

# Heterogeneity and the Baloch Identity

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## Abstract:

*The homogeneity and heterogeneity and the question of Baloch identity has been a question among the non Baloch people and the word Balochi has been misinterpreted through out the history , the aim of this paper is to discuss the etymology of the word Balochistan organ and background the geography of Baloch land and different composition of Baloch tribes, globalization and the identity of the Baloch nation , will be pointed out. The reconciliations of the Baloch people with the Arab rulers against the neighboring despotic nation and the Baloch cultural identification will be discussed.*

## Introduction

As the saying goes , Nation are built when diversity is accepted just as communities are built when individual can be themselves and yet work for and with each other ,in order to understand the pluralistic structure of the Baloch society this paper begins with a critical study of the Baloch sense of identity by discarding idealist views of national identity that overemphasize similarities. From this perspective ,identity refers to the sharing of essential element that define the character and orientation of people and affirm their common need s ,interest, and goals with reference to joint action at the same time it recognized the importance of difference ,simply put, a nuanced new of nation identity does not exclude heterogeneity and plurality .This is not an idealized view, hut one rooted in social inquiry in which heterogeneity and shared identity together help form potential building blocks of a position future for the Baloch.

Yet the dilemma of reconciling plurality and unity constitutes an integral part of the definition of the Baloch identity . Infect , one flaw in the thinking by the Baloch about themselves is the tendency toward an idealized concept of identity as something that is already completely formed rather than as something to be achieved . Hence there is a lick of thinking about the condition that contribute to the making and unmaking of the Baloch national identity the belief that unity is inevitable, a foregone conclusion, flow from this idealized view of it.

Another equally serious flaw is the tendency among some of the Baloch nationalist to think in terms of separate and independent forces of unity and forces of divisiveness ignoring the dialectical relationship between thus forces .Thus we have been told repeatedly that there are certain element of unity (such as language, common culture tograghty or share history ) as well as certain element of fragmentation (such as communalism tribalism localism ,or regionalism ,) if instead we view these

force from the cottage point of dialectical relation, the definition of Baloch identity involves a simultaneous and systematic examination of both the process of unification and fragmentation . This very point makes it possible to argue that the Baloch can belong together without being the same similarly it can be seen that they may have antagonistic elections without being different.

**The sense of Belong:**

The specificity of Balochistan geography and geopolitics has affected and shaped that character of Baloch their vision of the world and the way they have continued to reproduce and reinterpret their element and tradition . The Baloch myths and memories persist over generation and centuries forming contact and context for collective self-definition and affirm action of collective identities the face of the other<sup>1</sup>.

Located on the south eastern Iranian plateau with an approximately 600,000 sq Km an area rich with diversity that also incorporates within it a wide social variety ,Balochistan is larger than France (551,500.sq km)<sup>2</sup> it is an austere land of steppe and desert intersected by numerous extraordinary varieties. In the northern and interior highland temperature often group to 40 degree F in winter while the summers are temperate. The coastal region is extremely hot , with temperature soaring between 100 to a130 degree summers while winter provide a more favorable climatic spit of its position on the direction of southwest monsoon weds from Indian Ocean . Balochistan seldom receive more that 5 to 12 inches of rain fall per year due to the low allude of makkoran coastal range .<sup>4</sup> the ecological factors have however been responsible for the fragmentation of agricultural centers and pastureland thus shaping the formation of the tradition tribal economy and its corresponding social political institution.<sup>5</sup>

Balochistan geographical location between India and the Mesopotamian civilization had given its unique position as cross roads between earlier civilization .some of the earliest human civilization emerged in Balochistan , merger the earliest civilization known to man kind yet is located in eastern Balochistan the kech ,civilization in central makkoran date back to 4000 Bc , burned city near Zaiden ,the provincial capital in western Balochistan date back to 3000 Bc , thus by the course of time a cluster of different religion language and cultures coexisted side by side ,similarly in the Islamic era we see the flourishing of different set of Islam (sunni,zkri , and shia) remarkable marriage of tribal and semi-treble society enriched with colorful cultural and traditional heritage.<sup>6</sup>

