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THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF BALOCHISTAN

by

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THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF BALOCHISTAN

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requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Balochistan, the southwestern province of Pakistan, is taking on increased importance in regional affairs. With the discovery of vast fields of natural gas, along with other valuable minerals, the region is experiencing increased interest from foreign investors and developers. Along with this, the terrain of Balochistan makes it a prime location for the development of roads, railroads and pipelines to connect the Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia. To augment this development, the construction of a deep-water port at Gwadar has the potential of bringing globalization to the region in an exponential manner. In the face of this development and growth are the Baloch, whose continued insurgencies have created an unstable environment. Although deterring large-scale growth, interest in the region continues to grow, and with it, the threat of international politics and agendas colliding in a violent manner as Balochistan grows. As such, the strategic importance of Balochistan lies in its potential to either take the forefront in development in South Asia, or be the epicenter of the next large-scale multinational conflict.

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For Mandy,
Your love and encouragement pushes me to reach new heights,
making us a truly unstoppable team

For Logan, Bailley and Aiden,
Thank you for reminding me to laugh and enjoy the world
around me

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

The area of present-day Balochistan in Pakistan has been at the crossroads of conquerors, explorers, settlers and traders for all of recorded history. Its location is ideally suited for travel along the coast from the Middle East toward India and beyond, as well a critical hub for goods to and from Pakistan, Central Asia and points north. As a major crossroad, it is curious that the area should be so uninhabited, a desert of mystery and unknown.

Prior to Partition, the British used it as a buffer state, which means they administered it indirectly through tribal leaders and chiefs, a practice that continued after the creation of the Pakistani state despite several insurgent outbreaks.¹ Currently, the Pakistan government struggles to control it in order to maintain territorial sovereignty along with the newfound mineral and other resources. The Baloch have since 1947 launched five revolts against the central government.

However, its importance has come increasingly into focus, due to the world's changing political and economic situation because, as Kaplan points out, competition is becoming fiercer with diminishing amounts of new or emerging markets.² The current conflict that is taking place in Afghanistan also points to the importance of this

¹ Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 2-5.

² Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power* (New York City: Random House, 2010), 4-5.

region as it serves as the entry point for military and relief logistics heading into the combat zone. As combat operations intensify, Balochistan is increasingly becoming a safe haven for NATO's enemies, which threatens to bring the neighboring war to the Baloch doorstep.³ These issues, along with a history of domestic troubles with the center, are potential indicators of future concern that requires more attention. With increasing pressures from regional and international actors in their bids for power and influence, and with its prime location along multiple sea and land routes to multiple barely tapped markets, what is the strategic importance of Balochistan?

B. IMPORTANCE

Numbers of security issues of global dimensions are linked to what is taking place in Pakistan. Safe havens for terrorists, extremists and gun and drug smugglers along its western border invite pressures from the United States and its allies. Energy issues, not only in South Asia, but also Europe, Russia and China, have brought increased interest in the region. With plans for pipelines to carry natural gas and oil that either originate or transit Pakistan, and more specifically Balochistan, the security of the region and pacification of the Baloch takes on increased importance.⁴ To the east is the enduring security dilemma with India that has become more tenuous now that both countries are nuclear-armed. Internally, various

³ Pepe Escobar, *Balochistan is the Ultimate Prize*, May 9, 2009, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KE09Df03.html.

⁴ UNPO, "Balochistan: Its Importance For The Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline," *Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization*, March 23, 2010, <http://www.unpo.org/article/10894>.

factions are vying for control at the local, regional and national level, requiring the government to exert constant military intervention against their own people. For instance, the military's presence in FATA areas is assured for years to come with its half-hearted efforts and shifting priorities.⁵ Shortages of natural resources and strategic location are prime factors for additional international pressures placed on the government. Ironically, these same resources are the reason why the Pakistani central government cannot afford to deal with the insurgents demands. With the vital necessity of the resources, as well as the security of the region for extraction and distribution, while the Baloch have more incentive to fight, the central government has exponentially more reason to for the "ruthless crushing of the insurgency."⁶

Given this context, Balochistan's importance to the various power brokers in the region is apparent despite the fact that it was solely a national concern for years. Instability in Balochistan is not limited to Pakistani politics, nor can it be dismissed as a regional Islamic issue, as the Baloch, while Muslim, are secular in their politics. With repeated claims for greater levels of autonomy for the Baloch, this is largely a nationalistic movement. For the Pakistani government, who has dealt with various splinter factions, this is another insurgency that

⁵ Ahmed Rashid, "Renewed Strains Between Islamabad and Washington," *BBC News South Asia*, June 25, 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10375056>.

⁶ Dr. Robert J. Wirsing, "Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources: The Changing Context of Separatism in Pakistan," *Strategic Studies Institute: United States Army War College*, April 2008, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/summary.cfm?q=853>

cannot succeed, as it would add fuel to other claimants along similar lines; there cannot be another Bangladesh. Prior to the discovery of natural resources, this was a local problem that was rarely paid attention to by other nations until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Harrison, for instance, first predicted a "worst-case" scenario involving a Soviet war in Afghanistan, the reaction of the region and the strategic significance of Balochistan.⁷ When this hypothetical situation became a reality in 1979, Harrison expanded upon his earlier work showing a Soviet bid for a deep-water port on the Indian Ocean, and specifically the role that the Baloch potentially held in this endeavor.⁸

Currently, the international players interested in the region have expanded. Security issues in the region involve global players such as China, Iran, and India in the politics and the future of Balochistan.⁹ The state is ideally situated for access to South and Central Asia, the Middle East and the east coast of Africa. It is posed for overland travel to Russia, as well as a marketplace for East and Southeast Asian goods. It has plenty of real estate for extensive building projects, along with access to a cheap labor pool. This unskilled labor, however, creates additional problems, as technical projects require augmentation from skilled Punjabi labor. Militarily, it is important from a logistical standpoint as it provides a

⁷ Selig S. Harrison, "Nightmare in Baluchistan," *Foreign Policy*, Autumn, 1978: 136-160, 137.

⁸ Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baluch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981).

⁹ Kaplan, *Monsoon*, 10.

location for the rapid buildup of power and onward deployment and resupply to each of the aforementioned locations. From a defensive standpoint, an advanced air force and navy operating from Balochistan can also exert control over the Straits of Hormuz as well as the shipping lanes transiting across the Indian Ocean. Finally, the plethora of valuable natural resources discovered in Balochistan has made this area all the more critical in the complex strategic interests of multiple states. Because of these reasons, the location and riches of Balochistan have taken a dramatic rise in importance to the regional and international community.

C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

1. PROBLEMS

Why should we care what is happening in Balochistan? As described, the importance of the region is due its location and the presence of resources, and not the Baloch themselves, although they are deeply affected raising the issue of human rights.¹⁰ As national economies expand into various markets and competition for valuable resources intensifies, Balochistan due to its location and resources stands to be caught in the crossfire of multiple agendas. The Baloch have illustrated that they are willing and able to put up fierce resistance in order to preserve their homeland and way of life. Distrust of not only foreign governments, but also their own Pakistani government is apparent. Certain opportunists in the various Baloch

¹⁰ Raza Rumi, "Pakistan: Separatism and its Discontents," *Human Rights Watch*, December 30, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/12/30/pakistan-separatism-and-its-discontents>.

resistance movements attempts to play international interests against Pakistan in hopes of gaining independence or higher level of autonomy. For example, Pakistan has accused India of helping the Baloch with their insurgencies, including the current struggle.¹¹ These efforts have thus far not amounted to any tangible results except cause military intervention in the state; however, as interest in the area increases, there is the potential for great powers to maneuver against each other pushing Baloch interests aside. Given that, the question that guides this thesis is why it is strategically critical to solve the long-lasting problem of Balochistan and why possible solutions have to involve the international community.

2. HYPOTHESES

The thesis is guided by the recent history of the Baloch who are adamant about maintaining their way of life and controlling their own resources, an obstinacy that left unchanged will keep them wrapped in conflict with the central authorities. Also its growing international importance is critical for understanding what lies in its future, given the fact that merely 30 years ago, only surrounding regional powers, such as India and Iran, cared about what was occurring in the state. However, I argue here that the changes in the international and regional setting mean that a neglected Balochistan may turn into the next serious global conflict, which can be averted through

¹¹ ANI, "'Undeniable' evidence regarding India's involvement in Baloch insurgency: Malik," *OneIndia News*, March 23, 2010, <http://news.oneindia.in/2010/03/23/undeniableevidence-regarding-indias-involvement-inbaloc.html>.

timely action. In addition, I argue that it is important for the international community to get involved given the history of center-state relations and the regional security concerns. Finally, with its strategic location at the crossroads of countries with ethnic turmoil, logistical access and plenty of places to hide, Balochistan is ideally suited as a future safe-haven for terrorists.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of Balochistan appears to ebb and flow with the times and the current local and regional power structure. What is also clear from the available literature is that the Baloch have an uncanny resistance to change. With little in the way of written records kept by the Baloch, the earliest accounts are from the conquerors and traders that interacted with the Baloch. Although interesting, there is no real detail provided until the time of the British occupation, and it is from these writings that we first begin to gain an understanding of the people and the landscape.

In the 1840s, a deserter from the British military writing under the pseudonym Charles Masson, described his journeys through Balochistan and the surrounding areas.¹² These works paint a picture of life with the nomads. It also points out the importance of the Sardari (tribal) system that will play so prominently in Baloch insurgency a century later. Although not making any military or political claims about the importance of the region or the people, outside of casual observations regarding fertility

¹² Charles Masson, *Narrative of Various Journeys in Balochistan, Afghanistan and the Panjab* (London: Richard Bentley, 1842).

of the region and water, Masson's writings spurred interest in the region that would lead to military and political decisions. This interest was in large part due to the "Great Game" between Britain and Russia, especially as Russia gained dominance in Central Asia with an eye toward the Indian Ocean and the vast markets along the land and sea Silk Roads.¹³

The general themes regarding the region echo earlier analyses of a harsh landscape devoid of anything useful. In 1882, Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor visited Balochistan, arriving at Gwadar and travelling along the coast before turning inland.¹⁴ With the Great Game in full swing and the dominance of the British Navy, a passing remark is made as the suitability of Gwadar as a port, but is largely dismissed due to the lack of resources or finished goods to buy, or any significant sized population to sell to. The importance of the road networks connecting India with Afghanistan and Central Asia and Iran are commented on, but the main argument centers again on the location as a useful buffer zone from foreign attacks from the west or the north, as well as the usefulness of the Baloch in fighting any transgressors to the region.

In 1904, Mansel Longworth Dames wrote about the Baloch people,¹⁵ again mirroring many of the observations already made. Written from an anthropological view, it demonstrates

¹³ David Fromkin, "The Great Game in Asia," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1980, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/33619/david-fromkin/the-great-game-in-asia>.

¹⁴ Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, *Wanderings in Balochistan* (London: W. H. Allen and Co., 1882).

¹⁵ Mansel Longworth Dames, *The Baloch Race: A Historical and Ethnological Sketch* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1904), 34-40.

the unity and power exerted by this tribal people, especially in relation to the Sardar. In this work, more emphasis is placed on the Sardar as the role model and voice of the people, observations that would have proven beneficial in just a few short decades at Partition.

Taken individually, these accounts are interesting diversions about life in an earlier time. However, there are some very telling points that can be drawn out of them that are significant today. First is the lack of material resources. Europeans write the books that we have with a focus on the Great Game, leading to a repetitive account of the lack of resources, tough people and value as a buffer state. Following Partition in 1947, there remains very little written about the region outside of comments about the latest insurgency that Pakistan has to deal with. Although there is a small flurry of activity when East Pakistan breaks off and becomes Bangladesh, Balochistan is still widely ignored by the rest of the world despite extensive military activity in the region under Zulfikar Bhutto. During the period from 1972-1977, he disbanded the Balochistan government, sent roughly 30,000 troops into Balochistan and killed an estimated 9,000 militants and civilians. This exemplified the broader problems in Pakistan following Bangladesh independence as Iran assisted the Pakistani central government maintain control while Iraq and the Soviets were covertly supplying the Baloch rebels in what could be perceived as a precursor of Soviet ambitions leading up to the Soviet/Afghan War along with broader regional rivalries. It is not until the early 1980's with the discovery of copper and coal, along with the natural gas already being extracted, that Balochistan

begins gaining larger interest, namely from India and Iran and the proposed Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline, with discussions also beginning with Central Asia, Russia and China for additional pipelines or spurs off of the IPI.¹⁶

With these new finds and the war next-door in full swing, Balochistan is not looked at in larger strategic importance outside of sporadic bilateral or trilateral discussions between global powers and the Pakistani central government. Furthermore, although human rights and poverty levels are cited by leading NGOs, the rhetoric has failed to cause action, reprisal or sanctions against Pakistan. Authors like Mehtab Ali Shah, among many others, point to the impact of millions of refugees arriving in Balochistan during the Soviet/Afghan War after 1979.¹⁷ Many of these accounts also tie in the Taliban and cross-border attacks, which are not surprising as they were encouraged and funded by nations involved in the Soviet containment policy of the Cold War, and therefore carry little relevance. Peter Blood argues that the Soviets were trying to woo the Baloch into another revolt against the center and that such actions would be rewarded with autonomy following the Soviet victory in Afghanistan.¹⁸ Other authors such as Shaheen Khan have focused on Balochistan as it relates to regional conflict resolution. He points to the problems

¹⁶ Ariel Cohen, Lisa Curtis, and Owen Graham, "The Proposed Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline: An Unacceptable Risk to Regional Security," *The Heritage Foundation*, May 30, 2008, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2008/05/the-proposed-iran-pakistan-india-gas-pipeline-an-unacceptable-risk-to-regional-security>.

