changed the word Sindhu into Hindu. But whatever the terminology, one thing is for sure that Hinduism was the religion of this entire region.

The people who were settled in the areas of Indus valley, they were named as Hindus and later on this word emerged as a name of religion. Some other writers find the traces of Hindus from the Vedas. The Vedas were the religious poems of Aryans. It is believed, they migrated from the land of India in the middle of second millennium B.C. but some of the archeologists in the twentieth century rejected the idea and pointed out that the Aryans were never the first civilized people of India and they didn't create the old things that the Hindus have (Reisman 1988: 9). They do believe before the arrival of Aryans in the region, one thousand years before the people had their existence and they had generated a literate culture among the people in the northwest region of India that's how they believe the people of India had become civilized before the arrival of Aryans. However, it has still not been known who those were because the writers could not find the meaning of the words that were written by them, but they had their base in the surrounding of Indus River that's

why they are referred to “The Indus Valley Civilization”. The religious traditions of Aryan invaders and the religious heritage of civilization of the Indus valley are the source of origin of Hinduism.

Hinduism in Balochistan

While discussing the traces of Hinduism in Balochistan, it's still vague to find out the exact traces because very few materials have become available in the respective pages of history with regard to Hinduism in the regions of Balochistan. However, the Hindus have very old settlements in Balochistan.

The Baloch and Hindu writers and scholars point out that the settlement of Hindus in Balochistan is too old and they connect it with the time when Buddhists had their existence in the region. Furthermore, it is said that the Hindus had ruled in some of the Balochistan's regions before the invasion of Arabs and their rule came into an end when the Arabs invaded the region in 712 A.D. The existence of two important religious places (Hinglaj in Lasbela and Kali Devi in Kalat), of Hindus in Balochistan show that they had very strong presence in the region and the places are Hinglaj shrine in Lasbela and Kali Devi in Kalat. Kali and Durga are mothering Goddesses. However, when trying to find out the traces of Hinduism in Balochistan, it is necessary to know the history of Balochistan. In the ancient places of Balochistan, the historians and the archeologists have found a great number of idols in the different regions of Balochistan (Crooke 1990:

287). The archeologists consider these idols as “Matha Devi” and such other idols of Devi have also been discovered from the ancient settlements of Sindh Valley (Saeed 1971: 108).

Mother Goddesses were thought to be the supreme deity in Indus valley, as most of the Indus people worship female power. Similarly Zhob Cult of Mother Goddesses is the one which can be compared to that of the Indus Civilization and no doubt the religion of Indus Civilization was Hinduism as shown by the symbols of swastika, yogic god and many other abstract symbols, stated Mark Kenoyer.

It appears that in Hinduism, the concept of the worship of female energy in the shape of Mother Goddess (or Devi) dates back to the Mesolithic times down to the times of the Indus civilizations. In Harappan society, too, as in modern Hindus society, a major deity was worshipped along with many local cult deities. Although the Hindu acknowledges the existence and importance of a number of gods and demons, most individual worshippers are primarily devoted to a single god or goddess, of who Shiva (male) and Devi (female) are the most popular. Shiva embodies the apparently contradictory aspects of the god of ascetics and the god of fertility or regeneration represented by phallus (linga). This, too, is a Harappan legacy. Most probably, there was a great god in Harappan society who had many of the attributes later associated with the Hindu god Shiva and the Great Mother, who was the Great god’s spouse and shared the traits of Shiva’s wife Durga Parvati. Moreover, several goddesses in Hindu religion, who are the objects of primary devotion, are various faces of the Mother Goddess, originating from

Harappan Cults. Similar the Zhob mother goddess may have served the same purpose.

If we talk about the traces of Hinduism in India region, it is very old. The motif of Swastika on one of the peak of Himalaya which may have been considered sacred by the Indian people and with the passage of time they have incorporated it into their belief. Today it is the prime symbol of Hinduism. The same symbol of swastika and many other symbols of swastika are found in cave paintings in Balochistan around 10,000 B.C. in Suleiman Ranges and Zhob and Lorarali. This indicates that Hinduism was practiced in Balochistan even before the period of Mehrgarh. In the Mehrgarh period, the popularity of Hinduism even increases with the incorporation of Mother Goddess of Hinduism in Mehrgarh and various other sites in Balochistan such as Zhob and Lorarali, from both of them Zhob is important.

