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On marginality and overcoming: Narrative, memory and identity among British Hazaras.

Rabia Latif Khan

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South Asia Section, School of Languages, Cultures & Linguistics
SOAS, University of London

Abstract:

The purpose of this research has been to examine narrative and identity among the Hazara community in England and Hazara transnational connections. Within this thesis I study two Hazara-specific narratives: one on 'marginality' and the other about 'overcoming' and how these narratives interact with Hazara conceptualisations of identity. These narratives both relate to Hazara history, in that the narrative of marginality relates to the subjugation of the community since the insurrection of Hazarajat and subsequent instances of discrimination and injustice, while the narrative of overcoming stems from the post-2001 gains of the community in Afghanistan. By engaging with these two very distinct community narratives this research allows for an exploration of individual self-identification, community articulations of what it means to 'be Hazara' and how the community chooses to present itself to the outside world. This is alongside showcasing an indigenous historiography of the community within the thesis, which is being documented by Hazaras online. Accordingly, this thesis begins with an introduction chapter which explains the rationale behind the research as well as contextualising the narratives of marginality and overcoming and their relevance to this research. This is followed by a literature review and a background chapter which details Afghan migration to Europe since the late 1970s, with a focus on Hazara migration to Britain, after which there are several findings chapters and a conclusion chapter. The findings chapters explore the contents of these narratives, how the community relates to them and the events which shape this historiography project, with various modes of communication and spaces forming the basis of these findings chapters. Therefore within this thesis these modes of communication and spaces can be understood as the following: oral history, religion, social media and community events. In turn this research contributes to the study of Hazaras in Europe, Hazara historiography and Hazara collective consciousness in the 21st Century.

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On marginality and overcoming: Narrative, memory and identity
among British Hazaras.

Chapter 1: Introduction:

This research studies how narratives, lived experiences, social organisations and historiography interact to inform Hazara-specific narratives that the community articulate about themselves, as well as how these narratives engage with conceptualisations of identity, both on an individual and community level in England¹, alongside transnational Hazara political mobilisation and collective action. This thesis will in turn map out the development of the Hazara-specific master narratives within this research, on ‘marginality’ and ‘overcoming’², across various spaces (lived experiences, historical events, social organisations and historiography), in order to present an argument about historical identity formation among marginal communities more generally, and as a mechanism to link past events, present conceptualisations of the self and community, and future-oriented activism. It will also trace the ways that these Hazara-specific narratives have become interlinked, with time, to a more specific liberal framing. Literature on the Hazara community outside Afghanistan, namely in Australia, highlights the importance of social networks in relation to promoting or enhancing community engagement and cohesion, as well as preserving and maintaining Hazara culture. Thus, within this research a great emphasis has been placed on social networks given the significant role they play for migrant³ communities

¹ This research specifically focuses on the Hazara communities of London and the Midlands, as these regions were recommended as research sites by Hazara friends and acquaintances, given the large number of Hazaras based in these areas.

² These master narratives are discussed in-depth in the ‘master narratives’ section of this chapter.

³ In reference to the term ‘migrant’ Dr Tazreena Sajjad notes that ‘[p]rimarily the term ‘migrant’ generates associations with invisibility, illegitimacy or dependency leading to the assumption that they can be found, enumerated and categorised. It speaks to an association of ‘choice’ and confers the idea of opportunistic decision-making that generates little sympathy when considering questions of the rights and dignity of the individual in question’ (2018: 46). Given that the current political climate in Europe and the US has meant that the term migrant now generally has negative connotations, it is important to explain and justify the use of the term within this research. Within this thesis the term ‘migrant’ will be utilised in a literal sense, to denote a person who has moved from one place of residence to another. In turn, the emphasis here is on the movement of peoples. Furthermore, as the two main categories of research participants within this research are Hazaras who were born and brought up in Afghanistan (or in Iran and Pakistan), and Hazaras who have lived in the UK since childhood, migrant is used to differentiate the two groups within this research and define the generation who have had protracted lived experiences outside of Britain, unlike the younger respondents in this study, who are thus labelled as the Hazara diaspora. Therefore, the term migrant is used to distinguish older Hazara arrivals to Britain from the younger Hazara diasporic youth.

in a new 'host' country. Through the course of this research the aim has been to draw attention to the need to study how the themes noted above interconnect. This is because existing literature on Hazaras relating to migration, narratives and social networks predominantly focus on one or two of these themes, without assessing how collectively these themes impact identity among the Hazara community. In turn, this research will aim to highlight how these themes interact with, and inform, Hazara conceptualisations of identity, by engaging with the responses given during semi-structured interviews by members of the Hazara community in England, as well as through examining existing literature on the Hazaras and Hazara social media. The additional element of Hazara social media positions this online space as another mode of social networks. While this research also analyses online Hazara historiography and other literature published by Hazaras as an additional avenue of data.

This introduction chapter will present a brief history of the Hazara community, highlighting their troubled history and recent precarity in Afghanistan, in order to situate the master narratives within this research. As noted earlier these master narratives centre on the themes of marginality and overcoming, and are themselves informed by Hazara history and information propagated about the community regarding the values and ideals Hazaras espouse, both online on Hazara social media and at community gatherings. The following section will be a discussion as to the rationale and context behind this research, followed by a methodology section. This chapter will conclude by delving into the master narratives within this research, while also briefly introducing the subsequent chapters of this thesis, and their relevance to the master narratives within this research.

1.1 Research rationale and context:

The purpose of this research is to examine narrative and identity⁴ among the Hazara community in England, specifically in the city of London and the Midlands region of the country. This research studies two Hazara-specific master narratives: one of 'marginality' and the other of 'overcoming', and how these narratives interact with Hazara conceptualisations of identity. Given how marginal histories are largely

⁴ Various anthropological interpretations and understandings of the term 'identity' will be discussed further within this thesis in order to contextualise this research.

preserved by marginal groups themselves, this research engages with the Hazara community, in order to learn how their social networks impact narrative, ethnic consciousness and ethnic solidarity, through lived experiences of migration and historic, collective suppression in Afghanistan, and more recently in the neighbouring region. In turn, this research will highlight how the activities and engagement of the Hazara community in a Western context directly relates back to Hazaras in Afghanistan, and how the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region is a focal point for action in Hazara diasporic spaces, as their activism is directly informed by Hazara communities in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. Hence this research aims to delve into these transnational linkages to show how British Hazaras are part of a global Hazara network. Thus, during the course of this research the experiences and observations of British Hazaras were explored in order to observe how the master narratives within this research are perceived, both on an individual and community level.

Historical literature on Hazaras has primarily focused on the 'origins' of the community and the 'political awakening' of Hazaras in Afghanistan during the 1980s and 1990s. Formative writings on the history of the Hazaras and their culture have been undertaken by two prominent scholars, Hassan Poladi and Syed Askar Mousavi. However, their books on Hazaras date back to the late 1980s and 1990s respectively⁵. Most literature on Hazaras available in English examines Hazara history, with attempts to chronologise their persecution from the late 19th Century till the present times. Furthermore, although ethnographic research on the community does exist, a lot of this research is single-sited research, and largely focuses on the present. As a result, there is limited literature on other aspects of Hazara life besides their history, on themes such as contemporary politics, culture, identity or transnational connections. In the European context research pertaining to Hazara migration, assimilation and identity is sparse, with Hazaras being studied alongside Afghans more generally, as opposed to focusing solely on their lived experiences, as distinct from other Afghans. There has not been an attempt to analyse Hazara migration to Europe and the unique issues and challenges it raises for the community. In the current global setting where

⁵ An influential Hazara historian who should also be noted here is Faiz Mohammad Kateb Hazara. Kateb Hazara was commissioned to write an extensive history of Afghanistan for Emir Habibullah Khan. He produced a several volume book titled *Siraj al-Tawarikh* for the Emir.

there is increasing migration from predominately Muslim populated regions as a result of conflict, it warrants investigation how such communities once in Europe, navigate the issues of identity, integration and belonging in a new setting. Hence, this research is a holistic transnational study of how the past and present are interconnected through memory and narration, as well as exploring Hazara community activity on multiple scales, which is undertaken for the future betterment of the community.

In the British context, we see passing reference made to the Hazaras when highlighting the various ethnic groups that come under the umbrella of 'Afghan', or when discussing ethnic tensions among Afghans. However, this is where the issue of Hazaras in the country both starts and finishes. In recent years Hazaras in England have taken to the streets to demonstrate against targeted attacks by terrorists, and discrimination by the government against Hazaras in Afghanistan. The community in Britain, and Europe more generally, has a very active social media presence which has been used to raise awareness about the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan, and also in Pakistan and Iran. Going by social media alone, it can be seen that demonstrations by the Hazara community outside Afghan embassies for example, have led to growing animosity between Hazara and non-Hazara Afghans, and this can be seen by the countless number of comments left on Hazara social media pages by non-Hazara Afghans when Hazaras demonstrate outside Afghan embassies worldwide. Hence, within this study social media is a key tool, as it is a virtual space for Hazaras to share information about their community, discuss Hazara current affairs and raise awareness about 'Hazara issues' with the wider Hazara community, and non-Hazaras. As a researcher from outside of the community, social media allows for non-Hazaras to understand community sentiments on a wide range of issues, as well as being a catalyst for highlighting the extent to which the master narratives within this research are propagated, while also being a platform where Hazara history is being written and documented in greater depth. Without engaging with Hazara social media it would have been difficult to accurately determine what are seen as the key issues within the transnational Hazara community, which further emphasises the importance of this form of media within this research.

Through informal conversations with members of the Hazara community in London it has become apparent that the Hazara community, by and large, is segregated from other Afghan communities, and has its own community spaces, and in certain instances religious spaces. There are Hazara Nowruz (Persian New Year) and Eid celebrations, as well as Muharram events and Ashura commemorations. This is to be expected if the ethnic tensions that exist in Afghanistan are considered, which may have found their way overseas with various waves of Afghan migration to Europe, as well as literature on the Afghan diaspora highlighting that these tensions and issues also manifest outside Afghanistan. As noted earlier, in the limited literature available there is a general focus on 'Afghans', which in turn does not, or due to its narrow scope cannot, assess the internal community dynamics of the various Afghan ethnic communities in Britain. The only recent academic work specifically focusing on the Hazara community in Europe is a 2012 book chapter on religious and ethnic identity among Hazara Ismaili youth in the city of Essen in Germany, conducted by Hazara scholar Dr Yahia Baiza, a 2018 book by Dr Saideh Saidi, 'Juggling between two worlds: sociocultural change in Afghan immigrant women's identity in Germany', which focuses on Hazara migrant women, and a 2019 PhD thesis by Dr Khadija Abbasi titled, "'There is death in immobility'" an auto-ethnography of the identification process of transnational young Hazaras'. However, there is sizeable literature which examines the reasons for Afghan migration to Europe, personal experiences of migration among Afghans and the social networks of Afghans. Yet, within these studies there has not been an attempt to bring these themes together in relation to identity focusing on minorities, such as the Hazara community.

This research aims to assess the extent to which these internally constructed community narratives, on marginality and overcoming are employed and reproduced by the British Hazara migrant and diaspora community. While also seeking to understand to whether these narratives are deconstructed and critically engaged with by the community. This is in order to elucidate to what extent these narratives are perceived as accurate representations of transnational Hazara communities by Hazaras themselves, through engaging with various modes of communication: informal conversations, research interviews and social media.

1.2 Research methodology:

The primary method used to collect data and information for this research was through semi-structured interviews. The following quote epitomises why on a personal level, within this research, semi-structured interviews were primarily used, as they allowed for the extrapolation of ‘...opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues and enable[d] probing for more information and clarification of answers’ (Barriball and While 1994: 330), which was very evident throughout my interviews with multiple research participants. Within this study the exponential non-discriminative snowball sampling method was used to get acquainted with, and locate willing research participants, given that as a researcher from outside of the community it was the fastest and most effective way to form ties with this particular minority community and allow for an adequate number of interviews to be conducted within the field research time allocated for this study. With regards to the snowball sampling method it is said that, ‘[This] technique offers real benefits for studies which seek to access difficult to reach or hidden populations’ (Atkinson and Flint 2001: 2), which in part applies to the Hazara community who have come to the UK as a persecuted minority from Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, and whose numbers in the UK are unknown⁶. While Dr Nissim Cohen and Dr Tamar Arieli note that this research method allows for greater trust to be established between research participants and the researcher as, ‘The knowledge that the researcher was referred by a trusted person increases the potential for trust and cooperation in providing data’ (2011: 428).

In terms of the formal interviews, all research participants were asked to sign a consent form before commencing the interviews. The consent form detailed what the research entailed, information about who was conducting the research and who was supervising the study, as well as mentioning that there was a fixed retraction period in which some or all of the material provided by research participants during their interviews could be removed if participants so wished. Alongside this data collection method, some informal conversations also proved to be very fruitful for this research, so information provided through these interactions are also included within this thesis

⁶ The community’s numbers in Britain can be assumed to be small given that their migration to the country only began in the 1990s and declined significantly in the last decade.

where necessary, but these sources have been kept anonymous. It should be noted that a significant shortcoming of using such a research method is demographics, as snowball sampling is not a random selection sampling method. Professor Douglas D. Heckathorn notes that '...in the contexts where chain-referral methods are used, the initial sample usually cannot be drawn randomly. Second, chain-referral samples tend to be biased toward the more cooperative subjects who agree to participate' (1997: 175).

Initially, when reading the relevant literature and devising a research plan for this study a central aim had been to ensure that participants reflected a diverse cross-section of the Hazara community in England. However, as someone from outside of the Hazara community who was relying on Hazara acquaintances to inform community members about the research, and to enquire as to whether people from within the community would be interested in participating in the study, meant that the overwhelming majority of interviewees were of the same socio-economic background and educational level of those community members who recommended the research to others within the community in the first instance. Although there was a desire to have an even distribution of representation across gender, age, education, migration history and country of birth (and this was expanded to include the country in which respondents had either grown up in or had lived the longest in), but as the research progressed it became apparent that this was an unrealistic expectation to have given the research method employed for this study. As a result this has meant that most interviewees have attained a high level of education, holding bachelor degrees or higher tertiary qualifications, or those currently studying towards obtaining university degrees, with only a couple of interviewees having had limited educational opportunities (both of whom are male and grew up in Afghanistan, with one respondent having living in Iran for several years for work). Furthermore, of the fifty research participants interviewed for this research, thirty-six interviewees had a direct connection to Afghanistan, having been born and brought up in the country, or as it was the country where they were born but left during their childhood due to turmoil in the country stemming from violence and instability.

In relation to Iran and Pakistan, eight respondents were born and brought up in Iran, while six were from Pakistan, with one research participant who acquired British citizenship in his youth choosing to divide his time between Quetta and London. Having enquired as to why it was hard to get acquainted with Hazaras who had grown up in Tehran, Mashhad and Quetta, multiple interviewees and acquaintances mentioned that the majority of Hazaras in the UK are from Afghanistan, and Hazaras from Iran and Pakistan are far fewer in number in the country, with Hazaras from the latter two countries also agreeing with this statement. Therefore, it is not simply the case that the sampling method chosen for this research limited the opportunity to interview an equal number of Hazaras from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, as the community's migration trajectory from these three countries differs⁷. While in terms of gender there were thirty-two male respondents and eighteen female respondents within this study, with female interviewees making up 36% of the total interviewees. Although the research does not have an equal representation of gender, every attempt was made early on in the interviewing process to highlight that a gender-balanced sample pool within this study would be allow for greater accuracy with regards to assessing divergent and corresponding views between the sexes, with acquaintances and initial research participants assisting wherever they could to enhance the number of female research participants for this research. However, given that there was a limited time frame within which the research interviews had to be conducted and completed, and as it was a study undertaken by one researcher, there were bound to be restrictions in achieving all of the research's intended aims with regards to representation, as can be seen by the gender imbalance within this study. This imbalance is also reflected in the religious orientation of interviewees. Only two research participants interviewed for this study belonged to the Ismaili sect of Islam, and no Sunni Hazaras were interviewed for this study, although multiple attempts were made to locate potential Ismaili and Sunni Hazaras respondents. As a result, the overwhelming majority of interviewees either self-identified as Shia Muslims or were born into Shia families. Although, it was mentioned on multiple occasions by Hazara

⁷ Given the lack of available data on Hazaras in Britain, it has not been possible to verify this information, but these claims were articulated by the vast majority of research participants who discussed Hazara migration to the UK, hence the value of incorporating such information within the research.

acquaintances and research participants with a very active community presence, that the number of Ismaili and Sunni Hazaras in Britain is extremely low.

With regards to age there was a wide cross-section covered among research participants in relation to this category. The youngest respondent at the time of the interviews was eighteen, and the oldest respondent was in their sixties. Most interviewees were in their twenties and thirties, and only a handful were in their fifties, with there being no interviewee past the age of retirement taking part in the study (although several attempts were made to engage with this demographic, but there seemed to be a reluctance on the part of those contacted⁸). In terms of younger Hazaras, twenty-two research participants constituted the Hazara diaspora within this study, given that they either self-identified as such or had spent most of their lives in the UK. Of the diaspora respondents, all were born in Afghanistan and came to the UK as infants or during their childhood. None of the younger respondents had spent any time living in Iran prior to migrating to the UK, while several younger interviewees had briefly lived in Pakistan before migrating to the country. Additionally, younger respondents stated that they had only briefly visited Afghanistan, Iran, or both countries since settling in the UK.

The semi-structured interviews began with research participants giving an introduction about themselves, primarily focusing on their age and occupation, as well as where they currently lived and where they grew up. These introductions varied vastly in length, with some research participants merely stating what their occupation was and where they were based, while for others it formed a larger part of their interview. The reason for this discrepancy was that the latter group of research participants took time to explain, in detail, their migration history and what brought them and their families to Britain. These lengthy introductions proved to be extremely insightful for the research, as they helped to piece together Hazara migration to the country, which has not been written about, to date. However, it should be noted that these migration timelines were compared to information about Afghan migration to Europe to ensure

⁸ This reluctance could presumably and understandably stem from the fact that they were not well acquainted with myself, and also as the research was being conducted by a non-Hazara, which could make it harder for elder respondents to speak with ease about their life experiences to someone from outside of the community.

that a thorough and accurate timeline of Hazara migration to Britain was formulated within this study. Also as previously noted, limited literature on Afghan communities in Britain does exist, but these works rarely, if at all, mention the Hazara community. Hence why these protracted introductions were of great value to the research. In terms of the semi-structured interviews they consisted of ten questions. The themes of the questions varied but were in line with the topics that this research had envisioned to cover. For instance, there were questions which directly asked how research participants understood and perceived their identity, alongside questions about their perceptions and awareness of the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, as well as the role and significance, if any, of religion and more specifically Shi'ism⁹.

Through the course of the field research year, several community events were also attended. The rationale behind attending such events was to conduct participant observation, and incorporate findings from these events into the research, as participant observation '...provides opportunities for viewing or participating in unscheduled events' and as it '...improves the quality of data collection and interpretation and facilitates the development of new research questions or hypotheses' (Kawulich 2005). However, just prior to, and early on, during the interview stage of this research multiple respondents mentioned that in recent years Hazara community activities and events have decreased significantly, with two main reasons given as to why community engagement was so low at the time when research interviews were being conducted for this study. This was either due to internal community conflicts which have prevented local Hazara communities from coming together to rent spaces for cultural gatherings, or due to a lack of motivation among community members to raise and spend money on cultural events given the growing number of attacks on Hazaras in Afghanistan, as such efforts were seen as frivolous at a time when such money could be going towards Hazara charitable causes in Afghanistan.

⁹ For Ismaili research participants this question was slightly altered to encapsulate their position as a minority sect within a minority community, in order to understand how religion shapes their engagement with and perceptions of Twelver Shia Hazaras.

Yet, in spite of the decline in community events it was possible to attend a few events during the field research period, which included a political event with Hazara politicians from Afghanistan in London about the TUTAP project¹⁰ and Hazara political mobilisation, the annual Baba Mazari commemoration in London, an event at the House of Commons with British and Hazara parliamentarians on the current situation of the Hazara community in Afghanistan, as well as a Hazara Nowruz celebration in the Midlands, and a Hazara demonstration outside Downing Street in London against attacks on Hazaras in Afghanistan. The first political event which was attended for this study was with Hazara parliamentarians who had visited the UK from Afghanistan, and the event was conducted in Persian which acted as a barrier in fully understanding the proceedings of the event. However, Hazara acquaintances at the event did roughly explain what the parliamentarians were discussing. Similarly, proceedings of the Baba Mazari commemoration were also conducted in Persian (bar a handful speeches from non-Hazara speakers in English), but live Persian to English translation was provided for most of the event. While the other events listed above were conducted in English. These events will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters, where relevant.

