

The Reflections of Baloch People in Culture and Literature

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims at locating the signs and reflections of Baloch people in the cultural ethos and literary work of the Baloch. The historical narrative of the Baloch is not complete without an elaborate description and illustration of the culture and literature of the Baloch. The paper, after providing a very brief account of the formation of Baloch and Balochistan, shows that Baloch literature is full of explanations on the Baloch people. It provides an elaboration of the poetries and poets whose works are full of reflection of the Baloch people. It argues that the people in Balochistan are glorified in its art, literature, poetry, and other cultural manifestations. Such reflection therefore is not only a sound recognition of Baloch people but is also their clear acknowledgement in shaping the historical discourse of the Baloch community.

Introduction

Balochistan, the fourth province of Pakistan, is a region of immense geo-strategic importance, rich in oil, gas and other resources. Geographically, with an area of 347,190 sq km, Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan, comprising 44 percent of the country's territory and sharing international borders with Iran to the west and Afghanistan to the North.

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The population of Balochistan comprises only 5 percent of total population of the country.¹

Balochistan means the land of the Baloch people. The origin of the Baloch has been a historic puzzle, with a certain elusive nature and obscurity. The lack of documented record gives various reasons to scholars to ascribe different theories to the origins of the Baloch.² It is believed that various Baloch tribes had migrated to present day Balochistan in pre-Christian times and they belong to the Arab, Kurd, Persian and many origins. Some recent historical research highlights the gradual population of Balochistan by present-day Baloch populations of diverse origins and heterogeneous structures.³

Historians of the 19th and 20th Centuries have different views *vis-à-vis* the origin of the Baloch. Writers such as Bellew⁴ and Dames⁵ associated the Baloch with different racial entities of the Iranian region. Rawlinson⁶ was in favour of a Chaldean (Arab-Semitic) origin of the Baloch, while Bellew-

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- 1 Besides the Baloch, other ethnic groups have lived in modern-day Balochistan for ages, but do not consider themselves as part of the Baloch nation, since granted with their own ethnic and national identities. For instance, Pashtuns are the second largest group, established for centuries in 10 out of 30 districts of Balochistan. According to the 1998 Census Report, the Baloch are about 55 percent of the population, Pashtun about 30 percent, and the rest 15 percent [sic] are the Punjabis, Sindhis, Saraikis, Muhajirs, Hazara and others (see Khan, Gulawar, Politics of Nationalism, Federalism, and Separatism: The case of Balochistan in Pakistan, PhD Thesis, University of Westminster, UK, 2014: 1).
 - 2 Mir Ahmed Yar Khan Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan: A Political Autobiography of His Highness Baiglar Baaigi, Khan-e-Azam XIII* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1975), 51.
 - 3 For more details, see Manzoor Ahmed and Gulawar Khan, "The History of Baloch and Balochistan: A Critical Appraisal", *South Asian Studies*, 32, no.1(2017): 39-52.
 - 4 H. W. Bellew, *From the Indus to the Tigris: A Narrative of a Journey through the Countries of Balochistan, Afghanistan, Khorassan and Iran* (London: Trubner, 1874).
 - 5 M. L. Dames, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches* (in two volume) (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1907).
 - 6 G. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarch: Geography, History, and Antiquities of Parthia* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1873).

ligned the Baloch people with the Rajputs, who, he believed, are of Indian origin. He identified the name Baloch with 'Bal-licha', a clan of Chuahan Rajputs. Pottinger⁷ rejected the theory of the Arab origin of the Baloch and argued that they are of Turkmen ethnic stock. Dames⁸ considered them to be from the Aryan and Iranian groups of tribes. He held this opinion based on the physical structure of the Baloch. He considered the Brahu is to be a different race because of their linguistic differences with the Baloch and linked them to an Indian origin. He opined that those who speak the Balochi language are Baloch while those live around Kalat and speak the Brahui language are of an Indian origin. Baluch M.S.K⁹ also considered the Brahu is as a different race (linguistically) to the rest of the Baloch, and asserts, ". . . the origin of Brahui race is an enigma of history".

On the other hand many Baloch historians such as Dashti¹⁰, Naseer¹¹, Breseeg¹², and Inayatullah Baluch¹³ reject such racial theories and argue that the British Government and its history writers intentionally divided the Baloch people on the basis of language for the purpose of advancing colonial interests to rule them. According to Breseeg ". . . [w]hatever their ethnic origin may be . . . the Brahui regard themselves as part and parcel of the Baloch nation, sharing a common culture, religion, historical experiences and unifying symbols with the Baloch, and above all . . . there is a strong desire

7 Pottinger, *Travels in Balochistan and Sind* (London: Longman, 1816).

8 Dames, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*.

9 Muhammad Sardar Khan Baluch, *History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan* (Quetta: Goshe-e Adab, 1958), 265.

10 Naseer Dashti, *The Baloch and Balochistan: A Historical Account from the Beginning to the Fall of the Baloch State* (London: Trafford Publishing, 2012), 3-4.

11 Gul Khan Naseer, *Tareekh-e-Balochistan* [Urdu: History of Balochistan] (5th ed.), (Quetta: Kalat Publisher, 2010), 528.

12 Taj Mohammad Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism its Origin and Development* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2004), 143.

13 Inayatullah Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan: A Study of Baloch Nationalism* (Stuttgart: Steiner-Verlag, 1987).

among them to emphasise a common origin with the Baloch and that is politically very important”¹⁴.

Many historians trace their roots to the ancient tribes around the city of Aleppo, Syria, which historians and scholars like Dames¹⁵ Harrison¹⁶ and Khan¹⁷ also confirm. Dashti¹⁸ notes that the Baloch are Aryans and belong to the Indo-Iranian linguistic group, which had migrated from Central Asia towards the Caspian Sea and of and Iranian plateau around 1200 BC.¹⁹ Linguists trace the origin of the Baloch to the Caspian Sea in the time before the birth of Christ.²⁰ However, Marri²¹ as well as Ahmed and Khan²² hold the view that the Baloch are an aboriginal and indigenous people of Balochistan. For instance, Ahmed and Khan argue that the Baloch nation is a mixture of various ethnic groups such as Aryans, Arabs, Persians, Turks, Kurds, Dravidians, Sewais (Hindu), and the black African people, hence they are heterogeneous in its composition and characters. They consider the Baloch the aboriginal cave dwellers and hunters who created the first known civilization of the world called the Mehargarh Civilization.²³ Like Marri²⁴ and Ahmed and

14 Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 131.

15 M. L. Dames, *The Baluch Race: A Historical and Ethnological Sketch* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1904).

16 Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baluch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations* (Washington, D.C: Carnage, 1981), 10-12.

17 Baluch, *History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan*, 265.

18 Dashti, *The Baloch and Balochistan*.

19 Dashti, *The Baloch and Balochistan*, 3-4.

20 For details see, Dames Longworth, *The Baloch Race* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1904).

21 Shah Muhammad Marri, *Baloch Qawm 'Ahde Qadeem Se Riyasat ki Tashkeel Tak* [Urdu: Baloch nation from the ancient times to the establishment of the state] (Karachi: City Book Point, 2010).

22 Ahmed & Khan, "The History of Baloch and Balochistan,".

23 See for more details on the Mehargarh Civilization, Marri, *Baloch Qaum Ihde Qadeem Se Riyasat Ki Tashkeel Tak*, 54.

24 Marri, *Baloch Qum Ihde Qadeem Se Riyasat kiTashkeel Tashkeel Tak*.

Khan²⁵, Kenoyer²⁶ also terms the Baloch as indigenous people who have not migrated from anywhere but are aboriginal.

On the formation of Balochistan, Inayatullah Baluch²⁷ believes that the country of the Baloch has been known as Balochistan since the founding of the first Baloch Confederacy in the 12th Century.²⁸ Likewise, Gankovsky, a Russian scholar, attributes the appearance of the name to the formation of Balochi feudal nationality and the spread of the Baloch over the territory that bears today their name.

