

A Museological Survey in Balochistan: An overview

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Abstract:

Balochistan, an archaeological and ethnological potential piece of land, with ancient and up-to-date mysterious geographical location, has always graced attention of the foreign and indigenous scholars. The foreign archaeologists have always shown great enthusiasm and interest to conduct archaeological surveys and explorations in Balochistan, ever since the British Colonialism. These foreign missions, had not been merely indulged in archaeological tours and excavations, but were also successful in discovering a great deal of antiquities. This first step was taken in 1875 by Major E. Mockler in the coastal areas of Makran division. In spite of the fact, until now there is not a well-arranged and documented museum in the entire province of Balochistan. If archaeologically seen, it should have been the home of all types of museums with its extraordinary rich archaeological contexts and findings. Unfortunately, today this archaeologically rich province is deprived of its own attained objects. It is strange to say, since 1900s until 1970s, Balochistan had merely two museums, namely McMahon Museum and Geological Museum Quetta. Consequently, Balochistan had been always over-looked both in terms of archaeology and Museology. At present, the so-called functional museums lack the concerned people, who can cope with the museum property in its museological context.

Key words: Museum, Collection, Balochistan, Archaeological Museum, Ethnological Museum.

Introduction

Museum is generally termed an organization dedicated to sharing information about a topic or topics, providing visitors with visual knowledge and experience leading to better understanding and appreciation. Every museum is different in functions and may similarly be in collection from one another. However, the general perception is that this is the archaeological collections which give the names to a building or place as a museum, although, regarding purpose and objective, they do vary from one another. This, however, does not mean that the term 'museum' is restricted to the collection of archaeological objects only. The numbers of museums in term of different categories may run in hundreds. Some examples may include Army Museum, artillery Museum, Navy Museum, Air Force Museum, Art Museum, Ethnographic Museum, Fashion Museum, Folk Heritage Museum, Geological Museum, Maritime Museum, National Museum, Natural History Museum, Palace Museum, Postal Museum, Private Museum, Public Museum, Prefectura, or Provincial Museum, Rural History Museum, Science Museum, Botanical Museum, Zoological Museum, Technology Museum, Textile Museum, Toy Museum, Transport Museum, Railways Museum, University Museum, Virtual Museum, Wax Museum, etc.

One of the chief aims of a museum is to preserve the collections. These collections are the trusts of ancestors and represent their cultural traits. The second objective of a museum is to exhibit and convey the cultural diversity of a region, culture, civilization, for the sake of studies and researches. This is also a source of caring and guarding the past left-over objects in order to study, interpret and reconstruct the past lifestyles and history of the primitive peoples including their socio-economic conditions, art, architecture, beliefs, governance and political structure, etc. These tangible objects interpret intangible activities and narrate true-life stories regarding their past lifestyles.

Unfortunately, Pakistan is not a country that is capable to create or produce different types of museums, such as period museum, ceramic museum, textile museum, and so on. In Third World countries if a museum is arranged with different sorts of collection then it sounds a lot. For better tracing of the history of a region, a museum plays a very key role to handover its past history empirically to its audiences. In a museum as a visitor moves on looking at different types of specimens, he/she automatically develops an image of their past way of life. A diorama in a museum remedies the answers of many mysterious events of the past.

The First Ever Concept of Museum

According the Collins English Dictionary (8th Ed.) the word museum has been derived from a Latin word in 16th century museum, which means a set of collections open to the public. This collection contributes to general education as well as scholarly and scientific research. The history of first creative idea of constructing a museum goes back to the classical origins. The first suggested word for museum was a Greek origin mouseion meant “seat of the Muses.” This gave notion for the deities of arts and sciences chosen a philosophical institution as well as deemed a place of observation. (Lewis: encyclopedia Britannica) Whereas, ‘museum’ seems to have been limited in Roman times essentially places of philosophical debates. Ptolemy I Soter (ca. 367-283), was a Macedonian general of Alexander the Great, who founded the first museum of the world called “Great Museum at Alexandria” in the 3rd century BCE. At that time the interpretation of the preserved cultural heritage was focused on in the museum. (Flower 1896: 3)