Correspondence through social media with Hazara contacts in Europe again proved productive for this research, as multiple resources and information was shared online to assist with the research. Some of these contacts provided information they had about Hazara migration to Europe. These interactions were very useful at the early stages of this research given how difficult it was to find research and information about Hazaras in Europe, and more specifically on Hazaras in Britain. Such information was handled with caution, as academic references were not always provided to support certain assertions. Nonetheless, the information provided through such interactions allowed for further research into the information that had been shared, which helped to navigate the direction of this study, especially in terms of understanding Hazara migration to Britain, what questions would be of use as part of the semi-structured interviews, academic resources that would assist with the research, as well as cultural sensibilities to be aware of when conducting the research as someone from outside of the Hazara community.

¹⁰ The TUTAP project is a regional electrical power project that has garnered a lot of controversy among the Hazara community, and is discussed in detail in subsequent chapters.

As noted before, this research heavily relies on information provided through interviews and social media. This has invariably meant that the information engaged with may at times be subjective personal opinions on the topics of study within this research, as opposed to being reliable, objective facts, as Mohammad Yonus Entezar in a paper on Hazara online activism notes, when citing Professor Teun Adrianus van Dijk, who states that ‘...some issues will be emphasized by the writer and some issues will be deemphasized’ (2016: 51) with regards to discourse and ideology, and information propagated online. This is relevant and important to consider in relation to social media engagement more generally, and is also evident in the content found on Hazara social media pages. This is because this research is not claiming or aiming to bring to light unknown facts about the Hazara community and their history, but is instead seeking to understand the narratives the community constructs about itself and to what extent these narratives impact individual Hazara community members’ conceptualisations of themselves and their community.

Hence, given that social media is a key component within the research it is important to engage with the issue of ethics in relation data collection through such online sources. Its primary use within this research was to engage with public online sources of information in order to understand and assess the information shared on Hazara-specific online platforms and the perceptions of transnational Hazara communities in these spaces. In relation to this point an online social media research ethics paper produced by the University of Aberdeen notes that:

Social media platforms are increasingly used by many as a means of communication, sharing information and...the sharing of attitudes and behaviours on a huge breadth of topics. It is this user-generated content that presents such a valuable opportunity to researchers. Whereas before, researchers gathered information on attitudes and behaviours through a variety of methods such as questionnaires, in-depth interviews and observation, such data is often now accessible at the mere ‘touch of a button’ (or more accurately, typing a few search terms into a platform’s search bar). Such data, found on social media platforms, online discussion forums and

blogs (to name a few) is typically rich, numerous and naturally occurring (Townsend and Wallace 2014: 4).

Within this research any reference made to online information from Hazara sources are all public sources. An issue which does arise here is the factual validity of the information provided online. Although this is naturally an important issue to consider, given that this study primarily engages with people's subjective opinions this issue in this specific research context is not of great concern. The reason being that the online information being sought within this study is solely being used to gauge community sentiments on community issues and to show what information, whether factual or not, is propagated online in Hazara historiographical sources. Hence, this issue of factual validity is not crucial here as it does not undermine the usefulness of online sources within this research, nor do problems arise in relation to using people's private information, as only public webpages and social media sites have been consulted for this research.

Of the fifty interviewees who participated in this research, forty agreed to having their names and biographical information shared within the thesis, if they were to be directly quoted. However, ten respondents requested anonymity after participating in the research interviews, as the answers shared were seen as controversial in some regard, and given some respondents' standing in their local Hazara communities, which they naturally did not want to harm through participation in this research. Hence the preference to keep personal information concealed for these specific research participants. With the latter group of respondents, names are not used when directly quoting these individuals, but general information is given as to their occupation, age and place of residence.

Lastly, it is important to also briefly discuss the issue of positionality within the research. For the purpose of this research positionality can be understood as '...the stance or positioning of the researcher in relation to the social and political context of the study—the community, the organization or the participant group' (Rowe 2014: 627). Since the beginning of this doctoral research I had been concerned that as someone from outside of the Hazara community, and as someone from a non-Shia

background, there may be reluctance for prospective Hazara interviewees to engage with myself and the research. Therefore, prior to formally starting the research interviews in October 2017, the summer of 2017 was spent inquiring as to whether there would be difficulties in conducting interviews as a researcher from outside of the Hazara community. Hazara acquaintances overwhelmingly stated that they believed that the response to the study being conducted by an external researcher would in fact be more compelling for some Hazara community members as the community feels that there is a great need to inform and educate others about the community and their history. Lastly, as with any qualitative study of this kind it can only be hoped that all information shared during the course of research interviews were genuine sentiments held by research participants regarding the issues discussed during the field research stage of this project. Thus, such a belief has been taken in good faith, as it is not my position as the researcher, with whom personal, and at times traumatic lived experiences were shared to doubt and undermine the veracity of the statements made by research participants, unless credible evidence were to present itself which may challenge certain statements. In this case of this research project such an issue did not occur.

1.3 Master narratives:

This research centres around two master narratives, relevant to the Hazara community of Afghanistan, the UK and worldwide, which will be analysed throughout the course of this thesis. The narratives, on marginality and overcoming, and the reason for choosing to evaluate them within this research will be elaborated on within this section. Before delving into the master narratives within this research it is important to provide some background information about the Hazara community in order to contextualise the master narratives within this research. The Hazaras are one of the largest ethnic and religious minorities in Afghanistan (Ibrahimi 2017: 6). The community has contested 'origin stories', with the most prevalent theory, and widely disputed theory, being that the Hazaras are descendants of Genghis Khan's army who settled in the region in the 13th Century. However, through informal conversations and through formal research interviews with members of the Hazara community, it has become apparent that the prevalence given to this theory online and in the available literature is seen as problematic by Hazaras who believe the community to be

indigenous to Afghanistan, or as a Turkic-Mongol community who are not descendants of the Mongol army. This is premised on the belief held by multiple research participants that Hazaras fought Genghis Khan and his army when they entered the central highland regions of Afghanistan, which the community have historically inhabited. In recent years the validity of this heritage claim has been studied and dismissed by some anthropologists, but consensus still remains that Hazaras are most likely descendants of Mongols, and Central Asian Turkic people who settled in the region, as anthropologist Dr Alessandro Monsutti notes that:

It is historically conceivable that Turkish and Mongol groups, progressively driven off the Hindu Kush (from Central Asia in the North, and from Iran in the West) between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, mixed with the local population and adopted their language. Since the sixteenth century, the term *hazara* has referred more to a socio-political position than to a homogeneous population, as it is used to designate groups that have little in common other than their situation of geographical isolation and political autonomy (2007: 175).

Hazaras speak a dialect of Persian¹¹ known as Hazaragi, which contains significant Turko-Mongolic vocabulary (Ibrahimi 2012: 4), and are the largest Shia Muslim community in Afghanistan, although, there are some Ismaili and Sunni Hazaras in the country (Thesiger 1955: 317). Hazaras adherence to Shia Islam in a predominantly Sunni Muslim state has seen them persecuted, massacred and enslaved¹². Their

¹¹ Throughout this thesis the term 'Persian' will be used in reference to one of the two official languages spoken in Afghanistan, given the problems that arise with using either the terms 'Dari' or 'Farsi' to refer to the Persian language in the Afghan context. In Afghanistan and among Afghans issues arise with regards to the use of either the words 'Dari' or 'Farsi' because some Afghans who are adamant in using the term 'Dari' want to separate and distinguish Afghanistan from the cultural and historical links the country previously had with the Persian-speaking world (although it should be noted that Persian in Afghanistan is officially referred to as 'Dari' given that this is the term used in the country's Constitution for the language). Whereas proponents of the term 'Farsi' want to highlight Afghanistan's ties with its neighbours through a shared linguistic and cultural history. Personally, I have also encountered some mild hostility when using either of the terms 'Dari' and 'Farsi' when discussing language with some contacts prior to conducting the research interviews. However, the use of the term 'Persian' was never problematic and appears to be seen as a 'neutral' term by research participants. Hence, given the contentious nature of language terminology in Afghanistan and as witnessed during interactions with some research participants, Persian will be used throughout the research to refer to 'Dari-Farsi'.

¹² Hazara slave ownership was officially outlawed by King Amanullah Khan in the 1920s, but some research participants have noted that the practice still persisted after his decree was issued. This was

persecution began in the late 19th Century when Emir Abdur Rahman Khan¹³, an ethnic Pashtun, declared the Hazara community ‘non-Muslim’ and used a religious decree to suppress and conquer central Afghanistan, an area also known as Hazarajat. This is in stark contrast to the fact that the Hazara community had lived in relative isolation in central Afghanistan for most of their history in the country. As a result, since the late 19th Century there have been waves of Hazara migration to Iran and the city of Quetta, in modern-day Pakistan. Anthropologist Dr Fariba Adelkhah notes that the monarchs who succeeded Abdur Rahman Khan did work to undo some of the damage he had done during his reign, but that discrimination against Hazaras permeated once again during the reign of Nadir Shah and during the presidency of Daoud Khan, which is highlighted in the following quote:

[Habibullah and Amanullah] abolished slavery, withdrew some of the measures discriminating against Hazaras, and restored to them some of their rights by granting titles to their leaders (*amir*)... Later, the reigns of Nadir Shah (1929–33) and Zahir Shah (1933–73) put the seal on the Pashtun and Sunni domination of Afghanistan and the relegation of Hazara Shi’ites to the position second-class subjects. The great famine of 1971–72, with its accompanying drought, was terrible. During the tenure of President Dawood (1973–78), the subjugation of the Hazaras was intensified; land-grabbing by the Kuchis was encouraged under cover of the 1970 law on pastures...(2017: 145).

Thus, Adelkhah’s statement indicates how even after the reign of Abdur Rahman Khan ended in 1901, Hazaras were still at the bottom of the country’s social hierarchy and were still marginalised, well into the 20th Century, with this history of subjugation continuing to impact Hazara transnational discourses in the 21st Century.

Ascertaining the number of Hazaras in Afghanistan is difficult due to the fact that regular censuses are not conducted in the country, with political scientist Paul D. Miller

also noted by Niamatullah Ibrahim in his book ‘The Hazaras and the Afghan State. Rebellion, exclusion and the struggle for recognition (2017: 90).

¹³ ‘Emir’ is a title reserved for nobility in the Arabic language, and is used in Afghanistan in reference to former monarchs.

noting that 'There has still been no census in Afghanistan since 1979' (2014: 5), (which was the first national census in the country)¹⁴. Although it should be noted that there was a mandate for a census to be conducted in the country in the original 2001 Bonn Agreement (ibid)¹⁵. Thus, it is hard to determine the population of Afghanistan let alone the size of the country's various ethnic communities. Demographics of the country are an issue of contention that has been used to further political agendas across the country's various ethnic groups. For instance, lack of reliable data on population sizes and ethnic groups in Afghanistan has been utilised by members of the Pashtun community to assert that they are the largest ethnic group in the country. Similarly, the lack of statistics is also used by some ethnic minorities to highlight that their numbers may be higher than previously assumed. This is noted by anthropologist Thomas Barfield who states that:

In this absence of real data, Pashtun-dominated governments have always asserted that Pashtuns constitute an absolute majority in Afghanistan, although they probably comprise only its largest plurality. More recently, Hazaras have entered the numbers game to make themselves equal to the Tajiks. The Uzbeks have similarly inflated the number of Turkish speakers (2012: 24).

It should be noted that Hazara political analyst Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim in his 2017 book about Hazaras and the Afghan state cites 9% in relation to the ethnic composition of Hazaras in Afghanistan, with Hazaras and Uzbeks both constituting 9% of the population of Afghanistan (6). Nonetheless, as accurate information on the ethnic composition of Afghanistan is scarce, the reliability of such information is doubted by some. It should be noted that the figure cited above is disputed by Hazaras themselves who believe that it is not an accurate figure and that their community constitutes a higher percentage, as a larger ethnic group in Afghanistan, at (or just over) 20% of the population. The reason that this belief persists among members of

¹⁴ Although it should be noted that the results of the census were never released, leading some people to believe that the start of the Soviet occupation in the country meant that the census was never actually completed.

¹⁵ The Bonn Agreement was an accord which brought together multiple Afghan political factions to pass a set of conditions pertaining to governance in the country, after the fall of the Taliban regime, in order to allow for a smooth transition to democracy when the country's first Presidential elections took place in October 2004.

the Hazara community is because in potentially deflating the number of ethnic minorities in Afghanistan, the country's dominant ethnic group, the Pashtuns, can claim that they are the largest ethnic group in the country, taking again from Barfield's work, a view that is also prevalent on Hazara social media.

Within this context, Hazara historiography has cultivated two interconnected master narratives, one is that engrained in a legacy of subjugation and oppression, which also emerges in wider community discourses as well, both in print and in everyday understandings of Hazara selfhood, while the other relates to the recent gains of the community and their liberal ideals. In turn these master narratives can be understood as the following: on marginality and overcoming. These two master narratives - one focused on an inheritance from the past, and one focused on a future redemption - have been chosen for this research given the importance the Hazara community place on these narratives. Through informal conversations with members of the Hazara community it can be seen that reference to the persecution of the community since the late 19th Century is emphasised tremendously, especially when informing outsiders about the Hazara community and their past and present circumstances in Afghanistan, and the heavily ethnicised nature of Afghan politics, which are seen to disadvantage the community. While, within the narrative of overcoming the common self-narration of Hazaras as a liberal, 'outward-looking' and 'forward-thinking'¹⁶ community is also highlighted as a means to distinguish the group from other Afghan communities, and accentuate the positive contribution of Hazaras within Afghan society more generally, namely in the sectors of education, women's rights and sports. This is also hugely prevalent on Hazara websites and social media pages, as well in social media 'posts' by Hazara activists.

Within this research these master narratives are not only central to the collective memory of Hazaras, but expand in scope with time, to encompass newer examples of

¹⁶ Terms such as 'open-minded' and 'forward-thinking' are somewhat problematic when used to describe migrant communities in host countries, especially in political discourses, because they can be used as a means to convey that the values and norms of the host country are what one should aspire towards, and that the values and norms of migrants and their home countries and societies are regressive. However, I have purposely included these terms within this research as these are terms that members of the Hazara community have used to describe their community, especially as a means of distinguishing Hazaras from non-Hazara Afghan communities, and, at times, as a means of 'othering' non-Hazara Afghans.

marginality or instances of overcoming, in spite of the adversity endured. In turn individualised narratives are also discussed by research participants in order to articulate personalised Hazara conceptualisations of the community and 'self'. Furthermore, throughout the course of this study, multiple sites, such as physical spaces, literature and the online domain, work to collectively establish, disseminate, proliferate, and engage with these master narratives. This then impacts how members of the community work to inform 'Hazara identity', which is, in part, evidenced by the interviews conducted with Hazara research participants for this study. In examining certain narratives, relative to the past, this project does not attempt to determine historical fact, but rather the prominence of the given narratives in relation to past events. Thus, within this research interviewing members of the Hazara community has been vital, as it has allowed for a greater comprehension of how Hazaras who have migrated to Europe, and how the diaspora community engage with, renegotiate, or critique these narratives, while also allowing for an analysis into whether, or to what extent, these narratives impact or influence conceptualisations of what it means to 'be Hazara' in the West.

The master narrative of overcoming works in tandem with what it means to 'be Hazara' given the shared history, transnational connectivity and engagement of the community beyond borders, and these transnational links can allow for conceptualisations of being Hazara in the West, as well as in Afghanistan, Quetta and elsewhere, to intertwine in a digital age. In the online sphere such linkages can be seen through Hazara events and community achievements, such as the annual Dambora festival in Bamiyan, the annual Afghan Skiing Challenge which is also held in Bamiyan, and the numerous, trailblazing female Hazara musicians on the popular television show Afghan Star, such as Elaha Soroor and Zahra Elham. Information about these events and personalities, in and from Afghanistan, are circulated by the community in Europe and Australia. Similarly, in advocating for Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the diaspora, Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region see how the community outside is still connecting to and maintaining ties with those 'back home'. Therefore, in a more globalised world, in which there has been constant Afghan migration to the region and further afield, the dynamics of these Hazara narratives is that they both impact and relate to the regional and European Hazara communities. It

should also be noted that occasional participant observation and extensive engagement with Hazara social media has allowed for this research to further understand and establish the extent to which the master narratives of marginality and overcoming are reinforced or critically evaluated within the Hazara community.

1.4 Individualised narratives:

This section will briefly discuss what have been conceptualised as individualised narratives within this study. At their core individualised narratives emphasise specific incidents that are unique in character, in the Hazara context, and relate to the master narratives of marginality and overcoming. In turn they constitute individualised narratives as particular events and personalities are presented as distinctive examples of the narratives within this study, and are thus tailored to embody marginality and overcoming in and of themselves. In relation to individualised narratives, two distinct examples will be drawn upon in this section in order to contextualise the use of this phrase within this research, and what constitutes individualised narratives within this study. Two individualised narratives which transmit the two master narratives of marginality and overcoming are that of the desecration of the Buddha statues of Bamiyan, and the life and legacy of the late Hazara political leader Abdul Ali Mazari. With regards to the first individualised narrative, marginality and oppression are at the core of understandings as to why the statues of the Buddha were destroyed, with multiple references being made to the prior disfiguring of the statues at the hands of Abdur Rahman Khan, the historical accuracy of which is debated, as well as to the more recent full-scale destruction of the statues by the Taliban in March 2001, during research interviews. In these discussions the destruction of the statues was directly linked to views of Hazaras as outsiders, pillagers or infidels, in relation to the claim of Mongol descent of Hazaras espoused by some individuals, and also due to the Shi'a inclination of most Hazaras in Afghanistan. This is because the backdrop for the acts of March 2001 stem from a claim of a long line of oppression that Hazaras have endured at the hand of the state and extremists.

In contrast, in discussions with research participants about Mazari the master narrative of overcoming was generally insinuated and relayed. Since the passing of Mazari he has taken on an almost saint-like persona among the Hazara community. Accounts of

his life, key events in his political career and his advancements for the community are seen as the impetus for change which allowed the community to move away from being on the margins of society to being equal stakeholders in the future and development of Afghanistan, for all its people. Mazari's contribution to the evolution of Hazara consciousness among the community is seen as central to the heightened self-worth which started to develop among Hazaras at the time. Similarly, it can also be seen that the significant progress of the community since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 has been bolstered by the growth of Hazara consciousness, as the community through succeeding in various sectors, particularly in education, predicated on the efforts of Mazari, links to the master narrative of overcoming, through their achievements in recent years. Even though Mazari was a military leader at a time of heightened instability and fragmentation in Afghanistan, with ideals which differ from those being espoused by liberal, progressive Hazaras today, he nonetheless paved the way for a new way of thinking among the community regarding their struggle in Afghanistan, and that the community could in fact work to change their circumstances in the country, which would have appeared as unimaginable before.

At present, it can be seen that the way the community's struggle is being dealt with, although different in its conception, namely through working to acquire education as opposed to being armed, Mazari is still seen as being the person who allowed for this progression to blossom in the first instance, albeit in an alternative manner. This is then central to the resultant experiences that led to the development of individualised narratives of advancement and progress among the community today. Hence, in working to strengthen the position and status of Hazaras in Afghanistan, Mazari has come to embody overcoming, both in a literal sense of him prevailing in accomplishing his objectives for the community, and with regards to the persistence of the community to prosper in spite of adversity suffered in Afghanistan. This in turn means that Mazari is perceived as the epitome of individualised narratives of overcoming.

Given that these master narratives stem from past historical events, it is important to briefly delve into historiography and 'history making' here, and how this relates to the Hazara community and community narratives. This is because as can be seen from the narrative of marginality, it is heavily shaped by the events which took place in the late

19th Century in central Afghanistan, and subsequent, moderately minor events (in comparison to the insurrection of Hazarajat). While the narrative of overcoming draws from more recent, positive events and community achievements. Dr Allan Megill, Professor of History at the University of Virginia, notes that ‘...the relative solidity...grand narratives gave to historical writing a particular shape and feel. In general, commitment to such narratives tended to generate a history that was authoritative in tone and that was focussed on the actions and institutions of the state’ (2008: 25). However, in centring this research around master narratives that are formed and shaped by historically peripheral communities the inverse appears to be taking place, as the state and state institutions are in fact themselves critiqued or pushed aside to allow for marginal communities to formulate narratives which bring to the fore information and perspectives about minorities themselves which get lost in articulations of master narratives that are propagated by state agents and the elite. Thus, it can be argued in fact that such master narratives cannot be seen as being authoritative in relation to the wider-society given that they challenge dominant accounts of history and the whitewashing of historical events. In turn these counter-narratives are viewed as being problematic and are dismissed by dominant communities. This can be seen through these Hazara master narratives, given that some non-Hazara Afghans dispute the extent to which the community suffered during the insurrection of Hazarajat, which is exemplified by the following quote from a journal paper by Dr Andrea Chiovenda and Dr Melissa Kerr Chiovenda on interethnic conflict in Afghanistan, recalling discussions with Pashtun interviewees about the past:

Most Pashtuns with whom we tackled the issue [of the persecution of the Hazaras] did not seem to believe that any major “injustice” was ever brought upon Hazaras by the Afghan state, or by Pashtuns in particular (these concepts often overlap and become conflated in the narrative of many). The usual approach they maintained was that either Hazaras did not in fact suffer as much as they claim to have suffered, or that, if they did, after all they had probably deserved it... (2018: 177).