Various scholars, including many British travellers and other colonial writers dispute the exact time of the establishment of the first Baloch confederacy but Breseeg²⁹ claims that the unity of Baloch begins in the 12th Century, when Mir Jalal-Han was the head of 44 Baloch tribes. Similarly, for Baluch³⁰ and Dames³¹ the 44 tribes of Mir Jalal-Han later became the basis of the five major Baloch tribes: Rind, Lashari, Korai, Houth, and Jatoi. Stretching back from the 'Rind-Lashar Union' in 1485 under Mir Chakar Khan Rind, the Baloch people have a long history.³² According to Janmahmad³³ the Rind-Lashar Union was one of the largest Baloch tribal confederacies, stretching from Kirman (now in Iran) in the west to the Indus River Valley (in Pakistan) in the East.

25 Ahmed & Khan, "The History of Baloch and Balochistan".

26 Jonathan Mark Kenoyer, *Ancient Cities of the Indus Valley Civilization* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 36-39.

27 Inayatallah, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan: A Study of Baluch Nationalism* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1987).

28 Inayatallah Baluch, "Resistance and National Liberation in Baluchi Poetry", in *Minorities' on Themselves*, ed. Hugh Van Skyhawk (Heidelberg: South Asian Institute, 1986).

29 Taj Mohammad Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism its Origin and Development* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2004), 143.

30 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*.

31 Dames, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*.

32 Dashti, *The Baloch and Balochistan*, 3-4.

33 Janmahmad. *Essays on Baloch National Struggle in Pakistan: Emergence, Dimensions Repercussions* (Quetta: Gosha-e-Adab, 1989).

Baloch unification took place later. According to Breseeg,³⁴ the first ever union of the entire Baloch area occurred in the early 16th Century, but this was short-lived as the region and the people underwent frequent divisions and struggles. It was also recorded by British historians and travellers Dames³⁵, Pottinger³⁶ and Hughes³⁷ that Baloch tribes were unable to gain political unity, due to internal tribal conflicts and civil wars, until 1666. Later, the Ahmadzai tribe established the Kalat Confederacy in 1666³⁸. The Khanate Confederacy was known as the Khanate of Balochistan or the Khanate of Kalat. The Khanate of Kalat was established in the middle of the 17th century. It included all the territories of the Baloch inhabitants and the areas of former Baloch ruler Mir Chakar Khan in Sibi.³⁹ According to Breseeg⁴⁰ Makran, western Balochistan, Derajat, Seistan, and Lasbela were all under the authority of one central body. The Khanate of Balochistan became popularly known as the Khanate of Kalat or Kalat State because of its capital city, Kalat. The Kalat confederacy lasted until the invasion of Balochistan by the British Army in 1839 when Mir Mehrab Khan, the ruler of Balochistan, was killed.⁴¹ On November 13, 1839, the British forces attacked the Palace of Balochistan's ruler, Mehrab Khan, and he and several of his friends were killed. British manipulation and the 'great game', the Baloch lost Khanate. He argues that the Baloch state has fallen twice: once in 1839 at the hands of the British and again in 1948 with the advent of the newly formed state of Pakistan. The British

34 Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 156.

35 Dames, *The Baluch Race*.

36 Pottinger, *Travels in Balochistan and Sind*.

37 A. W. Hughes, *The Country of Balochistan: Geography, Topography Ethnology & History*, eds., (Quetta: Book World, 2002).

38 Martin Axman, *Back to the Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); A. W. Hughes, *The Country of Balochistan: Geography, Topography Ethnology & History* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1877).

39 Axman, *Back to the Future*, 2009.

40 Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 163.

41 Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism*, 206.

were mainly responsible for the plight of the Baloch people, which he called the demise of the Kalat State.⁴²

With the advent of British and the subsequent weakening of Khan of Kalat, Balochistan underwent a series of political, administrative, and economic changes. The British assumed the direct control of Balochistan, bringing far-reaching social and political changes in the Baloch tribal polity. The British employed the policy of “divide and rule” by keeping the Khan under their supervision, curtailing his powers, and acting as intermediary between Sardars⁴³ and the Khan. Instead of establishing a clearly demarcated role for the Khan and the tribal chiefs, they ensured that confusion and complications would exist between them. The introduction of administrative reforms by Sir Robert Sandeman changed the basic fabrics of Baloch society, which certainly helped the British to successfully crush the pockets of Baloch resistance against the occupation of their land.

For British colonizers, Balochistan was nothing more of a frontier state, in contrast to many parts of the subcontinent Balochistan effected no such economic importance to the British. Instead it grabbed merely only having geostrategic significance to the British. They denied all sorts of public services to the people of Balochistan and introduced no people-centric political, economic, and social reforms; even not a fraction of sorts that we see in other parts of the subcontinent. Yet this may be an anachronistic critique of a system that never pretended to be anything else than colonial. They intentionally kept the Baloch backward and underdeveloped with far-reaching consequences. The legacy of this British imperial practice can be seen even in today’s Balochistan. The tribal chieftains and the Baloch tribal system have to this day remain the key cause of many problems

42 Dashti. *The Baloch and Balochistan*, 321

43 Sardar is a title of nobility that is used for headship. Sardar in Baloch society is chief of a tribe. In tribal structure the society is divided in different tribes and clans, and each tribe is led a head or a Sardar. The Baloch society is divided in many tribes, like Bughti, Marri, Mengal Zehri, Jamali etc., and each tribe has its own leader or sarder, who is from the same tribe.

including lack of unity, feudalism, and animosity between tribes, leading to internal tribal wars, traditional economic means and without social dynamism. This critique may sound subaltern, with a sense victims vision, yet the many credible specialists of colonial history hold a similar view.

Balochistan has remained conflict-ridden for many decades. The central premise of the Baloch conflict with the colonial masters during the British Raj, and with the state of Pakistan after the partition of the Indian subcontinent, has been Baloch nationalism. The ethos and sense of nationalism, therefore, has been strong among the Baloch people for a very long time, which not only infuses into its politics and society, but also has strong implications with a sound foot-prints and reflections in the Baloch culture and literature. The recent history of the Baloch as a community is full of patriotic sentiments. Therefore, it is pertinent to see the reflection and strong sense of nationalism in Baloch culture and literature. And that may be seen through a strong sense of nationalism in poetry and other literary genres. So, like in other historical accounts, a sense of nationalism is also reflected in the culture and literature. Hence, this paper primarily aims at locating the reflections of the Baloch nationalism in culture and literature, and that is mainly through poetry and other form of cultural echoes. This is important, as it shows that the Baloch nationalism is a source and result of the very diverse historical circumstances that are evoked over the course of time.

Culture and Language

Culture is a complex whole, wherein individuals or communities are recognized through their cultural norms, values, language, and literature. All these aspects play a vital role in the development and survival of any culture. Similarly, the language and literature embolden modern nationalism. People who share common culture can communicate and comprehend one another easily – as they share similar lifestyle, ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Correspondingly, common consciousness provides the basis of community, and the

growth of common literature and language are the pillar of modern community identity.

Culturally, the people of Balochistan differ from their neighbouring nations in South Asia, the Middle East, Central and West Asia. These nations include Persians, Turks, and Afghans. Despite the fact that the Baloch from time to time were forced to live under the dominance and shadow of Iran, Afghanistan, and British India, yet they somehow succeeded in preserving their distinct cultural values and different attitudes towards life. Therefore, it can be argued that the distinct culture, language, and literature have played a significant role in the political and social awareness of the Baloch people

Balochi is the primary language of Balochistan.⁴⁴ Besides Balochi, there are various minor languages, which are spoken at the ethnic borders of Balochistan. Such as Brahui, Saraiki, Sindhi, Dehwari (Persian) and Pashto. Given this multiplicity of languages, many tribes in Balochistan are bilingual.⁴⁵ Persian and Pashto were used as official languages in Western Balochistan – Persian for Iranian part of Balochistan, the western Balochistan, whereas Pashto and Dari (Persian) in Baloch dominated Afghan provinces, Helmand and Nemrooz. English and Persian were official languages in State of Kalat and Balochistan. After the independence from British India in 1947, the Khanate of Balochistan announced “Balochi” as an official and national language. This policy was sustained until March 1948.⁴⁶ In 1948, when Balochistan (the Khanate of Kalat) was incorporated into Pakistan, Balochi was replaced by English as the official language and Urdu as the national language. In that time, Gwadar town and some of its adjacent areas were part of Oman and Arabic served as the official language until

44 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 49.