The idols which have been discovered from the archeological sites of Balochistan, it would not be wrong to consider them the “Morti” of mother Goddesses. The first humans that have gained consciousness in the universe, they of course felt relaxed in the arms of motherland because it was the motherland which fed them food. That was as well the motherland which had got the status of mother that’s why the people at that time had nothing better than motherland to worship.

In the beginning phases of settlements there seems to be no idols of mother goddesses physically and it is said that the people only had the concept of mother goddesses in their minds. In Neolithic times when the development of

civilization moved one step forward than the people felt the need to convert the concept into physical shape and for this purpose the people began to construct idols and worshiped them. They generated this concept just to present a systematic exercise of religion so that the people can perform the religious performance with discipline. The people got expectations from the mother goddesses and this concept spread which in return took the shape of a religion. At that time the mother goddesses had the rule over a big part of the world and the different religions called it with different names. The idols can be found at a very large part of Asia and Europe. Besides the countries of western Asia and Iran, its existence can also be found in the religious values of Sindh Valley; however, in the religious beliefs of Sindh Valley, it had the status of second priority. Later on Shiva got the status of a god in the valley of Sindh which slowly emerged as a very popular god that became the central point of religious rituals and got the status of a first priority. It had that much deep influence in the ancient society of Sindh Valley that it even got the highest status in the Aryan religions, but the concept of Shiva did not have any popularity in Balochistan. The people of Balochistan only had strong belief on mother goddesses. They made her idols and worshiped it.

Whatever the case is, we see a few traces of Hinduism in Balochistan are found in the shape Swastika Symbol in Mesolithic times and Mother goddess in Neolithic times. Mother goddess may have been in the abstract form earlier in Mesolithic times but it was given a physical shape in Neolithic time with the development of technology. But we don't see any swastika at this Neolithic time that may suggest

the change of cult. In either case, it suggests that Hinduism existed in Balochistan from 10,000 B.C down to Neolithic times which took its larger form in later Indus Valley Civilization.

Mother Goddesses have been shaped in many different styles. In some idols it has a cap over her head and in some other idols the shape of fan can be seen over her head. In one idol she has a newly-born baby in her arms and she has put her hand on the chest in another idol. Moreover, in every idol her head and lower parts can be seen and she has no legs. She has many bangles in her hands and her hair is beautifully decorated.



Figure 35: The Mehrgarh mother goddess carrying a baby.



Figure 36: The seated figurine of Mehrgarh.



Figure 37: The swinging leg figurine of Mehrgarh.

This is a strong point that in many places of Balochistan idols of mother Goddesses was found whose existence came into being after the attack of Aryans. From here we come to know that the people followed the religion of mother goddesses even after the end of Balochistan's ancient civilization.

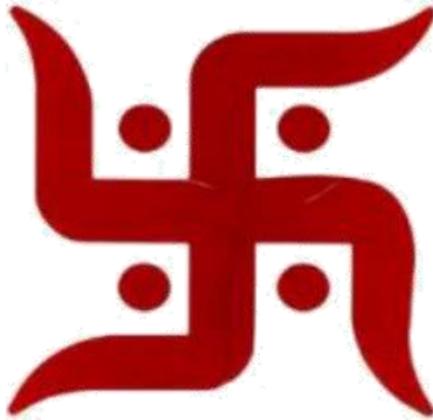


Figure 38: The Swastika symbol.

Swastika

“The Swastika is an equilateral cross with its arms bent at right angles, in either right-facing form or its mirrored left-facing form. Earliest archaeological evidence of Swastika-shaped ornaments dates back to the Indus Valley Civilization of Ancient India as well as Classical Antiquity.” The shape of swastikas has also been utilized in many other ancient civilizations of world. In Indian religion of Hinduism Swastikas are used and in some other religions of India such as Buddhism and Jainism Swastikas are used as a sign of good luck.