¹⁷ Mehtab Ali Shah, *The Foreign Policy of Pakistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy 1971 - 1994* (New York City: I.B. Taurus and Co Ltd, 1997), 32-35.

¹⁸ Peter R. Blood, *Pakistan: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1995), 4-5.

that Pakistan has within its borders as well as with its immediate neighbors, as the real reasons that Pakistan has not experienced more growth.¹⁹ His arguments are presented well; however, they are mired in obvious observations and regional biases and lack any possible workable solutions.

Mary Ann Weavers provides a good account of the life and politics of the modern Baloch as it relates to the Pakistani government, inter-tribal relationships and the regional impact of Iranian, Indian and Afghanistan politics.²⁰ Her conversations provide insight into what must be assumed is general sentiment by the Baloch about the government (both local and national), their neighbors and the resource extraction. If this is the "everyman" opinion of Balochistan, than it lends credence to the overall subjugation and manipulation of the Baloch people by not only national and international players, but adds the internal complexity of a growing dissent among the Baloch toward their Sardars. If this is the case and a leader emerges that is able to galvanize the people, then civil war in Balochistan could also be on the horizon that has the potential to dwarf earlier conflicts in the area. This assertion is based off seemingly accepted accounts from authors such as Nina Swidler that insinuates that the complex familial tribal system is an enduring way of life and source of continuity for the Baloch ever-changing political landscape.²¹

¹⁹ Shaheed Rafi Khan, *Regional Trade Integration and Conflict Resolution*, (New York City: Routledge, 2009), 22.

²⁰ Mary Ann Weaver, *Pakistan: In the Shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan* (New York City: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), 29-30.

²¹ Nina Swidler, "Kalat: The Political Economy of a Tribal Chiefdom," *American Ethnologist*, August 1992, 553-570.

In terms of extra-international interest in Baloch, more recently, Geoffrey Kemp²² and Robert Kaplan²³ have written about the rising role of China's involvement in Pakistan. In their works, they begin to show a broader international context regarding Balochistan's significance in world affairs. Kemp points to the outpouring of money by the Chinese throughout South Asia as they attempt to place themselves in economic or distribution centers in an attempt to corner the global market.²⁴ Kaplan also describes the strategic importance of Gwadar Port in Balochistan, as well as planned road and pipeline networks that originate or traverse Balochistan in a broader economic context. He further expresses how these initiatives have the ability to bring peace and stability to the region as governments pursue economic vice idealistic policies.²⁵ This thesis will effectively tie all of these pieces together to illustrate the global strategic importance of Balochistan. It is clear that the governments of Pakistan, the region and internationally have little regard for the Baloch since most of the references cited thus far have focused on the economic advantages of Balochistan. I hope to show the importance and need of a humanitarian solution along economic and political ones for a long-lasting agreement or an accord. As more international actors begin to descend upon the region, the Baloch stand to be further marginalized within

²² Geoffrey Kemp, *The East Moves West: India, China and Asia's Growing Presence in the Middle East* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2010), 4.

²³ Kaplan, *Monsoon*, 12.

²⁴ Kemp, *The East Moves West*, 6.

²⁵ Kaplan, *Monsoon*, 13.

their own province, a reaction that has historically proven to result in armed conflict. It is entirely possible that one of these uprisings could involve large enough numbers of casualties from foreign countries as to spark an armed response of their own. With Pakistan's historical acceptance of foreign militaries operating from bases in Pakistan, most notably that of the Americans which began as early as 1957,²⁶ as well as lack of repercussions when these militaries kill Pakistani civilians and military personnel, could well lead to a "Wild West" scenario. With increasing numbers of countries investing in and operating from Balochistan, there is increased risk of seemingly minor incidents escalating into international incidents that threaten not only the Baloch, but also all of South Asia, with the added possibility of encompassing all of the globalized powers.

E. METHODS AND SOURCES

The background information for the framework of will come largely from books and journal articles from historical and social studies sources. Additionally, historical analysis of various print media from the region is needed along with American, Russian and Chinese sources, to get a better idea of how the region not only views itself, but also how they are viewed by some of the major contenders in the region. Finally, although a lack of academic research exists in describing the regions, comparing similar veins of thought from various extremists

²⁶ Aamjad Syed Ali, *Glimpses* (Lahore: Jang Publishers, 1992), 32.

groups in Balochistan may present a pattern that could provide clues toward possible solutions to an ongoing problem.

F. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The second chapter will illustrate the significance of Balochistan due to its physical geography in relation to transportation opportunities. Namely, how it is ideally situated for road, rail and pipeline transportation of goods and services throughout the region as well as the Middle East, Central Asia/Russia and South Asia. The third chapter will show the significance of the vast, largely untapped, natural resources in Balochistan and how the Gwadar Port project ties into this as a means for propelling Pakistan into globalization. The fourth chapter will show how the stated goals of the Baloch run counter to displayed agendas and how continued insurgency threatens the stability of the region. Further, as the pursuit of their goals enters increasing levels of international involvement, the potential for international intervention along with political agendas can thrust the region into chaos. The final chapter will tie together all of the pieces, showing how the strategic importance of Balochistan lies in the vast rewards available to whomever can master the region, and dangers involved depending on the lengths that countries will go to in order to secure these riches.

II. THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN AND NATURAL TERRAIN

Under the agreement, Pakistan recognizes Kalat as an independent sovereign state with a status different from that of the Indian state. An announcement from New Delhi said that Kalat, a Muslim state in Balochistan, has reached an agreement with Pakistan for free flow of Communications and Commerce and would negotiate for decision on Defense Foreign Affairs and Communications.²⁷

A. INTRODUCTION

The strategic importance of Balochistan lies in its combination of location, resources and the people. In addition, these factors are not mutually exclusive. Instead, the way these factors relate to each other causes them to become of strategic importance when taken as a collective. In this chapter, the focus is on the geographic aspect of this triad. Here, I illustrate how the natural terrain places Balochistan at the crossroads of an increasingly important trade intersection between the Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia. By looking at the physical terrain in conjunction with the human terrain, Chapter II will demonstrate how they converge in a way that sets the framework for the current struggles, and more importantly, the potential for intense escalation of violence in Balochistan.

²⁷ Waseem Altaf, "Accession at gunpoint," *Viewpoint*, April 8, 2011, <http://www.viewpointonline.net/accession-at-gunpoint.html>.

B. THE CROSSROADS OF COMMERCE

According to the CIA World Factbook estimates,²⁸ there are approximately 187 million people in Pakistan, with the Baloch accounting for 3.5% (~6.7 million) of the population, living in a province that composes roughly 44% of the nation. The shaded area of Figure 1 displays the region referred to by the Baloch as Greater Balochistan, as it encompasses the Baloch living in Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan. Historical oral tradition along with archeological support states that this is one of the oldest settlements in the world.²⁹ Although it is arguable that the people that lived in the area 15,000 years are the direct ancestors of the current population,³⁰ this rhetoric is used to rally support for the continued assertion for greater autonomy from the central Pakistan government. Quotes such as "the Baloch who are inherently loving and peaceful people, have been forced to fight back for their existence and national identity throughout centuries"³¹ exemplify this rhetoric by drawing upon the passions and pride of ancestral struggles.

With at least six armed insurgencies in Pakistan and one in Iran along with the continued support of the Afghani Baloch, the idea of Greater Balochistan transcends national politics and exemplifies the porous nature of manmade

²⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "South Asia:: Pakistan," *The World Factbook*, March 8, 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html>.

²⁹ Sarbaz, "History of Balochistan," *Balochwarna*, 2009, http://www.balochwarna.com/modules/mastop_publish/?tac=More_On_Baloch.

³⁰ Balochwarna, "More on Baloch History," *Balochwarna*, 2009, http://www.balochwarna.com/modules/mastop_publish/?tac=More_On_Baloch.

³¹ Ibid.

borders. In much the same way as the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War showed the futility of inserting foreign objectives onto revolutionary or independence movements, the current ideology of globalization, whereby trade and the pursuit of wealth transcends local politics, has the potential for similar outcomes.

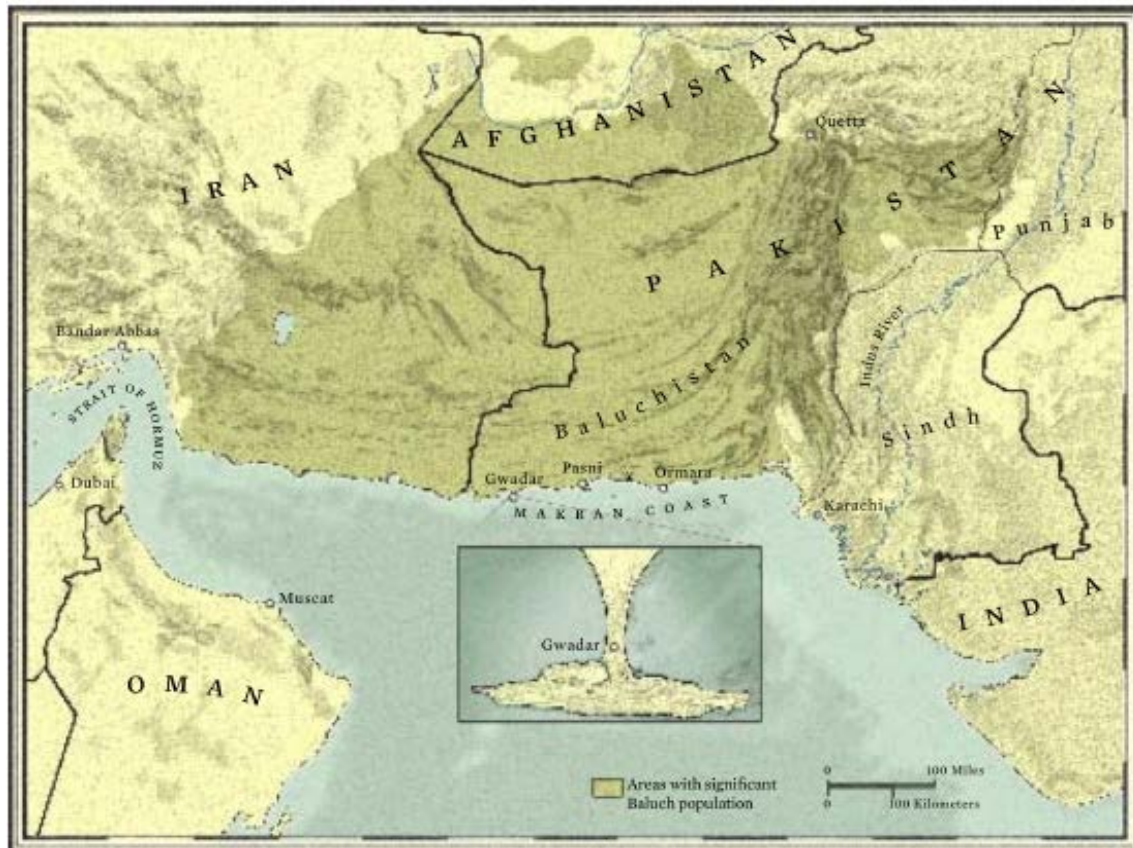


Figure 1: Map of Greater Balochistan
With Inset of Gwadar Port.³²

³² Zaman, Arshad. "New Greater Balochistan Map." Image. May 28, 2009, <http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/images/issues/200905/pakistan-map.jpg>.

C. HUMAN TERRAIN

Human terrain defined in military terms "involves proper systemic identification, framing, and balance of the actual human terrain's social, political, or economic problems in the particular area of interest in direct correlation to goal outcomes."³³ It is a way in which analysts are able to study the human aspects of a region to determine their role and importance and how various societies, with their unique customs and practices will react to outside stimuli. In this way, political and military authorities can better formulate approaches to interact with the local population in a way that is conducive and ideally involves a level of "win-win" for all participants. In this case, the subject population is primarily that of the Baloch who have occupied the area now referred to as Balochistan for much, if not all, of recorded history. Also of significance is that the Baloch do not limit their region to the borders contained within Pakistan, but instead they see all of their ancestral land extending into modern-day southern Afghanistan and southeastern Iran as part of their cultural and political heritage. This assertion has led to contention with the aforementioned governments, and while this is important, falls outside of the scope of this thesis.

³³ Irregular Warfare Centre, "Unconventional Solutions for Irregular Conflict," *The Irregular Warfare Centre*, 2009, <http://www.irregularwarfare.org/>.

1. The Baloch

The tribe is a self-contained world. At its centre is the Sardar or chief of the tribe. Tall, full-bearded, in flowing clothes and heavy turban, the Sardar is not unlike Sean Connery playing a tribal chief. He symbolizes Baloch custom and tribal tradition. Honor, hospitality, and bravery are displayed in his behavior. The tribe revels in his glory. The word of the Sardar is law, his authority total. In an area threatened by nature and, often, invading tribes unity under the Sardar became the key to survival. The Baloch have a saying, 'the Baloch will swear on the Holy Quran but never on the head of the Sardar.'³⁴

The Baloch are a tribal society and are the "majority ethnic inhabitants of the region of Balochistan in the southeast corner of the Iranian plateau in Southwest Asia, including parts of Iran, Afghanistan, Oman and Pakistan."³⁵ Each tribe is headed by a Sardar who holds absolute power over his tribe and sub-tribes. Such local form of political organization has existed for hundreds of years, and as common with tribal societies, there is intense inter-tribal rivalry and feuding.³⁶ In spite of this infighting, it never reached the scale that would change or abolish the system or fracture the society as a whole. As with many of the tribes in this region, the basic philosophy of hospitality, family and revenge exist, with

³⁴ Akbar S Ahmed, *Pakistan Society: Islam, Ethnicity and Leadership in South Asia* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1986), 188.