45 Shēr Muhammad Marri, *Balōčī Zabān va Adab kī Tārīkh* [Urdu: History of Balochi Language and Literature] (Quetta: Balochi Academy, 1973).

46 Gul Khan Naseer, *Tareekh-e-Balochistan* [Urdu: History of Balochistan] (5th ed.) (Quetta: Kalat Publisher, 2010), 528.

1958, when all the northern shores of the Sea, including Gwadar, was given back to Balochistan.⁴⁷

Balochi has several dialects. Linguists and scholars agree on the following two major dialects: Eastern and Western Balochi. The Eastern dialect has affinity with Sindhi, Saraiki, and Pashto, and uses a lot of vocabulary of these languages.⁴⁸ The western Balochi dialect has borrowed a number of words from neighbouring languages such as Turkmen, Persian, Pashto and Arabic.

It can be argued that the Balochi has different historical background compare to other languages of South Asia. At the moment of the Kalat State memorandum,⁴⁹ Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Quaid-i-Azam, who became the founding father of Pakistan in 1947, declared during a cabinet mission in 1946 that there was very little affinity between India and the State of Kalat, and that the Balochi language, the language of Kalat State, belonged to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European family unlike the other Indo-European languages of South Asia.⁵⁰ In the same memorandum, Brahui

47 Carina Jahani, "The Balochi Language and Languages in Iranian Balochistan," *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 4, no. 2 (2013): 153–167. http://www.lingfil.uu.se/digitalAssets/562/c_562186-l_3-k_jahanibadalkhannov15.pdf

48 J. Eifenbein, "Balochi Language, Linguistic History", in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. I (1954):1006-1007. See also Brian Spooner, "Notes on the Balochi, Spoken in Persian Balochistan", *Journal of Persian Studies* 5, no. 2 (1967): 65-87.

49 Submitted in the form of an official memorandum to the Mission in March 1946, the main concern of the Government of Kalat regarding the future position of the Khanate at the time, according to the document, was to restore its independence with the British withdrawal. In the memorandum the Khan of Kalat, stated that Kalat expected to restore its pre-1876 status by regaining its full independence and recovering its sovereign rights over all the Kalat territories held or leased by Britain upon the cessation of her power in India. As stated by the memorandum, the state of Kalat: "will become fully sovereign and independent in respect to both internal and external affairs, and will be free to conclude treaties with any other government or state... The Khan, his government, and his people can never agree to Kalat being included in any form of Indian Union..." Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*, 255-296.

50 See Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*, 49-51.

was declared as Dravidian language, with affinity with the Gond dialect of South India.

Although it is difficult to trace the actual time and period of the origination of Balochi language, yet scholars like Dashti, Janmahmad and Baluch⁵¹ are of the opinion that historically, Balochi language originated between 200 B.C and 700 A.D. Similarly, J. Elfenbein⁵² did a comparative study on Balochi with Parthian and Persian. He concluded that the ancestor of Balochi was neither Parthian nor Middle Persian but a lost language, which shared a number of characteristics, features either with Parthian or Middle Persian, whereas some characteristics of Balochi resemble both, although with a phonetics of its own. On the question of the affinity of Zand or old Bactrian languages, Dames⁵³ argues that Balochi being a “distinctive language” among the Iranian group of the Indo-European language family. He asserts that Balochi, as the distinctive language of the Baloch race, has been a defining factor in arousing the consciousness of the Baloch people in their demand for the right of self-determination.

Before the 19th Century, Balochi language was used in court proceedings, while Persian was the official language with written form used in all official correspondence. British historians and linguists introduced Balochi in written form with Roman script firstly.⁵⁴In ensuing era Baloch scholars might have been historically or geographically influenced by Persian and Arabic used in these styles of calligraphy called them “Nastaaliq” and “Naskh”. But a small group of linguists and scholars still favoured the Roman script with suppressed voice till 1948.⁵⁵

51 Dashti, *The Baloch and Balochistan*; Janmahmad. *Essays on Baloch National Struggle*; Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*.

52 Elfenbein, “Balochi Language,” 1006-1007.

53 Dames, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*.

54 G. W. Gilbertson, *The Balochi Language*, 1995:1-2.

55 Karim Dushti, “Balochi Rasmul Khat” [Urdu: Balochi Language and Script] 29-32; Noor Muhamad Jamali, “Baloch Rasmul Khat Kiya” [What is Baloch Script], 13-16, in *Balochi Dunya*, August, 1970.

Literature

Historically, given the lack of writing and record keeping, Balochi literature has transformed vocally from generation-to-generation. The *shair* [Urdu: poet], *dom* and *lori* [Balochi: professional minstrels] played a vital role in the development and preservation of Balochi literature. *Dom*, *Loris* and often were sung by minstrels during tribal meetings, preserved the genealogy of tribes people.⁵⁶ The earlier manifestations of Balochi poetry were in the form of *loris* [Balochi: lullabies]; *halo halo* and *lado*, or *ladok* [Balochi: songs for marriage occasions], *destanaghs* [Balochi: short songs usually sung in accompaniment with *naz*, a flute], *zahiruks* [Balochi: melodies of separation of lovers] and *motaks* [Balochi: mourning] and epicedium.⁵⁷ Professional minstrels and poets were considered praiseworthy for the preservation of Balochi literature.

The main Balochi literature is found in poetry, which is purely popular in origin and form. Dames⁵⁸ writes that the forms of Persian poetry which have been the universal standard, even of popular poetry, in Afghanistan and Muslim India are not to be found in Balochistan. There are ghazals, yet no artificial arrangement of poems in divans, as Baloch poetry is multilingual and, as such at least, includes the ghazal genre, none of the pedantry of Persian prosody. In form as in content, Balochi poetry is simple and direct in expression, and excels in vivid pictures of life and landscapes, which it brings before us without any conscious effort – which may be because of quest for simplicity should perhaps be considered part of a conscious creative effort – at description on the part of the singer. As might be expected in a parched-up land, where water is scarce and rain seldom falls, the poet delights in describing the vivid thunderstorms, which occasionally visit the mountains and the sudden transformation of the countryside that follows a fall of rain. The heavy atmosphere laden

56 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*.

57 Baloch, *Inside Balochistan*, 64.

58 Dames, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*.

with dust and haze is transformed into one of transparent clearness and inspiring freshness; the brown mountain-side is covered in a few days with a bright green carpet, the dry watercourse becomes flowing streams, waterfalls leap from the heights, and every rocky hollow holds a pool of fresh water. The shepherds, armed with sword and shield and matchlock, stride along singing in front of their flocks marching to the upland pastures from the parched and sweltering lowlands and the women join in and wander about alone in the hills, free from male molestation. On the other hand, vivid scenes of war and rapine are common, and the character of the act are sharply defined and brought out in their actions and speeches.⁵⁹

Cataloguing Balochi Poetry

Balochi poetry has been catalogued into the following order:

- Heroic or epic poetry of war ballads
- Romantic ballads
- Love songs and lyrics
- Religious poetry
- Short poems, including lullabies and rhymed riddles
- Modern and nationalism

Apart from poetry, Balochi has its own prose style of the following types:

- I. Balochi folk tales
- II. Modern style literature

Freedom of expression and independence with certain degree of nationalism, though raw and unconscious, is a sentiment where the people express their opinion and intimacy without any resistance. Historical evidence shows that the first poem was composed in the 12th Century at the time

59 Dames, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*; see also Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*.

when the Baloch migrated from Seistan Kirman to Makran and constituted their first confederacy under Mir Jalal Han.⁶⁰ In the 15th century, the Baloch were spread throughout Eastern Balochistan. Such a free space or a liberal atmosphere provided the chance to poets to compose love songs, record their traditional history and their relations with their neighbours, their intertribal feuds (relations and affairs) and their conquest drivers (military power) into the Indian subcontinent. At this time, they gave the new name to their territory, Balochistan (the land of the Baloch). The songs for the love of the land were composed for fatherland.⁶¹ With respect to nationalism and nationalistic sentiments in cultural ethos and literature, Balochi literature can be divided into various parts.

