

# Multiculturalism, Cultural Expression and Mass Media in Balochistan

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## Abstract

The concept of global village has an inherent acknowledgement that world belongs to all cultures without bias. It also testifies that multicultural character of countries is a resource provided it is managed sensibly. Pakistan is a multicultural country so is the case with its component provinces. There is a need to tackle the challenges and opportunities ensuing from globalization to reinforce unity at home and solidarity with other countries of the world. Balochistan cherishes multiculturalism and values and its different cultures are part of it's heritage. It has also a long history of promoting a pro-active media as the support structure for cultural expression and cultural diversity.

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## Introduction

‘Pakistan is a multi-cultural country. Multiculturalism embodies an ethic of acceptance of and respect for cultural diversity, community harmony and inclusion’.<sup>1</sup> Multiculturalism is an old phenomenon that has received new impetus as a result of rethinking globalization. Pakistan, like many other countries, views globalization with curiosity, responsibility and appropriateness. The country cherishes cultural diversity as a strength, yet this acknowledgement may not be enough. The stereotype approach of assimilation, pursued for more than six decades in the country, with a view to achieve an artificial solidarity, is no more effective. Therefore, it needs to be reconsidered objectively, in the light of fast emerging new realities. Evolving strategies of multiculturalism, tantamount to trust cultures that constitute the national culture of Pakistan. It would certainly be an important step towards empowering those cultures in the country.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.australiancollaboration.com.au/pdf/FactSheets/Multicultural-Australia-FactSheet.pdf>

‘Diversity is referred to as thinking independently together’.<sup>2</sup> It implies in the broader sense that expectations of component cultures need to be articulated in line with two-pronged strategy, that cultural interaction and dialogue should be horizontal, engaging countries of the region and the world at large, but also vertical, meaning intercultural communication and dialogue within the country, among various cultures taking all of them on board. To achieve cultural harmony and ensure expression, media and culture usually go hand in hand. Symbolically the Culture Policy as well as the Draft Media Policy of Pakistan acknowledges the need to address the cultural diversity issue as the cornerstone of the road forward. For instance the vision of the proposed National Media Policy provides as follows:

National media policy aims to employ communication as a dynamic continuum-guided by the past, responsive to the present, and geared for the future. It upholds the principles of the national unity, cultural diversity, equality, freedom of expression, access to information, fair media competition and futuristic planning to confront the emerging challenges in the development of media in Pakistan.<sup>3</sup>

Pursuant to the above vision and with the resumption of democratic process in the country a couple of initiatives for taking along the provinces and their respective cultures have been introduced. Intellectuals consider the renaming of the NWFP as Khayber-Pakhtunkhwa as a positive step towards addressing popular feelings of the people and trusting them. The second worth mentioning point is that of 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments made by the National Assembly for facilitating provincial autonomy. It is believed that provincial autonomy will eventually culminate in the cultural autonomy and will give genuine respect and legitimacy to all cultures forming the national mosaic. As the experience of the UNESCO member countries shows, it will not pose any threat to the national unity nor encourage any encroachment on the realm of national culture. Rather it will build bridges between provinces and the federation that suffer from trust deficit of decades. It is needed in the interest of preservation, safeguarding and enhancement of cultural diversity cultural.

Cultural diversity is a driving force of development and thus a guarantee of peace and prosperity fostering a constant

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<sup>2</sup> Leo, F, Parvis, ‘Understanding Cultural Diversity in Today's Complex World’, *Lulu.com*, 2013, p.13.

<sup>3</sup> *Draft of National Media Policy* (Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2006), p.2.

dialogue which humanity needs now more than ever. The region's political leaders are gradually recognizing this core concept. But how to realize and implement these concepts is a problem with which many are still groping.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, it is pertinent to mention that interaction of diverse cultures at national as well as local levels is of prime importance for the protection and promotion of cultural expressions. In line with the pivotal significance of the local context, the UNESCO had commissioned a study on 'Local Policies for Cultural Diversity' to the Institute de Cultura Arjutament de Barcelona, as Chair on Working Group on 'Cultures of United Cities and Local Governments the study puts a special emphasis on implementation of policies at local level across the board affording diverse cultures the right to express.

Cultural autonomy reinforces the empowerment of culture and its development. It is a fact that cultural expression is the via media to exhibit the richness of both tangible as well as intangible cultural treasure of people. Cultural Expressions are those expressions that result from the creativity of individuals, groups and societies, and that have a cultural content'.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, the Convention defines cultural content as referring 'to the symbolic meaning, artistic dimensions and cultural values that originate from and express cultural identities'.<sup>6</sup>

The above definitions cover almost everything that human kind produces. Symbolic meanings or cultural values, though not always an artistic dimension, exist everywhere. The convention also links cultural diversity to population structure and cultures of different population groups.

The aforesaid convention emphasizes on linguistic and ethnic minorities, indigenous people and the position of women, keeping in view the culture they produce for themselves (newspapers, books, theater and handicrafts etc.). Cultural expression may become concrete as goods, handicrafts, sound recording, painting or books, or can also be immaterial such as theatre, dance or musical performances. Besides others, the policies of cultural diversity and cultural expression warrant for a supporting structure based on a number of steps, particularly a

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<sup>4</sup> Sequeira Jorge, Welcome Address, 'International Conference on Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue', Islamabad: 2005, p.16.

