The Uncanny Future of Balochistan

Author’s Details:
(1) Hassnain Javed (2) Dragana Ostic (1,2) Jiangsu University, School of Management, China

Abstract
The case of Balochistan has been ongoing since the independence of Pakistan. Two options on the cards are self-determination or the territorial integrity of Pakistan. While the Baloch fight for the nationalistic cause, Pakistan is engulfed in a series of tensions which cannot allow secession to take place. The research highlights how the people believe and accept the grievances of the Baloch but at the same time are not ready to hand over the right of self-determination to Balochistan. Pakistan’s territorial integrity matters more at this given time, and hence, the only plausible solution is to come up with policies of inclusion for the Baloch.

Keywords: Balochistan, self-determination, territorial integrity and nationalistic cause

Introduction
Balochistan; a word that has become a controversy in itself. A region that not many speak of, a region that silently suffers, and a region that also violently retaliates. Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan, and ever since the birth of the country; it has been the center of attention due to multiple clashes between the federal government and the separatist elements in Balochistan.

During the colonial Raj; Balochistan was considered an uncivilized area along with the North West Frontier Province (Now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). To separate the tribesmen from civilized people and to ensure the safety from the looting practices of the tribesmen, a border was demarcated. One between NWFP and one with Afghanistan called the Durand Line.

Balochistan was home to several ethno-nationalist movements. When the talks of partition were underway, Baloch and Pashtun nationalists were hopeful that they would be consulted as to how borders should be demarcated. Baloch nationalists wanted, due to closer ties with bordering areas of Afghanistan, to be a part of Afghanistan. They were of the view that Afghanistan had agreed to the border in duress and hence when the British would leave, the border would no longer be valid until a new agreement was reached. Pashtun nationalists, on the other hand, wanted the Pashtun areas to be a part of the NWFP because a larger number of Pashtuns resided there. They wanted to name the province Pashtunistan.

In 1947, when the partition was announced; all the princely states were given the options of either joining India or Pakistan. The Khan of Kalat at that point claimed, based on the treaty between India and Nepal that the treaty between British India and Kalat was of the same nature. Hence, he declared independence for Kalat. He was supported by the ethno-nationalists of the region, and the state remained independent for almost nine months. In these nine months, the government of Pakistan pressurized the state to the extent that they finally acceded to Pakistan.

The creation of Pakistan was a huge blow to these movements as all of their demands were disregarded. Both, the Pashtuns and the Baloch, had to live within Balochistan and were forced to recognize Durand Line as an International border. Afghanistan also provided full support to these movements after partition and exerted all the pressure it could to make the Pakistani government give in to the demands of the nationalists. Initially, the government of Pakistan Muslim League tried to control these ethno-nationalist sentiments, but they did not die down.

Over time, these sentiments have played a very significant role in the politics of the province as well. Several protests were also staged to showcase the sentiments of the nationalists.

Initially, the center also refused to share the power with the provinces and accumulated as much power as it could. The continuous shifts between civil and military power also further deteriorated the situation. With time,
the situation should have settled down, and policies of inclusion should have been followed. However, successive governments failed to realize that and only used military means to settle down the problems. Hence, until now, no significant progress has been witnessed within the province.

The result of this has been that the province is the most impoverished in the land; its resources are exploited, and they remain far away from the benefits of development. Over time, secessionist sentiments have developed in the masses, and with the help of external influences, namely India and Afghanistan, they have been demanding the right of self-determination.

**Statement of the Problem**
The study of International law highlights how self-determination was adopted as a principle by the United Nations only for the process of decolonization. Several nations were granted independence from the colonial setups based on the principle of territorial integrity. Hence, the United Nations mentions both these as key rights of all states.

However, if one is to examine the course of history after the end of colonization; very few countries have been granted the right of self-determination based on the fact that it was violating the principle of territorial integrity. Hence, the UN stands at a very confused position as to what stance it will take when a secessionist demand comes up.

At the same time, the International law does not explicitly mention what and which groups qualify as secessionist groups and hence, their demands should be worthy of attention. Same is the case with Balochistan. The aim of this paper is to understand, whether or not an ethno-nationalist movement in Balochistan qualifies as a secessionist movement. If it does, will it be possible for them to get the right of self-determination and exist as a separate state?

**Research Questions**
This manuscript will attempt to address three sets of questions. Answering these questions will lead to the development of the final conclusion and recommendations. The following questions have been devised to comprehend the conditions Balochistan has faced since the advent of Independence in the national political arena and what sort of measures need to be taken to resolve the existing conflict.