Historical Poetry

Poetry is a unique version to represent the historical background of any nation. We can find the Baloch version of their history in poetic form where their origin, their migration from Seistan to Makran, the formation of a confederacy, and the division of agricultural lands etc. is easy to locate. And in the light of these attributes it can be argued that the kind of a love for Baloch community and the Baloch territorial landscape is broadly reflected in Balochi poetry. These poems give the information of tribal feuds in the 15th Century, which continued for 20 or 30 years.⁶² Hence, the Balochi classic poetry is kind of a “*Daftar*” [Urdu: historical record] in which the Baloch migration into the Indian subcontinent, the relations amongst several Baloch tribe themselves, the relations with the Mughals and the Afghans, and their agonies and pains and their joys and glories pertaining to the inhospitality and vastness of Baloch land are narrated with all clarity. For example, in one of the poetries, which is attributed with Mir Jalal Han, though he himself was not a poet, a short and yet

60 Dashti, *The Baloch and Balochistan*:

61 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 57-58.

62 Gul Khan Naseer, *Tareekh-e-Balochistan* [Urdu: History of Balochistan] (5th eds.) (Quetta: Kalat Publisher, 2010).

unconstructed history of the Baloch is narrated. The poem narrates:

I return thanks and praise to God, himself the Lord of the land; when the rest of world becomes dust and clay, he will remain serene of heart; we are the offspring of Mir Hamza, victory rests with God's shine; we arise from Aleppo and engage in battle with Yazid in Karbala and Bampur, and we march to the town of Sistan; our king was Shams al-Din who was favourable to the Baloch but, when Badr al-Din arose, we were suddenly harshly treated. At the head was Mir Jalal Khan, four and forty Baloch we were; we came to the port of Harin on the right side of Kech; the Hoth settle in Makran, the Khos-sas in the land of Kech; the Hoths and Korais (or the Nohs and Dodais) are united, they are in Lashar-Land; the Drishaks, Hoths and Mazaris (or the Drishak and Mazari-Khan) are equal with the Rinds; the Rind and Lashari boarders march one with the other; the greatest house is the Dombki, above the running water of Gaj. From Aleppo come the Chandyas together with the house of the Kalmats. The Nohs settle in Nali together with the Jistkanis. The Phuzh Mirali and Jatol tribes are all in Sevi and Dhadar, the Phuzh are the original Rind foundation with Mir Chakaur at their head. The Gorgezh are known for their wealth, and settle in the land of Thali. The Gholos, Gopangs and Dashti are outside the Rind enclosure, all the multitude of other baloch is jointed with Rinds. The Rind dwell in Shoran, the Lasharis in Ganddva, dividing between them the streams of running water; Shaihak is the chief of them all.⁶³

The same poet further elaborates:

This is our footprint and track; this is the Baloch record; for thirty years we fought together; this is Baloch strife. Following after Shaihak and Shahdad (or up to Shaihak and Shahdad), Mir Chakar was the Chief of all; forty thousand men come at the Mir's call, all descendants of one ancestor; all with armour upon their forearms, all with bows and arrows; with silken scarves and overcoats, and red boots on their feet; with silver knives and daggers, and golden rings on their hands; there were Baker and Gwaharam and Ramen, and the gold-scatters Jaro, venomous in replay, and Hadde, his sworn brother, pheroshah, Bijar and Rehan, and Mir- Han, the swordsman of the Rinds. There were sobha, Mihan and all, Jam Sahak (Durrakh) and Allan; Haivatan and Bivaragh among the Rinds, Mir Hasan and Brahim.⁶⁴

63 The original poetry is in Balochi that has been translated into English.

64 Dashti, Jan Muhammad *A Collection of Balochi Poetries from 1200 AD to 1500 AD* (Queta: Balochi Academy Publications, 2017).

It is important to mention that an anonymous poet composed these lines, and Mir Jalal Han comprehends them.

Patriotic Poetry

The Baloch also show their intimacy and love to their fatherland through the patriotic poetry, which were composed by warrior-poets during the 16th and 15th Centuries. For example, a 15th Century poem of Bivragh⁶⁵ is full of devotion to the land.⁶⁶The poem narrates:

Go we there which is the land of the Baloch,
the city of Sivi (Sibi) is pleasing to the heart.

Patriotism also teaches the respect of law of the country. This is mentioned in the poems of Bivragh. He stresses upon the Baloch the importance of observing the code of honour and particularly of revenging blood from the enemy:

The strong-based mountain-like Chief of Balochistan,
Thou hast made unjustly the target for thine arrows;

What clannish feud thou hast lost,
That thou hast murdered the pearl-like Bahar Khan

Henceforth, I shall sit heedlessly in a place,
To make this grave event forgettable for a time;

Though the venomous spite should outwardly seems
to be immature,
I am waiting for that occasion;

(that) I should meet Sheh Khatti (a spiritual leader)
with his son on a cross-way;

Like an unexpected lion that jumps on and breaks the
neck of a wild ram,
I will act likewise;

I will suck their blood with the immersion of my mous-
tache;

65 According to Baloch epics, Mir. Bivragh Rind was a nephew of Mir Chakar Khan Rind. He was a great warrior, who commanded the *lashkar* (Army) of his uncle. See, Faqeer Shad, *Faqeer's Collections of Balochi Poetries, Miras*, Quetta: Balochi Academy, 1995).

66 In early Baloch history, the term Sind was used for the plains of Sibi, Kachhi and Derajat (for more details, see Muhammad Sardar Khan Baloch, *A Literary History of the Balochis* (Queta: Goshe-e-Adab, 1968), 131.

Thereupon, my body will be cooled from the deadly
pneumonia;
Only then will I be relieved from the pains of the
graceful (dead father);
Let the Chief [Balochi: Chakar] be not happy with me;
Let him stop his bestowal of relational gift,
May not bestow milky cows and graceful steed;
If the Rinds deny to be my kindred, Dodais (clan of
Hoth tribe) are my brethren,
If I have Sind, India will find me soon.⁶⁷

On another occasion when Nadir Shah (Iranian emperor) sent a grand army with the intention to occupy the Baloch land and get control over it in the 17th Century, an unknown poet composed the following poems to inform future generation about Iranian intervention:

I laugh at rulers like you (Nadir shah), how is it possible to vacate our own land because of your threat and fear? It is difficult to die, but I will sacrifice my life on this occasion.⁶⁸

On that day, there was a bitter fight; Swords and guns were used; No doubt, several Baloch were killed; But they destroyed the Persians.

Moreover, when Ahmad Shah (Afghan ruler) in the 18th Century attacked Kalat and subdued the Khanate of Balochistan, headed by Mir Nasir Khan I, the court poet of Khan composed a poem to describe anti-Afghan sentiment amongst the Baloch. He praised the Khan, the Baloch Army, and Baloch people, who sacrificed their lives for the defence and freedom of their homeland.

“I admire the Baloch of Sarawan and Jhalawan,
They are loyal to their Khan,
Our Khan, our Amir is very violent in the battlefield,
He is aware in case of defeat; Kalat will face slavery
and domination,

67 Dashti, *A Collection of Balochi Poetries from 1200 AD to 1500 AD*. Balochi Academy Publications, Quetta. The collections are in Balochi. These lines have been translated into English. 2017.

68 See, Shad, *Miras: A Collection of Balochi Poetry*, 70-71.

He is ready to accept death instead of surrounding to the Afghans, whatever he is in fate, it will come."⁶⁹

Poetry was also a great source of historical annals and genealogical records of the tribes. During the time of Mir Khudadad Khan of Kalat (1857-1893), Reki Shahizai was the Raizwar Shair of the Ahmadzai dynasty of rulers, when, notwithstanding their preoccupations with state affairs, even the Baloch nobles, princes and the ruling Khans found time to compose poems. Among the rulers of Kalat, Mir Abdullah Khan Qahhar was a forceful poet. In one of his popular couplets, he proudly, but quite truthfully says:

Kohing a Koheen kalat

Kase pit-e-miras Na-ant

Ma pa Sagar ha giptagant.

