

## **Baloch Women: The Real Custodian of the Baloch Culture**

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### **Abstract**

*Culture is a collective means of achievement and of progress. Culturally rich Balochistan is motherland of ancient civilization and Baloch society comparatively presents a picture of tolerant, gender cooperative, gender-non discriminatory and human society from other neighboring societies of the region. Culture of a particular region consists of language, ideas, beliefs, customs, values, attributes, code of honor, institutions, tools, works and art, religion, law, ethics, rituals, fairs and festivals of a specific group of people. The status of women in the Baloch society has ever been of a great importance and impact. Here we give some glimpses of the position and influence of women in the Baloch society. Baloch women have the significant role in the promotion of culture in the shape of folklore, literature, dress, art, handicrafts, traditional food, indigenous herbal treatment from the early ages of a human till the death in the whole life of any human being. Her life is a symbol of Baloch culture. She is real founder, contributor and protector of the Baloch culture.*

### **Voyage of Civilization**

Balochistan is the motherland of the ancient civilizations. According to documents and literature, the name of Baloch and Balochistan is approximately 2000 years old.

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However, other names are also used for Balochistan. Old Persian literature indicates that Balochistan was called Macca, Mecca, Makya and Makian. Greeks describe it Gidrosia and Gadozia. Other illustrates it Makoran or Mekran. Holdich narrated in Sangi (2009) that Makoran originally was Mahikhoran (people eat fish) in the process of centuries. Later on the word Magi Khoran changed in Makoran. The author also writes that Makoran is a natural geographical route between Persia and India. Balochistan is a land of earliest civilization. The history goes back to around 15,000 years ago. During the last century French archaeologists discovered a new site in Balochistan at Mehrgarh, which is believed to be the earliest civilization in the world. It pre-dates the civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia. The site was occupied civilizations sign from 7,000 B.C. to 2,000 B.C. and it is the early Neolithic site where "we have the first evidence of domestication of animals and cereal cultivation - wheat and barley - and also the Centre for craftsmanship as early as 7,000 B.C. There are many historical sites across Eastern Balochistan (politically part of Pakistan), Western Balochistan (politically part of Iran), and Northern Balochistan (politically part of Afghanistan). The Burn City (*Sutkagēndōr*) in northern Balochistan is a unique archeological site and a prime proof of sophistication, engineering and planning. Evidence from these sites shows a very clear, deep rooted history of civilization, craftsmanship and exploitation. Amir Tavakol Kambozia wrote that Copper was first discovered in Balochistan. It was transported from Balochistan to present day Iraq by water-born vessels. (**Sangi-2009: 05-06**).

It is worth to mention here that gold buried in various tombs, and old settlements in Balochistan is reported. At present, many such gold deposits are being explored by the present populations. This shows that gold making was one of the technologies in old age by the Baloch society. They normally used when they need it. This also indicates that the raw object was available in Balochistan. With the passage of time, this technology was faded away. Peoples' saying that very few local people has the access to this technology, but its usage for them is highly risky for their life.

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The earliest stone tools found in the eastern Balochistan at Kot Mondai, Marri Area, belongs to Acheullian Culture an ancient primitive stage in human development. Similarly, stone (Hand Axes) of Mousterian Culture (100,000-40,000 B.C) have been found at Khokhar Kore, Lasbela region in the south eastern Balochistan in the upper Paleolithic period (40,000-12,00 B.C), which is known to us from the wonderful caves and rock-shelters paintings found in the Suleiman Range and its subsidiary ranges in the North-Eastern Balochistan. However, no material culture of the Mesolithic people has so far been discovered in Balochistan, except some engravings in the rock-shelters of Magdalenian Culture in Zhob District. It is, therefore, all the more essential to fill in this gap in the human history of Balochistan (**Gul Hasan et al 2011- 57**).

Balochitherium extracted from “the beast of Baluchistan” (*Paraceratherium*). In Dera Bugti hills **World’s largest mammal** that ever walked the face of the earth, **18 ft (5.5 m)** tall, a length of up to **28 feet** (from nose to rump) and weighed 20 tons, The head was **four feet** long, sitting on top of a **six feet** long neck. Almost as massive as the size of three very large elephants! The fossils of world's largest and about 30-20 million years old land mammal size of dinosaur was discovered in Dera Bugti in 1990. The eminent French Paleontologist Jean-Loup Welcomme asked the Daily Dawn that Prehistoric Balochistan can also be considered an exact place of migration of mammals coming from South East Asia on the road to Africa or Europe. Simply put, it could be called a cross road for African mammals. Amazing fossils of ancestors of elephants and lemurs also discovered in Balochistan strengthened the hypothesis that many animal groups have Asian origins. We can assume that this place was an evolutionary highway for the kind of today’s many advanced animals. Surprisingly the French team discovered some 20,000 fossils of mammals only from and around the areas of Dera Bugti. Two important discoveries are worth mention here, one is the mystery of lemur. Bug-eyed and slow moving lemurs now only live on the island of Madagascar. Before

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2001, scientists had believed that only Africa was the birthplace of lemurs.