³⁵ Mir Ahmad Baloch, "Baloch History," *Jimdo*, 2010, <http://shohaz.jimdo.com/baloch-history/>.

³⁶ John Pike, "Baluchistan Tribal System," *Global Security*, March 7, 2009, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/pakistan/baloch-tribes.htm>.

intense loyalty to the Sardar.³⁷ This final note is poignant for the Pakistani government in that it is the Sardars who are at the helm of resistance, conversely, also through the Sardars lays the road to compromise.³⁸

This thesis leads off with the human terrain because it is an underlying foundation of a system that is important for every chapter and subchapter of this thesis. As the Baloch maintain their claims of autonomy and vigorously fight for the attainment of this goal, advancement and development are retarded in the region. With overwhelming odds against them, this appears to be a classic case of "cutting off their nose to spite their face" mentality since the Pakistani government is unlikely to grant full autonomy and in the face of insurgency. Equally unlikely is that the government will pursue growth and development in the province as it would provide financial support to the rebels while also providing increased targets for attack. With increasing interest in the region by the international community and advancing methods of spreading their message, the Baloch are more determined than ever to maintain their culture and achieve autonomy through more drastic measures and in a highly varied manner.³⁹

³⁷ Dr. Nasir Dasthi, "A Brief History of Balochistan," *Baloch Homeland*, June 15, 2009, <http://www.balochhomeland.com/homeland-article2.htm>.

³⁸ Dasthi, "A Brief History of Balochistan."

³⁹ Charles Tilly, *Social Movements, 1768-2004*, (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004), 54. Social Movement Theory contends that people mobilize through claims of identity, political standing, and goals. Central to this theme is the charismatic leader who can organize and mobilize. Testament to the strength of the cause is indicated through continued support following the passing of control of the group to a new leader.

D. PHYSICAL TERRAIN

The land of Balochistan is exceedingly inhospitable; geologists have even compared the landscape with Mars. A Pakhtu expression, reflecting on ethnic relations as well as on geography, describes Balochistan as 'the dump where Allah shot the rubbish of creation.'⁴⁰

The primary reason for the increasing interest in Balochistan lies in its geographical location. Bracketed on the east and west by high rugged mountain ranges (the Zagros in Iran and the Toba Kakar in Pakistan/Afghanistan), Balochistan is canalized and serves as the easiest land route to western Afghanistan and the rich energy reserves and emerging markets of Central Asia. As a flat plain, Balochistan has longed served as the ideal crossroads for merchants and militaries for centuries travelling between the Middle East and South Asia.

In addition to its advantages for overland travel, the blue-water access at Gwadar has been of historical interest, primarily by the Soviets/Russians. So much was this the case, that the British ensured the loyalties of the Baloch during the 1860s and 1870s, as not only buffer against expanding Persian influence, but also to stop the expanding Russian Empire from reaching the Indian Ocean, thus threatening the British commercial dominance in the region.⁴¹ More recently, the Soviets again made a bid for this region when they courted the Baloch during the

⁴⁰ Punjabics, "Baloch Rights or Sardars' Rights?," *Punjabics*, 2010, http://www.punjabics.com/PunjabicsBalochistanForum/Baloch_Rights_Or_Sardars_Rights.html.

⁴¹ Mehrab Sarjou, "The demands for independent Baluchistan no longer can be ignored," *Balochwarna*, May 4, 2011, <http://www.balochwarna.com/modules/articles/article.php?id=2216>.

Soviet/Afghanistan War illustrating the ongoing importance of this crossroads region.⁴² With the quagmire that the war became for the Soviets, this relationship never fully developed, but it interesting to ponder what the region might look like today if the Soviets had been successful in expanding into Afghanistan and then into Balochistan.

Due to all of the advantages of the physical geography of Balochistan, a number of projects have been initiated or planned by various national and extra-national actors. These include high-speed road networks, railroads and pipeline that will make the transit of goods and services throughout the region more efficient and cheaper. On one hand, this could be a boon for the Baloch as millions of dollars in infrastructure and development are offered up by multi-national organization and surrounding countries. Instead, this competition is more likely to intensify concerns and conflict as the Baloch face increasing pressures from the Pakistani government to head off the loss of these revenues. With Iran, the Central Asian countries, Russia, India and China all looking to make inroads and profit from these projects, the delicate balance of power of South Asia is threatened by the Baloch.

1. Pipelines

The primary reason that Balochistan has gained international attention is because of the vast natural gas fields discovered there in 1952.⁴³ Although control of the natural gas field started immediately, it is due to the

⁴² Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 43-44.

⁴³ Punjabics, "Baloch Rights or Sardars' Rights?"

vast growth in industry and modernization in South Asia and associated increase in energy demand that led to large-scale pipeline projects.⁴⁴ As Figure 2 depicts, there are two major proposed pipelines with multiple sponsors within the region, along with the Chinese, that will transit Balochistan carrying natural gas from Iran to India and Turkmenistan to Pakistan, with both pipelines stopping at Gwadar Port. As previously discussed, there are also significant gas reserves in Balochistan that are supposed to be pumped into this pipeline largely for consumption in eastern Pakistan or internationally.

A 2005 study illustrating the importance of these pipelines in the region shows that India's market for natural gas is estimated to be 105 Million Standard Cubic Meters per Day (MSCMPD), yet its own natural resources can only provide roughly 65 MSCMPD. Furthermore, the study estimates that by 2020, India's demand will climb to 400 MSCMPD, of which 100 to 150 can be provided domestically.⁴⁵ In addition to the obvious energy issues, Iran is keenly interested in increased relations with India as a way to increase political support from India, and through them, improved global standing.⁴⁶ As an added advantage, cheaper gas and a friendly Iran will greatly increase India's

⁴⁴ Gal Luft, "Iran-Pakistan-India Pipeline: The Baloch Wildcard," *Institute for the Analysis of Global Security*, January 12, 2005, <http://www.iags.org/n0115042.htm>.

⁴⁵ Hari Sud, "Pakistan as Network Headquarter for Natural Gas Supply to India," *South Asia Analysis Group*, April 3, 2005, <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers13%5Cpaper1277.html>.

⁴⁶ Luft, "Iran-Pakistan-India Pipeline."

dominance in South Asia, swinging the balance of power with Pakistan even more in its favor.⁴⁷

With agreements from India with Iran and Turkmenistan for pipelines to fill this gap, a stable Balochistan is required, a stability that is yet to be resolved as evidenced by the constant attacks against the pipelines and construction crews.⁴⁸ With the current instability in Balochistan, countries such as India are being forced to consider alternate transportation of natural gas via maritime shipping that will cost more and with less efficiency, but more reliability.⁴⁹ This option also ties into India-Iran cooperation in the Chabahar Port project as well as the M-6 road project discussed later in this chapter. With natural gas requirements estimated to increase for the entire region as globalization expands into the new markets of Central Asia and the surrounding region, along with the importance of gaining access to these markets, India serves a clear example of pipeline importance.

⁴⁷ Luft, "Iran-Pakistan-India Pipeline."

⁴⁸ Ordons News Team, "Three more gas pipelines blown up in Balochistan" *Ordons News*, February 13, 2011, <http://www.ordons.com/asia/southeast-asia/10200-three-more-gas-pipelines-blown-up-in-balochistan.html>.

⁴⁹ Luft, "Iran-Pakistan-India Pipeline."

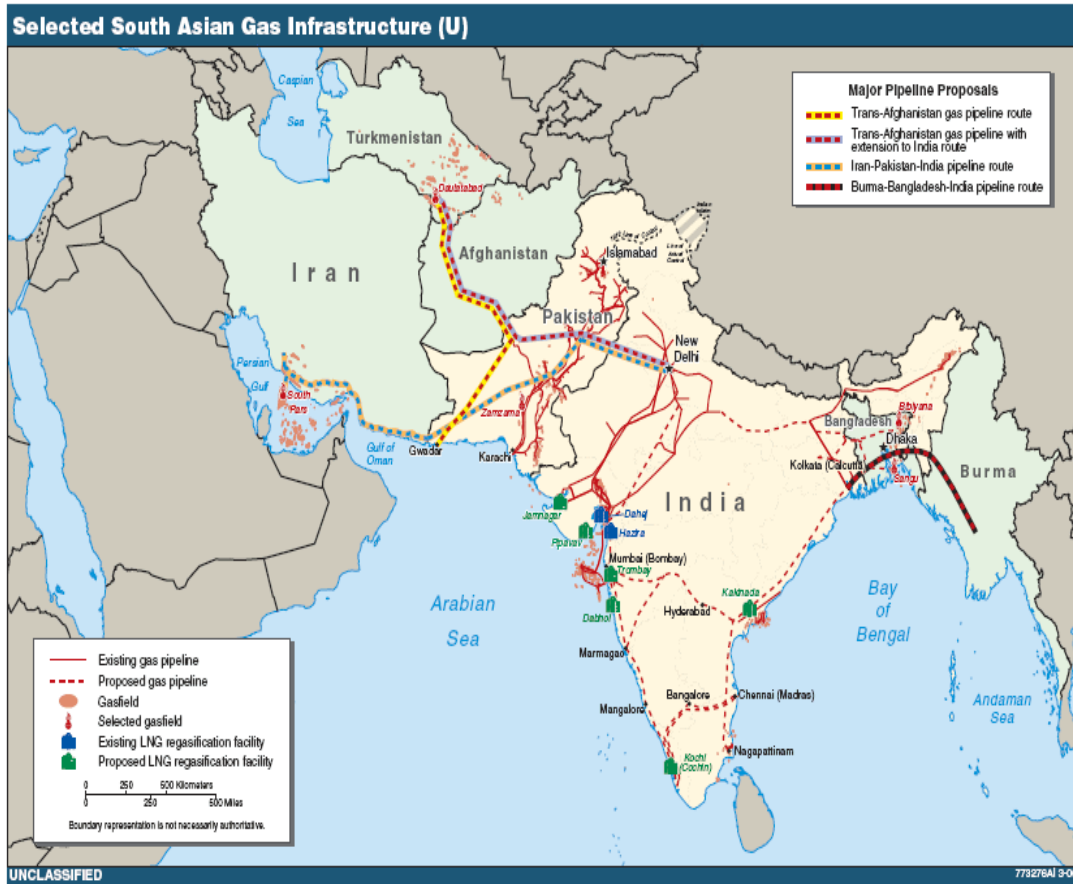


Figure 2: Proposed and Existing Natural Gas Pipelines in South Asia.⁵⁰

2. Road Networks

The lack of infrastructure in Balochistan extends to the road network as well. In order to fully capitalize on the transport of goods and services to neighboring markets, adequate road and rail networks need to be in place. To address this issue, Pakistan has embarked on a number of projects to transform largely rural, dirt roads into modern

⁵⁰ Pakalert, *Destabilizing Baluchistan, Fracturing Pakistan*. November 5, 2009, <http://pakalert.wordpress.com/2009/11/05/destabilizing-baluchistan-fracturing-pakistan/>.

thoroughfares capable of high-speed transport of goods.⁵¹ Figure 3 provides a graphic of existing and plans major road projects, highlighting the current deficiencies in connecting Gwadar with the other major urban centers of Pakistan. The continued Baloch perceptions of marginalization as the central government pursues its own interests contribute the frustration and continued insurgency. Also important is the issue of international border crossing points and the measures that are required for the effective control of cross-border traffic.⁵²

Figure 3 also brings up two more items of concern relating to Balochistan. First is the Iranian construction of a wall along the Iran-Pakistan border from Taftan (near the Afghanistan border) to Mand (about 100 Km north of Gwadar). Although built on the premise of inhibiting illegal border crossing and drug smuggling, the Baloch are concerned about its effect on tribal/family ties, much like the splitting of families that occurred with the construction of the Berlin Wall and the divide between North and South Korea.⁵³ With a lack of political voice, this wall has created renewed waves of Iranian Baloch

⁵¹ Asian Development Bank, "Balochistan Road Development Sector Project: Pakistan," *Asian Development Bank*, 2008, <http://pid.adb.org/pid/LoanView.htm?projNo=34333&seqNo=01&typeCd=3>.

⁵² Marshuk Ali Shah, "2nd Euro-Asian Road Transport Conference," *International Road Transport Union*, October 7, 2003, http://www.iru.org/en_events_2003_tehran_marshuk_ali_shah.

⁵³ PTI "Iran erecting wall along the border with Pakistan," *Outlook India.com*, March 2, 2007, <http://news.outlookindia.com/item.aspx?455022>.

insurgency to oppose the construction, making the Baloch problem a multi-national concern and further destabilizing the region.⁵⁴

The second concern is the distinct lack of any road networks connecting Balochistan and Afghanistan. This has a two-fold effect since it is an already porous border and is still largely uncontrolled which makes it easier to transport illicit goods (drugs, people and weapons), as well as preventing easy access for goods between Afghanistan, Central Asia and Russia and Gwadar Port. If land transportation must rely on movement to Quetta and then south to Gwadar or Karachi, the increase in distance and time makes this situation less favorable and therefore, makes Chabahar Port a more reasonable option. In this vein, recent discussions among Islamabad, Kabul and Tehran have led to a proposed agreement for the construction of a road linking Gwadar to Saindak (near the Iran and Afghanistan border confluence) to alleviate this problem, but actual construction has yet to begin.⁵⁵ If this road is constructed, the Baloch will lose any of the bargaining power they may have, as well as invite a harsh backlash from the central government in retribution for their perceived losses. In their multifaceted campaign, the Baloch are attacking road construction crews to deter its completion. The issue is made more problematic in that

⁵⁴ Chris Zambelis, "Insurrection in Iranian Balochistan," *The Jamestown Foundation*, January 11, 2008, <http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2373892%20>.