Similarly this wide-spread hostility also applies to the second master narrative of overcoming, as Annika Frantzell in her master's dissertation on peace-building and the Hazara community notes that:

Hazara successes have been breeding Hazara resentment, as Hazara migration to Afghanistan's cities after the 2001 invasion has stirred up local resentment, particularly in [Herat]. Given their strong opposition to the Taliban due to the brutal treatment they received at their hands and their high profile as translators for NATO forces, the Hazara are now viewed by some as spies and informants...(2011: 40).

Not only do the master narratives within this research give an insight as to how Hazaras view their own community and perceive their own history, it also allows for an understanding as to how the master narratives of marginal groups are viewed by dominant communities, and how they challenge prevalent accounts of history. Hence why these master narratives lend themselves to becoming sticking points between various communities, as the perpetually oppressed seek to see the ills of the past redressed but those who are in the majority, towards whom such articulations of the past are directed, will perceive admissions of wrong-doing as confessions of wrong-doing, for which they are personally not responsible. And so a cycle continues in which certain marginal narratives are expressed, but are at the same time dismissed by those they are directed at. In turn, by engaging with narratives a holistic approach towards comprehending history can be developed, as Dr Eileen H. Tamura, a professor of education at the University of Hawai'i notes that, 'Historical inquiry seeks to provide an understanding of events. The goal is to find the best ways to achieve this understanding. In integrating narrative and theory, educational historians can bring to bear new, different, and helpful perspectives' (2011: 156). Therefore, in analysing these Hazara master narratives this research allows for an understanding as to how the community frames itself with regards to dominant accounts of Afghan history, given that the community believes that they have been neglected from having a voice within Afghan history. Thus in developing and promoting these master narratives the community can seek to rectify perceived past wrongs which have left them on the periphery within Afghan history.

As this research heavily engages with narratives it is also useful to note the work of the late Dr Marshall Gregory of Butler University, Indianapolis, who in a journal paper on narrative and memory stated that, 'Much recent literary criticism and theory implicitly answers that narrative matters because it powerfully conveys ideology..., and recent work in the social sciences...explicitly answers that narrative matters because it plays a crucial role in the construction of knowledge and the development of societies' (1995: 35), which is extremely relevant in the context of this research given the limited contemporary literature available on Hazaras in the West, and Hazara history more generally. Furthermore, it is extremely pertinent in the case of the Hazaras who having endured over a century of marginalisation and are now promulgating specific narratives which document their community's suffering and pursuit to improve their socio-economic status in Afghanistan, through working with Western NGOs and pursuing education, for instance. However, although the historical accuracy of any given narrative may be disputed, it cannot be denied that certain narratives are very important in a community's conceptualisation of a collective identity and collective memory, which is evident with the Hazara community both in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This has also been observed within this research and will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

1.5 On marginality and overcoming:

As mentioned earlier, the first master narrative central to this research is one of marginality. This specific narrative has been the impetus for countless Hazara-led demonstrations in Europe and Australia, and more recently Afghanistan, where the subjugation of the past is paralleled with the current situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In relation to the Hazara community in Australia, Professor William Maley notes that, 'Many Hazara refugees entered Australian territorial waters in boats [in 2010 due to increasing attacks by the Taliban], as they had earlier done following Taliban massacres in the 1990s' (2011: 90). This in turn shows how marginality not only relates to the crimes of the late 19th Century against Hazaras, but also how this narrative is a more modern lived experience for certain members of the community. Furthermore, due to increasing ISIS and Taliban attacks against Hazaras in Afghanistan this narrative is widely propagated online in relation to contemporary events, and is done so in order to lobby parliamentarians and raise awareness of the

situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This narrative was proliferated most recently in relation to several issues including: the TUTAP project¹⁷, lack of development in the Hazarajat region, the targeted bombings of Shias in Afghanistan since 2015, the kidnappings of Hazaras in Zabul province, and the executions of Hazaras in Ghazni province¹⁸. Hence why social media is a key space within this research, because in proliferating these Hazara master narratives it can be seen that direct action is being undertaken by members of the Hazara community, to challenge and call out oppression.

In a working paper on Hazara ethnic consciousness, Dr Naimatullah Ibrahim adopts the narrative of marginality, as he states that the history of the insurrection of Hazarajat in the late 19th Century is a 'central theme' of Hazara collective consciousness (2012: 4). Firstly, due to the subjugation of the Hazaras as a result of political and military mobilisation by the Emir, through declaring *jihad* (a holy war) against the Hazaras due to their Shia beliefs, as opposed to his Sunni beliefs. Secondly, as the conquest of Hazarajat by the Emir resulted in '...the largest displacement and mass migration of the Hazaras from Afghanistan to date', and lastly because the authority of the Emir as the head of state meant that Hazaras who remained in Afghanistan after the war began were then at the bottom of the socio-economic strata.

Doctoral researcher Farzana Marie has also discussed Hazara narratives pertaining to marginality and subjugation. She states that the persecution of the community since the late 1800s is '...deeply engraved in the minds of Hazaras' (2013: 91). While Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim also emphasises that that '...the Afghan state is the main source of the added and imposed significance of ethnic difference and thus the main driver of ethnicisation of politics in Afghanistan' (2017: 8), which is a sentiment that many research participants have echoed throughout the interviews for this study. While historian Dr Sayed Askar Mousavi who has written extensively on Hazaras goes further than Ibrahim and claims that, 'Afghan nationalism or Pashtunism as a mechanism for

¹⁷ See for example: www.thediplomat.com/2016/08/tutap-power-project-reopens-old-wounds-in-afghanistan/.

¹⁸ On the marginalisation and persecution of Hazaras in Afghanistan see: www.hrw.org/news/2016/10/13/afghanistans-shia-hazara-suffer-latest-atrocity. and www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/afghans-protest-killings-hazara-isil-151110135854342.html.

tribal domination and oppression has been enforced upon society and the people of Afghanistan for over a century' (1998: 7), which again is a view shared by multiple research participants, and will be elaborated on in subsequent chapters. Furthermore, in a journal paper on the Wakhan Corridor, Dr Duncan Weaver states the following in relation to borders and identity, 'Borders allow certain expressions of identity and memory to exist while blocking others...borders are open to contestation at the level of state and in everyday life...' (2018:4), and this point is pertinent to note within this research in relation to the Hazara community, given the marginal status of Hazaras in the late 19th Century in Afghanistan and during certain periods of the 20th Century, as a result of the state and its policies.

Marie has also noted that 'ethnocentric' policies of the mid-1900s in Afghanistan worked to heighten ethnic divisions, which led to a sense of continuing marginalisation among Hazaras. This culminated in the assassination of King Nadir Khan by a Hazara student. While, the formation of the of the *Hezb-e Wahdat* (Unity Party) in 1989 by Abdul Ali Mazari led to a shift in Hazara consciousness on an unprecedented level. Marie states that Mazari was, '...primarily responsible for transforming the party into a platform for the rights and political demands of the Hazaras in the early 1990s' (2013: 94). Dr Fariba Adelkhah mentions that *Wahdat* was also significant with regards to working towards establishing Hazara consciousness, stating that, 'The *Hizb-i Wahdat*, more especially, had a decisive role in the ethnicisation of the social consciousness of the Hazara...' (2017: 143). While anthropologist Alessandro Monsutti also notes that:

The progressive politicisation of the Hazaras has thus gone hand in hand with a strengthening of their association with Shiism. In the 1980s most Hazara political leaders constantly associated themselves with the Iranian revolution, but it was only during the following decade that the ethnic dimension became really explicit. After a period of inner divisions, most Hazaras have become part of one movement, the *Hezb-e Wahdat*, the goal of which is to have the rights of Hazaras recognized at a national level and to ensure them a fair measure of political participation.

The reinforcement of identity in political speeches and its resonance among the population are the result of a social-historical process linked to past and recent conflicts. These have made an impression on people's minds and given Hazaras a whole symbolic language based on past sufferings and injustices. In the migratory urban context of Quetta, inter-community relationships are not much better. In Pakistan, as in Afghanistan, political exclusion, social injustice, poverty, insecurity and the example of the Iranian revolution are so many factors favouring the rise of a political activism that combines religious and ethnic demands. Muharram and the celebration of 'Ashura' crystallize tensions and the Hazara construction of identity (2007: 189-190).

It can therefore be seen that the community's history of oppression became the impetus for change within the community, as an emphasis on religion, particularly Shi'ism, which had existed before was replaced with the positive affirmation of a Hazara ethnic identity.

The second master narrative within this research is of overcoming, and relates to the progress Hazaras have made in Afghanistan, most notably since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, in spite of their historical marginality. Within this narrative Hazaras as a liberal, forward-thinking community is promulgated far and wide, both in Afghanistan, and among the diaspora in Europe and Australia. This self-identification as a liberal community can be demonstrated by following quote by Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim, '...the Hazaras more generally, offer the most potent example of a shift from violent conflict towards peaceful and civilian politics and as a result are one of the success stories of the post-2001 Afghanistan' (2017: 223). Subsequently, it can be seen that there is a concerted effort being made by the Hazara community to appear as, and promote themselves as, a liberal and progressive community. Furthermore, numerous online news articles about the Hazaras also allude to Hazaras as being forward-thinking and in turn distinct from other Afghans, with Michael Semple a Visiting Professor at Queen's University Belfast noting that the '...modernizing project had significant appeal in Hazara intellectual circles' (2012: 10). Many research participants have also alluded to such liberal traits as being prevalent among the Hazara community, with research participant Shokryah Mohammadi, who was born in Ghazni and came to England in

2008, stating that, 'Being Hazara means being modern, being open-minded, being welcoming to other people and being unified together'. Hence, there was significant scope for investigating this master narrative within this research, as it is widely propagated from within the community, but is also reaffirmed by some non-Hazaras.

In relation to the narrative of overcoming it is also worth noting some statistics from the annual Afghanistan Survey conducted by the Asia Foundation in 2018¹⁹. Opinions of Afghans on a variety of topics, from all thirty-four provinces of the country, were gauged as part of the survey, representing the country's diverse ethnic groups. Multiple topics were assessed within the survey, including security, governance and migration, with numerous statistics being provided about the perceptions of Afghans on these topics. In terms of voting the survey found that 95.4 % of respondents in the Hazara-dominated Hazarajat region stated that they planned to vote in the 2019 presidential elections, while in Kabul that number decreased significantly to 63.9%²⁰ (2018: 137). The survey also noted that Hazaras are more likely to support women's voting rights, which was at 92.9% in 2017 and 96.8% in 2018, while for Pashtuns it was at 81.7% in 2017, which was down to 79.0% in 2018, and for Tajiks it was at 93.0% in 2017, which was down to 91.9% in 2018 (ibid: 182). While in terms of employment it was mentioned that:

Ethnicity is a strong predictor of attitudes about certain types of employment. Hazaras (40.2%) are significantly more likely than Tajiks (20.5%), Pashtuns (15.3%), or Uzbeks (14.9%) to strongly agree with women working at a NGO, and Hazaras (51.4%) are also more likely to strongly or somewhat agree with women working in the army/police than Tajiks (36.5%), Uzbeks (34.4%), or Pashtuns (26.8%) (ibid: 191).

These are just a handful of statistics chosen from the survey to illustrate why the narrative of overcoming is relevant to the research and why the notions of being open-minded and forward-thinking are alluded to by members of the Hazara community. In

¹⁹ The first Afghanistan survey was conducted in 2004. The Asia Foundation '...is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia'. For more information about the organisation see: www.asiafoundation.org/about/.

²⁰ It should be noted that the general reluctance to vote in Kabul as opposed to in Hazarajat could also be influenced by the greater incidence of violence in the city, as compared to central Afghanistan.

turn, these statistics, in part, give credence to the assertion made by some members of the Hazara community about both their individual and collective liberal values and ideals. Furthermore, with regards to the narrative of overcoming it can be seen that there is a determination among the community to excel, in order to bring to an end the marginalisation Hazaras have endured in Afghanistan, Quetta and elsewhere. Farzana Marie notes that education is being utilised by Hazaras as a means to '[resist] against systematic ethnic and religious discrimination' (2013: 97). According to Marie this process not only acts as a means of social mobility but that educated Hazaras can begin to '...articulate a shared history through stories of dispossession, mass migration, violence, and political marginalization' (ibid), which is a quote that links both narratives together, and again further supports the first narrative's significance for the purpose of this research²¹. The increasing trend of acquiring educational opportunities among the community was noted in the early 2000s by Professor Robert Canfield who mentions the following correspondence with Hazara acquaintances:

One feature of the Hazara community that augurs well for their future is their avowed emphasis on education. As an educated Hazara wrote me in 2001, "This is probably where Hazaras are currently distinguishing themselves. There are more schools probably in the mountains today than ever, and if what we hear is correct it may be the only place technically under Taliban control that still has girls going to school. Beginning under the communists, Hazaras in particular saw education as the way off the bottom rung of the social ladder, and their pursuit of it ... has become only stronger in recent years. Resources are meager, but funds are raised both locally and internationally.... These are mostly more independent type schools, though Iran is weighing in a lot, as well. Curriculum is not like the Sunni Madrassahs, but much wider-a point even the Iranian schools pride themselves on-including English and computers." According to another educated Hazara, "Even before the Taliban appeared a university had begun [via some] relationship with the university of Balkh in Mazar-i Sharif. Those involved

²¹ On education as empowerment for Hazara girls in Quetta see: Changezi, Sofie Haug, and Heidi Biseth. "Education of Hazara Girls in a Diaspora: education as empowerment and an agent of change." *Research in Comparative and International Education*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2011, pp. 79-89.

were Hazaras from Kabul who had fled to Mazar.... [Also] in the mountains schools have actually multiplied and may have been the only place where girls were attending classes. All are locally supported."²²

In studying these two master narratives in a Western context, it allows for a wider representation and understanding of how the Hazara community interacts with these narratives on a transnational level, building on the seminal scholarship of Dr Alessandro Monsutti and Dr Khadija Abbasi on Hazara transnational networks. leads the research to enunciate newer understandings of Hazara history which stress how the diaspora is inextricably linked to the communities in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, as the narrative of marginality stems from historical and contemporary subjugation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, while the narrative of overcoming highlights how Hazaras globally are engaging with the process of democracy, either through voting, or lobbying their local parliamentarians regarding the human rights concerns of Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which in turn causes a shift in the demographic composition of Afghanistan's intelligentsia. Lastly, by tracing the ways that these narratives develop and transmit across social space, from the individual's personal lived experiences and through collective awareness and vice versa, this research draws out the ways in which narrative, identity, organisations, and socio-political action are all interrelated and embody each other. Therefore, what is ultimately shown is the production of individual and collective truth, in life and in history, which the narratives explore and express.

1.6 Subsequent chapters:

Having discussed the master narratives within this research in this chapter it is important to briefly explain the chapters leading on from this introduction, in order to further understand how these master narratives link to the research which has been undertaken for this study. It is firstly relevant to engage with literature on identity and the Hazara community, to allow for a greater understanding as to what extent these master narratives or other narratives have been investigated and researched within

²² This quote was taken from a footnote in Canfield's 2004 journal paper titled, "New Trends among the Hazaras: From "The Amity of Wolves" to "The Practice of Brotherhood"." *Iranian Studies*, vol. 37, no.2, 2004, pp. 241-262.

the context of this particular Afghan minority community living in the West. It will then be essential to contextualise and understand how and why Hazara migration to Europe, and specifically to Britain, has occurred. The starting point here will be a concise history of mid-20th Century Afghanistan, focusing on key political moments which became the impetus for mass migration of Afghans, of all backgrounds, to the neighbouring region, and further afield to Europe, while also delving into the historical situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. This section then transitions into discussing Afghan migration to Europe and Hazara migration to Britain. In doing the chapter develops a timeline of Hazara migration to Britain, because at present, such a timeline has not been formulated within other research. This is also due to the fact that most literature on Afghan migration to Europe does not distinguish between the various ethnic groups and differentiate their migration histories, to show the diverging migration trajectories of different Afghan communities. This is especially important to note given that Hazara migration to Europe, en masse, started to occur a decade and a half after that of other Afghans, namely Pashtuns and Tajiks. Hence, there is a need to engage with Hazara migration specifically, in order to demonstrate how it differs from other Afghan migration to the continent.

The next chapter will focus on an oral history of Hazara consciousness. The chapter takes as its focus both the narratives of marginality and overcoming to show how they interlink and change over time. Within this chapter there is a section on history and memory, given that they are at the core of the narratives of marginality and overcoming, and in turn this section looks at how both these themes interlink. A section on Hazara historiography then follows which shows how the political awakening of the Hazara community in the late 1980s and 1990s had a profound effect on the community and their sense of self. Alongside this, the chapter also discusses how the narratives of marginality and overcoming are connected, change with time, and are personalised by members of the Hazara community. The chapter ends with an analysis of the themes of experience, memory and narrative, as well as looking into the eminent Hazara political leader Abdul Ali Mazari and research participants' perspectives of him in relation to the discourses the community projects about Mazari as a notable figure within the community.

The following chapter then looks topic of religion, as a source of the master narratives within this research, and as a collective activity that catalyses identity in numerous ways, which also reinforces the master narratives. The chapter first discusses the Shia orientation of the Hazara community and its historical implications for the community. The chapter then moves on to highlighting the responses given during research interviews in terms of personal perceptions of religion and religious identities among the community. Following on from this is a section on the genealogy of Hazara political theology from before and during the Soviet war, which details the various ideologies of Hazara groups during the war from Khomeinist, traditionalist and Maoist, to show how both religious and secular ideologies shaped these movements. The chapter then ends with a section on genealogies of secularism in contemporary Hazara life, which has examples of online and public community engagement and awareness, that has been undertaken in order to promote a secular and liberal identity within the community.

The next chapter explores Hazara social media, and the use of online sites more generally, among transnational Hazaras as it is a space which is being utilised to document and preserve Hazara history, human rights issues and political mobilisation among the community. This chapter first details why social media is a research tool worth exploring within academic research, and then discusses the propagation of Hazara history online, which is centring this history around the insurrection of Hazarajat, massacres against the community in the 20th Century and successive migrations to the region and beyond. Here a couple of popular English-language Hazara websites and their content is explored, namely 'Hazara.net' and 'Hazara International'. The chapter then highlights how social media is also being used by the Hazara community for collective action by the diaspora in relation to human rights violations. The chapter ends with an analysis of Hazara social media use and the importance of engaging with this online content, as it allows for a greater understanding of a marginal history from the perspective of the community, is also a space for the transnational community to connect, as well as providing a space to coordinate effective community responses to acts of violence against the community in Afghanistan and Pakistan, where examples of collective action and lobbying are discussed.

The final chapter before the conclusion chapter examines political mobilisation, collective action and community events among transnational Hazara communities, with a look at the local, national and transnational level, focusing on the city of Quetta, Afghanistan and the Hazara diaspora. This chapter highlights how the precarity of the Hazara community in both Pakistan and Afghanistan has led the community to engage in collective action in the form of protests to demand greater protection for the community and a respect of their right to life and the need for heightened security to be provided by the state to prevent the community from continually being attacked. However, the chapter also shows how these demands are constantly ignored and in turn more extreme forms of protest are undertaken by the community in order to provoke a government response. This chapter also discusses the resilience of the community in spite of targeted acts of violence, and how through community events the Hazara community is working to promote and showcase their culture. The final section of this chapter details collective action in the diaspora and how the circumstances of the Hazara community in Afghanistan and Pakistan greatly impacts the transnational Hazara community. This thesis then ends with a conclusion chapter, which summarises the findings of each chapter within this research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review:

2.1 Introduction:

The literature explored within the chapter primarily focuses on identity, memory and history, as well as ethnic consciousness, given that they are the core concepts being evaluated within this study. Furthermore, Hazara ethnic consciousness has been the impetus for the visibility the Hazaras now have in public spaces in Afghanistan, and their online presence, through the propagation of information relating to community issues such as human rights, political mobilisation and Hazara history. Therefore, it is important to assess literature on community narratives and community consciousness as they are fundamental concepts relating to how the Hazara community is choosing to present itself to the world, be it in Afghanistan, Europe or Australia. The literature examined in this chapter will show how contemporary examples of ‘accomplishment’ among the community are drawn upon to legitimate and proliferate the specific narrative of overcoming. Additionally, the community can be seen to rely on past negative experiences and religiously significant events to emphasise ‘marginality’, with this narrative guiding Hazara historiography. Hence, these narratives have been significant for this research in that through assessing community organisations and Hazara social networks the extent to which these narratives have impacted conceptualisations of identity among the Hazara community could and have been assessed.