<sup>5</sup> *UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, Preamble, 2005, p.5.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

supportive mass media. In this respect the role of media of indigenous languages is well recognized, however, the role of ethnic media and its growth is also highly important as Charles Husband asserts ‘we need ethnic minority media which can speak for, and to, their own community; ethnic minority media which can generate a dialogue between ethnic minority communities; and between these and dominant ethnic community audience’.<sup>7</sup>

### **Balochistan: cultural diversity vis-à-vis provincial autonomy**

The concept of cultural diversity in Balochistan is linked with cultural autonomy. However, it is taken as being dough-tailed with the demand of provincial autonomy. It is presumed that provincial autonomy will eventually lead to cultural autonomy culminating in the empowerment of respective cultures, strengthening diversity and thus support and establish a political system reflective of cultural basis of the society as a whole. As history reveals the questions of cultural autonomy are rooted in the effects of colonization on the societies and cultures of native peoples.

It was not until the era of decolonization that an international effort began to address the rights of indigenous peoples. Within a framework of human rights, efforts began with the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No. 107 concerning the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and Other Tribal and Semi-Tribal Populations in Independent Countries in 1957.<sup>8</sup>

Culture is vital to democratic life where the major arena remains the nation state. Democracy is ‘government for the people and by the people’, as represented in popular texts. It is a ‘one man, one vote’ formula. But true democracy must also include ‘one person, one voice’. And to achieve that, a society must care about its cultural and communication system in order to guarantee equality in access to information and the possibility of expression. This is true for news and for norms and values, and opinions and ideas. Given the fragility of political process in the country resulting from dictatorial interventions,

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<sup>7</sup> Karim H. Karim, *From Ethnic Media to Global Media: Transnational Communication Networks Among Diasporic Communities*, International Comparative Research Group Strategic Research and Analysis Canadian Heritage, 1998, p.6.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---normes/document/publication/wcms\\_100897.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/document/publication/wcms_100897.pdf), p.1.

Balochistan had raised voice against such moves meant to derail the democratic process.

The demand for provincial autonomy had, however, been prominently raised by Balochistan at all forums including cultural, political, social, civil society and educational. There had been unanimity among all component cultures and the advocates of provincial rights on this sensitive and crucial issue. In past, the federal government had deliberately delayed the grant of political autonomy and discarded it for self-styled political reasons despite the rhetoric of promoting both culture and language. Beside some window dressing at government level, these subjects had been left to the people to mind for themselves. The diversity debate enticed by the globalization or as envisaged by the UN Convention, being a new phenomenon, is gradually gaining ground in the province. It has emerged as a new stimulating factor for the demand of cultural autonomy based on multiculturalism and diversity.

As already mentioned, Balochistan is the land of diverse cultures and ethnic identities. Cultural diversity is prominently visible all over its vast terrain. It is a widely accepted belief that more than anyone else people are the real custodian of their respective cultures. Its expression can be observed in day to day life of the province. And it is showcased at iconic cultural occasions such as Sibi Mela, 23<sup>rd</sup> March, Balochistan Arts Council, Radio and T.V programs, and in print media. Languages of the province are the focal vehicles that carry and reflect the diversity impressively. While interacting, these cultures conduct themselves with a sense of perfection and an extraordinary ease, eulogizing the diversity. After having lived with each other for centuries, people of Balochistan have been upholding multiculturalism, diversity and harmony as valued traditions.

Similarly Balochi, Brahui and Pashto have established their academies that have undertaken the gigantic responsibility of promoting language and literature remarkably, despite limited means and resources and with very modest support from the government. A number of voluntary literary and cultural organizations have emerged to take forward the cause of caring for culture, language and literature on self-help basis in all parts of Balochistan, which has given a genuine boost to this area. A considerable number of newspapers, magazines and books are being published in these languages providing multiple forums of expression to writers and journalists of indigenous languages.

In the above light, while evaluating cultural expression and the state of mass media in Balochistan, the following points need to be kept in mind:

- Balochistan acknowledges its multi-cultural status.

- Each of its cultures is regarded as a source of strength to the province.
- Each culture presses forward for recognition.
- They strive for survival and sustainability.
- They have limited means for cultural expression.
- As part of support structure there exist an emerging ethnic media.
- Besides measures under taken by society, at large, for cultural diversity and development, steps initiated by the public sector such as government institutions and official media have also augmented these efforts and can be called positive public interventions. ‘There are tangible as well as intangible cultural expressions. It would be appropriate to understand the components of cultural expressions that include:
- Verbal expression, such as folk tales, legends, folk poetry, common proverbs and librettos or scripts of ballad singers etc.
- Musical expressions, such as folk songs and instrumental music, etc.
- Expression by action, such as folk dance, ballad singing, story telling, comic dialogues etc.
- Tangible expression, such as, (a) production of folk art, especially drawing, paintings, murals (fresco), carvings, sculptures, pottery, mosaic, metal-ware, weaving and knitting, embroidery, ornaments and decorations, costume ornaments and designs, moulds of traditional arts and crafts and musical instruments. (b) Artistic forms of folk architecture.<sup>9</sup>

As pointed out above, expression of traditional culture including folklore may be either intangible or tangible, generally it is a combination of the two. An example of such a mix expression of folklore would be a woven rug (a tangible expression) that expresses the elements of a traditional story (an intangible expression).