The First Documented Museums

Samuel Quickelberg, a physician of Amsterdam, published one of the earliest known catalogues of such a museum in 1565 in Munich. As a matter of fact, this was the first cataloging of a museum in the world. Soon in the following year, the collections of Johann Kentmann were published by Conrad Gesner. This collection consisted of 1600 objects and mainly comprised materials of minerals, marine animals, and shells (Flower 1896: 4). While in England, the earliest cataloging of a museum is of Musaeum Tradescantianum in 1656. These were the specimens of English John Tradescants, father and son, of Lambeth, London. Later this property was owned by Elias Ashmole in 1677. This collection was transferred into the University of Oxford. For this collection, soon a building was erected and opened to the public in 1683. This museum is located within the premises of Oxford University and known by the name of Ashmolean Museum. (Boylan 2004: 2)



Fig. 1- Elias Ashmole (1617-92) and the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Courtesy: Encyclopedia Britannica)

The Role of Museum

Taken as a whole, museum collections and their scientific display symbolize the world's natural and cultural common heritage. As organizers of this heritage, museums are subjected to streamline an understanding of all natural kinds of the human knowledge. The museums are important treasures for human beings in all their activities to promote knowledgeable gratefulness of the rich and different worlds we have owned. (AAM 2000: 5) The objects are required for a museum in order to create collections because the objects kept in the museum convey important messages to the visitors. These objects can be religious, historical, economic, ecological, political, technological, and so on. (Anno 2009: 2) Museums are just not only buildings rather they are treasure-houses of the past peoples. They house the remembrances of the world's peoples including their cultures, dreams, and hopes. Throughout the world, each year, millions of people visit museums. The visitors visit these museums owing to keen interest towards the old world. These collections and the number of museums of the whole types are burgeoning year by year. (Ambrose 2006: 4-6)

Furthermore, a museum is about to perform a pre-eminent duty to advance their educational role and attract the audiences from the locality, community, or other group they serve as well. It communicates with the other essential communities and promotes their cultural heritage as a fundamental part of the education. (ICOM 2013: 8)

The Development of Museums in Pakistan

In European nations, the pioneering idea of establishing museums commenced along with concept of the 'nation'. This concept was figured out at that time when they collected and displayed a large amount of tangible remains. These remains came through archaeological context as a shared heritage. (Kristiansen 1996: 89-100) Similarly, in the developing countries likewise, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, and Nepal the tendency of museum occurred recently. These established museums made a chain between past and present. (Khan 1972: 8)

The ever-first museum of South Asia was "Indian Museum," built in Calcutta in 1814. (Morley 1981: 10) During the middle of the 19th century museums were established rapidly with a larger number than ever before. But in the inception, these museums were provided with natural history collections. However, as archaeological researches were being conducted in the country, so shortly these museums were enriched with archaeological materials. In Pakistan, the Victoria Museum was the first museum established in 1851. It was founded by Sir Bartle Frere at Karachi. (Habeeb 2000: 27) soon after, this museum was followed by the Lahore Museum in 1865-66, Peshawar Museum 1900 and McMahon Museum in Quetta 1906. (Dar 1989: 3) In fact, Peshawar Museum was mainly a museum of Gandhara Art with a large number of Buddhist sculptures on its exhibition. On the other hand, S. R. Dar writes that Sir Alexander Cunningham has mentioned the existence of a museum in Peshawar early in 1872. He stated this piece of information in the Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. II, p. 125. Unfortunately, presently nobody knows the precise location of this mentioned museum. However, the first purely archaeological museum was established in 1918 under the supervision of Sir John Marshall. In fact, this was a site museum established in Taxila, Punjab aimed at housing the Hellenistic materials. (Dar 1981: 13)

