

**POLITICS AND MODERN HISTORY OF HAZARA
SECTARIAN POLITICS IN AFGHANISTAN**

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Thesis

Submitted by Humayun Sarabi

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“This is an excellent description of how sectarian politics in Afghanistan offered foreign powers an opportunity to intervene in Afghanistan’s politics. This study is also important in terms of how external forces and internal conflicts combined to have disastrous consequences for the Hazara community in Afghanistan—as Humayun Sarabi demonstrates, the use of sectarian division between the small Shii community and the two larger ethnic groups—Tajik and Pashtun. To finally explain what happened, the writer analyzed original sources that demonstrate how the Human Rights violations took in siege of Kabul and the civil war that followed the defeat of the PDPA and during the rise of Taliban. This important work needs to profit the anthropological insights and the persistence of kinship and ethnic divisions of Afghanistan.”

Andrew Hess—Professor of Diplomacy and Thesis Supervisor
Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University

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**Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy
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MALD Thesis

Politics and Modern History of Hazara: Sectarian Politics in Afghanistan

**Independent Study Course
Fall 2005**

MALD Thesis Advisor: Professor Andrew Hess

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Politics and Modern History of Hazara: Sectarian Politics in Afghanistan

**By:
Humayun Sarabi**

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Part-I

Brief History of Hazara People

1) The Origin Of Hazara Ethnic Group

The land currently Afghanistan for long ago was a place for the earlier commune. The archeological findings show that human beings were living in this land for over 50 thousand years. The research on these ancient findings also showed that the people in this region were mostly living alongside the rivers because the life was so easy in those places having access to water¹.

There is no evidence to show the identity of those people. Though, the inhabitants of the neighboring countries have been identified. In Deh Khuda (Persian Dictionary) it has come that the Tapor were a nation living before Arya-i-ha (Aryans) in Mazindaran of Iran and that the word Tibristan has been derived from Tapor. Abdur Rafi Haqiqat writes that “Kaso” a tribe whose identity is not clearly known and the Greek historians name them “Kasi” or “Kasian” were living before Arya-i-ha (Aryans) in Gilan (Kadsiyan), Mazindaran (Tapor). In the south-west of Iran the other tribe “Ailami-i-ha” and in the shore of Persian Gulf and Oman, the “Habashi-i-ha” or black people were living².

¹ Hussain Ali Yazdani Behsoodi: Research on History of Hazaras, 2000 Tehran, page 11

² History of Qums page 16, Asfahan 1983

Before Arya-i-ha (Aryans), the group of people living in India was called Drawid-i-ha (Drawidis) whom as a result of severe war with Arya-i-ha (Aryans) were defeated and killed badly and the remaining escaped in the nearby jungles which nowadays they are called “Najis” having 45 millions population in current India³.

As mentioned above the identity of the people living before Aryans in Afghanistan are not known, yet Abdul Hussain Masoodi Ansari has written that the inhabitants of this country before Aryans were “Drawid-i-ha or Drawidis”, even though, he hasn’t mentioned any argument for his sayings. Hussain Ali Yazdani Behsoodi also thinks that Drawidis were the grand fathers of Hazaras living in this land before Aryans and as a result of fights with Aryans they couldn’t preserve and hence gradually escaped to the central Afghanistan which is mountainous and Aryans could not get them there⁴.

Korush was a man from Hakhamanish-i-ha or Hakhamanishi group who were ruling Iran in 500 B.C., expanded his empire from west to Bainun Nahrain (Currently Iraq), Turkey and some part of Greece and from east to Afghanistan and some part of the Middle East. The residence of Afghanistan on that time was without any central government but still they managed their force to fight against Korush (Hakhamanish-i-ha) for six years from 539 to 545 B.C. but finally Korush was succeeded to defeat them and control Kerman (which is a part of Iran now), Bakhtar (Balkh province), Stagidya (Current Hazarajat), Sistan, Baluchistan, and Kandahar. He faced a brutal attacked from the Kapisa populace and in one of the wars against them he was killed but nevertheless Afghanistan remained

³ Mohammad Nijat: “World of Knowledge”, page 47

⁴ Hussain Ali Yazdani Behsoodi: “Research on History of Hazaras”, 2000 Tehran, page 10-23

under the empire of Hakhamanish-i-ha for almost 200 years till the Alexander the Great dismissed them from power⁵.

Alexander faced many problems fighting Afghan people while he wanted to cross central Afghanistan. His historians write that “going from Kandahar to Balkh on his way Alexander faced a new type of people who was more unyielding than the other tribes”⁶. The description that Quintus Curtius “the Roman historian” gives in his book about their earthy houses is completely matching with what every passenger can see in the current Hazarajat area⁷.

Afghanistan remained in the hands of Greek empire till the year 135 B.C. and during these years the groups of the Greek soldiers married the people of this land. Some people of the Nuristan (a place north of Afghanistan) is said to be the remnants of these Greek soldiers.

⁵ Kuhzad and Usman: “History of Afghanistan”, page 215-217

⁶ A. H. Habibi (1962) : Afghanistan Bad Az Islam (Afghanistan After Islam), Dunya-i-Kitab, 1988 Printed in Tehran, Page 2-3, quoting a western scholar “Foucher”

⁷ Quintus Curtius: “The History of Alexander”; Iranian civilization, page 438

a) Theories About The Origin And Historical Background Of Hazaras

The question of origin and historical background of Hazaras has been discussed by so many historians over the years⁸. To give a better understanding of the different theories put forward by anthropologists, ethnologist and of course the historians, I categories them as under:

- 1. The Hazaras as the original inhabitants of Hazarajat**
- 2. The Hazaras as Mongols ethnicity (descendants of Mongols)**
- 3. The Hazaras as Mongol-Turkish ethnicity**
- 4. The Hazaras as a mixed race.**

i) The Hazaras As The Original Inhabitants Of Hazarajat

This theory which is not so acceptable was first proposed by French Scholar, J. P. Ferrier (1857, page 221) in the 19th century⁹. This theory says that Hazaras haven't migrated from other places to this land but have inhabited Afghanistan since the time of the Alexander the Great. Ferrier's theory was based on the explanations of the Greek historian Quintus Curtius (Iranian Civilization, 438) about the battles of Alexander the

⁸ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 14

⁹ S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 21

Great and his travels during winter to these areas. He gives further reasoning based on those explanations about the inhabitants of central Afghanistan on that time that considering their face resemblance and culture and customs those people were the fore father of current Hazaras of Afghanistan¹⁰.

Hassan Pouladi in his book about Hazaras of Afghanistan mentions that the theory of Curtius was not accepted by any anthropologist and historians of 19th and 20th century except Prof. Shah Ali Akbar Shahrستاني¹¹. He further says that Ali Akbar was also thinking that Hazaras were the native inhabitants of Hazarajat (central Afghanistan). The word Hazara according to Ali Akbar is a transformed form of second capital of Arcgozia, 'Herola' or 'Ozola'. He translates the word Hazara as "Happy" and "Famous" in his book¹². Hassan Pouladi also writes that a western historian and anthropologist by the name of "Fletcher" was also thinking that Hazaras were living before the invasion of Mongols on these lands currently known as Hazarajat.

The idea of Ferrier is also accepted by the most famous Afghan scholar and historian; Abdul Hai Habibi. His arguments are based on the linguistic findings which he concludes on three facts as below:

First, Habibi thinks that the name "Hazara" which is common between the Hazara people living in Afghanistan and the people living from the mountains of Mahabo in Haripoor Pakistan to Abbotabad, Pakhle, Kaghan and up to the current Kashmir of Pakistan and

¹⁰ J.P. Ferrier (1857): Caravan Journeys and Wanderings in Persia, Afghanistan, Turkistan and Baluchistan, with historical notices on the countries lying between Russia and India, John Murray, London, page 222-223

¹¹ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 14

¹² S. A. A. Shahrستاني : Qamus i Lahjaye Hazaragi e Dari, Kabul 1981, page 32-38

Kashghar (which is the border between China, Afghanistan and Pakistan now). He emphasis on his idea by giving the example of those people living in these parts stating that these people are not Tatars and Mongols but resembling the same shape on their faces with Hazaras of Afghanistan. He further says that these people speak different language with an Indo-Iranian dialect which shows that these people are the descendants of Indo-Aryans¹³. Habibi's idea can be complemented with Rashiduddin's Jami'ot Tawarikh who had a similar idea saying the Genghis Khan (Changiz Khan) never crossed the Attock river which is between Punjab and NWFP of Pakistan because of the battle between Jalaluddin Khawarizm Shah and Genghis which as a result of the bad weather Genghis Khan was not able to cross the river and turned back¹⁴. Hence, if Hazaras are the descendants of Genghis Khan then in Rashiduddin's view how it is possible that those living on the other side of the river are Hazara's too.

I think this is a fact too, since there were never been a mass relocation or movement of the population of these areas (except those Hazaras who left Afghanistan by the cruelty of Abdur Rehman Khan and inhabited in Quetta Baluchistan of Pakistan who still speak Dari with Hazaragi dialects and know the history of their relocations), while living in Pakistan and traveling to these areas I was asking myself the same question that if the Hazaras of Afghanistan are the descendants of Mongols how it is possible that these people are the same? I was talking to these people asking them about their histories and they never accept that they belong to Mongols. The majority of them speak Hindko and Saraiki and Kashgari and other dialects which they speak are most similar to one another.

¹³ A. H. Habibi (1962) : Afghanistan Bad Az Islam (Afghanistan After Islam), Dunya-i-Kitab, 1988 Print in Tehran, Page 3

¹⁴ Rashiddudin Fazlullah : Jami'ot Tawarikh, vol: 1, Tehran 1959, page 376-379.

The Second argument that Habibi points out in his book is the notes of Foucher and Saint Martin about their journey in central Afghanistan accompanying Hiuen Tisang; they mentioned that Hiuen Tisang was surprised by the face resemblance of these people with Chinese.

Third, Habibi argues when the famous Chinese emperor Hiuen Tsiang in 644 A.D. came from India to Tsu Koo Cha (Archozia), he named its first capital as 'Ho See Na' and its second capital as 'Ho Sa La' which some times later according to Habibi another historian Saint Martin relates 'Ho See Na' with current Ghazni and 'Ho Sa La' with Hazara. Habibi further says that around the same time another scholar Ptolemy mentions about a place called Ozala in north-western of Archozia; which Habibi thinks that this 'Ho Sa La' or Ozala has been changed to Hazara over time. Habibi justifies his arguments by saying that linguistically the transformation of 'ho' into 'o', 's' into 'z', and 'l' into 'r' is possible because of the change in pronunciation of the words. He gives the example of the word "diwar" which local people pronounce it as 'diwal'¹⁵.

Habibi accepts the idea that the word Hazara might have been derived from the Mongolian word "ming" or "minggan" which means 1000 in Military term in Mongols he states, but he insists on that the Farsi word "Hazar" might be the correct translation of the Mongolian word "ming" or "minggan"; he further argues that the name "Hazara" is

¹⁵ A. H. Habibi (1962) : Afghanistan Bad Az Islam (Afghanistan After Islam), Dunya-i-Kitab, 1988 Print in Tehran, Page 4

an ancient Aryan word meaning “happy” and “famous”¹⁶. For his argument he refers to Foucher, Saint Martin and the German linguist Michal Wiers.

For me this concept of relation between the words “Hazara” and “ming” makes no sense too. As a Farsi native speaker; I can argue that every Farsi speaking person can easily realize that the word “Hazara” doesn’t mean thousand; thus there is an obvious distinction between “Hazar” which means thousand and “Hazara” which really can’t be translated as thousand. If so, then we can translate the word “Lakh” meaning “hundred thousand” in Farsi to “lakha” which means a dirty dot on your cloths or a sign on your body and same with any other numeric number. Though, Hazara can be linked to the thousandth year in its Farsi meaning as Dah (ten) or Sad (hundred) which in turn becomes Daha (the tenth year) and Sada (the hundredth year).

ii) The Hazaras As Mongols Ethnicity (Descendants Of Mongols)

In 19th century when the Europeans came to Afghanistan; among the Caucasian faces they noticed Mongol faces too¹⁷. This idea that “Hazaras are the descendants of Mongols” takes its root from this time. In fact, this idea is so popular among the western historians like ‘Mount Stuart Elphinstone’, ‘Armenius Vamberry’, ‘Fraser Tytler’, ‘Hacher’, ‘Fox’, ‘Iwanmura’, ‘Mazmunn’, and ‘Burns’, but Bellew has put much insist on his believe that Hazaras are the descendant of the Mongol soldiers who were inhabited

¹⁶ Ibid 15, page 6-9

¹⁷ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 15

here by great Khan (Genghis Khan). According to him, nine groups of the Genghis Khan's soldiers were inhabited in Kabul and one group (the tenth group) of the soldiers was inhabited in Pakli in the east of Amu River¹⁸. Abul Fazl one of the ministers in Mongol King "Akbar" in India writes that Hazaras are the descendants of the military group of 'Chaghatai' who was sent by 'Mangoqa' by the support of the 'Halako Khan'. He says that this army group was sent by his grand son 'Nikodar Auqlan' to this area currently inhabited by Hazaras of Afghanistan. This idea was later accepted by Petrochevski. He says that Hazaras are the descendants of the Nikodari Mongols. He further says that it is easy to prove that the Hazaras who are living in Iran and neighboring areas were the descendants of soldiers left after each victory¹⁹.

Yule accepts this theory saying that Hazaras were either the descendants of the "Nikodari" or "Karvan" or both of them which he claims that Hazaras are the descendants of Mongols as a result of the invasions.

Boyle has a similar view as Yule saying that Hazaras who are the descendants of the Nikodar Mongols were living independently in Afghanistan the Ilkhanian rulings in Sistan, Kirman, and Fars were never been accepted by them.

E.E. Bacon believes that Hazaras are the descendants of Mongols but unlike other historians she rejects the idea that they have been inhabited in these areas of Afghanistan

¹⁸ H.W. Bellew : The races of Afghanistan: Being a brief account of the principal nations inhabiting that country, Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta 1880, page 114

¹⁹ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 16 and S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 27

by Genghis Khan; rather she believes that they have been settled in these areas gradually between the years 1299 and 1447²⁰.

Though many writers and historians believe that Hazaras are the descendants of the Mongol Armies who were settled in Afghanistan in the mid of 13th century; ‘Burnes’ believes that not only they are the descendants of the Genghis Khan but also of the Tamerlane who left thousand of his tribes in Afghanistan after returning back to Mongolia²¹.

S. A. Mousavi has talked about some Hazaragi expressions in his book “The Hazaras”; stating that while Hazaras teach behavior to their sons they are using the word Moghol as an adjective for good behavior. The example he has given in his book is “O, Bachah moghol beshi’ and ‘o, Bachah moghol bokhor²²’ makes no sense to me at all. Being a Hazara I have never heard of such words in my whole life and neither the word ‘moghol’ or ‘mongol’ ever means such a thing in Dari or (Hazaragi dialect). I am surprised by such a statement made by a scholar trying to give connection between the words and ancestry relation of his tribe. Nevertheless, there are people and groups who intentionally use these newly adopted sentences and words for their proof of being Mongol Ancestral. He further gives examples of the new small political groups of Hazaras in Quetta, Pakistan; the ‘Tanzim Nasl Nao Hazara’ and their idea that we are the descendants of Genghis Khan and the Ancestry Tree by Nasir Ansari which traces Hazaras back to Genghis Khan, (Mousavi: 1998: 26) is in no way an evidence of facts and is just a nationalistic

²⁰ E. Bacon; Obok: A study of social structure in Eurasia, Wenner-Gren, New York 1958, page 4

²¹ Burnes A. : Travel into bukhara, vol. 3, John Murray, London 1839, page 176

²² See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 25

act. While everyone knows the above mentioned “Tanzim” or party was created by Iran and their publications are totally far from facts with no proof of what they are saying. These Hazaras in Quetta, Pakistan rarely speak Dari and the Hazaragi dialect they are speaking is mostly mixed with Urdu words. For example, there usual sentence “double ko” means hurry up is the mixture of English word ‘double’ and Farsi ‘ko’. You will not see any Hazara in Afghanistan to use such words. Second, Nasir Ansari isn’t a famous historian either in Afghanistan or in Pakistan or other places. We simply can’t decide and make judgment based on such unaccepted facts written by a less famous writer with no proof of what he has said. I think we leave the matter to the audience to decide which argument makes sense by providing them with full facts and figures in hand so far.

iii) The Hazaras As Mongol-Turkish Ethnicity

Many historians agree that Hazaras are not the descendants of Mongols as we have talked over it in sufficient amount so far. In retrospect, most of them talk about another theory that Hazaras are a mixture of Mongols and Turks. Bernhard Dorn argues that Hazaras are the Turko-Mongol ethnicity whom as a result of conflicts been settled during the reign of Mangukhan or Mangoqa’n between the years 1284-1291 A. D. in currently Hazara inhabited areas of Afghanistan²³.

²³ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 17

E. Bacon also agrees with this theory that Hazaras are the Turko-Mongol ethnicity rather than being pure Mongol origin²⁴.

Macmunn based on his theory of face resemblance claims that the Hazaras were brought to these areas by the Genghis Khan soldiers whom were inhabited in Kandahar, Herat, and Ghazni. But he accepts this theory that their origin is Turko-Mongolian rather than only Mongols or only Turks.

iv) The Hazaras As A Mixed Race

This theory was first brought forward by F. Schurmann. He believes that Hazaras are neither Mongols nor the mixture of Mongols and Turks but he believes that they are a mixture of different races such as Tajiks-Mongols and Turks-Mongols, etc. He writes that “...The Mongols form a separate and distinct group, at the present time related neither to Hazaras and Aimaqs. All three tribal groups: Mongol, Hazara, and Aimaq, form separate and distinct ethnic and cultural groups at the present time...I believe the Hazarajat Hazaras to be a mixed population formed by a fusion of an aboriginal Iranian mountain people with invaders of Mongol affinities. The lack of vestigial evidence of an anterior nomadic culture among the Hazarajat Hazaras would seem to indicate the culture

²⁴ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 28

influence of an aboriginal non-nomadic population, which could only have been Iranian, on the unquestionably nomadic or semi-nomadic invaders (1962:110-11)²⁵.