But a lemur fossil discovered in Pakistan changed the paleontology text books (**Suhail Yusuf, Dawn- 20-12-2010**) Presently deserting Balochistan was part of the sea, after a process of millions of years became part of the land. Approximately 75 million years before dinosaurs were available in this lush green forest of the Balochistan. Mr. Muhammad Sadiq Malkani, a Geologist of the Geological Survey of Pakistan discovered the fossils at Vita Kari about 35 km from Barkhan in 2001. These fossils were mixed with the layers of stones. Preliminary research on these fossils disclosed that about 70 million years ago, there were many kinds of dinosaurs were available in Balochistan. About 1500 fossils were discovered from the 16 places of Barkhan District and all of them are displayed at the museum of the Geological Survey of Pakistan, Quetta (**Muhammad Raza, 2012-41**).

The civilization of Balochistan before Arians was developed and advanced the society of its time. Thousands year prior Christ civilization and industry of this area ruled upon a huge dynasty. Historians say that many potteries and statutes found from the ruins of Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Mesopotamia (Iraq), were imported from Balochistan. The ancient society of the area had a compact system of government. They had their socio-political, cultural, religious and traditional institutions. In short, they were at the peak of their time and had every facility of life. (**Ghulam Farooq, 2010: 43/44**).

### **Baloch Culture**

Culture is the integrated whole of learning, behavioral traits and characteristics that include knowledge, belief, art, morale, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by an individual as a member of society. It consists of patterns of behavior and way of organizing collective experiences that develop in the course of history (**Jan Muhammad, 2007:02**).

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The anthropologists of the world have defined culture in different ways. The culture of a particular region consists of language, ideas, beliefs, customs, values, attributes, code of honors, institutions, tools, works and art, religion, law, ethics, rituals, fairs and festivals of a specific group of people. Culture is a collective means of achieving and of progress. As the light and heat are necessary for human life, likewise culture is the inner and outer development of the behavior of the individuals and nations (**Sabir, A.R, Dr. at al, 2010: 18**).

Baloch culture is varied, rich and deep-rooted and exist in his present shape through a journey of thousands years and influence from the cultural traits of Arians, Median, Samarian, Sassanian, Dravidian, Turks, Huns, Arabs and many of the others invaders. There are certain characteristic which has become hallmark and distinguishing traits of the Baloch. Some of these characteristics are: bravery, fearlessness, honesty, loyalty, friendship, righteousness, sincerity, integrity, unfussiness and simplicity. Like every other nation who has been suppressed kept back-ward by the large numbers of the invaders, Baloch are traditional in the sense they are rather resistant to change their norms and values but are also liberal in accommodating stranger. The Baloch are very hospitable, nice and friendly. They are generally intelligent, learned, well-informed, initiated, cultivated, socially accomplished and culturally rich and self-dependant.

The Baloch believe that they are the heir of an ancient culture that manifests itself in a set of shared social norms, value system and traditions that controls their entire social behavior. The truthfulness and honesty are regarded as the best virtues. A very peculiar cultural feature amongst the Baloch is that even the criminal or offender, if apprehended, would never tell a lie even in the face of instant punishment because telling lie to avoid any reprimand is against their sense of honor (**Jan Muhammad, 2007-04**)

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All the qualities of a Baloch are represented in folk tales, which has been mentioned by Muhammad Akbar in his book "*Quom-e-Baloch Tareekh Ke Aeiny Mein*" (Baloch nation in the mirror of history). He writes the main character of a Baloch, which are follows:- (i) Honesty (ii) To save the life of any person who takes refuge in any family (iii) Blood for blood (iv) Not to give refuge to any corrupt person (v) To arrange and look after he needs of their guest (vi) During the battle not to kill women and children (vii) When during a battle women enter in the battleground and request to stop killing they should listen to ( **Jamil Zubery, 2002 : XIV**)

The folktales are the ancient source of the Baloch culture, civilization and traditions. If one goes through these tales evidently one finds they are focused either to the bravery, courage or to the romance. Even in the case of romance the courage, bravery and martial feelings are the dominating factors. An eminent Baloch scholar Dr. Abdul Rehman Brahui concluded the following code of honors from the study of folk literature.

1. Not to attack over enemy without warning.
  2. If the enemy escapes from the battlefield, not to attack him over.
  3. If the enemy surrenders and apologies, his apology will be accepted.
  4. To protect the person and property of those who take refuge and seek protection.
  5. Allegiance to the treaty at any cost.
  6. Honor of trust.
  7. Custom of hospitality and entertainment of the alien guest.
  8. To protect the sanctity and the modesty of the sister, wife, daughter at any cost.
  9. Not to kill women and children in combat.
  10. at the request of the ladies of the enemy tribe, the crime or guilt to be excused or at least to give cloths as a sign and token of sanctity if the guilt cannot be excused.
  11. To protect life, honor and property of guest even at the cost of the blood.
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12. Not to kill anybody, even the worst enemy in the boundary of the any shrine of some saint.

13. During war time if any women or a Sayyed intervenes or carries holy Quran on the head or bears a bare sword and requests for peace the parties to the combat will stop the war and refrain from bloodshed.

14. If the enemy composes and brings a *Meirh*, a Baloch conventional method to resolve the intricate issue, including heinous crimes, here a group of elders is sent to the aggrieved party to redress the matter. ( **Naudir Bakht Dr. 2009**)

Baloch society comparatively presents a picture of tolerant, gender cooperative, gender-non discrimination and human society from other neighboring societies of the region. They follow and practice the principle of feminism spontaneously. The principles are quite indigenous and had been matter of evolution for them. It remains far away from the developments achieved by the modern world for the many reasons. Despite their backwardness, however, on one account i.e. their attitude towards their women folk, they are much ahead of the non-hill people. Recent rapid changes in the society and transaction from nomadic- semi-nomadic to agro pastoral are adopting some unfair traditions, values and customs of other societies which damaging their indigenous codes of life. There is dire need of the removal unreasonable traditions, values and customs and revival of the constructive way of life with the requirement of the new era, laws and society.

