

Four Ancient Rivers of Sindh
OR
One lac years of History of Sanghar in Brief
By
M. H. Panhwar.

1. About 100,000 years back the sea level started rising and by about 20,000 years back its waters covered most of Sindh reaching as far north as Multan. The Sanghar District was under the sea mostly from 80,000 to 10,000 years ago. The only part of Sanghar District which was not submerged for these 70,000 years, was the South-eastern tip of Khipro Taluka. This information has come from recent investigation into the field of oceanography.

2. The weather records of the past 10,000 years studied with the help of archaeology botany and geomorphology show that Sanghar District had annual rain fall of approximately 14 inch between 9500 to 4,000 years ago. Due to higher rein-fall Savanna conditions must have prevailed in Khipro Taluka, where Mesolithic man must have reared cattle, sheep and goat in the same way as his neighbours in Rajasthan. The supply of Microlithic tools to these Mesolithic communities was from Rohri and Kot-Diji flint. The above evidence has come down to us from the last ten years studies of Allchin's group as well as study of rain fall in Rajasthan desert by Gurdip Sing, Bryson and Swain, which throws new light on climatic conditions in Sindh and Rajasthan.

3. Between 10,000 to 4000 years ago the Sanghar District had the proud privilege of having the confluence of the three major river systems within its boundaries.

- (a) The Indus River's main and the Eastern branch, which then separated from the main river in the Nawab Shah District and passed near the present ruins of Dalu Rai. It carried major portion of the Indus water.
- (b) The Hakra-Sarswati system which passed through the District and had its delta near the present Jamrao Head, where it branched into two system; one along the alignment of the Jamrao canal and meeting the main branch of the river Indus in the vicinity of Jhol-Dalu Rai and other branch following the course of the present Eastern Nara.
- (c) The third system was another independent river Dirshad vati taking off from Swalik hills north of Saharanpur near Nahanad Jogadhari and following through the central Rajasthan desert, it met Hakra in different times at different points above as well as below the Jamrao Head. This river was responsible for forming some 2000 lakes in Sanghar District, a geological mystry solved only a year back. The Mekhi Farah lake system of lakes is different from these desert lakes. This new river has been traced out after long efforts in India by Amal Kar and Bimla Ghose and has been traced out in Pakistan by present writer with the help of aerial photographs. This problem of finding out the origin of Khairpur lakes, being studied by the British geologists, is finally resolved.

4. The Indus civilization (3500 B.C. to 1000 B.C.) people must have fully availed of the large scale opportunities offered by the three river systems meeting in Sanghar District. During

this period Sanghar must have been a paradise of winter wheat, on the preserved moisture of the rivers. Pastoral tribes, raising cattle, buffalos, goats, sheep and camels and the fishermen must have flourished too. However, as the three rivers wandered around the plains of the Sanghar District, most of the year, no big city could be developed. The nearest township was Chanhudaro in Nawab Shah District located on the Eastern branch of Indus, The pre-Indus fishing tools from flint located at miles 101 on the National Highway by Allchins, must have been used by the fishermen of Sanghar District.

5. After 2000 B.C. water started reducing in Hakra / Sarswati due to lessening of rain fall. The central Rajasthan desert river also dried up and there was a decline in economic activities, although decay was not as bad as in the other parts of the decline of the Indus Civilization soon after 1600 B.C.