Timurkhanove also believes that Hazaras are a mixture of the Mongol soldiers of Mongol and Turkoman and the local Tajik community. According to him the Mongol soldiers whom remained in Afghanistan married the Tajik women which as a result of these inter-marriages the new ethnicity which nowadays is known as 'Hazara' came into being²⁶.

Some other writers like Snedarev (Afghanistan: 19), Kakar (The pacification of Hazaras in Afghanistan; 1973:1-2) has also supported this theory, while this theory is either not acceptable to most of the other historians.

Nevertheless, one can fit his or her own idea in the shade of these theories but the truth can never be proved, because the actual documents from that time is not recorded in any place to prove the shaping of a nation or ethnic group. S. A. Mosauvi has rejected these various theories in his book; "The Hazaras of Afghanistan"²⁷.

In my point of view, one can logically think of the Hazaras as being the original inhabitants of these areas which are neither the Mongols nor the Turks and other mixed race theories. For example, look at the map of these regions starting from east in eastern-china and Japan to north from Mongolia down to west-china and south west-china and to the Kashgar and Gilgit in north-east of Pakistan to the Wakhan. You will notice the

²⁵ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 29

²⁶ Timurkhanove: Tarikh e Hazara-i-Moghol, 1980. Translated by Hasan Raza Genghisi. Page, 4

²⁷ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, pages 31-37

similar faces for all these people regardless of the fact that they speak different languages and practice different religions²⁸. So you can continue to come to central Afghanistan to the land of Hazaras and can easily see that you found again the similar faces but different culture and religions. Therefore, it would not be unreasonable to say that as those people in the east and north and neighboring part live on their lands since ages and have never been proved that they have migrated from somewhere else so that we can say the same for these people too. It is true that there might have been minor relocations of these people inside Afghanistan as a result of several wars and attacks on them but nevertheless their identity remained as they were. God knows better...

b) Different Ethnicities In Afghanistan And Position Of Hazaras Among Them

Afghanistan is a multi ethnic country with almost 8 major ethnic groups and over 10 minors. The major ethnic groups are the Pashtun, Tajiks, Hazara, Uzbek, Baluch, Aimaq, Qizalbash, Turkman, Qazak, Farsiwan and Sayyeds; while to name a few of the minors we list the Kirghez, Arab, non-muslims, Jat, Brahui, Wakhi, Pashaii, and others.

i) Pashtuns

Pashtuns or Pathans are the most populated and powerful ethnical group in Afghanistan. The Pashtuns are mostly living in the south and south-east of Afghanistan with some

²⁸ The next step in this study will be taken by those Scholars that use DNA evidence — (Prof. Andrew Hess).

minor groups living in north-west of Afghanistan too. The Pashtuns of Pakistan living in NWFP and Baluchistan of Pakistan are also from the same origin living across the border, being separated from their counter parts by “Durand Line”. Pashtuns has mostly a tribal life mostly living in the villages and their basic livelihoods are agriculture and pastoral. But some of them still live the nomadic life.

Pashtuns of Afghanistan live mostly in Kandahar, Helmand, Kunar, Laghman, Khost, Paktia, Paktika, Nimroz, Urozgan, Ghazni, Kunduz, and some live scattered almost everywhere in Afghanistan. Their language is mostly Pashto but some of them speak Dari in their houses with the knowledge of Pashto as well.

Afghan historians like Mohammad Hayat Khan, Sher Mohammad Khan and Mohammad Khalis Durani relate their origin to Israeli Tribes and some links themselves to Arabs. But their lifestyle and linguist similarity shows that they belong to ancient Aryans²⁹. Pashtuns are mostly ‘Sunni-Hanafi’ but some of them are Shi’i.

Pashtuns has ruled Afghanistan from the time of Ahmad Shah Durani in 1747 till almost now with some short period rules of Tajiks (Bacha e Saqao (1928), Mujaddadi (1992), and Rabbani (1992-6)).

Pashtuns are divided into several tribes of which Durani and Ghilzai are the prominent groups. The other tribes are: Hotakian, Sadozai, Mohammad Zai, Wardak, Khugiani, Jaji, Tani, Mangal, Jadran, Shinwari, Safi, and Mohmand.

²⁹ Hussain Ali Yazdani: Research on history of Hazaras, Tehran 1990, page 88

ii) Tajiks

Tajiks are the second largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. Tajiks are more educated than other tribes of Afghanistan. They live in cities like Kabul, Herat and in rural areas like Panjshir, Samangan, Baghlan, Takhar, Parwan, Badakhshan, and also extend into the central mountains. They mostly speak Dari (Farsi) and are mostly Sunni-hanafi but some are Ismaili Shi'i.

Tazi or Tazik first was used by Iranian's to name Arabs but later this name was used to distinguish Persians from Turkish tribes by Turks. In Central Asia and in Afghanistan nowadays this similar name Tajik is used to name the Dari speaking population of Kohdaman, Kohistan and Panjshir except those of Hazara, Shi'i and Farsi-wan³⁰.

iii) Hazaras

Hazara is the third largest group among them but they have been neglected both from politics and education for years. The occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet Union and the continued war for freedom and later the civil war have much changed the life of Hazaras and their role in the Afghan politics and government.

³⁰ Hussain Ali Yazdani: Research on history of Hazaras, Tehran 1990, page 88-89

It is famous about Hazaras that they are honest, patient, calm, and peaceful and in the mean time courageous, and hardworking.

They are living in the mountainous central region of Afghanistan covering approximately 50,000 sq km of land which is also known as the Hazarajat³¹ (I will discuss the area in detail under the geographical locations of Hazaras). Some of them also live scattered in various parts of Afghanistan such as Mazzar-e Sharif, Badghis, Badakhshan, Juozjan, Samangan, Helmand, Herat, and other places. They Speak Dari with Hazaragi dialect and most of them are Imami Shia with a minor Ismaili Shia and Sunni.

As Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, the Hazaras are one of the poorest people in that country. They have always been neglected by the central government therefore most of them are living in the far mountainous areas with the rural way of life. Their main occupations are the farming and animal husbandry which hardly satisfy their needs because of the unsuitable land for farming and the severe cold weather which makes the life harder than usual. The illiteracy rate is high because of the lack of access to schools in those rural areas and the unstable political system for them. In 1960s an estimated 30-50 percent of the unskilled labor, artisans, factory workers, shopkeepers, and low grade civil servants where Hazaras migrating from rural areas to the cities in search of work³². The Hazaras were always seen to be working in the lowest rung of the social scale in the society. Despite the hard life and unequal opportunity for them in the society to survive the Hazaras are proud that neither Hazara ever beg on the streets nor

³¹ see <http://countrystudies.us/afghanistan/40.htm> (accessed 8 September 2005)

³² Ibid 30, paragraph 4

they have female prostitutes as in comparison to other tribes who even have more access to resources in the society seem to be involved in these works.

During 1970s and afterwards Hazaras political and economical situations improved remarkably³³. They proved their position among the other ruling groups within the society. Their presence in the government and the increasing number of their students in the schools and universities each year is a sign to a better future.

2) Geographical Location Of Hazara Ethnic Group In Afghanistan

The Hazara land or Hazarajat is located in the center of Afghanistan. In the past this land was also called 'Paropamizan' or 'Paropamisus' which is also called 'Hazaristan' and 'Barbaristan' in some books³⁴.

In some books the 'Sadajat'³⁵ has been used for the same land and some recent writers use the name 'Gharjistan'³⁶ for it.

There has never been an agreed geographical boundary for Hazarajat between the past historians, because the Hazara land was repeatedly attacked by Pashtuns during the past

³³ see <http://countrystudies.us/afghanistan/40.htm>, paragraph 4 (accessed 8 September 2005)

³⁴ Riazi: Koliat, Tehran 1976, page 220

³⁵ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 79

³⁶ Gharjistani: Tare Khi Nawin Hazara, Shoraye Farhangye Islami, Quetta 1988, page 35

history of this country and huge relocations of Hazaras happened in several occasions and their boundaries redefined as a loss of their mass lands. Though, Hassan Pouladi (1989: 82) defines the boundary for Hazarajat according to ‘Humlum’, ‘Dulling’ and ‘Louis Dupree’ drawn map of Hazarajat saying that land of Hazaras are situated between the 60 degree east and 68 degree west; 33 degree north and 35 degree south³⁷ of Afghanistan. On the other hand, S. A. Mousavi (1998: 69) still believes that Hazarajat from the north lay at a Pass situated 20 km of south of Mazar-e Sharif, continued southward along the river of Dar Gaz past the forest of Boyna Qara and onwards to Aq Kaprak, Qarah Kashan and Dandan Shikan Passes, where it joined the Shorkhab and Siah Khak...eastward to Hajar and Lurak Village to Ghorband river...Doab...south to Qotandar to Zay Mooni...west to Jalriz and Shorkh Sang...Ghazni-Qandahar road to Qandahar. He defines the southern boundaries of Hazarajat starting from Maidan to Moqor...Bandi Kotale Tahiri...Bagram...to Tagab Khor to Zard Bed. On the west, he starts from Band Barmah...Morghab river upto 20 km short of Bala Morghab then to Band Turkistan ends in village of Bookan. He argues on the bases of the new map of Hazarajat produced by Hazara refugees in Quetta, Pakistan and in Germany³⁸.

If one travel to the current Hazarajat it is easy to discern between these two ideas. S.A. Mousavi and the new map of Hazara produced by Hazara refugees in Quetta and Germany talks about the original land of Hazaras and Hassan Pouladi and Dupree and others look at the present lands occupied by them with some minor mistakes because of the lack of their information. S.A. Mousavi has criticized Louis Dupree for not being

³⁷ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 82

³⁸ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, pages 65-69 and Map1 on page 67

aware of the difference between the Tajik and Aimaq and the map given by her which Mousavi thinks is just a flippancy of the writer³⁹.

The current Hazarajat is approximately 50,000 Sq. Kilometers⁴⁰. The only other writer who has talked about the area of Hazarajat is Hassan Pouladi⁴¹ who estimates the total area to be 15,000 Mile Sq. which is equivalent to 38849.85 (sq. Kilometer). Hazarajat is approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the whole ratio. In the east it starts from 60 km west of Kabul (Kotal Onai and Maidan) to Chigh Charan, Ghor province in West. Even though, Baba Mountains are said to be the north borders of Hazarajat but in reality it extends in north to Darai -e Suf, Yakawlang, and north of Bamyan. In the south its boundaries lie to the Ghazni, Moqor and north of Qandahar. Despite of this core area some Hazaras are living scattered in different provinces of Afghanistan such as Badakhashan, Mazar-e Sharif, Qataghan and Turkistan, Kabul, Qandahar, Herat, and some other areas⁴².

It is true that the borders of Hazarajat have been significantly reduced to its current size. H.W. Bellew gives more detail on Hazarajat saying that "...They have occupied a huge amount of land in this country – From the borders of Kabul and Ghazni to those of Herat in one direction, and from vicinity of Kandahar to that of Balkh in the other. In reality Hazaras occupy all those land of Paropamisus of the past⁴³". Bellew further says "...I believe that Hazaras were holding the land beside the highway from Kabul to Qandahar and Herat. The name of majority of the villages near the highway proves this that Hazaras

³⁹ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 69

⁴⁰ see <http://countrystudies.us/afghanistan/40.htm> (accessed 9 September 2005)

⁴¹ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 82

⁴² For further clarification look at the map of Hazarajat in Appendix D.

⁴³ Bellew H. W (1880): The races of Afghanistan, published in Pakistan, 1979, page 113

were the founder of those areas. One of their fore-father's grave is near Girishk, Helmand province on the way to Herat whose name was "Chopan" and now the village is famous for this name...The boundaries of Hazarajat extends to Shawal in Quetta. The word 'Takatu' which is the name of a mountain between Qandahar and Quetta means 'Struggle' in Hazaragi and the word 'Kochlagh'" which means 'Hole' in Hazaragi is another place in Quetta traveling towards Qandahar⁴⁴.

Masson C. an American tourist in 19th century writes about the attacks of Pashtuns on Hazara's lands in the southern Afghanistan says "...Wardak was belonging to Hazaras before 100 years and Pashtuns overthrown them by force from these areas. One can say that Hazaras were holding the lands from Qarabagh to Ghazna and in the same way were being forced out of these areas as well. In fact, the invasion of Hazara's lands by Pashtuns still continues..."⁴⁵

Hassan Pouladi talks of another 19th century western tourist who wrote about the Hazaras of Afghanistan as "...The deserts surrounding Moqor, Qarabag, and West of Ghazni were the lands of Hazaras...", He also gives reference to Masson C. saying that "...In Qarabagh we see people who are Hazara and can be easily differentiated from their neighbors by their Tatar like face, being short, and the cloths especially Arakhchin which is sizeable to their heads that they wear. They are from the 'Bobak' tribe and their tribal chief is 'Gulistan Khan' a resident of Qarabagh"⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ Bellew H. W (1880): The races of Afghanistan, published in Pakistan, 1979, page 333-4

⁴⁵ Masson C.: Narrative of various journeys to Baluchistan, Afghanistan and the Punjab, vol. 2, Translated by Hasan Raza, Quetta, Baluchistan, 1979, page 224

⁴⁶ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 85-6

Timurkhanove says that "...The Hazarajat has been significantly reduced to its current size since 19th century. Based on my calculation which I took from different foreign sources these areas are reduced to 100,000-150,000 sq km. As an example the Maidan valley which was inhabited by both Tajiks and Hazaras in 1920s now in 1970s there is no Hazara remaining in this area"⁴⁷.

3) Population Of Hazara Ethnic Group in Afghanistan

There have always been arguments on the population ratio of different ethnics in Afghanistan. Perhaps one reason is that there has never been an accurate head count to show the correct figure. In 1999 United Nations estimated its population at between 1.6 million and 2.5 million (Johnson 2000: 46)⁴⁸. Rejecting this S.A. Mousavi (1998: 64) says that the population of Hazaras is over 4 million. The reason he gives in his book is the estimation of UNHCR of Afghan refugees in Iran which he says is between 2.2 and 2.7 million of whom the majorities are Hazara of Afghanistan⁴⁹. He also thinks that because of the lack of a central and national government in Afghanistan the population consensus has never been carried out accurately as of the whole population consensus of Afghanistan is not precisely yet known. He believes that because of the continued torture

⁴⁷ Timurkhanove: *Tarikh e Hazara-i-Moghol*, 1980. Translated by Hasan Raza Genghisi. Page, 39

⁴⁸ See *Middle East Studies: History, Politics, and Law*; edited by Shahrough Akhavi, University of South Carolina, Chapter Three; *Hazarajat: Kinship and Neighborhood in the Village*, page 59

⁴⁹ See S. A. Mousavi: *The Hazaras of Afghanistan*, Oxford, 1998, page 64

and depopulation of Hazara people in Afghanistan they were forced to migrate to various parts within the country and many of them took refuge in neighboring countries like Quetta, Pakistan and Mashhad, Iran. He believes that due to planned depopulation of Hazaras they were separated into three parts inside Afghanistan namely to the north, west, and in central Hazarajat. And some even tried to change their nationality and reintroduced themselves as Uzbeks in Mazar-e Sharif and Tajiks in Punjshir in order to be safe from the inhuman torture of Pashtuns carried out especially by Abdur Rahman Khan Regime⁵⁰.

Ahmed Rasheed (Taliban, 117) also believes that the Hazaras are between 3 to 4 million which is somehow near to the assumption given by S.A. Mousavi⁵¹.

Nevertheless, most of the sources estimate the population of Hazaras to be 19% as of Pashtuns 38%, Tajiks 25%, Uzbeks 6% and others 12%⁵². But in CIA fact book (2005) of the countries the population consensus has been given as; Pashtun 42%, Tajik 27%, Hazara 9%, Uzbek 9%, Aimaq 4%, Turkmen 3%, Baloch 2%, other 4%⁵³ which is absolutely out of the truth and one needs to be accurate to make a statement. In contrast the US country studies estimates the population as of 1996; Pashtun (40%), Tajiks (25.3%), Hazaras (18%), Uzbeks (6.3%), Turkmen (2.5%), Qizilbash (1.0%), and others (6.9%)⁵⁴.

⁵⁰ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 61-65

⁵¹ Ahmad Rasheed: Taliban, Islam, Oil and New Great Games, 1999, page 117

⁵² see <http://hazara.net/hazara/geography/ethnic/ethnic.html> (accessed 12 September 2005)

⁵³ <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/af.html> (accessed 12 September 2005)

⁵⁴ <http://countrystudies.us/afghanistan/38.htm> (accessed 18 September 2005)

I traveled in Hazarajat and interviewed many people and one of my questions was about their estimated population and their minority role in the society. I found out that most of them don't accept that they are a minor ethnic group and believe that they have been either neglected by their past governments who carried out the population consensus or the head counts were not carried out accurately.

4) Tradition And Culture

Although ethnical groups are quite different from one another in Afghanistan but they all almost share the common culture and traditions. This unity in the culture are widely seen across the country between different ethnic groups in weddings, festivals, games, dance, poetry, song, and also sharing common words in their language, most of the time in clothing, and almost every aspects of their way of life from agriculture to animal husbandry to shop-keeping and normal daily chores. One can assume that this unity and culture among them has one common root which is their common religion "Islam".