⁵⁵ Syed Fazl-e-Haider, "Balochistan: Challenges and Opportunities," *Experts Meeting on Afghanistan and Regional Stabilisation*, (Rome: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2009, 1-17), 12.

3. Rail Networks

According to the Figure 4, the promised railway connecting Gwadar with China has yet to be completed by the projected 2007 date.⁵⁸ A recent meeting between China and Pakistan reaffirmed mutual desire for the completion of said rail network.⁵⁹ However, akin to similar infrastructure development projects in Balochistan, the local population continues to hamper efforts against these projects by blowing up trains and sections of track, and by harassing construction crews.⁶⁰ Figure 4 further reinforces the limiting commerce routes from neighboring countries and from Quetta, the provincial capital. It is easier to transport goods to Karachi than to Gwadar, further contributing to the slow economy of the region and the lack of wealth and jobs to the vast majority of Baloch. As with all of the other land transportation issues, the need for safe and efficient access from Gwadar Port to the myriad of markets in the region is paramount to the significance of Balochistan.

⁵⁸ Daily Balochistan Express, "Railroad system will be ready in three years time, says Governor," *Gwadar News*, February 17, 2004, <http://www.gwadarnews.com/newsdetail.asp?newsID=48>.

⁵⁹ Khurram Anis and James Rupert, "Wen Visits Pakistan to Revive Road-Rail Network from China to Persian Gulf," *Bloomberg*, December 17, 2010, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-16/wen-visits-pakistan-to-revive-road-rail-network-from-china-to-persian-gulf.html>.

⁶⁰ Huma Aamir Malik, "Balochistan Railway Track Blown Up 3rd Time in a Week," *Arab News*, January 28, 2005, <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=4§ion=0&article=58155&d=28&m=1&y=2005>.

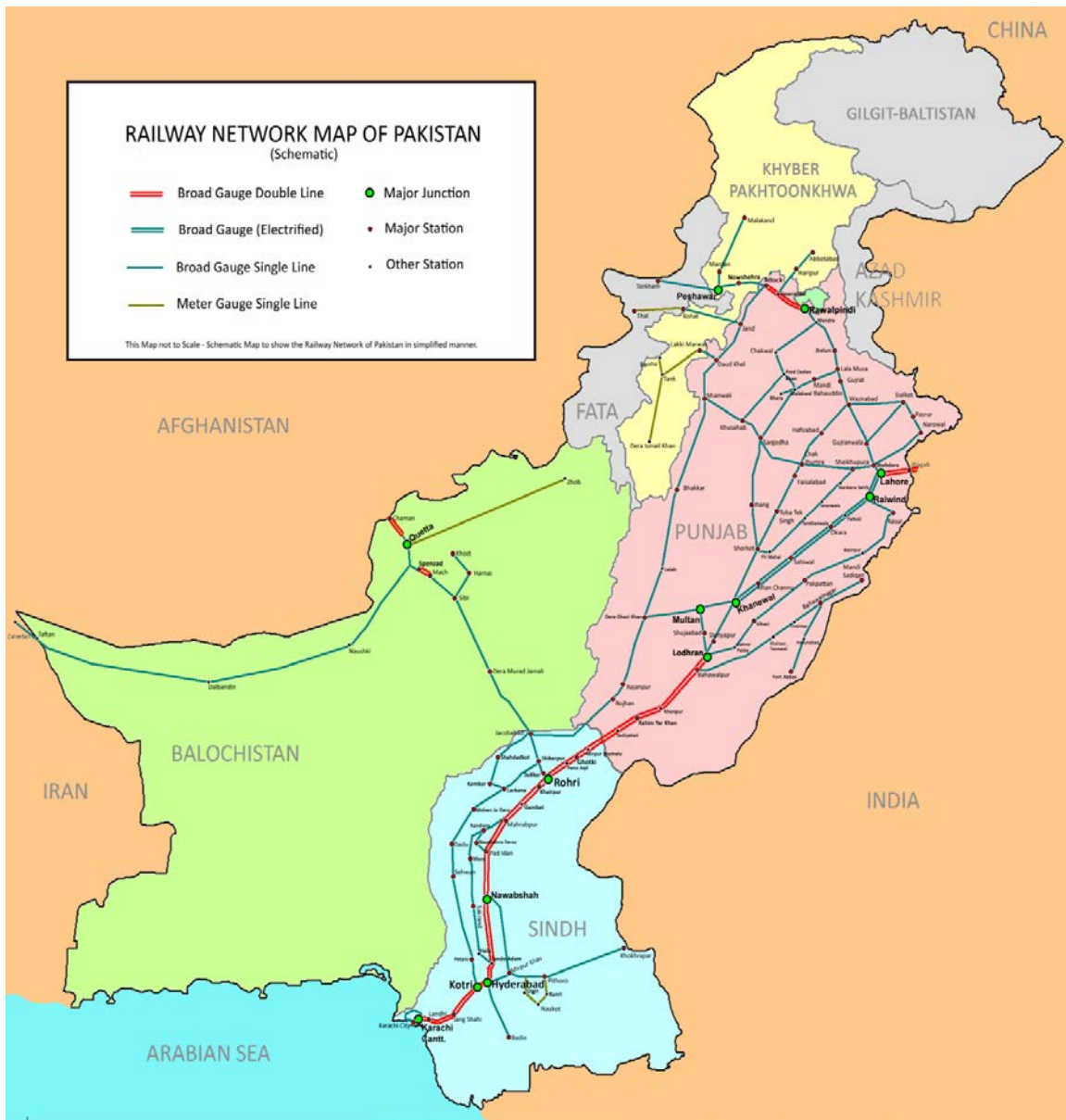


Figure 4: Current Railway Network of Balochistan.⁶¹

⁶¹ Chris Allbritton, *World Affairs Board*, December 13, 2010, <http://www.worldaffairsboard.com/international-politics/57363-pakistan-china-ties-strengthened-wen-visit.html>.

E. CONCLUSION

Chapter II illustrates the importance of Balochistan as it relates to planned or existing road, rail and pipeline networks. At this point, it is clear that the location of Balochistan is ideally suited for development and modernization. With a number of interests from neighboring countries in both the resources available as well as the ability to quickly and cheaply transfer these resources, there is no shortage of investment opportunity for the Baloch. As Central Asia, the Middle East and South Asia continue to develop economically, there will be a parallel interest in getting their goods to global markets as well and access from foreign investors to these production centers. Finally, as these countries expand, the need for exponential increases in energy will follow along with the need for cheap and efficient access to global markets for the sale of surplus energy, all of which indicate the strategic importance of Balochistan in regards to international commerce and economics.

Chapter II also exposes the importance of the human terrain as the Baloch rebel against uninvited outside intervention. As more countries and organizations become involved in Balochistan, there is a parallel increase in the danger that these projects could lead to an international incident as the Baloch continue to target workers and projects, regardless of country of origin. With billions of dollars and government reputations on the line, it stands to reason that increasing pressures will be placed on the Pakistani government to remedy the situation, or face the loss of revenue and status on the world stage.

With Pakistan's history of harsh treatment of the Baloch during past insurgencies, it stands to reason that it is only a matter of time before large-scale repercussions are employed by the Pakistani military, further devolving the Baloch.

III. THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF RESOURCES

A. INTRODUCTION

Chapter III will explore the importance of the abundance of natural resources that exist in Balochistan. As previously mentioned, the three factors of people, terrain and resources in Balochistan are intrinsically linked. Chapter II provided an overview of the terrain and its importance to trade and economics. The culminating aspects to the untold potential for this region lies in the vast amount of valuable natural resources coupled with the importance of suitable deep-water port access to the global market. The Gwadar Port project is included in this chapter because the impetus for the construction of Gwadar is due to the extraction of resources. Chapter III highlights this connection and the significance of the fact that it is not a Pakistani led project. Instead, the Gwadar Port project is fully financed and supported by the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a means for exporting natural gas from the vast reserves found 1952. This important factor helps explain the level and duration of insurgency by the Baloch discussed in Chapter IV.

B. THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF GWADAR PORT TO PAKISTANI ECONOMICS

According to Robert Looney, the Pakistani economy has long suffered from underdevelopment and a lack of active participation in the global market.⁶² The current project of the Gwadar port facility in the southwestern province of

⁶² Robert E. Looney, "Pakistan's Progress Toward Economic Freedom," *Contemporary South Asia*, June 1, 1997: 79-98.

Balochistan is meant to invigorate the Pakistani economy. The port, located near the entrance to the Straits of Hormuz, is expected to become a major hub for international trade in and around the Indian Ocean as well as a major gateway to Central Asia, especially for the export of Central Asian natural gas and oil. The port is also strategically located to serve as a shipping site for Pakistani natural gas, which is mostly located in Balochistan. With the planned influx of foreign direct investment (FDI) into the area, Pakistan could become a major world conduit for petro-chemical trade and greatly stimulate its economic growth. Of particular interest is how access to world markets and globalization could become a stabilizing factor in a region of Pakistan that has experienced widespread dissent and violence since their founding in 1947.⁶³

The modern world economy is dominated by the need for energy, especially fossil fuels, which power everything from transportation to agriculture. The Gwadar port could provide access to vast reserves of Central Asian natural gas and oil, whose "market access is hindered by political and geographic conditions, including continued Russian influence, limited access to waterways beyond the Caspian Sea, and limited export infrastructure."⁶⁴ Current estimates are that these reserves will match the combined oil reserves of Iraq and Kuwait and the natural gas reserves of

⁶³ Dr. Sadia Nasir, "Stabilizing Balochistan!," *Pakistan Times*, 2005, <http://pakistanimes.net/2005/02/28/oped2.htm>.

⁶⁴ Ariel Cohen, "U.S. Interests and Central Asia Energy Security," *The Heritage Foundation*, November 15, 2006, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2006/11/us-interests-and-central-asia-energy-security>.

Saudi Arabia.⁶⁵ Countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan possess these reserves but are landlocked and have limited access to foreign markets. Further, they are still suffering the effects of their inclusion in the former Soviet economy that never developed an efficient export infrastructure for their energy resources, instead focusing on domestic consumption.⁶⁶ The December 2002 agreement between the governments of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan to construct a pipeline that would carry oil from Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to Gwadar provides an example of Central Asian initiatives, highlighting the importance of Gwadar Port.⁶⁷

Gazprom and a few other Russian companies have, through infrastructural investment along with political and economic deals, developed a virtual monopoly on the purchase, transportation and sale of Central Asian natural gas and oil to outside markets.⁶⁸ These Russian companies exploit their position through practices such as buying Central Asian gas at "one-quarter to one-third of market prices in Europe and then resell[ing] [that] gas at market rates."⁶⁹ These practices have created strong incentives in Europe to bypass Russian intermediaries by building new pipelines that would transport Central Asian oil and gas to the world market as depicted in Figure 5. These pipelines would allow for the competitive sale of these resources on

⁶⁵ Cohen, "U.S. Interests and Central Asia Energy Security."

⁶⁶ Richard Weitz, "Averting a new great game in central Asia," *The Washington Quarterly* 29, No. 3, 2006, 155-167.

⁶⁷ Cohen, "U.S. Interests and Central Asia Energy Security."

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

the world market, greatly benefiting the producers as well as those countries through which the pipelines would run, due to the substantial transit fees they would collect.^{70,71} The corresponding increase in the price of Central Asian hydrocarbons would drive additional FDI in the "exploration, development, extraction, and production" of these as yet largely untapped reserves.⁷²



Figure 5: Current and Proposed Gas and Oil Pipelines From Central Asia.⁷³

⁷⁰ Ziad Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 2005, 95-112, 95.

⁷¹ Robert D. Kaplan, "Center Stage for the Twenty-first Century," *Real Clear Politics*, March/April 2009, http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/03/rivalry_in_the_indian_ocean.html.

⁷² Cohen, "U.S. Interests and Central Asia Energy Security."

⁷³ Lester W. Grau, "Hydrocarbons and a New Strategic Region: The Caspian Sea and Central Asia," *Global Security*, May/June 2001, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2001/hydrocarbons.htm>.

This situation has led to intense competition among regional countries that possess easy access to world markets through their deep-water ports. Due to their location, Iran and Pakistan present the best solutions for getting these reserves to the sea with the shortest possible pipelines, with Gwadar being the closest and most convenient warm water port to the Caspian region.⁷⁴ Both countries are pursuing major port development projects with accompanying transportation infrastructure to link them to the Central Asian republics in order to compete for the lucrative business of exporting their gas and oil.⁷⁵ Figure 6 illustrates how the location of Gwadar is ideally suited to meet these needs.

The importance of Gwadar Port also extends beyond energy resources since Russia also dominates all of the other aspects of trade to and from Central Asia. Although less profitable than the energy extraction and export business, trade in other products, such as the main cash crop of cotton, to and from Central Asian markets also represents a substantial amount of potential profit for any country that can open a secure route for that trade that is relatively cheaper than existing routes through Russia.⁷⁶ The Pakistanis hope to capture this trade and even envision Gwadar Port as the future primary transit point for Russian

⁷⁴ International Crisis Group, "Pakistan: The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan," *International Crisis Group*, September 14, 2006, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-asia/pakistan/119-pakistan-the-worsening-conflict-in-balochistan.aspx>.

⁷⁵ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 97.

⁷⁶ S. Frederick Starr, "A Partnership for Central Asia," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2005, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/60833/s-frederick-starr/a-partnership-for-central-asia>.

trade goods moving to and from South and East Asia and the Middle East.⁷⁷ The potential profits from this trade serve as an additional incentive for the competing Iranian and Pakistani port projects.⁷⁸



Figure 6: Strategic location of Gwadar and Possible Oil Lines Through the Region.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 100.

