

The Emergence and Nature of Ethno-Nationalist Movement in Balochistan

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Abstract

This paper deals with the emergence of Baloch Ethno-nationalist movement and federal government's policies from the merger of the Kalat State into Pakistan. Since independence, the Federal Government faced the continuous ethno-nationalist struggles in Balochistan in one or the other form. One of the main causes of such movements is the socio-economic deprivation enrooted in the hundreds of years in the history of locality. As a matter of fact, the solution of such problems lies in the realistic policies and dialogue. But in the past, some of the Federal governments did not take into consideration properly the political and social set up of province. This negligence has caused a momentum to the ethnic struggle. The present study is an attempt to analyse the federal government's policies as well as the policies of the nationalists which resulted in the unmet demands for enhanced political and economic rights in the realm of federation.

Introduction

Pakistan came into being as a multi-ethnic state in the wake of partition in 1947. The newly independent Muslim State

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comprised ethnic nationalities. One of those groups, the Baloch, lived with a distinct culture and geographical territory in the sub-continent. There emerged some issues during the merger of Kalat State into Pakistan. To retain their distinct political and culture identities some even started nationalist insurgencies. The social and political set up of Balochistan changed with its accession to Pakistan.

Baloch nationalists claim for a national identity in the history dates back two thousand years. After the creation of Pakistan the non-fulfilment of Baloch grievances resulted into nationalist movements on four occasions in 1948, 1958, 1962, and most vigorously from 1973 to 1977.¹ For the first time, nationalists came into power in early 1970 when the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto allowed regionalist parties to form government and later on, dismissed it on charges of treason. Political violence became commonplace and Balochistan was racked by open warfare between the federal government and Baloch nationalists. Insurgency ended only after Bhutto was ousted by General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq.²

Although nationalists stopped fighting federal government with regard to their demands that remained unchanged. Negotiations failed to satisfy nationalists who have been living abroad in self-imposed exile.³ Zia decided to pursue the policies of his deposed predecessor, but with Western financial aid he was able to remove some

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- 1 Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baloch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981), 3.
 - 2 On the basis of 1970 General Elections, NAP-JUI coalition government was installed in Balochistan. Atallah Mengal became the first Chief Minister of the Province with the Ghous Bux Bezenjo is the Governor. However, he was dismissed by the Z.A. Bhutto. He appointed Nawab Akbar Bugti and other rival Baloch tribes to undo the nationalist government.
 - 3 The troika of left-leaning Baloch leaders commanding the National Awami Party's Balochistan chapter in the 1960s and 1970s were Mir GhausBakhshBezenjo and the chiefs of the Marri and Mengal tribes, provincial NAP president, Mir KhairBakhshMarri, and its head of political affairs, AtallahMengal. For an account of their political philosophies see Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 41-69.

discontent and weakened the hold of tribal chieftains at the same time. The policies of democratic interlude during 1990's witnessed peace in the province. Ethnic nationalists, like other ethnic Pakistani communities, took part in the parliamentary politics of the country and the political changes at the center witnessed an end to the secessionist tendencies.

History of Baloch Ethnic Nationalism

After a long period of disunity, the Baloch united politically in the eighteenth century. Ahmadzai tribe established the Khanate of Kalat Confederacy in 1666 that covered Baloch tribes from Afghanistan and Bandar Abbas to the borders of the Punjab.⁴ Among the rulers of Kalat, nationalist historians extol the reign of Mir Naseer Khan (1749-1795) for military gains and economic prosperity of Balochistan.⁵ He remained a powerful ruler of the Khanate who founded military and civil institutions.⁶

The death of Naseer Khan brought a slow and gradual dissolution of the Kalat State into several small *de facto* sovereign principalities.⁷ The Khanate became weak and was engulfed with differences among the *sardars* and the Khan of Kalat. Consequently, internal differences did not pose a united resistance to the arrival of the British in the region during nineteenth century.⁸ It was the revolt of the

4 Imtiaz Ali, "The Balochistan Problem", *Pakistan Horizon* 58, no. 2 (April 2005):41-62; Martin Axmann, *Back to the Future Khanate of Kalat and the Genesis of Baloch Nationalism: 1915-1955* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2009), 22; Selig S. Harrison, "Ethnicity and the Political Stalemate in Pakistan," in *The State, Religion and Ethnic Politics in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan*, Ali Banuzaizi and Myron Weiner eds. (USA: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 272-73.

5 Sardar Muhammad Khan Baluch, *History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan* 2nd ed., (Quetta: Gosha-e-Adab, 1977), 86.

6 Inayatullah Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan: A Study of Baluch Nationalism* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GMBH, 1987), 104.