Museums in Balochistan

The McMahon Museum, Quetta

The McMahon Museum was one of the important features of Quetta. This beautiful museum drew the attention of visitors either in one way or the other. This was built along with the “Sandeman Library”. This aesthetically glamorous Museum was situated between Bruce and Anscomb south of the “Sandeman Memorial Hall”, or “Jirga Hall”. The building with its five domes was a noticeable object, as experienced from the lovely Lytton Road; looking eastwards through the gateway of the Political Agent’s bungalow. While, the Murdar range of mountains in the background represented a picturesque landscape. Moreover, according to this locate on of that time, today it marks its place on the situation of famous Serena Hotel. It is subterranean on Shahrah-e-Zarghoon just apposite to the Cantonment area. According to the above mentioned geographic location, it fits the location of McMahon Museum. Secondly, during the constructional work of Serena Hotel, a magnificent glaring golden bull along with a bowl met to the workers. Later on, these two masterpieces were donated to the National Karachi Museum. But unfortunately, today these priceless golden specimens are not on the museum display.

The first Idea of McMahon Museum

The idea of making a museum in Little London (sobriquet of the old Shālkot or Quetta by British colonists) came up with the application till the completion. This pioneering notion came on surface in 1904 when a question arose of erecting a separate building for the “Sandeman Libray”. This library was already founded in 1884. The constitution of Sandeman Libray came up under the patronage of Rai Sahib Diwan Jamiat, with the assistance of the late Sir Robert Sandeman and Sir Hugh Barnes. Concurrently, there emerged the question for consideration of beautifying Little London with a Museum.



Fig. 2- An old glimpse of the McMahon Museum before the destruction along with the Sandeman Library. (Courtesy: BSC, UoB, Quetta)

The Construction of the McMahon Museum

The prime aims and objects of building two certain institutions being so closely interrelated with one another, arrived with a conclusion that they may be dealt with together and housed in a single edifice. Sir Major John Ramsay was the officiating Agent to the Governor-General in Balochistan, happily agreed with this view and obtained the necessary funds from the Government of India. (Cumming 1934: 5) the constructional works commenced in 1904 just after releasing the funds. These all works finished within a span of two years in 1906 along with its furniture, show-cases, and fitting works. (Dani 1970: 23)



Fig. 3- An aerial photograph of the McMahon Museum. (Courtesy: [fb.com/archive 150](https://www.facebook.com/archive150/))

The Division of the Museum

In the inception, the museum edifice comprised merely four main rooms. The first room was devoted to the Sandeman Public Library, the second to a first-class Reading Room, the third to a Public Reading Room with combing the Museum, and the fourth was merely for Museum exhibits. During 1911 to 1912, the backyard of museum building was enlarged by the addition of two larger rooms. Among these rooms one was perhaps for Committee meetings and geological collection and the other accommodated archaeological, ethnological and miscellaneous articles. (Cumming 1934: 8) Simultaneously, then the Museum was given the title of “The McMahon Museum”, honoring the Honorable Sir Arthus Henry McMahon. He himself took a very keen interest in everything pertaining to the newly established Museum. (Cumming 1934: 7)

The Reserved Collection

Eventually, the day came when on 16th October 1906, the Museum and Library building were formally opened to the public. (Cumming 1934: 6) The dearth for a museum felt when they already had big collections of articles of historical and economic interest. Correspondingly these included coins, inscriptions, pottery and other specimens of local handicrafts, including carpets, and other materials of domestic use. These all cultural properties were collected in 1901 during the preparation of the Provincial Gazetteers of Balochistan and Balochistan Census Report. However, both were later on Published during 1905-1907. (Cumming 1934: 5) The other displayed museum assemblages were enriched by donations, gifts correspondingly natural history articles. Some other antiquities were discovered by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) during the course of excavations at Naāl (Khuzdar), Mastung, and some other sites. This museum came to destruction by the severe earthquake of 31st May 1935. It shook each and every building and converted them into ruins. Later some materials of the destroyed museum were shifted to the Staff College, Quetta. (Hughes 1915: The Indian Biographical Dictionary)



Fig. 4- The McMahon Museum in destructive form after the massive earthquake of 1935.
(Courtesy: Cumming)