Translation:

O thee mountain-fort of Kohing at Kalat
Thou are not heritage to anyone
We have captured thee by the swords.

Ballads and folk songs are the common form of classical Balochi literature, which has reached us through the ages via successive generations of bards and poets who preserved and intact them.⁷⁰ Thus, through these and many such couplets we can trace the reflections of Baloch nationalism in Balochi literature, which till the 20th Century was predominately in the form of poetry. Till the advent of the 20th Century, the predominant source of literature available was in poetry, and these poetries testify the Baloch love for their homeland, and show their resistance to any foreign occupations.

Anti-colonial Poetry

In the 16th Century the Portuguese invaded the Persian Gulf region, including the Baloch coast of Makran.⁷¹ Mir Hamal

69 Naseer, *Tareekh-e-Balochistan*, 2010.

70 Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*.

71 Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power* (New York: Random House, 2010).

Jiand (Kalmati) was a legendary heroic figure who got fame for his irrevocable and sheer resistance to Portuguese invasion onto the Baloch coast. The traditional Baloch folklores depict that Hamal along with comrades fought Portuguese to their last nails to protect Balochistan from foreign invasions. Hamal said to have been deceived, arrested, and later killed by the Portuguese yet without bowing down to the invaders. Thus, Hamal's legendary resistance manifests a strong sense of nationalism, for the Portuguese incursion into Makran coast and Hamal's binding resistance in retaliation is succinctly but vividly reflected in Balochi literature. For instance, a Baloch poet composed a poem written after the defeat and arrest of Mir Hamal Jiand by the Portuguese.⁷² The poem indicates the patriotism and love of the poet for his land and his hatred of the invaders and their culture.⁷³

1. "Thou sister of thy brothers, do not wash thine body on Saturdays, Saturday is not auspicious for brothers, (and) the sixteenth of moon not for fathers;
2. Saturday and sixteenth of moon, with their ill-omened hours, deprived Hamal of his boat, and the boat of the blue sea;
3. Seven days and nights, the boat was set to sail unceasingly, on the seventh day the boat touched the coast of Portugal;
4. From the outset, his (Hamal's) boat looked heavy with its bird-like flying feathers, Hamal's boat was surrounded (by the enemy);
5. (The Portuguese) asked Hamal to marry a European girl, (but) Hamal did not like European girls,
6. On the score that they do not wash their eyes nor pronounce the name of God; they devour handfuls of dates and flies,
7. Their shirts are cut above the knees, and the navel is exposed to view, neither their address to God is decent, nor (do they) recite the Muslim way of prayer;

72 Naseer, *Tareekh-e-Balochistan*.

73 Baluch, *History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan*.

8. Hamal loves his negative girls having intoxicating eyes, they wear shirts and trousers, and cover their heads with shawls;
9. They (the Portuguese) tied the hands of Hamal with speckled ropes, with speckled and thickly twisted rope by which lusty camels are controlled;
10. Hamal called forth his close comrades (but) his comrades were the coward Dashties, whose heartless action proved as futile as the embers of Tamarist firewood bursting with temporary and sudden violence;
11. The Meds too sent him in vain a secret message for help, (at length) Hamal called out his sliver-handled sword;
12. O, battle-axe I have cherished thee as my child, cherished thee like my (dearest) dear-like daughter;
13. Why hast thou, departed from Hamal's lion-like hands, (and) have fallen into the waves of the sea and drowned forever;
14. O, flying birds, take with thee the information about my state, state my state to the youths of Kalamt;
15. Inform (my aspect of affairs to) Halro, shadad Ghulamo and Talli, the possessors of papery lips;
16. Grind not yellow and fragrant wheat for my evening meal, Feed not rams with special care for my soup dish,
17. On my seat spread not bedding or spotted sheets, Knit not thin fringes for my chestnut steed's forehead;
18. My chestnut steed (hereafter) will graze in a different pasture, the trenchant sword will remain (inactive) and imprisoned in the waist cloth of an orphan, just like a golden sun benumbed by loss of voluntary motion;
19. Only three or four things will rejoice on the death of Hamal;
20. The Meds of Jaho, the deers of the fertile Rajro, the yearling wild goats will ask their females and males to rejoice; (they may say) leave the mountains, ye mother, and let us graze happily in the open field for a while;
21. Hamal Jiand has passed away, now there is no one else to shoot and kill us."

In every phase of history, the Baloch poets had expressed more consciously of their freedom and independence rather than neighbours. Whenever invasion took place from Europe or Asia, the Baloch poets inform their people about threats to the community. Baloch poetry is very rich with anti-imperialist and patriotic songs.

The Rise of National Poetry

The 19th Century dawned with a great threat to the sovereignty of Balochistan. In the course of history, it was indeed a crucial time and formidable challenge for Balochistan to preserve its sovereignty, as its new enemy from the eastern front was not only strong in sense of war industry, but was also capable of intrigues and conspiracies. The new enemy was none other than the British that had invaded some of the hard-resistant Baloch chieftains, but majority of the chieftains subdued to the British rule through the bribes and hard money.

In this phase the poets raised the poetry of protest against British imperialism and pro-British Baloch *Sardars* and exhorted the Baloch people towards nationalism and patriotism. The poetry therefore became a good and important source of awakening the Baloch and then raised the awareness in the Baloch community. In 1839, the British invaded Balochistan, and the Khan, Mir Mehrab Khan, sacrificed his life to defend the Khanate of Kalat. The Baloch poets condemned the traitors among the ranks and files of the Baloch *Sardars*, those who escaped from war, while glorified those who fought the English army heroically and embraced martyrdoms instead of surrendering to the occupiers. It is very interesting to note that Baloch poets were more conscious of their independence.⁷⁴ For the very reason they therefore

74 It is interesting to note that Baloch armies, until then, had always been composed of alliances and coalitions of tribes and sub-tribes of extremely diverse ethno-confessional origins, easily collapsing and reforming according to their military fortunes and misfortunes. Indeed, the chroniclers in Baloch verse and Persian prose of the Kalhora and Talpur eras in Sindh, and of the Ahmadzay period in Balochistan, have long vilified the 'treasons' of such or such faction during their respective masters' fight for power. For

composed poems to try and convince their countrymen to rise against the colonial yoke. Apparently, the purpose of such poems was to invoke the Baloch sentiments against the ruthless policies of the British meted out to Balochistan, and to create a sense of nationalism and affection for the homeland and its sovereignty among the Baloch. On the contrary, the Indian poets remained quiet and muted during the War of Independence in 1857 when the indigenous rulers of India raised against the British.

Lala Hittu Ram, a historian, and a Special Assistant to Sir Robert Sandeman, collected most of these poems in his book, *Tarikh-i Balochistan* [Urdu: History of Balochistan], which was published in 1907. Mulla Muhammad Raisani, a notable nationalist poet, admired the role of Mir Mehrab Khan in making sacrifices for the independence of the Baloch and their country, the Khanate of Kalat. He criticized the role of the chieftains who refused to join the anti-imperialist war and became, in Mulla Muhammad Raisani's words, the enemies of Balochistan. Mulla Mohammad also admired the role of the Hindus of Balochistan, who died in the defence of Kalat in 1839. His poems presented Baloch patriotism without any religious prejudices and called upon all the people of Balochistan to rise against British imperialism.⁷⁵

In 1845 and 1848, the British occupied Sindh and Panjab respectively; including the Baloch areas of Khan Garh (later Jacobabad), Dera Ghazi Khan (Punjab) and Dera Ismail Khan (KP).⁷⁶ It was the first direct British contact with the Baloch people.⁷⁷ In the upper Sindh Districts several Baloch tribes rose against British rule. Poets glorified the leaders of the uprising. The Baloch poets composed songs of patriot-

future research perhaps it would be interesting to propose, on the basis of this complex literature, a more contrasted historical sociology of the elites of what was long a typical frontier society.

