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## **Evolution of the Baloch Nationalism (Origin to 1947): A Historical Discourse**

### **Abstract**

*The Balochs, an ancient race but with a variety of opinions about their historical background and origin, could achieve the status of a distinct social group after a considerable length of time. They possess a brilliant history in terms of their warlike habits, bravery, literature and poetry. Right from Alexander the Great, various invaders from Arabia, Afghanistan and Central Asian region invariably adopted the route through their homeland (as Balochistan conceived at present) as an easy access to their respective destinies in the subcontinent. Their longest period under foreign subjugation was under the British stretching over more than hundred years. All these events cast deep impact over their socio-political fabric and orientation but they still have a strong sense of ethnic affiliation based on their shared history and culture. The instant study intends to examine the process of evolution of nationalist trends among the Balochs. For that purpose, it explores the historical background of the Baloch race along with their subsequent concentration in the present region of Balochistan in various phases of history and the emergence of the Khanate of Kalat in the mid of the second millennia which had a special significance for them. It also discusses the evolution of nationalist trends within the Balochs against the British imperialism during the pre-partition era.*

**Key Words:** Balochistan, Baloch Nationalism, Khanate of Kalat, British Imperialism

### **1-Historical Background of the Balochs**

Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, the last ruler of the Kalat State (1933-1947) and an autobiographer, believes that the historians and researchers have expressed their inability to agree upon any authentic version about the exact origin of the Balochs hence, to identify their roots, it would be pertinent to resort to their genealogical records and the age-long traditions as described in their legendary literature which suggested that the Balochs were of Arab origin. The ancient Balochs were settled in the valley between the Tigris and Aleppo, from where they migrated to Iran leaving a branch of that migrant group camping around the border of Caspian Sea; which was later recognized as Kurds. On the basis of historical evidence, Khan holds that the Kurds and the Balochs were two units of one common tribe who had lived in Aleppo Valley around 4 A.D. Their mutual discords and tribal feuds

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coupled with their requirement for fresh pasture-lands and water for their sheep and cattle, eventually led the Balochs into Balochistan in small groups (Khan, 1975:51-2). In contrast to Khan's stance, Sardar Khan Baluch believes that the antiquities of the Baloch race were recorded imperfectly and had become more obscure and perplexing by controversial opinions hence one could not trace their exact origin merely by following the language of the race or by the faint evidence derived from their traditional legends. He mentions that Sir Henry Pottinger compared the Balochs to the Turkomans and denied all their resemblance to the Arabs (Baluch, 1977:1). Gankovsky, too, claims that various archaeological, historical and anthropological evidences are available regarding the origin of the Balochs. He, however, believes that the most popular among those is the Semitic connection (relating to the people who speak Semitic languages especially Hebrew and Arabic) of the Balochs which claims that they were a Semitic race from Syria hence links them with the civilization of western Asia of the second millennia (Gankovsky, 1973:29-31).

Encyclopedia of Islam (1936:628) describes that the Balochs were from Kirman, Iran whereas Gankovsky (1973:41) observes that there had been a consensus that the Balochs had kinship with the Medians of northern Iran and had occupied the territory in and around modern Gilan and Azerbaijan. Their link with Kirman is also endorsed by Sardar Khan Baluch who narrates that the Balochs left their original homeland of Kaldia i.e. Babylon in 708 and 612 B.C. and settled in Kurdistan, Armenia and Gilan which were the northern provinces of Persia coterminous with the Black Sea. They lived in these mountainous regions for more than one thousand years where they served as the elite of the armies of the Achaemenian and Sasanids sovereigns. During the reign of the Pious Caliphs, they were scattered over the central parts of Persia, mainly inhabiting the Kirman province; nevertheless, nothing is known as certain regarding the period when they migrated from the northern provinces and settled in Kirman (Baluch, 1977:29). Furthermore, with respect to their migration from Kirman, Seistan and Persian Balochistan towards the presently occupied country, he mentions that besides the Balochi ballads and traditions, there were little resources to deal with that phase of history (Baluch, 1977:34); however, it is generally believed that throughout their multi-phased migration to Balochistan, they experienced massacre, harassment and forced-exile from the Arab, Persian and other ruling powers (Foreign Policy Centre, 2006; Khan, 1975:55).

The Brahuīs and the Balochs are two important social groups settled in Balochistan. Various notable Baloch historians like Justice Mir Khuda Bakhsh Marri, Gul Khan Nasir, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan and Sardar Khan Baluch strongly repudiated the idea that both the Balochs and the Brahuīs belonged to the same Dravidian stock (Brohi, 1977:3). Ahmad holds that the presence of a few common words in Balochi and Brahui languages did not suggest that the Balochs, too, like Brahuīs belonged to the Dravidian race. The Brahuīs had been settled in the Kalat plateau even before the arrival of the Balochs. Possibly, during the Mauryan rule of Chandragupta (323-297 B.C.), some terms of the Dravidian language applied in the adjoining areas of Sind and Punjab had been assimilated by the Brahuīs. The Brahuīs, distinguished from the Balochs, were perhaps Dravidian people who had originally lived in the Indus Valley (Mohenjodaro and Harappa) and, being driven

out by the Aryan invaders, sought refuge in the high hills of Kalat (Ahmad, 1992:37).