Question 1: Does the ethno-nationalist movement in Balochistan qualify as a secessionist movement?

Question 2: Using comparative analysis with another post-colonial nation; is self-determination really what the tribesmen want?

Question 3: Given the current situation, is it feasible to grant the right of self-determination and will Balochistan be able to exist as a separate state?

**Hypothesis**
Based on the research conducted on the history and current dynamics of the Baloch nationalism that governs the politics in the province, two testable hypothesis statements have been derived.

The null hypothesis states that the self-determination is the inherent right of any group that feels marginalized within a state. The alternate hypothesis highlights the need for other possible solutions other than secession from the state of Pakistan.

H0= The Baloch nationalist movement qualifies as a secessionist movement and should be granted the right of self-determination.
H1= The Baloch nationalist movement qualifies as a secessionist movement but granting the right of self-determination is not the feasible solution of the problem.

Rationale of Methodology

The logic and the underlying principle behind using this topic is for the purpose of research and putting into writing an in depth analysis of the role of the various ethno-nationalist groups in Balochistan the politics of Pakistan, how a strong central government has further aggravated the conflict between the two blocs, and what possible measures can be taken in the future to resolve the existing conflict. The effects of these ideologies and their influence on the political structure of Baloch politics and policy making setup will be properly researched in detail.

Research Methodology

A research methodology defines what the activity of research is, how to measure progress and what constitutes success. Different methodologies define distinct schools. The research methodology chosen to complete this project is both primary and secondary in nature. Primary data the data acquired by means of interviews or questionnaires conducted by the researchers. Secondary research is when a project is a summary of existing data. The secondary research sources used for conducting this research paper include online published articles by scholars, newspapers, journals, and books. These sources helped to form the argument and perspective presented in this research paper. Both qualitative, as well as quantitative data, has been used to complete this dissertation.

Theoretical Framework

To understand the reasoning behind the any group’s claim to the territory, I will be using Andrew Burghardt’s categories of claims.

All claims to territory (Hill, Pounds, Strausz-Hupe and Possony) can be placed in one or more of the following categories: (1) effective control, (2) historical, (3) cultural, (4) territorial integrity, (5) economic, (6) elitist, and (7) ideological. (Andrew Burghardt, 1973, p.228)

In order to answer the question of whether or not secession is morally acceptable; Allen Buchanan categorizes theories of secession. There is first the “Remedial Rights Only Theories:

According to theories of this kind, a group has a general right to secede only if it has suffered certain injustices, for which secession is the appropriate remedy of last resort. (Buchanan, 1997)

Then there are the “General Rights Theories.” According to such theories, there is no general right any group possesses within a state to secede. Next are the “Primary Rights Theories,” and these are further divided into two types; “Ascriptive Group Theories” and the “Associative Group Theories.”

Ascriptive Group Theories attribute a right to secede to certain groups on the basis of nonpolitical Ascriptive characteristics, such as shared culture, history, language, or political aspirations. Associative Group Theories attribute the right to secede to groups on the basis of the expressed voluntary preference of a sufficient proportion of the members of the group that the group forms its own state. (Marglit & Raz, 1990)

Next comes the comparison with a post-colonial nation, and for that, I have chosen African countries. In order to understand the secessionist deficit in Africa, I will be looking at the arguments presented by Pierre Englebert and Rebecca Hummel.

Finally, the current posturing will be based on interviews and surveys, along with an analysis of journal articles and newspapers.
Literature Review
There are various publications on the issue of territorial integrity and self-determination in international law. The medieval world did not have International borders as we understand them today. (Clark, 1961) Authority over territory was often shifting and overlapping. The legitimacy of territorial borders was defined in dynastic terms. And hence, the main focus of foreign policy at that time was the occupation of territory. The practice of establishing international borders emerged in the eighteenth century as a basic rule of coexistence. (Hedley Bull, 1977)

In the early centuries of the Westphalian system, the populations of the early modern state were often culturally diverse and politically disorganized. Many people were not collectively identified by state borders that moved back and forth without much regard for them. (Clark, 1972) It was during the 19th century that people’s view changed. Several people in the system raised their voices against the colonizers and moved the notion of not legitimizing the annexation outside colonial spheres, especially when it happened without the consent of the inhabitants. This change in attitudes was the beginning of an important change in the moral climate of international relations. (Sharon Korman, 1996)

Interrelated Territorial Issues after WWI
Three interrelated territorial issues arose during and after World War I. These were whether the victorious states should be allowed to take away territory from the defeated party, whether the victorious state should respect the territorial integrity of the defeated state, and whether national self-determination or existing state boundaries should have precedence in determining the territorial order. (Korman, 1996)

During the early years of the war, the major states still supported the right of the victorious to usurp the land of the defeated. However, this view significantly changed when the USA entered the war. In 1919, the Treaty of Versailles allowed only small territorial concessions to be given to victorious states. They did divide the colonies of the defeated states. However, the main mandate was to lead the colonized towards self-government.