### **Role of media**

The recognition of mass media as a social science as well as a strong agent of social change in the era of globalization puts a heavy responsibility on it .This is the promotion and preservation of cultural identities at local level especially when new questions have been raised and and threats of extinction of local cultures are increasing:

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<sup>9</sup> Jerry Feng Xia, *A Case Study on the Protection of Cultural Expressions*, The Centre for Intellectual Property Law (CIER), Utrecht University, 2002, p.3.

The role of media with respect to cultural diversity has been even more diffuse, focusing primarily on critique of the media's tendencies to foster cultural homogenization, rather than diversity, and overlooking the need and the possibilities of media reform in this regard. Media policy therefore should be seen as an enabling mechanism to enhance the media's capacity to play a positive role with respect of cultural diversity.<sup>10</sup>

### **Media and the empowerment of underprivileged**

The emerging question at present is 'How can the world's growing media capacities be channelized to support cultural diversity and domestic discourse?'

Communication in all its forms, from the simplest to the most sophisticated, is a key to people-centered development.... Yet at whatever level the issues of communication are envisaged, there is a shared challenge. This is the challenge of organizing our considerable capacities in ways that support cultural diversity, creativity and the empowerment of the weak and poor.<sup>11</sup>

In Pakistan the antidemocratic power structures always tended to ignore, labeling rather than remaining afraid of cultural expression, labeling their attempts to suppress the diverse cultures as enhancing national solidarity. That was the reason that instead of organizing indigenous cultures and diverse ethnic assets to transform into national assets these were either suppressed or only used as a tool of government specific propaganda.

Measures to promote diversity may vary considerably from one context to another, but they are always, necessarily in democratic societies, part of public policy process. Opening up the process of policy making, policy evaluation and regulation to broader public participation is therefore an important aspect of promoting cultural diversity through access to media.<sup>12</sup>

The democratic regimes of both the Bhuttos in Pakistan adopted a more flexible cultural policy and as a result much openness was witnessed in the media content especially on radio and television programming side even before the entrance of private electronic media in the country.

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<sup>10</sup> Marc Raboy, *Media Pluralism and the Promotion of Cultural Diversity*, A background paper for UNESCO (Montreal: McGill University, 2007), p.3.

<sup>11</sup> Marc Raboy, *op.cit.*, p.4.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

### **Patterns of cultural expressions in Balochistan**

The study of the patterns of cultural expressions in the context of Balochistan, beside others, require taking into account the threat perceptions of respective cultures with regard to their survival. It is true in case of the Baloch including Brahui and Pashtun cultures as well as cultures with smaller representation. Therefore, concept of cultural expression has three levels of connotation: First is based on the theme of survival of the respective culture perceived as vulnerable. Second is based on ethno-centrism with a protectionist tinge. Third it is based on the competitiveness of culture within the provincial limits and across boundaries. Such a study however, establishes that in the course of manner in favour of ‘my culture’, there exists a sense of respect for “other cultures” that leads towards tolerance and coexistence. There is another dimension wherein, intermingled considerably, these cultures operate at people to people level with remarkable understanding. Similarly, the government support system with regard to cultural expression also is of significance.

### **Some premises for cultural expression in Balochistan**

The above scenario then sets forward certain premises which are typical of Balochistan in the discourse of multiculturalism, cultural diversity vis-à-vis cultural expression. For instance:

- Language occupies the central seat of cultural expression thereby setting the agenda for not only cultural expression but also the state of mass media in the province.
- Romanticizing culture to claim an identity competitive to the multi-culturalist character of Balochistan.
- The interesting compartmentalization of media which is less for cultural diversity and more for supporting the ethnic agenda based on language.
- While balancing diversity and unity, the doctrine of ‘live and let live’ seems to be the dominant philosophy of the cultural relations of the people of Balochistan.
- Similarly, a premise that harbors a contradiction is that of not trusting official interventionist measures for the promotion of cultural expression but demanding more support from the government for culture and development.
- Lastly there is a latent demand that development process of the province may be carried out taking into account the respective cultures of the ethnicities.

In view of the importance of protecting linguistic diversity one needs to devote more attention. ‘Diversity of cultural expressions is neither meant to ignore, minimize or consciously bias nor over glorify cultures. It is based on respect for all cultures and to facilitate their enrichment for better coexistence’.<sup>13</sup>

Traditional and indigenous communities have long sought recognition and respect for their traditions and expressions that are a part of living culture, reflecting a community’s history, cultural and social identity, and values. Since the intangible as well as tangible culture of Baloch and Brahui are identical therefore the above applies to Baloch (including Brahui) and the Pashtun as well. Therefore for the convenience of inference the following classification will help comprehend the cultural expression and the state of media in the province:

- The “lingua-centric” approach suggests a review of selected priorities in the field of language and literature. Therefore, an overview of the development of Balochi, Brahui and Pashto language and literature can be pertinent to the aspirations of these cultural groups. It is interesting to note that in Balochistan literature and journalism had been intertwined and had been part and parcel of each other during the pioneering period. This traditional kinship continues till date.
- Significance of ‘cultural space’ for the expression of all cultures interacting on a single platform is of paramount importance as it provides the respective cultures with the crucial opportunity to exhibit cultural diversity. Therefore, the ancient cultural space of Sibi occupies a pioneering status and deserves description.
- Institutions/measures for upholding cultural diversity and promotion of cultural expression are important areas to establish the multi-culturalist character of the province. Therefore the role of Balochistan Arts Council (Idara-e-Saqafat Balochistan) and the Literary Award Programme of the Culture Department are of considerable significance for understanding the cultural diversity.
- A description of media serving the diversity and its role for the promotion of cultural expressions of the culture groups of Balochistan is second to none in importance vis-à-vis contribution. Therefore an overview of the state of mass media will help project a holistic picture of cultural diversity in the province.
- ‘Development also succeeds best where strategies and interventions take into account the local cultural context. On one level there is a

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<sup>13</sup> Jorge Sequeira, *op.cit.*, p.16.

clear need to operate in line with local realities and to avoid inter-cultural misunderstanding'.<sup>14</sup>

### **Diversity displayed/expressed**

Recognizing the distinctive features of Baloch (including Brahui) and Pashtun cultural diversity in terms of intangible expression, an overview of the 'vehicles of cultural diversity' mentioned above is given here to highlight the richness, intellectual content and the inseparable linkage between cultural endeavors and the media. For instance, Sibi Mela and Sibi Cultural Space, Idara-e-Saqafat Balochistan, Balochi, Brahui and Pushto literary academies and their role in the development of language, literature and indeed, the media that provided a commendable support to cultural rights including the right of diversity and expression. As the juxtaposition of cultural expression and the iconic milestones establish the cultural interaction for diversity and expression the subsequent focus will be on the genesis and the state of media in the province, by way of phasing and analysis.

### **Iconic landmarks**

*Sibi Mela (Sibi festival)*: Balochistan's cultural diversity is staged each year at Sibi during the first week of February. It is the most robust occasion of cultural expression since 15th century and beyond. It is at the same time the living tradition that has withstood the test of time. It is a show case of tribal elegance as well as an opportunity to see Balochistan cherishing its cultural diversity. Sibi proudly own the world's oldest cultural space, the unique heritage of humanity.

### **Sibi cultural space**

'The Sibi cultural space is the oldest as it has its roots in the Mehrgarh civilization (7000 BC) where the remarkable human achievement of domestication of animals took place in organized form for the first time in human history'.<sup>15</sup> This single achievement not only contributed enormously to the survival and continuity of human race but also gave paramount strength and speed to it that influenced its entire future and subsequent cultural developments. There are interesting archaeological details substantiating the stance. However, it will suffice to confine to a few such as the refined figurines and motifs, sophisticated pottery, paintings on terracotta pots and the symbolic motif of bull, rather the

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<sup>14</sup> Mark Nowotny, *Putting Culture First*, Commonwealth Foundation, 2008, p.32.

<sup>15</sup> Ayub Baloch, '*Sibi Cultural Space*', *Nukta* Karachi, 1:1 (2005), p.102.

‘Bhagnadi bull’, excavated from Mehrgarh, tell the story of domestication of animals quite loudly. Piecing and deciphering of the material further leads to two more human marvels founded at this seat of civilization, namely agriculture and nomadism.

### **Mass media as catalyst in promoting cultural expression in Balochistan**

The genesis of mass media in Balochistan is linked with the reading and writing traditions of the province. During its early period it was adopted as a borrowed tradition introduced by the elite of Balochistan for purposes like projection of identity, culture, language, image building and putting Balochistan on the media map of the country and region. The pioneers in this field had suffered a number of set backs, including an intolerant tribal society, discriminatory colonial treatment, vulnerability, physical elimination and the problem of extreme scarcity of resources.

In order to understand the genesis of Journalism in Balochistan, we need to consult the history, socio-political development and the transformation of society from nomadism to tribal state and onward. The pioneering phase had started with the introduction of printing press such as Victoria press, Albert press (1888) etc. This period was also characterized with the extension of Indian Press Act, 1867, which was promulgated in 1938.<sup>16</sup>

It was a mile stone as the people of Balochistan got the right of press and thereby to express. As a follow up a number of publications were brought out such as the *Monthly Balochistan Advertiser* (1888), *Border Weekly*, *Balochistan Herald*, *Quetta Times*, *The Trademan* etc. etc. In short the advent of journalism in the sub-continent started with the arrival of the Britishers, while in Balochistan regular journalism began with the departure of Britishers, during this period there were about 15 publications in English, distributed free to people and were without advertisements.<sup>17</sup>

Balochistan was in fact an area with no scope for journalism due to its negligible literacy and very small readership. Then the aim was to voice popular feelings of Balochistan in a literate way. Beside that it was also desired to convey Balochistan’s political grievances to the colonial

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<sup>16</sup> Seemi Naghmana Tahir, *Balochistan Main Ablagh-e-Aama Aghaz o Irtiqa (1888-2005)* (Islamabad: National Language Authority, 2006), p.132.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p.140.

masters initially. The tone of the journalism was that of resistance and criticism, on one hand, and sensitization of people, on the other. The endeavor was of rudimentary nature but this period laid the foundation of a bold, vocal and aggressive press. It was not without a cost as the pioneering era was an era of sacrifices and sufferings.