### **Role of Women**

The status of women in the Baloch society has ever been of a great importance and impact. Here we give some glimpses of the position and influence of women in the Baloch society. The Baloch women, comprise like any other social group, have about half of population. The Baloch women, as well in all communities, are more illiterate than men.

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Like other social groups, the Baloch women share problem related reproductive health. When primary and secondary subsistence activities are counted, women work more than men. The connectional framework to analyze women's status comprise a varieties of roles women play in life and work:- parental, conjugal, domestic, kin, occupational, community and as an individual. In order to appraise the social status of women in these diverse ecological areas, the findings have been divided into subsequent categories: - a) a girl; daughter ( *Nayari/ Janek* ), b) mother (*Maat/ Mas/ Ieyi*) married women (*Log Banok/ Logi/ Halak/Khad*) and (d) common women ( *Bibi/ Zalbol/ Nayari*), Midwife (*dae/Baluk*). Role of women is not only importance of economic activities, but her role in non-economic activities is equally important. The Baloch women work very hard, in some cases even more than men. However, in their own world women have a freedom, and self-expression. With the onset of developmental program economic changes are take place but Baloch women remains traditional in their dress, language, tools and resources. The names of women are derived from various sources depicting beauty, honor and soberness. For example *Maahu* maens moonlike, *Sangeen* means extremely reasonable/weighty , *Shaari* means righteousness, *Telu* means Gold like and *Baanadi* means lady.

*Pahwal* (nomads) are the frequent user of medicinal herbs for various diseases. Elderly *pahwal* women are expert in knowledge of herbal medicines, who examine the patients and recommend treatments for them (**Baloch, M.A.,1988:23/31**). The elderly women in a Baloch household are often specialist in knowledge and techniques of popular treatments. They have knowledge of home remedies for number of problems. Some settlements have an elderly female of one household act by default as the sole herbalist, masseur and traditional midwife (*Baluk*) for the whole settlement ( **Dashti, N., 2008: 80/81**). These women are basically custodian of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) of use of medicinal plant from centuries and preparation for home remedies (pounding, grinding, mixing, and cooking) using roots, shoots, barks, leafs, flowers, seeds, and/or fruit of plants.

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The usages of these herbal products are due to either lack of medical facilities or not accessible. The remedies used frequently at home could include herbs and/or plants or their combinations are easily available in area. These family healers transfer their expertise to their offspring or daughter-in-laws. The transmission of knowledge from folk had been tremendously decreasing, however due to involvement ethno botanical research, awareness of local community and overall global trend towards resurgence of the transmission of knowledge from herbalist to local community should be initiated. As we learn from history of traditional herbalist don't tell the specific prescription to local people as is identified from the present research and may other parallel studies in the field that most of the prescription possessed by the folk are related to the desires.

The structure of the society is being changing due to emerging the Baloch people from nomadic to semi-nomadic and agro-pastoral. Modernization is bringing changes, which affect man and women differently. The rapid changes and modernization in the structure of society not only bringing positive impacts but it is affecting and damaging constructive values, traditions and norms, prevails in Baloch society from the centuries, which are badly affecting the respect, honor and dignity of women. There is need of incorporation and promotion of constructive values, traditions and norms with recent rapid changes, revival of positive aspects and protection of the status women in the light of historical role and importance of women. The Baloch women play important and historical role in the field of political, social, economy, education, health, however she plays fundamental role as a creator of the important part of the folklore and cultural.

### **Folklore**

Folklore or lore consists of legends, music, oral history, proverbs, jokes, popular beliefs, fairy tales, stories, tall tales, and customs included in the traditions of a culture, subculture, or group.

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It also includes the set of practices through which those expressive genres are shared. The study of folklore is sometimes called folkloristic, and people who study folklore are sometimes referred to as "folklorists". "Folktales" is a general term for different varieties of traditional narrative. The telling of stories appears to be a cultural universal, common to basic and complex societies alike. Even the forms folktales take are certainly similar from culture to culture, and comparative studies of themes and narrative ways have been successful in showing these relationships. Also it is considered to be an oral tale to be told for everybody.

Baloch women have the significant responsibility to teach her son moral principle of society and bringing him up as a brave and enterprising youth especially on the matters of traditional values and morality. Therefore, the position of a mother who bear children is enviably unique. The girls are also taught household activities, everyday jobs and other responsibilities to become honorable women to be proud upon their relatives for their soberness, faithfulness and integrity. "These are unrecognized contribution of Baloch women in the promotion of culture and literature at the initial level of life. Ceremonies of birth include *shashigaan* (selecting name on sixth day), *Burruk* (circumcision), *Paadgaami* (Child's beginning to walk), and *Shalwaar* (wearing of trousers) etc. are the major social events. The occasion of the birth of either a male or female child is marked with music and singing. The women folk attend the mother for seven nights and singing *Sipath* or *Naazienk*, literally meaning songs of praise" (Jan Muhammad- 2007:08). The *loly* (Lullaby) form of poetry is the function of female folk, and the versifier of lullaby, are therefore, mainly females. The art of poetry versification by the female folk is deemed most opprobrious in the Baloch society. We seldom hear the name of a Baloch poetess. It is through this branch of poetry '*loly*' that poetess express her poetic instincts and ambitions, which are mainly devoted and dedicated to the newly born child. We can name this form of verse as the 'poetry of cradle, foe when child is placed in the cradle, the mother starts singing lullaby.