75 Justice Mir Khuda Bakhsh Baitarani Marri Baloch, *Search Lights on Baluchis and Baluchistan* (Karachi: MA Aref Printers, 1974).

76 Axman, *Back to the Future*.

77 Axman, *Back to the Future*.

ism and condemned the pro-British elements, declaring them traitors.⁷⁸ The British administrators, such as General Napier, the conqueror of Sindh, General John Jacob, Col. Merwether, Henry Green, Major Edward, Capt. Minchin, and Sir Robert Sandeman, regarded the “*Sarmacharan*” as raiders, criminals, thieves, and robbers.⁷⁹ The Baloch poets contested their opinion and regarded British “forward policy” as an act of interference, dishonesty, and a crime. They considered British victories a result of the betrayals of the Baloch chiefs.

In Upper Sindh, the sacrifices and anti-British activities of the Baloch were recorded in Balochi, Sindhi, and Saraiki languages. The poets of Bughti, Kahiri, Dombki, and Chandia tribes hailed the role of ‘the “raiders” against British rule.’⁸⁰ During the First World War (1914-1918), when several Baloch tribes in Western and Eastern Balochistan rose against British ruler, Baloch poets such as Rahm Ali Marri, Mir Chagha Buzdar, and Mast Tawakli did not hold themselves to composing anti-imperialism poems and to expose those who favoured and helped the British.⁸¹ Sardar Khair Bakhsh I, Chief of Marri tribe, for instance, refused to recruit the Marris for the British Army. Several other chiefs and Mir Muhammad II, the Khan of Kalat, on the other hand, cooperated with the British and provided them with money. Baloch poets recorded this treachery and condemned the traitor-chiefs. For instance, Mir Rahm Ali wrote an epic consisting of 1200 lines, which tells about British policy of 'divide and rule'. The Marri poet accused the British of being responsible for poverty in Balochistan mainly through by burdening the Baloch with heavy taxes and other extractive means.⁸²

78 Baloch, *Search Lights on Baluchis and Baluchistan*.

79 Baloch, *Search Lights on Baluchis and Baluchistan*.

80 M. Kaysarani, “Balochi Shairi aur Farangi Samraj”, *Mah-e-Nao*, (August, 1978).

81 Bugti Ghulam Hussain, “Balochistan ke Surma” [Urdu: The Tigers of Balochistan] *Nawai Watan*, (December 1976).

82 For detail see, Mir Mitta Khan Marri, Rahm Ali, Marri: Quetta, In Dashti, Jan Muhammad, *Collection of Balochi Poetries (Second Volume) from 1500 AD to 2000, AD*. Balochi Academy, Quetta, Balochistan, 2017.

A religious group also played a pivotal role in the flourishing of Balochi literature, which was led by Mawlana Durkhani. In the 19th Century British missionaries were also active to converting people into Christianity. It was a great challenge to control their people from religious deviancy. Mawlana Durkhani founded a madrasaat Durkhanto educate the Baloch population in Islamic studies. He translated and published several Arabic books into Balochi. His most important contribution was that he translated the Qur'an into Balochi and Brahui for the first time. Another important religious and literary figure of his time, Mawlana Hazur-Bakhsh Jatoi, continued the mission of Mawlana Durkhani after his death. Mawlana Hazur-Bakhsh Jatoi also published many books in Balochi. Other Baloch religious scholars with nationalistic sentiments also preached the philosophy of "Jihad" [Urdu: Islamic holy war] amongst Baloch, and regarded the defence of their motherland as an act of Jihad.⁸³ However, it is important to highlight that religious scholars' influence was limited only to the population of towns and villages, while majority of the Baloch population being nomads, remained beyond their influence.

It is pertinent to mention that Islamic concept of Jihad philosophy has two varieties:

1. Offensive Jihad
2. Defensive Jihad

The first philosophy of Jihad (offensive Jihad) has been practiced throughout Islamic history such as conversion of non-Muslims to Islam, expansion of Islamic state territories, and enrichment of Muslim state treasuries. The participants of the Baloch in offensive Jihad has been limited to their history, with exception of Mir Naseer Khan, the Khan of Kalat, offensive Jihad against the Punjabi Sikhs and Marathas of India. Regarding Naseer Khan and the concept of Jihad, it is, however, important to argue that he used the same pretext

83 Abdur Rahman Ghaor, Naghma-e-Kohsar: Quetta, in Dashti, Jan Muhammad, *Collection of Balochi Poetries (Second Volume) from 1500 AD to 2000, AD*. Balocchi Academy, Quetta, Balochistan, 2017: 170-179.

to wage an unnecessary invasion and occupied neighbouring state of Makran, and consequently killed thousands of *Zirkri* Muslims.⁸⁴ Thus, the people of Makran have never regarded Naseer Khan and his invading army been regarded as legends of Balochistan. On the contrary, in many folklores in Makran Naseer Khan is depicted a ruthless ruler who massacred his innocent Baloch brothers and sisters of Makran just on flimsy sectarian pretexts.

Defensive Jihad was famous in Balochistan in the 19th and 20th centuries. This variety of Jihad philosophy predominated in the poetry written during the 19th century and specifically during First World War (1914-1918). This philosophy of Jihad supported the right of self-determination against oppression. The defensive Jihad with the connotation of self-determination and nationalism is commonly found in Balochi literature. Religious scholars, prominent among them was Maullna Durkhani Jatoy, propagated the both philosophy of Jihad to incite the Baloch to defend and expand the frontiers of Balochistan. This philosophy was successful to great extent in challenging the British imperialism and British missionaries therefore were retreated on the cultural and religious front.

The poets who were struggling to widespread the anti-imperialism among the tribal society's members failed to realize that the actual challenge of political defeat was tribalism itself, a main hindrance to the formation of national front, which pushed the people of Balochistan to further backwardness. However, Rahm Ali Marri and Chagha Buzdar to some extent tried to find out the causes of backwardness in early 29th century and criticized the alliance of imperialism and *Sardari* system.⁸⁵ But they could not provide people alternatives to the anti-Imperialism and encouraged the people

84 For more on *Zikris* see, Ahmed, "The Princely States of Balochistan," *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, XL, no. 2 (2019): 139-162.

85 For detail see, Mir Mitta Khan Marri, Mir Rahm Ali Marri and Chigha Buzdar Chighai Guftar Poetries: Quetta, In Dashti, Jan Muhammad, *Collection of Balochi Poetries (Second Volume) from 1500 AD to 2000, AD*. Balochi Academy, Quetta, Balochistan.

to fight against an alien rule. They tried to seek alternative ways in order to win the wars and oust the British.

The Current Literature

In the early of 20th Century, several revolutions were going on at the same time. Such as Kemalist Revolution of Turkey, the Soviet Revolution (1917) in Russia, the Afghan National Revolution in Afghanistan in 1979 and so on. The socialist revolutions in Russia and later on in Afghanistan heralded a new dimension in Baloch nationalistic struggle, as the Baloch with their secular and liberal outlook on one hand, and with precarious social and economic status, and marginalised political representation on the other, were attracted to left leaning ideology. Therefore, the leftist politics, which was ushering in and engulfing many third world countries and marginalised societies, inspired the Baloch and redefined its nationalistic politics. Thus, political activities operating from Afghanistan and many of Central Asian Republics, Russia, China, and India left a great impact on the people of Balochistan. In addition to this, a small Baloch intelligentsia was also influenced by new western thoughts, such as democracy and nationalism and wanted, therefore, to focus their nationalistic struggle on the principles on nationalism instead of socialism, which is more of a class struggle. And the Baloch community was marginalised and wanted to ascertain its national importance could hardly afford any class based politics. Whether the Baloch should have supported radical left politics or embraced western thought of nationalism is an interesting debate. However, this debate is beyond the scope of this paper, therefore, is left for future research.