The second phase of journalism began with the merger of Balochistan with Pakistan. An analysis of this period establishes that Balochistan was hit by a new wave of struggle for its due rights in the aftermath of colonial departure. It was focused on the theme of highlighting Balochistan's rightful place in the independent state of Pakistan. The emergence of a Balochistani Press was rivaled by an official counter press as its competing force. The first was trying to uphold the media freedom, survival of culture, language, literature, human rights etc. while the other had an official agenda based on pushing for 'homogenization' and 'cultural assimilation' by countering the not-so-strong indigenous press. This was a time when the dictatorial regimes were determined to repress any opposition branding it as secessionist, curbing it with an iron fist.

The era was also characterized with the introduction of Radio Pakistan, National Press Trust and introduction of infamous regulations imposing censorship and chains on the press. Through parity doctrine, 'One Unit' was imposed in 1955 liquidating the provinces. Resultantly Balochistan was in a way written off through this provocative political move. The creation of 'One Unit' marks the beginning of another era characterized with new crises swinging from political protests to arm struggle. It was a very difficult time for the political workers and the indigenous media of Balochistan. It is believed that the events of the 'One Unit' period had engraved permanent scars to the relations of province and federation that influenced the subsequent times adversely. In the wake of political turbulence, the nascent media of Balochistan suffered along with the people. The following table explains the state of media at a glance:

**Table 1**  
**Balochistan's Press from 1947 to 1970**

S.No.	Name of Publication	Name of Owner	Language	Periodicity	Year	Place
1	<i>Zamana</i>	Barkat Ali	Urdu	Daily	1953	Quetta
2	<i>Ethaad</i>	Khalil Ur Rehman	Urdu	Daily	1953	Quetta
3	<i>Meezan</i>	Maulana Abdul Jamil, Abdul Kareem	Urdu	Weekly	1947	Quetta

4	<i>Nara-e-Haq</i>	Mian Gulzar	Urdu	Weekly	1952	
5	<i>Daily Qasid</i>	Fateh Muhammad Khan Barech		Weekly	1953	
6	<i>Balocistan Jadeed</i>	Naseem Thalvi	Urdu		1853	
7	<i>Pukaar</i>	Khawja Abdul Kareem Butt	Urdu	Weekly	1947	Quetta
8	<i>Nawa-e-Balochistan</i>	Mir Nabi Baksh Zehri		Weekly	1949	Quetta
9	<i>Rahbar-e-Niswan</i>	Allah Raka Jamali		Monthly	1947	Quetta
10	<i>Tarjuman</i>	Qazi Anwar ul Haq	Urdu	Weekly	1949	Sibi
11	<i>Karwan</i>	Abdul Haye Babar		Fortnightly	1950	Quetta
12	<i>Kohsar</i>	Mulvi Abdul Aziz	Urdu	Monthly	1950	Quetta
13	<i>Khwar</i>	Asim Malik	Urdu	Weekly	1951	
14	<i>Esaar</i>	Asim Malik	Urdu	Weekly	1953	
15	<i>Mualim</i>	Maulana Abdul Baqi Durkhani	Urdu	Monthly	1950	Quetta
16	<i>Pakistan Mirror</i>	Mati ur Rehman	English	Weekly	1958	
17	<i>Sadaqat</i>	Rasheed Malik	Urdu	Weekly	1950	Quetta
18	<i>Nawa-e-Watan</i>	Ghulam Muhammad Shahwani	Urdu	Weekly	1953	Quetta
19	<i>Dushman</i>	Aziz Ullah Hyderabadadi	Urdu	Weekly	1954	Quetta
20	<i>Misaq ul Haq</i>	Abdul Rehman Ghour	Urdu	Weekly	1957	
21	<i>Nawa-e-Bolan</i>	Abdul Rehman Kurd	Urdu	Weekly	1957	Mastung
22	<i>Gulistan</i>	Fazal Ahmed Ghazi	Urdu	Monthly	1958	Quetta
23	<i>Haiwadd</i>	Sultan Muhammad Sabir	Pashto	Weekly	1959	Quetta
24	<i>Elum</i>	Noor Muhammad Parwana	Brahui	Weekly	1960	Mastung
25	<i>Nauken Daur</i>	Babu Abdul Karim Shorish	Balochi/Urdu	Weekly	1962	Quetta
26	<i>Balochi Zamana</i>	Syed Fasih Iqbal	Balochi	Weekly	1962	Quetta
27	<i>Muslim</i>	Maulvi Muhammad Sharif Buzdar Baloch	Urdu/Balochi/Brahui	Fortnightly	1969	Khuzdar
28	<i>Ullus Balochi</i>	Tribal Publicity	Balochi	Monthly	1961	Quetta
29	<i>Ullus Pashto</i>	Tribal Publicity	Pashto	Monthly	1961	Quetta

Source: Dr. Seemi Naghmana Tahir, *Balochistan Main Ablagh-e-Aama Aghaz o Irtiqā (1888-2005)*, National Language Authority, Pakistan, 2006. pp.316, 317, 318, 319.