The Baloch probably numbering close to 15 million are one of the largest Train state nation in southwest Asia<sup>7</sup>. The question of Baloch origin iw who the Baloch are and where they come from has for too long reaming

an enigma . Doubles in a sex words one can respond for and genetic material superimpose over thousands of year of internal migration immigration cultural innovation and importation. Balochistan the cradle of ancient civilization has seen many races people religion and culture during the past few thousand year . From the beginning of classical history three of world civilization ,Dravidian, Semitic and Aryan ,met formed bonds and were mutually influenced on the soil of Balochistan to a lesser or greater extent they left their marks on this soil ,Particularly in the religious beliefs and the ethnic composition of the country .<sup>8</sup>

The exact meaning and origin of the term Baloch is somewhat cloudy .Its designation may have a geographical origin as is the case of many nation in the world , Etymological view supported by some scholars is that the name Baloch probably derives from Gedrozia or Kedrozial the name of the Baloch country in the time of alexander the great (256-323 BC)<sup>9</sup> The term Gedrozia with the suffix of {ia} seems to be a Greek or latin construction like per.ia ind.ia,kurd.ia etc gedroozai the land of the ringing sun , ws the eastern most satrpy ( province ) of the median empire probably its location was the main source of its designation as Gedroz or Gedrzia it should be noted that there are two other eastern counties in the Iranian plateau namely Shoran and Nimroz both have their dig nation originated from the same source the sun. They are known as the land s of rising sun . Likee the suffix is tan ,roz(Koch) is also a suffix for various place and family names construction in Iranian language.

Having studied the etymology of the term Kurd the Kurdish scholar mohammad Amin Seraji Belevs that the term Baloch is the corrupted form of the ten Baroch or Baroz , arguing on the origin and the meaning of the term seraji says thezaroz has a common meaning both in Kurdish and Baloch which means the land of the rising sun ( beroch) or toward sun) locating at the eastern most corner of the median empire the county probably got the designation baroch or baroz during the median era( median empire awes dominant from the 630 bc to 550 bs) believes saraji. According to him there are several tribes living in eastern kurdistn who are called barozai ( because of their eastward location in the region) based on an ancient Mesopotamian text some scholars however opine that the word Baloch is a corrupted form of melukkha meluccha or mleccha which was the designation of the modern eastern makkoran during the third and the second millennia Bc<sup>10</sup>

Etymologically speaking there many territorial or regional names which There Are Many Territorial Or Regional Names Which Are Derived After The For Cardinal Point(east west north and south)for example the English word Japan isn't the name used for their country by the Japanese while speaking the Japanese languages it's an eponym. The Japanese name for Japan are Nippon and Nixon .both originally and are often translated as the land of the rising sun. The nomenclature comes imperial corresponding with Chinese sui dynasty and refers to Japan eastward position relative to China.

Being a baloch ending. The origin of the word balochistan can be identified with more precision and certainty. The term constitute of two parts . Balcoh and stan ,the last part of the name stan is an indo Iranian suffix for place prominent in many language of the region .hte name bLaochistan quite simply means the land of the Baloch . which bear in itself a singficant nation connotation identifying the country with the Baloch.Gankovsky a soviet scholar on the subject has attributed the appeared of the name to the formation of Balcoh feudal nationality and the spread of the Baloch over the territory bearing their name to this day during the period between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The Baloch may be divided into two major groups. The largest and the most extensive of these are the Baloch who speak Balochi ar any of its related dialect. This group represent the Baloch par excellence the second group consists of the various non Baloch speaking groups among them are the Baloch of sindi and Punjab and the brains of eastern Balochistan who the fact that the latter group differ linguistically they believe themselves to be Baloch and this belief is not contested by their Baloch speaking neighbor .Moreover many prominent Baloch leader have come from this second group thus language has never been a hurdle for baloch. religious and cultural unity even before the improvement of roads communication printg Dod o Balach and Shymorid o hani , stores were popular throughout the length and breadth of Balochistan .