The Contributions of Mr. J. W. N. Cumming

Mr. J. W. N. Cumming was connected with the province of Balochistan for nearly half a century. He was one of the planners of the organization known as the “McMahon Museum.” For a couple of years, Mr. Cumming acted both as Honorary Curator and Secretary of the Museum. Mr. J. W. N. was also appreciated by his services and contributions towards the Museum. He acted as the Managing Committee of the Museum, when in April 1914, a permanent Curator was appointed for the said museum. He has been working from the very first day of the museum in 1906, unless taking the museum institution into its zenith. (Rai, 1934: introduction note)

Quetta Geological Museum

Respected Ahmad Hasan Dani writes, when it comes to museum then the whole Balochistan is blank. Further he says though many of this region's priceless objects are not only displayed in Pakistan's famous museums, but also throughout the world. However, the Geological Survey of Pakistan had established a Departmental Museum in Quetta. Nevertheless, this Geological Museum was not opened to the general public. According to a letter dated to 26 September 1970, (letter no. MUS/2/65), the Geological Department forwarded the letter:



Fig. 5- Quetta Geological Museum complex.

“This organization does not have a Museum in the sense as enquired in the questionnaire sent by you along with the letter under reference (questionnaire for the Museum Officers No.1). However, we have a small museum of minerals and rocks for reference studies as well as to acquaint the public, college and university students, and high officials visiting Geological Survey of Pakistan, with the geology and mineral wealth of the country. A section of Museum also keeps fossils collected from various regions of Balochistan. We have been participating in the exhibitions and fairs held in the country where mineral, rock and fossil specimens found in the country along with some of the instruments used in the survey, search for mineral are displayed”. S. A. Naqvi, the Superintendent of the National Museum of Karachi, contributed to the *Museums Journal* an article in October 1957 (Vol. VI, pp. 51-59), with the title “Development of Museums in Pakistan”, in which we have the name of “Geological Museum Quetta. This was one of the other newly established museums in the subcontinent. (Dani 1970: 29) The museum was enriched with the artifacts of geology, paleontology, mineralogy, astrogeology, dinosaur fossils, Balochitherium, walking whale, Cain azoic mammal Quettacyon parachai, coll of Jurassic/Cretaceous Ammonites, meteorites, rocks and minerals, and precious stones. (Dani 1970: 39)



Fig. 6- The vertebrate gallery displaying the fossils of Balochitherium on the floor level.

The Sub-Sections of Museum

Currently this museum keeps seven galleries within the museum complex. The first gallery houses natural objects like rocks and minerals coming from various regions of Balochistan; the second gallery houses precious and semi-precious gem stones; the third gallery houses economic minerals like gold, copper, iron, zinc etc.; the fourth gallery contains building and decorative stones; the fifth gallery comprises of astrogeological materials likewise stony meteorites and comets; the sixth gallery houses paleontological remains and the seventh and last gallery is consisting of fossils which further includes two sub-sections: vertebrate and invertebrate sections.

Quetta Museum

The Quetta Museum was established in 1971 along with the Directorate of archaeology and Museums in a rented Bungalow in Maikani Road, Quetta. This museum is also called the Museum of Directorate of archaeology and Museums. Afterwards, this museum was shifted to Mali Bhag. Third and last time it was shifted to Spini Road, at Noori Naseer Khan Complex. Nevertheless, this is not its permanent place hitherto. Right now, two directorates are working in this complex i.e., the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums and Directorate of Library. Most of the antiquities of this museum have come through donations by the local people. In terms of antiquities, this museum is quite rich but unfortunately, many objects are not displayed yet. Some of the objects were lost and others remnant ones were shifted to Karachi Museum due to mismanagement and lack of permanent place of its own in Balochistan. They have temporarily settled their offices at this place but they do not have a permanent place for the museum too. This museum exhibits guns (called Dahdari guns because of their manufacturing in Sibi Dadar), manuscripts date back to ca. 1000 AH. 92 objects belong to Mehrgarh, among which include terracotta male and female figurines, animal figurines, polychrome wares, polychrome jars, and other types of pottery with various designs and motifs. At a time, there was also a horde of coins some local and foreign coins displayed in the museum. The local coins probably belonged to the Kalat Sate, while the foreign coins belonged to the Buddhist and Abbasid periods. Due to the access of transferring of objects from one place to the other these all coins disappeared finally.