7 Yuri V. Gankovsky, *The People of Pakistan: An Ethnic History* (Moscow: 1971), 151.

8 Mir Khuda Bakhsh Bijarani Marri Baloch, *Search Lights on Baloch and Balochistan* (Quetta: Nisa Traders, 1985), 241; A.B. Awan, *Baluchistan:*

sardars from Khan's authority that first led to British interference resulting in the Mastung Treaty of 1876. Since then, the power of the tribal chiefs increased and the power of Khan as the leading factor did not remain effective as was in older days.⁹

The British Indian Government intervened in the North-west of the subcontinent due to its geo-political and military significance. They wanted to create a buffer zone to defend Indian Empire from Russian expansionism. The Russian expansion into Central Asia in 1860's, the conquest of Bukhara and Samarkand in 1866 and 1869, prompted the British to strengthen its presence on North to save the Indian Empire from Russian expansionist designs.¹⁰ The colonial rulers required to defend a line of communication with Afghanistan via Balochistan. In such circumstances, strategic significance of the Baloch territory played a key factor in shaping the British policies.

The British pursued a closed border policy under the command of Colonel Sir Robert Groves Sandeman to protect the Indian frontiers against the restless mountain tribes during the years 1854-72.¹¹ This was a period of 'indirect rule' in Balochistan. The consequences of this policy created a quasi-state of war among the tribes that weakened them militarily and economically.¹² The British administration was not satisfied with results of closed border policy to avoid external threats. The eminent Russian threat forced them to revisit their policy in the region. Consequently, from 1872

Historical and Political Processes (London: New Century Publisher, 1985), 62.

- 9 C.E. Yate, "Baluchistan," *Proceedings of Central Asian Society* (February 1906), 7.
- 10 Naimatullah Gichki, *Baloch in Search of Identity* (Washington: Wrigley's, 2015), 178.
- 11 Richard Isaac Bruce, *The Forward Policy and its Results: Thirty-Five-Year Work amongst the Tribes on our North-Western Frontier of India* (London: 1900), 14.
- 12 Fred Scholz, *Nomadism and Colonialism: A Hundred Years of Baluchistan, 1872-1972* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 92.

British adopted the forward policy and directly interfered in Balochistan's internal affairs.¹³

The British intervention changed the position and status of *sardars*.¹⁴ According to M. Sardar Khan Baluch,

The British rule of eighty years centred round the policy of how to divide and create a wider gulf of enmity and hatred between the same tribes of the same country...the country stands politically, economically and socially in the backwaters of civilization.¹⁵

By 1876, the Khan of Kalat and all *sardars* accepted the British as a final arbiter of their internal disputes, and all parties signed a treaty to that effect.¹⁶ However, this policy brought the British face to face with people of Balochistan. The tribes were given subsidies, concessions and regional autonomy.¹⁷ The advent of the British imperial power played off one *sardar* against another to advance its interest.

During Nineteenth Century, the anti-colonial movements in India and the division of Baloch territory by the British administration between Afghanistan in 1893 and Iran in 1928 created a sense of unity in the educated youth of Kalat State. Consequently, in the 1920s a group of young nationalists emerged on the political landscape to organize the Baloch masses along nationalist lines. Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd founded a political organization by the name Young Baloch which¹⁸ advocated institutional and political reforms in Balochistan. The group was composed of constitutionalists, western-educated, and middle class of the

13 Christian Tripodi, "Good for One but not the Other". The "Sandeman System" of Pacification as Applied to Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier, 1877-1947", *The Journal of Military History* 73, no. 3 (July 2009): 767-802.

14 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 33.

15 Baluch, *The History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan*, 74.

16 Sleig S. Harrison, "Ethnicity and the Political Stalemate in Pakistan", in *Regional Imbalances and the National Question*, S. Akbar Zaidi, ed. (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1992), 206.

17 Tucker A.L. P. and Sir Robert G. Sandeman, *Peaceful Conqueror of Balochistan* (Lahore: Yakki Gate, 1979), 5-6.

18 Taj Mohammad Breeseeg, *Baloch Nationalism: Its Origin and Development* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2004).

province. The organization along its party objectives and policy followed the line of Indo-subcontinent nationalists for the attainment of its goals.¹⁹ Yousaf Ali Khan Aziz Magsi, being fascinated by the Indian nationalists, established *Anjuman-e-Ittehad-e-Balochistan*.²⁰ The organization launched a political struggle for the introduction of administrative and constitutional reforms in Balochistan. The *Anjuman* also demanded unification of the divided Balochland and the establishment of united and independent Balochistan.²¹