## **2- Emergence of the Khanate of Kalat**

Inayatullah Baloch believes that, right from the time the first Baloch confederacy was founded in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the country of the Balochs is known as 'Balochistan' (Baloch, 2000). Breseeg observes that both the great Mughal emperors Babar and Akbar, had mentioned the name of 'Balochistan' in their commentaries written in the early and end sixteenth century respectively (Breseeg, 2004:57-8).

Mir Ahmad Yar Khan describes that following their periodic migration from Aleppo, the Balochs occupied the western part of Makaran but Kalat was out of their reach because of the Hindu Dynasty of Sewai rulers. In the end of thirteenth century, the Mughals started their early invasions of India through Balochistan and sought the cooperation of Balochs against the Hindu Sewais who had been an obstacle in their onward advance. The joint forces of the Mughals and the Balochs fled the Sewais deeper into the interior of Sind. Thus, after signing a bond of friendship with the Mughals, the Balochs became the masters of Kalat (Khan, 1975:69-70). Relying upon the folklores and traditions, Sardar Khan Baluch observes that the Baloch flux occupying the mountains of Kirman and the desert of Lut, took place, in late eleventh century, under the leadership of Ameer Jalal Khan (also referred by some writers as Mir Jalal Han). The traditional era of the Balochs began from that Chief. Out of his four sons i.e. Rind, Korai, Lashar, and Hot, Mr. Rind dominated all in valour, reputation and fame. Ameer Chakar ibn Ameer Shaihak, the epical hero of the Baloch race, descended from descendants of Rind (Baluch, 1977:34-5). Marri, nevertheless, holds that the Rinds needed no introduction among the Balochs, because forty-four different Baloch tribes, under Mir Jalal Khan Rind, migrated from Seistan to Makaran, and then spread out in Balochistan, Sind, Punjab and Gujrat (Marri, 1977:329).

The facts about the reign of Ameer Chakar are difficult to arrange in chronological order because no contemporary work dealt with the then Balochistan; hence, only a somewhat tentative trend of events of Chakar's era can be portrayed. Janmehmed believes that because of their continuous resistance against the foreign intruders, a feeling of group cohesion arose among the Balochs and, as a result, "Rind-Lashari Union", a tribal confederacy, was established by Mir Chakar Rind in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century (Janmehmed, 1989:157). The Union marked the beginning of modern history of Balochistan in many ways particularly by diffusing the Balochi language and culture over a wide range of territory. In the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, Mir Chakar had extended the boundary of the Union up to Kachi, Kalat, Sibi and Makaran (Gankovsky, 1973:88). Sardar Khan Baluch describes that the Balochs migrated eastwards towards Makaran and the Central Kalat highlands in the end of 15<sup>th</sup> century. In the beginning of 16<sup>th</sup> century, the whole of Balochistan and Sind had become a teeming hive of the Balochs. The Rind Balochs ruled Balochistan for about one-third of a century (Baluch, 1977:36). Mir Ahmad Yar Khan mentions that Ameer Chakar ruled the region in late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. He writes: "the famous Baluch hero, Mir Chakar Rind with his tribe, however, remained in the neighborhoods of Sibi and Bolan

regions for sometimes before affiliating himself with the Mughals in 1556 (Khan, 1975:71).” The dates of both the birth and death of Ameer Chakar are also somewhat anticipated ones. Sardar Khan Baluch holds that, according to general conviction, Ameer Chakar ascended the throne at the age of thirty and ruled for a quarter of century from 1487 A.D. which gives a clue about his approximate birth year to be 1457 A.D. He died nearly at the age of 96 years, probably during 1550-1555 A.D. (Baluch, 1977:39). Similarly, on the basis of vaguely anticipated historical evidences, Justice Marri guessed 1468 A.D. as his year of birth (Marri, 1977:175). The clash in dates is quite obvious which might only be termed as ‘poverty of historicism’.

Chakar followed his route to India through Marri-Bugti country towards modern Mazari village, Rojhan, and then to Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzzafargarh, Multan to Montgomery (now Sahiwal). Because of his wanderings throughout those regions, the Balochs scattered over an area of two hundred thousand square miles from the summit of Taftan to the heart of the Punjab (Baluch, 1977:39). Justice Marri and Sardar Khan Baluch agree that the present tribal classification among the Balochs was originated by Ameer Chakar (Baluch, 1977:45; Marri, 1977:330). Sardar Khan Baluch, however, condemns the said classification as the most perilous move of Chakar’s policy which became the chief cause of his failure and mainspring of all the future misfortunes of the Balochs. Thereafter, the tribal shell constructed by him maintained its dicta like granite stone and nothing had succeeded in breaking through its solidarity. It had since then argued ill for the future harmony of the race (Baluch, 1977:45).