Besides, there is no proper budget regarding the conservation and preservation of the museum's specimens. Currently the museum administration has made a new proposal for a new location of the Directorate of archaeology and Museums at Fine Arts College that consists of 25 halls. They have devised to establish 6 ethnological halls in this complex each for a separate division of Balochistan, including Quetta Division, Kalat Division, Sibi Division, Makran Division, Naseerabad Division, and Zhob Division. (Hussain 2014)



Fig. 7- The Display Hall of Directorate of Archaeology Museum, Quetta. (By researcher)

The Sibi Museum

In 1903 the Queen Victoria's Memorial Hall was erected. After sometime then it was converted to Jirga Hall where all the tribal issues used to be discussed annually by the elders. It was given status of a museum in 1987 by the Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums. This historical and archeological site takes the central part of the Sibi district on the Neshtar Road just adjacent to the Governor house. Irshad Hussain from district Charsada, Khyber Pakthunkhwa, was the first curator of the Sibi Museum who is presently working as the Deputy Director in Taxila Museum. Muhammad Baloch from district Khairpur, Sindh, was appointed as the second curator for this museum, but he resigned soon and Muhammad Khan was appointed the curator of the museum. He also worked for a short span of time like Muhammad Baloch and resigned. Ultimately, in December 1990, Mahmood-ul-Hassan was appointed as the curator of the Sibi Museum. He was the only curator, who worked in this museum for the longest duration until its conversion into a "Jirga Hall" in November 1999.



Fig. 8- A fascinating and profile view of Sibi Museum. (Courtesy: BSC)

The collection in Sibi Museum comprised specimens of the three famous sites of Kachi Bolan, namely Mehrgarh, Nausharo, and Pirak. The museum consisted of a main central display hall with a corridor. The central hall was enriched with the excavated archaeological objects of the above three mentioned sites. The corridor was furnished with the ethnological objects and portraits of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Jinnah himself visited this historical building as the first Governor General of Pakistan. However, these ethnological objects mainly included five Dahdari guns (the blunderbuss guns made in Sibi Dadhar), eight swords, and Balochi cultural dresses. The total objects displayed in the museum were one hundred sixty-eight.

In November 1999, the Museum was closed and the building was once again declared as the Jirga Hall. The whole objects of the Sibi Museum were shifted in the Karachi National Museum. But unfortunately, none of these priceless objects are on the display; rather all of these findings have been dumped in the museum storerooms. (Mahood-ul-Hassan 2015: Interview)

Quaid-e-Azam Residency Museum, Ziarat

Quaid-e-Azam Residency, also known Ziarat Residency was erected during the British Colonialism. This building has the unique distinction to have been in use of the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This is spread over an area of four acres and situated in District Ziarat. This residency is in the north of Quetta at a distance of 65 miles. Prior to Partition of the Indian Subcontinent, the Chief Commissioner of Balochistan used to reside here during summer season. This is a two-story building built with baked bricks with wooden floor and balcony.



Fig. 9- The Quaid-e-Azam Residency Museum Ziarat after the restoration work. (Courtesy: FB)

This residency is housed in the valley of world's richest Juniper forest. It has four rooms. Moreover, this historic building was declared as a National Monument under the Antiquities Act of 1975 by the Government of Pakistan (Mumammad 1987:38). Many visitors visit this museum and enthusiastically look at the sophisticated objects used by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah during his life. But unfortunately, this archaeological monument was put ablaze on 15 June 2013. It was restored and inaugurated on 14th August 2014 by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.