⁷⁸ Starr, "A Partnership for Central Asia."

⁷⁹ Black, "Gwadar," *Health Advice for Healthy Living*, August 2, 2008, <http://healthforadvice.com/pakistan/gwadar.aspx>.

C. REGIONAL COMPETITION: GWADAR AND CHABAHAR

The advantages of Gwadar Port are clear, and in the absence of competition, the Baloch could well use its importance to their advantage. Unfortunately for the Pakistanis, a similar port project is underway at nearby Chabahar, Iran. This project, financed predominately by Indian companies, is well underway and is not meeting the same difficulties as those encountered in Gwadar. With the advantage of road development linking the port with the Ring Road in Afghanistan, Chabahar is poised to take the forefront in maritime commerce in the region.

The Gwadar port and its Iranian competitor, the Chabahar port, are located a mere 110 miles apart and are directly competing for access to the same markets, evidenced by the transportation networks being constructed and enhanced from both ports to Afghanistan, the most direct path to Central Asia from the south.⁸⁰ This rivalry is a major concern to Pakistani officials, who have stated that success of the "Chabahar port would inflict a huge financial setback for Pakistan."⁸¹ Iran has been attempting to tip the balance in its favor through measures such as giving Afghanistan substantially reduced port fees when using the Chabahar port.⁸² Pakistan has countered by granting "preferential trade status" to Afghanistan.⁸³

Yet the emerging rivalry is much more than an Iran versus Pakistan rivalry as each of the port projects is

⁸⁰ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 100.

⁸¹ Ibid, 101.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Starr, "A Partnership for Central Asia."

largely driven by FDI from one of the two emerging Asian financial giants, China and India. Chinese investment accounts for over 80% of the capital flowing into the Gwadar port project, the total cost of which is estimated at \$850 million, and over 450 Chinese engineers and workers are providing the expertise to complete the majority of the construction.⁸⁴ China is currently an important trading partner for Pakistan, and increased trade between the two countries is a major anticipated benefit of the completed port. Annual trade between the two countries has risen steadily to over \$2.4 billion, which is equivalent to roughly half of the trade volume between China and India.⁸⁵ Pakistani business interests are advocating preferential economic treatment for Chinese companies operating through Gwadar, in the hope of stimulating trade between the two countries.⁸⁶ The Pakistanis are also encouraging China to use Gwadar to facilitate trade to and from the western Chinese province of Xinjiang, which has recorded annual foreign trade of \$4.8 billion and a GDP of \$22.7 billion.⁸⁷

The Sino-Pakistani partnership is especially troubling to India, which has a long-standing geopolitical and military rivalry with Pakistan, which dates back to their partition in 1947. The rivalry has encompassed three wars, and currently settled into an uneasy cold war between these two nuclear powers who still vigorously dispute the northern province of Jammu and Kashmir.⁸⁸ The rivalry

⁸⁴ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 100.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 103.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Kaplan, "Center Stage for the Twenty-first Century."

between the two explains why India chose to finance the development of Chabahar and its associated transportation infrastructure, rather than collaborating with the Pakistanis and Chinese and pooling their resources in the development of Gwadar, which is closer, and therefore more convenient, to India.⁸⁹ From a financial standpoint, this option would make more sense, however, due to security concerns relating to the use of Gwadar Port as a military naval base that will be more difficult to target, India will likely continue to eye this project with skepticism. Compounding this tension is the emerging geopolitical, military, and financial rivalry between India and China, fueled in part by competing Indian and Chinese interests and influence in Central Asia.⁹⁰

Another key component of this rivalry is that China's establishment of a significant military presence in Gwadar and other friendly ports along the northern rim of the Indian Ocean, known as the "string of pearls" strategy, directly challenges India's position in the area that India views as its rightful sphere of influence.⁹¹ As Figure 7 depicts, China has made substantial headway in this endeavor, with projects surrounding India to gain access to the relatively untapped markets of Central, South and Southeast Asia.⁹² Both India and China import large amounts of their fossil fuels through the Straits of Hormuz, which

⁸⁹ Stephen Blank, "India's Rising Profile in Central Asia," *Comparative Strategy* 22, No. 2, 2003, 139-157.

⁹⁰ Kaplan, "Center Stage for the Twenty-first Century."

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Bhaskar Roy, "China's String of Pearls," *Twenty-22: India on the Move*, September 24, 2008, <http://20twentytwo.blogspot.com/2008/09/chinas-string-of-pearls.html>.

are only 250 miles from Gwadar, making China's large naval base and listening post at Gwadar an important resource for safeguarding Chinese shipments and a serious threat to Indian shipments in the event of hostilities.⁹³ Another sign of the growing tension between these two countries is China's plans to use Gwadar as the starting point of a pipeline that would carry Middle Eastern oil into western China via an overland transit system, thereby mitigating China's vulnerability to India's military naval ability to close the Straits of Malacca to Chinese shipping.⁹⁴



Figure 7: China's String of Pearls.⁹⁵

⁹³ Donald L. Berlin, *India-Iran Relations: A Deepening Entente*, Special Assessment, (Honolulu, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Oct 2004), 2.

⁹⁴ Kaplan, "Center Stage for the Twenty-first Century."

⁹⁵ Roy, "China's String of Pearls."

It is under these tense conditions that India is financing and providing engineers for the development and upgrading of Chabahar port and its associated transportation infrastructure reaching into Central Asia.⁹⁶ India and Iran have signed an agreement with Afghanistan to develop transportation infrastructure from Chabahar into Afghanistan and India committed \$70 million to the construction of the Zaranj-Delaram Highway⁹⁷, which was completed in January 2009.⁹⁸

In addition to the substantial economic benefits of being a major trade hub, especially as the gateway to Central Asian energy and trade, and the advantage of cementing Pakistan's relationship with China, Gwadar also promises to draw significant FDI into the area. Estimates of potential unnamed investors run as high as \$8 billion, with the money used to develop various aspects of the infrastructure and economy needed to support large-scale operations and the influx of people to Gwadar Port.⁹⁹ Despite its inherent worth to Pakistan, the Gwadar port and its associated pipelines and other transportation infrastructure face serious internal challenges. The primary obstacles are the native Baloch, the vast majority of whom oppose these developments. In order to understand the root causes of why the Baloch would oppose a project

⁹⁶ Berlin, *India-Iran Relations*, 4-5.

⁹⁷ Kaplan, "Center Stage for the Twenty-first Century."

⁹⁸ VK Shashikumar, "Indian built Zaranj-Delaram Highway under Taliban control," *Canary Trap*, March 26, 2011, <http://canarytrap.in/2011/03/26/indian-built-zaranj-delaram-highway-under-taliban-control/>.

⁹⁹ Sarfaraz Ahmed, "The Latest Hotspot: Gwadar," *Daily Times*, May 5, 2004, 17.

that would benefit their province, one needs to examine the history if their incorporation into the state of Pakistan since 1947.

D. THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE INSURGENCY

Throughout Pakistan's history, scholars argue that the Baloch have been marginalized both financially and politically.¹⁰⁰ Only one Baloch has ever held a major post in the national government, and the government of Balochistan itself is often run by non-Baloch installed by the central government.¹⁰¹ There have been six major insurgencies since the founding of Pakistan in 1947 with the first starting the day after Partition. The Nation of Baluchistan was declared in 1947 when the British withdrew their colonies from South Asia and created the nation-states of East and West Pakistan in conjunction with autonomy for India. The government of Pakistan opposed their independence and invaded Balochistan, subduing the tribes and incorporated them into West Pakistan in 1948.¹⁰² The next insurgency occurred in 1958 to maintain their pseudo-autonomy in response to One-Unit, which abolished all of West Pakistan's provinces in favor a single, unified state to counter East Pakistan strength.¹⁰³ Following the

¹⁰⁰ Aasim Sajjad Akhtar, "Balochistan versus Pakistan," *Economic & Political Weekly*, November 17, 2007, 1-10.

¹⁰¹ Muhammad Mushtaq and Syed Khawaja Alqama, "Poverty Alleviation Through Power-Sharing in Pakistan," *European Journal of Social Sciences* 8, no. 3 (2009): 459-468.

¹⁰² Paul Titus and Nina Swidler, "Knights, Not Pawns: Ethno-Nationalism and Regional Dynamics in Post-Colonial Balochistan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2000: 47-69.

¹⁰³ John Pike, *Balochistan Insurgency - Second Conflict 1958 - 59*, January 5, 2009, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/balochistan-1958.htm>.

end of martial law, 1963 brought the next round of insurgency as the leading tribes of the Bugti, Marri and Mengal Baloch rose up against the government's military cantonments (numbering about 35) in Balochistan.¹⁰⁴ Then in 1971, East Pakistan, who also had grievance against the government, was able to successfully break away and form the nation of Bangladesh.¹⁰⁵ West Pakistan (now simply Pakistan) was also having problems regarding the Kashmir area, with constant fighting with the Indian government along with Chinese interference. With this going on, the most cohesive and violent insurgency was launched in Balochistan, lasting from 1973 to 1977.¹⁰⁶ This uprising, involving over 20,000 insurgents, began with the state's dissolution of Balochistan's first democratically elected provincial government.¹⁰⁷ The central government launched a full-scale military invasion of Balochistan with more than 80,000 troops, which eventually crushed the insurgency after the deaths of hundreds of Baloch.¹⁰⁸

Baloch opposition to the center continues to remain potent but was expressed mainly through political means until 2002 when the current insurgency began. President Musharraf's 2001 announcement of the plan to develop a massive, deepwater port at Gwadar was viewed by the Baloch

¹⁰⁴ John Pike, *Balochistan Insurgency - Third Conflict 1963 - 69*, January 6, 2009, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/balochistan-1963.htm>.

¹⁰⁵ Aswini K. Ray, "From Autonomy to Self-Determination: The Politics of East Pakistan and Kashmir," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2001: 38-43.

¹⁰⁶ John Pike, *Balochistan Insurgency - Fourth Conflict 1973 - 77*, January 6, 2009, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/balochistan-1973.htm>.

¹⁰⁷ Akhtar, "Balochistan versus Pakistan," 3.

¹⁰⁸ Harrison, "Nightmare in Balochistan," 138.

as another step in the center's plan to colonize Balochistan. This perception may seem strange considering that Balochistan is a province of Pakistan, but looking at the method of incorporation into Pakistan and their exclusion from power sharing in the center, the Baloch have reason to feel marginalized by what they perceive as a pseudocolonial power.¹⁰⁹ Additionally, in an arrangement that mirrors classical colonialism, the central government has controlled the extraction of Balochistan's vast energy resources, with the Baloch receiving only token royalties from their sale.¹¹⁰ In Frederic Grare's paper, he contends that this lack of political opportunity and unseen benefits from the government in regard to the natural gas fields have led the Baloch to feel a level of dispossession and desperation, thus explaining their constant revolt against the government.¹¹¹ This fear of colonization is further reinforced by the military occupation of not only Gwadar and key natural gas fields, but the continued existence of the other cantonments that sparked the fourth insurrection.

Based on this history, it is not surprising that when Nawabzada Balach Marri, a Baloch militancy leader in the current insurgency, was asked, "Why are you opposing development activities, including mega projects like the Gwadar deep sea port, in Balochistan?" he responded, "We do not consider ... Islamabad's plans, focused on their own

¹⁰⁹ Frédéric Grare, *Pakistan: The Resurgence of Baluch Nationalism*, South Asia Project (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006).

¹¹⁰ Alaiwah, *Constitutional Distribution of Natural Gas and Hydro-Electric Power*, September 24, 2008, <http://alaiwah.wordpress.com/2008/09/24/constitutional-distribution-of-natural-gas-hydro-electric-power/>.

¹¹¹ Grare, *Pakistan*.

interests at our cost, as development ... These actions threaten the national identity of the Baloch nation and amount to destruction, not development."¹¹² This comment betrays another Baloch concern that strengthens the opposition, which is the fact that the forecast influx of 1 to 2.5 million non-Baloch workers to run Gwadar once the port is fully operational will make the Baloch a minority in their own province.¹¹³ This lends to the fear that the Baloch will lose the small amount of semiautonomy allowed for the past few decades. Gwadar further ties Baloch grievances together because it would serve, along with its many other functions, as an export site for Balochistan's natural gas, from which the Baloch have no reason to believe they would meaningfully profit.¹¹⁴

The trigger for the current insurgency was Musharraf's insistence on moving forward with the Gwadar project over the objections of the Baloch. In 2002, he engineered elections that brought politicians to power in Balochistan who would support him, which led to street protests in opposition to the Gwadar Port initiative.¹¹⁵ Musharraf characterized the Baloch insurgency as inspired and fueled by India in order to undermine its legitimacy as an expression of the discontent of the people of Balochistan

¹¹² Shazada Zulfiqar, "We have launched a struggle for Baloch freedom from the yoke of Punjab's slavery," *Baloch Voice*, September 2004, http://www.balochvoice.com/Marri_files/Balach_Marri_Newsline_sep-2004.html.

¹¹³ Dera Bugti, "Asia: The tribes arise; Balochistan," *The Economist*, May 5, 2005.

¹¹⁴ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 103.