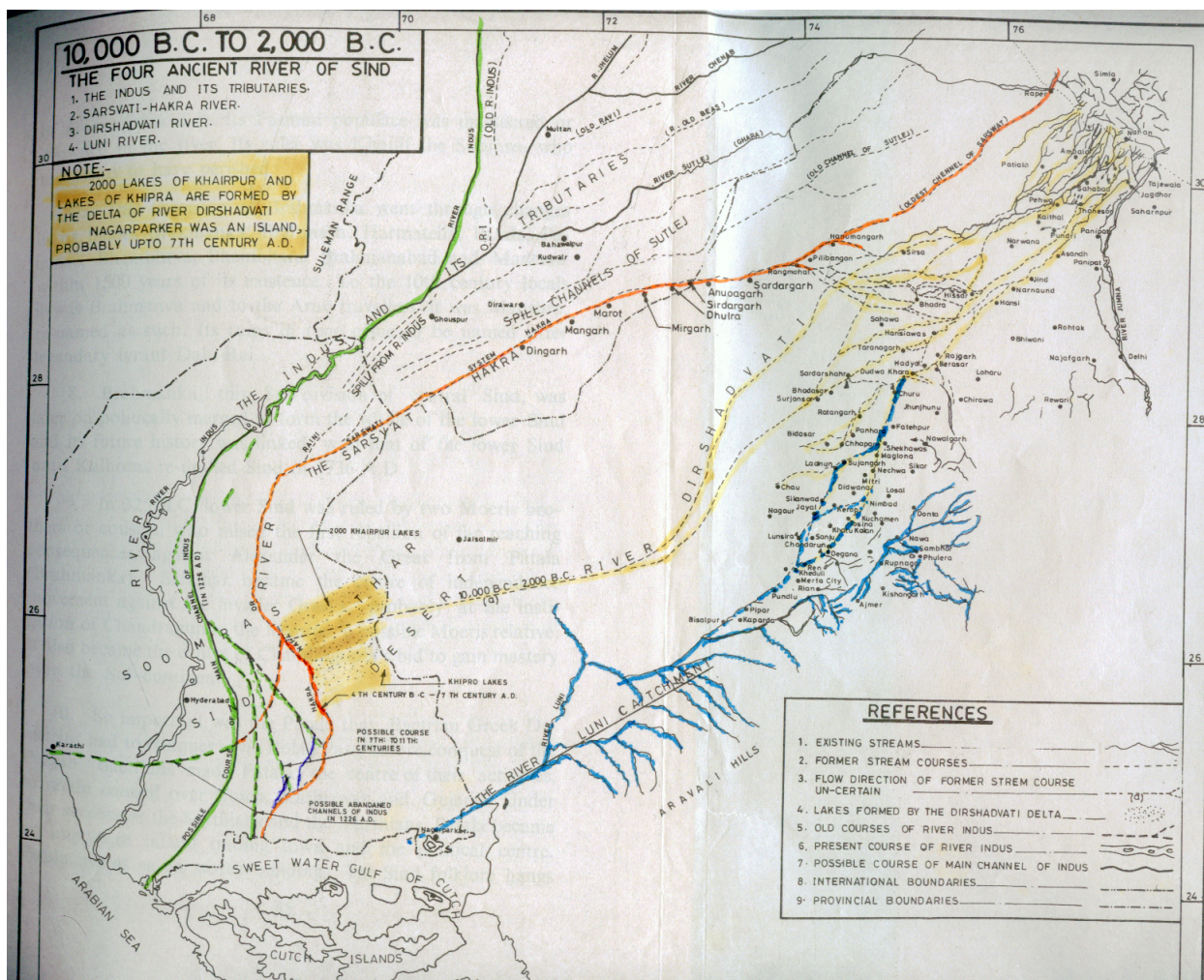
6. The Aryans came to the Sub-continent 1000 B.C., but did not reach Sindh until the 800 B.C. In the next three centuries, townships developed in Sindh and Sanghar district had the honour of having the largest town of Sindh at the end of 5th century B.C. This town described by contemporary grammarian Panini in the Central division of Sindh also called Brahmanika was on the left bank of the Indus. In the due course of time this town became the most important historical town of Sindh next in importance in the ancient world only to then in ruins Mohenjodaro and survived for 1500 years a period of twice the life of the latter. It perished in mid-December of 1205 A.D. when Mahmud of Ghazni sacked it. Its Fatimid populace was massacred or drowned in the river. Its ruler was Khaifir the Soomro, who too seems to have perished.

7. This township of Brahmanika went through changes in its names Bramanika, Brahmanika, Harmatelia, Patala, Patalene, Bhambharka, Bhambhara, Brahmanabad and Mansura within 1500 years of its existence. To the 20th century locals it was Brahmanva and to the Arab travellers it was Mansura, re-named as such. Its ruins in time came to be named after legendary tyrant Dalu Rai.