This literature review is divided into several sections. Given how limited the academic literature is on the Hazara migrant and diaspora community in Europe, in this chapter literature on Afghan migration, diasporas and identity will be engaged with more broadly, in order to highlight overlaps and divergences between Hazaras and other Afghan communities. The first section in this literature review focuses on ‘ethnicity, identity and diaspora’, given that central to this research is the investigation of identity and how individuals construct their identities. The term diaspora is also important to discuss here, as it elaborates on anthropological understandings of the term and its applicability to Hazara youth in Britain, and in order to justify the use of the term in relation to the Hazara community within this research. This is followed by a section on the seminal work of political scientist and historian Benedict Anderson on ‘imagined

communities', given that at the core of this research are master narratives which work to construct an imagined community. This is followed by a section on 'Hazara social networks', given that one of the aims of the research has been to engage with local Hazara networks, which has allowed for a deeper understanding of what identity means to the community as a whole, as well as on a personal level for community members. Literature on 'collective memory' is then analysed as the shared memories of a Hazara past have been fundamental to the narratives constructed and propagated by the community. Finally, 'narrative and history' are also examined, given that Hazara historiography is discussed in this thesis, and as social media and Hazara institutions are actively working to promote an indigenous history of the community. However, it should be noted that given there is limited literature on Hazara migration and identity in Europe, there is instead an emphasis on research on Hazara migrants in Australia throughout this literature review, as there has been significant research conducted on the Hazara community in the country.

2.2 Ethnicity, identity and diasporas:

Given that this research assesses identity constructs stemming from indigenous community narratives, it is important to firstly engage with key concepts which communities and individuals use to identify and distinguish themselves from other groups within various societies. In relation to this research a significant concept worthy of discussion is the term 'ethnicity', given that most literature on Hazaras refers to the community as a distinct ethnic group. An essential text which examines ethnicity and identity is 'Ethnic groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference', first published in 1969. The book was edited by social anthropologist Fredrik Barth, and in its introductory chapter Barth states that '...categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information, but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories' (9). This quote is central to Barth's theorising of the term ethnicity as he departs from essentialist understandings of the term, of a pre-determined 'essence' being at the core of different ethnic groups but instead highlights that ethnicity does not in fact have a pre-determined essence which distinguishes it from other categories of identification, but rather that it is defined against other communities. Barth's

intervention here is pertinent to note as introductory interactions with members of the Hazara community have shown that there is at times a reliance on such a conceptualisation of ethnicity when community members are defining and constructing Hazara identity with reference to an 'Afghan identity' or community. In turn the research interviews within this study will help to shed light on the extent to which Barth's definition of ethnicity is reproduced, or if essentialist definitions of ethnicity appear to be more relevant.

In a paper on ethnic boundaries Professor Andreas Wimmer notes that 'Barth and his collaborators observed how the boundaries between two ethnic groups are maintained, even though their cultures might be indistinguishable and even though individuals and groups might switch from one side of the boundary to the other', and how '...ethnicity is the product of a social process rather than a cultural given, made and remade rather than taken for granted, chosen depending on circumstances rather than ascribed through birth' (2008: 971), which further highlights Barth's novel approach to ethnicity as being a relational process, defined in relation to other communities. However, in discussing the term ethnicity it is important to note that not all social scientists are comfortable with its usage in contemporary discourses on communities and society more generally, as Professor Rogers Brubaker contends that there is a need to critically engage with the term 'ethnicity' and not to solely perceive it as distinct unit, stating that:

Ethnicity, race, and nation should be conceptualized not as substances or things or entities or organisms or collective individuals-as the imagery of discrete, concrete, tangible, bounded, and enduring "groups" encourages us to do-but rather in relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated terms....It means thinking of ethnicization, racialization and nationalization as political, social, cultural , and psychological processes. And it means taking as a basic analytical category not the "group" as an entity by groupness as a contextually fluctuating conceptual variable (2004: 11).

Brubaker's critical approach has become more salient in contemporary discourses on ethnicity and race, and is relevant to note given that a few Hazara research

participants have raised questions about the label of 'ethnic' in relation to the term Hazara, stating that for them the most sound reason as to how they came to be known by the term would have been due to the shared religious beliefs of the various communities living in central Afghanistan, in the past as Shia Muslims who thus came to be known as Hazaras. Hence a rigid understanding of such a community based on ancestry does not adequately represent what it means to be Hazara and who is Hazara for these specific research participants. Similarly, a research participant from Quetta noted that the identity of Hazaras based on a claim of a shared heritage could be seen as exclusionary, given that in his city other communities have settled, over generations, in Hazara neighbourhoods, taking on Hazara customs and speaking Hazaragi as their mother tongue, and very much identify as Hazara even if they do not have a historic link to central Afghanistan. Who then has the right to dictate who is, and who is not, Hazara, if someone feels a connection to such a term, identity and community, was the question posed by this particular research participant. In drawing upon the two aforementioned theorists, who have studied ethnicity, it can be seen that the term and its usage is within a spectrum, with one understanding being more rigid, while the other is more fluid and critical. However, given that this research does not aim to delve into the discussions about deconstructing the notion of ethnicity, it is important to briefly draw upon these influential studies for context, which has been concisely done in both this and the previous paragraph, without dismissing the use of the term, as identity among the Hazara community in England is a key component within this research.

Dr Yahia Baiza, a research associate at the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, conducted research with Ismaili Hazara youth in the city of Essen in Germany in 2012. His research found that for the Ismaili Hazara youth interviewed identity was 'hybridized' (89), due to having grown up in Germany but being brought up in an Afghan household, and hence Baiza notes that identity is 'complex and subjective' (ibid: 79) and is 'driven by the individual's experience' (ibid: 84). In Baiza's research the Hazara Ismaili community did not espouse much ethnic solidarity and instead saw their Ismaili religious identity as most important. This was due to the fact that they had not experienced the persecution that other Hazaras in Afghanistan had, but a sense of ethnic consciousness did exist among the youth interviewed by Baiza. One interviewee

even stated that as they had never personally suffered any injustice for being a Hazara, ethnicity was less significant for that individual, instead religion and nationality had more of an influence on their conceptualisations of identity. Baiza states that historically Ismailis have been marginalised in Afghanistan. Therefore, a motivating factor for the centrality of a religious identity among German Ismaili Hazara youth could be tied to the history of their co-religionists as stated by a couple of Hazara research participants through the course of his study, in the same way that an ethnic Hazara identity was significant for Hazaras in Afghanistan during the 1980s and 1990s, when their political mobilisation heightened. In turn it can be seen that this particular Hazara community have articulated a substantive identity deriving from the religious beliefs that their community holds. Hence, given that Baiza's research was conducted among a diasporic community, his findings are significant for the purposes of this study, as Baiza's work was one of the first accounts drawn upon within this research which differs from other studies, in that the findings show a Hazara community which primarily associates with their religious identity as opposed to an ethnic Hazara identity.

In master's dissertation on 'The religious identity of the Hazaras of Afghanistan in modern-day Pakistan' Jennifer Creasy notes that the Hazara community in Quetta, although being present in the city for decades are 'not entirely settled in Quetta' (2009: 52) and that '...there is a sense that they do not permanently belong there' (ibid). Creasy's research states that this perception even manifests among third generation Hazaras, and in turn Quetta is seen as a 'temporary home'. This notion of not being entirely settled in a location is significant to note for the purpose of this research given that just over half of the interviewees for this study had protracted lived experiences in either Afghanistan, Iran or Pakistan, so it will be worth noting Creasy's findings to see if they manifest among Hazaras who now live in Britain but were born and brought up in other countries. What is unusual about this research in comparison to other research on Hazara identity, is the fact that through self-identification some Hazaras in Quetta refer to themselves as 'Persian' as opposed to 'Pakistani' given their linguistic and religious connection with Iran.

Within literature on Hazaras it is not common to see that the community perceive themselves as Persian, which further highlights the subjective nature of identity, given that many scholars on Hazaras do not refer to the community as 'Persian'. However, this identification as Persian is reinforced by the fact that some non-Hazaras in Quetta refer to Hazaras as Persians. Creasy notes that such an identification '...displays a lack of identification with Pakistan' (ibid), as she had never come across a Hazara who referred to themselves as Pakistani. Additionally, '...the Hazara community appears from the outside well settled and permanent, their occupancy of Quetta is more temporary in their own self- understanding' (ibid: 52-53). In turn, it can be seen here that identity is framed as relational, as Hazaras in Creasy's research do not strongly identify with the national identity of Pakistani, and are perceived as Persian-speaking Hazaras. While Dr Elaheh Rostami-Povey in her book on identity among Afghan women in Iran and Pakistan states that the idea that there are tensions between identities for diasporas communities has shifted, and now what is prevalent is transnationality among Afghan communities in the West (2013: 89). This therefore entails living dual political, economic and social lives, and moving between cultures in the different countries with which members of a diaspora have a link. This hybridity of identities is important to highlight, in order to assess to what extent this notion of transnationality is prevalent among British Hazaras.

Amy Elizabeth Neve in her master's thesis on identity among newly arrived Hazara men in Australia found that they participate in Australian society, as well as within their home communities and the 'international community of Hazara diaspora'. With Hazara men it was found that an ethnic Hazara identity is central to the community. Furthermore, Hazara identity is more important to the community '...than country of birth or where they grew up as these young men are from Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan...and identify with a shared history of persecution' (2014: 60-62). Neve's work shows how a transnational Hazara identity has developed among a Hazara migrant community. These findings are pertinent to note in relation to this study given that her work covers a central theme that this study also seeks to understand, which is conceptualisations of identity among British Hazaras, through engaging with narratives of history (with both master narratives within this research also being narratives of history). Therefore, in this specific research it can be seen that a substantive identity,

based on an essentialist understanding of ethnicity has been espoused by new Hazara migrants in Australia. In turn by highlighting that younger Hazara men had a strong affinity to their ethnic identity as Hazaras, it will be a useful comparison to see whether Hazara men in England interviewed for this research share the same views with regards to identity as Neve's interviewees in Australia, and to what extent a transnational Hazara identity manifests among this specific demographic, and also among female Hazara research participants, a demographic which was not studied within Neve's research. Furthermore, Neve's research also highlights how histories of the community are passed on and preserved over generations, given that Neve's participants were younger Hazaras.

In research on the Hazara community in Oxford Fatima Hashmi noted an observation that did not appear in other literature on migrant and diasporic Hazaras. The observation being that Afghan and Pakistani female Hazaras in Oxford did not interact with one another. Hazara women who had fled from Afghanistan to Pakistan during the Taliban regime associated and socialised with both groups of women at community gatherings but Afghan and Quetta Hazara women would only interact with Hazaras from their native countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan. This is an educative discovery as it highlights a divide not noted in other research on Hazaras outside Afghanistan and Pakistan. Hashmi's research states that there was a difference between Afghan and Pakistani Hazaras with regards to 'dialect, dressing and culture'. Furthermore, Hazaras of Pakistani background are more '...accustomed to Pakistani culture and it seems that the national origin has more influence than ethnic affiliation' (2016: 34). Thus, in turn, Hashmi's findings state that national identity has more influence on Pakistani Hazaras than *qawmiyat*²³, and is an outcome that one would not necessarily assume given the sectarian violence in Pakistan since the mid-2000s, leading to countless attacks on the Hazara community in Quetta.

Within Hashmi's research a possible reason as to why national identity may be of such importance could be due to the fact that for those among the Hazara community for whom national identity supersedes ethnic identity, the suffering inflicted on the Hazara people in their regional homelands may not have had a direct impact on

²³ Hazara 'community-hood'.

Hazaras who moved away from home or were brought up abroad. Thus, ethnic consciousness may exist as Hazaras with a strong national identity still attend Hazara cultural gatherings, but ethnic solidarity is may be less prevalent among them as they themselves have not suffered persecution. This notion of ethnic consciousness existing without necessarily being tied to a sense of ethnic solidarity was mentioned by Baiza in his research on Ismaili Hazara youth in Essen, Germany from 2012. It should be noted that Hashmi specifically uses the word 'influence' meaning that national identity may have a greater impact on the cultural aspects of identity among Pakistani Hazaras, but this does not necessarily mean it supersedes the importance of a Hazara ethnic identity for the community.

While in an undergraduate dissertation focusing on the integration of Muslims in Britain, for which the interviewees were of Afghan Hazara background, researcher Maneeha Ali found that the views discussed in relation to assimilation, belonging and home were multi-faceted among her research participants. Within Ali's study one male respondent, Amir, noted how he had encountered multiple incidents of racism through his job as a taxi driver in Britain for almost two decades, with a number of physical attacks taking place, due to his Asian background. He also stated how the abuse he has suffered in Britain has not only been initiated by white British males but also by British Muslims. One incident mentioned in this interview was how the respondent was referred to as a heretic when a Muslim colleague became aware of the respondent's Shia background, and this specific incident resulted '...in a physical altercation, near the cab office', with Ali stating that Amir noted that '...he should have been more careful about how and to whom he vocalised his beliefs. However, he notes that in Britain he has almost no fear as there is religious freedom, in comparison to the danger he can face for his beliefs in Afghanistan or even Pakistan, where [S]hi'as face persecution' (2018: 28 - 29). Although some of the literature discussed so far highlights the discrimination some Muslims face as a minority in Britain, Ali's study brings to the fore another form of prejudice that may get lost in discussions on bigotry, that of inter-Muslim relations. Although Amir had gone through a multitude of negative experiences while living in Britain, both from the native community and Sunni Muslims, he ended his interview with Ali by stating the following about Islam, citizenship and integration:

...being a good [M]uslim is synonymous to a good and 'integrated' citizen. [Amir] acknowledges the negative stereotypes perpetuated by the media OF Islam and asserts that Islam practices peace and coexistence. Amir also believes that racist mentalities of some of the white groups in society hinder some [M]uslims, from feeling accepted (ibid).

While Dr Virinder S Kalra a senior lecturer in sociology at the University of Warwick notes that '...notions of ethnicity, immigration, settlement and race are all found to intersect and dissect conceptualizations of the diaspora' (2005: 9). The fact that these notions intersect is significant for this research. Not only do these notions intersect, the multiple aspects that are commonly found to constitute identity, for example nationality, religion, ethnicity (among others) have a 'complicated relationship' with Hazaras. Although, the majority of Hazaras are Afghan nationals, by some sections of Afghan society they are perceived as 'others' due to the common Mongol heritage claim, which is at times both internally articulated or externally imposed, and also in relation to the historically low socio-economic status of Hazaras in Afghanistan. Additionally, this view is related to the Hazaras' religious beliefs as Shia Muslims, which further complicates their relationship with their fellow Afghan co-nationals and their national identity, which due to fringe elements, deny that Shias 'belong' to the nation. Ethnicity is also linked to this, due to the fact that relations between Hazaras and Afghanistan's dominant ethnic group, the Pashtuns, have been fraught for well-over over a century. Accordingly, the notions that Kalra states do indeed intersect in relation to the Hazara community, given their troubled relationship with the 'homeland' and other ethnic groups. Subsequently we see a 'double-intersection' for Hazaras, with not only the notion of identity but also with the terms that constitute a given identity.

Having discussed the notions of ethnicity and identity in this section, it is also relevant to briefly discuss the term 'diaspora' given that members of the Hazara diaspora also constitute a significant proportion of research participants within this study. Professor Robin Cohen, an eminent scholar within this field of diaspora studies has written extensively on the term and its core constituents. Cohen notes that the '...the classical term, usually capitalized as Diaspora and used only in the singular, was mainly

confined to the study of the Jewish experience...these peoples conceived their scattering as arising from a cataclysmic event that had traumatized the group as a whole, thereby creating the central historical experience of victimhood as the hands of a cruel oppressor' (2008: 1). This classical notion of diaspora heavily emphasises an expulsion from the homeland as being central as to who the term can accurately apply to and represent. While Dr Virinder S Kalra notes how the 'classical form of diaspora' as mentioned by Cohen relates to forced exile and loss, and the underlining assumption is that there is a desire to for all who constitute a diaspora to return to a homeland whether real or imagined, and this is explicitly highlighted when Kalra states that '...forced exile becomes essential to the heightened a sense of longing for home and is central to this understanding of diaspora' (2005: 10).

A problem that emerges with this classical notion of diaspora is that it assumes that all the members of a diaspora community intend or want to eventually go back to the place from which they were displaced, and that only those who are victims of forced migration can refer to themselves as belonging to a diaspora. This very narrow view obviously excludes many groups who may refer to themselves as also constituting a given diaspora. What then becomes of those who self-identify as South Asian diasporas or Caribbean diasporas in Britain for example? In ascribing certain characteristics to a term understood differently by academics and the public it may be found that definitions of terms understood by researchers do not match how research participants conceptualisation these terms. In turn such rigidity does not necessarily assist with conducting research but may impede its depth and impact, and the ability to fully engage with respondents, especially in the case of a community like the Hazaras who have primarily come to Europe as refugees, hence their desire to go back and settle in Afghanistan may be limited.

Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge state that 'Diasporas always leave a trail of collective memory about another place and time and create new maps of desire and of attachment' (1989: i). This is a very important point to consider in light of what Dr Parvathi Raman has said about diasporic understandings of 'home'. Primarily, that an ancestral land can be romanticised and imagined in a way which does not reflect its true nature. A well noted example of this was when a South African Indian anti-

colonial activist, Yusuf Dadoo, who was subsequently involved in the anti-apartheid struggle, visited India for the first time. Raman writes that ‘...like many other Indian South Africans who had romantic images of an India that they had created from a distance, Dadoo became somewhat disillusioned after his arrival in the country. Reaching his village in the rainy season, he was to observe glumly, ‘[t]his place is full of mud and water. And it looks so grim and dismal. I don't think India is the paradise I thought it to be’²⁴ (2003). However, given the contemporary dynamics of society and the political order in Afghanistan, marginal communities like the Hazaras may not be prone to such assumptions. While, Dr Fiona Adamson conceptualises an innovative approach to the discussions on diasporas, and proposes that these communities can themselves also be transnational identity networks, defined by a ‘shared collective identity’, through the lens of transnational social movements, in that:

...[D]iasporas are a particular form of transnationalism that emerge through the process of strategic social construction and framing with the aim of constructing a shared collective identity or “imagined community”. This connects with migration in that globalization, exile, migration, and boundary-crossing from one political system to another all serve as impetuses for the creation of new identity categories and discourses, since these activities expose an individual to novel social and political conditions... (2012: 32- 33).

This is very much apparent on Hazara social media, where borders are transcended in order to build a global Hazara community working to promote the community and its achievements. In doing so the community works to educate people, both within and outside of the community, of the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and in the neighbouring region, both past and present. This is primarily done through the online activism undertaken by members of the Hazara community in Europe and Australia.

Therefore, it can be seen from the literature highlighted in this section that emerging scholarship on Hazara communities both in the East and West shows how identity is framed as both relational, so in opposition to other communities, for instance as Hazaras and not Pakistani, as found in Creasy’s study, but also as substantive, with

²⁴ See: www.himalmag.com/a-resting-place-for-the-imagination/.

reference to religious beliefs, Hazara history and nationality, such as in the work of Baiza, Neve and Ali. While, at the same time much of the literature also emphasises the formulation of a transitional Hazara identity, which depending on the Hazara communities being interviewed also oscillates between being a relational and substantive identity. Hence, the aforementioned literature will help situate the responses given within this study, in order to fully understand and contextualise how Britain Hazaras construct and articulate their identity.

2.3 On 'imagined communities':

As the foundation of this research is the engagement with a specific community, in this instance, the Hazara community, it is necessary to discuss and dissect one of the most seminal studies on the theme of communities written in the latter half of the 20th Century, which is Benedict Anderson's book titled, 'Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism'. Central to Anderson's argument in the book is that print media or as he refers to it, 'print capitalism' has been the catalyst for the nationalisms taking shape since the 19th Century. It is claimed that the nation as a vast and populated region, partly manifests, through it being imagined and socially constructed, as it cannot be that every individual in any given landmass will be acquainted with all of his or her co-nationals. Therefore, the suggestion of an imagined community formulated through print media allows such co-nationals to bond, through engaging with the ritual of reading the daily newspaper, for example (1983: 35), as Anderson notes that 'Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search (for a fraternity), nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways' (ibid: 36). Furthermore, he goes on to state that:

Speakers of the huge variety of Frenches, Englishes, or Spanishes, who might find it difficult or even impossible to understand one another in conversation, became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper. In the process, they gradually became aware of the hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people in their particular language-field, and at the same time that only those hundreds of thousands, or millions so, so belonged...[in turn forming]...the embryo of the nationally imagined community' (ibid: 44).