Despite all these commonality between the cultures of different ethnic groups in Afghanistan, there are still more differences to be seen in their customs and traditions. Perhaps these differences are because of the variations within Islam and some being left over from the before Islam which is considered specific to each ethnical group. For example, nomadic way of life is specific to Pashtuns. Also different foods are specific to different locations and ethnic groups⁵⁵. That is, 'Typshi'(dry bread mixed with Dough

⁵⁵ "We need a section on Tribalism here, and on the Social Plane these should be a discussion of marriage patterns—tribal , gender, etc." —comments by my thesis advisor; Prof. Andrew Hess.

(yogurt) and Roghan Zard (cooking oil produced from animal milk)) is a special meal which is only found in Hazarajat and 'Uzbeki' Palao which is spatiality of the Uzbeks in Mazar-e Sharif and many more... For example, despite of the common cloth 'Pirahan and Tunban' every ethnics having their own special cloths such as 'Arakhchin' which is a Hazaragi Hat but similar to other 'ethnic specific hats' in the country. Same as 'Chappan' Mazari in north, Loungi in South and Central Afghanistan, Kolah-e Pakol special in Panjshir, Payzar (Hazaragi, Baluchi, Qurs which can be seen everywhere), Waste Coat in South, Kolah-e Qarakul of West, and many more... In music one can see at the local level that there are some ethnic specific music and songs with their specific instrumentals. For example, Tanbura of Badakshi and Hazaragi, Doul (drum) of Pashtuns, etc. The same is true for local dances like 'Atans of Pashtuns', Girdak or Puffi of Hazaras', Raqs-e Tajiki, etc.

a) Language

Hazaras share the common language with Tajiks which is Dari with a slight difference in dialects. Dari is a variation of Farsi that is spoken in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan but with some difference in dialects in each country. Some writers such as S.A. Mousavi believes that Hazaragi is a mixed of Farsi (Dari), Mongolian, and Turkish, with its own oral but not written tradition⁵⁶. But it is surprising that even a scholar like him who himself is a Hazara might not be aware that Hazaragi is not a language in its own or it might be the nationalistic factors that arose the keen in him to neglect the facts. As I told and for sure every Hazara knows that their language is the same as Dari speaking people

⁵⁶ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 81

with no difference in grammar, and in written and spoken variants. S. A. Mousavi himself mentions in the next paragraph referencing Dulling (1973) and Shahrstani (1981) that dialect is a more accurate name for Hazaragi than language. Nevertheless, the influence of Arabic because of the religion of the people of this country can be seen easily in both Farsi (Dari) and Pashto and even Urdu which is spoken in Pakistan.

i) Mongolian Words In Hazaragi

Linguists have found several words in Hazaragi which they relate to Mongolian words of the same root but not the exact words⁵⁷. I don't know Mongolian but for the readers interest I list some Mongolian words which is similar to Hazaragi from Hassan Pouladi book (1989:139) in table_1 below.

HAZARAGI	MONGOLIAN	Meaning in English
Abgha	Abagha	Uncle
Bula	Bula	Cousin
Khatu	Khatu	Wife
Elgha	Alga	Palm of Hand
Nilgha	Nilha	Baby
Chigin	Chehin	Chest
Qachar	Qachar	Forehead
Tolgha	Tolgha	Elbow
Qabargha	Habirgha	Ribs

⁵⁷ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 139

Table_1...Hassan Pouladi (1989:139-41)

ii) Turkic Words In Hazaragi

Hassan Pouladi also mentions some Turkish word common in Hazaragi. But most of the words which I found that they are also common in Farsi (Dari) spoken by Tajiks and others so I omit them from my list here. Same I did with Mongolian words. If you are interested to know more about these words see his book “The Hazaras”, pages 139-46.

HAZARAGI	TURKISH	Meaning in English
Aba	Aba	Mother
Ata	Ata	Father
Qash	Qash	Eyebrow

Table_2...Hassan Pouladi (1989:142-43)

iii) When the Hazaras Changed Their Language?

Hassan Pouladi's (1989:133-4) believe that Hazaragi is a dialect of Farsi (Dari) but he the grammatical rules belong to one language (Farsi) and Words belong to another language⁵⁸ (Mongolian and Turkish) is a claim far from reality. It is clear to those who know Farsi (Dari) that those words are just some inserted words from other languages to Hazaragi Dari which is usual with any other language. For example, 60-70 percent of Urdu is combined of Farsi, Arabic and Hindi. Though, the percentage of the Mongolian or Turkic words in Hazaragi is neglect able. He himself hardly could have found less than 100 words which I found most are even common in Dari spoken by Tajiks. Pouladi

⁵⁸ See The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 133-4

further said that “...Hazaras were speaking in Mongolian language during Babur the Mongol King who came to Afghanistan in 16th century. But when the western tourist came to them after some time they noticed that Hazaras had changed their language...this evidence shows that Hazaras forgot their language in between 16th century to 19th century to learn a new language which is Dari...for his proof he points to Dulling that he mentioned at the end of 18th century as a date for the change of language for Hazaras”⁵⁹.

Bacon⁶⁰ and Schurmann⁶¹ believe that the original language of Hazaras was Farsi (Dari) from the beginning. Bacon also believes that it is possible that the Jaghtai Mongols—the forefathers of Hazaras—before coming to Hazarajat had accepted Turkic language and used it because there are countable numbers of Turkic word in Hazaragi than Mongolian word⁶². But Dulling (1973:47) was thinking that the language of Hazaras was a mixed of Farsi and Hindi which then Farsi took over Hindi in Middle Ages⁶³.

Hassan Pouladi (1989:136) talks about the “Hephthalite” written works on stones founded by Professor Bewar (⁶⁴) in Jaghori and Urozghan which gives the idea that the people living on these lands were talking in Latin Language as Prof. Bewar suggested the written language was a mixed of ‘Old Farsi’ and ‘Sanskrit’. These written works are from the 500 B.C.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Ibid 56 page 134

⁶⁰ Bacon E.: The Hazara Mongols of Afghanistan: A study in social organization, PhD Dissertation, University of California, 1951, page 6.

⁶¹ H.F. Schurmann: The Mongols of Afghanistan: an ethnography of the Mongols and related people of Afghanistan, University of California 1962, page 25-26

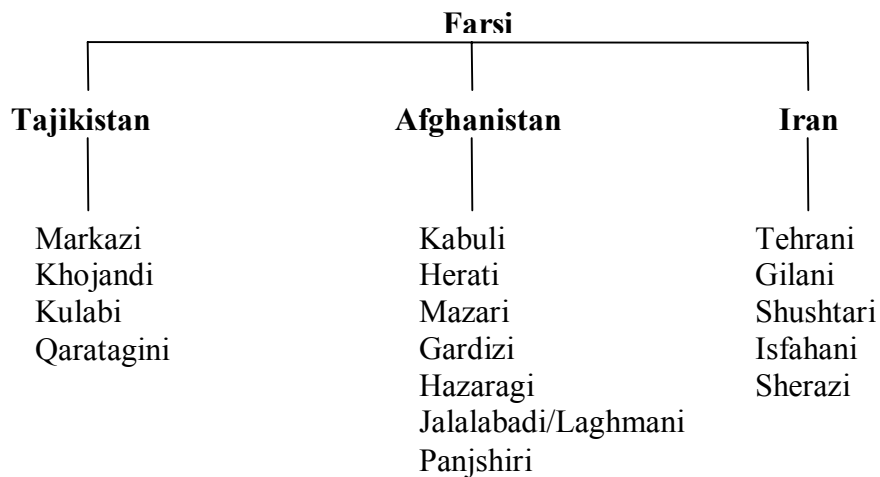
⁶² Bacon E.: The Hazara Mongols of Afghanistan: A study in social organization, PhD Dissertation, University of California, 1951, pages 13-14

⁶³ Dulling G. K.: The Hazaragi Dialect of Afghan Persian, Central Asian Research Center, London 1973, page 47

⁶⁴ I am not sure about the spelling of Professor Bewar's name since the Hassan Pouladi's book is in Farsi and the exact spelling is difficult to guess.

⁶⁵ The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hassan Pouladi, 1989; page 136

S.A. Mousavi focuses on the variations of Farsi language in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan illustrated in diagram_1⁶⁶ below with some addition and changes that I made under Afghanistan section.



Diagram_1 (S. A. Mousavi (1998:82))

b) Religion

Hazaras are basically Imami Shi'i Muslims where some of them are Ismaili Shi'as and some minor have adopted Sunni sector of Islam. The difference between Imami and Ismaili Shi'as are that the first accepts twelve Imams (Isna-Ashri) and the second only accepts six of them (In fact, it is seven Imams but since in customs and history only six is mentioned therefore they are called Shash (six) Imamis).

i) Difference Between Sunni'ism And Shi'ism

⁶⁶ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 82

The minor fraction of Hazaras who are Sunni now had converted from Shi'ism to Sunni'ism because of the continued victimization of this sector during the Pashtun ruling class. One should know the difference between the Sunni sector of Islam and Shi'a sector to better understand the reality. Both Sunni and Shi'i belong to one religion "Islam" with the same Holy book "Quran or Furqan" and the same Prophet "Mohammad (pbuh)" following the one divine – kinship rules. Thus, the only difference between Shi'a and Sunni is over the succeeding Caliph after the death of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh). Sunnis believe that Abu Bakr"(R) was the first Caliph after Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) passed away, followed by Omar (R), and Usman (R) and Ali (R). On the other hand, Shi'as believe that there are instead twelve Imams succeeded Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) starting from Ali (R) ibn Abu Talib to Mohammad bin Hasan ul Mahdi⁶⁷. The Shi'is base their theory on the saying of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) that "There will be twelve imams of the Muslims"⁶⁸.

ii) Victimization Of Shi'i Groups In Afghanistan

Many writers like Hassan Pouladi (1989: 179) and S.A. Mousavi (1998: 76-7) believe that Hazaras have always been victimized exclusively because they were of Shi'i believers; its easy to believe this theory because Hazaras who are in majority Shi'i have

⁶⁷ 1. Ali ibn Abu Talib al-Murtadha (as) 2. Hasan ibn Ali al-Mujtaba (as) 3. Hussein ibn Ali al-Shaheed (as) 4. Ali ibn Hussein Zainul-Abedin al-Sajjad (as) 5. Muhammad ibn Ali al-Baqir (as) 6. Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq (as) 7. Musa ibn Ja'far al-Kadhim (as) 8. Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (as) 9. Muhammad ibn Ali Taqi al-Jawad (as) 10. Ali ibn Muhammad Naqi al-Hadi (as) 11. Hasan ibn Ali al-Askari (as) 12. Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Mahdi (as)

⁶⁸ Bukhari: Bukhari-e Sharif v.9 # 329

always been tortured and victimized especially by Pashtuns during the history of Afghanistan and in most of the cases they were forced to leave their lands and homes and migrate to other locations within the country or in some part to neighboring countries. But one should root out the basic causes of all these victimization and peer into it carefully. Then it is not hard to realize that there have never been hatred from the Pashtun locals towards their counter part Hazaras and visa-vies except that the Pashtun ruling class had always tried to victimize the minority groups for their own political gains which of course Hazaras were victimized the most among all the others. If we remember history we can spell out the matter by looking at Hazaras ruling elites who were involved in the persecution of Hazaras as much as the Pashtun's rulers of that time were. For example, when Abdur Rahman Khan came to power he had the full support of the 'Mirs' of Hazaras fighting against his Pashtun enemies. According to Timorkhanove (1980: 116) These 'Mirs' were from Ghazni, Jaghori, Sheikh Ali, Behsud, Malistan and Day Zangi who all announced support for Amir Abdur Rahman Khan⁶⁹.

According to Orazgani (1913:7) the 'Mirs' of Hazaras wanted to have good relation with Abdur Rahman as they had with other Amirs in the past; they were ready to pay their taxes in order to live their usual lives. But he says that Abdur Rahman had other plans and it was to gain control of the independent areas of Hazarajat⁷⁰. These 'Mirs' of Hazara who later joined the Hazara patriots to fight against the inhuman reign of Abdur Rahman were once the master mind behind the 'conquer' of their own people by Amir of Kabul. When they saw that Abdur Rahman would never stop it's discrimination of Hazaras even

⁶⁹ Timurkhanove: Tarikh e Hazara-i-Moghol, 1980. Translated by Hasan Raza Genghisi. Page, 116

⁷⁰ Orazgani M. Afzal: Al mokhtasar Al Manqul Fi Tahrik-e Hazara wa Moghol, Quetta 1913, page 7

of the ‘Mirs’ and ‘Shaikhs’ then it was time to realize their mistakes and turn back to give hands to their brothers for the fights against the brutality of Amir of Kabul. For example, Orazgani further on page 76 says that “...Mohammad Azim Beg, the Day Zangi Mir....planned Abdur Rahman’s invasion of the originally unoccupied Hazarajat such as Orazgan, Chorah, and Arjistan”⁷¹. But even though, some of them remained patriots for their nation and fought against Abdur Rahman and his brutalities but in several occasions for their safety these ‘Mirs’ were to turn back and change side to fight alongside the government forces against their own nation. One of these cowards and traitors was ‘Mohammad Riza Beg’, who changed side and fought against his own nation alongside the government brutal forces⁷².

iii) The Emergence Of Shi’ism In Afghanistan

There is no factual evidence to proof that when Hazaras turned to Shi’ism from their previous religion. Since their origin is not proofed by majority agreed, though, their original religion is also doubtful. Thus no transcript of factual history is available to help us figure out the truth about their religion. Bacon (Obok 1958: 5-6) believed that Hazaras converted to Islam soon after they inhabited Afghanistan in 13th century. He further explains without giving exact reference to time that Hazaras fore-fathers converted from

⁷¹ Ibid 68, page 76

⁷² for details see Timurkhanove: Tarikh e Hazara-i-Moghol, 1980. Translated by Hasan Raza Chaghizi. Page, 160

their Mongolic religion “Shumanism” to Shi’i Islam by the influence of Iranians into them⁷³.

Schurmann also believes that Hazaras possibly converted to Shi’ism through Iran by their alliance with Iranian Safavids; perhaps Shah Abas-1 that the majority parts of Hazarajat was allied to Iran for a short time. According to Schurmann the conversion of Hazaras, Tori Pashtuns and some other groups of Shi’is to Shi’ism possibly happened during or after 16th century while the Safavids were ruling Iran and some parts of Qandahar merged under the Iranian Emperor. Schurmann further says that Shah Safavid gifted the command of the Hazarajat to one of the “Mirs” of Day Kundi “Doulat Beg” for eight generations. He believes that the only way that Shi’ism was inserted to Hazaras was through west, through Iran because Iran is the only most important Shi’i Muslim country in the world. He says that there is no theological difference between the Persian and Hazara Shi’ism. Hazara Shi’ism like that of Persia is Isna-Ashari (Twelver)...Shi’ism is as old as of Islam itself but Shi’ism became the state religion the first time during Safavids in 16th century and the masses of Persia were completely converted to Shi’ism...one can say that Hazaras were converted to Shi’ism after the rise of the Safavids during or after the 16th century^{74 75}.

⁷³ E. Bacon; *Obok: A study of social structure in Eurasia*, Wenner-Gren, New York 1958, page 5-6

⁷⁴ H.F. Schurmann: *The Mongols of Afghanistan: an ethnography of the Mongols and related people of Afghanistan*, University of California 1962, page 12-120

⁷⁵ “I think this is the best current explanation”—comments by my thesis advisor; Prof. Andrew Hess.

Bacon opposes Schurmann's idea and says that it was Nadir Shah not Shah Abas to give the commands of the Hazarajat to 'Doulat beg' and it was for six generations not for eight⁷⁶.

Timorkhanove rejects the idea of conversion of Hazaras to Shi'ism by Safavids of Iran. He says that Shah Abas Safavi never conquered Hazarajat and thus it is impossible that he nominated 'Doulat Beg' as a ruler of Hazarajat. And he further explains that 'Doulat Beg' and his groups never ruled the whole Hazarajat and even they couldn't rule the whole Day Kundi⁷⁷.

Mir Mohammad Gobar the most prominent Afghan historian says that Islam was first introduced to Hazarajat by Asad, who was an Arab Muslim Commander in 724 A.D⁷⁸. Gobar argues that the Hazaras were introduced directly to Shi'ism sector of Islam.

S.A. Mousavi agrees both with the idea of Schurmann and Timorkhanove saying that "...it is possible that some Hazaras were converted to Shi'ism by Ghazan Khan and Abu Sa'id, a fact which need not contradict the theory holding Shah Abbas responsible for further encouraging Shi'ism among the Hazaras. Thus, it can be maintained that Shi'ism among the Hazaras began at the time of Ghazan Khan, but it was not until the Safavid period, when Shi'ism became the official religion of Iran, that the process was completed"⁷⁹. He further insists that the social changes in the life of a nation can't happen

⁷⁶ Bacon E. 1961 : 'H. F. Schurmann's: An Ethnography of the Mongols and Related Peoples of Afghanistan', in: Central Asiatic Journal, Vol. VIII, page 44

⁷⁷ Timurkhanove: Tarikh e Hazara-i-Moghol, 1980. Translated by Hasan Raza Genghisi. Page, 26

⁷⁸ Mir. Mohammad Gobar: "Afghanistan dar Masir-e Tarikh", 1980, page 71

⁷⁹ See S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 75

all at one time. He thinks that the process of Shi'ization of Hazaras might had taken place over time as he agrees with both Shurmann saying that Hazaras adopted Shi'ism during Safavids and Timorkhanove which opposing Schurmann saying that Hazaras turned to Shi'ism thirty years later after the death of Holaku Khan (156-65); Genghis Khan's grandson during Ghazan Khan when he undertook the pilgrimages to the tomb of Imam Ali and his sons⁸⁰.