8. Brahmanika, this Sub division of central Sindh, was later on politically merged to form the whole of the lower Sindh and its future history was linked with that of the lower Sindh until Kalhoras re-unified Sindh in 1736 A.D.

9. In 325 B.C. lower Sindh was ruled by two Moeris brothers or cousins, who raised the first rebellion of far reaching consequences against Alexander the Great from Patala (Brahmanika). Sanghar became the centre of independence movement against the invader Greeks, probably at the instigation of Chandragupta, the Maurya, a possible Moeris relative. It also became the centre of Chandragupta's bid to gain mastery over the Sub-continent.

10. So important was the Patala that Bactrian Greek Demetrius had to conquer it via Bolan Pass, before conquest of the Punjab. Bactrians made Patala, the centre of their activities, to retain control over Cutch, Kathiawar and Gujarat. Under their successors the Scythians and the Parthians, Patala became an important inland trading town and the political centre. Patala means seven storey building. The Sindh folklore hangs around king's seven storey Palace (satmar) and his favourite mistress in the Palace.



11. The goods than were imported by Patala and exported via the river system through Patala via Barbaricon (Bhumbhore) were:

Tibetan hides furs, Muslins, perfumes, ugrents, pearls, lions, tiger, leopards, hounds, rhinoceroes, musk or perfume, gilgit, deer, ivory, reptiles, crocodiles, oyster pearls, silk yarn, lac dye, spikes, aromatics, cinnamon, melabathrum oil, peppers, spikenard oil, sotos, myth, gums, rhubarb, sugar, indigo, cotton linen, sheeshcane, deodar, dry fruit, rice, sorghum, lapis lazuli, European women, corals, wine, gold, silver, gems, glass and frankincense.

12. Patla (Barhamanka?) did not lose its importance even under the successors of Parthian i.e., Kushana, the later Parthians, Sassanian, Vahlikas, Rais, Brahmans. Under Duraj Bin Chach and Dahrissia Bin Chander Between 669-700 A.D., it was the capital of the independent lower Sindh with Cutch included.

13. It was summer capital of Dahar after 700 A.D. and after his death in 711 A.D. the Arabs under Mohammad Bin Qasim laid a seige of Brahmanva or Banbhra for six months, when Jaisina Bin Dahar secretly escaped.

14. After departure of Mohammad Bin Qasim in 714 A.D., Jaisins Bin Dahar re-captured Brahmanabad and sub-dued all territories to the east of the river Indus. In 717 / 718 A.D. at the invitation from Khalif Umer Bin Abdul Aziz, Jaisina Bin Dahar embarrassed Islam and all territories to the east of Indus were confirmed on him by the Khalif.

15. In 725 A.D. Junaid the Arab Governor of the western Sindh, pressed Jaisina to pay tribute, which was refused on the ground that the latter was a Muslim and territories were confirmed on him by Khalif Abdul Aziz. Unaid on the pre-text that Jaisina had abjured Islam, defeated Jaisina on Lake Seri (probably Mekhi-Farash) and had him beheaded. His cusion Chach Bin Dharisia, who was on way to Damascus to report to the Khalif, was also captured on the clear understanding that Jaisina death was caused by misunderstanding and put to death. Brahmanabad was still in revolt against the Arabs and therefore Mahfuza a military cantonment was built in 730 A.D., to settle and to protect lives of a few Arab Muslims scattered in Sindh. By 734 A.D. Arabs who by then had full control over Brahmanabad, made it their capital of Sindh and renamed it Mansura. Two hundred years later Arab traveller heard Sindhis calling it Brahmanva and Arabs Mansura. Another hundred years later, Alberuni heard it being called Brahmanva. After becoming the Arab capital of Sindh. Brahmanva saw arrivals, removals or dismissals of 10 Umayyadi and 29 Abbasid's governors of Sindh, between 714 to 854 A .D, a period of 140 year.