This is a very narrow approach in seeking to understand national consciousness as it does not account for the myriad of ways, outside of print, in which views come to manifest or are propagated in societies. For instance, the 'Epic of Manas', an epic poem, originally transmitted orally, which is said to be from the 18th Century is as seen as the foundation of Kyrgyz national identity and the Kyrgyz nation, but its appeal and reach did not spread through society's reliance on print capitalism as Anderson asserts. Therefore, although Anderson's text provides interesting insights into how populations come together and circulate a given nationalism, it is not a holistic account or approach to nationalism and national identities. For example, the book on the whole does not account for the global south, bar reference to a few historical events in South East Asia during colonial times, nor does his reference to the Philippines (ibid: 26 - 29) do much to prove Anderson's assertions. This is because he is very much referring to Manila's elite class, who were both literate and had access to print media, but by no means accurately represent the majority of Filipino society at the time. Hence, the assertions made in the book appear as generally quite Eurocentric, while only accounting for the literate classes of European societies which the text describes. In turn, a great emphasis is placed on print media's influence on nationalism without thoroughly engaging with other modes of communication which also effect communities' nationalistic tendencies.

Another significant issue with Anderson's text is the lack of an insight into minority communities, and in particular marginalised communities. This is pertinent to note in relation to this thesis given that the community being studied were formally, and generally, currently perceive themselves as a marginalised community in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. Furthermore, given the information accessible online, on Hazara websites and social media pages, it can be seen that growing access to print media and even online informational sources in recent has not lead to a formation of a national consciousness as Afghans, but has in fact worked to partly highlight the fragmentation stemming from a national identity among some of Afghanistan's minority communities, which goes against Anderson's claim that 'Print-language is what invents nationalism, not a particular language per se (ibid: 134)'. He further writes about 'the imaginative power of nationalism' (ibid: 158) when describing how the Vietnamese came to defend their nation when an external name was imposed on

them. However, this again does not accurately represent all those who belong within the territorial borders of a given nation, as in the specific case of the Hazaras it can be seen that the name of the nation is in itself contentious and a reason as to why certain members of the community actively choose to disassociate with labelling themselves in relation to the name of a nation which they feel excludes their community. Hence, Anderson's assertion here naturally lends itself to majority populations within nations, which again does not account for marginalised communities, that are seeking integration into a wider national polity as opposed to creating their own.

In the case of the Hazaras, Abdul Ali Mazari was central to the proliferation of Hazara ethnic consciousness, which was not being done through the national print media, as his community's political aspirations would not have been accurately represented in these sources of information and communication, as they would have been perceived by the ruling class as undermining national unity. Rather it was his lived experiences and the circumstances of his community which internally propelled this view of promoting an ethnic consciousness. This internal shift in consciousness within Mazari was broadcast to his followers, primarily through his speeches and rallies, which in present times have become the foundation of an emerging Hazara nationalism. Such modes of propagating ethnic consciousness and localised nationalisms are not adequately captured by Anderson, as Mazari's words and subsequent Hazara community action played a major role in formulating a new imagined Hazara community. While in the context of contemporary Hazaras, the dominant national media infrastructure in Afghanistan excludes Hazaras, so the Hazara community does not rely as heavily on print capitalism, hence the importance of, and reliance on the internet, social media and even mobile phones, in order to circulate Hazara discourses about the nation, society at large, and their specific community. In turn these newer modes of communication become an outlet for the dissemination of narratives which seek to unite a marginalised community.

In Afghanistan specifically, telecommunication statistics show that in 2013 just under 90% of the country mobile telephone coverage²⁵, while alternative statistics from a

²⁵ These statistics can be accessed from the following link:
www.web.archive.org/web/20140407123229/http://atra.gov.af/en/page/telecom-statistics-2013.

New York Magazine article from 2018 highlight that ‘...only about a tenth of its population, or 3.5 million people, was online in 2016, and yet, that low rate of penetration belies a society that is increasingly digitally connected’ and that ‘This is thanks to the widespread availability of the mobile phone (as of early 2018, countrywide mobile-phone penetration was an estimated 80 percent)...’²⁶, while a paper by the United States Agency for International Development from 2017 states that ‘95% of social media users have a Facebook account’ and are a ‘...homogenous group of mostly young and educated individuals’²⁷. Thus, within this research Hazara social media pages and informational community webpages are engaged with in order to partially gauge an understanding of internal community dynamics and sentiments on community issues.

This section on Anderson’s eminent scholarship has shown the scope of his hypothesis on print capitalism (print media) in relation to a marginal community. Although print media does indeed play a pivotal role in the spread of information and ideas, its target audience by-and-large will be the dominant groups within societies, which in many instances are large ethnic communities. Consequently, the content found in these sources may not seek to include or may be ambivalent towards promoting the ideas or cause of minor ethnic groups or marginal communities. In turn, this has meant that Hazaras have utilised other means of information sharing and communication to promote an ethnic Hazara identity, transnationally, and these novel modes of communication are investigated within this research to thoroughly account for Hazara narratives and sentiments on community issues. Accordingly, if print media is only partially useful in the context of a marginal community, then it becomes clear as to why it is necessary to pay attention to other forms and means of information sharing. Therefore, it helpful to consider how social network theories can contribute to analysing the process of narrative formation and circulation of information in this project.

²⁶ This information is from the following article: www.nymag.com/developing/2018/10/afghanistan-sneakernet-internet-physical-file-sharing.html.

²⁷ These statistics can be accessed from the following link: www.internews.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/Social_Media_Afghanistan_2017-4-pager.pdf.

2.4 Hazara social networks:

Having delved into Anderson's seminal study on print capitalism, it is crucial to discuss social networks more generally, of which print capitalism is a segment, as in certain instances, social networks can help to define and shape people's ethnic consciousness and identity.

Taking from the work of Dr Kristian Berg Harpviken on social networks in Afghanistan, the most important aspects of social networks with regards to this research are the following, namely that, 'Actors and their actions are viewed as interdependent rather than independent, autonomous units...' and 'Network models conceptualize structure (social, economic, political, etc.) as lasting patterns of relations among actors' (2009: 14-15). Formal and informal Hazara social networks are vital for this research as they have acted as the starting point from which it became possible to decide which specific research sites were to be incorporated within this research. As a result, it was envisaged that it would be more conducive to establishing a greater number of contacts within the Hazara community at various research sites, and in turn be introduced to potential interviewees for the research. Harpviken also notes that with regards to social networks, the natural association people tend to have is with '...the ties that exist between people who are close to each other', which is the most prevalent conceptualisation referred to in social science literature. He elaborates on a specific feature of social networks, in that they are forms of 'bounded solidarity' which he refers to as '...the existence and potential enhancement of cultural markers (dress style, language, customs etc.)' (ibid: 30), which are also a feature of Hazara social networks.

A recent and valuable study on Hazara social networks was conducted by Mackenzie and Guntarik, who studied Hazaras in the Dandenong suburb of Melbourne in 2015. Among the community it was noted that Hazara social networks allowed for community members to interact and engage with others in the community, and for the '...capacity to develop a strong sense of community belonging' (2015: 70). These social networks were considered to be important as they provided 'social structures' enabling recent migrants to '...actively participate in community and social life' (ibid). The suburb was chosen by newly arrived Hazaras to settle as their established social

networks informed them that the area was an 'ideal place' for them to settle, and once settled they themselves worked to assist new Hazara community members (ibid). These findings have been the impetus for incorporating asking Hazara research participants whether community institutions exist in their areas and what role they play for the community and what services they offer the local Hazara community. Therefore, for the purpose of this research it has been important to assess the Hazara social networks that exist in the cities chosen as sites for this research, in order to see if they can further assist this research with an analysis of local Hazara demographics and community dynamics, in the various research sites.

Diana Glazebrook in her study on the use of mobile phones among Hazaras in the same Melbourne suburb of Dandenong, notes that, 'The bases of a Hazara social network might be traced to shared village of origin, shared school or university in Afghanistan, shared boat journey, shared detention center, or shared region of resettlement or workplace in Australia' (2004: 46). She also notes that some Hazaras came to Australia as a Pashtun community association offered to provide Hazara asylum seekers 'limited support'. Here we see an example of support and solidarity among the broader Afghan migrant community. This is very significant to note, because based on informal conversations that have taken place with Hazaras and non-Hazara Afghans in London prior to this research, it appears that the Afghan community in the UK is very fragmented and segregated on ethnic lines. Thus, learning that there are positive interactions between Hazaras and non-Hazaras outside of Afghanistan is very illuminating.

Similarly, Fatima Hashmi notes that areas with larger Hazara communities have seen the formation of structured community organisations which act as both religious and cultural spaces. These spaces naturally allow for increased interaction between Hazaras, which previously may have been limited if there were no Hazara social spaces, or access to information for new Hazara arrivals. In turn ethnic solidarity among the Hazara community in Oxford is demonstrated by the fact that settled community members help to provide practical support to newly arrived asylum seekers through providing information on visas, '[helping to fill] application forms and correspondence with the Home Office' for instance (2016: 48). With Hashmi's

findings in mind, throughout the course of this study active Hazara community members were asked about the community spaces available for Hazaras, in the cities where this research was being conducted, and their functions.

While in his work on social networks among Hazaras in Afghanistan and Quetta, Alessandro Monsutti notes that as the number of Hazaras grew in any given location it became hard for them to solely stay among groups from their locality and as a result they developed a ‘...complementary set of mutual support structures, especially *qawm* and neighbourhood associations’. Monsutti details how through social networks the heads of Hazara *qawms* collect money from the families they govern and that the money goes towards schools and roads, among other things. Monsutti also notes how religious meeting places also act as a ‘community structure’, and that these spaces are known as *imâmbâras*²⁸ whose committees organise Muharram processions (2005: 113-114).

Therefore, it can be seen that research on Hazara social networks highlights how ethnic solidarity is a motivating factor for settled Hazaras when it comes to providing assistance to recent Hazara arrivals, given their shared migration struggles and collective history. Such help then enhances one’s attachment to a given community, and as a result newly arrived Hazaras become active participants within a given community. Once settled these migrants then also help newer Hazara arrivals within the community. Furthermore, in areas with larger Hazara populations, formal community organisations form as means for interaction between the community. In turn it can be seen that Hazara social networks are central in aiding the social integration of newly arrived Hazaras, as well as providing them with practical information about their new home. Given that these social networks help with community cohesion and the establishment of formal community institutions, it has been important to engage with Hazara social networks for the purpose of this research. This is because they are sites that will help to inform how lived experiences of migration impact narrative, historiography and identity among the Hazara

²⁸ For the rest of this research *imâmbâras* will be referred to as *Hussainiyas*, using the Arabic term for these specific religious spaces, as there are several different words used to denote Hussainiyas in Central and South Asia.

community. In the context of the Hazara community, these networks are also central to the preservation and revitalisation of Hazara consciousness.

The literature examined in this section highlights the central role that Hazara social networks play in assisting community members in practical ways in host societies, showing solidarity and support to vulnerable co-ethnics and preserving, maintaining and promoting community harmony. The spaces where these networks manifest can be community institutions, both religious and cultural, online Hazara social media pages and forums, and informal community gatherings. In turn all these spaces alongside the aforementioned practical community needs also become spaces where substantive identities are promoted and performed. For instance, the global, annual Baba Mazari events become spaces where Hazara ethnic consciousness is promulgated, Hazara social media becomes a space which promotes Hazara culture, and informal gatherings such as family Nawroz events can become forums where traditional Hazara clothes, instruments and music are visible. Thus, these sites go further in broadcasting a given narrative than sole reliance on print media would be able to achieve. Furthermore, as this section has featured some of the means through which narratives are communicated, it is then also important to consider the processes which influence narratives, by looking at how past experiences are perceived and are categorised into distinct sets of memories which inform the contents of specific narratives. Hence, in the next section literature pertaining to collective memory is discussed.

2.5 Collective memory:

Having discussed print media and Hazara social networks it is important to also discuss collective memory, as collective memory is also a site which accounts for community narratives, which both Anderson and Barth neglect in their own work.

The term collective memory is most often attributed to French philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs who pioneered the term and its study in the latter half of the 20th Century. Therefore in discussing the term collective memory it is necessary to first examine Halbwachs' work and findings. In discussing the subject of memory, Halbwachs in his book 'On collective memory' states that, '...the mind reconstructs its

memories under the pressure of society' (1992: 52), and this is extremely relevant in relation to Afghanistan. This reconstruction can be seen to be happening on a national level, in Afghanistan, in how figures such as Abdul Ali Mazari and Ahmad Shah Massoud who both fought during the civil war in Afghanistan in the 1990s are seen by their respective communities, the Hazaras and Tajiks, as national heroes who worked to protect their community's interests. This is in spite of the fact that both men and their factions picked up arms during the war, and have been accused of human rights violations during the war. Even with such claims present, the favourable images constructed of these two figures are still maintained and memorialised by these communities, with Massoud officially having an annual national holiday in Afghanistan in his memory since 2012, on the 9th of September, known as 'Martyr's Day' or 'Massoud Day'. While in relation to Halbwachs' previous quote and the collective memories that communities choose to propagate or reconstruct, be they in Afghanistan or elsewhere, they are further scrutinised by Halbwachs who notes that, 'Society from time to time obligates people not just to reproduce in thought previous events of their lives, but also to touch them up, to shorten them, or to complete them so that, however convinced we are that our memories are exact, we give them prestige that reality did not possess' (ibid).

For Halbwachs what brings communal recollections together as a collective memories is the fact that they are '...part of a totality of thoughts common to a group, the group of people with whom we have a relation...To recall them it is hence sufficient that we place ourselves in the perspective of this group, that we adopt its interests...' (ibid: 52). Here the point of 'placing ourselves' is important to note as that can be seen to be happening with various Afghan communities in how they associate themselves with competing narratives of the past about the nation, and who is viewed as a hero of the people or enemy of the nation, as touched upon in the previous paragraph on Mazari and Massoud. In a diasporic context, in relation to the research interviews conducted for this study, it can be seen that some younger Hazaras make reference to memories of relatives or stories told by other community members in order to align themselves with the history of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, and the narratives of marginalisation and persecution that are regularly alluded to by senior members of the community, which are also present on Hazara social media. Therefore,

what can be seen to be taking place, to a certain extent, is a recollection of the past that fits with an overarching narrative of the community, which works to reinforce the belief that Hazaras in Afghanistan still suffer disproportionate levels of discrimination.

Having touched upon the work of Halbwachs another French philosopher whose work is also pertinent to note is Paul Ricoeur. In Ricoeur's book titled 'Memory, History, Forgetting' it is stated that:

...in relation to individual consciousness and its memory, that collective memory is held to be a collection of traces left by the events that have affected the course of history of the groups concerned, and that it is accorded the power to place on stage these common memories, on the occasion of holidays, rites, and public celebrations (2004: 119).

Here Ricoeur states the potency of collective memory with regards to shared histories, and the influence they have on communities and the specific events they engage in as a means to remember the past. This is also relevant in the case of the Hazaras where the 19th of May is has now become a day for annual celebrations of Hazara culture, which is generally referred to online as 'Hazara Culture Day'. On this day images are shared on social media of traditional Hazara dress, videos of Hazaragi music are also proliferated online and informational resources about the community and their history are also shared. In 2019 specifically, multiple Hazara cultural events were organised in Australia by various local Hazara communities in the country. While in a similar vein, with regards to informing the public about the community and their history, the 25th of September is marked as a 'Black Day' where the massacres of Hazaras under Abdur Rahman Khan's reign are remembered. This is mostly done online and is a transnational event where Hazara activists and community members highlight the atrocities which were enacted against the community on social media, while others choose to share online resources about the massacre in order to raise awareness about the events which took place at the time. Additionally, more recent events relating to attacks in Afghanistan and Quetta are also commemorated through vigils, talks and online information sharing, but these are to a much lesser extent than the 25th of September commemorations. Therefore, it can be seen that these events are

'accorded the power' to allow for their continued presence in community gatherings and the collective memories the community chooses to share about itself and its past. While, in a paper on collective memory Dr Nicholas Russell of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee underlines how Paul Ricoeur perceives collective and individual memory, stating that:

Ricoeur observes that in everyday discourse memories can be attributed to one person or to more than one person: we can say "my memory of a given event" (attributing a memory to one person) or we can say "our memory of a given event" (attributing a memory to more than one person). Memories attributed to a single person, according to this definition, are personal memories; whereas, memories attributed to more than one person are collective memories (2006: 792-793).

Through initial background readings, informal conversations with Hazara community members and an exploration of Hazara social media it has become apparent that this notion of collective memory is very salient among the community, hence the need to delve into the work of Ricoeur. Although Ricoeur distinguishes between individual and collective memories, another layer that could be added, which has been observed among the Hazara community, is how events of the past, even if not personally experienced, are framed in the language of collective memory. Meaning that even if knowledge of certain events are only known as a result of what has been read in books and other publications or through assertions made about the past, which have been proliferated between generations, in relation to significant historic events, the factual underpinnings of these assertions are at times dubious. An example of such is the information shared in relation to the insurrection of Hazarajat in terms of how many members of the community were killed at the time, with 60%, 62% and 65% being common percentages articulated in conversations and in the online content of some Hazara social media pages, with limited credible information being provided to actually prove the accuracy of these numbers. This in turn adds another dimension to both the lived collective and individual memories that Ricoeur discusses in his work.

While Dr James E. Young a Professor of English and Judaic Studies makes use of the term 'collected memory', and in his book titled 'The texture of memory: Holocaust memorials and meaning', Young states that:

...I prefer to examine "collected memory", the many discrete memories that are gathered into common memorial spaces and assigned common meaning. A society's memory, in this context, might be regarded as an aggregate collection of its members' many, often competing memories. If societies remember, it is only insofar as their institutions and rituals organize, share and even inspire their constituents' memories. For a society's memory cannot exist outside of those people who do the remembering-even if such memory happens to be at the society's bidding, in its name (1993: xi).

Young's comments are important to note given the reference made to institutions and rituals. These are significant for the Hazara community in so much as local institutions, most prominently community spaces and religious spaces, play a huge role as to what historic events and leading figures are commemorated and deemed noteworthy to remember on a local, national and transnational level. This then plays into who is and what are transmitted in narrations about the community's past. For instance, annual commemorations are held globally in memory of the Hazara political leader Abdul Ali Mazari, to remember his commitment and service to his community. While at the same time a figure such as Faiz Mohammad Kateb Hazara is less well-known among younger Hazaras, and comparatively little is done to educate the community about his work and achievements, given that he was the court historian under King Habibullah Khan and compiled the aforementioned seminal study on 18th and 19th Century Afghan history for the King, known as the *Siraj al-Tawarikh*. Here Kateb Hazara is used as an example to highlight Young's assertion about institutions 'inspir[ing] their constituents' memories'. And based on the fifty interviews conducted for this study it seems that this claim is extremely pertinent with regards to what was discussed by Hazara research participants in research interviews, especially Hazara youth, whose knowledge about their community and past was relatively limited in comparison to the stories articulated by Hazaras who had protracted lived experiences in Afghanistan,

Pakistan and Iran²⁹. This is due to the fact that younger research participants relied, more on, and felt that they had the opportunity to learn about their community and their past through institutionalised events, even though such events only present limited aspects of Hazara history, as opposed to presenting a more holistic timeline of the community's presence and history in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. Therefore, reference to the term collected memory is relevant for the purpose of this study, as it appears that there is indeed an element of institutions informing the memories of the members of a given community, and in this particular instance, the memories of diasporic Hazaras.

Hence, in discussing and incorporating literature on collective memory within this research, another layer is added to this study, which is how certain collective memories become institutionalised by communities, in order to construct a certain narrative of the past which in turn fuels collective action in the present. However, without such an exercise in institutionalising and revisiting these collective memories, and without constant remembrance, such memories will cease to exist as collective memories, with time. These collective memories are then passed on through generations at formal and informal gatherings, as a means of preserving the past. These collective memories then impact articulations of the self, as a shared history of persecution, in the case of the Hazaras, becomes the foundation for a collective, substantive, transnational, community identity.

2.6 Narrative and history:

As with the previous section on collective memory, narratives and history are pertinent to discuss in the context of marginal communities, as they allow for under-represented accounts of the past to gain greater exposure, while also allowing for engagement with alternative discourses on how historical events are framed, and how they shape the perceptions marginal communities hold of themselves. In relation to historical narratives historian Alun Munslow states that:

²⁹ These stories, collective memories and knowledge of the past, among research participants, will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

...historical narratives are not 'in fact' lived the first time around. Reality may not possess a given narrative structure to be described as 'the story' of the actions of people in the past. If there is any benefit in this epistemological scepticism, it is the realisation that written history is not automatically coincident with the meaning of the past even though we may wish it were...The reason why history is not truthful in the epistemological sense (of truth being the correspondence or correlation of word and world) is because all we have of our past reality is that which is known to us through its representation (2003: 138).