Magsi infused a spirit of nationalism in Baloch society.²² The revolutionary Magsi passed away at the youthful age of 27.²³ The unfortunate death of Magsi led to the replacement of *Anjuman* by Kalat State National Party (KSNP) in the politics of Balochistan. The party leaders were inclined towards the political thinking of the nationalists of the subcontinent. The KSNP struggled for political, social and economic reforms for Balochistan.²⁴ However, coincidence of interests between the constitutionalists and the autocratic Khan did not last long. Divergence of interests pushed them apart. The Khan became unhappy over the blunt criticism of the *Sardar* system and the British administration by KSNP. The Khan banned the party on July 22, 1939. It was declared an unlawful body.²⁵ The party shifted its headquarters from Kalat to Quetta, disillusioned by the Khan's behaviour. The ban was lifted after World War II. It joined all India States People Conference, a sister organization of the All Indian National Congress in 1945.²⁶ It

19 Awan, *Baluchistan*, 164.

20 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 151.

21 Janmahmad, *Essays on Baloch National Struggle in Pakistan: Emergence Dimensions Repercussions* (Quetta: Gosha-e-Adab, 1988).

22 Inam-ul-Haq Kausar, *Pakistan Movement and Balochistan* (Quetta: 1999), 16-18.

23 Awan, *Balochistan*, 165.

24 Axmann, *Back to the Future*, 151.

25 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*.

26 Axmann. *Back to the Future*, 149.

was, in fact, a representative organization of the Princely States which actually worked under the congress command. Baloch historians considered the party's brief affiliation as a mistake. The stance of nationalists, that Balochistan having a separate identity and independent position in the Subcontinent was greatly damaged by KSNP's association with the Congress.²⁷

Kalat's Accession to Pakistan

The Khanate of Kalat enjoyed a sovereign status in the treaty agreements with the British government.²⁸ The Khan was alarmed when the British changed the constitutional position of the Khanate unilaterally without consultation. Government of India Act 1935 treated the Kalat as an Indian State and provided future representation in the federal legislature.²⁹ The Khan opposed this decision and maintained that the Kalat State had been independent and sovereign in the Subcontinent. Its relations with the British were governed by the treaty of 1876. It would be free to follow its own course in future in case of withdrawal of the British from India.³⁰

On August 4, 1947 in a Round Table Conference, an agreement was reached between the British, Kalat and Pakistan at Delhi. It was agreed upon that "Kalat State will be independent on August 5, 1947, enjoying the same status as it originally held in 1838, having friendly relations with its

27 Axmann, *Back to the Future*, 151.

28 The first treaty of friendship was signed between Mehrab Khan, the Khan of Kalat and the British Government in 1839. Subsequently, the treaty of 1841 made the Khanate of Kalat a vassal of Afghanistan. The treaty of 1854 between Nasir Khan and the British restored the independent status of Balochistan. Finally the treaty of 1876 looked forward to mutual friendship and reaffirmed the treaty of 1854. See for more information, Memorandum of the Government of Kalat. The future position of Kalat claims in respect of Las Bela and Kharan, in respect of the Marri and Bugti Tribes; Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*.

29 Mir Ahmad Yar Khan Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan: A Political Autobiography of His Highness Baiglar Baigi, Khan-e-Azam-XIII* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1975), 267.

30 Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*.

neighbours.”³¹ In order to judge the demands and the position of the Kalat, a meeting took place and presided over by Lord Mountbatten on the same day at Delhi. As a result, another agreement between Khan of Kalat and Jinnah was signed. The Article 4 of the agreement reads that a “Standstill Agreement will be made by which Pakistan shall be legal heir to the British with respect to Kalat.”³² Thus, Pakistan determined to maintain *status quo* and waited for an opportune time to merge Khanate to Pakistan.

The Khan’s political moves aimed at achieving complete independence of Kalat State before withdrawal of the British. The Khan realized the interest of the successor states of Pakistan and India about the geo-strategic and economic importance for the Indian subcontinent.³³ The Khan could not foresee the political penetration of Muslim League in Balochistan. The regional and national leadership of the League gained enough popularity in British Balochistan and Kalat State. Pakistan’s leadership considering the geo-strategic significance of Balochistan determined to incorporate Kalat into Pakistan at the end of British rule. There was some difficulty in settling the procedure for ascertaining wishes of the people of Balochistan.³⁴

According to the standstill agreement further negotiations were expected to take place between Pakistan and Kalat. However, the agreement was not materialized as Pakistan demanded unconditional merger. The Khan delayed the matter to seek constitutional guarantees for the future of the Kalat state in the new arrangements. On the other hand, he tried to strengthen his position through elections in the state.³⁵ KSNP won majority of seats under the leadership of Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo in Kalat Assembly. Khan responding to Pakistan’s demand of

31 Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*, 147.