⁸⁰ Ibid 76, page 74-5

Part-II

The New-Political Condition Of Hazaras

5) King Zahir Shah And Daoud Khan Regimes And The Resurgence Of Hazara Nationalism

The time of Zahir Shah from 1933 to 1973 was the best possible time for the rebirth of Hazaras. Even though, the Hazaras were still the most oppressed national with the subservient jobs as laborers, daily wage workers, butlers, porters, servants, etc. The Hazaras were not allowed to enroll to two secondary boarding schools in Kabul; Rahman Baba and Kushhal Khan (named after two Pashtun poets) and also the Hazaras graduating from any other high schools in the country were not admitted to the University of Ningarhar where the medium of the instruction was Pashto⁸¹.

In the modernization era that took place during the King Zahir Shah reign, S.A. Mousavi (1998, 171-74) distinguishes the Hazaras of Kabul from the rural area Hazaras saying that those have been city-dwellers mainly in Kabul benefited, albeit marginally, and hence the population of the migrants Hazaras in Kabul was on the increase. He further says that ‘the presence of a number of successful Hazaras in the economic, political and cultural sphere within the country demonstrated that the Hazaras could play a constructive role in the development of Afghanistan’. He divides the achievement of Hazaras in this time into three categories; economic, political, and cultural⁸². In the political arena, S. A. Mousavi mentions of two ministerial posts and several parliamentary representatives. The Hazaras in the House of Parliament included; Haji Nadir, Haji Abdur Razaq Taufiq, Mohammad

⁸¹ Hafizullah Emadi; The Political Role of Hazaras in Afghanistan.
http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 (accessed 22 September 2005)

⁸² S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 171-172

Ismail Moballigh, Shaikh Sulaiman Yari, Qorban Ali Razawi, Abdul Hussain Maqsoodi, Dr. Abdul Wahid Sarabi (Minister of Planning), and Yaqoob La'li (Minister of Public Works) and the member of Senates to name a few are the Ali Akbar Narges, and Nadir Ali⁸³.

The emergence of the two new political parties – the Socialist group; The Sholai Javid (New-Democratic Party – Moist group) and the People Democratic Party of Afghanistan PDPA (Khaq-o Parcham) and the second group was the Sazman-e Nasr (Victory group) – among Hazaras in the late 1960s was considered the new resurgence of Hazaras in the history of Afghanistan. Akram Yari – a Hazara from Jaghori was one of the founders of the Sholai Javid and among some Hazaras who were members of the PDPA were; Abdul Karim Mesaq, Sultan Ali Keshtman. In the Islamist side the Sayed Nasr Balkhi was the founder of the Islamist group Sazman-e Nasr⁸⁴. Hafizullah Emadi though talks about the emergence of three groups; Islamist, Hazara nationalist and Socialists⁸⁵. I disagree with him because the new researchers on Hazaras in Afghanistan such as “S. A. Mousavi and Hassan Pouladi” and in Afghanistan history no one has mentioned such ‘Hazara nationalist’ group. Although, the Sholai Javid (Moist) and PDPA (Khalq-o Parcham) were not specific to Hazaras and were the new political parties among all the ethnicities in Afghanistan but the ‘Sholai Javid (Moist group) specifically has been famous for being a Hazara specific party among most of the less educated people because the one of the founders “Akram Yari” was a Hazara from Jaghori and the leader of the party. Even the

⁸³ S. A. Mousavi: *The Hazaras of Afghanistan*, Oxford, 1998, page 173 and Hafizullah Emadi: *The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan*. http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 (accessed 25 September 2005)

⁸⁴ S.A Mousavi also talks of the New Democratic Movement (Maoist group) and Islamist Mullahs in: “*The Hazaras of Afghanistan*”, Oxford, 1998, page 173”

⁸⁵ Hafizullah Emadi: *The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan*. P. 373 http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 (accessed 25 September 2005)

Khalq or Parcham were using this word among their fellows to leave the impression that the “Sholai Javid (Moist) group is not for the whole people of Afghanistan and is a nationalist group only. Kristian Berg Harpviken (1995, 34) also divides the Hazara political parties into Islamist and secular, radical nationalist or leftist. She mentions some more groups such as Jawanan Musلمان (Muslim Youth), Madrasai Quran by Maulawana Faizani which originally was set up as a Sufi-order and later turned into a political groups and had both followers of Shi’i and Sunni belief. This group later joined the Madrasa-i-Tawhid which in 1978 split along sectarian lines and the Shi’i faction under Asadullah Nuktadan’s leadership settled in Iran after Khomeini took power. And another small group he mentions is the Sobh e Danesh linked to Sheikh Asif Mohseni’s school in Kandahar, the Hazara nationalist groups such as Jawanan-i-Moughul (Mongol Youth), Tanzim-i-Nasl Nau-i Hazara (Organization of the new generation of Hazara)⁸⁶. Kristian Berg was perhaps not aware that the groups she is talking about is either a Shi’i group; e.g. the Jawanan Musلمان, Madrasa-i Quran (Madrasa-i Tawhid), and Sobh-e Danesh or a Pakistani Hazara party; e.g. Jawanan Moughul, Tanzim-i Nasl Nau-i Hazara; which doesn’t have to do anything with Hazaras in Afghanistan.

During the Zahir Shah reign the new sense of nationalism and wants of freedom spread among the Hazaras which the Russian invasion of Afghanistan shaped it in new pro-Iran groups.

King Zahir Shah’s “new democracy” promised much to the people but brought little to them and hence the Mohammad Daoud Khan received a warm welcome in July, 1978.

⁸⁶ Kristian Berg Harpviken: Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992), May 1995. ‘Cand. Polit. Thesis.’, Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 34

Hazaras were breathing-freely as a result of less pressure on them from the central government. The strong position of the Daoud Khan on Pashtunism and Pashtunistan issue was one of the reasons that Hazaras remained out of their focus. The Hazaras took benefit of the situation and tried to establish their position among the government ministries. Yaqoob La'li (the Mine and Industries Minister) and Wahid Sarabi (the Minister of Plan) were the first two Hazara ministers in the Afghanistan history ever. The first Hazara General in the army was Ahmad Ali Khan whom later dismissed without any known reason by Daoud Khan⁸⁷.

6) Political Conditions Of Hazaras During 10 Years Of Russian Regime In Afghanistan

a) The Coup D'etat Of April 1978 And The Noor Mohammad Taraki Regime (April 1978-September 1979)

Noor Mohammad Taraki (the leader of Khalq group) was one of the enemy's to the wants and wills of Hazaras. As soon as he holds the office he starts to humiliate the rights of Hazaras. He arrests Sultan Ali Keshtmand (who was Parchami) and blames him of the propaganda against the government and sentence him to death. Since he was a Russian-Puppet and hence because of the pressure from his Russian bosses he changed the death penalty to life imprisonment. The radical politics of Noor Mohammad Taraki and the Khalq group as a whole wretched the minor ethnical

⁸⁷ The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 271

groups around the country. The small areas around the country turned to centers for revolutionary fighters whom were against both the Pashtuns and so called-Communists⁸⁸.

Hazaras were the one of the first groups whom arose against the Russian-Puppets in power in Kabul in 1979. In April 1979 the residence of Hazarajat rose against the Kabul government and shattered their strategic points across Ghor, Bamyān and Urozgan for ever⁸⁹.

In late 1979 the different groups in Hazarajat gathered and established the ‘Shura-i-Inqilab Itifaq Islami Afghanistan’ under the leadership of Sayed Ali Behishti⁹⁰.

Taraki undertook a Soviet-style nationality policy to get into the different ethnicities in Afghanistan and promote their propagandas and can easily explain their so called-socialism agendas among the farmers and poor workers of different ethnics⁹¹. The Melliat (nationality) policy program of PDPA focused on four areas: government participation, education, newspaper, and culture. It was decided to offer education in different languages such as Pashto, Farsi, Uzbaki, Trukman and Baluchi from autumn 1979⁹². The Soviets started working on Nuristani language before the coup and the first Nuristani publications just appeared after the coup. But no concession was given

⁸⁸ The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 272

⁸⁹ Ibid.82.

⁹⁰ Hussain Ali Yazdani: Research on history of Hazaras, Tehran 1990, page 110

⁹¹ For further details see Naby Eden's ‘The Ethnic Factor in Soviet-Afghan Relations’ in Asia Survey, 20, 1980, p. 245-251

⁹² Kristian Berg Harpviken: Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992), May 1995. ‘Cand. Polit. Thesis.’, Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 53

to Hazaras and the Soviet advisers described them as an ethnic group who had lost its ethnic identity⁹³.

b) Hafizullah Amin Regime (September 1979-December 1979)

The duration of Hafizullah Amin was not enough to think about the Hazaras and other minor ethnicities. Though, some writers believe that his political will was against Hazaras⁹⁴. However, The Hazarajat remained out of the sight of the central government and the Hazaras found time to focus on their unity and the establishment of new pro-Iran Islamist parties occurred in this time where “on 11 February 1979 the Shah was out of Iran and the Iranian-Islamic revolution was a fact”⁹⁵. Kristian Berg (1995, 48) says that “in Hazarajat the PDPA neither had supporters nor allies”. This is because “In Hazarajat people revolted within local networks centered on the Mir, and by early summer 1979 the government was effectively driven out”⁹⁶. The growing insurgency of the Mujahideens compelled Amin to turn to Soviet Union for help and the Soviet Union’s response was positive but Moscow was dissatisfied with Amin as the Afghan leader capable of maintaining the pro-Moscow Communists in power. The Soviet leaders based on the

⁹³ See Naby Eden’s ‘ The Ethnic Factor in Soviet-Afghan Relations’ in Asia Survey, 20, 1980, p. 251

⁹⁴ see Hasan Pouladi (1989), page 273.

⁹⁵ Ibid 89, Page 49

⁹⁶ Ibid 89, Page 48

information of KGB that Amin is responsible for the destabilization of the situation and was also claimed to be a CIA agent based on the KGB agents in Kabul. On December 22, 1979 the Soviets airborne forces landed in Kabul and upon seeing this Amin moved the office to the Tajbeg Palace believing that this place is safe for him. On December 27, 1979, 700 troops, including 54 KGB spetsnaz special forces troops from the Alpha Group and Zenith Group, dressed in Afghan Uniforms captured all major government buildings and the Tajbeg Palace and Killed President Hafizullah Amin in there and in the morning of December 28, 1979 Babrak Karmal was placed on the chair of President of Afghanistan⁹⁷. The Russians claimed that they had been invited in by the Amin government and that they were not invading the country. They claimed that their task was to support a legitimate government and that the Mujahideen were no more than terrorists⁹⁸.

c) Babrak Karmal Regime (December 1979-May1986)

Bakrak Karmal came to power in December 1979. Sultan Ali Keshtmand was freed from prison and appointed as the Minister of Plan and then in 1981 became the Prime Minister. There was no concession for Hazaras even when the Keshtmand was in power holding the Minister of Plan position in the government. In February 1980 the Hazaras in Kabul defied the Kabul regime and demonstrated their opposition by organizing an uprising known as the insurrection of Se-e-Hoot. The insurrection originated in several districts,

⁹⁷ Soviet War in Afghanistan: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_invasion_of_Afghanistan#April_1978_coup (accessed 4 October 2005)

⁹⁸ Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: <http://www.2-russia.com/russia-afghanistan.asp> (accessed 5 October 2005)

including Qala-e-Shada, Dasht-e-Barchi, and Afshar. The demonstrators marched toward the Soviet embassy and attacked the house of former president Hafizullah Amin and several police stations, seizing arms and ammunition⁹⁹. As a result Azai Gard Inqilab (Members of Revolutionary Guards) started the house-to-house search of Hazara areas such as Chindawol, Wazir Abad, and Qalai Shada; arrested and shot the Hazaras in front of their houses. The number of Hazaras being killed in this time is not known but in one relatively absolute guess about 1500 Hazaras were shot to dead¹⁰⁰. This in turn created hatred in the heart of Hazaras for the Kabul government and a growing number of Hazara young and elders were joining their Mujahideen brothers in the rural areas around Afghanistan to fight against the Soviets and the Soviet led-government in Kabul. In January 1981 a remembering conflict between Hazaras and the common Russian-Afghan troops occurred in Bamyān¹⁰¹.

In the year 1979-1981 many pro-Iran Shi'i groups were founded either in Hazarajat or in Iran which later entered Hazarajat. The names of the parties established in 1979 are: 'Shura-e-Itifaq (Council of the Union) headed by Sayed Ali Behisti', 'Harakat-e-Islami (Islamic Movement) headed by Sheikh Asif Mohsini', 'Sazman Mujahidin-e-Mustazafin (Organization of the Dispossessed Warriors)', 'Sazman-e-Nasr (Victory Organization)', 'Sepah-e-Pasdarān (Revolutionary Guard Corps) headed by Muhammad Akbari', 'Hizbullah (Party of God) headed by Sheikh Wusoqi'¹⁰².

⁹⁹ Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan. http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 p. 377 (accessed 8 October 2005)

¹⁰⁰ The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 274

¹⁰¹ Ibid 97

¹⁰² Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan. http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 (accessed 9 October 2005), p. 378 for more detail see the table in Appendix B

The 'Shura-e-Itifaq' was considered as a government for the whole Hazarajat and used to be a powerful party among the Hazaras. By 1981 the Shura-e-Itifaq was succeeded to drive the Russian-Afghan forces out of all Hazarajat territory. The government in Kabul was searching ways to defeat 'Shura-e-Itifaq'. In its effort, the Kabul government used many techniques such as 'divide and rule', and the 'ethnic and tribal disputes' but neither really worked as the Kabul government failed in its efforts. The next possible attempt of the Kabul government was through its 'Intelligence Services' and the use of distributing money among the Mirs, and Sayeds in power of the Hazarajat and this time the Kabul government succeeded to divide the 'Shura-e-Itifaq' into two factions¹⁰³. In 1983 Sazman-e-Nasr and Sepah-e-Pasdaran came into existence and succeeded to defeat Sayed Ali Behishti who was the leader of Shura-e-Itifaq in Waras, Bamyan¹⁰⁴. In late 1983 the political differences between these groups and the clashes of the personality among their leadership resulted in conflicts between the different Hazara groups themselves and ended up with the thousand lives of Hazaras. S.A. Mousavi (1998, 180) brings the reason for these conflicts the emergence of the Hazara groups backed by Iran in inevitably need to consolidate their controls over more areas in Hazarajat¹⁰⁵. In 1984 almost the Shura-e-Itifaq was demolished by the other Hazara groups and all its followers joined mostly the Sazman-e-Nasr and Sepah-e-Pasdaran.

d) Dr. Najibullah Regime (May 1986-1992)

¹⁰³ The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 275

¹⁰⁴ Ibid 99 p. 377

¹⁰⁵ S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 180

Since long ago, the Soviet leaders were searching for a suitable person to replace Babrak Karmal because his leadership and no more according to the desire of Soviets Union and the political aims of Moscow were not satisfactorily accomplished during the Babrak Karmal regime. First the Soviets were training Afaq, and Panjshiri wishing that the next president could be from one of those. Another candidate was Sultan Ali Keshtmand but since he was a Hazara and his leadership was not acceptable to Pashtuns and other ethnicities, therefore, they replaced Babrak Karmal by Dr. Najibullah who was also a Pashtun belonged to Ghilzai (Ahmad Zai) tribe. Najibullah mediated between factions of PDPA¹⁰⁶ and tried to bring all the ethnicities around him. The Hazaras had still two ministers in the government; Abdul Wahid Sarabi (Vice President. 1988-1991) and Sultan Ali Keshtmand (Chair, Council of Ministers. 1988, First Vice President 1990-1991). And also Abdul Karim Mesaq was the Mayor of Kabul. In late 1986, Najibullah announced a “National Reconciliation” program which offered a six-month cease-fire and discussions leading to a possible coalition with government. Contact was made with over 40,000 Mujahideens but the Mujahideen leadership rhetorically claimed that the program had no chance for success¹⁰⁷. Dr. Najibullah also brought about the freedom of religion performance and everyday the “Talawat Quran” and other similar programs were broadcasted from the radio Kabul. Finally the Soviets Union decided to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan in May 15, 1988 and ultimately withdrew forces on February 2, 1989. The Soviet Union officially announced that all of its troops had left Afghanistan on

¹⁰⁶ Najibullah Leadership: <http://countrystudies.us/afghanistan/95.htm> (accessed 10 October 2005)

¹⁰⁷ The Soviet Decision to Withdraw: <http://countrystudies.us/afghanistan/96.htm> (accessed 14 October 2005)

February 15, 1989¹⁰⁸. And in 1992 the Kabul government failed and Mujahideen took power of the whole country.

7) The Emergence of Hazara New Political Groups And The Civil War In Hazarajat

The Hazarajat was simply peaceful during the Soviets War in contrast to the other areas of Afghanistan. But the civil war in-between Hazaras themselves were always a struggle for the power. The Shura-e-Itifaq was the most powerful among the Shi'ia groups all over Hazarajat and could manage to drive the Soviets-Afghan troops out of the Hazarajat by the end of 1981¹⁰⁹. Despite the many attacks the Soviets-Afghan troops couldn't manage to hold the Hazarajat back under their control except for some parts of Bamyan and Ghor¹¹⁰.

The appearance of the other Shi'ia political groups in 1979; such as Harakat-e-Islami (Sheikh Asif Mohsini), Sazman-e-Nasr, Sazman-e-Mujahideen Mustazafin and Sazman-e Fallah Islami (Mo'llim Baba Qarabaghi) in 1980 and in 1981 the Sepah-e-Pasdaran (Mohammad Akbari), and Hizbullah (Sheikh Wusoqi) was a big challenge for the unity of the Hazaras inside Afghanistan. The conflict over power and the thirst to consolidate

¹⁰⁸ Soviet War in Afghanistan. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_invasion_of_Afghanistan (accessed 14 October 2005)

¹⁰⁹ The Hazaras: History, culture, politics and economy by Hasan Pouladi, 1989; page 275, para 2. See also S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 179-80

¹¹⁰ Payam-e Mostazafin, 1988, No. 69/70: page 146-154

its control over the more areas resulted with severe internal war with one another and ended up with bloodsheds of more Hazaras leaving less power for all of the parties. S.A. Mousavi (1998, 180) mentions the killings of thousands of Hazaras and migration of many families to Kabul, Iran, and Pakistan and other areas in the world and also the physical destruction wrought to Hazarajat itself¹¹¹.