Fig. 10- the Quaid-e-Azam Residency after the attack. (Courtesy: google)

Command and Staff College Museum, Quetta

The Pakistan Army Command and Staff College Quetta is regarded one of the high-status Pakistani military educational institutions. Here the officers are trained and educated. Basically, it was established in 1905 at Deolali near Bombay, India and then transferred to Quetta in 1907. It is located at the entrance to the Urak Valley, Quetta. The College possesses a small museum inaugurated on 16th of May 1979. It houses a small private collection secured by El Alamein, who was an instructor there as is considered the hero of World War II. The private collection comprises various objects of interest and historical value pertaining to the College, like military objects, paintings and photos. There is no written record whether the transferred objects of McMahon Museum still exist in this museum or not. It is just because it is under the control of military and is highly restricted for a visitor without the military permission. (Ibrahim 2014: interview)



Fig. 11- Command and Staff College Museum Quetta.

Kech Museum, Turbat

Kech River is one of the largest rivers of Makran, thus, the old name of district is Kech probably taken from the name of Kech River. But later on, possibly because of its geographical location it was named “Turbat” which itself means grave in Persian, probably because of the extreme heat of summer giving a deserted look like a graveyard. It was again renamed as Kech. Apart from this, Kech Museum is known in Balochi Kech Qadeem Ja, Qadeem means “old or ancient,” while Ja means “place,” so literally it means “old place” attributed to museum. Kech Museum is located in the main city of Turbat; just on the right side of National Bank of Pakistan.



Fig. 12- Kech Museum, Turbat, Makuran

History of the Museum

According to the written records of late 1994 and early 1995, the current building of Kech Museum was the first rest houses of Kech used between late 1960s and early 70s. Until the beginning of 1995, it was not a functional museum and there is no evidence that any antiquities were on display. It according to the official documents of 2006, this museum was under the control of Department of Culture and Museums Government of Balochistan. There are several Directorates in the Department of Culture Tourism and Archives, and this museum was under the department of culture and Museums. (Ahmed 2014: interview)

In the boundary wall of Kech Museum there are 4 mud-rooms erected with a front corridor. In 2006, a museum staff comprising 6 persons was appointed for Kech Museum but without any particular office for the official works. Currently, Mr. Ayaz Ahmed is the assistant curator of Kech Museum since 2011. In response to a question he informed that, the former Director of Archaeology and Museums Balochistan, Noor Khan Muhammad Hassani, has once said all the valuable and precious objects of this museum were transferred to Karachi Museum due to its non-functionality and mismanagement. (Ibid., 2014)

Gawadar Museum

The Sultan of Oman, Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said, directed the ministry of Heritage and Culture of Oman to restore the Gawadar Castle and convert it into a museum during his state visit of Pakistan in 2001. This was a political strategy to have a stronger reflection of the historical ties between the Sultanate of Oman and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. On completion of the work, Mohammed bin Said Al Lawati, Sultanate's ambassador, handed over the key of Gawadar Castle on behalf of his Government in a ceremony at Pearl Continental Hotel. (Gawadar News and Business Source) On 20th March, 2007.

Gawadar Museum itself is an archaeological monument and still keeps its significance due to its impressionistic look and masonry (fig. 3). This museum consists of two types of galleries, i.e. Ethnological Gallery and Archaeological Gallery. The Ethnological Gallery housed the traditional objects of Oman State, such as daggers, swords, canons, and many more. The Archaeological Gallery displays the archaeological

objects of two famous sites of Shahi-Tump and Miri Qalat, Makran. Presently, the rich cultural and historical museum has been abandoned and once again turned into a ruin because of mismanagement and lack of funds. Of the objects on display in this museum only one canon is visible in a corner of the museum in worst condition covered by thick layer of dust. (Razzaq 2014: interview)



Fig. 13- A beautiful view of the façade of Gawadar Museum. (Courtesy: Jehand Baloch)

The Balochistan Study Center Museum, UoB Quetta

Balochistan Study Center (BSC) Museum was established in Arts Faculty Department, University of Balochistan, Quetta. It consists of merely a central hall without any particular galleries. This museum is furnished with show-cases, fixed in walls and arranged in the centre. The total wall show-cases are eight in number, four on each side. Further, each showcase is subdivided into two sections with a wooden column in the middle. In the central portion of the museum ten show-cases are displayed. Unfortunately, there is not proper lighting arrangement for the objects in the showcases. This museum is illuminated with the common fluorescent tube lights. Moreover, the objects on display have not come from one source but from various sources, such as donations, surface collections, and purchased objects.

