

4. B. de CARDI — *Excavations and Reconnaissance in Kalat, West Pakistan: The pre-historic Sequence in the Surab Region*, published in *Pakistan Archaeology*, by the Department of Archaeology, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, Karachi, Number 2, - 1965, pp. 86-182. Figs. 23; plates 9. Journal priced Rs. 15.00/25 Shillings.

Baluchistan has drawn the attention of the archaeologists for a long time as a transition zone between the Indus Civilisation of the main valley and the ancient cultures that grew up in the Iranian plateau. Several sites have been located along the old caravan routes and the river valleys but all present a picture of the poverty-stricken communities seeking life in the dry zone of Baluchistan more by trade than in the subsistence of the local products. Recent studies of Fairservis and de Cardi have focussed light on these little communities pursuing their hard life in isolated pockets of small valleys with occasional germination of new cultures on the arrival of new caravans, loaded with goods and technical knowledge of higher culture. Such studies are highly rewarding in those places where the caravans from different directions meet. The Surab Region, studied in this report, is one such area which was selected after careful consideration of all these problems. The region on the one hand opens through Mula pass into the main valley of the Indus and on the other three routes diverge — one northward to Quetta, the second southward along the Mashkai river and the third westward along Rakshan river and lower down along the Kech river. With such a central location it was not difficult to catch here the influences from different quarters. But the excavation was rather short and only one part of the report is published here, with a promise that the whole exploration report will follow in the next issue of the journal.

The report deals with the excavations of only two sites: Anjira and Siah-Damb, Surab. At Anjira the excavation revealed four main periods, to which period V was added by the surface collection of materials and those found "in superficial layers". At Siah two main periods were distinguished, the second subdivided into three phases. Again period III was added by the "Surface sherds". At Siah period II was most important. On the basis of pottery it was equated with period III of Anjira. Period I of Siah was again poorly represented but on the sparse material recovered it was equated with Anjira II. Thus the sequence is as follows:

<i>Anjira</i>			<i>Siah</i>
Period I	..	..	?
Period II	..	..	Period I
Period III	..	..	Period II with 3 phases
Period IV	..	..	Period III
Period V	..	..	?

In order to re-assess the whole material we can broadly group them under three categories:

- (A) The age of Stone, when metal tools were not known. This includes Anjira periods I and II, the first period of settlement yielded no

structures but only pottery, chert flakes and animal bones; and the second period revealed boulder walls as footings for mud-brick super-structures with almost the same material contents plus additional types of pottery, particularly "cream-surfaced hand-made and basket-marked wares, ranging from a quarter to a half of the total number of sherds found". (P. 101).

- (B) The age of Metal, when "chert implements had disappeared completely, and their absence, combined with the discovery of a whetstone may signify the introduction of metal during this period" (P. 102). This includes Anjira periods III and IV, the third period marked by walls of "roughly squared stone" and the fourth period by "fine squared masonry walls". This last was "a period of rebuilding and great expansion", when pottery types clearly show contacts established with Amri in the main valley of the Indus and with Nal and other sites in the South.
- (C) It includes "an ill-defined Period V" of Anjira, which is supposed, on the basis of surface pottery, to include "a small settlement of Rana Ghundai III C or allied folk". This was obviously an age of decay and desolation, probably a disruption of the main sources of life.

The chert implements of Anjira have been described and discussed by the late Col. D.H. Gordon (PP. 122-26). He has placed them in the wider context of the neighbouring areas. A doubtful terminology of "neolithic assemblage" has been applied to them, while Dr. Fairservis in his report on *Excavations in the Quetta Valley*¹ has gone outright to speak of "neolithic period". The term has to be understood in a limited sense as applicable to the environment of Baluchistan. The chronology of the period has been discussed by de Cardi in the background of Sialk and Hissar (PP. 111-15). The first period of the so-called "nomadic settlement" is equated with Kile Gul Mohammad II, but in general can be understood in the background of the earliest settlements in Deh Morasi Ghundai, Rana Ghundai and Mundigak (see earlier reviews). Quite naturally, in this stage A, de Cardi found pottery types showing links with the north. At Kot Diji (see next review) some chert flakes and "micro-blades" were found in the earliest level along with the well-known ribbon-flakes of the Indus Civilization. How far can we now understand them in the background of the materials from Baluchistan? However, a definite link with Amri and Kot Diji is seen in period III (P. 113).

On the whole the report is very constructive and advances our knowledge of the people of Baluchistan at this little-known period of history.

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1. This report could not be reviewed in this journal because I could not procure a copy.