Dissolution of 'One Unit' became inevitable as a consequence of uprising in East Pakistan and opposition of the erstwhile provinces. Reluctantly provinces including Balochistan were restored in 1970. Provincial Government set up its Information Department in Quetta. Gradually the media experienced a multi-dimensional expansion. The hallmark of the new era was a sense of psychological fulfillment with a desire of managing the provincial affairs in accordance with the aspirations of the people. Media mirrored the hopes by underscoring the strategic importance of the province and the huge mineral and marine resources, promising a bright future to the province. To what extent those goals materialized, it is altogether a different debate.

However, since then a considerable increase in the mass media can be seen, including the development of an ethnic-press, as harbinger of cultural diversity. The globalization, the I.T revolution, satellite system and Internet-connectivity have virtually broadened the awareness of people of Balochistan and have promoted a sense of identity and diversity.

On one hand the new phenomenon has brought new opportunities, on the other, it has increased the sense of deprivation among the people of the province, suffering from prolonged disparity. Awareness through media has re-enforced the demand for cultural as well as political autonomy of the province. This statement is substantiated by announcing 'Balochistan Package' offered by the federal government in order to address provincial grievances. The following charts show the growth of mass media (print media) in Balochistan since 1970.

**Table 2**  
**Growth of Mass Media (Print Media) in Balochistan since 1970**

S.No.	Name	Head	Year	Periodicity	language	Place	Status
1	<i>Ethamaad</i>	Javed Ahmed	1970	Daily	Urdu	Quetta	Continue
2	<i>Nawa-e-Watan</i>	Malik Muhammad Panah	1971	Fortnightly	Urdu-Balochi	Quetta	Continue
3	<i>Oman</i>	Muhammad Ayub	1972	Weekly	Urdu-Balochi	Quetta	Closed in 1973
4	<i>Jang</i>	Syed Asghar Rizvi	1972	Daily	Urdu	Quetta	Continued
5	<i>Mashriq</i>	Aali Rizvi	1972	Daily	Urdu	Quetta	Continued
6	<i>Nasthar</i>	Tahir Muhammad Khan	1976	Daily	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1977
7	<i>Balochistan Times</i>	Syed Fasih Iqbal	1976	Daily	English	Quetta	Continued

8	<i>Tarjuman Lasbela</i>	Kaleem Ambalvi	1972	Weekly	Urdu	Lasbela	Closed
9	<i>Quetta</i>	Abdul Majeed Butt	1972	Weekly	Urdu	Quetta	Discontinued
10	<i>Azadi</i>	Nabi Baksh Khosa	1972	Daily	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1973
11	<i>Sangat</i>	Rauf Warsi	1973	Weekly	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1974
12	<i>Sachai</i>	Ghulam Muhammad	1974	Daily	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1974
13	<i>Balochistan Nama</i>	-	1972	Monthly	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1973
14	<i>Himmat</i>	Aziz Bhatti	1974	Midweek	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1975
15	<i>Bachon Ka Akhbar</i>	Syed Safdar Hussain	1973	Weekly	Urdu	Quetta	Discontinued
16	<i>Namak Daan</i>	Syed Imdad Nizami	1978	Monthly	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1972
17	<i>Aks-e-Bolan</i>	Abdul Razaq Chisthi Shamulvi	1984	Monthly	Urdu	Quetta	Discontinued
18	<i>Ahwaal</i>	Ghaus Baksh Marghazani	1984	Monthly	Urdu	Sibi	Continued
19	<i>Balochi Duniya</i>	Chakar Khan Baloch	1984	Weekly	Urdu	Quetta	Continued
20	<i>Wadi</i>	Agha Muhammad Nasir	1984	Fortnightly	Urdu	Quetta	Closed
21	<i>Wajdan</i>	Yasmin Nizami	1978	Quarterly	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1987
22	<i>Aamoozish</i>	Sarwar Ayubi	1985	Monthly	Urdu	Quetta	Closed in 1987
23	<i>Sanobar</i>	Zafar Ullah Khan	1985	Fortnightly	Urdu	Quetta	Continued

Source: Dr. Seemi Naghmana Tahir, *Balochistan Main Ablagh-e-Aama Aghaz o Irtiqa (1888-2005)*, National Language Authority, Pakistan, 2006, pp.392, 393.

**Table 3**  
**Current major publications of Balochistan**

S.No.	Dailies	Weeklies	Fortnightlies	Monthlies
1	<i>Jang</i>	Quetta Times	Pasban	Sangat
2	<i>Mashriq</i>	Talar	Anjam	Jahan Numa
3	<i>Balochistan Times</i>	Hewad	Din	Nokeen Daur
4	<i>Balochistan Express</i>	Eilum	Aks-e-Bolan	Balochi Zind
5	<i>Express</i>	Dastak		Balochia
6	<i>Intekhab</i>	Parave		Pashto

7	<i>Dunya</i>	Bachon Ka Akhbaar		Balochistan Today
8	<i>Baakhabar</i>	Sanobar		Balochi
9	<i>Askar</i>	Balochi Duniya		Pishin Express
10	<i>Independent</i>	Muslim		Cascade

Source: *Media Directory*, Department of Information, Government of Balochistan, 2013.