¹¹⁵ Jayshree Bajoria, "Pakistan's Constitution," *Council on Foreign Relations*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.cfr.org/pakistan/pakistans-constitution/p15657>.

and invited the Chinese to come and begin the project anyway.^{116,117} In response, the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) was formed and began targeting government buildings, communication infrastructure, natural gas fields, army units, and the Gwadar port, clearly communicating its intent to strike at and disrupt the extension of the center's power into Balochistan.¹¹⁸

The violence escalated throughout 2003 and 2004, and reached a high point in the events surrounding the alleged rape of a Baloch doctor by an army captain at the Sui natural gas field, the largest in Balochistan.¹¹⁹ The Baloch demanded justice, and Musharraf responded by deploying more military power to the area to deter any attempt at armed reprisal by the Baloch. This deployment was followed by the threat that the Baloch "[would] not know what hit them" if they did not stop shooting.¹²⁰ The Baloch responded by sending militants to Sui, and the resulting clash with government troops left 67 dead.¹²¹ Musharraf still refused to try the captain for the rape,

¹¹⁶ Muhammad Ali Siddiqi and Shamim-ur Rahman, "Baloch to go to any Lengths for Rights: Khan of Kalat," *The Dawn*, November 8, 2004, <http://archives.dawn.com/2004/11/08/top2.htm>.

¹¹⁷ Tarique Niazi, "The Ongoing Baloch Insurgency in Pakistan," *The Jamestown Foundation: Terrorism Monitor*, June 7, 2005, [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=496&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=180&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=496&tx_ttnews[backPid]=180&no_cache=1).

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Himadree, "Victim of Sui rape case still waits for justice," *The Muslim Woman*, July 26, 2006, <http://www.themuslimwoman.org/entry/victim-of-sui-rape-case-still-waits-for-justice/>.

¹²⁰ Walsh, Declan. "Pakistan's Gas Fields Blaze as Rape Sparks Threat of Civil War." *Guardian*. February 21, 2005. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2005/feb/21/pakistan.declanwalsh>.

¹²¹ Bugti, "Asia: The tribes arise."

but instead announced that he was innocent.¹²² The Baloch took this as a direct insult to their honor as a people, and the support for the insurgency strengthened.¹²³ In 2004, three Chinese engineers were killed and nine more were wounded when their van was struck by a car bomb en route to Gwadar.¹²⁴ The BLA has continued to target the port along with fossil fuel extraction and transportation facilities, stating that they choose these targets because they "believe the rest of Pakistan is exploiting their mineral and oil and gas resources."¹²⁵ Moreover, the movement is not isolated; on the contrary, "it appears as if ordinary Baloch are willing to support any entity that challenges what is perceived to be a colonial army engaged in blatant self-aggrandizement."¹²⁶

E. THE EFFECTS OF THE INSURGENCY

Obviously, a violent insurgency with a history of attacking energy transportation resources is a strong deterrent to FDI.¹²⁷ So far, Pakistan has responded to the insurgency with intense repression involving widespread arrests and even "disappearing" of political activists.

¹²² Dawn, "Sui Rapist Must Hang: president," *The Dawn*, February 25, 2005, <http://archives.dawn.com/2005/02/25/top9.htm>.

¹²³ Syed Saleem Shahzad, "Tribals looking down a barrel in Balochistan," *Asia Times Online*, January 15, 2005, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GA15Df07.html.

¹²⁴ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 98.

¹²⁵ Dawn, "Baloch rebels claim kidnap of UN refugee official," *The Dawn*, February 7, 2009, <http://archives.dawn.com/archives/126906>.

¹²⁶ Akhtar, "Balochistan versus Pakistan," 3.

¹²⁷ Akhtar, "Balochistan versus Pakistan," 6. Reports that in 2005 there were 187 bomb blasts, 275 rocket attacks, 8 attacks on natural gas pipelines, 38 attacks on electricity transmission lines and 19 explosions on railway lines in Balochistan and bordering areas of Punjab and Sindh.

This strategy has been relatively successful due to the disjointed and erratic nature of the current insurgency, which has nowhere near the level of organization of the 1973 insurgency.¹²⁸ However, there are other, more effective measures that the government could take to quell the violence and bring long-term stability and security to Balochistan. Exploring these measures is important, since Islamabad cannot always rely on a disorganized insurgency or the effectiveness of its own coercive apparatus to prevent catastrophic damage to the rapidly expanding and increasingly important infrastructure in Balochistan.

The central government needs to convince the Baloch that the port will substantially benefit them and that they therefore have a stake in ensuring its success. Training Baloch for the technical jobs that will be available in the expanding economic zone around Gwadar and then ensuring their preferential hiring over nonlocal workers would greatly alleviate the frustrations fueling the resistance. A final measure would be to compensate those displaced by the expansion of the port facilities, which should be easily achievable using the substantial revenues anticipated to flow in through the port.¹²⁹

F. THE BENEFITS OF GWADAR

The development of Gwadar and its related transportation infrastructure promises many benefits for the people of Pakistan as a whole and Balochistan in particular. Proven through repeated success stories,

¹²⁸ Akhtar, "Balochistan versus Pakistan," 7.

¹²⁹ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 96.

countries that have integrated into the world market experience faster growth and reduced poverty compared with countries that have pursued isolationist or protectionist policies.¹³⁰ During the 1990s, less globalized countries averaged negative growth rates while more globalized countries averaged growth rates of 5 percent.¹³¹ Opening up Gwadar port as a free-trade zone, which has been advocated by Pakistani corporations, will be a strong incentive for increased trade, thereby allowing Pakistan to "do what it does best and trade for the rest."^{132, 133} This opening to increased international competition will undoubtedly cause some localized hardships within Pakistan, but the long term benefits to the Pakistani economy and people as a whole will greatly outweigh the short-term costs to a small segment of the population.¹³⁴ In the face of Baloch desires for autonomy however, this loss of control and infringement on their culture is unacceptable, leading to appeals to the U.S to stop their aid to Pakistan as they contend that the aid is being used to finance operations in Balochistan.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ IMF Staff, "Globalization: Threat of Opportunity?," *International Monetary Fund*, April 12, 2000 (Corrected January 2002), <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/ib/2000/041200to.htm#IV>.

¹³¹ PREM Economic Policy Group and Development Economics Group, *Globalization, Growth, and Poverty, Building an Inclusive World Economy*, Briefing Paper, (Oxford: World Bank and Oxford University Press, 2002).

¹³² Mike Cox and Richard Alm, "The Fruits of Free Trade," Annual Report, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, 2002.

¹³³ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 102.

¹³⁴ Haider, "Balochis, Beijing, and Pakistan's Gwadar Port," 102.

¹³⁵ Ahmar Mustikhan, "Pro-independence Baloch activists protest in Vancouver; Marri main leader," *Baltimore Examiner*, January 31, 2011, <http://www.examiner.com/foreign-policy-in-baltimore/pro-independence-baloch-activists-protest-vancouver-marri-main-leader>.

Experience shows that "[c]ompetition stimulates innovation and offers incentives to adopt efficiencies," which in the end will make the Pakistani economy stronger and more competitive.¹³⁶ Increased trade with the booming Chinese economy will provide many benefits, one of the most important being decreased reliance on trade with the United States. The United States currently accounts for roughly 80% of Pakistani textile exports, Pakistan's number one export sector. This heavy reliance on a single market proved disastrous when a recent decrease in U.S. purchases of Pakistani textiles caused the layoff of 48,000 Pakistani workers.¹³⁷ Opening new markets in a rapidly expanding economy like China is key to insulating Pakistan against the harmful effects of overreliance on a single market. Perhaps most importantly, Gwadar promises to greatly increase the amount of FDI in Pakistan. This is important for a number of reasons, first among them being that "globalization of production now significantly outstrips trade as an organizing feature of the international economy."¹³⁸ Thus, the only way to be truly integrated in the global economy is to attract multinational corporations (MNCs) and their FDI. The liability presented by a lack of FDI and MNC activity in a country is highlighted by the experience of the former Soviet republics. Their

¹³⁶ Francois Melese, "The financial crisis: a similar effect to a terrorist attack?," *NATO*, 2009, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2009/FinancialCrisis/Financial-terrorist-attack/EN/index.htm>.

¹³⁷ Robert E. Looney, "Problems in Using International Trade to Counter Terrorism: The Case of Pakistan," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 26, No. 4, Summer 2003, 1-10.

¹³⁸ Stephen G. Brooks, *Producing Security: Multinational Corporations, Globalization, and the Changing Calculus of Conflict*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 17.

deficiency in these two areas caused them to fall farther and farther behind the West throughout the 1970s and 1980s.¹³⁹ MNCs facilitate technological advances through inter-firm alliances that spread the costs of research and development. Attempting to compete with MNCs and their access to global resources while maintaining an isolationist stance is doomed to failure.¹⁴⁰ FDI provides developing countries "access to the technical-financial potential of [MNCs] while preserving national sovereignty," and this is exactly what Pakistan needs to grow and compete in the world market.¹⁴¹ Gwadar's role in attracting additional FDI is critical because Pakistan's ratio of per capita FDI inflow throughout the 1990s was less than 5 percent of the world average.¹⁴² Without a significant increase in FDI, Pakistan will continue to fall behind its competitors. Gwadar port holds enormous potential for the future development of Pakistan, but only if the Pakistanis can find a way to spread its benefits among the people of Balochistan.

G. CONCLUSION

Chapter III discussed the vast natural resources that exist in Balochistan. It further showed how the extraction of these resources is meeting increasing resistance from those that claim the rightful ownership of these resources in the face of their central governments extraction policies. Due to an apparent inability to compromise and

¹³⁹ Brooks, *Producing Security*, 104-114, 164-165.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 114-122.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 114.

¹⁴² Ibid, 264.

perceived lack of political mechanisms to achieve their demands, the Baloch have instead embarked on a mission of sabotage and terror, against not only the Pakistani military, but also extending to include violence against the foreign workers involved in the various projects. This situation of rich rewards and multiple claimants will only serve to prolong the issue at hand. By involving powerful international actors in this situation, the jockeying for these natural resources could escalate into a broader dilemma, thereby increasing the strategic importance of Balochistan in matters of international security and regional stability.

IV. THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVE AND AGENDAS

A. INTRODUCTION

The final chapter of this thesis investigates the role of the Baloch and their responses to the new global and national interest in their homeland. How are the Baloch leaders are attempting to expand their struggle onto the international stage in order to bring attention to their cause is also focused upon. Through repeated failures to achieve autonomy and the formation of Greater Balochistan, they are now reaching out with increased fervor to the international community.¹⁴³ Examples of this are notable in their membership in the UNPO (Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization) as a mechanism to appeal to the United Nations (U.N.).¹⁴⁴ Not content with a single course of action, the Baloch are increasingly adopting a plan of direct appeals to the United States patronage in a tit-for-tat strategy.¹⁴⁵ Although commendable for their ingenuity, such actions, if successful in pulling in foreign military assistance, stand to radically destabilize an already unstable environment. By introducing foreign militaries and agendas into local affairs, the Baloch leaders may

¹⁴³ IntelliBriefs, "Extrajudicial killings in Balochistan: Baloch in US appeal to UN and world community," *IntelliBriefs*, March 19, 2010, <http://intellibriefs.blogspot.com/2010/03/extrajudicial-kilings-in-balochistan.html>.

¹⁴⁴ UNPO, "Balochistan," *Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization*, April 14, 2008, <http://www.unpo.org/members/8014>.

¹⁴⁵ Dr. Wahid Baloch, "Baloch leader Seeks Support in USA," *South Asia Analysis Group*, August 22, 2008, <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers29%5Cpaper2820.html>.

inadvertently make their situation worse by advancing it to a point from which they are unable to retain any semblance of control.

B. AUTONOMY AND THE PRESERVATION OF CULTURE

As described in Chapters II and III, the Baloch have resisted both Pakistani and foreign governments' intervention or interference since Partition in 1947. Their staunch desire to maintain their identity, remain independent, and provide the prospect of a better future for their children continues to motivate the insurgency.¹⁴⁶ With little education and limited prospects for the future, control over the sought after terrain and resources of Balochistan is the most powerful tool available to the Baloch leadership.¹⁴⁷

Parallels can be drawn to other tribal systems throughout history, and sadly, history tends to show that the tribal societies ultimately will lose. Whether that loss is through assimilation (the Celts of the British Isles), diffusion (the natives of the Caribbean), removal (the Native Americans displacement the reservations), subjugation (the natives of Southeast Asia), or extermination (the Inca's and Aztec's), the end result is loss of land, tradition and autonomy. In each of these examples, the tribes or clans resisted, often through protracted wars that decimated their populations and left

¹⁴⁶ Bushra Zulfiqar, "Images from Balochistan," *gawaahi*, April 8, 2011, <http://gawaahi.com/2011/04/08/images-from-balochistan/>.

¹⁴⁷ Malik Siraj Akbar, "Seminar discusses impact of conflict on Balochistan's politics and economy," *The Baloch Hal*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.thebalochhal.com/2010/04/seminar-discusses-impact-of-conflict-on-balochistan%E2%80%99s-politics-and-economy/>.

enduring rivalries and bias' that exist long after the wars ended. On the reverse, according to Ralph Peters, "ethnic cleansing" through dramatic re-drawing of borders and creation of new states may work best for bringing peace in a region.¹⁴⁸ He argues that Pakistan needs to not only give up Balochistan to a newly independent Greater Balochistan, but also their Pashtun regions need to join Afghanistan, leaving the Punjabi and Sindhi regions to form the new extent of Pakistan.¹⁴⁹

With such proposals and knowledge at their disposal, the Baloch continue to persist in their defiance in the face of overwhelming odds. Independence of Bangladesh in 1947 also provides an example to emulate. Although Bangladesh was able to break free from Pakistan and form their own country, the circumstances surrounding their situation were completely different in two critical ways. First, the physical separation was a key component and second was the near-overt support from the Indian military toward the East Pakistani resistance.¹⁵⁰ The first is obviously out of Balochistan's hands and the second, while an option, becomes less so as time goes by. There have been rumors of Indian support to Baloch insurgency in the past, and continued distrust in this arena, threatens an already tenuous relationship between these countries.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Ralph Peters, "Blood Borders," *Armed Forces Journal*, June 2006, <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2006/06/1833899>.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ John Pike, "Bangladeshi War of Independence/Indo-Pakistani War of 1971," *Global Security*, April 27, 2005, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/indo-pak_1971.htm.