Mir Chakar established a short-lived but the ever largest Baloch confederacy embracing all the Baloch regions such as Makaran, Western Balochistan, Derajat, Seistan and Lasbela and consolidated them under the suzerainty of a single government. He nourished the martial virtues of the Balochs who regard him as a symbol of their integration. “We are the sons of Chakar”, is the most famous song among the Baloch nationalists (Breseeg, 2004:145-8). Justice Marri, too, regards Mir Chakar as a natural leader who had resolute determination and was one of the greatest heroes of the Balochs. He, in fact, writes: “Had it not been for Mir Chakar, there would have been no Kalat State, nor Talpur rulers of Sind; nor could the Punjab Baloches have found it easy to secure Jagirs and settle down there (Marri, 1977:181).”

At the time of Mir Chakar’s eternal departure, there was no fixed rule of heredity and accession in the confederacy; hence, a great national crisis erupted in the country caused by internecine quarrels and horrible tumults at intermittent periods; various Baloch tribes migrated to Sind and Punjab because of the inter-tribal wars. The glory of the Rinds passed away and its hegemony terminated (Baluch, 1977:45). The Meerwanis from whom the petty principality of Kalat was seized by Chakar, were impatiently hunting for a proper chance to attack Mandaw Rind, the brother-in-law of Mir Chakar and the then governor of Kalat. In collaboration with other tribes, the Meerwanis and Kambaranis, attacked the Rind army near Kalat; the killing of Mandaw Rind and defeat of the Rinds in the said battle ended the Rind supremacy in Kalat. After that conflict, Kalat remained under various short-lived alien rulers and domestic dynasties for almost eighty

years until the period of Brahui hegemony in Balochistan started when Mir Ahmad II succeeded the throne of Kalat Niabat in 1026 A.H. (Baluch, 1977:76-7).

Mir Hasan Khan Baloch, who ascended to the throne of Kalat unanimously by all tribes, was the first ruler from Ahmadzai dynasty. After him, Mir Ahmad Khan Kambarani Baloch of the Brahui Ahmadzai tribe founded the Khanate of Kalat in 1666 A.D. (Kaplan, 2009; Baloch, 1987:101; Musarrat, Ali & Azhar, 2012). Mir Ahmad Yar Khan records that Mir Ahmad II introduced various reforms which, *inter alia*, included the establishment of a 'Baloch Confederation' (integrating smaller units) and a *Diwan* (Court) comprising *Sardars* and other dignitaries from all the tribes; a Council of Elders, officially called the Baluch *Jirga*, too, was formed which comprised of *Sardars* from all tribes and whose adjudication of cases and disputes could be overruled by the Khan-e-Baluch only who might consult the members of the *Diwan* for that purpose. Abdullah Khan (1714-1734), the fourth Khan-e-Baluch, expanded boundaries of the Khanate from Kandahar and Chaman to Kharan, Chagai and Shorawak, up to Makaran and Port Abbas. The State of Kalat was more vulnerable to the influence of its neighboring kingdoms of Persia and Afghanistan. Nasir Khan, the Khan-e-Baluch-VI (1749-1817), had pledged allegiance to Ahmad Shah Abdali, the ruler of Afghan, for 11 years. However, according to Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, his reign was the glorious age of the Khanate. He terms Nasir Khan as the "philosopher-king" defined by Plato in 'The Republic' who established a Baluch Parliament which had to function on a workable constitution based on Islamic *Shariat* (Laws) and Baloch traditions. He changed the original name of the region i.e. 'Turan' to 'Baluchistan'. Another of his significant achievement was rooting out the Zikri sect which ideologically negated some very basic preaching of Islam. His efforts to organize the military force of the State of Kalat were remarkable (Khan, 1975:77-84). Inayatullah Baloch believes that the Khanate (the Khan dynasty) not only re-united the Balochs but also blessed them with an unwritten constitution commonly known as '*Rawaj*' or '*Dastur*' regarded by them as a "holy" document (Baloch, 1987:101).