On the issue of territorial integrity, President Woodrow Wilson was the strongest proponent. His very famous “Fourteenth Point” spoke of guaranteeing territorial integrity and political independence to all the states. This took the form of Article 10 in the covenant of the League of Nations.

Clear tensions existed on the third issue in the democratic governments between the proponents of self-determination and those of territorial integrity because the covenant did not mention self-determination for ethnic nations. (Frank, 1990)

Establishment of the Norm of Territorial Integrity
Following the World War I peace settlements, the territorial integrity norm was supported in several multilateral declarations and treaties. The Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 included support for prohibition of territorial aggression, and the Stimson Doctrine of 1931 also denied legitimacy to territory obtained by force. (Korman, 1996)

However, there were some disruptions in the political maintenance of the norm. First of all, there was the problem of inconsistency and inequality in some of the 1919 settlements that evoked dissatisfaction in a number of countries. The Italians were given some part of the Austro-Hungarian territory for entering the war on the side of the allies. The second was that by the 1930s, the major powers did not ensure that countries respected the norm. Nor did they use force to stop Japan, Germany, and Italy’s expansionist policies. (Frank, 1990)

All of this changed by the end of the Second World War. The only exception at this point was the Soviet Union, which absorbed parts of Germany, Poland, Rumania, and Finland. But in 1945, at the San Francisco conference, all countries acceded to the obligation of respecting the territorial integrity of other states. (Korman, 1996)

Evolution of the Norm Since 1945
The United Nations Charter of 1995 affirmed states’ obligation not to use force to alter states’ boundaries. This same respect for the borders of judicial entities influenced the UN’s approach to decolonization. The colonial territory became the frame of reference for making and responding to claims for self-determination and political independence. (Jackson, 1993)

It did also highlight that it was existing colonies, and not ethnic groups, that were eligible for independence. With regards to the dependent people within, the UN stated that any attempt to disrupt the national unity or territorial integrity is incompatible with the principles of the UN. The UN encouraged the acceptance of the norm of sovereignty-as-territorial-integrity through resolutions, monitoring devices, commissions, and one famous peacekeeping episode in the Congo in the 1960s. (Barnett and Fennimore, 1999)

Organization of African Unity (OAU), Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), Helsinki Final Act, and Charter of Paris for a New Europe; all reiterated the same principle. (Zacher, 1979)

During the 1990s, it was further strengthened by the European Union (EU) and NATO. They made it mandatory for all contiguous nation to have cordial relations and respect borders. For the leaders of EU, this came at the cost of sacrificing their dreams of absorbing parts of contiguous countries. One of the reasons why everyone joined the bandwagon was because the principle would mutually benefit all, and countries would be able to hold a piece of land in their name legitimately. (Maresca, 1985)

United Nations in Confusion

It was after decolonization that problems arose. This was when ethnic groups within a territory started demanding the right of self-determination.

The principle of self-determination has been specifically (Article 1 and 55) endorsed by the United Nations Charter. In juxtaposition to this is Article 2(4) that talks about the inviolability of the territorial borders.

These two articles have created so much confusion within the system and have been challenged several times by nations and secessionist groups both. In many instances, it was apparent that the principle of self-determination was only given importance in cases of decolonization. Most of the ethnic nationalities that have demanded self-determination after the process have been let down by the international political system.

Self-determination was denied in cases of Western Sahara and East Timor. And was threatened in cases of Belize, Falkland Islands, and Gibraltar. All the ethnic nationalities were denied the right to decide whether they wanted to be part of a particular state or wanted a separate state for themselves. The only reason why this happened was that neither the League nor the UN specifically mentioned self-determination in cases of ethnic nationalities.

Hence, over the years, the UN finds itself in a very difficult position because the Charter guarantees both rights. However, the norm of territorial integrity has taken precedence in most cases.