¹⁵¹ Reuters, "India aiding Baluchistan rebels: Musharraf," *Express India*, January 9, 2006, <http://www.expressindia.com/news/fullstory.php?newsid=61079>.

However, with the current Gwadar and Chabahar Port competition discussed in Chapter III, there is the danger that overt Indian support to Balochistan could have spillover effects in such regions as the Jammu and Kashmir.¹⁵² India's support for independent Balochistan will not and cannot be along the lines of support provided to Bangladesh in 1971.

To take this point further, the Pakistani state cannot allow the Baloch, with their presence in nearly half the country (geographically), to dictate the rules of governance. It would set a bad precedence for other factions in such places as the Northwest Frontier and Jammu and Kashmir. With their history of autocratic or pseudo-autocratic leaders, to allow the peoples of Pakistan a voice in a sudden manner could undermine current democratic initiatives.¹⁵³ The rationale behind this is by examining the often-violent upheaval that many nations in South and Southeast Asia experienced following the rapid end of European colonization. As time progresses, more elements stated in the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan are being implemented, such as more rights and privileges to its citizens, as well as greater support from the center. With this trend, the governments point to the insurgents is that they need more time and insurgency only serves to make the process longer as precious resources are stripped away to deal with insurgency vice infrastructure and social

¹⁵² Manasi Kakatkar-Kulkarni, "India's Baloch Dilemma," *India: The Foreign Policy Blog Network*, July 20, 2009, <http://india.foreignpolicyblogs.com/2009/07/20/indias-baloch-dilemma/>.

¹⁵³ Michael Meyer-Resende and Hannah Roberts, "Pakistan's maturing democracy," *The Guardian*, April 20, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/apr/20/pakistan-democracy-maturing>.

development.¹⁵⁴ In a region where random violence against all non-Baloch is possible, there is a requirement for additional military and police forces to provide safety to the workers. Added to these costs are the costs of repairing the damages associated with pipeline, rail and roadway detonations along with the interruption in services or transit, all of which amounts to substantial loss of time and money. Furthermore, the constant threat of violence makes contracting out these services more difficult and expensive. Finally, with the abundance of valuable natural resources in Balochistan, Pakistan has an increased reason to hold on to the region. Also with increasing pressures and attention on the region due to the current War on Terrorism, a dangerous game of international politics is underway that could drag the region into a dramatic upswing in violence. In other words, the Pakistani Central government, civilian or military led, has very little incentives to let Baloch insurgency succeed. In fact, due to the War on Terror and growing energy needs, the state is motivated to end the insurgency as soon as possible, which might have not been the case in the earlier decades, when the pressures were purely domestic. International presence in the region places greater pressure to find a solution.

C. INDIRECT APPEALS FOR SUPPORT

The UNPO is an organization that strives to provide a voice to the various cultures and societies around the globe that are being subjugated or marginalized by their

¹⁵⁴ Meyer-Resende and Roberts, "Pakistan's Maturing Democracy."

government.¹⁵⁵ The Baloch are attempting to appeal to the global society in an effort to bring U.N. or other international attention to their conflict.¹⁵⁶ Following the Cold War, the U.N. has taken increased interest in becoming involved with similar groups that can provide some level of economic or strategic advantage to the U.N.¹⁵⁷ Examples of this lie in their involvement in independence movements in the Western Sahara, Namibia and East Timor.¹⁵⁸ The U.N. has received a great deal of criticism over the Peacekeeping Operations, with some pointing out that its involvement does not solve the root problems, instead merely dragging out the crisis and causing more death and destruction.¹⁵⁹

Further challenges to U.N. Peacekeeping Operations lie in defining government legitimacy and respect by all parties involved.¹⁶⁰ This point is particularly applicable to the Balochistan situation. Although there is clearly a legitimate government in Pakistan, the Baloch routinely waffle in their support of the center or deny recognition of the government, which makes it difficult for foreign

¹⁵⁵ UNPO, "UNPO Membership," *Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization*, October 2006, <http://www.unpo.org/section/2/3>.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Dr. Sam Vaknin, *The Disunited Nations*, March 10, 2005, <http://samvak.tripod.com/unitednations.html>.

¹⁵⁸ Neave O'Clery, "The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda: Peacekeeping Operations in the 21st Century," *A Global Village*, 2010, <http://aglobalvillage.org/essays/essay0108/>.

¹⁵⁹ William Shawcross, "Paving the Road to Hell: The Failure of U.N. Peacekeeping," *Foreign Affairs*, March 2000, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/55875/max-boot/paving-the-road-to-hell-the-failure-of-u-n-peacekeeping>.

¹⁶⁰ Dr. Charles T. Call and Gigja Sorensen, "UN Peace Operations and State-Building: A Case Study of Haiti," *Stabilisation Unit*, May 2009, http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/stabilisation-and-conflict-resources/geographic/doc_details/103-un-peace-operations-and-state-building-a-case-study-of-haiti.html.

agencies to accurately gauge the level of mistreatment being suffered. An example of this lies in the fact that the Baloch have been involved in state politics, with their absences being a combination of dismissal or conscious disassociation.

The result of this waffling is evident in the marked increase in civilians, military and rebel deaths and injuries in Balochistan stemming from the increased attacks against the railways and pipelines discussed in Chapter II and the resultant backlash from the military.¹⁶¹ Figure 5 provides an example of the increasing violent incidents. Nearly seven times the number of people were killed in the first month following a recent breaking of the cease-fire agreement between the Baloch revolutionaries and the state (numbers in parentheses are the figures for December 2008).¹⁶² These figures are further supported by reputable news coverage for the area, and although actual figures will likely never surface, the broad consensus appears to point to the increasing violence.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ T. Khurshchev Singh and Alok Bansal, "Violence in Pakistan: Trend Analysis January 2009," *Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses*, February 28, 2009, http://www.idsa.in/idsastrategiccomments/ViolenceinPakistan_A%20Bansal_TKSingh_280209.

¹⁶² Singh and Bansal, "Violence in Pakistan."

¹⁶³ BBC News, "Pakistan militants killed 2,500 in 2010, report says," *BBC News - South Asia*, April 14, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13085776>.

Places	Incidents	Militants			Civilians			Security Forces			Total	
		Kill	Injury	Arrest	Kill	Injury	Kidnap	Kill	Injury	Kidnap	Kill	Injury
FATA	88 (121)	129 (100)	6 (63)	47 (31)	50 (87)	18 (31)	21 (185)	10 (4)	16 (15)	1 (1)	189 (201)	40 (109)
NWFP	190 (178)	53 (100)	12 (1)	157 (248)	186 (191)	134 (172)	22 (70)	40 (16)	61 (36)	3 (7)	279 (307)	207 (209)
Balochistan	58 (30)	10 (2)	0 (0)	17 (40)	40 (8)	60 (17)	1 (14)	23 (1)	27 (0)	0 (0)	73 (11)	87 (17)
Others (Punjab, Sindh etc)	94 (58)	17 (14)	0 (0)	150 (96)	70 (44)	22 (20)	8 (2)	6 (2)	12 (2)	1 (0)	93 (60)	34 (22)
Total (Pakistan)	430 (388)	209 (216)	18 (64)	371 (533)	346 (340)	234 (240)	52 (271)	79 (23)	116 (53)	5 (8)	634 (579)	368 (357)

Figure 8: Casualty Figures in Violent Incidents in Pakistan, January 2009.¹⁶⁴

Although appeals to the U.N. may seem like a logical choice for a group of people to pursue in light of their organic inability to solve the problem, there are a number of issues that present themselves. Following the end of the Cold War, the U.N. increased its Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). Initial entry into this foray came with expected complications, and although there is a great deal of information coming from the U.N. regarding lessons-learned and improved capability, the amount of harsh criticism is also increasing, coming from states where peacekeeping operations occurred, as well as scholars and academics.¹⁶⁵ As noted by the Heritage Foundation, U.N. PKO is increasing in both numbers of places involved, as well

¹⁶⁴ Singh and Bansal, "Violence in Pakistan."

¹⁶⁵ Tricia McMillan, "What Canada can do to increase UN peacekeeping capability," *Everything2*, April 13, 2005, <http://everything2.com/title/What+Canada+can+do+to+improve+U.N.+peacekeeping+capabilities>.

as level of danger for the peacekeeping forces.¹⁶⁶ The article points to an increasing trend in violence, as more parties become involved in the crisis, as well as increased targeting of the foreigners in an effort to either curry favor or remove the additional threat.¹⁶⁷ In other words, if the Baloch are successful in gaining U.N. attention, the level and duration of violence currently experienced will likely increase leading to the inevitable U.N. withdrawal. Then the Baloch are likely to either be in the same or worse position than they were prior to the U.N. arrival.¹⁶⁸

Further challenges are noted and corollaries are seen in the recent U.N. mission to Haiti, which presents an exemplary case of problematic U.N. Mission. A synopsis of the challenges reported by The Center on International Cooperation in Haiti identified three areas that result in poor or absent cooperation between certain ethnic/tribal groups and the central government.¹⁶⁹ The first is when there is no mechanism for resolving conflict, refer to the Social Movement Theory of Charles Tilly defined earlier which identified this same point.¹⁷⁰ Specifically, the lack of involvement in state politics through legitimate means will often lead politically minded people to resort to methods that are more violent in an effort to make the

¹⁶⁶ Brett Schaefer, "Time for a new United Nations Peacekeeping Organization," *The Heritage Foundation*, February 13, 2007, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2007/02/time-for-a-new-united-nations-peacekeeping-organization>.

¹⁶⁷ Schaefer, "Time for a new United Nations Peacekeeping Organization," <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2007/02/time-for-a-new-united-nations-peacekeeping-organization>.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Call and Sorenson, "UN Peace Operations and State-Building," 4.

¹⁷⁰ Tilly, *Social Movements*, 54.

state meet their demands. The second aspect in this case was the resistance of Haitian elites toward state reform. In this case, although measures were adopted, the perceived loss of local power led local elites to resist in order to maintain their status. The final point centers on the perception of a state weak in resources and economy and widely viewed as corrupt, which caused a lack of faith in the government's ability to follow through with their promises.

With all of these points currently evident in Balochistan and Pakistan, it is clear that Balochistan may face similar difficulties following U.N. involvement. While the U.N. claims success in a similar tribal/ethnic clash in Cambodia, the ongoing violence and underpinnings of resentment are clearly still manifesting in the area.¹⁷¹ These are just two of the many cases that highlight the dysfunction of the U.N. regarding peacekeeping operations, providing further proof that the Baloch should strongly reconsider their choice of international sponsor and the ramifications of what could happen if the U.N. decides to forcibly involve themselves in Balochistan.¹⁷² While there may be some success cases as well, such as the mission to

¹⁷¹ Judy L. Ledgerwood, "UN Peacekeeping Missions: The Lessons from Cambodia," *East-West Center*, March 1994, <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/khmer/ledgerwood/PDFAsiaPacific.htm>.

¹⁷² Mir Mohammad Ali Talpur, "Balochistan: Ground Zero," *IntelliBriefs*, January 2, 2010, <http://intellibriefs.blogspot.com/2010/01/balochistan-ground-zero.html>.

East Timor that ended hostilities in 2002 and created a peace that stands to this day, the overall record is mixed.¹⁷³

D. DIRECT APPEALS FOR SUPPORT

Successive failures to gain full autonomy have led the Baloch to court foreign powers to provide either financial or material support.¹⁷⁴ As discussed earlier in the chapter, with little prospect of Indian support coming, the Baloch appear to be pursuing a tactic of enticing the United States to support their cause.¹⁷⁵ This has placed the United States in a somewhat awkward position, as Washington has spent, and continues to spend, billions supporting the Pakistani government.¹⁷⁶ For example, in 2010, Washington set aside \$1.5 billion for military and economic aid to Pakistan.¹⁷⁷ These payments are now being questioned in light of a perceived lack of return on investment in the Global War on Terror following the U.S. military raid that killed Osama bin Laden outside of Islamabad.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷³ Ameerah Haq, "Timor-Leste: top UN envoy highlights progress toward stability and security," *UN News Centre*, October 19, 2010, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36498&Cr=timor-leste&Cr1=>.

¹⁷⁴ Crisis Balochistan, "Dr. Nazar: A Man's Struggle For His Country," *Baloch Johd*, April 3, 2011, <http://www.balochjohd.com/modules/AMS/article.php?storyid=72>.

¹⁷⁵ Ahmed Quraishi, "Pakistani Kurdistan: Terrorists Preparing To Declare Independent Balochistan," *International Analysts Network*, August 5, 2009, http://www.analyst-network.com/article.php?art_id=3080.

¹⁷⁶ Lt. Col. Zaheerul Hassan, "Trilateral Talks & U.S. Involvement in Balochistan," *Asian Tribune*, May 2, 2011, <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2011/05/02/trilateral-talks-us-involvement-balochistan>.

¹⁷⁷ Patrick O'Connor and Danny Yadron, "Congress Questions U.S. Aid to Pakistan," *The Wall Street Journal*, May 3, 2011, <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2011/05/03/congress-questions-u-s-aid-to-pakistan/>.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

Meanwhile, Balochistan continues to serve as a primary conduit for military resources to support the current War on Terrorism based out of Afghanistan. The loss of this supply route would greatly complicate the logistics for the U.S. and Pakistani operations. Complicating matters further, with the growing voice of the Baloch in international arenas, the issue of which "subjugated" peoples to support and the ramifications for not supporting, are having an increased effect on world opinion and policy decision-making.¹⁷⁹ Finally, with China already having a strong foothold in perhaps the best strategic location in Balochistan at Gwadar, there is the added danger of an international incident that could quickly blossom out of control under the right circumstances.