32 MSS EUR D971/2.

33 Axmann, *Back to the Future*, 183.

34 Axmann, *Back to the Future*.

35 Naseer, *Tareekh-e-Balochistan*, 544-45.

accession referred the matter to the Kalat State Assembly to seek the opinion and decide the issue. The parliament voted against the merger and expressed its determination to maintain the independent status of the state.³⁶ Bizenjo, in a fiery speech highlighted the strategic significance and natural resources of the region and questioned the existence of Pakistan without Balochistan.³⁷ Meanwhile, the British High Commission warned the Government of Pakistan of the dangers and suggested not to recognize the Khanate as a separate international entity.³⁸

Meanwhile Pakistan was alarmed by the Indian designs about Kalat. The announcement of a news bulletin from All India Radio broadcasted on March 27, 1948 that Kalat government desires accession with India made Khan's position more susceptible to Pakistani reaction.³⁹ Pakistan was afraid of Indian military attack on Kalat which the new state could not afford at that time. The pretext led the Pakistani government to decide the fate of Kalat state by military force. Thus, political circumstances forced the Khan to merge the Kalat state on March 30, 1948.⁴⁰

Unwillingly, the Khan of Kalat signed the accession instrument to bring an end to the Kalat state. The unification of Balochistan remained a greater challenge than any other region. The British governing system discouraged unity among the Baloch to unite against the empire.

The Nationalist Movement 1948

Not willing to the decision of Kalat merger with Pakistan, Prince Karim Agha, brother of the Khan, resist forceful annexation of the Kalat State. He organized a resistance force on the border areas of Afghanistan in 1948.⁴¹ Prince

36 Axmann, *Back to the Future*, 231-32.

37 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*.

38 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 257.

39 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 159.

40 IOR: MSS EUR D 971/2.

41 IOR: Mss Eur D971/2.

appealed tribal chiefs to join and support the movement.⁴² He issued a manifesto in the name of Baloch National Liberation Committee disavowing the unconditional accession of Kalat. Karim proclaimed the independence of Kalat State and demanded fresh negotiations with Pakistan.⁴³ The delaying tactics in merging the state designate the belief that the Khan had a secret understanding with the separatists who considered it the last hope to get more princely privileges from Pakistan.⁴⁴

However, the Khan ordered Kalat State forces to locate the camp of the rebel prince in the mountains of Balochistan.⁴⁵ He also sent the notables to persuade Prince Karim and bring him back to Kalat from mountains. However, upon seeing the elders, the Prince complained of Pakistani state's repressive attitude and vowed to fight for Balochistan's independence.⁴⁶ For the success of his political motives, Prince Karim struggled to get aid from Afghanistan but the authorities refused to support because the idea of independent Balochistan was not in favour of Afghanistan as Pakistani Balochistan was a part of Afghanistan's concept of so-called *Pashtunistan*.⁴⁷

Seeing the failure of resistance and pressure from Pakistan, the Khan declared himself a well-wisher of Pakistan. He issued a *farman* (decree) against the insurrection and denied such knowledge about younger brother's adventure.⁴⁸ The *farman* called upon the subjects

42 The Kalat State National Party, Baloch League and Baloch National Worker Party, Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Balochistan*, 190.

43 Harrison, *In the Shadow of Afghanistan*, 26.

44 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Balochistan*, 193.

45 MSS EUR D971/3.

46 MSS EUR D971/3.

47 Inayatullah Baloch, "The Baloch Question in Pakistan and the Right of Self-determination", in *Pakistan in its Fourth Decade Current Political, Social, and Economic Situation And Prospects for the 1980s*, Wolfgang-Peter Zingel in collaboration with Stephanie Zindgel-Ave Lallemand, ed. (Hamburg: Deutsches Orient-Institute IM Verbund Der Stiftung Deutsches Ubersee-Institute, 1983), 200.

48 MSS EUR D971/3.

of the Kalat State not to afford the young rebel any kind of help and pressed the government of Pakistan to take strong steps to foil any attack on the Khanate.⁴⁹ Failing to get any external help the rebel nationalist Prince was arrested in the mountains of Balochistan along with his comrades and imprisoned was along with a fine of Rs, 5,000.⁵⁰ His other companions were also sentenced and fined.⁵¹ The uprising was not favoured by Ghaus Bakhsh Bezenjo, Gul Khan and Abdul Aziz Kurd because they were not certain about internal and external support.⁵² In fact, they largely changed their political strategy and instead of taking a separatist stand, worked within the political framework of Pakistan.