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'*Halo*', which is celebrated by the females of the family and tribe at the time of marriage ceremonies and festivals. The 'Halos' are generally versified by women gifted with poetic art, and such, the names of versifiers of '*halo*' and '*Loly*' are unknown, unmentioned and unheeded. We reproduce a lullaby '*Loly*' which clearly manifests the burning zeal and impatient ambition of Baloch mother who pray for boon, regarding her infants son to become a great lover, a warrior and a highway man in the flower of life ( **Baloch M.S.K, 1984: 174**).*Dehee* and *Zaheerok* are very near to each other. Same as *Zaheerok*, *Dehee* also expresses of lover whom are very far away from their beloved. *Dehee* is the folk poetic form composed by the women folk but man has also composes *dahees* like all other poetic forms. *Dehee* is also mourning of lover. It is famous Balochi poetic form which depicts the social realities of the society ( **Sajid G.N at all, 2010: 83**).

Baloch mother have taken the responsibility of teaching their children moral principle and values. Through lullabies (*loly*), she teaches his son(s) and daughter(s) about the culture and tribal norms of life. Meer Chakar Khan has expressed his views about lullaby is poetry "I am born from a Rind woman, *Mudhi*, whose milk I have sucked; *Mudhi* would sing lullaby for me in the midnight; when I would sleep in my cradle, that one day I should use to Chākar, mainly during the unhappy hours of fight, (accordingly) I kept on waiting for that day". The following lullaby is clearly indicating that a women (mother) how teaching her son the cultural responsibilities, moral values and traditional tasks to her son.

*Alam Din, thou art of young man,  
Dressed with white garments,  
Fasten thine six war weapons,  
The shield, musket and the dagger;  
Gird the bow around thy shoulder,  
Take the trenchant sword of Shiraz;  
Beguile the youthful girls of Jat tribe,  
Give them as gift the fine cloths of Dera Ghazi Khan;  
Present them red-colored cloths,  
(Ask them) that ye will give them money in cash;*

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*Feed thee with neat of young goat,  
 (Also) supply them sugar-candy brought from city;  
 When moon-faced girl of Jat feels pleased,  
 Then she will ask thee;  
 When the sun places it knees on earth (a little before  
 sunset),  
 Bends on the top of the mountains,  
 (And) the stars shine in the darkness of the night;  
 (Then) at that time saddle thine sprightly horse,  
 Mount on the boastful steed;  
 Come near to my residence,  
 Tie the horse with the tree of tamarisk;  
 Sit and keep waiting under the tree,  
 When Punnun (her husband),  
 Starts going towards the cowshed;  
 Drives the buffaloes,  
 (And) the maid-servant, old and lean like saw,  
 Enjoy a full sleep;  
 Then slowly and step by step,  
 I will come to see thy graceful form and figure;  
 Will sit together with pleasing heart,  
 And pleasing manner,  
 When the morning star arises;  
 (Then) leave me to go away,  
 Perhaps the coward Punnun may come back,  
 Perchance the vulgar maid-servant too awake from sleep;  
 Ye should (then) return back to join the,  
 The graceful assembly of the Rinds,  
 The chief will send a messenger,  
 To bring the highway-man 'Alam Din';  
 I have to wage war against the bitter enemy,  
 The men of Dajal and Harrand;  
 We have to comb a formidable force,  
 Will array in fight thousands of our warriors;*

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*Will ransack the headquarter of bloody enemy;  
I sing lullaby for my son,  
May god accept my prayers?*

The Baloch women is the main promoter and contributor of the folk literature and culture in the form of *Loly* (Lullaby), *Shayari* (poet), *Ridānk* (prose), *Lacha* (verse), *Pirband* (stanza), *Saut* (songs), *Moutik* (elegy), *Sippat* (praise), *Aazmaank* (short story), *Geddi Kisso* (folk tale), *Geddi Saot* (folk song), *Daastaan* (tale), *Pant Kissa* (fable), *Batal* (proverbs), *Gushtin* (sayings), *Tamb* (column), *Chaach* (riddle), *Masskara* (joke), *Gegaan* (parody) etc.

### **Women Costume**

The term costume can refer to wardrobe and dress in general, or to the distinctive style of dress of a particular people, class, or period. Costume may also refer to the artistic arrangement of accessories in a picture, statue, poem, or play, appropriate to the time, place, or other circumstances represented or described, or to a particular style of clothing worn to portray the wearer as a character or type of character other than their regular persona at a social event such as a masquerade, a fancy dress party or in an artistic theatrical performance.

Baloch women dress a straight and loose costume (*Pashk*) extending to mid-calf. The simple round neckline in slit at the front of bodice of the dress. Sleeves are long and loose and slightly tapered on the wrist. The robe are worn over loose-fitting trouser of same or matching color; the trouser are gathered at the waist and tapered at the ankles. Probably the most striking feature of the women's costume is hand embroidery, covering the front of the dress and cuffs of the sleeves and trousers. These embroidered pieces of the dress usually include a fully embroidered bodice (*Jeeg/Zee*). The piece for front the front of bodice is squares and extends across the entire front from shoulder to waist.

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Another rectangular piece (*Pandol/Pado/Koptan*) extends from the waist to the hem of the dress and comes to point at the top; the sides of this piece are left unstitched so that can function as a large pocket. This pocket is major ethnic marker of Baloch women dress. The cuffs of the sleeves and trousers are beautifully embroidered.