“With regards to these events, cardinal principles were involved, and precedents were being set that would have consequences not only in the territories themselves but also beyond their borders. The old imperialism was being replaced by another form of foreign control founded on territorial claims”. (Shirley Amerasinghe, 1975)

Self-Determination: The Concept in Question

In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations defined the right of self-determination as “by virtue of this right, people freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”

“In no case, it is synonymous with independence. For the attainment of this which the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, quoted above, defines as to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development”, freedom is more important than independence.” (Balraj Puri, 2001)
It is important to redefine self-determination to shift the focus from independence and to highlight a better way of being self-determined within the state. Independence is not important, especially in the case of ethnic identities.

Ethnic identities that evolve over time are constructed, and they keep on changing as the times change. If over time, these identities keep on demanding the right of self-determination, it will not be humanly possible to entertain these ideas. These identities are many and varied in all countries of the world. It is not possible to accommodate each one of them by making a separate state.

Also, a mere change in the political status does not always ensure freedom. Ways need to be worked out within the system to resolve the matter. The right of self-determination does not always have to be exercised outside the larger polity. Other factors (like national interest, defense strategy, foreign involvement in secession, the impact of secession on the economy, etc.) have to be taken into account too.

The internal right of self-determination basically provides for a people to be able to have a full voice within the legal system of the overall nation-state, control over natural resources, the appropriate ways of preserving and protecting their culture and their way of life and to be able to be a visible partner with strong powers within the overall national polity. (Mathew Coon, 1998)

There can also be swings in popular moods. For example, if a population chose to secede from a state but the new generation feels that staying integrated with the state was a better option. The international system cannot accommodate such demands again and again. Hence, it is important first to resolve these issues internally. Dialogue can resolve a lot of matters and can lessen the existing tensions.

**Secession and Balochistan**

Pashtun and Balochi movements arose in the last decades of the Raj in the areas that now constitute the Pakistan province of Balochistan. The creation of Pakistan was a crushing blow to those hoping to establish autonomous, ethnically defined states in the western borderland of the Indian empire. (Titus & Swidler, 2000)

The alignment with Pakistan was initially based on an agreement that Balochistan would be autonomous and retain authority over land, resources, and political matters while the Pakistani government would oversee currency, foreign relations, and defense. But almost from the beginning the central government aimed at control, leading to violence between Baloch guerrillas and the Pakistani army sent into the province to subdue them. (Aurangzeb Alamgir. 2012) Since the creation of Pakistan, the Pakistani army has been fighting its own people in the country’s most impoverished, marginalized, and violated province, Balochistan. The military and the civil government claim that the attacks have been launched against militants but the attacks have been indiscriminate and resulted in the loss of life and property of innocent people. (Adeel Khan, 2009)

Though the seeds of ethnonationalism were sown in Balochistan in the colonial era, its full flowering took place as a result of uneven post-colonial modernization. The unstable coalition governments and the successive civil-military takeovers along with the lack of acceptance of integration into Pakistan has pushed the province to this dismal state. (Titus & Swidler, 2000) Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), which is fighting for Balochistan's independence from Pakistan, perceives Jinnah’s residence as an emblem of colonialism that the British Empire passed on to the Pakistani state. According to the BLA that considers itself the representative of the average Baloch, the people of Balochistan never truly got independence. For them, the British colonials just passed on the reins to Pakistani ‘colonialists.’ (Kunwar Khuldune, 2014)

Balochistan’s vast land mass – comprising over 40 percent of Pakistan’s territory – and its reasonable endowment of natural resources including land, gas, minerals, as well as a highly strategic coastline, mean that it is a viable target for spatiotemporal fixes. The fact that the regime plans to construct cantonments in Sui, home to Pakistan’s largest known supply of natural gas, Gwadar, a highly strategic city, and Kohly where there
are reportedly major deposits of untapped energy reserves, implies the capitalistic imperialism of the state. (Aasim Akhtar, 2007)

The CPEC links Xinjiang to Balochistan, which is the hub of a separatist movement of its own. The Kalat Operation in 1948; the Nowroz Khan led guerrilla warfare in 1958-59 against the One Unit Policy which was replicated under the leadership of Sher Muhammad Bijnari Marri in the 1960s and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto’s military operation in the 1970s, laid the foundation of Baloch estrangement. The alienation was exacerbated with the military operation in the 2000s, which saw Akbar Bugti being killed in 2006. The current conflict in Balochistan is the extension of the Musharraf-led operation. The major concern expounded by all Baloch leaders from Nowroz Khan to Brahamdagh Bugti is with regards to greater control over Balochistan’s resources and a fair profit sharing mechanism. The CPEC has opened old wounds after the Pakistani federal government decided to change the route of the 3,000-km long economic corridor. (The Nation, 2015)