The Khan of Kalat delayed matters to bargain more perks and privileges for his family, thereby putting the Balochistan into unending war and mistrust against Pakistan. Commenting on the adventure of the Prince, the *Dawn* observed in its editorial that "His Highness could not have been ignorant of his younger brother's intentions...and that he cannot therefore be altogether absolved of responsibility for the latter's escapade."⁵³

The state of Pakistan responded the first resistance of the Baloch in a manner which was against its earlier commitments with Kalat State. As it is practiced in the post-colonial developing world, the state and its institutions played a significant role in rising of nationalist movements. Every state has dissenting voices either for economic and political rights or for complete secession but it is the policy and response of the state apparatus to accommodate the ethnic groups in the broader political realm that determines developments.

49 MSS EUR D971/3.

50 Rana Muhammad Amir and Mubasher Bukhari, eds., *Balochistan: Conflicts and Players* (Islamabad: Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), 2008), 48.

51 Naseer, *Tarikh-e Balochistan*, 26.

52 Malik Muhammad Saeed Dehwar, *Contemporary History of Balochistan* (Quetta: Third World Publications, 1994), 323.

53 *Dawn*, "Kalat Affairs", July 15, 1948.

Upon his release, Abdul Karim Khan formed a new political party *Usthaman Gall* (People's Party). The Baloch political organization focused on the formation of Baloch province.⁵⁴ The political scenario was in flux in both Pakistan and Balochistan. The country was without constitution due to irresolvable disagreement over the several key issues, including the formula for power sharing between the centre and the provinces.

In 1952, the federal government formed Balochistan States Union (BSU) by merging Kalat, Kharan, Las Bela and Makran States into a single entity which remained separate from former British Balochistan. Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, the Khan of Kalat, was made the life time Khan-e-Azam (The Great Khan) in the new set up. Khan, representing the BSU signed a supplementary instrument of accession and delegated the status of colonial period thereby paved the way for earlier accessions to Pakistan.⁵⁵

Second and Third Wave of Baloch Nationalism 1959-69

The Khan of Kalat resisted the administrative arrangements and merger of Balochistan in the One Unit System.⁵⁶ The feelings of marginalization were intensified when he demanded abolition of One Unit and restoration of the lost status of Kalat Sate. He mobilized tribal chieftains to criticize the merger and the attitude of federal government despite a ban on political activity.⁵⁷ The President of Pakistan, Sikander Mirza was planning for imposing Martial Law, indicated Khan of Kalat to restore the previous status of Kalat. He suggested the Khan to seek advice of British lawyer at London regarding the withdrawal of Kalat from One Unit System. Mirza deliberately created a situation to impose martial law on the pretext that the Baloch want to secede

54 Awan, *Baluchistan*, 219.

55 MSS EUR D 972/2.

56 Farhn Hanif Siddiqi, *The Sate and Politics of Ethnicity in Post 1971 Pakistan: The Baloch, Sindhi and Mohajir Ethnic Movements* (London: Routledge, 2012), 131.

57 Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*, 172.

from Pakistan. When Khan returned from London to Balochistan, Pakistani forces moved into Kalat on October 6, 1958 and arrested the Khan on the charge of revolt against Pakistan.⁵⁸ However, the charges were, denied by the Khan who considered this whole episode as an excuse used by Sikander Mirza to impose martial law in the country.⁵⁹ General Mohammad Ayub Khan took over power in Pakistan in a military *coup d'état* in October 1958.⁶⁰

The military presence was resented by the tribesmen and the eighty years old Sardar Nauroz Khan Zahri, led an armed insurrection in support of the Khan in the mountains of *Jhalawan*.⁶¹ The octogenarian leader demanded the release of the Khan, breaking up of One Unit and restoration of Kalat State. He also urged the central government to respect Baloch customs and traditions.⁶² The unfulfilled demands of the insurgent leader made the Baloch ethnic identity a significant force from this point onwards in Pakistan.⁶³

The struggle of *Babu* (elder) Nauroz became a role model for the next ethno-nationalist movements for the Baloch identity and greater political autonomy. Pakistan Government apparently, succeeded in silencing the dissent but provided a historical lesson of deprivation and grievances for the Baloch people to prepare for another round of conflict with the state.

The regime of General Muhammad Ayub Khan followed strong political, economic and cultural policies with One Unit Scheme introducing 'Controlled Democracy' based on the Basic Democracy.⁶⁴ The government believed in suppressing

58 Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*, 181-85.

59 Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*, 183; Breeseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 301.

60 Farhat Mahmud, "The 1958 Coup d'état in Pakistan: Historical Background", *Journal of Political Science*, no. 1, 2 (Winter, 1987): 58-89.