*Sareg/ Shawl/Shar/Goshan/ Chadar* a large scarf is another major and traditional sign of Balochi women, usually colorful embroidered scarf which beautifies the clothing of Baloch women. Traditionally, strict veiling is not common among Baloch, but Baloch women feel proud to draw the corners of their scarves across their faces.

There is no doubt now a day's most of Baloch women bright plastic and other kinds of sandals but the traditional shoes that they used to wear before modern sandals became available, were known as *Chakani* which were beautifully embroidered; in the rural area Baloch women still wear the shoes made of date or dwarf palm tree leaves.

Baloch women's everyday garbs are not completed without jewelry which usually serves as indicator of a cultural and traditional beauty of Baloch Women. Most characteristics and impressive jewelries of the Baloch women are earnings, which typically consist of twelve or fourteen small rings inserted along the rim each of ear from the top to the bottom of lobe. The weight of these rings causes upper flap of the ear to fall forward, which is considered as sign of beauty. Commonly, a female baby ear's are usually pierced for a such series of small earning shortly after her birth. After marriage women may add huge earnings made by thick piece of gold (*Durr, Waleg, Bareg, Namuk, Puluek, Chulamb, Sahara, Chandbala, Tips, Paletro, Kurri*), which are gifted from her husband's family. In addition, nose jewelry (*Pullo, Puluk, Pulli, Larzuk, Mushobak, Pulwah, Granzenk, Haptlali Puluk, Lanti, Seri, Wat, Bul*) are very popular, as are heavy necklace (*Haar, Murat, Guluband, Pupoko, Kupoko, Taidag, Tauk*), bracelets and hand rings (*Mundriek,*

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*Baahuband, Tulmal, Sanga, Panjag, Tabu, Khara, Putha, Lukiki, Mangoli, Galas, Tulaml, Boaband, Patan Churbak, Dast-e-Tak, Gab-e-Sango, Dastunk, Baanhiek, Dast Kanger*), foot ornaments (*Padenk, Beecho, Pazeb, Kari*), Rings around hands (*Sangah/ Taali*), and ornaments of various kinds are also fixed of their hairs (*Modi, Chouti, Taali, Qed, Shams, Tikla, Clip, ShimShuk, Chang, Kundi, Sengarapti, Mutizhumbak, Chehka, Pupoko, Woreg, Pankeg, Jumak*) Traditionally, all females braid their long hairs and tie the bottom each braid with multicolored tassel (*saggi*) made of many small glasses beads and yarn pompons.

### **Women Embroidery**

The folk art of Balochistan is unique in entire world but it is still in the process of evolutionary growth and made tremendous progress by passing through stages. The pottery formation, embroidered dresses, leatherwork, metalwork, , the art of rugs and weaving, stonework and jewelry are the key features of folk arts of Balochistan. "The archaeological sites of Mehrgarh present the marvelous and amazing example of folk art in Balochistan. The folk art can be depicted either in the form of sculpture, paintings, weaving, textile formation, knitting and pottery formation". Balochistan is a treasure house of exquisite handicrafts made up by the people who grew up to weave, to pot, to work metal, wood and stone, to decorate and to build objects of various sizes and varieties. Balochistan pottery is a living history, a traditional craft that becomes an art with its origin from different parts of the province. its traditional jars and jugs from study terra-cotta to proper made ceramics, timid colors of mustered yellow, deep green mud, sky blue hand-woven carpets, brass items, wood-carved, embroidered "Kurta" (Shirts) and "Kaush" shoes and countless objects of art are found (**M. Akram Dost, 2010:08**). Here we discuss the Balochi embroidery in detail. Balochi embroidery is one of the oldest in the history. Balochi female dresses are very famous because of their unique embroidery patterns adopted from the very native land.

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One of the most popular arts and crafts of the world is the Balochi embroidery, which is generally done by women. While most of the motifs and designs of Balochi embroidery have been inspired by nature, some of the patterns take brainwave from the pottery of the Mehrgarh civilization, one of the oldest civilizations. The art, which involves the use of threads, beads and tiny mirrors, has been passed down for many generations. “This is an integral part of the Baloch culture, which has been inherited by our ancestors,”

The embroidery is considered by many as a Baloch emblem, distinguishing the culture of Balochistan with that of other ethnic groups. “The colorful and distinct embroidery patterns serve as ethnic markers, which differentiate Balochs from others. However, even within Balochistan, there are different embroidery designs and terminologies applied to garments from different tribes of the region.