In the quote cited above, Munslow highlights how narratives of the past are framed through the viewpoint of individuals themselves, which means that what may be presented as representations of past events may at times not be factually accurate accounts of history. Munslow's insight here is important to note given how some members of the Hazara community perceive dominant historical narratives about the history of Afghanistan. Going by Hazara social media alone, it can be seen that there is a belief among some segments of Hazara society that accounts of Afghan history which have gained traction over the last few decades are in fact only histories of one part of Afghan society, that of the Pashtuns. Whether the prevailing accounts of Afghan history do indeed solely represent Pashtun history is a question that would be most accurately and adequately answered by historians with in-depth knowledge of the country and historical literature, but it is intriguing to see that some non-Pashtun Afghans feel that what is presented as national history is not holistic or representative of all Afghan communities within the country. This in turn is leading to a greater reliance on the internet and social media, with these online spaces being utilised to construct and propagate a history of the Hazaras of Afghanistan, from within the community. This again links to Munslow's statement regarding the veracity of historical narratives. Furthermore, in relation to the previous point Munslow highlights the issue of the objective nature of a historian that has for some time been assumed and not critiqued given how it is seen to undermine the discipline of history completely, if those that have contributed to its knowledge are seen as being complicit in undermining the foundation and sanctity of the field. This is something to be mindful of when studying both the prominent accounts of Afghan history and also the

newer Hazara historiography being documented online, and here Munslow states how such a perspective is flawed as:

...the epistemological position...insists [that] we can represent the reality of the past results from not fully appreciating the nature of representation and its most essential characteristic, that of the unavoidable overlap of subject (historian) and object (the past) and the indeterminative nature of history (bid: 140).

While the late historian Michael Stanford in his book titled 'A companion to the study of history' notes that:

Any history, of course, has to be selective, for not every event can be described. Yet there remains the doubt that this may be done at the expense of strict truth. Are there not relevant facts which the narrator has, perhaps half-consciously, omitted because they would bend the direction of halt the flow of his tale? And even the most scrupulous historian may, with a good conscience, omit details which *she* thinks unimportant or irrelevant but which we, if we knew of them, would not (1994: 93 - 94).

Again, Stanford's quote relates to the points made by Munslow, but appears to take on a more lenient tone as to why incomplete historical narratives are sometimes presented to the public. Although the point about pragmatism should be noted it does not take away from the fact that the 'objectiveness' of historical accounts of the past being presented are then at stake, if personal preference is used to dictate what is deemed as important to keep and transmit as knowledge, and what can in turn be dismissed. This inevitably means that caution must be taken when engaging with historical narratives if the author has taken the liberty to omit certain information, which only goes to further justify Munslow's critical approach to history writing and the narratives historians choose to share with readers. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Hazaras and other minorities in Afghanistan may feel that their histories have deliberately been omitted from the national history writing project, especially if such discretion is afforded to the chroniclers of history, to highlight or remove

information based on whether they think it is meaningful or not. To afford such authority to historians inevitably means that their biases, whether overt or not, may inform the decisions they make as to what they feel should be propagated as a narrative history of any given historical event, and may further alienate marginal communities from the history that is presented to them as the history of the nation. This can be seen with the Hazara community and their attempts to document a history of Afghanistan which equally represents their community's past. This act of reconstructing history does not in itself mean that there have not and will not be instances where some Hazara historians may themselves choose to engage in the same tactics that have been used to omit their community from certain accounts of Afghan history. Here it is pertinent to note the following quote by historian Geoffrey Roberts who notes that, 'Since the past is gone it is, of course, impossible to assess the accuracy of the picture (or unity) presented in the historian's narrative' (2001: 11).

In a similar vein to Munslow, Haitian anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot states that:

Human beings participant in history both as actors and as narrators...in vernacular use, history means both the facts of the matter and a narrative of those facts, both "what happened" and "that which is said to have happened." The first meaning places the emphasis on the sociohistorical process, the second on our knowledge of that recess or on a story about that process (1995: 2).

The aforementioned quote is taken from chapter one of Trouillot's book, 'Silencing the past: power and the production of history' where he discusses how the way in which historical narratives are situated greatly affects the way in which readers seek to understand the past. Here Trouillot gives a 'simplistic and controversial' example to further explain his statement. The example given is that the landing of the Mayflower in North America was when the history of the United States began. This specific example does indeed correlate with the claims of 'what happened' and 'what is said to have happened', but it can easily be seen how the event in question has been taken out of context when it is proclaimed that this specific event was in essence the birth of a country's history. It is also an example which verifies the statement made by

Trouillot in relation to sociohistorical processes and knowledge. Going by the work of Trouillot, it can be seen that what constitutes our knowledge of history does not necessarily mean that such information is factual. It could be that a certain narrative gains prominence over time and as a result is widely propagated as being situated in fact, when it could just be a case of 'that which is said to have happened' which over a lengthy period of time can be hard to entirely prove as verifiable. As a result, competing narratives may come to the fore with time if it appears that events of the past have indeed been fabricated or omitted.

Trouillot also delves into what he refers to as the constructivist view of history and states that, 'Narratives are necessarily emplotted in a way that life is not. Thus they necessarily distort life whether or not the evidence upon which they are based could be proved correct. Within that viewpoint, history becomes one among many types of narratives with no particular distinction except for its pretense of truth' (ibid: 6). With the aforementioned quotes in mind it is unsurprising to see the antipathy with which certain discourses on Afghanistan are treated by members of the country's ethnic and religious minorities. However, it should be noted that Trouillot's assertion does it part also apply to this new and innovative approach being taken by members of the Hazara community to document their history online, most prominently in relation to the insurrection of Hazarajat. As noted in the 'collective memory' section of this chapter, countless references are made online to 60%, 62% and 65% in accounts about the massacres of the Hazaras at the time. Although such numbers become hard to verify with time, they have come to be known as 'that which is said to have happened', in the words of Trouillot. Most importantly Trouillot's work considers marginal narratives in relation to dominant discourses of history and how they are employed, which again is central to Hazara historiography. Lastly, Trouillot also delves into historical narration, especially that of marginal histories and marginalised communities, and how it emerges and circulates in constructive dialogue with spaces that are largely outside of the professional academy. This approach of Trouillot's is of great relevance to this thesis, and underpins why this research has attempted to trace the process of history formation in conversation with the everyday, and individual, self-produced and emergent, personalised community narratives about the Hazara community's past, present and future.

In discussing literature on narratives and history in this section of this literature review, the aim has been to underline the importance of, and need to include Hazara historiography within this research. In deconstructing and critically engaging with the discipline of history it becomes more apparent as to why marginal communities such as the Hazaras are taking it upon themselves to write and disseminate their history, and the role it plays with regards to collective memory and identity. Furthermore, in relation to identity, history can be seen to take on a myriad of forms, as the historical subjugation of the Hazaras in Afghanistan in the late 19th century becomes a core element of a substantive identity based on a shared history of oppression. While at the same time, recent Hazara history since the fall of the Taliban regime becomes the impetus for constructions of relational identities of Hazaras as supporters of democracy, human rights and women's rights, as opposed to other communities in Afghanistan, as articulated in some research interviews.

2.7 Conclusion:

This literature review has attempted to delve into both anthropological literature on identity, diasporas and memory, while also engaging with discussion on history in relation to deconstructing the field, the role of historians and the accuracy of historical narratives, given the interdisciplinary nature of this research project. In highlighting a wide variety of literature across disciplines, this chapter has shown where seminal studies and research within anthropology and history situate themselves in relation to this research on narrative, memory and identity among British Hazaras. Given the limited literature available on Hazaras in Europe, reference was made to contemporary research on Hazaras in Australia, in order to contextualise this study. Memory was also explored in this literature review given that multiple research participants took it upon themselves to document their migration histories during interviews, and highlight both their negative and positive experiences of life in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. During these conversations memories of research participants' youth were shared, and these interviewees also made reference to the collective history and suffering that their community had endured in Afghanistan and the region, both historically and at present. In these discussions the conversation would regularly flow between narrating personal histories and memories of the past, to invoking collective memories of the community, hence the need to examine memory within this literature review.

The study of history has also been examined within this chapter, given that this research also looks to partially analyse Hazara historiography. The literature engaged within the 'narrative and history' section of this chapter critically engages with the discipline of history and history writing. This is due to the fact that prior to conducting the formal research interviews for this study multiple informal conversations took place with Hazara acquaintances, where many contacts stated that they were very critical of what is frequently propagated as Afghan history, as a common perception among research participants was that the Hazara community has largely been omitted from this national history. These conversations became the impetus for seeking to explore literature which does not take for granted the role of the historian, nor assume that they are always objective and reliable individuals, who do not bring their biases into their work and research.

Chapter 3: The political backdrop of Afghanistan from the 1960s onwards and Hazara migration to Europe:

3.1 Introduction:

This chapter aims to give a backdrop to the latter 20th Century history of Afghanistan, focusing on key political events which became the impetus for four decades of Afghan migration, both to the neighbouring region, and further afield to Europe. Having engaged with literature available on Afghan migration to Europe, the objective of the second half of this chapter is to document a timeline of Hazara migration to Britain, which at the time of writing does not currently exist. This is done so through the information gathered from research interviews, as well as reference to research on Afghan migration to Europe and policy reports on migration trends among the community.

3.2 Governance in Afghanistan from the 1960s to the 1980s:

Afghanistan was ruled by an absolute monarchy until the early 1960s, but in 1964 a new Constitution was drafted for the country which resulted in a constitutional monarchy (Saikal 2004: 148). In 1973 Afghanistan's last King Zahir Shah was ousted in a coup orchestrated by his cousin and former Prime Minister Daoud Khan (ibid: 174), with the support of the country's communist party, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Khan wanted to form stronger ties with the Soviet Union and minimise Afghanistan's reliance on Pakistan. He then became the country's first President as a result of the coup, which at the time simultaneously led to the abolishment of the monarchy. The next several years saw intense Soviet engagement with the *Khalq* and *Parcham* factions of the PDPA at a time when Khan's relations with the party had become fraught. 1978 was the year in which the 'Saur Revolution' took place, leading to the assassination of Daoud Khan by PDPA members (ibid: 185). This subsequently led to the installment of a PDPA government under the leadership of Nur Muhammad Taraki. Once in power Taraki and his party implemented a new constitution, and instigated a process which dismantled Islamic institutions in the country, a move designed to undermine the Islamic law framework of Afghanistan, in order to pave the way for more a secular system. Less than eighteen months after the coup that killed Daoud Khan, Taraki was also assassinated (ibid: 195). Here it should be

noted that during the rule of the PDPA, and for the first time in the country's history, a Hazara, Sultan Ali Keshmand, became the party's longest serving head of state, from 1981 to 1989. However, Taraki's death was not well received in the Soviet Union, and as a result Afghanistan was invaded in December 1979 (ibid: 196). The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan lasted for just under ten years, officially ending in February 1989. The end of the war signaled the defeat of the Soviet Union and victory for the Mujahedeen (Afghan freedom fighters). In relation to the Soviet invasion, it is pertinent to note the following with regards to Afghan migration abroad:

In their scale and duration, the series of conflicts that have been tearing Afghanistan apart since the Communist coup in April 1978 and the Soviet invasion in December 1979 have provoked one of the largest forced displacements of population and protracted refugee situations since World War II. At the beginning of the 1990s Afghans constituted 6.22 million - more than a third of the country's population - the largest group of displaced persons in the world under the responsibility of the UNHCR, accounting for 40% of the total (Donini et al. 2016: 2).

3.3 From the Mujahedeen to the Taliban:

The Taliban movement, which gained prominence in the 1990s, developed from Mujahedeen fighters of the Soviet war period. Although the Soviet Union had been defeated in 1989, the 1990s was a tumultuous time for Afghanistan as the country was in the midst of a civil war. The first phase of the civil war lasted until 1992 which saw the resignation of Afghanistan's then Communist President Mohammad Najibullah. During this time many political factions began forming alongside the Taliban, mainly on ethnic lines, such as the Hazara dominated Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan, the Uzbek controlled National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, the predominantly Tajik Northern Alliance, (which later became a wider non-Pashtun alliance), and the hardline Islamic group of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar known as the *Hezb-e Islami* (Party of Islam), among others.

Dr Kristian Berg Harpviken states that, 'Since the fall of the communists in April 1992, Afghanistan has continued to be the scene of massive military conflict, primarily about

control over central power, between groups with various ethnic or religious affiliations' (1997: 271). However, at this time, in 1992, the Peshawar Accord was also signed, which was a peace agreement that established the Islamic State of Afghanistan³⁰. All the major post-Soviet factions agreed to the terms of the accord, bar Hekmatyar, who wanted to govern the country exclusively, despite the fact that he had been offered the role of Prime Minister as a result of the accord (Saikal 2004: 217). Hekmatyar had in fact previously been Prime Minister for two years, in 1993 and again in 1996. From 1992 to 1996 various factions began fighting in order to gain control of Kabul. As a result, Kabul was continually bombed and many civilians were killed and maimed in the cross-fire³¹. In September 1996 the Taliban became the de facto government of Afghanistan, as some warring factions had retreated from Kabul, although it should be noted that the Taliban government was only recognised by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates³². Subsequently, after the end of this phase of the civil war, the Taliban were in power for just under five years, until the start of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) combat mission in Afghanistan in 2001.

3.4 NATO in Afghanistan and the 2001 Bonn Conference:

The NATO intervention in Afghanistan, officially referred to by the United States government as, 'Operation Enduring Freedom', began on the 7th of October 2001. The United States government stated that it was necessary to intervene in Afghanistan in order to defeat Al Qaeda and end terrorist activities in the country. At the time of the attacks no terrorist organisations had claimed responsibility for the attacks, with the Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, saying at the time that, 'We want to tell the American children that Afghanistan feels your pain. We hope the courts find justice', as did the foreign minister of the Taliban government at the time of the attacks, Wakeel Ahmed Mutawakel ³³. In December 2001 the Bonn Conference took place with the aim of installing a new government in Afghanistan, supported by the country's major warring factions. The conference also stipulated the need for a new Constitution to be drafted for the country, which was approved in 2004.

³⁰ See: Jayakumar, Kirithi. "Conflict in Afghanistan." *TransConflict*, www.transconflict.com/gcct/gcct-members/asia/afghanistan/conflict-in-afghanistan.

³¹ See: "Afghanistan's Civil Wars." *Human Rights Watch*, 2001, www.hrw.org/reports/2001/afghan2/Afghan0701-01.htm.

³² See: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11451718.

³³ See: www.edition.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/central/09/11/afghan.taliban/.

The Bonn Agreement resulting from the conference laid out the measures agreed upon at the conference. Some of the measures to be established through the agreement were, 'An Interim Authority...upon the official transfer of power on 22 December 2001', as well as, '...a Judicial Commission to rebuild the domestic justice system in accordance with Islamic principles, international standards, the rule of law and Afghan legal traditions'³⁴ and a Central Bank of Afghanistan. While at the same time a new governing *loya jirga* (grand assembly) was established. Hamid Karzai was first elected to head this *loya jirga* for two years in 2002, and then elected President of Afghanistan in 2004. It is important to note that the Bonn Agreement '...was not an agreement among the warring groups to lay down their arms and build a new society' (Rubin 2013: 136). In spite of this fact a major development for the country, as a result of the agreement, was the establishment of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) in 2002. The AIHRC is defined as being a '...constitutionalised, national and independent human rights body in Afghanistan'³⁵, with the commission publishing reports on a various domestic issues, such as social and economic rights, women's rights and minority rights.

The NATO intervention in the country lasted just over thirteen years, with the combat mission in Afghanistan officially ending on the 31st of December 2014. Some troops remained in Afghanistan to assist with training the Afghan National Army (ANA). As a result of the troop withdrawal, 2015 was one of the worst years for civilian casualties in the country³⁶, and saw the Taliban gain traction³⁶ in areas they had previously not controlled, due to a fragile central government and ill-equipped army. Subsequently, four decades of war have now devastated Afghanistan: from the Soviet invasion, the civil war and the NATO assault against Al Qaeda and the Taliban. However, in the midst of such anguish there is hope for academic research on the country and its people, as Angela Schlenkhoff notes that:

Since 2001, after almost two decades of virtual standstill, research on Afghanistan and the Afghans has been on the rise again. There is a desire to

³⁴ For a full list of the measures established through the Bonn Agreement see: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200102/cmselect/cmcaff/384/1120507.htm.

³⁵ For more information on the AIHRC see: www.aihrc.org.af/home/law/360.

³⁶ See: www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/02/afghan-civilian-casualties-hit-record-11000-2015-160214071436972.html.

close the gaps in information and understanding that were left open by decades of war and destruction, and in many ways the country almost has to be researched anew due to the lack of continuous information based on in-depth knowledge (2010: 9).

Having discussed the political backdrop of Afghanistan from the 1960s to the early 2000s, it is also important to briefly discuss the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, in order to fully understand the Hazara community's precarity in the region and migratory flows. Until the late nineteenth century Hazaras had minimal interaction with the Kabul regime. As mentioned earlier, they resided in the mountainous and isolated areas of central Afghanistan, Hazarajat. However, this isolation came to an end in the 1890s with the invasion of Hazarajat, under the command of the Emir at that time, Abdur Rahman Khan (Kakar 1979: 4). The Emir wanted to consolidate his power, and one means of doing so was through gaining control of Hazara lands (Ibrahimi 2009), as at this time the Hazara community was at the bottom of the country's social hierarchy (Emadi 2005: 9-10). Khan's siege of Hazarajat significantly decreased the Hazara population and the size of the Hazarajat region, and led to the massacre and enslavement of the Hazara people. Dr Yahia Baiza notes that, '...[Hazara] men and women, were taken as war captives and sold as slaves. The Amir put taxes on each Hazara slave. Consequently, the Amir destroyed and closed the Shia congregation centres, known as *takya-khanahs*, banned the commemoration of Hussain ibn Ali bin Talib's martyrdom on the 10th of *Muharram*, and forced the Shia population of the country to perform Sunni religious rituals' (2013: 41). As a result, since the capture of Hazarajat, there have been multiple migrations of Hazaras to neighbouring countries.

3.5 Hazaras in Afghanistan:

As this section will be discussing the historic and current circumstances of Hazaras in Afghanistan, it is important to start by exploring a key moment in Hazara history, the insurrection of Hazarajat in the late 1800s. Therefore, a key text to consider here is the *Siraj-al Tawarikh* by the court historian Faiz Mohammad Kateb Hazara, written under the reign of Habibullah Khan, the son of Abdur Rahman Khan, (the title of which is translated as 'the history of Afghanistan' in Professor Robert D McChesney's 2013

translation of the text). In the section of the text, which details incidents in Hazarajat in the late 19th Century, the rape of the wife of a Hazara *mir*, Yazdan Bakhsh, by a cavalryman of the Emir in 1891 is discussed (681). This incident appears to be the first major event that resulted in a fallout between the region's Hazaras and the King. Due to the outrage felt in the Hazara regions as a result of this criminal act some Hazara leaders came to Kabul in order to be 'reassured' that something similar would not occur again at the hands of any other soldiers (ibid: 682). Instead these men were put under house arrest in the city (ibid). However, soon after this incident some Hazara leaders did submit to the King and it is mentioned in a written statement by the King from August 1891 that:

'...no signs of duplicity or hostility should appear on the face of the situation of all of you people, and as long as I live, I will view you with the eyes of love and kindness. After me, my children and grandchildren will be your close friends just like me' (ibid: 684), and subsequently in 'September-October 1891, all the people of the Hazarahjat peacefully placed their heads beneath the writ of the farman and submitted to the commands and prohibitions of the regime...' (ibid: 689).

Although, it is noted how there were still Hazara militias present in various parts of Hazarajat at this time who had not submitted to the King (ibid: 691-693), so Hazara loyalties were not so clear-cut at this time. This was followed by a confiscation of weapons from Hazaras throughout Hazarajat during which time many Hazaras were killed, robbed or enslaved, supposedly unbeknown to the King or sanctioned by him (ibid: 703-704). While in discussing the circumstances of 1892 Kateb notes how regular soldiers had begun to act 'tyrannically and oppressively', in turn imprisoning Hazaras at their own volition (ibid: 732). This was soon followed by the rape of another Hazara woman by some soldiers in Uruzgan (ibid), which became the impetus for mass Hazara revolts against the Emir's rule, with Kateb stating that local Hazara men took an oath declaring that, 'Death 100 times over is preferable to enduring such things, which should never occur in a humane world and one in which the excellent Shari'ah prevails. Should we simply excise the sighs of grief and regret from our hearts, wrap the foot in the skirt of disgrace, and suffer patiently?' (ibid: 732-733). This resulted in

farmans and proclamations being issued ‘declaring jihad against [Hazaras] to the governors’ (ibid: 772) and consequently Hazaras were ‘plundered, killed, and enslaved’ (ibid).