### **3-The Balochs and the British**

Breaseg explores that, from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onward, Mir Jalal Han, Mir Shaihak and Mir Chakar, the powerful Baloch chieftains, extended their hegemony over most of the Balochistan region. During 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, various regional state formations emerged in Balochistan. Of those, the Dodai confederacy of Derajat, Buledai dynasty, the Malik dynasty of Kech and Bampur and the Khanate of Kalat were the most significant. The Khanate had remained a tributary state for sometime in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to Nadir Shah of Iran and Ahmed Shah Durrani of Afghanistan. Durrani invaded Balochistan in 1758 when the Khan declared independence; that expedition concluded in a *treaty of peace*, wherein it was decided that the Khan would furnish troops to assist the Kabul armies in return of cash allowance. From that time until the occupation of Balochistan by the British army, the Khanate remained completely independent which owed allegiance not to any authority in India or outside (Breaseg, 2004:205). Sardar Khan Baluch observes that before the advent of the British rule, Khanate rulers held their nominal sway over the whole of Balochistan save the northern Pashtun belt (Baluch, 1977:72).

The presence of Iran in the west, Afghanistan in the north and Arabian Sea in the south makes Balochistan an important geo-political and geo-strategic location. The whole region is extremely rich in vital natural resources like oil, gold, copper and gas. Noraiee (2015) explores that Balochistan, Iran, and Afghanistan were attractive to both the British Government and Russia because of their geographic contiguity with the principal trade routes between South-West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia; hence, the British Government formulated its policies towards that particular region keeping in view only its geo-political and geo-strategic significance. It was not surprising that the advancement of Russia in the Central Asia caused too much apprehension in London. Awan holds that until the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Russians, who were looking for an access to the warm waters since the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725), had taken control of Central Asia and started dispatching political missions to Afghanistan, Sind, Iran and Punjab which were independent regions under Maharaja Ranjit Singh (Awan, 1985). In the beginning of nineteenth century, France under Napoleon Bonaparte, too, expressed interest in the region occupied by the Persian Empire when the process of its disintegration accelerated (Baluch, 1977:72). The British were cautious of the possible Russian invasion into the Indian Empire via Afghanistan and Khyber or Bolan passes hence they dispatched Captain Grant (1809), Colonel Henry Pottinger (1810) and Mounstuart Elphinstone (1812) to the north-western regions in order to gather strategic information (Awan, 1985).

### **3.1- Some Significant Treaties**

In 1830s, the Russians advanced towards India and the British advanced towards River Amu (Oxus) which created security threats resulting in the occupation of Quetta-Kalat-Chaman region by the British who desired to secure a line of effective communication through Balochistan to support the government of Afghanistan (Ahmad, 1992:xviii). In 1838, the British Government focused its concentration towards the rulers of Kalat who managed a comparatively large region of the contemporary central Balochistan (Ayres, 2009). Ahmed (2006) holds that the first Anglo-Afghan war (1939-1942) was fought actually to intimate Moscow not to advance towards the Indian Empire. The British Government was supporting Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk in Afghanistan during that war and for that purpose it needed safe passage for its troops moving towards Afghanistan through Balochistan. According to Ahmad, a “Red Line” separated the tribal areas of Balochistan from rest of the region and the British were forbidden to cross that line. Even during battles, the British troops were cautioned against following the tribesmen into the hills. They actually required a safe passage from Sind to Afghanistan via Balochistan (Ahmad 1992:76).

In 1839, Mehrab Khan (1837-39), the then Khan of Kalat, concluded a treaty of friendship with the British Government wherein it was decided that the Khan would provide necessary strategic support to the British troops moving to Afghanistan through Balochistan. The British Government, in turn, agreed to pay to Mehrab Khan, a sum of one and a half lakh rupees by half-yearly installments from the date of that engagement as long as the passage would have to be used by the British army (Khan, 1975:219-21). However, soon after its withdrawal from Kandahar, the British Army invaded Kalat on 13<sup>th</sup> of November, 1839, on the pretext that the Khan betrayed the British Government and failed to safeguard the

British troops while travelling through Balochistan. Mehrab Khan refused to give in to the British troops and was killed in the battlefield along with hundreds of his military men (Awan, 1985). Sardar Khan Baluch praises that Mehrab Khan sacrificed his life and throne for the cause of his nation's integrity and independence. After his death, the control over the national policy, once for all, slipped away from the Khan to the British (Baluch, 1977:95).

Shah Nawaz, a fourteen years old young boy, who was a distant relative of the deceased Khan, ascended to the throne of Kalat by the British but the nomination was resisted vehemently by the Baloch tribes. The British Government acknowledged the agitation and replaced Shah Nawaz with Naseer Khan II (the son of Mehrab Khan) as the new ruler of the State of Kalat (Awan, 1985). Naseer Khan concluded the treaty of 1841 with the British Government wherein it was declared that Kalat would be a vassal state of Afghanistan and the British or Afghan troops could be stationed therein anywhere. The Khan was made bound to ensure the safety of those troops as well as the merchants passing through the state of Kalat and not to hold any political communication/negotiations with foreign powers without the consent of the British Government and of His Majesty Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk; the Khan also had to act in subordinate co-operation to both of these governments (Khan, 1975:221-23). Sardar Khan Baluch comments that the fate of Balochistan was sealed because of the privileges granted to the British under the said treaty (Baluch, 1977:73-4).

