

Hazaras: Truth of the Folks in Thousand

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Abstract: This paper represents an overview of Hazaras truth of the folks in thousand.

Keywords: Hazaras, Afghanistan, Tribes

1. Introduction

Medieval history is highly impactful in terms of giving good tribe members and rulers. The rulers ruled across the globe, stretching from Central Europe to Eastern Asia. The rise of Islamic invasion with the crusaders required many men to fight out their battles. The tribes provided support and huge back-up to the foremost regiment of the Mongol leader Genghis Khan. The tribesmen with the meaning "thousand" are Shi'a followers of tribes who have provided a massive infantry skill to fight the disputes of the Karakoram up to the ancient city of Persia. One of the highly skilled and trained men, the tribe acted as the spine for the great Mongol who ruled more than half of Central Asia and parts of Europe. With the ability to hold on to their skills and power to inculcate and resist the harshest of weathers, the tribe knows to hold herds and cattle to produce the best quality of dairy and trade them with the other counter nations. Traditionally, the Hazaras are known to have been the believer in the nuclear family. The system of becoming the head of the family in Hazaras is contrary to the traditional Islamic practice. The man is generally the head of the family; however, post the man's death, his wife takes over the hold of becoming the head of the family and takes control of all the finances, working and establishing the norms for running their family on a day-to-day routine. The tribes consider being one of the most progressive Islamic sects in the Rights and education of the women in the family. About 15% of the total women population of the tribe have become teachers or education activists running the town of Bamyān.

2. History

The tribe is known to have been originating itself on the rough mountains of modern-day Northern Afghanistan. Even though the inception of the tribe goes back to Alexander the Great, the great emperor had a tough time facing and crossing the countryside of Afghanistan. The emperor found the tribesmen to be rather unyielding and different from what he had encountered previously while on his reign to conquer the world. It has been a matter of debate as to whether the Hazaras originate from the city of Bamyān or have migrated from the Mongolian land. The theory to trace back this unique tribe's origin, there are two postulates to abide by:

- French scholar J.P. Ferrier (as the origins of Hazarajat)
- The Hazaras as the natives of Mongols.

1) J.P Ferrier's theory of Hazaras

- The famous French scholar J.P Ferrier, in the 19th century, postulated the theory of the origin of the Hazara Tribe as the native of Afghanistan. The scholar took the inspiration of determining the tribe to be a part of the very country from Curtius' book. He also postulated when Alexander traveled across the terrain, fought battles, and led some of his soldiers to settle down in the country, who consider the forefathers of the current set of tribe members. Interestingly, approximately 3% of the tribe consists of people born with blue eyes, which resemble the DNA of Greeks.
- The making of Hazaras as the descendants of the Greeks was a highly unacceptable theory as it believes that the tribesmen do not feature out with the skin tone and the body structure to that of the East Europeans.
- There is another approach to the Ferriers theory, which considers as a more holistic approach towards the same. Professor. Shah Ali Akbar Shahrstani predicted that the name 'Hazaras' came from the second capital of Aregozia, which meant 'Herola' or happiness. The word Hazara translates as the clan of 'famous' based on the Persian-Arabic dialect, which the tribesmen speak.
- Arnold C. Fletcher, another historian, based his research on the Hazaras by declaring them as the natives of the state of Afghanistan. According to him, the Hazaras had features that resembled the classical Afghani part, i.e., air skin, elated body structure, house of the Pashtun tribe of Central Afghanistan. To give backing to the idea Ferrier, the most famous and known historian of Afghanistan, Abdul Hai Habibi, had laid down three of the most important guidelines, which were important in terms of justifying why the Hazaras originate themselves as the natives of the Afghan land and not from the Mongolian hilltops. Habibi laid down the belief of the tribe not belonging to the land-based on linguistic approach, which gave rise to three important facts about the Hazaras being the native of Afghanistan.
- Habibi claims that the "Hazara" has a common trend between the people of Hazara and the folks living on the mountains of Mahabo up to Abbottabad in Pakistan and the merchants of Kashmiri Pakistan who shared border with Kashgar, now a north-western province in China.
- The second idea portrayed by Habibi was the fact quote

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of Saint Martin, who talks about the journey of Chinese Emperor Hieun Tsang, who, during his trip, talks about the resemblance of the Hazaras with those who lived on the southern tips of the Pamir Mountains.