. Name of Some of the popular embroideries are worth mentioning such as “*Kapuk, Panch, Thaitookh, Jallar, Mehrab, Kantolo, Chandanohar, Cha'war, Mirchok o chamok, Morg-o-paanch, Gad-o-band, Jadok, Chamkali, Arif-e-chadar and Dillobita, Jadok, Bibi-e-tik, Kapoot-e-Telag, Shuchul, Double Suchul, Bakal-e-sarok, Shams tak, Chhum-e-Mataj, Voley-o-Bali, Dushman doch, Gobi-e-Phul, Nakali Kargo, Mehrgi, Sipat-o-stah, Kushash, Baghdadi hapt kap, Sol-e-tak, Cheelako, Watt, Murg, Keek-e-Naal, Turbat-e-Banor, Allahnazari Top, Zurto, Zulfi, Mehrab-e-Kalat, Murg-o-churo, Kashish, Chilam, Sabzo, Cham-e-Surmag Kantuk, Kantuk-e-Naal, Zupi, Bipi Loli, Zum-e-Tej, Taeduk, Cheek, Siah-o-Suped, Kalati Pur, Arbi Pur, Tanab, Kaput-e-talo, Tamatrok, Caoch-e-bus, Kech-e-Channel, Nakali talo, Banor-e-Shams, Chaeal or Abida passand, Sheren Janek or Koh-e-Sare Banok, Phuldoch, Sadam-e-Taj, Pudiwar, Roch-e-Brenz, Gezhuk, Kanch-o-Kabat, Payaladoch, Charghani, Longen, Biscuitidoch, Hazarsheesha, Kashmiridanke, Argh-e-Langer, Petenko, Dilkurak, Dosoti, Zeba Bakhtiar, Showcasi, Bilinagidan, Kundi, Cham-e-Barunk, Mukari, Kachdanka, Mosami, Bost, Haptranga, Jamalkun, Gulkasheeda, Khabri, Haddi, Dungdi, Sarae, Kachhidoch, Panjbahar, Darchkok, Mand-o-Bulo, Jug-o-Gilas, Jenkok, Bagun-e-Dast, Murgo, Chiken, Kochnayat, Zakhmidil,*

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*Mechanahar, Roadblock, Nishar-o-Wasu, Moledo, Zubeda Jalal, Kapot-o-Namok, Gadaband, Noorkhan-e-Hars, Kap-o-Sansar, Talohark and many others.* “The areas where such kind of embroidery is made are Makran, Kalat, Mastung, Noshki, kohlu, Dera Bugti, Sibi, Jhal Magsi and Khuzdar. An average dress takes 3 to 9 months to get completed. Meanwhile, selection of colors and designs of embroidered clothes differs from person to person rather than from area to area. One can easily judge the place of creation of the embroidery by its unmatched patterns. The embroidered dress is worn by both young and older women. Whereas young girls prefer wearing embroideries in bright colors like pink, green, orange, yellow etc., the older women wear dark colors like blue, black or brown and according to the Baloch tradition it is compulsory for widows to wear black or dark colors.

However, the art doesn't just come naturally and women in Balochistan have to practice regularly to master the skill. These women usually set aside a few hours for embroidery after completing their daily household chores. “The girls and older women in interior Balochistan do not use charts or diagrams but create extremely complex designs in a random manner. They are guided by family members and elders of the area.” Meanwhile, tastes and preferences regarding the color of embroidered clothes differ for people belonging to different age groups. Whereas young girls prefer wearing embroideries in bright colors, older women wear dark colors like blue, black or brown and it is compulsory for widows to wear black or dark colors.

While both hand embroidery and machine embroidery have great commercial value, Baloch women in Karachi give preference to machine-embroidered and printed embroidery. The most expensive among these dresses, which range between Rs15, 000 to Rs70, 000, are made for brides. “It takes six months to a year to make one such dress,” However, women employed in the embroidery industry are exploited by retailers and dealers in cities, who pay them a very small percentage of the price of dresses.

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Meanwhile, to save the art from dying, the Balochistan government has patronized the region's embroidery by establishing training centers in some parts of Balochistan, mainly in Makran, Kharan, Rakhshan, Kalat, Mastung, Khuzdar and in addition to awarding monthly stipends to students. The training centers were handled by the provincial industries department and the directorates of small industries. However, the embroidery industry needs proper marketing as well as modification in terms of technology. The art demands efforts and time and it should be kept alive with more support and appreciation.

### **Balochi Cuisine**

Baloch cuisine refers to the food and cuisine of the Baloch people from the Balochistan region, comprising the Balochistan as well as Sistan-o- Balochistan in Iran and Afghanistan. Baloch food has a regional variance in contrast to many other cuisines of the region. The Balochi cuisine is known for its richness and flavor and it is not spicy but aromatic. Balochi cuisine, traditional and fast foods are popular in cities and rural areas. Baloch use mild aromatic spices, less oil, characterizing affinities to the cuisines of neighboring Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia. However, given diversity of the people of Balochistan, cuisines generally differ from home to home and region to region and may be totally different from mainstream Balochi cuisine. Sajji, Mutton Roast, Khadit, Kaak, Kurno, Dampukht, Sheelanch are well-known cuisine, food items and there are a large numbers of meat, rice, vegetable and milk food items consumed everyday basis in Baloch areas. Baloch take three or four meals in day Harzband (breakfast), Nihari, Subarag, Neemroch Nan (Luanch), Nemrozi, Nemroshi (Afternoon) and Sham, Sapenan (dinner).

**Sajji** is a native dish of the beautiful province of Balochistan, Pakistan that is popular in Balochi cuisine. It consists of whole lamb, in skewers (fat and meat intact), marinated only in salt, sometimes covered with green papaya paste, stuffed with rice, then roasted over coals.

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Sajji is considered done when it is at the 'rare' stage. It is served with a special bread "Kaak", "roti" or "naan", which is baked in an oven, wrapped around a stone "tandoor". Sajji is favorite of Balochistan natives, where most are nomads. Sajji is native Prominent Baloch dishes such as the lamb-skewed Sajji have gained massive popularity among different parts of country ding the food hubs.