To better know the causes of the internal conflicts in Hazarajat we shall see upon the different parties involved in the internal conflict and their establishment and agendas first.

a) The Shura-E-Itifaq (Council Of The Union)

In 1979 for the first time all the Hazara intellectuals gathered in Panjaw, Bamyan to establish a Shura (Council) for the Hazaras to resist against the Soviets Union's invasion as solidarity with their Pashtun brothers in Jihad. As a result the Shura-e-Itifaq (hereinafter "Shura") was established based on the traditional Islamic ideology (Shi'ia faction of Islam) and Sayed Ali Behishti was chosen the head of the "Shura". Initially the Shura had 1000 staff with 2000 partisans and Sayed Jagran (former Army General in Zahir Shah Regime) was appointed as a chief commander for the military coordination. It was decided that the preliminary areas of operations are Ghazni, Bamyan, and Balkh provinces and will be expanded to other areas upon request from

¹¹¹ S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 180

the local communities. The “Shura” was supported financially by the local communities by paying 20% of their harvest to the “Shura” but to solicit the foreign aid the “Shura” established its offices in Quetta, Pakistan and Tehran, Iran but was not politically connected to any of the outside governments¹¹².

b) The Harakat-E-Islami (Islamic Movement)

The Harakat-e-Islami was founded in 1979 in Qum, Iran by Sheikh Asif Mohsini based on the traditional Shi’i Islamist belief. The assumption is that the Ministry of Information and Culture of Iran was behind the creation of this movement¹¹³. Yet the Harakat-e-Islami preached a moderate Islamism, opposing Khomeini’s emphasis on the unity of religion and politics. Harakat-e-Islami was established with a non-Hazara “Asif Mohsini” and recruited mostly from the Qizillbash but also Hazara¹¹⁴.

The initial composition was 200 staff and 3000 partisans headed by Mohammad Anwari in Wardak, Qandahar, Bamyan, Parwan, Kabul, and Samangan provinces¹¹⁵.

¹¹² See also Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan. http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 p. 375. (accessed 20 October 2005)

¹¹³ My personal interview with ‘Ali Hasan Ikhlās the former commander of Hezb-e Wahdat, basically member of Sepah-e Pasdaran’ during my visit to Afghanistan this summer (August 2005). Interview taped and is on file.

¹¹⁴ See Kristian Berg Harpviken: Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992), May 1995. ‘Cand. Polit. Thesis.’, Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 59

¹¹⁵ See also the table in Appendix B.

c) Sazman-E-Mujahideen-E Mustazafin (Organization Of The Dispossessed Warriors)

This was also a people “Shura” or Council formed in 1979 in Bamyan, Afghanistan. It was supervised by a Joint Council which was based on militant and political aims and less Islamist than other groups. It is said to be populated mostly of those intellectuals with leftist connections¹¹⁶. This movement couldn’t expand its base out of Bamyan.

d) Sazman-E-Nasr (Victory Organization)

Sazman-e-Nasr was first founded by Sayed Nasr Balkhi in Kabul during the King Zahir Shah’s reign. It was almost forgotten but the Iran Foreign Ministry revived it in 1979 in Qum, Iran during the Khomeini regime with an Islamic fundamentalism ideology pro-Iran policy. It was supervised by a council of four persons rotating between different leaders among them. The initial organization was of 1500 staff and 4000 partisans operational in Ghor, Bamyan, Wardak, Parwan, Ghazni, Balkh, and Kabul provinces. Nasr was mostly populated by Hazaras and adhered to strict Khomeinism. But still was leaning towards the Hazara Nationalist group “Jawanan Moghol” based in Quetta, Pakistan. The Nasr group represented an effort by Iranian Khomeinists to gain control over Hazara nationalism. It also has played a role by providing an Iranian-trained leadership for resistance in some localities but overall command was in the hands of

¹¹⁶ Ali Hasan Ikhlas interview; video taped and recorded on file.

military committees headed by a “Mir” and some good representation of “Sayyids” who were trained in Iran¹¹⁷.

e) Sepah-E-Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guard Corps)

Sepah-e-Pasdran like Sazman-e-Nasr was the creation of Iran in Qum, Iran in 1981 by the Sepah-e-Pasdaran Iran which they adopted the same name. Sepah was established as a result of Iranian evaluation that the Nasr is not enough to fulfill the Iranian aims¹¹⁸. The founder and leader of the Sepah-e-Pasdaran was Mohammad Akbari and Pasdaran was based on existing movement of Rohaniyat Mobarez. The initial composition was 1500 staff and 2000 partisans operational in Ghor, Helmand, Bamyan, Ghazni, and Parwan provinces. The ideological difference between Sepah and Nasr was that Sepah was most radical and pro-Khomeini ruler-ship and Nasr while accepting that was also insisting more on the self-leadership of Hazaras and Sayyids¹¹⁹. The majority of the partisans for both Sazman-e-Nasr and Sepah-e-Pasdaran are those Hazara-refugees working at various construction sites in Iran. Iran not only organized them into Nasr and Sepah to have the foothold in Afghanistan but also used its influence to encourage them to defend Iran in its war with Iraq, claiming that they will gain experience in the art of warfare which could help them to effectively do Jihads against Soviets-Afghan forces when returning back home. Prior to actively going to war with Iraq they were

¹¹⁷ See Kristian Berg Harpviken: Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992), May 1995. ‘Cand. Polit. Thesis.’, Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 59

¹¹⁸ Grevemeyer and Jan-Heeren ‘Ethnicity and National Liberation: the Afghan Hazara between Resistance and Civil War’. Paris 1988 p. 21-22

¹¹⁹ Kristian Berg Harpviken: Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992), May 1995. ‘Cand. Polit. Thesis.’, Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 88

trained in Taibad, Gilan, Qum, Sabzwar, Zahidan, Tehran, Zabul, Turbat-e-Jam, Sirjan and other military centers in Iran. They were paid 6000 Iranian Rials as their salaries in the first three months of their trainings and 20,000 Rials during the remainder of the training period which was not paid in full as promised¹²⁰.

f) Hizbullah (Party Of God)

Another Islamic fundamentalist group founded in Qum, Iran by the help of Iranians in 1981 was the Hizbullah headed by Sheikh Wusoqi. It had 1000 staff with 2000 partisans and the commander of the military was Qari Ali Ahmad Darwazi also famous as Qari Yakdasta. Hizbullah couldn't establish itself in Afghanistan as opposed to Sazman-e-Nasr and Sepah-e-Pasdaran.

There were many other small groups such as Jabha-ye Mutahid-e Inqilab-e Islami, Hizb-e Da'wat-e Islami, Sazman-e Niroo-ye Islami, and Tauhidi group etc; which were not appreciated by many people. Beside that the Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar) had also some influences inside Hazaras of Jaghoris and in Bamyan the other Sunni groups such as Jabha-ye Nijat, Jam'iyat Islami, and Haraket-e Inqilab-e Islami¹²¹ were also operational.

¹²⁰ See also Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan. http://boozers fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 p. 377 para.2 (accessed 25 October 2005)

¹²¹ see S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 181

In 1982 the internal conflicts between these groups over the control of more areas and enforcing their leadership on the other parties resulted in a big loss of credibility for these Hazara groups and discredited them in the eyes of Hazaras. The Sazman-e Nasr and Sepah-e Pasdaran were allied in one side and Shura and Harakat on the other side. The result of this bloody civil war cost more lives than the war against the Soviet-Afghan troops¹²². The civil war was not only fought between these two warring parties but in turn the other parties passed their turn too. For example, Hizbullah and Harakat and others in Herat and in most part of the Hazarajat, nonetheless, they warmed up their soldiers for later civil war of the country. This also in turn made them member-wise weak and as a result international community paid less attention to them. Pakistan based resistance established the 'seven-party alliance' in 1985 but no Shi'ia party was invited. Most of the international community's funds and military weapons were sent to Seven-Sunni parties in Peshawar and Shi'is were neglected because of their relation with Iran.

8) Formation Of Shura-Ye I'tilaf And Hezb-E Wahdat Islami Afghanistan

The signal for Soviets Union's withdrawal of Afghanistan was blinking and thus there was the need for the formation of a coalition among the Hazaras to have a better chance in the coming government after the Soviets leave Afghanistan. Iran now wanted the

¹²² See Kristian Berg Harpviken: Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992), May 1995. 'Cand. Polit. Thesis.', Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 88

Hazaras and Shi'i groups of Afghanistan to be united to contend their Sunni counterparts at national level in their representation in the new government.

The first serious of coalition between eight Hazara and Shi'a parties was formed by Iran and named it Shura-ye I'telaf-e Islami-ye Afghanistan (Islamic Unity Council of Afghanistan). The coalition was made between the Sazman-e Nasr, Sepah-e Pasdaran, Nahzat-e Islami, Jabha-ye Mutahid-e Inqilab-e Islami, Harakat-e Islami, Hizb-e Da'wat-e Islami, Hizbullah, and Sazman-e Niroo-ye Islami¹²³.

Although, the Shura-ye I'telaf consisted the name of Afghanistan in it but it was totally considered to be Iran-controlled council. The disagreement over the leadership between the different member-groups' leaders in Afghanistan was a dilemma. Thus, there arose a conflict between the member-parties and grew to reach the level of civil war in Hazarajat. The formation of Hezb-e Wahdat (Unity Party) in the middle of 1989 largely put an end to the internal struggle in Hazarajat¹²⁴. The Hezb-e Wahdat in a sense directly came out of the Shura-ye I'telaf with the reasons of being an Afghani party led by a Hazara leader "Abdul Ali Mazari"¹²⁵, and to unite against the Pashtun unity that didn't accommodate Hazaras and Shi'is into the interim government in their meeting of early 1989 in Rawalpindi, Pakistan¹²⁶.

¹²³ S. A. Mousavi: *The Hazaras of Afghanistan*, Oxford, 1998, page 184-185

¹²⁴ Kristian Berg Harpviken: *Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992)*, May 1995. 'Cand. Polit. Thesis.', Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 94

¹²⁵ S. A. Mousavi: *The Hazaras of Afghanistan*, Oxford, 1998, page 185

¹²⁶ Ibid 121

The Hezb-e Wahdat was founded as a result of one year negotiation between different Hazara groups mainly 'Nasr and Sepah' in Bamyan with the moderate Islamic ideology and Hazara nationalism. The composition was Sazman-e Nasr, Sepah-e Pasdaran, Hizbullah, Dawat, Nahzat, Nayro-e Islam, Jabha-e Mutahid, Shura-e Itifaq, and Sazman-e Mujahideen-e Mustazafin. The only Shi'ia group which was not included was the Harakat-e Islami.

9) Neighbors Influence Among Hazaras

a) Iran And The Shi'i Groups In Afghanistan

The anti-Russian war in Afghanistan enabled Iran to establish its relation with the Shi'i of Afghanistan while the majority of Shi'ia (mostly Hazara) was in Iran as refugees or as workers. The aims to establish the relation with Shi'is of Afghanistan was two fold; first, Iran used those Shi'ia militants who were trained in Iran to fight against Iraq in Iran-Iraq war and for that purpose they were trained and paid; second, to have a footprint in Afghanistan's politics in the future¹²⁷. Majority of the Shi'ia groups was backed by Iran with the exception of Sheikh Asif Mohsini (Harakat-e Islami) whose relation didn't last well with Iran for long and he closed his office in Tehran and centered in Peshawar and Quetta Pakistan, Sazman-e Mujahideen which was moved to Hazarajat, Tauhidi group moved to Quetta, and Shura-e Itilaf also closed its representatives offices in Iran¹²⁸.

¹²⁷ See Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan. http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 p. 377 para.2 (accessed 7 November 2005)

¹²⁸ S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 182

Although, Iran did keep its relation well with some Shi'i groups such as Nasr and Sepah and later with Hezb-e Wahdat. After the withdrawal of Soviets Unions troops from Afghanistan the Khomeini regime was ended too with his death. The policy of Khomeini towards Afghanistan was driven by ideological and sectarian interests. While after him Iran was involved to influence the Shi'i groups to fill the power vacuum left by Soviets withdrawal. For the dream to come true, Iran extended its influence to establish well contacts with more groups other than the Shi'i pro-Iran groups and hence increased its support for the Tajik, Uzbek and Isma'ili groups as well¹²⁹. Yet, in the Civil War of 1992-1996 Iran remained the major supporter of the Hezb-e Wahdat in their fight with Ahmad Shah Masood, and Saiyaf parties but with more emphasis on Hezb-e Wahdat to make allies with Masood and Rabbani government against the Pashtun rule of Taliban or other Pashtun groups in Afghanistan. In the war against Taliban the United Front (Hezb-e Wahdat, Jamiat-e Islami, and Dostum) was supported by Iran. The human rights watch has details of the military, aerial re-supply, construction of Dasht-i Qala Bridge to supply military aids to United Fronts and the military training of the United Front's partisans¹³⁰ for the same purpose.

¹²⁹ Human Rights Watch; Afghanistan: Crisis of Impunity ;“the role of Pakistan, Russia, and Iran in Fueling the Civil War’. Vol. 13, No. 3 (C). July 2001, p. 35-36 <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/afghan2/Afghan0701.pdf> (accessed 8 November 2005)

¹³⁰ Ibid 126, p. 36-39 <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/afghan2/Afghan0701.pdf> (accessed 8 November 2005)

b) Pakistan And Other Neighboring Country's Role Among Shi'i Of Afghanistan

Pakistan's political aims were satisfied by the Seven-Party of Pashtun and other tribes (except Hazara) who were based in Peshawar Pakistan and a great political advantage to Pakistan both during the war and in the future. During the war all the military and financial aids which were routed to Mujahideens were through Pakistan channel and the Pakistan share and service-tips were paid fully. Beside this Pakistan was replacing its old military weapons with the all new weapons which were supplied by the west for Mujahideen through Pakistan and as well as the political will of Pakistan was accomplishing in the way that they were planning. The relation of Pakistan with the Shi'ia groups in Afghanistan was of inferior quality because of the difficulties that Zia ul Haq facing in his Islamization program from Shi'is inside Pakistan. For example, Pakistan was the key to unite the Seven-Party in Peshawar to solicit the International aids in a uniform manner to them but neglected the Shi'ia groups at all. Sheikh Asif Mohsini's Harakat-e Islami when told to leave Iran he requested Pakistan for recognition of his party and financial aid shall be provided to his party as well but his demand was not responded seriously by Pakistani authorities because of the fear of alienating the Iranian authorities¹³¹. However, during Daoud regime in Kabul, Pakistan was supporting Hazaras in Quetta Baluchistan to form Hazara parties and fuel the war of ethnicity inside Afghanistan to bring down the issue of Pashtunistan.

¹³¹ Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan. http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 p. 379 (accessed 11 November 2005)

Russia on the other hand was playing a dual role with the Hazaras by changing the Kabul government between two factions of PDPA. The Khalq faction was more Pashtun-nationalist and had not a good relation with Hazaras but the Parcham faction had, nevertheless, more representatives from Hazaras in the government.

10) Hazaras In The Civil War Of 1992-1996

In February 1989 the Sunni groups set up an interim government in Rawalpindi. There was no role for the Shi'ia parties in their government. The Shi'ia parties got their lesson that there would be nothing for them without their unity and struggle. As a result in 1989 the formation of Hezb-e Wahdat brought all the Shi'ia parties (except Harakat-e Islami) into one unite group¹³². The improvement of Hezb-e Wahdat was unimaginable to the extent that in two years from its creation it gathered almost all the Hazara parties around it; even the Harakat-e Islami. Hezb-e Wahdat was recognized internationally as a vigorous group and was invited to participate in Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers-Istanbul (1991), Four-Parties Conference-Islamabad and Tehran (1991), Sixth Conference of OIC in Senegal, UN annual meeting, Talks with Soviet Deputy President in Moscow. Henceforth, after the fall of Najibullah's regime in 1992, Hezb-e Wahdat was one of the country's three main political forces.

¹³² For more information see Kristian Berg Harpviken: Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992), May 1995. 'Cand. Polit. Thesis.', Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 94 and S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 192-194

The civil war of 1992-1996 of which Hezb-e Wahdat is also an element of it was not less than the Rwandan Massacre of 1994. After the Northern Alliance were driven out by Taliban from Kabul in 1996 they left behind 50,000 dead with a huge record of violence, rape, killings and torture of innocent civilians¹³³.

In May 1992 the fighting started between Ittihad forces (a Sunni-Pashtun party led by Abdul Rabb al Sayyaf) and the Hezb-e Wahdat forces (Abdul Ali Mazari) in west Kabul. According to S.A. Mousavi (1998, 197) the Hezb-e Wahdat was involved in this war unwillingly to protect its area in the west Kabul which was mostly populated by Shi'ia and Hazaras. All over twenty-seven battles fought in the west of Kabul more than any other area in the capital¹³⁴. I disagree with what Dr. S. A. Mousavi talks about because the civil war of Afghanistan in general and Hezb-e Wahdat and Ittihad in particular were based on the undiplomatic characters of ethnics' leaders and their thirst for power sharing; it was fueled by outside hands such as Iran and Saudi Arabia backing their puppets respectively¹³⁵. The same 'thirst-for-power' that was in Sayyaf was not lacking in Mazari either. For them the lives of civilians were worthless and in retrospect they were giving it the name of 'fight-for-their-rights'. S.A. Mousavi further gives the reason for the civil war himself; saying that "the reason behind Hezb-e Wahdat's opposition to the Interim Government was that it had been excluded from it. The Interim Government plan had been drawn up in Peshawar by the Mujahideen groups based there and led by

¹³³ The Independent (UK), November 14, 2001 quoted in: <http://www.rawa.org/na-rug.htm> (accessed 13 November 2005)

¹³⁴ S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 197

¹³⁵ for more supporting ideas see; The Battle for Kabul a Human Rights Watch report. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed 14 November 2005)

Sayyaf...the battles were thus between the various factions of the Interim Government on the one hand and Hezb-e Wahdat on the other»¹³⁶.