- Habibi's third argument is of the ideal that bases upon the dialect of the Hazaras, which is an Indo-Persian-based dialect, contrary to the Arab mixed as claimed by other Historians. Habibi also mentions that when Emperor Hieun Tsang moved from India to Tsu Koo Cha.

2) *Hazaras as descendants of Mongols*

The contention acceptable to 90% of historians, the Hazaras are perceived to be the carriers of the Army led by the Great Khan. The resemblance distinguishes itself by the visit of Europeans in the 14th century. The observation was distinctive towards the ability and understanding of finding that both Caucasians and Hazaras were different from the natives of Afghanistan. Many historians provided the basis for the looks and features of the tribe. However, H.W Bellew insisted much upon the belief of the tribe coming as one of the settled soldiers who were enabling the possible outcome that the Great Khan sent to protect and prevent any aggression. According to Bellew, the Great Khan had dropped a few of the tribesmen in Kabul, rest on the banks of Amu River.

We can find similar observations in the book of Mughal Minister Abul-Fazl during the reign of Akbar. He believes that the tribesmen and soldiers were mainly sent from the Mongol land with 'Halako Khan', who was the ruler of the Mongol empire. The minister also believes that the number of these soldiers with similar resemblance Nikodar Auqlan, the grandson of Halako Khan. Petrochevski accepted the theory of the minister. Petrochevski later took this idea. He says that Hazaras are the descendants of the Nikodari Mongols. He further states that it is easy to prove that the Hazaras living in Iran and neighboring areas were the descendants of soldiers left after each victory.

Historian Boyle holds a view similar to Yule's, saying that Hazaras are the descendants of the powerful Nikodar Mongols, lived independently in Afghanistan. However, the Ilkhanian rulings in Sistan, Kirman, and Fars never accepted the tribesmen of Hazaras as they were considered outsiders. Though many writers and historians believe that Hazaras are the descendants of the Mongol Armies residing in Afghanistan in the mid of 13th century; Burnes thinks that not only they are the descendants of the Genghis Khan but also of the Tamerlane who left thousands of his tribes in Afghanistan after returning to Mongolia. The idea of holding these tribesmen was not only verified and given recognition as the ideal holders of the power of the great Khan's legacy, but the tribe also became one of the leaders of the trading, which was quite the contrary made in terms of providing the best quality of tradespeople. The tribe is known to have been traveling and delivering the best quality of mercenary to the rulers of Karakoram by traveling to distant places such as Marrakesh, Cairo to supply rich quality wines and dry fruits.

3) *Hazaras as a part of the Modern-day Afghanistan*

The third-largest tribal group in Afghanistan, Hazaras held a population of 67% of Afghanistan before 1893. Confining

themselves mainly to a 50000 sq. km land of Central Afghanistan known as Hazarajat in the Central province, Hazaras have sustained harsh climates. Some also live-in scattered forms in various parts of Afghanistan, such as Mazar-e Sharif, Badghis, Badakhshan, Jozjan, Samangan, Helmand, Herat, and other places. Their native language bases itself on the Hazargi dialect known as Dari. The tribesmen are mainly Shia Muslims, with a minor portion focusing on Ismaili Shia.

4) *Plight of Hazaras*

Hazaras, since 1893, are differently handled with a more discriminating approach which resulted in the down gradation of the understandable and considerable share of the tribesmen focusing on the development mainly towards the Pashtun Tribe. The tribe is a victim of the minority of the country. Afghanistan has been one of the world's poorest countries, and Hazaras are the biggest facer of poverty. They are kept in ignorance and not given adequate facilities due to the habitation on the mountains. The Tribesmen have been working on the menial jobs, which marks up to 30-50 percent of the country's total workers of the industry that include work along the lines of unskilled labor, artisans, factory workers, shopkeepers, and low-grade civil servants where Hazaras were migrating from rural areas to the cities in search of work. About 60% of the population of Hazaras remain illiterate as they have either been denied admissions to schools due to the linguistic differences and the biased attitude of creating schools that were Pashtun dominating.