**Khadit** also known dried meat is winter food popular in Balochistan, it also called Tabaeeg and Patav by the Balochs and Parsanda and Landhi by Pashtuns. The use of Khadit, a kind of biltong, is common among the well-to-do classes and also some poorer people in the different cool areas. It generally made of mutton, but occasionally also of goat's meat, beef and camel's flesh, and is pickled in a mixture of salt and asafetida, cut into strips and dried in the sun. Consumption of khadit is common in during winters. Sheep's especially fattened for the so that there flash may be more suitable for preparing Khadit. It consumed only in summers in freezing weather areas of Balochistan. Khadit-o-pati (cooking of Khadit with mung pulse)

**Khaddi Kabbab** is a dish in which the people of Balochistan cook a whole lamb or goat on fire. Usually there is raw rice in the stomach of the lamb and the rice is cooked by the fats of the lamb. The lamb is cooked on fire.

**Vegetable** so many wild and cultivated in Balochistan and which are used as food items and dishes in Baloch society, saag (leaf-based dishes of *spinach*, *mustard leaf*, *Basella*, and other wild plants) i.e. *Kulkusht* (colocynth), *Mager* (*Rumex vesicarius*) *Kalhook*, *Malera*, *Lulur*, *Palak* (*Spinalla*) , *Saresaag* (Mustard leaves) , *Goleef*, *Potronkesaag*, *Aptak*( which grows after rain at the roots of dwarf-palm) , *Chapli*, *Teripanko*, *Ziban-e-Burak*, *Gurbust* (whitetop), *Gandgo*, *Kaleer* (capper), *Sandae*, *Peemalo*, *mallai*, *makhankur*, *chambark*, *sochanko*, *Aaluko*, *guragpad* (*Malva*)

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(*Malva parviflora*), *indargah* (*Trianthema pentandra*), *Bhuri*, which is prepared from the pollen of the *Kul* plant (*Typha angustifolia*), the *bhuri* is then either eaten as it or mixed with sugar in which case the preparation is known as *Shoragh*.

**Sheelanch/ Quroot**, also called *Kashk* (Iran) is a reconstituted Quroot product. It was traditionally a by-product of butter made from sheep or goat milk. The residual buttermilk remaining after churning of the butter is soured further by keeping at room temperature for a few days, treated with salt, and then boiled. The precipitated casein is filtered by cheesecloth, pressed to remove liquid, and shaped into balls. The product is thus a very sour cottage cheese.

**Rice** dishes are the "king" of all foods in the parts of the Balochistan. The Baloch have certainly taken much time and effort in creating their rice dishes, as they are considered the best part of any meal. Wealthier families will eat one rice dish per day. Weddings and family gatherings must feature several rice dishes and certainly reputations can be made in the realm of rice preparation. Rice is also cooked with meat & stock, vegetables, wild plants, pulses and others *Gaun*, *Nagez Morswabi*, *Taren Banklenk*, *Maak*, *Mash*, *Dalag*, *Sabzak*, *Bat-o-Mahi* and many others.

**Kāk**, and *Kurno* a rock-hard prepared bread, is also a notable dish ( which is made by wrapping dough round a hot stone and putting it on the embers, Popular among the nomadic Balochis, *Kaak* is very hard once it has been baked) other breads prepared in Baloch area are *Zurat or Juhri Naan* (sorghum bread), *Punari Naan* (flour, salt and khameer mixed and baked on coal) , *Dotapagi Naan* ( part of two stone collected and make them hot and lay the wet flour on one and keep other upon it), *Tapag-e-Naan* ( thrown dough on skillet and half bake and half bake on coals) , *Shurdi Naan* ( half-baked bread mixed with ghee), *Tandoori Naan* ( Bread is cooked in

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a *tandoor*, from which *tandoori* cooking takes its name), *Teni Naan*, *Chaputi Naan* (Chapatis are made from a firm dough made from flour and water. Some people also add salt and/or oil to the dough. Small portions of the dough are rolled out into discs much like a tortilla, using a rolling pin. The rolled-out dough is thrown on the preheated dry skillet and cooked on both sides. In some regions it is only partly cooked on the skillet, and then put directly on a high flame, which makes it blow up like a balloon), *Barinji Naan* (Rice flour bread), *Seesark*, *Shusti/Dodoki/Dako-e-Naan* (flour, sugar, ghee mixed bread), *Barzan-e-Naan* (pearl millet flour bread), *Saag-e-Naan/ Potronk-e-Naan/ Potronk-e-saag-e-Naan/Gomadran-e-Naan* (leaf base of mustard and other wild plants and flour bread), *Banklenk-e-Naan* (broad bean/ fava bean and flour bread) etc.

***Wād-o-āp*** (Soup of Salt and Water boiling with some items due to non-availability of all required ingredients of a dish but it provides full and unique taste) another traditional foods mostly consumed in Baloch Society i.e *Sheelanch-e-wad-o-aap* (Sheelanch, onion, pickle, salt, black pepper & water), *Mahi-e-wad-o-aap* (fish, onion, pickle, salt, black pepper & water), *Seerak-e-Wad-o-Aap* (Garlic, onion, pickle, salt, black pepper & water), *Gozhd-e-Wad-o-Aap* (Meat, onion, pickle, salt, black pepper & water), *Guren Wad-o-Aap* (onion, pickle, salt, black pepper & water), *Imli-e-Wad-o-Aap* (Tamarind, Gurr (Local made sugar), Dan chob, water), *Tamoter-e-Wad-o-Aap* (Tamoto, Tamarind, Gurr (Local made sugar), water), *Thehrzko* (onion, black pepper), *Zereg-e-Wad-o-Aap* (cumin, Ghee), *Sher-o-Rughan* (Ghee, Sheer (Yogurt based drink) onion and bread), *Aah Sheerag* (Pickle, salt, onion).