If the province’s grievances continue to be shelved, and the center continues to sell the expired glue of Pakistani ideology as reason enough for the Baloch to stick to toeing the line of Pakistani nationalism, the juxtaposition between the Muslim nationalism movement in 1947 and Baloch nationalist movement in 2014 will become all the more ominous. (Kunwar Khuldune, 2014)

Chapter One
Question 1: Does the ethno-nationalist movement in Balochistan qualify as a secessionist movement?

Secessionist groups make demands for land or territory based on different claims. These claims have been categorized by Andrew Burghardt, and I will check whether or not, the claims of the Baloch fall under these categories. As mentioned above, these categories include historical, elitist, effective control, cultural, ideological, territorial integrity, and economic claims. The Baloch claim falls under the category of historical, effective control, economic, and cultural.

Historical Claim

Historical claim means that a population has lived in a particular territory for a specific duration, have memories attached to the land and hence, has the emotional connection to claim the land. The Baloch are believed to move here from Arabia or Asia Minor. If we look at the Baloch case; they have been living on the land way before partition. Even in the times of the British Raj, the Baloch tribesmen were acknowledged and allowed to live on this land, and manage their internal affairs.

Balochistan, in colonial times, was divided into several administrative units. British Balochistan, Kalat and then, there were areas that the British had leased from the Khan of Kalat. Kalat was an independent area, ruled solely by the Khan. British did have their means of influence, but it was nominal. The other two parts were under direct control of the British. Hence, by no means are they new to the land or have occupied it illegally. Generations of Baloch have been born here, and hence, they have the right to the land.

Effective Control

Effective control implies that the people of the land have been managing the administrative function of the place. The British could not control the tribesmen, hence demarcated borders. These borders were peace agreements of sorts, highlighting that the princes would govern these states, but they would come under the reign of the British.

Balochistan, even in colonial times, was managing its affairs internally. Then after the creation of Pakistan, it was allowed to continue under that umbrella, and despite several military operations; administration lies in the hands of the elders of the areas. These include members of the Bugti, Marri, Magsi, Khosa, and Mazari, etc. families. These people have been in charge for generations, and despite conflicts; the charge has not been
handed over to the government till now. When a group has been effectively controlling the affairs of an area, it has a claim to the land.

**Economic Claim**

Economic claim implies that land, in order to survive and progress economically, needs to have control over its resources and plan of the economy. For the longest time, the province of Balochistan has been exploited for its natural resources. In metallic minerals, it has 4.5 million tons of copper reserves, 20,000 tons of chromite ore, 273 million tons of iron ore, and 26 million tons of lead-zinc ore. In non-metallic minerals; Balochistan has 262 million tons reserves of coal, 100,000 tons of fluorite, 25,000 tons of barite, 12 million tons of onyx marble, and 787,000 tons of Sulphur.

Balochistan is estimated to have more than 9 billion barrels of petroleum oil and 105 billion cubic feet in shale oil and natural gas reserves. All these resources have led Balochistan to be a constant target of all successive governments. Instead of including them in the political process and leading them towards inclusion by addressing their grievances; they have been sidelined, and their resources have been exploited. Natural gas is still not available in the province, while their gas is being used in the rest of the country. Mega projects are forcefully started in the province, but no measure is taken to provide basic facilities to the people.

When land is rich in resources and is being exploited like this, it is only natural that the people of the land will demand control over the territory to prosper economically.

**Cultural Claim**

The cultural claim over land is that the people belonging to it have a set of traditions that they follow. These traditions keep them integrated and connected. A number of tribes make up the Baloch people. However, three main tribes include Pashtoon, Brahvi, and Baloch. These tribes either speak Pashto, Balochi, or Brahvi; given which tribe they are affiliated to. Several of the people living in the land also understand Persian and Darri. Despite the ethnic differences; what connects them is their literature, their customs, beliefs and the moral order of life. These people are known for their hospitality, their sincerity, and their loyalty. However, they are also known for their hatred towards fidelity and disloyalty. Such instances are never forgotten by the Baloch. They also have their own folk music, cultural dances, and cultural dresses. Men are known to wear turbans, while women wear shirts with small mirrors embedded in them. This shows the depth of their cultural lives and the traditions that they hold dear.