The reason ‘Human Rights Watch report’ mentions is that it was a mundane issue of posters. Which both the forces were tearing down the posters of each other’s leaders – Mazari and Sayyaf – in turn led them to conflicts. They began skirmishing in west Kabul, shooting rockets at each other and engaging in street battles to occupy more neighborhoods and government buildings which in mid-2005 turned to ruins¹³⁷.

According to General Mohammad Nabi Azimi the battle between Ittihad and Wahdat started on 31 May, 1992 when the Ittihad (Sayyaf) partisans in Silo Kabul killed the four leaders of Wahdat – Karimi, Sayyed Ismail Hussaini, Chaman Ali Abuzar, and Vaseegh – and in retaliation the Wahdat forces stopped the car of Haji Shir Alam – the commander of Ittihad near Pol-e Sorkh Kabul and killed him with a passenger in the car¹³⁸.

In July, 1992 Harakat-e Islami joined Hezb-e Wahdat in fights against Ittihad and Jamiat (Ahmad Shah Masood’s party) joined Ittihad and launched rockets on civilians in the west Kabul.

Rabbani was elected president for second term on 2nd July 1993 but was blamed for vote fixing and corruption and five parties out of nine boycotted the assembly. Hezb-e Wahdat

¹³⁶ Ibid 131

¹³⁷ The Battle for Kabul: April 1992- March 1993; <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed 18 November 2005)

¹³⁸ General Mohammad Nabi Azimi: Urdu wa Siyasat, Kabul, 1998, page 606-607 (my translation) also Human Rights Watch report on : the battler for Kabul. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed 18 November 2005)

forged an alliance with Gulbaddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Islami in fights against the Rabbani's government. On the other hand, Iran supported Rabbani's government and tried to best persuade Mazari to support Kabul government too because it was a non-Pashtun government which could be more close to Iran rather than a Pashtun government in Kabul. Iranians maintained that by supporting Rabbani the Central Asian republics would be protected by a Tajik-dominated government in Kabul¹³⁹.

The agreement reached between Wahdat and Rabbani's government over Wahdat representation in the government and Wahdat was granted eight seats in the Council and three ministerial posts. The fighting between Wahdat and Defense Ministry (Ahmad Shah Masood's forces) were continuing and after the announcement of Wahdat representation in the government the fighting between Ittihad and Wahdat raised the issue of ethnic violence among them. The fight changed its shape to targeting ethnics' civilians. Thus far, many victims of this war were civilians, who were made victims only because of their ethnic identity. The search was for the ethnic civilians in the public transportations and the ambulances were targeted if they were carrying the ethnic civilians to the hospitals. The people were killed by nails being driven into their heads, or being burnt alive locked in a container¹⁴⁰. Many people were telling the stories of those civilians whose necks' were chopped off and then boiled oil was poured on it; since the bodies

¹³⁹ Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan.

http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 p. 381 (accessed 20 November 2005)

¹⁴⁰ Kristian Berg Harpviken: Political mobilization among the Hazara of Afghanistan (1978-1992), May 1995. 'Cand. Polit. Thesis.', Department of Sociology, University of Oslo. Page 113

were alive, hence moving till being dead; and it was famous by the name of “Raqs-e Murda” or the Dance of the Dead¹⁴¹.

The war was not only between Wahdat and Ittihad. Hezb-e Islami who refused Rabbani’s government was firing artilleries and rockets over Kabul. Dustom’s Junbish, Harakat, Shura-e Nizar (Jamiat) was also involved fighting each other all over Kabul. Human Rights Watch Report says that “In August 1992, Hekmatyar’s forces – who had already been rocketing civilian area regularly since April – launched a new artillery and rocket blitz, bombarding all areas in Kabul held by Jamiat, Junbish, Ittihad, Harakat, and Wahdat – essentially the whole city. The apparent aim of the blitz was to force the government into a political compromise with Hezb-e Islami, as Hekmatyar likely did not have enough troops to launch an actual invasion of the city. During the attack, hundreds of homes were destroyed, approximately 1800 to 2500 persons were killed, and thousands more were injured. Governmental functions, already severely hampered, ceased. The Presidential Palace and numerous government buildings were hit, as well as the headquarters of the Red Cross and at least two of its hospitals. The city’s water and electricity grids were severely damaged. On some days, shells and rockets fell without interruption, and the city was gripped with terror”¹⁴².

¹⁴¹ A documentary movie of the civil war was by this name (Raqs-e Murda – Dance of the Dead) and was available in Peshawar. My brother-in-law (Enayatuallah Nazari) who was in Afghanistan at the time of war also remembers the same story which he has seen it by himself.

¹⁴² Interim Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan, prepared by Felix Ermacora, Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan for the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, November 17, 1992, U.N. Doc A/47/656, para. 34 (citing reports of 1,800 killed, thousands wounded); Human Rights Watch interviews with former U.N. officials working in Afghanistan in 1992, Kabul, December 10 and 11, 2003. For detailed accounts of the August 1992 attacks on Kabul, see Interim Report of the Special Rapporteur, November 17, 1992, para. 34; Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, pp. 272-273 (citing U.N. Department of Humanitarian Affairs, “Note on Winter Emergency Needs in Afghanistan,” November 1, 1992, and U.N. Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programs Relating to Afghanistan, “Immediate Humanitarian Needs in Afghanistan Resulting from the Current Hostilities,” press release, August 23, 1992); Saikal, “The Rabbani Government, 1992-1996” in *Fundamentalism Reborn*, p 33; Goodson, *Afghanistan’s Endless War*, pp. 74-75. See also, John Jennings, “Rival factions shell Afghan capital,” Associated Press, August 8, 1992; “Residents curse rebel rivalries,” Associated Press, August 15, 1992; Mushahid Hussain, “Kabul and rebels claim advances,” Inter Press Service Global Information Network, August 21, 1992.

The war between Ittihad and Wahdat and later Wahdat and Hezb-e Islami was in the benefit of the Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Masood to remain in power. Rabbani and Masood were using the old style politics of “divide and rule” and it is clear from the letter of Defense Minister “Ahmad Shah Masood” to his chief of the state intelligence “Ahmad Fahim” in a facsimile authorizing him to fuel the flames of racial (sectarian) hatred among Hazaras and Pashtuns. A facsimile of the letter reads: “ Considering the progress of your work, you are instructed to authorize every department of the National Security to intensify the war between Hezb-e Wahdat and Hezb-e Islami and Ittihad on the basis of ethnic cleansing between Hazaras and Pashtuns to the extent that its effects must incite hostilities among inhabitants of central and northern parts of Afghanistan either in the form of Shiite and Sunni differences or as hostilities between the Hazaras and Pashtuns which would be a sufficient ground for preoccupation for further military fronts”¹⁴³.

a) The Afshar Massacre

After some crucial battles between Wahdat and Ittihad and Wahdat and Shura-ye Nizar; Wahdat was holding strong positions including most of the west of Kabul and some areas in the eastern city of Kabul. Most of the government buildings in the central Kabul to the western hills of Paghman over the Sayyaf’s headquarter in Paghman and the position of

The Battle for Kabul: April 1992- March 1993; <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed November 23, 2005)

¹⁴³ Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan. http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 p. 381 (accessed 24 November 2005)

Peak of Afshar Mountain, north of the main road to Paghman, made their position more strong.

The alliance of Wahdat and Hezb-e Islami was another threat to the government of Rabbani and Shura-ye Nizar and Sayyaf. Therefore, Rabbani and senior Jamiat and Ittihad commanders decided to attack Wahdat and Hezb-e Islami alliance by attacking their positions in west of Kabul and their strategic positions on top of Afshar and some government buildings and Afshar itself¹⁴⁴.

On 11 February 1993 one of the most shocking moments of the civil war was the massacre of Afshar (a district in west Kabul). Hundreds of Hazaras were collectively massacred in west Kabul under the direct command of President Rabbani and his defense minister Ahmad Shah Masood and Sayyaf¹⁴⁵.

Human Rights Watch also received some creditional reports from several officials who worked in Shura-ye Nizar and the interim government that the Afshar incident and the capture of Hazara political leader “Abdul Ali Mazari” was planned and approved by officials at the highest levels of Jamiat and Shura-ye Nizar, Ittihad, and the Rabbani government¹⁴⁶.

¹⁴⁴ The Battle for Kabul: April 1992- March 1993; <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed 26 November 2005)

¹⁴⁵ S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 198

¹⁴⁶ Human Rights Watch interview with K.S., former government security official, Kabul, July 24, 2003; Human Rights Watch interview with C.S.A., former government security official, July 18, 2003; Human Rights Watch interview with R.D., former official in the interim government 1992-1995, Kabul, July 16, 2003; Human Rights Watch interview with J.G.M., former government intelligence official 1992-1996, Kabul, July 10, 2003. Intelligence agents in Wahdat also told Human Rights Watch that they knew in advance of an impending attack by Jamiat and Ittihad forces. The Battle for Kabul: April 1992- March 1993; <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed 26 November 2005)

The plan was known to some residence of Afshar who had personal relations and connections with Shura-ye Nizar forces¹⁴⁷.

The attack was well planned and some of the Hazaras (member of the Harakat-e Islami) were paid off well to empty their positions for the Ittihad and Shura-ye Nizar forces and it happened accordingly¹⁴⁸. (Some of those people who took many and commit crimes against their own Hazaras were later hanged by Mazari forces in front of the public on a crowded street).

Human Rights Watch also mentions that two days before the attack, Masood held a meeting with senior commanders of Jamiat and Ittihad and Shura-ye Nizar at the military base at Badambagh in Kabul. Mullah Izzat (a commander in Paghman), General Mohammad Qasim Fahim (head of Aminiati-e Milli on that time later defense minister), Baba Jan, Anwar Danger, Gadda Mohammad, Baba Jullunder Panjshiri, Haji Almas, Gul Haider, and Bismillah Khan were the senior leadership of Jamiat at that time. According to Human Rights Watch it is certain that General Fahim, Shir Alam and Zalmay Tofan (two Ittihad commanders) and Hussain Anwari (leader of Harakat faction) were in that meeting¹⁴⁹. Human Rights Watch further notes that the next day following Masood's

¹⁴⁷ for the interviews of those civilians who evacuated the area before attack; see The Battle for Kabul: April 1992- March 1993; <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed 27 November 2005)

¹⁴⁸ The Harakat and Wahdat commanders alleged to have received payments from Jamiat were Sadaqat, Zabiti Mohsin Sultani, Iwaz Ali Ghorjani, Tabbish, Malik Sherif, and Sayyid Sherif. Human Rights Watch received consistent testimony on these names from former officials in Wahdat and Shura-e Nizar. Human Rights Watch interview with Q.Q.S., former Wahdat commander, Kabul, July 14, 2004; Human Rights Watch interview with Q.E.K., former Wahdat political official, Kabul, July 15, 2003; Human Rights Watch interview with C.S.A., former government security official, July 18, 2003. The Battle for Kabul: April 1992- March 1993; <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed 30 November 2005)

¹⁴⁹ Afghan Justice Project report, January 2005, p. 84 <http://afghanistanjusticeproject.org/warcrimesandcrimesagainsthumanity19782001.pdf> (accessed 30 November 2005) and The Battle for Kabul: April 1992- March 1993; <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (Afghan Justice Project report, January 2005, p. 29. "although, the page-reference HRW gives here is inaccurate") accessed 31 November 2005.

meeting, Sayyaf held a meeting with Ittihad commanders; Haji Shir Alam, Zalmay Tofan, Abdullah Shah, and Mullah Taj Mohammad, in Paghman to discuss the planed attack¹⁵⁰.

Masood also held another meeting in Karte Parwan on the night before attack and Masood also met with Rabbani, Sayyaf and Fahim on February 12 at Hotel Intercontinental on the second day of operation¹⁵¹. In Appendix A I have included the names of all the commanders who took part in the Afshar operation¹⁵²:

The attack carried out at one o'clock on the morning of 11 February, 1993. The inhabitants of Afshar were been attacked from four sides and within the next two days some 700¹⁵³ people were estimated to have been killed or disappeared. The brutal Ittihad and Shura-ye Nizar soldiers killed, raped, tortured, and took young boys and girls as captives and set fires to homes and properties of the civilians¹⁵⁴. These criminals wrote their messages on the walls for the remaining using the bloods of those civilians whom they killed and left the head of the women and children cut from their neck or took with them as a gift to their officers¹⁵⁵.

The Massacre was condemned by regional and international governments and human rights organizations and Rabbani government accepted the tragedy as one of his

¹⁵⁰ AJP also refers to this meeting on page 84.

¹⁵¹ The Battle for Kabul: April 1992- March 1993; <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm> (accessed 6 December 2005) Afghan Justice Project report, January 2005, p. 85.(although, AJP mentions the names of Ayatollah Mohsini, Ayatollah Fazl as well present in the meeting). <http://afghanistanjusticeproject.org/warcrimesandcrimesagainsthumanity19782001.pdf> (accessed 7 December 2005)

¹⁵² Afghan Justice Report, January 2005, p. 83-84
<http://afghanistanjusticeproject.org/warcrimesandcrimesagainsthumanity19782001.pdf> (accessed 9 December 2005)

¹⁵³ Although, Human Rights Watch estimates about 700-750 people killed, 70-80 were killed in the streets, and 5000 houses were looted. http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/afghanistan0605/4.htm#_ftnref167 (accessed 12 December 2005)

¹⁵⁴ S. A. Mousavi: The Hazaras of Afghanistan, Oxford, 1998, page 199

¹⁵⁵ I have seen it on the Afshar documentary movie that the soldiers have written "Yad Gar Gul Agha...etc." from the blood of those people being massacred.

government's 'mistakes'. But those criminals are still free and most of them are members of the Karzai's administration and parliament and never brought to justice, although, the Human Rights Watch recommended some of their names to Afghan government to be brought to Justice but no action has been taken yet¹⁵⁶.

The War continued till the Taliban took over Kabul in 1996 and the number of crimes that both the Hezb-e Wahdat and the other Jihadi groups committed are countless. For the thirst of power they fought and they authorized their followers and partisans to carry out all kinds of discrimination and violence against the civilians either in Kabul or in other areas of Afghanistan. For the more details about their crimes including the rape, torture, summary executions and other criminal acts see the report of Afghan Justice Project, January 2005. All the crimes carried out by them were out of my topics of discussions and were not discussed completely.

In early 1995 Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Islami vacated his military bases in Char-Asyab, Kabul for Taliban to advance to Kabul. In a peace agreement between Taliban and Hezb-e Wahdat Mazari was proposed by Taliban to provide them the front lines in West Kabul. It was happily accepted by Mazari and Hezb-e Wahdat. The Taliban were retreated by Shura-ye Nizar's forces in the first few days leaving the Hezb-e Wahdat and Hazaras vulnerable without any support from them. The severe bombardments of Hazara bases in west Kabul compelled Mazari to send his envoy, Abdul Hussain Maqsudi to talk with Taliban's leader Mullah Borjan to return Wahdat's heavy arms and munitions to best enable them to survive against Masood's severe attacks. Mullah Borjan arranged the

¹⁵⁶ Same as 148

place and time for direct talks with Mazari but when Mazari and several members of Wahdat's Central Council were present in the Taliban's controlled area in Gulbagh they were taken hostages and then transferred to Char-Asyab¹⁵⁷. Finally in March 12, 1995 Mazari with seven of his fellows were murdered by Taliban. There are different arguments over the death of Mazari while some believe that he was murdered in Char-Asyab but most arguably believe that he was purposefully being transported to Kandahar but on the way in a short stop in Ghazni, Mazari was able to capture the gun of a Talib (a Taliban soldier) and after a self-battle did find his way to escape out of the Helicopter but being shot by Taliban while running off to save his life¹⁵⁸. After the death of Mazari the politics of Hazara redefined itself in the coming years.

11) Hazaras During Taliban (1996-2001)

In 1996, the Taliban drove the government out of Kabul. Hezb-e Wahdat moved its headquarters to Bamyan and after a year of argument and struggle over the leadership within the party finally Abdul Karim Khalili was nominated as the head of Hezb-e Wahdat.

Hezb-e Wahdat was once again reorganized under the leadership of a Hazara but this time unlike Mazari Khalili was pro-Tajik government and keen to make alliance with the

¹⁵⁷ Hafizullah Emadi: The Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan. http://boozers.fortunecity.com/jerusalem/47/Political_Role/political_role.html#7 p. 383-84 (accessed 22 December 2005)

¹⁵⁸ My personal interview with Ali Hasan Ikhlās (July 2005) the former-commander of Hezb-e Wahdat who said to me that he was in Ghazni on the time but couldn't do anything for Mazari despite that he was near to the area that Mazari was shot to death. According to Ahmed Rashid, Mazari was dropped from Helicopter down to ground in Ghazni while being carried to Kandahar (Taliban: Islami, Oil and the New Great Games in Central Asia. P. 65)

Tajiks and Uzbeks to fight back the Pashtun-Taliban to take their lost territories back from them. The Taliban or as Ahmed Rashid calls them the ‘unknown soldiers of God’¹⁵⁹, were ethnically Pashtuns and were against the Shi’ia and Hazara in particular.