Despite the heterogeneous composition of the Baloch however in some case attested in tradition preserved by the tribes they believe themselves to have a common ancestry .Some scholars have claimed a semitic ancestry for the Baloch a claim which is also supposed by the Baloch writers even though this belief may not necessarily agree with the fact(which it should be pointed out are very difficult to prove either way) it is the concept universally held among members of the group that fact is that there are many common ethnic factor which have contributed to the formation of the Kurdish nation . the were also factor which have led to division within the Kurds themselves while the language identified as kudish ae not the same as the Persion Arabic or Turkish they are mutually intelligible Geographically the division between the Kurmaniji speaking



arear and the sorani speaking area correspond with the division between the sunni and shite schools of Islam despite all these factors the Kurd form one of the oldest nations in the Middle East.

Tribal loyalties continue to dominate the Baloch society and the allegiance of the majority of the Baloch tribes share an ideology of common descent and semi-tribal alliance and opposition. These principles factually operate at the level of the smaller sub-tribes but they are contradicted by the political alliance and south-south relations integrating these sub-tribes into larger wholes. In a tribal society a political ideology such as Baloch nationalism would be unable to gain support because loyalties of tribal members are not directed to entities rather than individual tribes. The failure of the tribes to unite in the cause of Baloch nationalism is a result of tribal behavior in total the Pakistan and Iranian Baloch recount. Within the tribes an individual's identity is based on his belonging to a larger group. This larger group is not the nation but the tribe. However the importance of the rise of a non-tribal movement over more tribal structure should not be underestimated. In this respect the Baloch movement of the 1920 to 1930 and 1940 proved us a good example.<sup>12</sup>

The Baloch have devised nationalist ideology but realize that the tribal support remains crucial ingredient to any potential success of a national movement. By accepting the support of the tribes, however small, are of little significance in southern Balochi (both Pakistan and Iranian Balochistan) Makoran, which was originally a stratified society with a class of nominally Baloch landowner controlling the agricultural resources. The great majority of the tribes in Balochistan view them and are viewed by outsiders as the Baloch.<sup>13=</sup>

politically, the British occupation of the Baloch state of Kalat in 1839 was perhaps the greatest event and turning point in the Baloch history. From the very day the British forces occupied Kalat state, Baloch destiny changed dramatically. The painful consequences for the Baloch were the partition of their land and perpetual occupation by foreign forces. Concerned with containing the spread of the Russian socialist revolution of 1917 the British assisted Persia to incorporate western Balochistan in 1928 in order to strengthen the latter country as a barrier to Russian expansion southward. The same concern also led later to the annexation of eastern Balochistan to Pakistan in 1948.

Thus colonial interests worked against the Baloch and deprived them of their self-determination and statehood. Confirming this notion in 2006 in a pamphlet, the Foreign Policy Center a leading European think tank launched under the patronage of the British prime minister Tony Blair revealed that it was British advice that led to the forcible accession of Kalat to Pakistan in 1948. Referring to reliable British government archives the Foreign Policy Center argues that the Secretary of State Lord Listwell advised

Mountbatten in September 1947 that because of the location of Kalat it would be too dangerous and risky to allow it to be independent the British high commissioner in Pakistan was accordingly asked to do what he can to guide the Pakistan was accordingly asked to do what he can to guide the Pakistan government away from making any agreement with Karat which would involve recognition of the state as a separate international entire .<sup>14</sup>

Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Balochistan political boundaries do not conform to its physical frontier they vary widely eastern Balochistan with Quetta as its capital has been administered by Pakistan since 1948 . western Balochistan officially known as Sindh was Balochistan with Zaheda as its capital has been under the control of Iran since 1928 and the northern Balochistan known as the welayat I Nimrooz has been under the Afghan control since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Shared History:**

As the Kurd , Baloch make a large ethnic community in the southwest Asia without a state of their own . Baloch folk tales and legends point out that major shift of Baloch population to the present land of Balochistan were brought about in different time and different place from linguistic evidence , it appears that the Baloch migrate southward from the region of the Caspian sea. View against this Backgrounds the Baloch changed several geographical political and social environments Thus from the very beginning they learned to adjust themselves with different culture and way of life.