Till the conclusion of the treaty of 1854, Kalat was a dependent state of the Afghan Kingdom; the British Government granted it autonomy through the said treaty thus putting it on equal footings with Afghanistan (Ahmed, 2014). The treaty of 1841 had been annulled through Article 1 of the said treaty whereas the subordinate position of the State to the British Government in relation to the external relations was retained through Article 3. While other terms of the agreement were substantially the same to those of 1841 treaty, the British Government, in the fresh treaty, agreed to pay to Khan an annual subsidy of fifty thousand rupees which could be suspended if the Khan failed to perform obligations binding under the treaty (Khan, 1975:224-27). It is worth-mentioning that the treaty of 1954 had no mention of the Afghan Government as compared to the previous treaties of 1939 and 1941 wherein Afghan Government of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk was rather made a party which indicated the change in nature of relationship between the British Government and Afghanistan.

The treaty of 1854 was re-affirmed and renewed in 1876 by the British Government during the reign of Mir Khodadad Khan I (1857-1893). Under the fresh treaty, the British Government pledged to duly honor the independence of Kalat but the Khan, in return, had to observe obligation under Article 3 of the treaty of 1954 with respect to external relations of the state. The nature of relation between both the parties undergone a radical change through Article 4 of the fresh treaty wherein both agreed on the one hand that British Agents with suitable escorts shall be duly accredited by the British Government to reside permanently at the Court of the Khan and elsewhere in His Highness's dominions; and, on the other hand, that a suitable representative shall be duly accredited by His Highness to the Government of India. Both the parties further agreed through Article 5 that in case of any dispute between the Khan of Kalat and the *Sardars*, the British

Agent at the Court of the Khan shall, in the first place, try to settle the issue; failing which, the Khan will, with the consent of the British Government, submit such dispute to its arbitration, and accept and faithfully execute its award. Article 6 provided that the Khan had requested for a detachment of the British troops in the State of Kalat which was assented to by the British Government on the condition that the troops shall be stationed in such positions as the British Government might deem expedient, and be withdrawn at her pleasure. Both parties further agreed to construct railway and telegraph lines in the Kalat State (Article 7). Like previous agreements, monetary benefits to the State of Kalat in terms of annual subsidies were also pledged by the British Government (Khan, 1975:230-34).

### **3.2- Territorial Manipulation by the British**

The lust for territorial expansion was the main driving force which brought the British to Balochistan. The 'Forward Policy' was only a happy political slogan intended actually to accelerate conquests over the entire north western tribal belt while the pretext of Russian aggression was a sort of camouflage to dominate Balochistan and the North Western Frontier (Baluch, 1977:73). Ahmad observes that the British Government accrued some benefits by controlling Kalat and other feudatory states through British resident agent; they also enjoyed friendly relations with the Khan of Kalat (Ahmad, 1992:50). The Imperial Gazetteer of India (1908) mentions that the British established their paramountcy in Balochistan after the occupation of Quetta in 1877. The treaty of Gandamak (1879) was concluded between the British and the Afghan Governments ceding Sibi, Pishin and Chaman to the former. In 1883, the administration of Bolan and Quetta districts was also surrendered to the British Government by the Khan on a fixed lease of rupees twenty five thousand and thirty thousand respectively (Dunne, 2006; Breseeg, 2009; Dashti, 2012). In 1886, the Bori valley, which included the Loralai cantonment, and in 1887, the area of Kehtran (currently a tehsil of Barkhan), was brought under the British control. In 1889, the authority of British Government was extended to Kakar Khurasan and Zhob valley; in 1896, the Western Sinjrani and Chagai were also engrossed into such territories. In 1899, the Niabat was founded by the Khan of Kalat on an annual rent of nine thousand rupees; and in 1903 the tehsil of Nasirabad was attained from Khan on the yearly rent of 117,400 rupees (Gazdar, 2006; Hanifi, 2011). The leased and the Pashtun areas were combined by the British Government under the title of British Balochistan; hence, at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Balochistan was actually divided into three regions: the British Balochistan which was ruled directly under the Governor-General of India, the tribal regions including Marri-Bugti Area and ultimately the Khanate of Kalat which comprised four principalities i.e. Las Bela, Kharan, Makaran and Kalat (Dunne, 2006; Breseeg, 2009; Dashti, 2012; The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908:317-18; Harrison, 1981:19).