61 Breeseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 286.

62 Axmann, *Back to the Future*, 286.

63 Breeseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 302.

64 Janmahmad, *Essays on Baloch National Struggle in Pakistan*, 202.

the opposition with force in the country. The life imprisonment of Nauroz Khan and execution of his companions sparked off resistance in Balochistan. In 1962, President Ayub Khan visited Balochistan and ordered to tight the situation against any rebellion.⁶⁵

The events led Marri, Mengal and Bugti tribes to establish loosely based guerrilla organization, called *Parari* (rebel) in 1963. The organization was influenced by the concept of popular war as experienced by Algeria, Cuba, China and Vietnam. Sher Mohammad Marri, the founder of the movement, vowed to struggle to protect the people crushed by central government and continue the armed movement to the dissolution of One Scheme.⁶⁶ *Pararis* fought against the state in conventional guerrilla fashion to which the state hit back with force.⁶⁷ The state faced disturbance in Marri-Bugti areas of Balochistan respectively. In order to control the opposition to government policies, Ayub Khan withdrew chieftaincy titles of hostile *sardars* while appointed his supporters as *sardar* of Mengal, Mari and Bugti tribes.⁶⁸

The situation continued for about nine years with casualties from both sides. The Baloch struggle subsided when General Yahya assumed power in 1969 and subsequently abolished One Unit Scheme of West Pakistan in 1970.⁶⁹ Thus, Balochistan consisting of previous areas was declared a full-fledged province in the same year. The nationalist insurgents brought an end to their opposition because their principal demand of separate province based on Baloch identity was restored. However, the leaders of the

65 Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*, 189.

66 Sher Mohammad Marri, also known as General Sherof, was the leading Baloch strategist of irregular warfare and a man who underwent 14 years of imprisonment for seditious activities. Harrison, *In the Shadow of Afghanistan*, 29; Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 304.

67 Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 308.

68 B.M.Kutty, ed., *In Search of Solutions: An Autobiography of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo* (Karachi: Pakistan Study Center, University of Karachi, 2009), 106.

69 Syed Iqbal Ahmad, *Balochistan: Its Strategic Importance* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1992), 197.

movement continued with guerrilla formations and they kept their command headquarter intact for future.⁷⁰

Nationalist Movement in 1973-77

In 1970, President Yahya Khan restored political activities on the condition that the parties kept the national interest supreme. National Awami Party (NAP) was able to gain hold in the politics of Balochistan on account of its opposition to the One Unit Scheme. The party made efforts to make political capital out of it. General Elections of National and Provincial Assemblies were held in 1970. The NAP won eight seats out of twenty in Provincial Assembly of Balochistan. This was for the first time where people voted for national and provincial assemblies and rejected traditional tribal *Sardars* of the province.⁷¹

After the separation of East Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto assumed the office of President with a pledge 'to turn over a new leaf and start out on a clean slate' in the new Pakistan. Bhutto lifted the ban on NAP in December 1971.⁷² In his address to the National Assembly, he spoke of equal rights for the people of Pakistan and acknowledged the mandate of majority parties in establishing provincial governments.⁷³

Resultantly, on March 6, 1972, a Tripartite Accord was concluded between the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the NAP and Jamiat-e-Ulama-e-Islam (JUI). Under the agreement, governments both at the center and in the provinces were to be formed on the basis of parliamentary majorities. The federal government would appoint governor of Balochistan in consultation with the majority party in the province. Mir Ghause Bakhsh Bizenjo, a leader of NAP was

70 Harrison, *In the Shadow of Afghanistan*, 33.

71 Craig Baxter, "Pakistan Votes-1970", *Asian Survey* 11, no.3 (March, 1971): 197-218, accessed on 25-04-2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3024655>

72 Government of Pakistan, *Achievements of People's Government 1972-1976* (Islamabad: Directorate of Research, Reference and Publications, 1976), 2.

73 Government of Pakistan, *President Bhutto's Address to the National Assembly* (Islamabad: Department of Films and Publications, 1972).

appointed as the governor of Balochistan.⁷⁴ Consequently, the NAP-JUI alliance formed provincial government and SardarAtaullahMengalwas elected as Chief Minister by assembly.⁷⁵

The Tripartite Accord 'ran into trouble within days of its conclusion' as Bhutto made it clear that the governor would remain in office as long as he had the confidence of the President.⁷⁶ Bhutto did not desire to share power with any political power in the country. The desire of powerful rule led him to start a campaign regarding NAP leadership's involvement in the London Plan to further break-up the country. He felt this would serve to discredit the NAP while applying pressure on them to accept a constitutional arrangement. At the same time, he played on tribal rivalries by supporting the opposing factions.⁷⁷

Unfortunately, the process of democracy was disrupted by state centralised policies and high handedness in Balochistan.⁷⁸ The central government charged the leadership of the NAP as 'anti-state elements' working for the disintegration of the country.⁷⁹ The NAP continued to propagate the theory of four nationalities in Pakistan,(Baloch, Sindhi, Pashtun and Punjabi) based on linguistic and racial basis.⁸⁰ During the period of tussle

74 The Tripartite Agreement was a major "political settlement" reached between the three parties. See the text of the tripartite agreement in Satish Kumar, *The New Pakistan* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Ltd., 1978), 10-11.