Here it is also worth examining seminal studies on the anthropology of Hazaras from 20th Century scholars, as they detail the aftermath of the insurrection of Hazarajat and the community’s socio-economic status during the previous century. The Danish ethnographer Klaus Ferdinand notes how the landmass which comprised Hazarajat had shrunk since the late 19th Century onwards, ‘Formerly the southern border [of Hazarajat] was very close to Qandahár, but during these 60—70 years it has become very indistinct, as a large contingent of Afghan tribes has settled there and wholly or in part taken over the land from the Hazaras...’ (1959: 12), and this is something which has been relayed to me by Hazara acquaintances who state that Hazarajat was much larger in size before the war instigated by Abdur Rahman Khan against the Hazaras in the late 1800s. In another book by Ferdinand, written almost half a century after his informative research on Hazara culture in the 1950s, on Afghans nomads, he mentions how the insurrection of Hazarajat was central to the change in relationship between the Hazaras and the central government:

The Hazara political relations with the outside world, be it through war or the obligation to pay taxes, as described for the 18th and 19th centuries, were marked by the common factor that they did not change the local political structure and organisation. There were thus no fundamental changes until the reign of Abdur Rahman Khan in the 1890s’ (Ferdinand 2006: 174)...In 1893 the independent status of the Hazara had ended, crushed by the forces of the Amir, which advanced on Hazarajat from all sides. All the Hazara leaders were captured and taken to Kabul (ibid: 185-186).

Similarly, an insightful extract from the Emir’s memoirs is also shared by Ferdinand, where it is stated that:

...Afghan chiefs had applied several times to raise a force of country people at their own expense to fight against the Hazaras, whom they looked upon as

enemies to their country and religion. I had not given them permission to do this heretofore, but now [spring 1892] I gave a general order that everybody would be allowed to go and help in the punishment of the rebels' (ibid: 185).

Unsurprisingly, in this excerpt no reference is made to the indiscretions of the Emir's army in Hazarajat which fuelled Hazara resentment towards the establishment. Kateb's work notes soliders' problematic behaviour in Hazarajat on multiple occasions and dishonourable acts carried out against Hazara women, but the Emir disregards Hazara grievances in his statement. Rather he uses the common tropes used to disparage the Hazara community, in relation to religion and loyalty to the state, to further justify causing them harm and weakening their defences. While anthropologist Elizabeth Bacon in a book on social structures in Eurasia notes how Hazaras revolted against Abdur Rahman Khan, who is referred to as being '...the first ruler to bring the country of Afghanistan under a centralized Afghan government' (1958: 5). In turn, the defeat of Hazaras during the insurrection resulted in many fleeing to '...Quetta in Baluchistan and to the area around Meshed in northeastern Iran' (ibid). Here it is also important to note the work of anthropologist Robert Canfield who wrote about Hazaras in the 1970s. His paper for the Afghanistan Committee of the Asia Society mentions the following:

The hostilities of war of course crystalized the social separation of the Hazaras and Afghans...The war against the Shiite Hazaras therefore brought a state which was being shaped by a Sunni Muslim polity against a Shiite confederation, and as a consequence, more firmly solidified each side as a sectarian polity (1970: 4).

Canfield further notes that the war exacerbated sectarian ideology and that these 'differences and hostilities' were still present in Afghan society at the time of writing, in the year 1970, and resulted in the continued 'social isolation' of Hazaras from their co-nationals and the Sunni government (Ibid: 5). Furthermore, he states that there is limited Hazara representation in the Afghan government (ibid: 6), which is a claim backed by multiple research participants within my study, conducted almost five decades after Canfield's work. Around the same time

as Canfield, archaeologist and anthropologist Louis Dupree notes the following about the social standing of Hazaras, a decade and a half prior to the formation of the *Hezb-e Wahdat*, in the early 1970s:

Most Hazara...work at coolie labor, gathering each morning at specific points in Kabul, to which labor foremen come to enlist their day's requirement of workmen. In the city as well as the countryside, the Hazara are low men in the ethnic peck-order. Man must always find a rational reason for his discrimination against men, and non-Hazara Afghans use two counts against the Hazara: 1) they are physically Mongoloid and, by tradition, descendants of the destructive army of Genghis Khan; 2) most are Shi'a Muslims (1973: 161).

In turn Dupree's quote highlights why Hazara consciousness had not taken hold among the community at the time of writing, as Hazaras were at the bottom of Afghanistan's social hierarchy, well into the 20th Century, eighty years after the insurrection of Hazarajat.

In terms of the more recent history of Hazaras in Afghanistan, since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the situation for the community in the country has vastly improved in terms of access to education, as well as partially in public sector recruitment. Through the course of research interviews for this study multiple respondents have noted the achievements of Hazaras in Afghanistan since the NATO mission in the country began. Despite the educational opportunities presented to Hazaras since the overthrow of the Taliban regime and the better socio-economic status of Hazaras in urban centres in recent years, attacks on Hazaras in Afghanistan have also increased, and this has led to growing resentment of the government by members of the community, and a lack of trust of the ruling elite. In relation to these points, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection needs of Asylum-Seekers from Afghanistan published in August 2018 noted that, 'While [Hazaras] were reported to have made significant economic and political advances since the 2001 fall of the Taliban regime, in recent years there has reportedly been a significant increase in harassment, intimidation, kidnappings and killings at the hands of Taliban, Islamic State and other [Anti-

Government Elements]’ (93-94). These attacks are inevitable given how weak the post-Karzai, central government currently is. A stark reminder of the government’s inefficiency is the fact that since the start of the Ghani administration the Taliban has had an increased presence in the north of Afghanistan, particularly in Kunduz province, an area they were unable to penetrate before, as well as the fact that in a news report from the BBC from January 2018, it was stated that ‘Taliban fighters...are now openly active in 70% of Afghanistan...’.³⁷

There are now also mounting claims that the extremist group ISIS is also present in the country³⁸. For instance, in 2016, over one-hundred Hazaras were killed in attacks for which ISIS claimed responsibility³⁹, and in 2017 there were multiple attacks on Shia Mosques and on Shia religious processions⁴⁰, as well as growing attacks in the Dasht-e Barchi neighbourhood of west Kabul, a predominately Hazara district. While the annual Afghanistan Survey conducted by the Asia Foundation found that, ‘Examining the [survey] data by ethnicity...the tendency of Daesh/ISIS to mount sectarian attacks is reflected in the 30.3% of Hazaras who identify them as the biggest threat to local security (in the country)’ (2018: 60). Furthermore, as a result of the growing attacks in the Barchi area it was reported in September 2018 by TOLO News (one of Afghanistan’s most prominent independent news networks) that over 500 residents of the area had taken up arms in the run up to Muharram, thus further adding to the precarity of the security situation in Kabul, although the Ministry of Interior had stated that arming residents was ‘not possible’⁴¹. However, in a report by the Afghanistan Analysts Network published around the same time it was stated that for Muharram, ‘No distribution of arms by the government [had] taken place, but volunteer guards, some armed, including with Kalashnikov rifles, other not, [had] been stood up. This

³⁷ See: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-42863116.

³⁸ The presence of ISIS in Afghanistan is discussed later in this thesis.

³⁹ For information on attacks on Hazaras in Afghanistan see: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-39031000.

⁴⁰ For news articles on attacks on Shia religious spaces in Afghanistan see:

1) www.nytimes.com/2017/08/25/world/asia/mosque-kabul-attack.html.

2) www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-afghanistan-shiites-20171021-story.html.

3) www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/28/blast-afghan-news-agency-kabul-kills-dozens.

⁴¹ See: www.tolonews.com/index.php/afghanistan/current-war-against-our-people-and-constitution-ghani.

[was] with Ministry of Interior permission'.⁴² In relation to the fraught relationship between the Hazara community and the government, another issue to consider is the contentious Central Asian electrical project (TUTAP), which has seen the rerouting of a section of the project in Afghanistan, from the predominately Hazara province of Bamiyan to the Pashtun-Tajik region of Salang, which has substantially contributed to the belief among the Hazara community that they are again being discriminated against, as their region is being deprived of electricity and development. Thus, as a result of this perceived discrimination there were a number of protests in 2016 and 2017, outside Afghan embassies in multiple European cities, with social media being a key tool through which information about these protests was circulated, among the Hazara community and beyond.

In terms of growing attacks by extremists on Hazara religious spaces, the 2018 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Afghanistan by the US Department of State mentions that, 'Ethnic tensions between various groups continued to result in conflict and killings. Societal discrimination against Shia Hazaras continued along class, race, and religious lines in the form of extortion of money through illegal taxation, forced recruitment and forced labour, physical abuse, and detention' (36) and the report also states that:

According to NGOs, the government frequently assigned Hazara ANP (Afghan National Police) officers to symbolic positions with little authority within the Ministry of Interior. NGOs also reported Hazara ANDSF (Afghan National Defence and Security Forces) officers were more likely than non-Hazara officers to be posted to insecure areas of the country. During the year ISIS-K continued escalating attacks against the Hazara community. Attacks against the Shia, predominantly Hazara, population, resulted in 705 civilian casualties, including 211 deaths between January 1 and September 30 (ibid).

While Dr Amin Tarzi, the Director of Middle East Studies at the Marine Corps University in Virginia, mentions that in the aftermath of the deadly July 2016 bombing on a

⁴² See: www.afghanistan-analysts.org/before-ashura-extra-security-measures-in-place-for-second-year-running/.

Hazara Enlightenment Movement⁴³ demonstration in Kabul the Taliban did in fact condemn the attack, but according to Tarzi, ISIS responded by, ‘...issu[ing] a fatwa (a religious decree) claiming that the Shiites were indisputably infidels, adding that any Sunni religious scholar that rejects this understanding and [ISIS]’s right to kill them is himself an apostate’ (2018: 135).

In relation to government representation, the 2017 International Religious Freedom Report on Afghanistan by the US Department of State mentions that, ‘Shia Muslims [have] held some major government positions; however, Shia leaders continued to state the number of positions did not reflect their demographics’ (1). While Akram Gizabi, a former Voice of America journalist and current chairman of the World Hazara Council, stated in a tweet from July 2018 that, within Afghanistan’s Ministry of Interior, of the ministry’s six deputy ministers, none are Hazara, and of the thirty-four provincial police chiefs, only one is Hazara⁴⁴. The lack of Hazara political representation has been widely criticised in many research interviews, with Assadullah Shafai, a journalist and researcher based in London, who is the Director General of the Hazara Encyclopaedia Foundation, stating that:

Well Hazara people in Afghanistan they still I mean the feeling that they have is that they believe and I agree with some part of that there is still huge discrimination against Hazaras in Afghanistan. For example in government structure they don't represent Hazaras has are as believe that they are around 25% of the population at least. But for example in many ministries, in many government departments, there are between 2% to 4%, maximum 5%, Hazaras, especially in in foreign ministry. For example, in many embassies with 15 to 20 people, for some, there are no Hazaras at all and in some there are some Hazaras. We have, for example, more than 50 embassies, and in some periods there were no Hazara ambassadors, and in some periods they

⁴³ The Enlightenment Movement refers to the mobilisation that occurred in the aftermath of the TUTAP route change, and in an article published on the Hazara International website, it is stated that the movement came about from a desire ‘...to obtain the right to electricity and to an equal development for the entire population, the Enlightening Movement gradually evolved into a movement against corruption, against the lack of security and the ethnic and gender discrimination’. See: www.hazarapeople.com/2017/01/30/where-is-the-enlightening-movement/. The Enlightenment Movement is discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

⁴⁴ See: www.twitter.com/AGizabi/status/1013436194468884480.

were just say 2 to 3 in some countries, which were not important (countries) at all.

These statistics and reports are part of a more systemic belief among Hazaras that they have not in the past, and are not at present, appropriately represented in ministries and the government more generally. When, within research interviews for this study, it has been highlighted that there are in fact several high-profile Hazara ministers in the government at present, namely Muhammad Mohaqiq, Karim Khalili and Sarwar Danish, the unanimous response from Hazara research participants is that these are superficial appointments, as these men have not done anything for the Hazara community, and only serve their own personal interests. This is also a sentiment shared by a vast number of 'Hazara activists' on social media who are heavily critical of high-profile Hazara politicians.

3.6 Hazaras in Pakistan:

Having discussed the historic and current position of Hazaras in Afghanistan, it is also pertinent to explore the history and daily lives of Hazaras in Pakistan. Hazaras who settled in Quetta had initially moved to the city during the insurrection of Hazarajat in the late 19th Century. Subsequently, when the partition of India occurred, the community were no longer subjects of British India, but were now citizens of the newly established state of Pakistan. In Pakistan the community was welcomed and excelled in the country, where their religious beliefs and ethnicity did not act as a barrier in becoming part of the social fabric of the country (Lieven 2011: 346 – 347), as can be seen by the appointment of Muhammad Musa Khan as the Commander in Chief of the Pakistan Army in the late 1950s and 1960s. The community also '...achieved a legal status as Pakistani citizens' (Changezi & Biseth 2011: 80) and did not face legal uncertainty and precarity (in the way same way that Hazaras in Iran do) , and this in turn has meant that the community has been '[provided with] access to the formal systems of...education, health, and politics' (ibid). Syed Askar Mousavi notes that, '...Hazaras living in what had become Pakistan were among the first groups to accept and endorse the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and to send representatives to Karachi, then capital of Pakistan, as a sign of their support' (1998: 145), but that, '...although well integrated into Pakistan society, it was not until 10 May 1962, that

their status [as citizens] was formally first declared by the government of Pakistan...’ (ibid). However, in relation to the 1990s onwards, Dr Paolo Novak notes the following in a paper on Afghans in Pakistan:

The 1990s saw, in addition to diminishing levels of assistance for those residing in [refugee villages]..., a progressive erosion of protection for Afghans in Pakistan. In 1998 the [Government of Pakistan] stopped recognizing Afghan migrants as prima facie refugees, requiring them to produce a travel document. In 1999, the [Government of Pakistan’s] increasingly negative attitude towards Afghans translated into specific forms of harassment of the refugee population, with traders’ stalls destroyed, Afghans forcibly relocated to RVs and deportations of those without a valid passport and Pakistani visa (2007: 567).

Although Hazaras who had settled in the country since the insurrection of Hazarajat were not at the risk from the policy shift of the 1990s, Hazaras who came to the country in the midst of Afghanistan’s civil war, subsequent Taliban governance and NATO intervention were inevitably vulnerable in Pakistan, due to the aforementioned hostile schemes enacted by the government, causing economic uncertainty and making the threat of deportation a daily reality. While in terms of growing insecurity for Hazaras in Quetta, one research participant based in London who is originally from Quetta stated that:

...[I]n Pakistan, we were fine. Our literacy rate is about between 85%-90% and we are progressive people, but for the last 10-15 years due to these proxy wars and politics and may be elements of jealousy as well, they (terrorists) started killing us. And to be honest we are just confined in our two areas, Hazara Town and Alamdar Road (in Mariabad) basically [because of the targeted killings of Hazaras in Quetta].

In more recent years, as a result of growing religious extremism in the country after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US, and the NATO intervention in Afghanistan, the

situation of Hazaras in Quetta has become perilous⁴⁵. This is highlighted in a journal paper by Frédéric Grare, a non-resident senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's South Asia Programme, titled 'The evolution of sectarian conflicts in Pakistan and the ever-changing face of Islamic Violence', which states that, '...the link-up between sectarian and *jihadi* groups, as well as between local and internationalist organisations, first established during the Afghan conflict, has grown dramatically in recent years' (2007: 127). As a result of this growing sectarian violence the Hazara community has become ghettoised and is concentrated in a two different areas within the city (in areas known as 'Hazara Town' and 'Mariabad'), with a Human Rights Watch article from April 2018 stating that, 'At least 509 members of the Hazara community have been killed and 627 injured in militant attacks in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan province, over the last five years'⁴⁶. Increased attacks towards the community by various extremist groups, and the inability of the local and national government to counter the targeted attacks against Hazaras has meant that some Hazaras have left the city.

3.7 Hazaras in Iran:

It is also important to examine the situation of Hazaras in Iran within this chapter, having previously discussed the past and present circumstances of Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan. As noted earlier, Iran was a likely destination for Hazaras given the common religious beliefs and language the Hazaras share with the Iranian people (Leimsidor 2014: 137), as both Shias and Persian speakers⁴⁷ (albeit with vastly distinct Persian dialects). However, these similarities have not been enough for Hazaras to be fully accepted within Iranian society. Although the situation for Hazaras is markedly better in Iran than in Afghanistan or Pakistan at present, in terms of diminished threats to life, both localised and institutional racism has meant that many Hazaras are stuck in low paid menial jobs, and their children are denied access to

⁴⁵ For information on attacks against the Hazara community in Quetta see: www.hrw.org/report/2014/06/29/we-are-walking-dead/killings-shia-hazara-balochistan-pakistan.

⁴⁶ This quote was taken from the following article: www.hrw.org/news/2018/04/30/pakistans-hazara-community-under-attack.

⁴⁷ This can be seen from the following quote from a journal paper by Diane Tober, a Research Anthropologist at the University of California, San Francisco Institute for Health and Aging, on Afghan refugees in Iran, 'Reasons Afghans gave for going to Iran rather than other neighbouring countries like Pakistan include:... (3) it is an Islamic country (Hazara Shi'as also emphasized because it was a Shi'a country and, therefore, felt that they would experience less discrimination here); (4) they felt it was culturally more similar to their own culture and language...' (2007: 267).

education (Kamal 2010: 189), and citizenship. This in turn has led to both social and economic stagnation of the Hazara community in Iran; with many seeing little prospects for their families in the country. Additionally, Mamiko Saito states that, 'Since the mid-1990s access to education has only been provided for documented refugee children. In 2002, the Iranian government declared Afghan self-run schools illegal, on the grounds that they encouraged Afghans to remain in Iran. Among those who did attend school, it was acknowledged that there were limitations on access to higher education...especially in recent years' (2009:5). This is also highlighted in a report by Minority Rights Group International which states that, '...maltreatment, ranging from limited access to education and employment to summary arrests and denial of many basic rights, was the direct result of policies that perpetuated hardship and insecurity (for Hazaras). Many [Hazaras], despite living in Iran for decades, still lack legal status and documentation – a situation that leaves them vulnerable to deportation at any time' (2017: 17). Furthermore, Dr Zuzanna Olszweska notes that despite the increased literacy among Afghans in Iran compared to those in Afghanistan, '...the rising expectations of those educated to high school or even university level are thwarted by the fact that [Afghans in Iran] cannot legally work in anything but menial professions in Iran-and, as of 2004, cannot attend university without paying fees that few can afford' (2007: 214).

In interviews with Hazaras who have had lived experiences in Iran, reference was made to the term *Iranigak* a pejorative term used by Afghans towards 'Iranian Afghans', which Alessandro Monsutti translates as 'little Iranian'⁴⁸. The term was used by research participants to show that once 'home' in Afghanistan they were not fully accepted into Afghan society, just as they had not been in Iran. One research participant, who is a research student in her 30s based in London, recalled that when visiting Afghanistan after having lived in Iran she also encountered use of the term towards her:

I started hearing people say *Iranigak*, *Iranigak* (when visiting Afghanistan).
They (Afghans in Afghanistan) use this term, it means little Iranian. It's a

⁴⁸ Monsutti's translation can be accessed via the following video, just past the 1 hour and 8 minutes mark: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aoc0Td2zyyY&t=1676s.

derogatory term, and for me that sums up how they perceive us (Afghans who have grown up in Iran). So for me, it was a slap in the face, because in Iran I knew that I have to go back to my country and feel at home, and go and build my country, and then when I was there I was labelled (*Iranigak*), it was like slap in the face, and that actually you are not home. It's another exile.

While Zuzanna Olszewska also notes that, '[The young generation of Afghans in Iran] have drifted so far from their own culture that they find it difficult to adjust to life in Afghanistan and indeed are often harassed there for being too "Iranian". In Kabul, every nuance gives returnees away, from the way they dress to the way they close taxi doors, to their accent or the particular phrase they use to tell a bus driver they would like to get off.' (2007: 214). This quote exemplifies some of the tensions that exist for Afghans, and more specifically in the case of this research Hazaras, those who grew up in Iran and visited Afghanistan for the first time in their teens, and how acceptance among Afghans was not forthcoming in the way one might assume. Hence, reference was made to the term *Iranigak* in research interviews for this study to show that a form of othering occurred to distinguish Afghans who had been born and brought up in Afghanistan from those in who had lived in Iran, with an emphasis on the Iranian accent native to Hazaras who grew up in Iran, when trying to discredit or dismiss their 'Afghanness'. Furthermore, identity among Hazaras who grew up in Iran is an intriguing topic, given the perception of the country that had previously existed among the community. Iran was seen as the bastion of Shi'ism by the community; however lived realities of life for Hazaras in Iran show that a notion of Shia brotherhood does not necessarily translate into embracing a refugee Shia community like the Hazaras, who suffer from widespread discrimination and institutional racism in the country, even at present.