16. Local Arab tribe of Habaris became independent rulers of Sindh after 854 A.D. Sanghar District was very peaceful and prosperous under Habaris from 855 to 1011 A.D. A number of Arab travellers visited Mansura (Brahmanabad) of Sanghar district and have wrote the accounts of agricultural crops, fruits and commercial commodities of Sanghar District in particular and Sindh in general.

17. From 1011 to 1023 A.D. Mansura (Brahmavna) was ruled by Khalif Soomra and was sacked by Mahmood of Ghazni.

18. Sanghar District however did not lose its importance due to this catastrophe. The major set back was drying up of Hakra in 1226 A.D. Water from this source reduced and the parts of Sanghar district from Jamrao Head downward were no longer evergreen. Combined with this was the fact that Khipro Taluka had already dwindled, due to reduced rain fall as well as drying of the Dirshadvati river since 2000 B.C. The Eastern branch of the river Indus which had always passed near Brahmanabad, seems to have swung westwards by some miles in the 11th or 12th century. This aspect resulted into deserting of Brahmanabad once for all. The agriculture cropping also was confined within 10 to 15 miles of the new course of the river Indus, which now was passing from Hala to Odero Lal on way to Nasarpur.

19. It was after gap of some 600 years when Fife the British Superintending Engineer in Sindh, gave a new mouth to the old bed of Hakra from the river Indus, near Rohri in 1859 A.D. However, Jamrao-Head in is present form came up after another 25 years. Thus we had old river

system replaced by small canals which brought in fresh life to the desert. Large scale cultivation of cotton on Jamrao and Mettrao systems made Sanghar district, the most important cotton ginning centre of Sindh. Little is realized that Tando Adam was the second largest town of Sindh at the time of partition and only second to Karachi. After separation of Sindh from Karachi in May 1948 it was the largest town of Sindh for some time. It was creation of cotton the king. It was from Sanghar District, that cotton expanded to the rest of Sindh and so did the cotton ginning factories.

20. Mekhi-Farash swamps and jungles became the centre of free-men who owed no allegiance to any organized government. It became centre of the activities of the Hur movements in the last decade of 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. The consequence of such strife was unhappy as all the territories occupied by the freedom loving tribes who took part in supporting these activities were vacated, levelled up and disposed off for irrigated agriculture. The natural environment, paradise of natural historians, botanists, and zoologists was destroyed. Very little is now left in Sanghar District of the Zoo-geographical life of three river systems which supported this type of life so distinct from each other.

SOURCES.

1. Shepard and Curry, 'Oceanography', vol. IV, 1967, pp. 283-291 and M. H. Panhwar, 'Chronological dictionary of Sindh' pp. 8-10.
2. Gurdip Singh, 'Valley Culture seen in the context of post-glacial climatic and ecological studies, in the North-West India, archaeology and Physical Anthropology, Jour. Oceania, Vol-VI No. 2, pp. 177-189. B. Allchin, Goudie and Hedge. 61.

Gurdip Singh, R.D. Joshi, and A.B. Sindh, 'Stratigraphic and Radio-Carbon Evidence for Age and development of three salt lake deposit in Rajasthan, India' Quaternary research, Vol-2, pp. 496-505, 1972. R.A. Bryson and A.M. Swain, 'Holocene Climatic changes in the Indus civilization, deptt. Of Earth Resources, Colorado state University Fort Collins, Colorado, pp. 1-20. Louis Falm, 'Towards an ecological analysis of Pre-historic settlement patterns in Sindh', Man and Environment, Vol-V, pp. 52-58, 1981.

3. Kar Amal and Ghose Bimal. The Dirshadvati river system of India; and assessment and new findings. Geographical Journal part 2 Vol. 150 London July 1984.
4. B. Allchin, 'The Discovery of Paleolithic sites in the Plains of Sindh and their implications The Geographical Journal, Vol, 142, No. 3, pp. 471-89, 1976.

B. Allchin, Andrew Goudie and Kurunakara Hedge, 'The Pre-history and Paleogeography of the Great Indian Desert', London, 1978.

B. Allchin: 61 "The Geographical Journal" 1976.

M.H. Panhwar, Mesolithic period, 'Chronological Dictionary of Sindh' pp. 13-14.