3. Discrimination Towards the Tribe

The discriminatory attitude of Hazaras can be observed since the early 13th century during the regimes of the Persian rulers Ilyas shahis. However, the discrimination did not rise to such a high level till 1893. With the coming in of the Pashtun ruler Amir Abdul Rahim Khan, the Afghan society was slowly moving towards ethnocentrism polity. The Amir slaughtered about 50% of the total Hazara population and made some of the members of the tribe escape the region and settle at other places. With the rise of the war, there was a notable change brought in the condition and plight of the people that they had to let go of their property, cattle, relatives and settle towards the eastern front, which is Quetta, Pakistan.

1) *Period of relief*

The discrimination towards the tribe had reduced for the time being when the ruler Amanullah Khan sought ways to prevent the annihilation of the tribe and declare the importance of maintaining peace in the state and amongst every tribe with no scope of hindering or harm. King Amanullah introduced various reforms to improve the troubled relationship between the Pashtuns, Ahmadis, and Hazaras by setting up a committee to represent members from the three communities. Being liberal and understanding, he appointed Mahmud Tarzi to provide solutions and bring the committee to a unanimous decision. During the early 1920s, to secure the peace treaty amongst the tribes and reduction of taxes. The emperor also annulled the enslavement of the Hazara tribe in the 1920s and expected everyone to treat them with equal love and compassion.

2) *Mohammad Nadir Shah's era*

Despite being considered a progressive ruler, Ghazi Mohammad Nadir Shah, a Sunni Muslim by practice, was one of the leaders to have imploded the idea of creating a distinction between the Sunnis and the Shias of the State. The ruler introduced various reforms and policies which were considerably biased towards the former and increased the tax values for the people belonging to the Hazara community. The hate also grew when the denial of admission to Hazaras at the University of Kabul took place. The taxation policy and the targeted animosity towards the community, the king, was assassinated in 1933 by Abdul Khaliq, a young 19-year-old student belonging to the Hazara community. The assassination of Nadir Shah led to a massive gap between the Hazaras and the rest of the country, resulting in 1000s of members belonging to the Hazara community were assassinated and imprisoned.

3) *Annexation of Afghanistan by Soviet Union*

With the taking over of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union came a drastic change towards the system of Government of Afghanistan. With the rise of the Parcham Government led by Babrak Karmal, the policy clarifies to make all the members and tribes residing in the country treated with equality. During the Soviet Union occupation of Afghanistan, the Hazaras held an essential role in the Army and Prime Ministership in the Government.

4) *Rise of Taliban*

With the rise of the Taliban and its tacit understanding with the Government, there began another era of torture and enslavement by two parties towards the tribe in the 1990s where innumerable people were slaughtered, forcefully converted in Pashtun, women raped, and illegal occupying the properties. The Taliban regime is known to have constantly been creating fear amongst the Hazaras by carrying out many Tactical attacks. The attacks occurred every month till 2001 wherein more than 10,000 of the Hazara tribesmen have died.

5) *Era of change: The rise of Hamid Karzai's rule*

With fall of the Taliban regime and the coming in of the Karzai Government in 2004, a drastic change brought change to the plight and condition of people living in Hazarajat. The Karzai Government's newly formulated Constitution recognized the tribe as one of the Ethnic Minorities of the country, with equal rights providing to every citizen of the country. The Hazaras can quickly get the citizenship of the country as well as hold the Passports with ease. The access to higher education came in with more substantial effectiveness, which led them to become part of critical policy-making bodies. The step taken is highly effective, however not the right action taken.

6) *Return of Anguish: Formation of National Unity Government*

The coming in of the NUG Government in 2014 became a source of trouble for the Hazaras. The Islamic State-Khorasan Province, a military organization under the Islamic State banner, increased the activity of persecuting the Hazaras with their subliming and slow attacks killing 100s of Hazaras every year. The Government promises to ensure that the troubles will be out from the Hazarajat region; however, the progress has not

been significant when it comes to execution. The recent attacks in Ashura in 2016, university preparatory academy bombing in 2016 have shown a lackadaisical attitude towards improving the situation in any of these regions, with the recent most attack in the Bamyán city killing almost 50 people in total.