Making this entire situation even more disturbing, the Baloch appear to be hedging their bets to a certain degree by also seeking assistance from the Russians.¹⁸⁰ There is historical precedent for this move as the Soviets courted the Baloch during the Soviet-Afghanistan War that lasted from December 1979 to February 1989. In their efforts to access the Indian Ocean, the Soviets promised military and other forms of aid to the Baloch in return for their assistance in southern Afghanistan and Soviet access to

¹⁷⁹ Ahmar Mustikhan, "Sen. Mikulski expresses concern over Balochistan human rights situation," *Baltimore Foreign Policy Examiner*, April 26, 2011, <http://www.examiner.com/foreign-policy-in-baltimore/mikulski>.

¹⁸⁰ Hafeez Hasanabadi, "The interests of Russia and America in Balochistan, Crucial time for Baloch leadership to make right decision," *DailyTawar*, June 14, 2010, http://www.gwank.org/June10/russian_and_usa_intrest_in_balochistan20100616.html.

Gwadar during the Cold War.¹⁸¹ Although the Cold War is over, there are still residual feelings of distrust between Washington and Moscow in the region, and when combined with increasing Chinese interest in the region, the potential for some form of international crisis is exacerbated. Although evidence of support is inconclusive, an interesting WikiLeaks cable stated that the Russians are continuing to support Baloch insurgency, although for what purpose is yet to be ascertained.¹⁸²

E. INCONSISTENT MESSAGES

With the attention focused on the headline-grabbing appeals, along with the accusations and counteraccusations between the Pakistani government and the Baloch leadership, some interesting points seem to fall through the cracks. A great deal of time is spent on the Baloch insurgent group's blogs regarding the fight against colonialism, with some claiming that Pakistan has enslaved the Baloch in the British colonial fashion.¹⁸³ Other groups claim that the Pakistan modifies their practices to ensure that the Baloch do not have a voice in government, and eliminate any

¹⁸¹ Dr. Raja Muhammad Khan, "Nexus of Conspiracies in Balochistan," *Fact and Truth*, April 14, 2010, <http://facttruth.wordpress.com/2010/04/27/nexus-of-conspiracies-in-balochistan/>.

¹⁸² Saba Imtiaz, "MPs told Russia, India and UAE involved in Baloch insurgency," *The Express Tribune*, December 3, 2010, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/84902/wikileaks-india-russia-supporting-baloch-insurgency/>.

¹⁸³ Zaffar Baloch, "Balochistan's Burden of Slavery," *Baluch Sarmachar*, March 28, 2011, <http://baluchsarmachar.wordpress.com/2011/03/28/balochistans-burden-of-slavery/>.

political personage that threatens their control.¹⁸⁴ With the recent history of the subcontinent, notions of colonialism provide an excellent touchstone for evoking images of oppression and subjugation. However, their claims that they are fighting against the Pakistani central government, along with foreign developers in Balochistan, in order to ensure that they do not return to this awful past start to fall apart when one examines the actions of the leadership. It is difficult to state in one breath that a group is fighting for autonomy for its people, and then in the next breath invite foreign militaries to come in and assist your group in this endeavor.¹⁸⁵ Although the military aspects are obvious, having a new sponsor who is physically and emotionally detached could actually worsen the situation for the Baloch. The development of Balochistan could turn into a combination of business enterprise and strategic posturing, with the desires of the Baloch taking a backseat to these endeavors.¹⁸⁶

By examining the dilemmas surrounding foreign assistance, combined with their strategic terrain and geographical location and their abundance of valuable natural resources, a slightly different picture begins to develop. The Baloch leadership stands to amass untold

¹⁸⁴ Sarbaaz Baloch, "Rehman Malik rubs salt on Baloch wounds," *Baloch Land*, September 10, 2010, <http://baluchland.blogspot.com/2010/09/rehman-malik-rubs-salt-on-baloch-wounds.html>.

¹⁸⁵ Malou Innocent, "Explaining America and Pakistan's Troubling Mutual Dependence (and Hostility)," *The National Interest*, February 9, 2011, <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-skeptics/explaining-america-pakistan%E2%80%99s-troubling-mutual-dependence-ho-4852>.

¹⁸⁶ Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "Support Balochi Separatists," *American Thinker*, July 25, 2010, http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/07/support_balochi_separatists.html.

wealth (which may or may not be redistributed to the masses) by gaining their autonomy.¹⁸⁷ With promises of untold wealth and the backing of the United States, it would appear that the Baloch insurgency has laid their existence at the feet of hope.¹⁸⁸ The hope for more say in their development and government, along with the hope for better education and access to technical seeking jobs would lead the Baloch to an almost vassal-like status to the United States for the prospect of far greater financial returns than their current situation.¹⁸⁹ The trend in this direction can be seen in Washington's past treatment of tribal or ethnic groups. As the random levels of support for the Kurds during the 1990s and into the second invasion of Iraq show, discontented groups are supported by the United States so long as they provide some benefit, as the natural resources and Gwadar Port of Balochistan clearly would.¹⁹⁰

F. CONCLUSION

Chapter IV has shown how the motives, both stated and suspected, make the Baloch an extremely dangerous wild card. With increased interest in the region for the

¹⁸⁷ Dr. Jumma Khan Marri, "Baloch Nation in leadership crisis," *Baloch Sardar*, January 12, 2011, <http://sardarwatch.wordpress.com/2011/01/12/baloch-nation-in-leadership-crisis/>.

¹⁸⁸ Lt.Col. Zaheerul Hassan, "U.S. Motives behind Balochistan Movement," *Asian Tribune*, April 10, 2011, <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2011/04/10/us-motives-behind-balochistan-movement>.

¹⁸⁹ Malik Rashid, "Between US and Local Masters," *Boloji*, October 11, 2009, <http://www.boloji.net/analysis2/0494.html>.

¹⁹⁰ John Stanton, "Balochistan, Power Politics and the Battle for Oil," *Global Research*, March 29, 2007, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=5226>.

aforementioned reasons, the Baloch stand to either make massive gains or face complete marginalization, with a multitude of gradations in between. With the understanding of the treasure trove they are sitting on, it appears that the Baloch are determined to make a concerted effort to gain autonomy with the understanding that this is likely their last opportunity given the resource and political urgency facing the Pakistani state.

With the world's attention focused on the region and increasing animosity between Washington and Islamabad, the time is ripe for a partnership with the United States. Barring that, a secondary option of getting the U.N. to embark on a mission would not likely garner immediate results; however, increased international pressures might force the Islamabad to alter their position on Balochistan. Whereas neither of these options is likely to happen, the fact that other countries are responding or paying attention to the Baloch attempts try and involve foreign governments in the pursuit of their goals indicates that the Baloch are of extreme significance regarding the future stability of the region.¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ Shahid R. Siddiqi, "Why Insurgency in Balochistan Cannot Succeed," *Foreign Policy Journal*, March 30, 2010, <http://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2010/03/30/why-insurgency-in-balochistan-cannot-succeed/>.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Taken individually, the three factors presented in this thesis, those of human and physical terrain, natural resources and local politics, are compelling in regards to strategic importance of Balochistan not only for Pakistan, but also for the entire region. As technology continues to bring the peoples of the world closer together, it is safe to say that matters of regional importance will have ripple effects around the globe. Modern politics are no longer limited to local grievances or cultural nuances. The expanding global trade environment and increased international competition for resources drive for cheap production and new markets have set local politics aside in the interest of larger global political economy.

With this rationale in mind, the significance of Balochistan is clear. With its favorable terrain enabling rapid and easy access to the emerging markets and resources of Central Asia or as a land-bridge connecting the Middle East and South Asia, it has become of great interest to international players. This is apparent in the planned major rail, road and pipeline development projects as discussed in Chapter II. The potential for a deep-water port in Gwadar is also of extreme importance in that it will allow for active competition in global markets along the sea-lanes as well as the ability to accommodate the massive influx of imports and exports that go hand-in-hand with this growth as pointed out by Robert Kaplan in his thought provoking book *Monsoon*.

Moving beyond the Balochistan terrain and its advantageous ability to facilitate the crossroads of commerce, the interest in this province is expounded with the addition of the vast natural resources that have such high global demand as shown in Chapter III. Further, the sale of these resources promises untold economic gains for many years to come as globalization continues to increase in exponential fashion throughout developing countries. The rise of many east African and Southeast Asian countries from obscurity is intertwined with Gwadar Port and the opportunity that it provides as a mechanism for these nations to access each other as well the global market. As such, the owner of these resources stands to gain not only in economic terms, but also through increased power and prestige in the region.

The location and the presence of vast resources in Balochistan lead to the heightened interest in pacifying the region by the Pakistani government. Not only would the nation's increased economic status assist them in their enduring rivalry with India, but would also extend this elevated status into Central Asia, Iran and Afghanistan. Further, by courting the rising Chinese power, they stand to either shed their reliance on American aid, or experience even greater gains as these two powers vie for power and influence in South Asia.

Finally, the importance of Baloch in the achieving stability and national development in increasing global scrutiny elevates this region as strategically important on for Pakistan. With their claims on the geography and resources of Balochistan, along with persistence to

maintain their cultural identity, their pursuit for autonomy creates a dangerous breeding ground for conflict as illustrated in their conflict-ridden integrative history with Pakistan. In an ever-escalating fashion, the insurgent groups have demonstrated that no manner of person is safe, be the military, police, government employee, transportation worker or foreigner or even Baloch. All are caught between the center's decision to tap into the region's resources and the Baloch elite's decisions not to allow them full access without them as intermediaries and sufficient reimbursement. Such reckless behavior centering on absolutes and ultimatums could easily lead to some manner of governmental outrage where the Pakistani military moves in and instills harsh martial law again as they have done in the past.

Harkening back to the previous insurgencies discussed in Chapter IV, the Pakistani government has made it clear that autonomy is not an option and that large-scale rebellion will only have the effect of military action and increased military presence. In addition, an attack against foreign citizens, or against elite or high-status personnel, could create an international incident whereby foreign militaries arrive to exact revenge. This situation could then spiral further, drawing in enemies and allies alike that are pursuing their own self-interests. We are already seeing the potential for this in the attacks against the Chinese port workers along with warnings by the Baloch rebels that all foreigners (in this context referring to all non-Baloch) should immediately depart the region to avoid being caught in the crossfire.

In summation, the strategic importance of Balochistan lies in how the unknown of the Baloch and the Pakistani leadership will react to the known increasing international pressures in the pursuit of wealth and status. The physical geography is not likely to change and will continue to be vital for overland transport and access to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Russia along with serving as a land-bridge between the Middle East and South Asia. Until alternate fuel sources are produced in an economical fashion and enter mass production and dissemination, the natural gas fields, along with the oil and mineral wealth, will continue to be sought by all of the countries in the region. Therefore, the heart of the strategic importance of Balochistan is how the powerful nations of the world approach Balochistan, and how the Baloch react to these advances.

B. READING THE TEA-LEAVES

Global interest in the region of Balochistan is unlikely to decline anytime in the near future. As South Asia continues to modernize at exponential rates, the need for energy will only increase. With the current known locations of natural gas and petroleum as they are, India and China are likely to engage in dramatically increasing competition for access to these vital resources. It is no surprise then that the natural gas fields in Pakistan and Central Asia are of given so much attention as control or influence of the source allows privileged access and lower prices. Intrinsically tied to this is the transportation and refinement of these resources. As discussed in Chapter II, the gross lack of mass transportation means or

infrastructure leads to a virtual clean-slate in Balochistan. What this means for the region and interested parties is that the countries and / or corporations that can provide infrastructure development and service provision will likely experience a dramatic rise in preeminence in the region. Along with this will be the corresponding rise in additional actors in the region who will have an impact on local and state politics. In an already troubled and unstable environment, this additional foreign involvement is unlikely to instill progress in the region as commercial interests vie with national politics leveraging pre-existing animosities to gain influence.

With the obscene amount of foreign aid available either through the US or China, Pakistan is likely to escalate their use of force in the region to pacify the Baloch, thus enabling and even encouraging this power struggle to occur. With the War on Terrorism likely winding down in neighboring Afghanistan in 2011 as President Obama prepares to unveil his plan for troop withdrawals along with deteriorating relations with the United States, Pakistan can anticipate a decrease in U.S. foreign aid. In order to maintain their position in the region, Pakistan must replace and augment their current treasury lest the balance of power gap between them and India widen dramatically further.

Added to this, as India increases its pressures in what could be construed as a surrounding tactic with the Chabahar Port project and associated road network to Afghanistan, Pakistan is on the brink of being completely marginalized in the region. At this point, the continuing

nuclear standoff between Pakistan and India takes on renewed interest. Although the likelihood of India invading Pakistan and jeopardizing their own growth is minimal, the perception and policies of Pakistan are unknown in this future environment.

It is similarly unlikely that Pakistan will meet the demands of the Baloch and their calls for any level of autonomy. The Pakistani government and the Baloch need to reach consensus soon as they both stand to lose in their current tactics. A stronger Iran and an Afghanistan allied with India will squeeze Pakistan and further exacerbate their problems. With both of these countries having sympathetic Baloch populations, they stand to gain access to the Pakistani Baloch region, chipping away at Pakistan's tenuous hold. Success in this arena will likely further empower the Pashtun, who also have a sizeable population in Afghanistan and have their own problems with the Pakistani government. Although this seems to be an acceptable option for the Baloch, it is unlikely that their new benefactors will allow them any more autonomy that Pakistan does; in effect they will just trade masters. Finally, reaching this new arrangement is likely to come at a high human cost. So the question really is how much are the Baloch willing to lose for the chance at marginal (at best) gains?

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