Baloch nationalism is not just an offshoot of the anti-colonial sentiments but also this sense of belonging within a group; a group that feels the need for a state based on their cultural similarities.

**Remedial Rights Only Theories**

As mentioned earlier, according to such theories, secession is the last resort in cases where the group has suffered serious injustices at the hands of the state.

After the initial resistance by the Khan of Kalat to join the newly made state of Pakistan, he had to accede to the pressure by the Pakistani government and join the country. This did not mean that the ethno-nationalist voices in the province died. They started demanding their rights right after merging with the state of Pakistan. They also formed a political party, National Awami Party (NAP), to get their interests articulated in a better manner.

However, over time the conditions only deteriorated. To counter the pressure from East Pakistan; One Unit Policy was adopted in 1955. This created a lot of problems for Balochistan because Punjab had already been the center of all the administrative units and all developmental policies were made, keeping Punjab in mind. It meant that the autonomy of the provinces had been taken away, especially the Baloch province; which was already fighting for rights within the country. The NAP ardently started opposing the One Unit Policy, and as their opposition intensified; it became one of the factors of the military coup of 1958. The Khan of Kalat, who
initially supported the policy, started opposing it too and demanding the independence of Kalat. The military used this opportunity to arrest the Khan, ban political parties, and arrest leaders of a NAP.

Despite trying to become a part of the electoral process, their demands are curbed by using military action. During Ayub Khan’s regime, non-party elections were held in which ethno-nationalist sardars (Ataullah Mengal, Ahmad Nawaz Bugti, and Khair Baksh Marri) were elected to the National Assembly. When they started highlighting the problems of the Baloch people in the assemblies, their Sardar titles were taken away, and replacements were appointed. Yahya Khan promised to dissolve the One Unit and resolve the issues of Balochistan. However, instead of taking the people into confidence; he merged the entire of Balochistan into a single entity, leaving the people alienated once again. Bhutto did the same during his regime as well. Even though NAP came into power during his time but again, the highlighting of Baloch problems led to their dismissal. This time the Baloch started an armed struggle against the government because they had realized that the government was not ready to address their issues. Bhutto used the military tactic again instead of seeking a political solution.

The military has been used time and again to seek control of the Baloch province. Their resources have been occupied, and military centers and cantonments have been set up to keep a check; while the rest of the province remains impoverished. A nutritional emergency is on its way because of severe malnutrition, and lack of healthcare facilities. While projects like the Gwadar port are being set; it is being done by force and keeps the Baloch marginalized. Majority of such projects and their lucrative posts are occupied by the Punjabis, and that agitates the people more than anything. There are ongoing disappearances, and anyone who speaks up for the Baloch is very effectively thrown out of the system. The security lapse in the province has resulted in the loss of several lives, and these are just a few of the cases of how the Baloch have suffered in history and continue to do so even today.

Primary Rights Theories

Primary Rights Theories allow the right of secession to groups that have a shared history, culture and tradition, and want to form their own state. It includes everything mentioned above in the cultural claim over a territory. I believe that the territorial integrity of a country matters more than anything in this given time. However, the grievances of the people cannot be ignored. Hence, I ascribe to the Remedial Rights Theories; granting the right to groups that have suffered endlessly. The right cannot be given to just about every groups because ethnic and cultural identities are not constant. They evolve over time and not every group can be accommodated based on it.

Chapter Two

Question 2: Using comparative analysis with another post-colonial nation; is self-determination really what the tribesmen want?

For this portion of my study, I have chosen to study the countries of Africa and understand the reasons for a secessionist deficit there and compare it with the province of Balochistan. Africa has over 48 states, and in the 40 years after independence, only 10 of them have experienced secessionist conflicts. Most other regions of the world display a greater propensity for separatist activity: since 1960, 44 percent of domestic conflict years in the Middle East and North Africa, 47 percent of those in Asia, and 84 percent of those in Europe have had separatist content, as against 27 percent in sub-Saharan Africa.¹

It is not as if the African states are homogenous and culturally integrated. They have the same cleavages as any other colonial state, both horizontal and vertical: lack of proportionate allocation of resources, alienation of the masses, and lack of basic necessities, class difference, and ethnic divides. However, despite all these differences, the states have survived secessionist conflicts, and they have not been powerful enough to change the boundaries of the states.