7) *Discrimination against Hazaras in Pakistan*

Becoming a migrant from Central Afghanistan towards the western border of modern-day Pakistan, the Hazaras started settling here since their persecution under the ruling of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan. Crossing the Durand Line, the Hazaras migrated to the city of Quetta in thousands. However, the residents' living conditions were undoubtedly better than those living on the other side of the country. With recognition as an Ethnic minority in the Constitution, the Hazaras were given credit and provided themselves with the best quality of work and enriched their children with a better quality of education. However, despite the status, the conditions of peace did not last long for the men, who were one of the most potent forces of the Great Khan. With the rise of military dictatorship rule in Pakistan under General Zia-Ul Haq, there was a drastic rise in the Sunni Muslims and Shia' Muslims. Considered to be a Sunni-dominated state, Lashkar-e- Jhangvi, and Sipah-e-Sahaba, there was substantial illegal ammunition from various countries to control the "rise" of the Hazara community in the country. Many believe that the rise of the communal warfare was not solely based on the actions of Zia-Ul-Haq but also taken their ideals from the Al-Qaeda. In the overall timeline, 2,600 Hazaras have been killed in Pakistan. With over 30,000 have been tortured and persecuted in the country till date. The plight of the Hazaras has not been the same as the members living in Afghanistan. However, they have been living in a much better condition, despite the revolts and strong condemnation made by the Right-Wing Sunni Majoritarian rulers in the country.

8) *Modern-Day position of Hazaras*

From the time of being the Great Khan's bravest warriors to becoming the most vulnerable tribal community globally, Hazaras have come a long way. Despite being tortured, secluded, deposed, and persecuted, the Hazaras are known to have held their heads in high esteem. The tribesmen have performed the various menial jobs that were considered a curse in Afghanistan. Hazara tribe members keep themselves away from begging or undermining any work allotted to them. Being honest, peaceful, and kind towards every human is a trait for which the community is known and respected worldwide. They are amongst the premier group of Islamic tribesmen who believe in a Matriarchal society, which is considered one of the essential aspects of putting women on the same pedestal as men. True believers of Scholar and educational reforms, Hazaras are known to have given the world some of the best quality of poets such as Qazi Muhammad Esa, who talks about the reform, love, and acceptance of people to all and sharing their beliefs along with respecting and holding them equally important. A prominent leader, rising from the dust and becoming one of the principal leaders of the Pakistan movement in the early 1900s. Sultan Ali Keshtmand held the central post by becoming the Prime Minister of Afghanistan twice in the 1980s and ensuring the best possible way to unite the country's people. Ghulam Ali

Wahdat, the former Governor of Bamyan region, saw the struggles and the discrimination made towards the people of Hazara, yet completed his education along with the idea of creating a more profound knowledge and perspective for the people and giving them the motivation to become the leaders of tomorrow and never to lose hope. The tribesmen have inspired themselves to become the version of themselves, which resulted in the condemning of any way out which shall help provide caring and betterment for the purpose.

9) *An opinion*

Despite the struggles and the hindered power, which prevented the tribesmen from holding their original identity. There is indeed a high amount of discrimination due to their religious identity and the debate of residing factor. There has been a tremendous amount of radicalism that led to the destruction of the community's identity. However, not losing the hope of becoming a better personality and seeking the same amount of respect as others have given a boost to their dignity, and the tribesmen have become better. However, the struggle never ends as the evil elements remain to divulge and cause hindrance to the people. The battle, however, needs to be tackled in a much more efficient way and the need of the hour is a tacit understanding by the Government getting over the division and unite people for the betterment of Afghanistan. The tribe is known for its ability to fight wars and focus on poetry which shall help in glorifying the culture of Afghanistan,

which was a dream for Dost Muhammad Khan.

4. Conclusion

This paper presented an overview of Hazaras truth of the folks in thousand.

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