Keeping in view the geostrategic significance of Balochistan as a buffer zone, the British Government decided to demarcate the boundaries of its territories in the early 1870s (Titus, 1998). A joint Perso-Baluch Boundary Commission was constituted in 1872 to resolve the dispute between Iran and Afghanistan over Seistan (Martín, 2013). General Goldsmid was appointed as its Chief Commissioner while Mirza Ibrahim represented Iran and the Governor of



Makaran, Sardar Faqir Muhammad Bizenjo, represented the Khanate. The debate about division of Balochistan took several months to settle. Ultimately Goldsmid divided Seistan between Iran and Afghanistan (Smith, 1998) which region, owing to its ethno-lingual and geographic complexion, seemed more a part of Balochistan where the Sanjrani chiefs had ruled until 1882 (Ismail, 2014; Shah, 2007). Goldsmid just wanted to appease Iran to keep her away from Russian influence hence the partition was based on political factors (Gazdar, 2007; Hyman, 2002).

The demarcation of boundary by Goldsmid became controversial because of various reasons and the British Government, in 1896, constituted an Anglo-Persian Joint Boundary Commission, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry McMahon, to finalize the demarcation process (Khan, 2013). Sir McMahon finally demarcated Seistan border in 1904 but the historical claims of Khanate were neglected again (Kokaislova & Kokaisl, 2012). Bifurcating families and tribes, the new boundary ran through the Baloch country (Hernandez, 2012). The British Government neglected all evidences about certain areas falling within the jurisdiction of Khan of Kalat and surrendered them either to Iran or Afghanistan (Shafique, 2015). Moreover, the Balochs had reservations about the line since the Khan was not consulted by the British during the demarcation process of the Perso-Baloch border (Titus, 1998).

Harrison holds that, while demarcating the Goldsmid line in the far west, one-quarter of the total area of Balochistan was assigned to Persia in 1871. The Durand line, too, attributed a small strip to Afghanistan in the north in 1893 (Harrison, 1981:19). Until 1905, the demarcation of border between British India and Iran, on the one hand, and British India and Afghanistan, on the other, quite effectively had divided the Balochs among three states (Wirsing, 1981). Breseeg observes that “the Naruis, the Sanjaranis, the Rikis and the Brahuis were divided among Iran, Afghanistan and British Balochistan (Breseeg, 2004:92).” Ahmad (1992:xix) believes that the first two Afghan Wars were precipitated because of the Russian threat to India; the Treaty of Gandamak (1879), delineation of the Russo-Afghan boundary known as Ridgeway Line, British-Afghan boundary known as the Durand Line, and Perso-Baluch(istan) boundary known as Goldsmid line were redrawn also because of the same threat.

### **3.3- The Sandeman System**

The British Government in India knew the fact very well that any direct physical occupation of Balochistan was difficult to be maintained and prolonged hence it imposed Sandeman System of indirect rule wherein, instead of controlling the entire tribe, Sir Robert G. Sandeman (a Scottish) controlled only the tribal chiefs of Balochistan (Hamed, 2008). The colonial interference in developmental and administrative affairs was least because the said system recognized the *Sardars* as the guardians and custodians of their respective area (Dorrnsoro, 2012). In that system, the Agent to the Governor-General, being the political adviser to the Khan of Kalat, was the actual ruler who was responsible to provide subsidies to the Kalat State (Johnson & Mason, 2008). Sandeman was known as the founder of the British Balochistan (Wirsing, 1981).

The Sandeman System was actually a peaceful penetration of the British into the Baloch homeland (Embree, 1979:13). Sandeman mostly dealt with the Balochs, Brahuis and Marris of the Marri-Bugti region, Kalat, Zhob, Quetta and Kachhi areas. He had singularly been successful in dealing with the Brahuis and the Balochs since he comprehended the tribal system better than his peers. In order to win the confidence of the tribal chiefs and commanding them effectively, he worked hard to understand the tribal behavior. For him, it was easier and cheaper to control a few tribal chiefs rather than to control the tribes directly (Ahmad, 1992:98,121). He had identified that the tribal *Sardars* needed authority and the necessary means like money, weapon and horses to hold it. The British Government offered those means to attain the allegiance of those *Sardars* who, in turn, guaranteed local law and order. To maintain peace, Sandeman encouraged the *Sardars* to raise their own paramilitary *Lashkars* or Levies which were paid from the British treasury and controlled by the respective district officers (Hernandez, 2012; The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908:334; Tucker, 1979:23).

In Balochistan, the institution of *Jirga* existed even during the invasion of Alexander the Great in 330 B.C. (Dupree, 1973:278). Sandeman, who already had witnessed the practice of *Jirga* among the Pathans, intervened in that institution, too, and molded it into *Shahi Jirga* (Council of the main tribal *Sardars*) (Tucker, 1979:26). The *Jirga* was a form of trial by a jury comprising councils of Chiefs and notables, which, in the beginning, was constituted purely on merit with honest, honorable and brave members; however, the nomination of the members to the *Shahi Jirga* had an implied loyalty to the British Government (The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908:321). The *Shahi Jirga* had to be held at Quetta, Fort Munro and Sibi once or twice in a year; it could also impose property and labor taxes whereas its decisions could be overruled only by the Political Agent. It was a shrewd mechanism devised by the British to rule indirectly by vesting powers in few tribal elders ready to act against their own people (Breseeg 2004:91).

