Kech-Makurán

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CORRESPONDENCE.

“*Kech-Makurán.*”

HAVING been closely associated with Makrán affairs for the better part of two years, during the period that I held administrative charge of that country, the letters that have recently appeared in the *Geographical Journal* on the subject of Makrán have been full of interest for me, especially that communication on the subject in which General Haig has published the result of his study of the itineraries of the well-known Eastern authors whom he quotes. As I actually resided in that country during the period to which I have alluded, I venture with all humility to put together a few items of information, in the hope that, as my information was collected directly from the inhabitants themselves, with whom I was brought into very close contact while engaged in making the Revenue Settlement, the notes may prove of interest.

The “Kes Macorán” of Marco Polo is a very close approximation to the name of this country which is in use at the present day. From careful inquiries made on the spot, it appears that Kech (or Kej) and Makurán are considered as two distinct countries, although they are adjacent to one another.

The country of Kech is bounded on the east by the Upper Kolwah district. The Kolwah district is itself divided into two parts by the stream known as Tirtej. South of this stream there is the district or subdivision of Lower Kolwah, which is included in Kech. The Tirtej stream is therefore the eastern boundary of Kech. On the west Kej includes the subdivision known as Tump. The Boleda valley, 30 miles north of Kech, is considered to belong to the latter, the actual boundary between it and Panjgur being a spot about 18 miles north-east of the fort of Chib, in the Boleda valley.*

The northern limits of Kech, and also of Makrán, are formed by the watershed which divides the waters flowing into the Mashkel and Rakshan rivers from those of the Sarbáz river, and the Nahing and Dasht rivers as well, Panjgur being considered by the inhabitants as belonging to “Khorassan.”

Bámpur is not considered as belonging to or included in the country known as Makurán. Makurán is a collection of districts, of which the best known are Mand, Sarbaz, Kasrkand, Báhu, and Kir-Bir, and others as well. It is probably owing to this that it is written sometimes in the plural—“Makranát,” the Makrans—in Persian books. The names of the subdivisions just mentioned do not represent towns; each of these districts may contain several villages, and none of these may necessarily bear the name of the district.

Kech also is composed of many subdivisions, Kech, Tump, Boleda, and Lower Kolwah being the best known. In the Kech subdivision there are five or six villages, none of which are known as Kech; the chief of these villages is Turbat.

Panjgur is said to extend from the hills known as Band-i-Panjgur,† 40 miles to the east of the village of Isai, and to include the Párom district, 40 miles west of the same village. The area under permanent cultivation which depends on Karez irrigation contains several villages, of which those worthy of mention are Isai, Tasp, Khudabadan, and Garmkán, and not one of the villages is known as Panjgur.

Each village in these subdivisions is practically a distinct self-governing unit,

* The other forts are those of Bit, Kosluk, and Suto.

† Or Panjgur Koh.

ruled by the "Rish safid," and the headman, who is called the "Ka-hudá" (a corruption of Kad Khuda). Under the orders of the latter are subordinate officials called "ghazirs," whose office is practically hereditary, and there may be one or more ghazirs in each village. The collection of villages situated in the part of the Panjgur valley which is permanently under cultivation has been called Panjgur by the British officials who are connected with the country and with the general supervision of its affairs, for the sake of convenience alone.

Wherever there are irrigation works of a permanent nature the date palm is extensively cultivated. It is grown on the borders of the fields, which are purposely made small, to afford a certain amount of protection from the direct rays of the sun, and prevent the rapid evaporation of moisture from the cultivated soil, and so prevent it becoming rapidly dry, and becoming hard and crusted. The fields are carefully tended, as if they were gardens. The rice, jowari, and other crops, such as tobacco, etc., are grown in nurseries, and when the young plants are an inch or two in height they are planted out in the fields, which have been carefully prepared to receive them. A group of date palms is called kallag, and the habitations, if any exist, are known variously as shahr, bázár, and res. The word "kalat" is also, of course, largely used.