In 1996 the alliance was made between the Jamiat-i Islami-ye Afghanistan (including Shura-ye Nizar) , Hezb-e Wahdat-i Islami-ye Afghanistan, Junbish-i Milli-ye Islami-ye Afghanistan (Dostum’s party), Harakat-e Islami-ye Afghanistan, and Ittihad-i Islami Bara-ye Azadi (Sayyaf’s party) whom were once fighting against each other in Kabul now giving hands to each other to fight the extreme fundamentalist Muslims (Taliban) who were believed to bring the Pashtun subjugated rule once again in Afghanistan. The alliance was called the National Islamic United Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan (ISA) but was commonly known as United Front¹⁶⁰ with one Pashtun (Sayyaf) party also in the alliance.

a) Taliban And The Massacre Of Hazaras In Mazar-E Sharif

In May 1997, General Abdul Malik one of Dostum’s deputy made a weak alliance with Taliban for the occupation of the Mazar-e Sharif (capital of Balkh province, north of Afghanistan) and to help him to overthrow Dostum from power in Mazar-e Sharif. Malik blamed Dostum for having hands in the killings of his brother (General Rasool Pahlawan)

¹⁵⁹ I borrowed these words from Ahmed Rashid’s Book; Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia. Ahmed Rashid, Ch. 2. P. 59 (Farsi Version)

¹⁶⁰ See also the Human Rights Watch report: The Military Assistance to the Afghan Opposition (Oct. 2001). Accessed December 26, 2005 <http://www.hrw.org/backgrounder/asia/afghan-bck1005.pdf>

with his 15 guards and also for his 'killing-order' by Dostum¹⁶¹. The Dostum (Malik faction) and Hezb-e Wahdat were controlling the city by the time the Taliban attacked. The alliance between Malik and Taliban was deteriorated because after capturing the Mazar-e Sharif city the Taliban refused the participation of Malik in power and only promised him to appoint him as a deputy foreign minister (Rashid, p. 102). For the first time the fight against Taliban started in May 12, 1997 when a group of Hazaras didn't obey to Taliban for being disarmed. First Hazaras and then the whole population started the retaliation against Taliban by opening fires on them from behind their walls and homes in every street and in only 15 hours 600 Taliban were killed and being buried collectively¹⁶². And in the next few days more than hundreds were killed by Malik and Wahdat forces and some 3000 were captives. Dostum blamed Malik for the massacre of Taliban and found 20 collective-gravesites of Taliban in Laily-desert in Jozjan where more than 2000 Taliban captives were buried (Rashid: Taliban, p. 109). When the Taliban were escaping out of the city on the way back to Kabul they massacred the Hazaras of Qizil Abad – A village in the south of Mazar-e Sharif – and according to Ahmed Rashid (Taliba, p. 108); they killed at least 70 and perhaps hundreds more (Rashid: Taliban, p. 108). The war now got the new face of Pashtun and non-Pashtuns. Taliban were summarily executing the Hazaras and drove the Tajiks out of Shamali-valley and on the other side the Tajik, Uzbek and Hazaras were looting and carrying out the summary execution of Pashtuns in the north and around the Kabul (Rashid: Taliban, p. 110).

¹⁶¹ Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia. Ahmed Rashid, Ch. 2. P. 101 (Farsi Version)

¹⁶² Ibid 158, Ch. 2. P. 102-103 (Farsi Version)

In June 1998 Taliban with the new soldiers gathered from Madrasas in Pakistan and with a huge money-support from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan attacked Maimana city and captured 800 Uzbek soldiers related to Dostum and then later summarily executed all of them. In August 1998 when the Taliban attacked Mazar-e Sharif for the second time the Uzbek soldiers evacuated the front line leaving the 1500 Hazara soldiers vulnerable in the area around the city. In the morning of 8 August, these soldiers were surrounded by Taliban and fought till end of their lives and only 100 of them were able to escape alive from the Taliban¹⁶³. When the Taliban recaptured the city of Mazar-e Sharif they massacred some 2000 Hazara civilians¹⁶⁴.

Within the first few hours of the recapture of the city, the Taliban carried genocide of the Hazara, Uzbek, and Tajik population of the Mazar-e Sharif. According to various sources they were searching for Hazaras but on the way around the city they were killing everything that was moving¹⁶⁵. According to Ahmed Rashid (Taliban, p. 124) one of the Taliban-commanders later confessed that Mullah Omar allowed us to massacre the people of Mazar-e Sharif for two hours but we continued that for two days¹⁶⁶. Rashid also says that thousands of Hazaras were in prisons in Mazar-e Sharif and when the prisons were filled with people; Taliban were locking them in the containers and carrying them to Dasht-Laily and behaving with them as were done before with Taliban (Rashid: Taliban, p. 125). One of the witnesses told to Ahmed Rashid (Taliban, p.125) that he was the eye witness that when Taliban were carrying three containers filled with Hazaras to Dasht-

¹⁶³ See Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia. Ahmed Rashid, Ch. 2. P. 123-124 (Farsi Version)

¹⁶⁴ Participation of Hezb-e Wahdat in armed struggle to overthrow the Taliban: <http://www.ilw.com/articles/2004,0419-afghanistan1.shtm>, (May 27, 2003) and (Accessed: December 29, 2005)

¹⁶⁵ The Massacre in Mazar-e Sharif: Human Rights Watch, November 1998. Vol. 10, No. 7 (c). Accessed December 29, 2005. http://hrw.org/reports98/afghan/Afrep00.htm#P35_500

¹⁶⁶ Ibid 160, Ch. 2. P. 124 (Farsi Version)

Laily, he says when they opened the door of a container out of three hundred only three were alive there and those also were transferred to prisons.

Taliban blamed Hazaras for the killings of Taliban soldiers in 1997 and hence reprisal the killings of Hazaras and the clearance of the north from Shi'ia and Hazara were the main objectives. In a mosque announcement the Mullah Manoon Niazi said that Hazaras shall have only three options; convert to Sunni faction, leave the city and go to Iran, or die¹⁶⁷.

b) Fall Of Bamyan And Massacre Of Hazaras

The Taliban entered Bamyan in 13 September 1998 for the first time¹⁶⁸. According to Rashid (Taliban, p.125) Taliban attacked Bamyan from three directions but no heavy fighting occurred because some commanders of Wahdat surrendered themselves to Taliban and they entered the city without any resistance. Karim Khalili with their fellows and the Hazara young males escaped to the mountains. Mullah Omar ordered to his fellow soldiers to avoid torturing Hazara civilians in Bamyan. Yet, more than 50 old Hazara men were killed in few weeks later. Hezb-e Wahdat recaptured the Bamyan in April 12, 1999¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶⁷ See Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia. Ahmed Rashid, Ch. 2. P. 125 (Farsi Version)

¹⁶⁸ Massacre of Hazaras in Bamyan. <http://www.hazara.net/taliban/genocide/bamyan/bamyan.html>. Accessed January 1, 2006

¹⁶⁹ See Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia. Ahmed Rashid, Ch. 2. P. 128-131 (Farsi Version)

The Taliban recaptured Bamyan after three weeks and this time with a four thousand troops¹⁷⁰. It was 9th of May 1999 and this time Taliban didn't forgive anybody including the women and children of the Hazara ethnicity. According to US Departments of State this time the Taliban carried out the summary executions. Hundreds of civilians including women and children were taken to mountains and being killed. The houses were burnt and detainees were used for forced labors as of reports by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International¹⁷¹.

The Taliban also carried out a massacre of Hazara civilians in May 2000 near the Robatak pass on the border between Baghlan and Samangan provinces. According to Human Rights Watch; "thirty-one bodies were found at one site to the northwest of the pass of which most of them were tortured before they were killed". These people were arrested as a result of nine days continues house-to-house search. According to Human Rights Watch the facilities at which these men were detained were under the command of Commander Mullah Shazad Kandahari¹⁷².

¹⁷⁰ For more information see the "Massacre of Hazaras in Bamyan". <http://www.hazara.net/taliban/genocide/bamyan/bamyan.html>. Accessed 2 January, 2006

¹⁷¹ US Departments of States: Taliban's Betrayal of the Afghan People;

http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Archive_Index/The_Talibans_Betrayal_of_the_Afghan_People.html Accessed: 2 January, 2006

¹⁷² Human Rights Watch: Massacres of Hazara in Afghanistan (Massacre at Robatak Pass, May 2000) Vol. 13, No. 1 (c), February 2001; http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/afghanistan/afghan101-04.htm#P176_25561 Accessed: 3 January 2006

c) Massacre Of Hazaras In Yakaolang

Hezb-e Wahdat recaptured Yakaolang between late December 2000 and early January 2001¹⁷³ and according to Amnesty International at least four people were executed by Wahdat forces. The reason is not clear that on what basis Hezb-e Wahdat killed those people. Infact, Amnesty International recorded the interview of a witness and according to him Hezb-e Wahdat arrested four shopkeepers named Haji Ishaq, Nazer Moalem, Mohammad and Abkar and shot them in the area of Dahan Shura at the end of Bazar Kona in Nayak.

Sufi Garizi a fanatical and factionalist Talib was the commander of Taliban in Yakaolang. According to RAWA (Revolutionary Afghan Women Association); Khalili attacked the Taliban from Suof valley. Khalili succeeded to defeat Taliban in the first attack which took place in Gum Aab and after some clashes the forces of Hezb-e Wahdat entered Yakaolang on 2nd January 2001.

On January 8, 2001 the Taliban forces recaptured the Yakaolang district after two major attacks confronting the loss of thirty of their men¹⁷⁴. The Taliban were searching house-to-house for Hazaras male and arresting them. After taking them to the deserts and mountains they were summarily executing them. The shout of these innocents were not heard by anybody and their only leader (Khalili) who promised to save their lives escaped and these empty-handed civilians were left alone to wait for their death by Taliban only

¹⁷³ Revolutionary Afghan Women Association (RAWA) mentions 2nd January 2001 as the date that Wahdat recaptured the Yakaolang district but in most other books late December is recorded

¹⁷⁴ For details see Human Rights Watch: "Massacres of Hazaras in Afghanistan, vol. 12, No. 7 (c)" February 19, 2001 http://www.pcpafg.org/organizations/Human_rights/hrweb/Class2/HR_Reports_Afghanistan/Massacres_of_Hazaras_in_Afghanistan.htm Accessed: 7 January 2006

because they were Hazaras. According to Amnesty International over 300 unarmed men and a number of civilian women and children were Massacred on 9th January 2001 and a witness told Amnesty International that some 73 women, children and elderly men took shelter in Fatimatozahra mosque in Kata Khana area of Yakaolang, thinking that the Taliban would respect the sanctity of the mosque but the Taliban fired rockets on the mosque killing all of them¹⁷⁵. Hundreds of such incidences are portraying the malice and vindictiveness of Taliban against the Shi'ia of Afghanistan and Hazara in particular.

12) Role Of Hazara In The Karzai Government

The political and economical situation of Hazaras changed drastically after the overthrow of Taliban by the U.S.-led coalition forces in October 2001.

The Bonn Agreement and the constitutional law of Afghanistan established the basis of the participation of Hazaras in the Karzai government in fulfilling their rights. Since then Hazaras have been included in the central government, however, it is dominated by ethnic Pashtuns and Tajiks.

Based on both the constitutional law of the country and the Bonn Agreement the Karzai government policy is to promote the minority rights. Henceforth, Hazaras having six ministers in the cabinet, a deputy president, one governor and many representatives in the

¹⁷⁵ Amnesty International: Massacres in Yakaolang;
<http://www.amnestyusa.org/children/document.do?id=D33D75136CB017EC80256A1C00664835> Accessed: 07 January, 2006

parliament. Since then, aid agencies started many projects in different areas of Hazarajat and in different sectors. Their social, economical and political situation is considerably improved. But it is still hard to judge the role of Hazaras in achieving their rights in the current government which also differs from some points of view to others. For example, Maolem Aziz – a former Hezb-e Wahdat member of the high panel council and the spokesperson for Mazari and later for Mohaqeq and now a teacher in West Kabul – thinks that the presence of the Hazaras in Karzai government is only symbolic which doesn't have to do anything with the rights of the Hazara people¹⁷⁶. Sayyed Saaler – A former commander of Hezb-e Wahdat – in Mazar believes that the rights of Hazaras can not be accomplished just by occupying some ministry posts in the government¹⁷⁷. While some like Ali Hassan Ikhlas thinks that the position of Hazaras has improved drastically since before and especially since the time of Taliban¹⁷⁸.



¹⁷⁶ For detailed interview with Maolem Aziz see the Appendix C.

¹⁷⁷ My personal interviews with them are listed in Appendix C.

¹⁷⁸ See Appendix C for detailed interview of Ali Hassn Ikhlas.

Appendix A

Following are the commanders who took part in Massacre of Afshar in west Kabul.

Jamiat Islami Commanders and Units:

1. Mohammad Qasim Fahim, director of intelligence, with responsibility for special operations in support of offensive and participating in planning of the operation.
2. Anwar Danger, commander of a division level unit of mujahideen from Shakkar Darra, Shamali, named by numerous witnesses as leading troops in Afshar that carried out abuses on the first two days of the operation.
3. Mullah Izzat, commander of a division level unit of mujahideen, from Paghman, named by numerous eye witnesses as leading troops in Afshar that carried out abuses on the first two days of the operation.
4. Mohammad Ishaq Panjshiri, a commander of a brigade level unit of Mujahideen (lewa) that, according to witnesses, participated in the assault.
5. Haji Bahlol Pansjshiri, a commander of a brigade level unit (lewa) that, according to witnesses participated in the assault.
6. Baba Jullunder Panjshiri, a commander of a battalion level unit (ghund) that participated in the assault.
7. Mushtaq Lalai, a battalion level, participated in the assault.
8. Baz Mohammad Ahmad Badakhshani, a commander of a division level unit that participated in the assault, attacking from Qargha.

Ittihad-e Islami commanders and units participating in the operation:

1. Haji Shir Alam, division commander affiliated to Sayyaf, from Paghman, named by numerous eye witnesses as leading troops in Afshar on the first two days when abuses were committed.
2. Zalmai Tofan, a commander of the Lewa 597 brigade, named by numerous eye witnesses as leading troops in Afshar on the first two days, when abuses were committed.
3. Dr. Abdullah, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund) of the Lewa 597, named by several witnesses as leading troops in Afshar on day one and two, when abuses were committed.
4. Jaglan Naeem, a commander of a battalion level unit (ghund) of the Lewa 597, had stationed troops in Afshar by second day of the operation.
5. Mullah Taj Mohammad, named as participating in planning of the operation.
6. Abdullah Shah, named by several witnesses as leading troops in Afshar and responsible for arbitrary arrests, abductions and other abuses.
7. Khanjar, who had stationed troops in Afshar by the second day of the operation.
8. Abdul Manan Diwana, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund), named by witnesses as stationing troops in Afshar by the second day of the operation.
9. Amanullah Kochi, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund), had stationed troops in Afshar by second day of the operation.
10. Shirin, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund), had stationed troops in Afshar by the second day of the operation.
11. Mushtaq Lalai, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund), had stationed troops in Afshar by the second day of the operation.
12. Mullah Kachkol, had stationed troops in Afshar by second day of the operation.

Appendix B

Establishment of the Shi'i political groups in Afghanistan.

1	Shura-e-Itifaq (Council of the Union) Place & Date of Formation: Bamiyan, Afghanistan, 1979 Head: Sayed Ali Behishti Ideology: Traditional Islam Composition: 1,000 staff: 2,000 partisans Main Front Commander: Muhammad Hasan, known as Sayed Jaglan. Bases of operation: Bamiyan, Ghazni, and Balkh
2	Harakat-e-Islami (Islamic Movement) Place & Date of formation: Qum, Iran, 1979 Head: Muhammad Asif Mohsini Ideology: Traditional Islam Composition: 200 staff: 3,000 partisans Main Front Commander: Muhammad Anwari Bases of operation: Wardak, Qandahar, Bamiyan, Parwan, Kabul and Sammangan provinces
3	Sazman-e-Mujahidin-e-Mustazafin (Organization of Warriors of the Dispossessed) Place & Date of Formation: Bamiyan, Afghanistan, 1979 Head: Joint Council Ideology: Militant & political Bases of operation: Bamiyan.
4	Sazman-e-Nasr (Victory Organization) Place & Date of Formation: Qum, Iran, 1979 Head: (Council of four persons) Ideology: Islamic Fundamentalism Composition: 1,500 staff: 4,000 partisans Bases of operation: Ghor, Bamiyan, Wardak, Parwan, Ghazni, Balkh, and Kabul provinces.
5	Sepah-e-Pasdar (Revolutionary Guard Corps) Place & Date of Formation: Qum, Iran, 1981 Head: Muhammad Akbari Ideology: Islamic Fundamentalism Composition: 1,500 staff: 2,000 partisans Bases of operation: Ghor, Helmand, Bamiyan, Ghazni, and Parwan Provinces
6	Hizbullah (Party of God) Place & Date of Formation: Qum, Iran, 1981 Head: Sheikh Wusoqi Main commander: Qari Ali Ahmad Darwazi known as Qari Yakdasta Ideology: Islamic Fundamentalism Composition: 1,000 staff: 2,000 partisans
7	Hizb-e-Wahdat (Unity Party), Founded in 1988 – Present. Head: Karim Khalili succeeded Abdul Ali Mazari Ideology: Moderate Islam & Hazara Nationalism Composition: Sazman-e-Nasr, Sepah-e-Pasdar, Hizbullah, Dawat (Invitation), Nahzat (Progress), Nayro-e-Islam (Islamic Strength), Jabha-e-Mutahid (United Front), Shura-e-Itifaq, Sazman-e-Mujahidin-e-Mustazafin and Harkat-e-Islami.