The collection shows variety such as, ethnological, archaeological, natural, geological, and art specimens. Further, these objects have come from fifteen districts of Balochistan. Of the large number of objects only thirty objects have been provided with captions showing their proper provenance, while the remaining objects are on display without any proper captions. (Naseer 2014: 196-97)



Fig. 14- The display of the main central hall of the BSC Museum, Quetta. (By researcher)

Brief History of the Museum

For the very first time in BSC Museum, there were just some four to five ancestral weapons donated by the Director of BSC Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir and Manzoor Ahmad Baloch. Dr. Sabir added in his interview, that from its inception in 1997 he was appointed as Acting Director of the newly established Research Center and due to non-existence of Museum Curator the Director was also the custodian of the museum.

Archaeological objects for the museum have been donated voluntarily by people of the area. The best collection ever donated was by Siddique Mirwani, Jahangir Marri, Bahram Khan Lehri, and Wahid Kethran. The other objects including both archaeological and ethnological have been donated by and through the personal efforts of Siddique, Habib Baloch, and Hameed Shawani (current Director of BSC). Farooq Baloch, Assistant Professor of History in the BSC worked day and night for the enrichment of this museum. He made extra efforts to collect many objects from people he reached through out the province. Farooq Baloch along with his team members of BSC contacted every person and every house where he could get hold of any cultural object and in the process also faced difficulties. (Sabir 2013: interview)

The Reserved Collection of BSC Museum

The property of this museum is quite rich in terms of its well-known articles of Mehrgarh, Killi Gul Muhammad, Kulli, Naal, and some other Neolithic, proto-historic, Bronze and Iron Age documented and undocumented sites of Balochistan. This museum also houses the materials of those sites which were not surveyed and visited earlier by archaeologists. The total objects in this museum are around six hundreds, which include forty coins of Pre-Islamic and Islamic eras. The mentioned Museum collection also includes terracotta figurines, seals, Islamic manuscripts, fossils, potteries, water pitchers, terracotta bowls, earthenware jars, cups, plates, jugs, dishes of different designs like dish on stand with different motifs including (fish motif, bird motifs, geometric designs, emboss rope designs, Balochi dress-embroidery) seals, weighing stones, varied types of potsherd, ewers, statues of mother goddesses, male figurines, animal figurines, terracotta bulls, humped bulls, stone blades, jewelries including (bangles, necklaces, studs, Earrings), beads, sea shells, Islamic period swords, Sikh period daggers with sheaths, guns, a padlock, replicas of Chakar-e-Azam and Balochelites, and other household specimens. (Ibid. 195-96)

Concluding Remarks

It is, of course, of great pride for the inhabitants of Balochistan that the ancient land where they are currently residing remained the abode of one of the earliest advanced cultures of the ancient world. This is the very place, where the primitive man took its first hesitant steps to unite himself in a settled village life. The instances of these first cultures have been unearthed by the archaeologists in early 1950s and 1970s from the sites of Killi Gul Muhammad in Quetta Valley and Mehrgarh in Kachi Bolan region. The Neolithic cultures of Balochistan are not merely under the consideration of South Asian Countries rather they are exemplified everywhere in the world.

Nevertheless, there are still well preserved sites with multi-dimensional cultural artifacts in Balochistan. We are sure that further archaeological explorations and excavations, if conducted in this province will not only produce valuable artefacts to cater to the needs of our new museums but will further unfold the rich legacy of Balochistan and will greatly facilitate establishment of new Museums. Development of archaeological sites and establishment of more museums in the province will boost cultural tourism while flow of more and more tourists will not only enhance the beauty of Balochistan but will also add tremendously to the socio-economic development of the province and ultimately restore peace and tranquility in the restive province.

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