Nevertheless, both the politics of class struggle and nationalism among the Baloch are vividly reflected in Baloch literature and culture. Irrespective of the shape and tenor of the struggle in Balochistan, the epicentre has always been nationalism, therefore, any literary and cultural explanations is much focused on nationalism. Language and literature have played an important role in the development of nationalism. In 1929 when Yousef Aziz Magsi, a young progressive lead-

er from Balochistan, led the Baloch national movement, the medium of instruction at schools and other academic institutions was Urdu. Because there were few schools in whole Balochistan and in the western part of Balochistan none of them was based on the pattern of western system. Majority of teachers were from Punjab, syllabus was also from the Punjab University from British India, and the examination system was also under the Punjab University. Yousef Aziz Magsi realized the importance of language and literature to promote sense of community among the people of Balochistan. The people of Balochistan being largely illiterate at that time were aloof from any nationalistic thoughts that could be promoted through literature, no matter in what language.

First Literary Document and Baloch Awareness

The Baloch nationalists had no option to express their thoughts and spread awareness about their freedom and rights. In such a situation they chose Urdu as medium, as it was difficult to impose Balochi as medium of instruction at schools. So, the easiest language which they could adopt and disseminate their political thoughts and run their campaign awareness was Urdu. The first nationalist writings by Aziz Magsi were written in Urdu and Persian and published as an article entitled *Feryad-e-Balochistan* [Urdu: Cry of Balochistan] in the daily *Musawat*, Lahore, in 1929. It was the first literary document for the cause of Baloch awareness.⁸⁶ There was an appeal made to the Baloch to organize them for the freedom, liberation, and unity of Balochistan. On account of such allegedly seditious activity Aziz Magsi was arrested and punished. In this connection "Balochistan and all India Conference" was held in December 1932 at Jacobabad, with the demand of abolition of censorship in Balochistan and establishment of Baloch Press.⁸⁷

86 Aziz Bugti, *Tarekh-e-Balochistan* [Urdu: History of Balochistan] (Quetta: Spinzar Printers Pvt. Ltd., 1996).

87 Abdul Samad Achahzai, "Statement", in the West Pakistan High Court, October 26, 1956.

Hence, in the consequence for the first time in 1933 Aziz Magsi founded the Baloch Press, and several teachers and social workers resigned from their jobs on his appeal. The following important weeklies were published in Karachi: *Al-Baloch*, *Balochistan*, *Itahad-e-Balochistan*, and one weekly from Jacobabad named *Al-Hanif*.⁸⁸ However, it is important to mention that The Baloch Press started in Urdu, which was foreign Indian language to the people of Balochistan, and majority of people were unable to understand Urdu. There could arguably be certain reasons though for the adaptation of Urdu: firstly, Baloch intelligentsia and students had been educated in Urdu; secondly, they wanted to inform the people of India about Balochistan's problem; thirdly, they wanted to gain the Indian nationalists support and win over the sympathies of bourgeoisie from across Indian Subcontinent.

Several articles were written on Baloch awareness, imperialism, and socio-cultural problems for awakening and spreading consciousness among the Baloch. Aziz Magsi and others who were leading this campaign adopted the principles of nationalism, socialism, and progressive Islam to promote their agenda of anti-imperialism among the people of Balochistan. Although other leaders of the *Baloch Ustoman-e-Gall* (The Baloch National Party), a nationalist political party founded by Yousef Aziz Magsi to promote and foster the Baloch political and socioeconomic rights, played their respective role in creating awareness and promoting nationalistic sentiments among the educated Baloch through literary activities. Among all leading Baloch political figures, the role of Aziz Magsi was paramount in this regard. In his articles, Aziz Magsi informed his readers that the Baloch, like Afghans and Iranians, are a separate nation, stating the specific history and culture of the Baloch. He believed that nationalism could be spread through modern education. Therefore, he established a private school in his village, *Jhal*, in Jhal Magsi District. In 1935, after touring England, he made plans to build a hostel within the premises of his school for stu-

88 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 65.

dents to provide them free of cost accommodation across Balochistan.⁸⁹ He knew the importance of education and stressed that it was the only source to change the Baloch socio-political system and liberate them from British rule.

Aziz Magsi and other Baloch progressive leaders, like many Muslim leaders in the Subcontinent and Afghanistan, favoured progressive Islam. But in the same fashion they also believed that Marxism and Leninism could be a solution to socio-economic problems of Baloch society.⁹⁰ They condemned the British imperialism. They raised the social revolution, in which they demanded complete independence and education for Baloch women. In their viewpoint, any assertive political movement against the British could not be achieved without women participation.⁹¹ They focused on universalism of Islam, and opposed Muslim clergy. They were the followers of Marx and Lenin's philosophy, and favoured Islam on the condition that it recognized the concept of nationalism. Aziz Magsi, in particular, saw nationalism and patriotism in the teachings of Quran and Sunnah. He also criticized Sir Syad Ahmed due to his pro-British policy.⁹²

Aziz Magsi had left a great impact on the ideas of Baloch workers as well as Baloch writers. Mir Mitta Khan Marri wrote a poem entitled "Poets and Nation" which was published in 1933. A poet like Mir Mitta Khan represented the feeling and emotions of the people and emphasized the role of progressive Baloch political leadership who can lead his people towards freedom from British. In his Urdu poem, he stressed the importance of education and unity as well as progressivity and social revolution.⁹³ Likewise, another leading figure, Muhammad Hussain Anka, a close friend of Aziz Magsi and

89 Anwar Roman, "Nawabzada Yousuf Ali Khan Aziz Magassi," *Balochi Dunya*, Multan, (May 1971): 22-23.

90 Inyatullah Baluch "Yusuf Ali Khan Magsi," *Azad Balochistan*, (Nov-Dec. 1984 and January 1985).

91 Nawab Yusuf Magsi's Letter to Amin Khosa, Dec.1932. *Al-Hanif*, (annual edition), (March 1938).

92 Nawab Yusuf Magsi's letter to M. Amin Khosa, 44

93 Baluch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 67.

a towering personality of Baloch National Party, wrote against the Baloch tribalism and tribe lords. He lamented the colonial rule as a key factor for backwardness of the Baloch. In October 1937, Muhammad Hussain Anka published the first national poem in Balochi and made an appeal to the Baloch writers to write in Balochi. He wrote that: "true education can only be achieved through *Zuban* [Urdu: mother tongue]. Several Baloch writers published articles and poems with such title as "Azadi Balochistan", "Inqelab" and "Paigham Eid".⁹⁴ All of these writers and poets had, to some extent, same purpose – to achieve the independence of Balochistan from the British rule. Baloch writers did not write on Pakistan movement or Hindu-Muslim controversy.

After the death of Aziz Magsi in 1935 in a tragic earthquake in Quetta, Baloch press lost its main financial support. However, the Khan of Kalat Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, Mir Shahbaz Khan Nusherwani, Mohammad Amin Khosa, Jam Maghul, and the Baloch middle class in Sindh provided a meagre but insufficient financial help through contributions of gifts. In both Derajat and Kalat Muhammad Hussain Anka promoted the Balochi literature after the demise of Aziz Magsi. Muhammad Hussain Anka was of the view that other Baloch poets should also deliver their Balochi poems in order to meet this important need.⁹⁵ His first poem promoted national language and culture under the title "*Kadi Kaayat Sharren Roch par Maa*" [Balochi: when will come our good days]. His first Balochi poem provided a way to the other several poets and writers. So, on April 8 1947, Muhammad Hussain Anka published "*Kaumi Tarana*" [Urdu: The National Anthem], claiming the semantic origin of Balochi:

We are Baloch with a glorious past,

We belong to the respectable race of Aleppo.⁹⁶

94 *Weekly Bolan*, Quetta Balochistan, March, May 1, 1947, May 16, 1947, and Sept 26, 1947.

95 *Weekly Balochistan*, Karachi, October 24-1937.