75 Ziring, *Pakistan: The Enigma of Political Development*, 164.

76 Government of Pakistan, *White Paper on Balochistan* (Rawalpindi: Government of Pakistan, 1974), 9.

77 Rafi Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan 1967-1977* (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 1997), 267-68.

78 Herbert Feldman, "Pakistan-1973" *Asian Survey*, 14, no.2, Part II (February, 1974): 136-42.

79 Government of Pakistan, *Attorney General YahyaBakhtiar's Opening Address in the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the Reference by The Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Dissolution of National Awami Party* (Islamabad: Directorate of Research, Government of Pakistan, 1975),45.

80 Government of Pakistan, *Attorney General YahyaBakhtiar's Opening Address in the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the Reference by the Islamic*

between the center and provincial administration certain events happened in Balochistan, which proved decisive in the overthrow of provincial government.

The dissolution of the Balochistan Provincial Assembly followed the arrest of its elected members.⁸¹ Bhutto government accused the NAP leaders of creating chaos and unrest in the country. They were also charged of challenging the integrity of the state in collaboration with Afghanistan.⁸² Eventually, federal government declared the NAP an unlawful party operating in a manner prejudicial to the integrity and sovereignty of Pakistan. The offices were closed down and central government filed a reference to the Supreme Court against provincial leadership. The Supreme Court issued notices to the NAP leaders. In response, the leadership submitted separate written statements in the apex court.⁸³

Dismissal of the provincial government led to another uprising in Balochistan. The military was called in to grapple with the insurgents.⁸⁴ The government also sought help from Iranian government in quelling the resistance.⁸⁵ Iran had a lot of concerns about the effects of the so-called 'Greater Balochistan Movement' in Pakistan on Iranian Baloch.⁸⁶ The NAP was side-lined and the various guerrilla groups surfaced and took up arms against the state. The insurgency was mostly launched by Balochistan Peoples' Liberation Front (BPLF) and Baloch Students' Organization (BSO). The

Republic of Pakistan on Dissolution of National Awami Party (Islamabad: Information & Broadcasting Division, Directorate of Research, Reference & Publications, 1975), 42-46.

81 Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 327.

82 Hamid Khan, *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001), 300.

83 Wali Khan, Arbab Sikandar Khan, Sardar Khair Bakhsh Marri, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and Sardar Ataullah Mengal

84 Khan, *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan*, 97.

85 Tahir Amin, *Ethno-National Movements of Pakistan: Domestic and International Factors* (Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies), 149.

86 Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 271.

BPLF originated from the *Parari* organization which was involved in rebellious activities during Ayub Khan era.⁸⁷

The insurgents tried to disrupt communication links and deployment movements of the army.⁸⁸ According to one estimate 6,000 Baloch fighters were killed and army suffered 3,000 casualties in the conflict.⁸⁹ The insurgency engaged the forces mainly in the Marris-Bugti areas. At the height of the fighting in late 1974, U.S. supplied Iranian combat helicopters; some manned by Iranian pilots joined Pakistani Air Force in raids on Baloch camps. The Baloch, for their part, did not receive substantial foreign help and were armed only with bolt-action rifles, homemade grenades and captured weaponry.⁹⁰ The conflict was brought to an end only after Bhutto's regime was overthrown in a coup by General Zia-ul-Haq in 1977 and the subsequent release of the Baloch leaders by the military regime.⁹¹

The policies of the central government against the NAP leadership caused mistrust between the center and the province. Bhutto, from the beginning did not practice the democratic traditions of federal system, instead he believed in authoritarian rule. Bhutto was unfamiliar with traditional cultures and local tribal rules when he dealt with the Baloch leadership. The external pressure also played an important factor in worsening the situation. The conflict between Iran and Iraq was a key factor in forcing Shah of Iran to demand action against the nationalist leaders by Bhutto regime. The Iranian government was critical and apprehensive about the movement for autonomy in Pakistani Balochistan and its spillover effects in Iranian Balochistan.