¹

Pierre Englebert and Rebecca Hummel have provided different reasoning for this phenomenon, and we are going to look at them one by one and access whether or not the same holds true for Balochistan. The conditions that prevail in African countries are almost the same as those in Balochistan. The countries are impoverished, there is barely any economic development, and there are constant tensions between the regional elites and ethnic leaders. The institutions are weak to implement any effective policies, and there is a history of state violence against the ethnic groups. The only difference in these cases is that Pakistan is not a weak sovereign state, whereas, African countries are.

In studying the African secessionist deficit, three variables were highlighted in aggravating the secessionist sentiments within a region. The first is the nature of the state itself; its location, size, and population. If the masses are dispersed and diverse, secessionist conflicts are easier. The second consists of material variables. If the population (especially males) is uneducated, it is easier for the leaders to push forth secessionist ideas. Natural resources and their availability also promote secessionist conflicts. However, that again is dependent on whether or not they require foreign investment. Economic injustice certainly plays a part in such cases.

The third variable is the political system itself. Democratic systems play the role of interest articulation well. However, autocratic systems curb the rights of individuals. We’ll now compare the effect of these variables on both Africa and Balochistan.

Table 1. Regression estimates of secessions in Africa and Balochistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Effects on instances of secession in Africa</th>
<th>Effects on instances of secession in Balochistan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New State</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Contiguous Territory</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Size</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Heterogeneity</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Secondary Education</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regime Change</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Positive implies no increase in secession, and vice versa.*

This highlights that every other variable that has not affected the secessionist sentiments in Africa, has been the cause of secession in Balochistan. However, after careful comparison with the African system, I have reached the conclusion that like Africa, the ethnic elite only uses secession as a tool rather than as a legitimate option for the territory.


Although Africa displays a high level of heterogeneity and polarization, specific regions are not sufficiently homogenous to warrant separatist collective action by local ethnic groups, justifying the existence of the states. Same is true for the Pakistani case. Even though the tribesmen have suffered endlessly, not the entire region of
Balochistan want separation. While the Baloch want a merger with Afghanistan, and independence for Kalat; the Pashtoons want a merger with regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to form the province of Pashtoistan. This does not allow secessionist voices to gain power in the region.

At the same time, another phenomenon highlights the lack of materialization of secession in Africa. It is the development of nationalism over time; this nationalism is entrenched in the shared experience of colonial subjugation. At the same time, the elites support the nationalist sentiment out of necessity. This produces legitimacy and undermines their opponents. Hence, living in their own land has integrated them. In a survey conducted by me, 42 participants were selected randomly; each is belonging to a different province of Pakistan. The Baloch people, despite their differences with the center, hold Pakistan very dear and have a strong sense of nationalism.

Pakistan's territorial integrity matters more than Balochistan's independence.


This highlights that people are ready to forgive and forget for their country if effective measures are taken for the progress and protection. The political elites of the region have also been playing with the sentiment alternatively; the sardars and the nationalists have been successively coming into power and legitimizing the writ of the state in order to amass power and undermine the secessionist claims of the opponent at the time. They realize that the lack of accountability and space to privately appropriate the resources encourages them to become a part of the polity.

Another deterrent in Africa’s case is the lack of International recognition. The states have not been able to break away because, after colonial breakups, the United Nations and the major powers have been more inclined towards supporting the territorial integrity of nations. Same is true for the Baloch cause. It has never gotten enough coverage to create the space for dialogue about it. The only time that it was brought up in the US congress was in 2012 when a small group of congressmen suggested two changes in the AfPak policy of the US. The first was to rearm NATO instead of supporting the Taliban, and the second was to stand against Pakistan’s corrupt military and support the Baloch cause, claiming that they have a historical right to the territory. However, these representatives (Dana Rohrabacher, Louie Gohmert, and Steve King) were not influential enough in terms of foreign policy to make a significant impact. Hence, Balochistan remains as is.

Separatism does pose a threat in the African system because of tribal, racial, linguistic and religious divisions. Hence, if the government provides this right to a particular group, several others will rise with the same demand. Hence, the theory of vulnerability suggests that countries in such a position rarely offer such a right to groups. Same is true for the Baloch case because several other groups can demand the same right. These will...
include groups from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the tribal belts of Pakistan. And the government cannot afford such an action.

Hence, similar to the African case, I believe that the argument of secession is only used to threaten the state and push it towards giving in to its demands.

Chapter Three

Question 3: Given the current situation, is it feasible to grant the right of self-determination and will Balochistan be able to exist as a separate state?