Swastika in Balochistan

The writers have dedicated the sign of Swastika to Aryan, but the fact is that this symbol has been found in Balochistan even before the Aryan invaded this land. According to the pages of history the Arians migrated from their birth place after 2000 BC. During this rule on 15th and 16th centuries B.C, a great part of Balochistan's ancient civilization came into an end and the culture in other regions of Punjab and Sindh was in full swing prior to Aryan invasion. Mehrgarh city came into an end in the duration of Aryan time. The land of Balochistan had a highly progressed and advanced civilization before the invasion of Aryan. The society of Balochistan had the value of a very advanced civilization. According to the scholarly researches of the historians all those statues and potteries that had been found in Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Mesopotamia (Iraq) show some similarity with Balochistan pottery and other artifacts which have been imported through trade or mutual understanding. All those ancient idols have the sign of Swastika that had been discovered from the archeological sites of Balochistan. This sign can be seen on the potteries, stamps and talisman that have been discovered from Mehrgarh. These signs belong to the duration of 7000 BC 3000 BC to and they are far ancient than that of Arians. In addition, the sign of Swastika can also be seen in written shape on stones in Balochistan's district of Lasbela. There are so many words that have been jotted down on the stones in the region of Balochistan and that also include many of Swastika's words. Some of the writers express that these words are Greek ones, but they have not provided any

evidence of resemblance to that of Greek ones. Moreover, a poetry that has been found in the district of Khuzdar also contains the words Swastika and this worthy piece of poetry has been kept in the museum of Balochistan. This strong evidence proves that Swastika was in use among the settlements that existed before the invasion of Aryan.

Additionally, this is solid proof that Swastika existed in Balochistan in the duration of pre-historic civilization. When a baby gets birth in Baloch home, they use a symbol of protection over the face of baby that is called “Rakh” in Balochi language. This Swastika symbol means protection, which the Baloch use for the safety of their Babies and mothers given birth.

Similarly to that of Balochi Rakh tradition, there are many abstract symbols thought to be protective elements against evil and bringing good fortune which are painted in the houses of toady’s Hindus in India and Pakistan. Many of these traditions are still present in some parts of Balochistan but are overshadowed by Islam. We could see larger number of practices and traditions alive in Balochistan similar to that of Hinduism but with the introduction of Islam in the region many of these traditions did not survive anymore (Baloch 2010: 38-45).

The most of historians dedicate Swastika to the Aryan which was mostly used by military and religion, but when we look deeply into the evidence and arguments, it becomes explicitly clear that the above concept is completely wrong and the Swastika does not belong to Aryan rather it existed before the Aryan in the land of Balochistan. Many objects that

have been discovered from the archeological sites of Balochistan have enough evidences to prove that concept wrong. It is said that when the Aryan invaded sub-continent, the most of ancient civilizations ended, but that existed in many parts of Balochistan till the invasion of Arabs.

The symbol of a Swastika on Indo-Scythian or Indo-Parthian kings coin found in Balochistan gives another interesting view regarding the survival of Hinduism in Balochistan in later times. From the 1st century to the 3rd century A.D the region was ruled by Paratarajas which was a dynasty of Indo-Scythian or Indo-Parthian kings. The Parata kings are essentially known through their coins, which typically exhibited the bust of ruler with long hair in a headband on the obverse and a Swastika within a circular legend on the reverse written in Brahmi. These coins are mainly found in Lorarali in today's western Pakistan. The dynasty of Paratas is in thought to be identical with the Paradas of the Mahabharata, the Puranas and other Vedic and Iranian Sources.



Figure 39: The silver bust of Mirhavana depicting Swastika on the reverse. (Courtesy: coinindia.com)



Figure 40: The god Arjuna on the obverse and the swastika on the reverse. (Courtesy: Coinindia)

The scholar has found 57 new coins, and has given the full details, and then examines how these coins consolidate and transform our understanding of this series and of previously studied coins. While the rest have been acquired

just over the last few years. These later acquisitions are reportedly all from the area of Lorarali in the Pakistani state of Balochistan. All but four of the coins have images of a diademed bust right within a dotted border on the obverse, two carry a bust to the left, and the last two do not have any portrait on them. With the exception of one an epigraphic coin, they all carry legends in Brāhmi on the reverse, although exactly what is on the reverse of the last two coins is not entirely clear. 38 coins carry Swastikas to the right, 14 carry Swastikas left and five do not carry Swastikas at all (Tandon, nd : 4).