The Baloch history is a chain of unsuccessful for autonomy and independence .It tells about genocide forcible assimilation deportation and life in exile . Since its inception the Baloch national identity has been seen as based primarily on such experience. However the early political history of the Baloch is obscure. It appears to have begun with the process of the decline of the central rule of the caliphate in the region and the subsequent rise of the Baloch in Makkoran in the early years of the 11<sup>th</sup> century .<sup>15</sup> The unwarlike general Muhammad bin Qasim captured Makkoran in 707 AD Thereafter Arab governor ruled the country at least until the late 10 century when the central rule of the Abbasid Caliphate began to decline.<sup>16</sup>

The period of direct Arab rule over Makkoran lasted about three centuries by gradually accepting Islam the scattered Baloch tribes over vast area ( from Indus in the east to Kerman in the west) acquired a new common identity the Islam thus Islam gave them added cohesion.<sup>17</sup>

The Arab rule also relieved them from the constant political and military pressure from Persia in the north .moreover as mentioned earlier they benefited materially from the growth of trade and commerce which flourished in the towns and ports under the Arabs reviving the old sea and land trade routes just like India to Persia and Arabia through western Makkoran .<sup>18</sup>

Under Arab rule the Baloch tribal chief became a part of the privileged Muslim class and identified themselves with the Arab caliphate and represented it in the region. The conflict between the Arab caliphate and Baloch on the one hand and the neighboring non-Muslim powers on the other strengthened the Muslim identity of the Baloch while the conflict between the Arab caliphate and the Baloch contributed to their tribal unity and common consciousness. The threats posed to the Arab empire and to the Baloch would gradually narrow the gap between the warlike Baloch tribes. In this process Islam would function as unifying political ideology and promote an common culture among the Baloch tribal society and its different social classes as a whole. These developments appear to have played a significant role in enabling the Baloch to form large scale tribal federations that led to their gradual political and military supremacy in the territories now forming Balochistan during the period of 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>19</sup>. Thus the early middle ages saw the first emergence of a distinctive Baloch culture and these spiritual vacuum.

Since the 12 century the Baloch formed powerful tribal unions. The confederacy of forty four tribes under Mir Jala Khan in the 12 century the Rind Lashari confederacy of the fifteenth century. The Maliks, the Dodaids, the Boliidais and the Chakhs of Makkoran and Khanate of Balochistan on the 17 century united and merged all the Baloch tribes at different times. Moreover the invasion of the Mughal and the wars and mass migration of thirteenth centuries shaped the Baloch identity.<sup>20</sup>

Thus historical experience have played an important role to the formation of the Baloch national identity. In this regards the Swiss experience shows a remarkable similarity. In the Swiss case strength of common historical experience and a common consensus of aspirations have been sufficient to weld into nationhood groups without a common linguistic and cultural background. The history of the Baloch people over society to a more modern one. ("More modern" is a comparative term, and evolution.) As such, the reliance on tribal criteria is stronger in the earlier movements, and the reliance on nationalism is stronger in the later one. Similarly, the organizing elements in the early movements are the tribes; the political parties gradually replace the tribes as mass mobilization is channeled into political institutions.<sup>21</sup>

### **Culture and the Baloch Identity**

Geography helps, because it accustoms the Baloch to the idea of difference. Thus, the Baloch culture owes much to the geography of the country. The harsh climate and mountainous terrain breeds self-reliant people used to hardship; the same conditions, however, there is the long extension from Kalat of the inconceivably wild highland country which faces the desert of Sindh the foot of which form the Indian frontier the

cultural heartland lies in the interior in the callers of kech panjgur and pambpur in the southern and central Balochistan .