Table taken from “Hazaras and their role in the process of political transformation in Afghanistan” by Hafizullah Emadi

Appendix C

During my visit this year to Hazarajat I interviewed many of the civilians who were in the area during the war and also some of the commanders of Hezb-e Wahdat which I want to list them below as a general discussion:

Interviews:

All the interviews are being video-taped and are recoded with me. The original interviews are in Farsi and I have translated them to English. To see the videos of the interviews click on their links in the table at the end.

1. Ali Hassan Ikhlas: the former commander of Hezb-e Wahdat (Sepah-e Pasdaran Faction) from Jighato Ghazni. See the [video](#)

Q. What is the role of Hazaras in Karzai government and in your opinion are Hazaras improved economically much better than before or not?

A. Currently, in Karzai government I shall say that the situation of Hazaras are neither good nor bad but they have much improved by knowledge since the start of the Jihad. For example, before one person had a radio in a village but now everyone has one and listens to the news. Our children are going to school and we are free to express ourselves. In the government their positions are not very well but it is better than the times of Taliban.

Q. If you remember anything from the war time. We would like to hear it from you if you want to share it with us?

A. In the war of west Kabul when for the first time the fight started I was there for six months. When the war started in Kotey Sangi I was witness to it and was involved in the fight. I was the commander of 150 soldiers in “Aloom Ijtimayee” Kotey Sangi near Dewandey. I have the memories of win and defeat both. For example, in one day we captured from Silo to Dura-ye Company which was observed by foreign journalists too. During the war there is either defeat or win and I was for six months facing both kinds of the experiences.

Q. In this war, did you fight because of the benefit to your ethnic or to your party or just because you were in the battlefield and you had to fight because of your self-defense?

A. It was just an ethnic and religious war and you had to fight for your right. We were not a part of the government and the government was not giving our right so we were fighting. The war was between Hazara, Pashton and Tajik. There was no Harakat and Wahadat and Sepah but only one party. We all were related to Hezb-e Wahdat, it was an ethnic war and we were asking for our rights and they were not giving it so we were fighting.

Q. Mr. Ikhlas! Were you personally involved in fights with Taliban too?

A. When Taliban were in Kabul for about one year we didn't fight with Taliban but when the war started with Taliban in Bamyan we fought with Taliban here in Ghazni too. I had 100 soldiers under me and we fought for 22 days with them but after the fall of Bamyan, Dr. Shah Jan (Harakat-e Islami commander) negotiated between us and Taliban to save our area from Taliban. We surrendered our weapons to Taliban but during the war we lost some of our men. When the area was captured by Taliban I escaped to Pakistan.

2. Mohammad Feroz from Deh Nazar village of Jeghato, Ghazni

See the [video](#)

Q. What changes you see in the position of Hazaras in Karzai government in contrast with Soviets-led governments in the past.

A. Hazaras fought and defeated the Soviets from their villages and country. The role of Hazaras now in Karzai government is much better than before. They are considered to be one of the greatest powers in the politics of Afghanistan now.

Q. In your opinion this war was good or you are against it?

A. A lot of Hazara people were killed which exceeds ten thousands. But despite these it was in the benefit of Hazaras.

Q. How?

A. Because if this war was not fought the Hazaras were losing its identity and name and they would have been forgotten completely.

3. Mohammad Kazim Afzali from Bayee-Nawor, Ghazni

See the [video](#)

Q. Do you remember anything from the war against Russian in which you were involved directly?

A. yes, I don't remember the dates but once I remember that one of my relatives was killed before my eyes his name was Abdul Najam and also we lost Haji Ibrahim who was a commander.

Q. Did Russians entered in your area (Nawor)?

A. Yes, they came and we even couldn't walk during the night and day and they took some of our villagers as captives of which some released later but some were missing.

Q. Why you were fighting with Russian?

A. I was not in the political process of it and I just know that we were told that it is Jihad but now I can say that this Jihad was useless. For example, we wanted to be teachers and engineers but we lost everything and gained nothing.

Q. What you remember from the civil war after the withdrawal of Russian?

A. The war with Russian was a holy one even if we were been killed; because we were fighting to save our people, namos (family), religion and country. But the civil war was totally nonsense and had no advantage because we couldn't get anything from it.

4. Abdullah from Folateen Bamyan

See the [video](#)

Q. Do you know anything from Taliban attack here?

A. I escaped from here when they came because they were killing everyone.

Q. How many people have been killed by them here?

A. I am not sure about the number but when I came back after the Taliban left the area I saw hundreds of the dead bodies of the people whom were killed by Taliban.

5. Hassan, Mohammad Ali and Mohammad Dad

See the [video](#)

Q. What were you working during the Taliban rule here?

A. (Hassan) I was not working because and I was at school. (Mohammad Ali) Taliban were not letting us to work. (Hassan) Taliban arrested me and were asking me that where your father is? I refused to tell them and they beat me and then when they released me I with my family escaped to a village three hours away from here. (Mohammad Dad) Some Pashtuns were living here and when Taliban came here they whispered that he was with Hezb-e Wahdat and they arrested me here in the Bazar of Bamyan. I tried to escape from them and they fought at me but no bullet touched me and finally they captured me at the end of Bazar and by giving them eight hundred thousand Afghani I was released and then I escaped to Behsood (an area three hours away from Bamyan).

6. Mohammad Hussain Mohaqeq from Jagghori

See the [Video](#)

Q. What do you remember from the civil war of Hazarajat?

A. Sazman Nasr had the majority of the area under control in Jagghori followed by Nuzat and Sepah. They were fighting with each other and killing their own people. Sazman Nasr and Nuhzat fought a lot in Jagghori and killed hundreds of their own Hazaras.

Q. What do you think of the civil war in Kabul?

A. Though the war was because of the personal interest of the leaders either Hazaras or Pashtuns and Tajiks but the civilians were killed for nothing. But the only role that it had in the future of Hazaras was that this fight put Hazara in the international context. For example, now people around the world know who the Hazaras are.

Q. Are you satisfied from the current government?

A. We are not satisfied at all. We are eighty thousand people in Jagghori but even not a penny has been spent on Jagghori in the education and development context. Except the NGOs who have done a lot and also our own people have contributed a lot.

7. Maolem Aziz Kabul

See the videos ([video 1](#), [video 2](#))

Although Maolem Aziz Kindly has given a brief overview of Afghanistan's history from Abdur Rahman Khan Reign to current government but due to the limit of my thesis I couldn't include this entire interview here.

Q. What was the main factor behind the civil war in Afghanistan?

A. It is difficult that we find the main cause of it because in the social and political arena there won't be only one cause but different causes persists for such a thing. I feel the main factor was the past despotic history where there no fair relations between the people of Afghanistan were shaped so that the people of Afghanistan consider themselves the elements of a national framework. But the only thing which changed the historical difficulty into a bitter reality was the lack of the political policy of the Jihadi parties. Because they were put into the political leadership without having the political capacity for it and they didn't have any particular plan for the control of the power and hence they used their power to suppress their oppositions. Yet they couldn't figure it out logically that they could solve most of these problems without even using the power.

Q. How was the situation of Hazaras? Were they fighting to defend their nation from the cruelty of Pashtuns or was the interests of their leaders were involved in it?

A. It is different. In Hazaras front once you see the political aims of the parties and you also see the social-participation of the people. If you study the war in Kabul it soon changed to a social-war means that in Kabul it was not Hezb-e Wahdat to fight but all the people who were here thinking that it doesn't matter who this party is and from where it came; but behind its name it is we whom to be killed. And the enemies who were fighting here never beating anybody by the name of Hezb-e Wahdat and even if they were arresting people they were not asking them that you are a Wahdat (belonging to Hezb-e Wahdat) or to which party you concern? But all these areas that you see were once been the target of Rockets. Despite that in Kabul you could not find more than 100 people being the member of Hezb-e Wahdat; yet people who were living here were the target of attacks which were carried out by the name of Hazara on them. Therefore, the defense that Hazaras were doing as a mass of society was the defense of their situation and presence. But why they were put into such a situation refers back to the lack of political policy in the upper level because when the politics can't be intact controller for the behavior, feelings, and even the advantage of people will bring the convulsion and chaos. And this was that once because of the political differences of some political leaders and some parties because of the divide of the power brought up the social fierce and when the social violence came, the summary executions occurred and thousands of people of Hazaras and even Tajiks, and Pashtuns were massacred without even knowing why? Because when the war ended, now you see that Pashtuns and Hazaras are living with each other and none of them even think of fighting with each other. But even now these people have the capacity that if some unsafe political action occurs among them could possibly change this intact situation into an unsafe situation. It is enough that if you have a managed group and move to some where and kill five Pashtuns and then announce that you killed them because you took the revenge of Hazaras or even if a four Pashtuns could arrange something to attack some place and tell that they are Hazaras. This will become the reason for some hundred shops to be burnt, hundred cars to be theft, hundred other people to be victim. I think that in wars of Kabul also such relations existed, it is true that the bases of the historical revenge, social injustice were present here as a percussion-cap of the explosion in Afghanistan but the only thing which changed this percussion-cap into practical explosion was the lack of the political knowledge which was seen among the political leaders.

Q. There were the Hazara parties who fought with each and other and were harmful not only to their partisans but also to Hazara civilians. Was it just because of the personal interest of the leaders?

A. No, when the fight started the different sides came into being. The west Kabul front which was leaded by Hezb-e Wahdat included with in it the Harakat-e Islami which was headed by Ayatollah Mohsisni. But when the war started it soon changed to a national-struggle. Even though, in the beginning it was a religious war but the victim of war was completely ethnical which means that only Hazaras because of their face or in whatever means they were identified, then they were being tortured and annoyed. We also had Shi'is which were non-Hazaras such as Qizel Bash, Sayyeds and they were not been targeted as Hazaras from the beginning, therefore, in the war they were in the side of Ahmad Shah Masood. For example, Ayotullah Mohsisni who was a member of the High Panel Council in the government and also Anwari and Kazimi they all soon went to their side. Later on when the war was critical all those non-Hazara Shi'is went to join Sayyaf, Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Masood, thus, when the war started between them which was between parties in its real meaning was a national-war. Because all the Hazaras were with Hezb-e Wahdat and all the non-Hazaras of Hezb-e Wahdat went to the side of Mohsini, Sayyaf, and Rabbani and soon this front took its ethnical shape. Also another thing which had a principle role was the involvement of Iran. Iran had vast devotee among the Shi'ia parties before they came to Kabul because the Pashtuns were in power. But later when Tajiks replaced them in 1992 Iran changed its policy. Because of its ethnical and cultural relation with Tajiks hey preferred to support Tajik government rather than Pashtuns. I myself am witness to a scene that Mr. Najafi who was the ambassador of Iran in Kabul met with Mr. Mazari and was pressurizing Mazari to support Tajiks in Afghanistan giving the reason that the Shi'is government in Afghanistan is impossible and hence it goes to Tajiks or Pashtuns and Iran situation requires that they back Tajiks (Farsi speaking) rather than Pashtuns (Pashtu speaking) and therefore asked Mazari to give hands to Tajiks. Mazari in response articulated that the though the policy of Iran requires to support Tajiks but policy of Hazaras require to support a government which should be a mixed of every ethnicity. Mazari was giving an example that we have not more than 2 km borders with Tajiks in Afghanistan but more than 1500 km with Pashtuns which starts from Badghis down to Ghorband and other places. If we only support Tajiks then it means that we shall burn fire over this 1500 km border and the fight which occurs as a result will be only between Pashtuns and Hazaras which is not in our benefit. Hence Mazari refused to give positive answer to the demands of Iran which made Iran a bit upset. But when in 1994 the war started with Shura-ye Nizar insisted more on Hezb-e Wahdat and as a result they raised the Iran-trained Akhonds (Mullahs) which were almost 90 percent of the Hezb-e Wahdat as an opposition front which they shall try to establish a good relation between Mazari and Rabbani. Mazari was still thinking the same and didn't hear to Iran and established good relation with Hekmatyar which benefited Hazaras to have peaceful relations with Pashtuns. But when Taliban came to Kabul raised the issue of the Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns government which I remember that for the second time in the mid of 1994 another Iranian Ambassador Mr. Haddadi came to see Mr. Mazari and insisted on him during his visit on that night that Hezb-e Wahdat should side Shura-ye Nizar because all the Pashtuns have established a united front whom will kill non-Pashtuns. But Mazari was still give the same reasoning that if a good Pashtun

government come to Afghanistan is better than a Tajik government and we can't kill all Pashtuns to have power in our hands. Mr. Mazari hence made an alliance with Taliban but after his death the people thought that alliance or government with Pashtuns are not possible and hence in Shamali and other areas established the alliance against Taliban but still they were not powerful to reduce the risk of Taliban's attacks and progress. And I think that the reason for their weak alliance were once again the lack of political policy among them which once they fought over power with each other and then when another power "Taliban" stood against them they were not able to fight against it united they had different and separate fronts in reality but just by the name they were an alliance.

Q. In this time why Hazaras were fighting against Taliban? Was to take the revenge or just for the self defense?

A. Unfortunately Taliban were the envoys of a wrong and dangerous ideology. They were never thinking over a political solution for the problem of Afghanistan and they had the colonial ideology on the top of their policy. Therefore, the idea of Taliban was a practical war between ethnics. For example, when they came to Kabul they soon started the ethnic cleansing so when they went to Shamali and because it was a pure Tajik state and their opposition parties they burnt their houses and farms and tortured the people and killed them. Also when they went to Yakaolang and Bamyan they were thinking that everyone in the area is enemies and not thinking to find only the responsible person. Hence, the fight against Taliban was because of the policy and actual performance of Taliban which was ethnical. For example, when Mullah Niazi announced in Mazar that Hazaras shall convert to Sunnism, or leave the country, or give taxes. Hence, when such a thing occurs then it was the sign of a war that being a Hazara is a crime. Therefore, every Hazara in every where were defending themselves. If we ask that what was the aim of Hezb-e Wahdat as a political party from that war is completely a different issue because Hezb-e Wahdat had its own agendas and political policies. But when behavior of Taliban initiated the war between Hazaras were their ethnical issue because in everywhere they were attacking people by the name of Hazara and it is clear that the reaction was a "Hazara" ethnical defense.

Q. How much Hazaras proved their position during these wars and how much of their rights been given to them by this war?

A. In principle the war is destructive. You destroy some possessions and resources to bring some others in hand which always equalizes the equation. Suppose that you 100 percent receive your wants on the other side you 100 percent destroy those wants. Then in no where you can find that through the war one can get something. Hence the gains Hazaras had from this war been thousand times less than the loss that it from it. For example, when they lost their homes they lost everything because their only home was everything for them. Some people think that they have achieved their goal of being considered among others and showed to others that they can't completely remove them. I think they could do the same thing by the peaceful means. For example, the most intact fight is the cultural, education and political fight. By spending some pens and papers you could achieve a lot. I think the war can't be proud for the whole people of Afghanistan

even if it was for some. Because these all shame of being displace and finally the shame which Taliban put in our history all were as a result of these wars.

Q. What you think about the position of Hazaras in Karzai government?

A. The government of Karzai is a puppet government. It is the result of an outside hand not because of the support of the people. Those who are in the government also know that if the support of outsiders were not behind them then they can't pass even some days here. The combination of ethnics among this government is also obligatory which is fixed in outside the country and dominated on them e.g., that party 10 percent or this party 4 percent and that party 40 percent and they don't have any other choice. Therefore, the Hazaras are symbolically present in the government but I think the only thing which is a finding for Hazaras in this government is the "constitutional laws of Afghanistan". In the political history of Afghanistan (not considering its deficiencies) this constitutional law is giving the right for the Hazaras as other people to vote, rights of political participation and nominate themselves in the parliament, and after going to parliament can argue over the rights of his people and without this the symbolically presence of the Hazaras in the government doesn't take any place.

8. Sayyed Saalar – Mazar

See the videos ([video 1](#), [video 2](#))

Q. You said you were present in the war against Taliban. Would you please explain your experience?

A. When Taliban came to Mazar for consecutive three days they started the ethnic cleansing killing over 3000 people including women and children.

Q. In which area more massacre of the civilian occurred and what memories you have?

A. In Yakaolang, I was on duty with Mr. Khalili there. We fought with Taliban but since we were weak Taliban defeated us by the help of air strikes and when they entered to Yakaolang they summarily executed everyone there in three places; one place was Bagha Yarak, the other point was inside the mountains, and the third place was the village itself. After Taliban when we went there we say the dead bodies of those civilians and no one was left. They even burnt their farms, houses and animals. They were using every kind of torture on them so that they leave Afghanistan.

Q. Except Mazar and Yakaolang was there any other place where Taliban massacred the Hazaras?

A. Yes, there was no place in Afghanistan where Taliban haven't killed us. Shidan was one of the other areas where people were massacred including women and children and also Souf Valley.

Q. How much this war was in the benefit of Hazaras?

A. The only war which benefited us was the war against Russian. We fought to take our rights from Pashtuns but the rights can not only be summarized with one person sitting as a deputy president. We didn't get anything because we still are poor and lost everything during these wars. We are 40 percent in Balkh but don't have even one person working in the high position with the government here. It is true that we have four and five ministers in Kabul sitting with Mr. Karzai but it doesn't mean anything for the poor people.

9. Mehdi Nasiri – Mazar

See the videos ([video 1](#), [video 2](#))

Q. Mr. Nasiri why Hazaras started to fight with Taliban?

A. When they came to Balkhab it was clear it was not an Islamic front but an ethnic-front whose target was only Hazara people. We fought because we were thinking our defense a necessity. If we wouldn't fight then we would have been killed.

Appendix D



Source: http://www.karty.narod.ru/maps/hazarestan/hazaristan_map.jpg



Source: <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/map.ethnic.afghan.html>

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