The above table shows a trend of growth elevating Balochistan to the media map of the country. However, the subsequent period has registered a mushroom growth of newspapers and magazines out of which a considerable number consists of ethnic/linguistic press as per details given below:

**Table 4**  
**Ethnic/Linguistic Press of Balochistan**

S.No.	Name of Publication	Language	Year	Periodicity
1	<i>Nawa-e-Watan Quetta</i>	Balochi	1971	Daily
2	<i>Nawae Zhwnd Quetta</i>	Balochi	1992	Daily
3	<i>Zhalaand Quetta</i>	Pashto	1999	Daily
4	<i>Ruzhn Turbat</i>	Urdu-Balochi	2002	Daily
5	<i>Haiwad Quetta</i>	Pashto	1959	Weekly
6	<i>Elum Mastung</i>	Balochi	1960	Weekly
7	<i>Breshna Quetta</i>	Pashto	1970	Weekly
8	<i>Balochi Duniya</i>	Urdu-Balochi	1984	Weekly
9	<i>Talaar Quetta</i>	Urdu-Balochi	2003	Weekly
10	<i>Koh-e-Suleman Quetta</i>	Urdu-Balochi	2002	Weekly
11	<i>Kozhak Chaman</i>	Urdu-Pashto	1995	Fortnightly
13	<i>Balochi Quetta</i>	Balochi	1996	Monthly
14	<i>Nauken Daur</i>	Urdu-Balochi	1987	Monthly
15	<i>Chagerd</i>	Balochi-English	1989	Monthly
16	<i>Labzank Hub</i>	Balochi	1990	Monthly
17	<i>Sahar Quetta</i>	Pashto-Urdu	1993	Monthly
18	<i>Tumain Quetta</i>	Balochi	1998	Monthly
19	<i>Pashto Quetta</i>	Pashto	1999	Monthly
20	<i>Balochi Zind Noshki</i>	Balochi	1999	Monthly
21	<i>Star Surab</i>	Brahui	2001	Monthly
22	<i>Saarthen Tumain Turbat</i>	Balochi	2001	Monthly
23	<i>Aasap Turbat</i>	Balochi	2002	Monthly
24	<i>Chakaas Kharan</i>	Balochi	2003	Monthly
25	<i>Zagh Quetta</i>	Pashto-Urdu	2003	Monthly
26	<i>Mualim Mastung</i>	Urdu-Brahui	2003	Monthly
27	<i>Balucia Quetta</i>	Balochi	2003	Monthly

28	<i>Qandeelistan Panjgur</i>	Balochi-Urdu	2003	Monthly
29	<i>Bazm-e-Feroz Bolan</i>	Brahui-Urdu	2003	Monthly
30	<i>Sichkaan Gwadar</i>	Balochi	2004	Monthly
31	<i>Mehr Noshki</i>	Brahui-Urdu	2004	Monthly
32	<i>Nawa-e-Bolan</i>	Brahui-Urdu	2005	Monthly
33	<i>Aasyab Noshki</i>	Urdu-English- Brahui		Monthly

Source: Dr. Seemi Naghmana Tahir, *Balochistan Main Ablagh-e-Aama Aghaz o Irtiqa (1888-2005)*, National Language Authority, Pakistan, 2006.

The above account is culture-specific though Balochistan's thorough ordeal had been characterized with political turbulence. However, media had been linked to culture as well as politics of the province, more so during the hard times when draconian tactics were deployed by dictators to silence it. It was noteworthy that Balochistan had fielded its best team of intellectual-journalists to plead for its political and cultural rights. Unlike past when the far flung areas had to depend on weeks old newspapers, the current communication and technological advancement has lifted the embargo of distances, and has made the so called argument of 'scattered communities' redundant.

Swift means of information travel has brought all the corners of the province within the reach through information highway. Consequently, people have become both enlightened as well as nervous. The nervousness stems out of the fear that until diversity is recognized as the fundamental cultural right and unless a media stands shoulder to shoulder with culture to afford it a guarantee for cultural expression, their vulnerability might enhance. Therefore there is a great need of strengthening culture by cherishing diversity and of course upholding the freedom of expression particularly through the freedom of media in the province.

The question that needs educated attention is 'how existing policy mechanisms, regulations, community involvement and political will can support efforts to uphold cultural diversity, prevent the erosion of traditions and languages, and influence the use of media as an instrument for cultural promotion and preservation'.<sup>18</sup>

## Radio

'Radio has the proud distinction of announcing the creation of Pakistan, at midnight of 14th August 1974 when the country appeared on the political map of the world as a sovereign state. Radio Pakistan (then

<sup>18</sup> [http://media.mcgill.ca/files/unesco\\_diversity.pdf](http://media.mcgill.ca/files/unesco_diversity.pdf)

known as Pakistan Broadcasting Service) went on air for the first time. The last announcement of AIR from Lahore Station was made at 11:00 p.m. An hour later, the newly composed signature tune of Pakistan Broadcasting Service was played and Zahur Azar made the following announcement: ‘At the stroke of twelve midnight the independent sovereign State of Pakistan will come into existence’.<sup>19</sup>

Radio had pioneered the electronic media in the province establishing a linkage between the provincial capital and the farthest corners of Balochistan. Being affordable and receiving signals through waves, it was the most successful medium of information, entertainment, culture, music, education etc.