Conclusion

It is hard to explicitly prove the crystallized existence of the earliest traces of Hinduism in Balochistan, because lack of genuine research on these regions made it complicated to generalize the earliest traces of Hinduism in regions of Balochistan. But the earliest traces of Hinduism in Balochistan could be implicitly seen and proved through a deduction from the situated Hinglaj Mandir in Lasbela, existential myths of Hinduism and the religious symbolism in Mehrgarh.

However, Hinglaj Mandir situated in Lasbela, it is close to Hingol River. The presentable existence of Nani Devi in Hinglaj Mandir proved it that it is attached to Hinduism. The core notion to visit to Hinglaj Mandir is to worship Hinglaj Matha. In contemporary, to Hindus the Hinglaj Mandir is one of the highly sacred places because after the religious visit to Gangha River, it is obligatory to Hindus to visit to Hinglaj Mandir as well. Hinglaj Mandir is situated on route, on which Alexander and Mohammad Bin Qasim marched to South Asia. Here, it could be known that before Alexander it was an established route that people from Makran region or some other regions, usually or frequently, came to Bela region. The existence of this route gave evidence that it might be used for religious purpose. It could be said that in ancient time people from western regions used this route to perform pilgrimage or to worship Nani Devi or Hinglaj Matha.

Hinglaj Mandir is mythically attached to Hinduism as well. Mythical attachment also shows that Hinglaj Mandir is important and significant for Hindus in mythical sense as well. In Hindu mythical texts, it is believed that Sathi (one of Hindu mother goddesses) was fallen apart into fifty-two pieces in which one part of her body was fallen in the Hingol region. Shive (one of main Hindu gods) was husband of Sathi, after the disintegration of Sathi, he cried. Meanwhile, drop of his tears also fell in Hinglaj region and it became a mud volcano. Whole fallen parts of Sathi became the sacred places for Hindus and Hindus show reverence to whole sacred places. Thus Hinglaj Mandir became to be revered by Hindus. Another, myth that is also attached to Hinglaj Mandir in which Hingol was described in Hindu mythical text as King and that nation was known as Hing. King was cruel on his own subjects. People worshiped and prayed to Devi Matha to protect them from ruthless and merciless King. Devi Matha descended from heaven to earth and saved that nation. It is believed that people prostrated to Devi Matha that to be there to protect them. Then Devi Matha slept in a cave at that region. Likewise, that region became to be known as Hinglaj Region. And that cave became Hinglaj Mandir, it was intended to save and protect people from the tragedies and calamities. These mythical attachments of Hinduism to Hinglaj Matha show that Hinglaj Mandir is not contemporary but it has pre-historic existence.

Interestingly, archaeological evidences were interpreted that in Mehrgarh the mother goddesses existed in that settlements. It is believed that she was protector; savior and provider of people that save people from tragedies and

provide foods through an agriculture means. The availability of archaeological evidences about the mother goddesses in Mehrgarh settlements were seemed that before Aryans the cult of worship of mother goddesses has existed in these regions. And the religious symbol such as Swastika was found in Mehrgarh as well. It could be deduced that Swastika was pre-Aryan symbol of people of these regions. Likewise, existence of mother goddesses in Mehrgarh and availability of Swastika show that religious cults that time was more or less connected to Hinduism. Theoretical it could be proved that through cultural continuity Hinduism existed in these regions from pre-historic to historic period. However, mother goddesses in Mehrgarh continued to exist in these regions as savior and protector, and in advanced form it was revered as Hinglaj Matha in Hinglaj Region. Likely, in contemporary time, Hinglaj Matha is revered as one of Hindu goddesses and Hinglaj Mandir as sacred place of Hindus in Balochistan.

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