***Mixed foods*** also items used in Baloch society like *Achar* (consists of onion, garlic, chilies, coriander, pomegranate seeds, with flour and made into small pieces), *Kashak* (flour Sheer (Yogurt based drink), onion), *Sheelanch* (Sheer "Yogurt based drink" and cloth), *Tabahag* (dried meat, pomegranate seeds), *Chezhak*, *Panir*

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(Panirbaad, Sheer "Yogurt based drink" and cloth), Sapan Rughan (Sheer, Turmeric) , Koel (dried bean, chickpea, rice, salt, dal, wheat grain and water) , Kosh (wild plant boiled in water mix sheer and date) , Hushken Banklenk ( dried bean), gwatuk (wild plant boiled and mix sheer), Mahi Chug (flour, ghee, sugar), Mader (date, ghee and flour) , Pisht or lot ( a porridge made of half-parched barley flour, is considered delicacy) , Lehdi/ Balad (flour, sugar, ghee), Arat Halwa (flour, sugar, ghee, dry fruit and water), Mosh, Gaonpos (date without seed), Pondi (flour, date), Shalgami (Turnip, date, water), Gazurki (carrot, date and water), Tasaapi (Sugar and black pepper), Zaraap (date, Gurr, chili, ghee and flour), Changal/Bibi ( flour and date) Dasti Hoshejosh (grain, sugar, ghee and water), Treit/Kutti (curry and bread), Aputak ( wild plant, ghee, spice and salt), Sharshko (wild plant, rice, ghee, onion, tomato, green chili), Chapli Gosht ( meat, salt, green chili, spice, garlic, tomato), Sheelanch-o-wanger (prepare brinjal and mix sheelanch) Tejaki Chamri (dried melon) Chauli (,Melon pulp is dried and preserved and eaten with powder made by pounding on seeds), Pato ( melon seeds are parched with a little salt), Nageezmorsawabi (Mash bean or kidney bean, mung bean, green chili, ghee, spice, pomegranate seed, dry pickle) etc.

***Fish*** a large number of Balochi people living on the coastal belt eat fish in their own style.

## **Conclusion**

Baloch women play significant role in the promotion of culture in the life, playing field of literature, handicrafts, values, beliefs, traditions, art and food from the beginning of childhood till the end of life. Many researchers and scholars are sure that there are so many other Baloch women in the all above mentioned countries and regions also contributed in the literature are hidden parts of pages of old literature of the said area.

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On the birth of child, circumcision, beginning to walk, wearing trouser and marriage ceremonies in the shape of *Sipatt* (praise), *Naazienk*, *Hallo* and *Loly* (lullaby). They are promoting and contributing in the field of culture through literature in the shape of *Loly* (Lullaby), *Shayari* (poet), *Ridaank* (prose), *Lacha* (verse), *Pirband* (stanza), *Saot* (songs), *Moutik* (elegy), *Sippat* (praise), *Aazmaank* (short story), *Geddi Kisso* (folk tale), *Geddi Saot* (folk song), *Daastaan* (tale), *Pant Kissa* (fable), *Batal* (proverbs), *Gushtin* (sayings), *Tam*, *Chaach* (riddle), *Masskara* (joke), *Gegaan* (parody) etc.

Dress of Baloch women and Balochi embroidery is another major contribution of Baloch women for promotion of culture from the centuries. Balochi embroidery has been by nature, some of the patterns take brainwave from the pottery of the Mehrgarh civilization, one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The art, which involves the use of threads, beads and tiny mirrors, has been passed down for many generations. "This is an integral part of the Baloch culture, which has been inherited by our ancestors," Dress and jewelry are the part of her life that promote the culture and inspire the other females of the other nations and all around the world. Balochi traditional foods are other input of the Baloch women to promote the culture.

A man and a woman are like two wheels of a vehicle. The vehicle can move fast and safely too, when both of them drag it in the same direction and with equal potency. Hence no developing country or society can afford to neglect the function of women, if they are to development. A large number of Baloch women actively contributed in the field of culture during their study period and after started practical life most of them found out of scene. After this detail study, it has been observed that Baloch women are not playing their dynamic role in the field of literature because of following reasons;

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(1) the obtaining of non valuable customs and traditions, (2) The high percentage of illiteracy among women, (3) Ignorance of their rights, (4) Patriarchal Society, (5) Economic system, (6) Acceptance of the theory of so-called tribalism & feudalism, (7) Unchecked male domination in all walks of life and finally time constraint due to their eventful schedule in practical life.

The following recommendations have been suggested on the basis of the study:

- i. Cultural organizations and government institutions, should design an integrative system as to support women in all culture related fields.
  - ii. Media sector i.e. electronic media and print media focus the women role in culture and provide suitable place and time for promotion of culture.
  - iii. Women organizations and magazines, papers, periodicals need special attention for providing suitable environment and financial assistance for proper growth and survival.
  - iv. This study provides preliminary information about the contribution of Baloch women in culture and needs further detail study about their contribution in different field of the literature and their expertise.
  - v. Policy reforms should be introduced to encourage women, who would helps in promotion of culture among women and rural women, belongs to any sort of cultural activities.
  - vi. All political, social and cultural organization should focus on the provision of suitable environment and assurance for promotion of the culture.
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