The first radio station was setup at Quetta in 1956 and initiated broadcast in Balochi, Pashto, Brahui, Hazaragi beside Urdu. It was a new experience for the respective cultures to voice their intellectual, literary and cultural programmes spreading awareness and the sense of pride in cultural diversity. Soon Radio Pakistan Quetta turned into an important cultural centre broadcasting and serving as a multilingual and multicultural institution.<sup>20</sup>

Shown in the following table are various Radio Stations of Balochistan with their year of establishing:

**Table 5**  
**Radio Stations of Balochistan**

S.No.	Station	Year of Commencement
1	Quetta	17 <sup>th</sup> October 1965
2	Khuzdar	17 <sup>th</sup> June 1981
3	Turbat	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1981
4	Sibi	1 <sup>st</sup> October 1989
5	Lorlai	1992
6	Zhob	1992
7	FM 101 Quetta	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2002
8	Chiltan fm 88	2008
9	FM 101 Gwadar	2009

Source: <http://www.radio.gov.pk/>, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiltan\\_FM\\_88](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiltan_FM_88)

<sup>19</sup> Nihal Ahmed, *A History of Radio Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.12

<sup>20</sup> Seemi Naghmana Tahir, *op.cit.*, p.298.

**Table 6**  
**Duration of Programmes by Language**

Language	Original Programme		Repeat Programme		Total Time	
	hours	minutes	hours	minutes	hours	minutes
Urdu	4	21	8	17	21	38
Balochi	5	54	-	-	5	54
Pashto	4	44	-	22	5	6
Brahui	4	11	-	-	4	11
Hazaragi	1	-	-	-	1	-
English	-	1	-	20	1	20
Total Time	20	10	9	59	30	90

Source: Directorate of Public Relations Media Directory, 2009

### T.V

Balochistan got its first television station in 1974, established at Quetta. Out of six core objectives, one was ‘promotion of culture and encouragement of artists’.<sup>21</sup> Although it was toeing the official policy it did a remarkable service to the cultural diversity by telecasting programmes in all languages of the province such as Balochi, Brahui, Pashto, Urdu etc. After its linkage with the national hookup and its beaming through satellite the real diversity of Balochistan’s cultural spectrum became national and global, airing its colours to the cultural identity of Pakistan. PTV Quetta as well as Radio Pakistan became the real cultural centers that served, besides their routine goals, as training institutes for the emerging talents of Balochistan and gave a real boost to the cultural development, language, literature and music.

With the launching of a new channel, PTV Bolan, on 14th August 2005, entirely dedicated to the projection of cultural diversity, the richness of Balochistan’s cultural, linguistic and literary heritage experienced a new admirable height. It gave a good sense of participation and identity to the people. ‘Bolan Channel’ would promote the rich cultural heritage of Balochistan province and provide entertainment and information to the people in Balochi, Pushto and Brahui languages.<sup>22</sup>

It was one of the success stories of positive interventionist policy of the federal government and an appreciable step to uphold diversity and

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.370.

<sup>22</sup> *Pakistan Press International*, 15 August 2005.

inclusiveness of cultures of Pakistan. ‘Its role had been lauded for promoting harmony and brotherhood among various tribes in Balochistan by highlighting local culture and traditions’.<sup>23</sup> It is believed that PTV Bolan has played a vital role in highlighting and promoting the culture, norms, customs and literature of three languages i.e. Baluchi, Pushto and Brahvi quite effectively.<sup>24</sup> Masses therefore, had the real sense of the multicultural diversity features of Balochistan reflected through PTV Bolan. The following table exhibits the culturally diverse features of Balochistan as reflected through PTV Bolan.

**Table 7**

S.No.	Timing	Programme/Language	Minutes
1	04:00PM to 04:25PM	Bismillah + Sirat-e-Mustaqeem	25
2	04.25PM to 04.55PM	Children Program + Documentaries	30
3	04:55PM to 06:00PM	Regional Slot on PTV-I Home & PTV Bolan	65
4	06:00PM to 08:00PM	Brahvi Time	120
5	08:00PM to 10:00PM	Balochi Time	120
6	10:00PM to 12:00MN	Pushto Time	120

Source: <http://www.ptv.com.pk/ptv-bolan.asp>

Certain initiatives for setting up private channels in the country have also been undertaken that telecast in Balochi and Pashto. Though it is too early to attribute success to them, yet those are regarded as commendable additions as part of a support structure of the cultural diversity in Balochistan.

### Conclusion

To conclude, multiculturalism is gaining acceptance in Balochistan with the increase in the level of awareness earned with the help and support of mass media. Balochistan has always cherished its cultural diversity. There is no clash of cultures or culture related conflicts that can pose a threat to provincial harmony. However, pro-active cultural policies and investment in capacity building of media and cultural institutions can go a long way in promoting the cause of culture and expression thereof. There is need and scope for scientific studies and research in this sphere highlighting Balochistan and its interesting cultural mosaic.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.ptv.com.pk/ptv-bolan.asp>