The main goal of the presence of the British in Balochistan region was to protect the borders (Haqqani, 2007). Sandeman never hesitated to apply brute physical force whenever he felt necessary. All the British settlements and administrative units in Balochistan had a stand-by regular force to back him up (Tucker, 1979:25). He, as an administrator, used coercion, taxation and temptation to advance his policies (The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908:281). He pitted the tribes against each other and, as an arbitrator, resolved feuds created at his own will (Tucker, 1979:38). The isolation of Balochistan from the body politic of the subcontinent was because of the Sandeman System (Ahmad, 1992:104).

#### **4- The Evolution of Nationalists Trends in Balochistan during 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

With varying intensity, the Baloch resistance against the British subjugation had been continued for over a century; nevertheless, these were individual or collective acts of some of the tribal chiefs aggrieved by one or another action of the British Government. The communication gap between the Baloch tribes, the superiority of the enemy in arms and material resources as well as the lack of a reasonable political organization to mobilize the masses were the main causes that the said uprisings could not take the shape of a national movement; but, in spite of all these drawbacks, the Balochs continued their

struggle throughout the period of British domination and never allowed the British influence to diffuse into their society (Breseeg, 2004:166). However, the dawn of the twentieth century found new forms of expression of Baloch discontent and political unrest; there was an increase of sporadic uprisings throughout the Balochistan region. Some major external events, such as the Iranian Revolution (1907), the World War I (1914-18), the Russian revolution (1917), the Turkish and German activities, pan-Islamism and the Indian freedom movement also affected the trends of Baloch resistance. Although, the consolidation of the Balochs as a nation was retarded by the war economy, nevertheless, the destruction and suffering stimulated an unprecedented political consciousness within them; since the end of World War I, the Baloch nationalists increased their efforts to promote unity among people and their national consciousness grew with every fresh outbreak. Lenin's appeal for the "right of self-determination for all oppressed nations" already had influenced the rapidly developing nationalist tendencies; after staging a revolt against the British attempts to raise mercenaries in Balochistan, some rebel Baloch tribal chiefs fled to Soviet Union and constituted a delegation to the "Baku Congress of the People of the East" held by the Communist International in September 1920. Communist influence in Balochistan dates from that time (Breseeg, 2004:193). Inayatullah Baloch endorses the same viewpoint by observing that the failure of the Baloch movement against the British gave rise to various groups of nationalists to be classified under two major categories; the revolutionaries who fled to Soviet Union to seek support against the British imperialism and the constitutionalists, with middle class background and education from the British educational institutions, who followed the line of the Indian nationalists and organized the *Anjuman* and later on the Kalat State National Party (KSNP) (Baloch, 1987:143-7).

Mir Dost Muhammad Khan Baloch, the nephew of Bahram Khan, captured the throne of Kalat and pronounced himself as the Shah-e-Balochistan in 1920 (Wirsing, 1981). However, when Reza Shah came in power in 1928, the Persian forces started operation with the help of the British against the Baloch forces and defeated them (Hanifi, 2011). Mir Dost Muhammad Khan Baloch was executed in January 1930 in a prison located in Tehran (Connell, 2013). The anti-British political activities have already started in the region; the first successful nationalist campaign was, in fact, launched against state recruitment in 1929 which soon turned into an armed mutiny. In 1930, an anti-colonial movement 'quit Balochistan' was also launched by several underground groups (Khan, 2003). Because of the execution of Mir, the resentment of the Balochs against the British increased and they raised their voices at the Baluch Conference of Jacobabad, held in 1932, against the British Government and the occupation of Western Balochistan by Persia (Gazdar, 2006; Pinéu & Fleschenberg, 2012).

Mir Yusuf Ali Khan Magasi (1908-1935), the son of the chief *Sardar* of the Jhal-Magasi region, was the organizer of the modern Baloch nationalist movement (Breseeg, 2004:203; Khan, 2013; Hanifi, 2011). In 1931, he along with Abdul Aziz Kurd organized "*Anjuman-e-Ittehad-e-Balochan wa Balochistan*" (Organisation for Unity of the Balochs) with objectives to attain reforms within the Khanate and ultimately a unified and independent state of Balochistan. The nationalists also criticized the *Sardari* system which enabled the *Sardars* to

oppress and abuse their subjects. Since the *Sardars* had been a close ally of the British hence were intolerable for the young nationalists; the abolition of the *Sardari* system was another main demand of the *Anjuman* (Breseeg, 2004:207-10). Meanwhile, Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd published a proposed map for a Greater Balochistan which included Iranian Balochistan and parts of Punjab and Sind along with the British Balochistan, Kalat and the Baloch principalities (Khan, 2003).