The soil, which is a light clay, is very fruitful. On irrigated lands it is a common occurrence to obtain three or four harvests from one sowing of jowari; and even in ground dependent on the rainfall for irrigation, three crops have been obtained from a single sowing of jowari.

The letters *p* and *f* are frequently interchanged, as well in the colloquial as in the written language of Kech. Thus the well-known name *Pir Baksh* becomes corrupted very commonly into *Fir Baksh*. The name *Páhra* into *Fáhra*; *Panjgur* is also turned into *Fanjgur*; and *fakir* into *pakir*. The word *áp* ("water") is usually pronounced *áf*.

At the risk of appearing presumptuous, I venture to agree with the identification, by General Haig, of Pahra, near Bámpur (that is, the modern Persian fort of Nasrich).* The "Masakand of Istakhri" (I am quoting General Haig) is probably Naskand, a well-known locality in Makrán (properly Makurán) to the south-east of Bámpur. The city of the Khwarij I should be inclined (with all deference, be it said) to place south of the watershed of the Sarbáz stream. Rask may well have been a district or subdivision, such as have been just described, in which case the "village of Yáhyah-bin Amr" would have, in all probability, been the principal village, the residence of the chief, or the more influential man of the district of Rask.

To talk of ruined cities in this part of the world is apt to prove misleading. Ancient sites in Kech Makurán are recognizable by the mounds of white clay covered with fragments of pottery which are found in all parts of Baluchistan, and known as "damb." These mounds are the remains of forts and dwellings. The latter are constructed at the present day of either pure clay or of sun-dried bricks set in clay mortar. Trunks or beams of the date palm (being the most common timber) are set in the walls, especially near angles, to bind the earth or masonry together. This system of building is probably that which has always been employed in the country. A large town or village in Kej (that is, the country known as Kej) consists of a fort (varying, of course, in size), which is the residence of the chief. Adjoining the fort there may be a dozen or so of houses built in the manner just described; these are the dwellings of the principal inhabitants, and the shops of the local merchants or dealers, who require a secure place for the storage of their

* This name was obtained in 1889-90 from local information at Jálk.

wares. The remainder of the population, however numerous, dwell in huts, either thatched with mats and palm branches, or constructed entirely of those materials. Scattered among the date groves are to be found the huts of a considerable number of inhabitants whose lands lie at some distance from the village. It cannot be expected that "ruins" such as are generally understood could be found, except where the destruction has been recent. A village such as that just described, if destroyed, would, in the lapse of years, form a mound composed of the *débris* of the more permanent buildings, the clods of earth or unbaked bricks of which would dissolve under the action of the elements.

The only ruins worthy of the name are those of the domed buildings containing tombs, and which are evidently mausolea, which have been constructed of carefully baked bricks and tiles set in clay mortar. These have been found to exist from the Gaud-i-Zirreh on the north all over Kharan, the Panjgur and Kech districts; those of Galugáh in the Máshkel have been already described by Colonel Holdich, C.B., etc., from information supplied by me. There are types of these buildings among the photographs I am sending to the Society; the general plan of the buildings does not vary, but the style of ornamentation does, and in many instances the representation of living objects is omitted.

The hills in the vicinity of such a village as that just described might be inhabited by a numerous and warlike tribe owning allegiance to the chief residing in the village, but these would dwell in tents, and the destruction of their habitations would result in a few handfuls of ashes.

The only instance of a carved stone is that contained in one of the photographs, in one of the panels of which there is a rude figure of a horseman armed with a bow.

At Jálwar, in the Kharan hills, I discovered inscriptions in what appeared to be Arabic characters cut with a blunt instrument into the face of a cliff, and I was informed that inscriptions exist in another locality in Makurán, which I have not had an opportunity, so far at least, of examining. It was a matter of deep regret that it was not possible to photograph the Jálwar inscriptions, or to devote time to copying them or to obtaining rubbings.

There are distinct traces of the occupation of Kech Makurán by the Moghals.* In the translation of the *Tabakat-i-Nasiri* by Major Raverty, treating of the subject, the name, given in a mutilated form, on the authority of the *Jami-ut-tawarikh*, of the locality in which the Moghal horde passed the summer (in a footnote) could be easily made to read Panj Gur. This name is still written in two distinct syllables, as well as in one word.