Bhutto's initial strategy of sharing political power with regionalists had good effect on national politics. Later, PPP

87 Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 76.

88 Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 152.

89 *The Weekly Takbeer*, Karachi, September 6, 1986.

90 Sleig S. Harrison, "Baluch Nationalism and Superpower Rivalry", *International Security* 5, no. 3 (Winter, 1980-1981), 154.

91 Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 337.

government undermined the elected government in Balochistan and did not acknowledge the very concept of political tolerance and culture of pluralism in politics.

Nationalists and Zia-ul-Haq Regime

Zia-ul-Haq toppled the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and imposed Martial Law on July 5, 1977. The *coup d'état* experienced the same pattern of military-bureaucratic rule as it had been during Ayub era 1958-1969.⁹² However, Zia regime took some positive steps pertaining to Balochistan crisis. The detained Baloch leaders including their political supporters were released. Zia dissolved Hyderabad Tribunal which was formed by Bhutto government to try the NAP leaders for their alleged 'anti-state activities' and withdrew the Hyderabad Conspiracy Cases.⁹³

These positive gestures of the regime, to some extent, reduced the tension in Balochistan. However, centrifugal tendencies grew stronger because under military rule all doors of political participation were closed. Zia's government tried to integrate the Baloch nationalists through the so-called process of Islamization. It failed to redress the genuine grievances of Balochistan. The Baloch nationalism remained a potent force and clear signs of restlessness were observed during Zia rule.⁹⁴

Thus, the Baloch nationalists were divided in this era. The contradictory forces of assimilation and political pragmatism marked it. Political pragmatism during this time was at its peak amongst a majority of the political and tribal chiefs of the province. It was an era of divisions, alliances, and factionalism.⁹⁵ However, most Baloch nationalist parties

92 Amin, *Ethno-National Movements*, 169.

93 Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 39-40.

94 Amin, *Ethno National Movements*, 168.

95 Aziz Bugti, *Balochistan Wasail Mein Masail* [Urdu: Balochistan: Problems in Resources] (Quetta: Kalat Publishers 2009); Christophe Jaffrelot, *Pakistan Nation, Nationalism and the State* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 2002), 30.

possessed a common stand on Baloch national issues such as provincial autonomy and control over resources.⁹⁶

The Zia regime, however, introduced democracy to organize political life without political parties. That was why, non-party national and provincial elections were held in 1985.⁹⁷ Resultantly, election campaign revolved around regional, ethnic and local issues.

Since the elections were held on non-party basis, therefore, the entire major political and regional parties were deprived of participation in the political arena. It also caused a sense of alienation among the people of Balochistan. Zia's regime engaged many *Sardars* in so-called democracy.⁹⁸ Twenty-seven tribal chiefs or their relatives were elected in the non-party election of 1985.⁹⁹

The policies of government aggravated the feelings of deprivation in Balochistan. They were deprived of their right of power sharing, which they had under a civilian regime. The prolonged rule of the regime increased the sense of alienation. This policy gave birth to Intra-group and inter-group divisions that led to a growing clash between different personalities, ideologies, strategies and goals. The end of Zia rule heralded a period of partial democracy in the country.¹⁰⁰

Political environment in Pakistan came to normalcy in post-Zia period. Earlier power-tussle between the institutions caused great harm to the federation. Consequently, it created a sense of deprivation in Balochistan. Civilian governments did not take solid steps to integrate nationalist forces. The centralised policies of the so-called democratic

96 See Manifesto Booklets of Balochistan National Party-Mengal; National Party; Balochistan National Party-Awami; and PIPS, *Balochistan*, 85-130.

97 Khan, *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan*, 385.

98 Amin, *Ethno- National Movements*, 203.

99 *Dawn*, March 2, 1985.

100 Lawrence Ziring, "Pakistan's Nationalities Dilemma: Domestic and International Implications", in *The Subcontinent in World Politics India, its Neighbours, and the Great Powers*, ed., Lawrence Ziring (New York: Praeger, 1982), 113.

era reinforced the demand of provincial autonomy and economic rights. With respect to Baloch nationalist forces the things rested here when General Pervez Musharraf imposed martial law in Pakistan in 1999.

Conclusion

The socio-economic deprivation of the common people of Balochistan is long rooted in history. During the British Period those problems became more aggravated. Hence the creation of Pakistan, it inherited many serious problems.

During the post-independence period, the central governments sometimes adopted a centralised policy to deal with the national issues. This policy gave rise a sense of deprivation. Federal governments should have tried their best to minimize this sense of deprivation. To deal with those issues, the federal governments, at times, handed over the responsibilities of suitable redressal to the local tribal chiefs and that seldom produced positive results.