Mir Ahmad Yar Khan narrates that Mir Mohammad Azam Jam, the Khan-e-Baluch-XII (1931-33), succeeded to throne of Kalat on 9<sup>th</sup> of December, 1931. He claims that the Khan wished to get rid of the British thus supported the “Quit Balochistan” movement launched against the alien rulers. He quietly encouraged his influential friends like Nawabzada Yusuf Ali Khan, Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd, Malik Faiz Muhammad Yusufzai, Mir Muhammad Hussain Unqa, Dr. Faiz Mohammad Khan Tamandar Marri and Nawabzada Mir Abdur Rehman Khan Bugti to promote the cause of the movement; he also assured his cooperation to Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar and Maulana Shaukat Ali in their struggle for the freedom of India from the British yoke (Khan, 1975:110). Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, born at Loralai in 1902, succeeded Mohammad Azam Jam on 20<sup>th</sup> of September, 1933 (Qaisrani, 1994:142). He took some important initiatives in Kalat which included the abolishment of the *bejaar* system (i.e. forced labor without due remuneration) and unnecessary taxes, improvement of the judicial system as well as strengthening education department by raising its budget from Rs. 13,000 to 400,000 and awarding scholarships to students to study in Indian and other foreign universities. He preferred the Balochs in local recruitments. In order to improve the economy of the state, he took various steps including the establishment of an Ordnance factory (Khan, 1975:126-7). Inayatullah Baloch observes that, as a ruler, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan was comparatively more sympathetic and cooperative towards the policies of the *Anjuman*. To plead for the sovereignty of Kalat and negotiate for the repatriation of the leased area to the Khanate, he sent Magasi as his personal envoy to Britain in 1934 (Baloch, 1987:155). Malik Faiz Mohammad Yusufzai, another key figure of the *Anjuman*, nevertheless, revealed that Magasi was actually sent to London by the British as a move of conspiracy against the *Anjuman* (Breseeg, 2004:218). The tour of Magasi to London was not much productive since the British Government denied to introduce reforms in Balochistan; as a consequent, the nationalist in Balochistan under him were inclined to armed resistance against the British Government but his unexpected death because of the earthquake in Quetta in 1935 proved the greatest loss for the Baloch national movement (Baloch, 1987:155).

On 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1937, the “Kalat State National Party” commonly known as “National Party”, was formed in a convention at Sibi; Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd was elected as President while Malik Faiz Mohammad Yusufzai and Mir Gul Khan Nasir became the Vice-President and General Secretary respectively. The independence of a unified Balochistan which included the leased areas as well as the principalities of Las Bela, Kharan etc. was the primary objective of the nationalists. Like *Anjuman*, the Party, too, was against the *Sardari* system introduced by the British in Balochistan. Because of the opposition from the Party, the British Government failed to obtain the Jiwani port in 1939; which provided

sufficient reason to the British to ally with the *Sardars* who were already annoyed with the Party. On July 6, 1939, the tribal force arranged by the *Sardars* disrupted the Mastung convention of the National Party. On the following day, the *Sardars*, headed by Nawab Mohammad Khan Shahwani, demanded to ban the Party and arrest its leadership. On July 20, the Prime Minister of Kalat did the needful and asked its prominent leaders including Mir Gul Khan Nasir and Abdul Karim Shourish to leave Kalat. The Party went underground and continued its struggle inside the State of Kalat as a clandestine organization. The banishment orders, however, were withdrawn after the World War II (Breseeg, 2004:221-6). The party continued its activities and after partition, it opposed the merger of Kalat with Pakistan and favored an independent Balochistan which was in line with its previous commitments (Harrison, 1981:25).

## **5- Analysis**

The study reveals that the Balochs have a distinct and cherished history of tradition and culture. They were a brave and warlike people and their socio-economic and political structure was different from other parts of British India. As a nation, the Balochs were a lucky people since, from Mir Chakar to Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, they enjoyed the leadership of various notable chiefs. The Khanate was the basic unit to strengthen the ethnic bond among them. Moreover, their struggle against the British further solidified the nationalist sentiments. The Balochs had introduced a system of political institutions well before the other communities residing in India. Knowing these facts, the British Government in India handled them with care and did not apply there the policies framed for the other subjugated regions. The British rule in Balochistan stretched over almost hundred years was a dark period. The British feared that a prospering united Balochistan might thwart their geostrategic designs hence they intentionally kept the region socio-politically and economically backward. Jinnah knew these facts very well and, therefore, stressed for reforms in Balochistan through his “Fourteen Points” of 1929. The present analysis of the history of the Balochs shows that, in any kind of arrangement at the state level in Pakistan, they must be paid due respect as a compact ethnic unit, otherwise, their peaceful assimilation into the larger body politic would be a difficult task to achieve.

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