It has been 70 years since independence, and every successive government has only curbed the rights of the Baloch people, have fought endlessly not to include them into the system and stop them from bringing their issues to the forefront. Pakistan, at the time of formation, wanted a strong center; the result of which was the lack of autonomy in Balochistan. At the same time, power shifts made the system very weak. This meant that policies kept on changing and grievances kept on increasing. Instead of focusing on eradicating issues, the focus was on amassing power. Hence, in these 70 years, the Baloch have been discriminated against. They have lost lives in trying to ask for help and have been labeled as traitors by the state.

However, for any movement to get attention; the masses need to support the cause. The state of Pakistan has successfully molded the story and presents its version everywhere; one which labels Baloch as anti-state. This means that not very many Pakistanis are educated about the Baloch cause and think of them as rebels.

Baloch movement qualifies as a secessionist movement?

42 responses

Only 16 out of 42 participants recognized the movement as a secessionist movement; the others believed that the group only has grievances with the state.

The state has been unjust with the Baloch people and has marginalized them.

42 responses

90.5%
However, at the same time, the masses feel that along with the government; the tribal leaders have also played a role in the alienation of the Baloch people. They have been too stubborn to realize that they are a part of the system at large, have refused to change their orthodox ways, and have failed to adopt the modern state system. The reason why there is lack of education is that it maintains the control of the tribal leaders, accentuates their power, and stops people from challenging the current setup.

Tribal leaders of Balochistan are responsible for their lack of integration within the system.

In such circumstances, getting a right of self-determination will be difficult for the Baloch people. It is clear from the responses of the people that the solution lies in effective management at both ends; the state and the tribal leaders. Nationalism in Pakistani citizens is very high; it is very unlikely for them for accepting anything other than respecting the territorial integrity of Pakistan.

Baloch leaders need to cooperate with the federal government to become a part of the system at large.

There is also this sentiment that Balochistan cannot exist as a separate state; one because institutions have not developed and it lacks the coherent structure to form a state. Neither do all the citizens want a separate state. Some want a merger with Afghanistan, while some pursue a greater Pashtoonistan; as mentioned earlier.

Also, if the right of self-determination is given to a particular province; it will enrage other marginalized groups to ask for a separation, which Pakistan cannot afford. It stands at a very key geographical location, and the integrity of the territory is necessary to maintain that position and to stop India from rising as the regional hegemon.
When these are the views of the general populace, granting such a right is near to impossible within a country like Pakistan.

**Recommendations and Conclusion**

From the research, it is evident that the Baloch population has suffered at the hands of the state and its institutions. In order to effectively address the problem, it is important to accept this and address their grievances. They should be allowed to highlight the issues that they face within the system. The answer to their problems is not military intervention. This is where the state of Pakistan has been wrong. Seeking military’s help has only aggravated the problem; what needs to be done now is to look for political and administrative issues. Their resources should not be exploited; if the rest of Pakistan is using their reserves of natural gas, they also deserve such facilities.

While the government is working on the Riwaj Act at the moment which seeks to merge FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, they should also work towards inclusion of Balochistan and push tribal leaders to accept the modern state system. The citizens have suffered enough; we have recently seen a call to declare a nutritional emergency in Balochistan. This means that the people need help.
Tribal leaders need to understand that it has been 70 years since independence and it is time to let bygones be bygones. The solution lies in cooperation. The military and its presence in the province makes the Baloch feel violated and under threat. Forceful encroachment by building military cantonments should stop, and all the developmental projects that are underway should have more ratio of Baloch than Punjabis.

Recently, several belligerents surrendered to the state highlighting that they had been working under the influence of India. When a state purposefully neglects an area, external influences rise. We have historically seen the involvement of Afghanistan in the area as well. The census team was also attacked near the Chaman border because Afghanistan claims that those areas are a part of their territory. In order to lessen these influences and the militancy in the region, the state needs to accept its mistakes and work towards betterment.

At this particular point, when there are diplomatic tensions with Iran and Afghanistan; both pushing the idea that Pakistan houses terrorists and regular border security lapses, it is not possible to push towards the self-determination.

While I believe that the Baloch deserve a right to self-determination; I also believe that the term self-determination needs to be revised. Self-determination should imply greater control over resources and a role in the politics of the state. This is what the Baloch should also settle for, because existing on their own is not a feasible option. States and secessionist groups should be encouraged towards working out their differences in a more feasible manner, rather than through independence.

References