Being expressed through language literature religion customs tradition and beliefs . culture is a complex of many strands of varying importance and vitality . The Balochi adjustability, accommodate and purportedly primordial categories Turing to the familiarity of their own ethic background .In the process they try to gain an identity of their own by going back to the fundamental of their religion to a language unspoken for generation . to the comfort of homeland that may have been their in the past .In doing so they construct anew identity .<sup>25</sup>

The Baloch people are unique challenges contingent on the nation state in which they reside for example in Iran where the Baloch are thought to comprise more than two million are restricted from speaking Balochi freely and have been subject in military operation by the Persian dominated state. The harsh oppression of the Iranian and Pakistan states has strengthened the Baloch will to pass on their heritage to coming generation . the Balochi language is both roof and symbol of the separate identity of the Baloch and impressive efforts are made to preserve and develop it <sup>30</sup> having realized the significance of the language as the most determinate factor for the Baloch identity the Persian and Punjabi dominated states of Iran and Pakistan have sought to assimilate the Baloch by all possible means.<sup>31</sup>

### **Globalization and the Baloch identity:**

Since the early 2000 electronic media has been a continually changing forum for communicating which has been taken up by the Baloch communities to maintain connection with has been taken up by the has been an easy and innovative avenue for cultural expression . The Baloch for instance have established on line magazine newsgroup , human right organization student group academic organization and book publisher for a trans nation a community some of these informative and insightful English media include. Balochistan TV . radiobaloch.org. Balochi.com balochunity.org ,Balochnews.com , crumbs.org, Baloch voice.com, Based out of the country they have significantly contributed to the development of the Baloch identity.

The revival of ethnic identity is converging with the emergence of continental political and economic units theoretically able to accommodate smaller nation units with overhang police , economic and security framework . The nationalist resurgence is inexorably moving global politics away from the present state system to a new political order more closely resembling the world ethnic and historical geography . Thus the new world order may hold light hope oppressed ethnic communities. Who have survived empires . nation building process by brutal neighbors who systematically eroded them . reduced their existence to rival

treble. Therefore control to the globalist argument the new media are not eroding the since of national identity but rather reinforcing and preventing it with a broader and much independent context to ethno cultural identity macro the juridical boundaries of states to strengthen and solidify its distinct culture indemnity.

### **Conclusion :**

There is a general consensus among the scholars about the Baloch community with regard to get erogeneity in Baloch political society that voluntary association , independence ,autonomy equality and consultation had remained its basic principles and ingredients. It is the idea of an ever land emerging from an ancient civilization united by a shared history , sustained by pluralistic way of life in fact this way of life made it possible for people with different social realities come under the umbrella of a free willingly accepted social and cultural code . The Baloch embraced and Baloch are not a single race, but are a people of different origins whose language belong to the Iranian family of language. They are mixed with Arabs in the south , indian in the East and with Turkmen and other Altaic group in the north west.

The very survival of the Baloch as a distinctive nation is of dialect of tribes and communities of religion butit diversity with a unity proved by common tribal culture common history common experience and common dream .Thus it is necessary to understand the force of unity and the forces of divisiveness in relation to each other. The Baloch also recognize a shared place in history and common experiences , similarly, social formation and share economic interests have helped to shape the Baloch Identity and finally the Baloch identify is shaped by specific shared external challenges and conflict.

### **Note:**

1. An eponym is a name for a place that is not used within that place by the loc inhabitant(neither in the official language of the state not inlocal language name for a people or language that is not used by the people or language to which refers . The name used by the people or lovals themselves is called anonym. For example deuchland is an eddony mgerman is an English exonym for the same place.
2. Many prominent Baloch such as Mir Gus Bakhsh bizenj u,sardar atuallah mengal , gulkhan nasir arw brahi speaking .
3. It ws in makkuran that the early middle ages saw the firt emergence of a distinctive Baloch culture and the establishment of the Baloch principalities and dynasties.

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