M.H. Panhwar, 'Stone Age in Sindh Jour. Sindholological Studies', Summer, 1983. pp. 14-31.

5. Stein, Sir Aurel, 'Survey of Ancient sites along the Lost Saraswati River', jour. Royal Geog. Vol. XCIX, No. 4, 1942.

Lambrick H. T., "Sindh-A General introduction" 'History of Sindh Series', Vol-I, Sidhi Adabi Board, 1964.

Panhwar, M. H. 'Ground water in Hyderabad and Khairpur Division', 1964.

6. Agarwal and Kusumgar, 'Pre-historic Chronology and Radio Carbon dating in India'. Calcutta, 1974.
7. M.H. Panhwar, 'Sindh the archaeological Museum of the World-location of Brahmanka, Patala, Demetrias, Minaggara, Brahmano, Brahmanva, Brahmanabad, Dalurai and Mansura. Sindh Quarterly Vol-XI No. 1, 2 and 3, 1983.
8. Panhwar M.H. 'Sindh's struggle against Fudalism', Jour. Sindh Quarterly, 1977, and Jour. Sindhological Studies, 1978.
9. A.T. Omstead, 'History of Persian Empire', Chicago Univ. Press, 1948.
Ghirshman, R, 'Iran', London, 1954.
For Lane, 'Alexander the Great', London, 1970.
Mc Crindle's John Waston's 'The invasion of India by Alexander the Great'.
10. Lambrick, H.T., 'History of Sindh' Vol-II, 1973.
M.H. Panhwar, 'Chronological Dictionary of Sindh', 1983, pp. 90-108. Charts and Maps Nos. 17-26 and figures Nos. 65-73.
11. M.H. Panhwar, International trade of Sindh through its port Barbarican (Banbhore 200 B.C. 200 A.D). Jour, Sindhological Studies, Winter 1980.
12. M.H. Panhwar, 'Sindh the archaeological Museum of the World-location of Brahmanka, Patala, Demetrias, Minaggara, Brahmano, Brahmanva, Brahmanabad, Dalurai and Mansura' Sindh Quarterly Vol-XI No. 1, 2 and 3, 1983.
14. M.H. Panhwar Chronological Dictionary of Sindh pp. 127-135.
15. Panhwar M.H. 'Chronological Dictionary of Sindh' pp. 143-183, and chart No. 38-39. Also 'Sindh' Quarterly, December, 1976.
16. M.H. Panhwar, '5000 years of irrigation in Sindh'.
M.H. Panhwar, 'Failure of a gate of Sukkur Barrage and lesson for future', Jour. Sindhological Studies, Winter, 1983.
Chronological Dictionary of Sindh pp. 184-207.
17. M.H. Panhwar, 'Sindh the archaeological Museum of the World-location of Brahmanka, Patala, Demetrias, Minaggara, Brahmano, Brahmanva, Brahmanabad. Dalurai and Mansura', Sindh Quarterly Vol-XI No. 1,2 and 3 1983.
18. Stein, Sir Aurel, 'Survey of Ancient sites along the Isot Sarswati River'. Jour. Royal Geog. Vol. XCIX, No. 4, 1942.

Pithwalla M.B., 'Physical and Economic Geography of Sindh', Sindhi Adabi Board, 1959.
Lambrick, H.T., "Sindh-A General Introduction"-History of Sindh Series', Vol-I, Sindhi Adabi Board, 1964.
Panhwar M.H., 'Ground Water in Hyderabad and Khairpur Divisions' with additional notes, 1969.
Holmes, 'The Recent History of Indus', Journal Royal Geographical Society, VO-34, Part 3, London (1968).
Wilhelmy Prof. Dr. Herbert. The shifting river (Indus), Jour. Universitas Vol-10, 1968.
19. M.H. Panhwar or 5000 years of irrigation in Sindh (In press) and Failure of a gate of Sukkur Barrage and lesson for future. Sindhological Studies, Winter 1983.

PAGE

**42 - 51.
SINDHOLOGICAL STUDIES**