The Miri fort in the Kech subdivision, which is at present in a ruinous condition itself, stands on a very extensive "damb" or mound, which is evidently that of a more extensive fort or group of habitations than the Miri fort represents.

There are two localities in Kech (that is, the country known by that name) which are known as Nag, one 25 miles north-west of the fort of Chib, in the Boleda valley, and the other about 40 miles to the east of the village of Turbat, in the Kech subdivision. At each of these two localities known as Nág there is an abundant supply of spring water. To the east of the village of Isai (in the Panjgur district), and about 80 miles distant from it, is the fort known as Naghai Kalat (the fort of the Nágha). Here there is also a fine spring of water.

The names of Kej (or Kech) and Panjgur are place-names of very great antiquity. The latter was the headquarters of the Administration, and the quarters of the civil

* At Dizak, in the "Perso-Baluch" country; also seen in names such as "Moghal-p-áb" ("the Spring of the Moghals"), "Moghal Khariná," and "Turki Ambár," frequently met with in Kech and Panjgur.

officer and his establishment were at the small village of Chitkán, where lines had also been constructed to house the troops stationed in the country. The surrounding villages used to be constantly visited for purposes of administrative work, as well as the surrounding country, and there are certainly more than five tombs in Panjgur.

GEO. P. TATE,
Survey of India Department.

Quetta.

MEETINGS OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, SESSION 1896-1897.

Fourteenth Ordinary Meeting, June 28, 1897.—Sir CLEMENTS MARKHAM, K.C.B., President, in the Chair.

ELECTIONS.—*Henry de Courcy Agnew; Mathew Arthur, D.L., J.P.; Frank Bateman; Edward Boyle, Barrister-at-Law; Captain Murray Cookesly (late 22nd Regiment); William Montgomery Crook, B.A.; William Fraser Hume, D.Sc.; M. H. Spencer Josephs; Claude G. Montefiore, M.A.; Thomas Dixon Rust; W. Gordon Sprigg; Edgar Salis-Schwabe; Alexander Tucker Wardrop (Customs and Harbour Officer); M. L. Wessels.*

The Paper read was:—

“Recent Journeys in Persia.” By Captain Molesworth Sykes.

GEOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE OF THE MONTH.

Additions to the Library.

By HUGH ROBERT MILL, D.Sc., Librarian, R.G.S.

THE following abbreviations of nouns and the adjectives derived from them are employed to indicate the source of articles from other publications. Geographical names are in each case written in full:—

A. = Academy, Academie, Akademie.	Mag. = Magazine.
Ann. = Annals, Annales, Annalen.	P. = Proceedings.
B. = Bulletin, Bollettino, Boletim.	R. = Royal.
Com. = Commerce, Commercial.	Rev. = Review, Revue, Revista.
C. Rd. = Comptes Rendus.	S. = Society, Société, Selskab.
Erdk. = Erdkunde.	Sitzb. = Sitzungsbericht.
G. = Geography, Geographie, Geografia.	T. = Transactions.
Ges. = Gesellschaft.	V. = Verein.
I. = Institute, Institution.	Verh. = Verhandlungen.
J. = Journal.	W. = Wissenschaft, and compounds.
M. = Mitteilungen.	Z. = Zeitschrift.

On account of the ambiguity of the words *octavo*, *quarto*, etc., the size of books in the list below is denoted by the length and breadth of the cover in inches to the nearest half-inch. The size of the *Journal* is 10 × 6½.

EUROPE.

Austrian Alps.

Die Pinzgauer. Von Dr. Wilhelm Schjerning.—Forschungen zur deutschen Landes- und Volkskunde . . . herausgegeben von Dr. A. Kirchhoff. Zehnter Band. Heft 3. Stuttgart: J. Engelhorn, 1897. Size 9½ × 6½, pp. [104]. *Illustrations*.

Schjerning.

A note on this paper was given in the June number of the *Journal*, vol. ix. p. 660.