

to the position of Sīstān between Susa in the west, Anau in the north-west, and the sites of Balūchistān and the lower Indus valley in the south-east—all localities which have yielded up remains of a closely allied prehistoric civilization.

Similar
cultures in
Transcaspia
and Sind.

We do not know whether it was as a result of migration of races, conquest, or peaceful intercourse that the sites of Sind (Mohenjo-daro), the southern Panjāb (Harappa), and Balūchistān (Nal) now reveal the existence of a culture strikingly akin in various aspects, on the one hand to that of pre-Sumerian sites of Mesopotamia and Susa, and on the other to that of the earlier strata at Transcaspian Anau. But it is certain that the routes indicated by nature and most likely to have been followed by those movements pass through Sīstān. Reference to the map will show that the present Helmand delta lies approximately half-way between Anau and Mohenjo-daro, the direct distance measured from Nasratābād being a little over 500 miles to the former and a few miles less to the latter site. The resemblance of the Sīstān prehistoric pottery in forms, technique, and painted ornamentation to that brought to light by the Pumpelly expedition from the older strata of the Kurghāns of Anau,¹⁰ is particularly close, as has been fully recognized by Mr. Andrews. The evidence which the association with it of stone implements and fragments of bronze affords at both places is similarly concordant in general. But it must be borne in mind that at the Sīstān sites it is impossible to determine stratigraphic succession for any class of finds.

Relations to
early re-
mains of
Sind and
Balūchis-
tān.

The close relations which geographical conditions have created and maintained to the present day between Sīstān and what are now the territories of Sind and British Balūchistān must lead us to expect an equal, if not even greater, degree of affinity between the chalcolithic culture indicated by the relics of the southern Helmand delta and that which the excavations now proceeding at the ruined sites of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa are revealing. Publication of the surprising results which these have already yielded has not as yet proceeded far enough to permit here more than a general reference. But it can already be safely asserted that the resemblance in respect of the painted ceramic wares is very great, and particularly as regards the older layers reached by the spade in the Indus valley. There Sir John Marshall and his helpers from the Indian Archaeological Survey are systematically excavating extensive structural remains left by a civilization which through its inscribed seals and other relics can now definitely be co-ordinated with that which in Mesopotamia preceded the earliest Sumerian period. It is on the results of these explorations on the Indian side that we may at present base the main hope of likewise determining some chronological limits for the prehistoric remains of Sīstān.

¹⁰ For a detailed account of the archaeological excavations at Anau, by Dr. H. Schmidt, with excellent illustrations, cf. Pumpelly, *Explorations in Turkestan*, 'Prehistoric Civiliza-

tions of Anau', i. Chap. VI-IX; for illustrations see particularly Pl. 9-35.