96 Baluch, in *Weekly Bolan*, Quetta Balochistan, April 8, 1947: 67.

In the poem, the poet rejected the ethnical borders of Balochistan, which were declared from Derajat near the river of Indus to Garmsir in Afghaistan and from the Hab River to Seistan. In response to these demarcations, Muhammad Hussain Anka claimed that "We have conquered all the areas which are now our homeland, it is real and true Balochistan. If we are separated and demarcated, then so what, this is a temporary division, our soul is one. We will destroy these walls. We are like rain and storm."⁹⁷ Muhammad Hussain Anka and Qadir Bukhsh Nizamani, another icon of Baloch nationalist struggle established Balochi Literary Academy in 1940 at Karachi for promoting cultural consciousness and started publishing of Balochi literature. Academy published few books on Baloch history. It also published several books for Baloch children.⁹⁸ In 1946 Zahoor Shah Sayed Hashmi, another leading literary figure from Gwadar founded the *Anjuman-i-Islah-i-Balochistan* (Baloch Enlightenment Organization).

In 1947 and 1948, the Balochi language was further promoted through the work of these Journals, periodicals, Magazines, Organizations and Literary Societies. Because these, incredible works that were conducted for the promotion of Balochi language and literature, Balochi is used a written language with rich literature and sound cultural connections.

Nationalism and Cultural Values

Cultural values are the basic pillars of any society and its national identity. In the 12th and 16th Centuries powerful invaders and rulers had forced the Baloch to migrate from their existing locations, and this migration brought basic sociocultural transformation in Baloch society. Consequently, a ray of factors such as, pastoral ecology and tribal structure had developed the contemporary Baloch social values. The Baloch culture in response to a typical tribal-based social structure and agro-pastoral economic base has developed a

97 *Weekly Bolan*, Karachi, April 8, 1937.

98 *Weekly Bolan*, March, February 14, 1947, and interview with Mr. M. Hussain Anka.

stubborn and rustic nature in social behaviour and attitude. Such a stubborn behaviour remained a prominent feature and a stumbling block for the Baloch assimilation to the other ethnic groups and nationalities in South and West Asia. Hence, to be stubborn in nature and to resist to be assimilated within powerful ethnic-groups, the Baloch has a peculiar identity, distinctive features and consistent with their nomadic or agro-pastoral past. Baloch cultural values and traditions might have been influenced by the tortuous history of their migrations, sufferings, and many historical happenings in and around the region where they made their existence.⁹⁹

In any culture, language plays a central role in distinguishing the culture from other, as Boas¹⁰⁰ mentioned that the shared language of a community is the most essential carrier of their common culture. Unlikely Kroeber and Kluckhohn¹⁰¹ pointed out that language is not just one cultural trait among many but is rather the direct expression of people's national character. Nevertheless, the disperse Baloch communities in vast area from Indus River in the east to Iranian province of Kerman in the west, the language and Balochi folklore and traditions and values are almost common.

The cultural values development and the linguistic and cultural transformation of Baloch from medieval period to modern era, had been very slow and without any radical impact on general cultural outlook.¹⁰² The contextual factors had shaped the Baloch behaviour with protective mentality, due to constant pressures from various corners for the last many centuries.¹⁰³

99 Dashti, *The Baloch and Balochistan*, 2012.

100 F. Boas, *Race, Language and Culture* (New York: Macmillan, 1940).

101 A. L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (Cambridge, MA: Peabody Museum, 1952).

102 Janmahmad, *The Baloch Cultural Heritage* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1982).

103 M. G. K. Naseer, *Tarikh e Balochistan* [Urdu: History of Balochistan] (Quetta: Kalat Publishers, 1979).

The cultural identity based upon the standards pattern or cultural ethics guided the Baloch in their religious, economic, and socio-political affairs. Special characters built through, which followed this standard pattern is called “the Balochi Way.” As Dashti¹⁰⁴ pointed out that very often one cannot find people who adopted all patterns. But negligence towards standard pattern in relation to culture would cause a great cultural loss, and this phenomenon also exists in Baloch cultural setting.

For example, one of the cultural norms is *haal* [Urdu: Information] in which information is shared in detail. It is a mode of communication among the Baloch in their nomadic days. The same mode of information sharing not only holds importance, but also is widely being practice among many tribes in rural areas even today, especially in Districts Dera Bughti and Kohlu and in Makran Division. In a gathering, the notable person is supposed to initiate the process of *haal*. Traditionally during *haal* or exchanging information the Baloch tribes used to share their tribal conflicts and even the resistance against the any foreign force in defence of their territory.

Being controlled, balanced and shameful are the essential features of “the Balochi Way”. A person with low willpower considered coward, and excess of anything will spoil person will. The sadness and vulnerability supposed to hide in front of others. Dignity, pride enduring and a deep sense of shame are the basic principles of Balochi culture.¹⁰⁵ It can be argued that like many attributes or subtleties resistance against invaders, foreign forces, which inherently caused to promote raw sentiment of nationalism amongst the people of Balochistan, are the prominent features of the Baloch cultural complex.

There are several factors which alliance to build national identity among the various tribes and numerous tribal con-

104 Dashti, *The Cultural Context of Health* (Quetta: Balochi Academy, 2010).

105 Janmahmad, *The Baloch Cultural Heritage* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1982).

federacies. Several factors help to promote the consciousness among the tribes and taking a shape of proper Baloch identity. Formation of national identity, a group of people might have a common history, religion, language, or, race. Nationalism actually identifies oneself or belongingness to a large group of nation with its existence and working process. A reality has modified and treated for the political reason. According to Connor,¹⁰⁶ similarity in language, religion, and culture determine a national group. And it is “self-awareness” and “self-consciousness” that is the basic ingredient for formation of a nation. Anderson¹⁰⁷ also provided the imagined communion for nation or community members, where, bonds of allegiance among the members are developed. The people of that cultural group feel and cultural resources and traditions that denote with sense of tangible reality.

The national identity among the Baloch was flourished at the end of medieval periods due to sociocultural transformation of Baloch society. When the Baloch tribes settled in urban setting, drew financial and social resources, the national consciousness was forming during that time. Many tribes and ethnic groups began to integrate that led to promote greater Baloch identity and ultimately occurred as national identity. Expanding Baloch tribe confederacies led to the incorporation of new people and new sources of income for affiliating tribes. Balochi language is rich with folklore tradition and set of cultural values system, which provided a denominator for the various tribal groups and rural population in occupied vast territory that created sense of national identity; which accelerated with passage the search for national state.

Conclusion

Whereas both the general and academic literature on Baloch and Balochistan political history discusses nationalism, yet it

106 W. Connor, “When is a Nation?” *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 13, no. 1 (1990): 98-99.

107 B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso. 1991).

fails to discuss how Baloch nationalism is embedded in Baloch culture that reflects in its literature, and how the development of nationalism is suggested in nationalistic literature. To fill this gap, this paper has located the reflection of the Baloch nationalism in culture and literature. Through a survey of some salient poetry and prose, written both by native and non-native writers, the paper argues that the nationalism is not something merely discussed and evaluated, and thereby, imbedded in historical discourse of Baloch and Balochistan, but it is also widespread in Balochi literature, be in poetry and prose. This location and identification, therefore, helped to identify the genesis of Baloch nationalism, and its evolution to its current, which may be one of the critical causes of development and consolidation of Baloch nationalism. In other words, this paper, using first hand sources, explained and analysed that how the Baloch nationalist literature impacts the development of a Baloch nationalist movement, of providing a critical appraisal of the available literature that deals with emergence, evolution and dynamics of Baloch nationalism. The paper is important and has a significant contribution in the sense that it brought to light altogether a new perspective to the question of nationalism. That is how the nationalism, which has a long historical process, fused into the culture and language in Balochistan. The reflection of nationalism virtually in forms of poetry, and many of the prose written by the Baloch and non-Baloch writers, supports this argument that the slogan of nationalism for the Baloch is not just a political one with a process of historical evolution, but also it has become an integral part of Baloch culture and language. In addition to this, the paper also underlined that Baloch nationalism, which has different orientations, nature and directions over the years, has invariably been inspired and received an unnoticed theoretical support from the culture and linguistic writings, which, as shown in this paper, is full of considerations of the nationalism and its glorification.