3.8 Hazara migration to Britain:

In terms of Hazara migration, Dr David Radford, a lecturer in Sociology at the University of South Australia, notes that, '...a historical context of conflict and migration has significantly shaped both the diaspora's and the individual Hazara's sense of self' (2016: 15), while Dr Khadija Abbasi states that, '...the persecution by the Emir of Afghanistan Abdur Rahman Khan in late 19th Century...is still vivid in the

collective memory of Hazaras'⁴⁹. The Emir's infiltration of Hazarajat, the deportation of thousands of Hazaras to Kabul in bondage, and the continued marginalisation of Hazaras has resulted in multiple migrations of the community to the neighbouring region since the 1890s onwards, and in the 20th Century, with Craig Loschmann et al. noting that, 'The pull from stronger neighbouring labour markets along with close social and cultural ties helped establish robust social networks across locations' and that, 'These networks were utilised and strengthened in the subsequent years of conflict...' (2017: 80). However, migrations back to Afghanistan have also occurred in instances when it was perceived that it was safe for Hazaras to return back to Hazarajat (Harpviken 2009: 7). In terms of the Afghan migration of the 1980s and 1990s it is pertinent to note the following:

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the overwhelming majority of Afghan refugees went to Pakistan or Iran. For them, exile was neither definitive nor temporary, it was more appropriate to speak of recurrent multidirectional movements, Few Afghans refugees never returned to their place of origin at least once for a brief visit after their initial flight and most households in Afghanistan have at least one family member in a neighbouring country (Donini et al. 2016: 4).

In turn, these regional migrations, as well as migrations further afield may add to the complexity of understanding Hazara identity and the community's 'sense of self'. Therefore, in this section of the chapter Hazara migration to Britain and Afghan migration to Europe will be discussed, in order to produce a preliminary timeline of Hazara migration to the continent.

Afghans currently constitute one of the largest migrant groups entering the European Union (EU). In 2015 '...the number of asylum applicants from Afghanistan rose to 176,000 in the European Union..., which was 14 percent of the overall total' (İçduygu and Karadağ 2018: 483) and in 2016 Afghans were the, '...largest group of first-time asylum seekers in the EU', (Quie and Hakimi 2018: 28) with a total of 183,000 Afghans

⁴⁹ This is an extract from a speech delivered by anthropologist Dr Khadjia Abbasi at a conference held in Vienna, Austria in January 2016 on Afghan migration to Europe. For a brief overview of the conference and access to Abbasi's direct quote see: www.hazara.net/2016/02/afghanistan-the-lost-paradise/.

applying for asylum (ibid). War and violence have plagued Afghanistan for over four decades, and still continues to do so at present, despite the withdrawal of NATO combat troops in December 2014. In a report from 2018 by Thomas Ruttig, the co-founder and co-director of the Afghanistan Analysts Network, it was noted that 'Afghan communities in several European countries have grown as a result of the refugee crisis. ...Germany, for example, had registered 48,622 Afghan asylum seekers in 2015 and 154,046 in 2016... In total, it hosted almost 255,000 Afghan nationals in 2017'⁵⁰. While at the same time mentioning that '...it can be assumed that only a small proportion of those Afghans still leaving the country have been able to move into Europe, as entry has become more hazardous'.

Many Hazaras fled Afghanistan as refugees when the civil war of the 1990s was coming to an end, as the community had been the target of massacres during the post-Soviet civil war period⁵¹. This again resulted in many Hazaras fleeing east to the city of Quetta in Pakistan and Mashhad in Iran (Monsutti 2004: 219-220), as they had previously done during the siege of Hazarajat in the late 19th Century. Hazara persecution also heightened due to the growth of the Taliban in the aftermath of the country's civil war. Furthermore, according to the 2018 annual Afghanistan Survey conducted by the Asia Foundation it is stated that, 'Hazaras, a predominantly Shi'a minority who continue to face disproportionate harassment and attacks by armed groups in Afghanistan, consistently express greater willingness to leave the country than other ethnic groups' (204). However, it should be noted that as of the end of 2018 the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) quarterly report noted that Afghan migration to Europe has reduced, noting that:

Eurostat...reported 19,640 -first-time Afghan asylum seekers in the EU in the first eight months of 2018...[T]he number of first-time Afghan asylum seekers to the EU has decreased significantly since the high point in 2015/2016. The Afghanistan Analysts Network said that stronger border controls and

⁵⁰ For the full report see: www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/migration/pressure-and-peril-afghan-refugees-and-europe-in-2017/.

⁵¹ See: <https://blog.nationalgeographic.org/2012/01/16/helping-the-hazara-of-afghanistan-and-pakistan/>.

tightened asylum laws in Europe are the primary cause for the decrease in the number of Afghan asylum seekers (2018: 129).

According to the most recent census conducted in the United Kingdom, in 2011, there are just over 72,000 Afghans living in England and Wales⁵². This number is not broken down further into the various Afghan ethnic groups, so it is not possible to know how many of these approximately 72,000 Afghans are of Hazara background. Since the mid-1990s Hazaras from Afghanistan have been arriving to Britain in waves. This contrasts with research which states that Afghans first started arriving to Europe during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, at the end of the 1970s, and throughout the 1980s, with Mir Hekmatullah Sadat noting that Afghan migration to Europe and the United States directly correlates with political instability in Afghanistan at the time, such as, 'The Soviet Union invasion and later civil war between the Afghan government and Mujahidin', 'The sectarian wars between the former Mujahidin' and, 'The start of US-led invasion against the Taliban and Al- Qaida' (2008: 334). Similarly, in a journal paper on 'Afghan migration through Turkey to Europe', Ahmet İçduygu and Sibel Karadağ note that:

...the formation of Afghan diaspora communities in Europe came through several phases over the last four decades. In the first phase, the pioneer settlers were students, business people and government officials. Then, the first large wave of Afghan immigrants to Europe was composed of refugees fleeing from the 1980s communist regime, followed by many others coming in the early 1990s escaping from the regime of mujahideen. The number rose in the latter half of that decade due to the rise of the Taliban in the country. The period of 2000s saw the rising arrival of irregular migrants together with the asylum seekers (2018: 495).

However, through interviews and informal interactions with members of the Hazara community in England, it appears that Hazaras during the time of the Soviet invasion chose to migrate to areas closer to home, to Iran and Pakistan, where there were

⁵² The exact figure is 72,238 which was deduced through public access to the England & Wales 2011 census data.

already Hazara communities residing, who had migrated to these countries since the insurrection of Hazarajat in the late 19th Century, as opposed to migrating more westward towards Europe, as other Afghans had chosen to do at this time. It can be presumed that this was because historic Hazara networks already existed in these areas, as established networks play a key factor in where some refugees chose to migrate to⁵³. Hazara migration to Britain and Europe, more generally, occurred at a much later stage than that of other Afghan communities⁵⁴. Given the difficulties in obtaining accurate information on Hazara migration to Europe, it is essential to engage with information provided by Hazara research participants about their community's migration, within this research.

Hazara research participants have mentioned that the migration trajectory of their community does not mirror that of other Afghan communities, yet it is problematic that literature on Afghan migration to Europe does not distinguish or highlight the fact that Hazaras were not part of the first wave of Afghan migration to Europe, during the Soviet occupation in the late 1970s and 1980s. Through interviews and informal conversations with Hazara research participants it has become apparent that Hazara migration to Europe started to occur from the mid-1990s to late-1990s, over a decade after the migration of other Afghan communities to Europe, as prior to this time, Hazaras migrated to neighbouring countries where Hazara social networks had existed for almost a century. Research participants have stated that the mid-1990s, when Afghanistan was grappling with a civil war, which decimated large parts of the country, especially Kabul, was when Hazaras started to migrate en masse to Europe. This is reaffirmed by Dr Carolin Fischer when she notes that, 'It was not until the mid-1990s that Afghans came to the UK in greater numbers, which have been continuously rising since then' (2017: 21). Furthermore, according to Fischer's informants '...this is because of the UK's liberal labour market and peoples' personal networks' (ibid). Fischer's reference to 'personal networks' is significant to note, because even though Afghan migrants will be in an unfamiliar environment once in the UK, the destination itself was chosen for practical reasons. From Fischer's informants' comments we learn

⁵³ For more information on Hazara social networks and settlement see: Monsutti, Alessandro. "Cooperation, remittances, and kinship among the Hazaras." *Iranian studies*, vol. 37, issue 2, 2004, pp 219-240.

⁵⁴ The oral histories of interviewees within this research show that the mid-1990s, late 1990s, early 2000s and the years 2007-2008 were key migration periods for Hazaras to the UK.

that Afghan social networks have been around in the UK since the 1990s, if not before, and given that Hazaras are among the Afghans that have left Afghanistan for the UK it can reasonably be assumed that Hazara social networks also exist in the country⁵⁵.

Having briefly discussed Afghan migration to Britain, it should be noted that the way in which the Afghan migration to Europe is covered is itself problematic. Dr Marieke van Houte in her book on return migration to Afghanistan states that ‘...what is often overlooked is that the group of Afghan migrants in Europe is also heterogeneous in terms of background skills and reasons for migration...’ (2016: 55). She goes on to provide statistics on Afghan asylum claims in EU member states, showing a stark increase in asylum claims from 2005 which stood at 6,780 compared to 2015 when the number drastically increased to 178,230. However, these statistics are not broken down into the ethnic composition of arrivals, so it is difficult to determine how many of the asylum applicants in 2015 were of a Hazara background. Given the limited information available on Afghan migration to Britain, and the lack of information specifically on Hazara migration to the country, oral accounts of Hazara migration to Britain have assisted in drawing a timeline of when the community began to settle in the country. Alongside this, the social and political situation in the country at the time of these migrations, as well as reports on Afghan migration have been drawn upon and discussed in this section, in order to verify claims made about the waves of Hazara migration to Britain.

The late 1990s saw an increase in Hazara migration to Europe during the Taliban rule in Afghanistan and also during and after the earlier civil war period. Multiple research participants interviewed have stated that they themselves, (and some their family members) migrated to Britain at this time, and recalled a small but sizable Hazara community emerging in the country at this period in time. And this would correlate with instances of growing violence and ethnic tensions in Afghanistan. There were

⁵⁵ In relation to Afghan migration to the West, Alessandro Monsutti notes that those who migrated in the 1980s and 1990s were of a slightly higher social standing than some of the Afghans who have migrated since the 2000s. He states that, ‘[a] growing number of Afghans also went in Europe, North America or Australia. In the 1980s and early 1990s, most of them were from upper and middle urban classes. But many rural people found their way to the West during the time of the Taliban. For instance, some Hazaras are now present in Washington, DC, New York and New Jersey, where they are taxi drivers or are active in the catering industry (several have a pushcart or even a fried chicken shop)’ (2008: 68).

countless massacres carried out during the country's civil war period, and some were directed at the Hazara community. Several major massacres include the mass bombardment of Kabul carried out by *Hezb-i-Islami* from 1992 to 1993 which killed thousands of Hazaras and non-Hazara civilians, as did another mass bombardment in Kabul jointly coordinated by Pashtun leader Abdul Rasoul Sayyaf and Tajik leader Ahmad Shah Massoud in 1995 (known as the Afshar Massacre), as well as the 1998 massacre of eight-thousand Hazara civilians in Mazar-e Sharif by the Taliban.

The massacre in Mazar-e Sharif is important to note given that many research participants mentioned that there was a surge in Hazara migration from Afghanistan to Britain at that time. A Human Rights Watch report mentions that the massacres in the city were in part due to the Hazaras religious beliefs as Shia Muslims,⁵⁶ as a Taliban commander at the time of the attack, Mullah Niazi, stated that, 'Hazaras are not Muslim, they are Shi'a. They are *kofr* [infidels]. The Hazaras killed our forces here, and now we have to kill Hazaras...If you do not show your loyalty, we will burn your houses, and we will kill you. You either accept to be Muslims or leave Afghanistan'⁵⁷. While Jon Armajani in his book on modern Islamist movements states that '...according to the Taliban's interpretation of the Quran and Hadith their killing of the Hazara Shiites was justified because, in the Taliban's view, the Shiites are heretics.' (2012: 207).

Migration to Britain in the early 2000s was a logical choice for Hazaras leaving Afghanistan given that some small Hazara social networks had started to emerge among members of the community in the country who had settled years prior. However, since the latter part of the 2000s Hazara migration to the UK has decreased, this is in part due to asylum procedures becoming more stringent, and a reluctance to accept Afghan migrants in Britain and several EU states. This has not meant that Hazara migration, and more generally Afghan migration, to Europe has significantly decreased, but rather that these refugees are less likely to try and attempt to seek asylum in the UK. Instead Hazaras and other Afghans are being processed in regions

⁵⁶ Taliban commander Maulawi Mohammed Hanif is reported to have told a crowd in the mid-1990s that 'Hazaras are not Muslims, you can kill them'.

See: www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/06/afghanistan-hazaras-160623093601127.html.

⁵⁷ See: www.hrw.org/legacy/reports98/afghan/Afrep0r0-03.htm#P186_38364.

such as the Mediterranean⁵⁸, their first entry points into Europe from the land routes taken from Afghanistan, through Iran and then Turkey, onto Greece, Italy or Nordic countries, where there has been a steady increase in Afghan migration, and thus there is a growth in Hazara social networks emerging in these states.

Dr Angeliki Dimitriadi, a Research Fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, notes that migration from Afghanistan can be linked to ‘multiple factors’, including searching for ‘...protection or security or even for financial reasons’ (2017: 60), with second generation Afghans from Iran and Pakistan who can no longer stay in these countries or return to Afghanistan, also migrating to Europe. In relation to the pecuniary motivations for mobility and westward migration to Europe, in a 2018 online blog post for the Refugee Outreach & Research Network, Abbasi and Monsutti note that the, ‘Migration of young Afghan to Europe is structured by a moral economy...[implying a] social system of exchange and redistribution between young migrants and their relatives who stayed behind’. Similarly, in a chapter by Dr Ignacio Correa-Velez et al. on irregular migration it was noted that there were multiple factors which act as catalysts for irregular migration alongside seeking protection, such as ‘...widespread poverty, economic hardship, political instability...’ (2017: 143). Thus reaffirming the economic motivations for migration, alongside fears of persecution or threats to life.

In the aforementioned journal paper on Afghans in Greece, Dimitriadi further notes that asylum is a central factor in Afghan mobility to the continent, and that this move was ‘permanent’ for those migrating (in so much as it could be permanent when asylum procedures are a prerequisite to enable certainty and residency in a new host country for refugees). Her own respondents, 50% of whom were Hazara Afghans, stated that their destinations of choice in Europe were Germany and Sweden, followed by Britain (2017: 59 - 64). Similarly, Hazara research participants in England⁵⁹ have mentioned that Britain and Sweden have the highest number of Hazara residents in Europe (which is reaffirmed by unpublished statistics provided by the World Hazara

⁵⁸ The following CBC report has further information on the growing number of asylum applications being processed in Greece:

www.cbc.ca/news/world/greece-asylum-applications-1.3531714.

⁵⁹ These are research participants who have participated in my research interviews, as Dimitriadi’s work focuses on Afghans in Greece.

Council), with many Afghans also residing in Germany, although mostly non-Hazara Afghans. Dimitriadi's observations here are noteworthy as they show that what are perceived as ideal migration destinations in Europe for Hazaras since the mid-1990s have been constant. While in a journal paper titled, 'Turning refugees into 'illegal migrants': Afghan asylum seekers in Europe', Dr Liza Schuster, a Reader in the Department of Sociology, City University London, notes that 'moving on' through Europe is also seen as a way out of 'illegality':

Most of the Afghans seem to have mixed motives for moving on - negative experiences in Greece plus stories from contacts further afield, from contacts in other EU Member States that promise things will be better. A significant number know, or know of, members of their extended families or friends around Europe who have received papers and who are working, or who are working without papers. In some cases, they are expected and encouraged to come and join them (2011: 1398).

A 2010 report published by the Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees (ICAR) on 'Afghans in the UK' states that the, '...number of applicants for asylum by Afghans in the UK has consistently increased in number between 1997 and 2001, and since then asylum applications have remained high' (1). This information correlates with what Hazara research participants have mentioned during the course of research interviews, namely that the late 1990s saw an increase in Hazara migration to the UK, as did the early 2000s. This was firstly due to Taliban rule in Afghanistan, and subsequently when the NATO intervention began after the 9/11 attacks. The same report also states that, 'The number of [Afghan asylum] applications has fallen since 2001 when a record 9,000 applications were made' (ibid: 4). Which again also falls in line with another time period mentioned by Hazara research participants as a key period in Hazara migration to Britain. It was stated by multiple research participants that after a lull in migration to Britain from the early 2000s there was a brief resurgence in Hazaras migrating to the country in 2007-2008, when there was heightened violence Afghanistan⁶⁰.

⁶⁰ The desire to migrate abroad from Afghanistan still persists given the heightened instability and lack of security in Afghanistan. The 2017 annual survey of the Asia Foundation stated that there has been an increase in the desire to migrate from Afghanistan from 30% in 2016 to 39% in 2017. The study specifically states that, '38.8% of Afghans would leave the country if afforded the opportunity—the

Given that Hazara migration to Britain has been occurring for just over two decades the demographics of the community has altered sharply from what it was during the first wave of migration to the country. This can be seen from the beginning of what has been termed the 'refugee crisis' since 2015, in reference to refugees from the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa and Afghanistan arriving in Europe, fleeing war, violence and persecution, with many of these migrants young males. The same was the case for Hazaras who arrived in Britain from the mid-1990s onwards. Some research participants have noted that families were brought over once there was more certainty regarding their residence in the country, while for others they married in Britain but still had extended families in Afghanistan, Iran or Pakistan. In a journal article by Lange et al. on Hazara refugees in Australia it was stated that, 'Generally, the men left their families behind (in Afghanistan) in the hope they would be able to organize reunion once they have arrived in a safe place' (2007: 34). Furthermore, in the small town where the research for the paper was conducted there were, '85 Hazaras in Albany - 65 men...7 women and 13 children. Most of the men were married and either had a wife (in Australia) or a wife and children in Afghanistan or a transit country' (ibid: 35). In turn Lange's observations validate the pattern of migration seen in Britain too, with young Hazara men coming to the country and only once settled in terms of residency and work, did the majority bring their extended families over. However, having noted the continuing Afghan migration to Europe, how states have responded to such movement is also pertinent to briefly note. In a paper on Afghan asylum seekers and the European Union, Dr Tazreena Sajjad, a senior professorial lecturer at the American University in Washington DC states the following, which summarises the growing hostility European governments are showing towards Afghan asylum seekers:

Europe has been receiving large numbers of Afghans for several years; since the beginning of the 2015 'crisis', they have consistently represented one of the largest refugee clusters to reach the continent's shores. However the rate

second-highest level recorded in Survey history' (14). Whether such ambitions will materialise can only be assessed with time. Nonetheless, dependable surveys conducted such as the Afghanistan annual survey allow for researchers to cautiously predict that there may be an increase in the number of asylum seekers to Europe, if violence, lack of security and governance have increased in asylum applicants' countries of origin.

of granting them asylum in various EU countries has depreciated significantly over time, with acceptance numbers being particularly low since at least 2010. Between 2015 and 2016 when the EU-Afghan deal⁶¹ was signed, the number of deported Afghans nearly tripled from 3,290 to 9,460 corresponding to a marked fall in recognition of asylum applications, from 68 per cent in September 2015 to 33 per cent in December 2016. In 2016 almost 10,000 Afghan applicants had their asylum cases rejected. In 2017, there was a marked fall in Afghan asylum applications to Germany, Sweden and Finland, with Germany granting asylum to less than half of Afghan applicants during the first nine months of 2017 (2018: 49).

Problems that have occurred in policy making in the EU were highlighted in a publication by the British-based institute of international affairs, Chatham House from late 2017, early 2018. The publication stated that the current German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said that aid to Afghanistan ‘...was conditional on the government’s ability to accept the return of migrants’, and that, ‘The deal made aid and development contingent on repatriation’ (Quie and Hakimi 2018: 28). This is a significant declaration, because the same publication stated that the EU claimed that, ‘There is never, never a link between our development aid and whatever we do with migration’ (ibid), according to comments made by Federica Mogherini, the current Vice-President of the European Commission. Steinmeier’s and Mogherini’s comments are in direct contention with one another, yet Germany’s deportation policy of Afghans still continues unchallenged (as well as that of the UK, Sweden and other European states that deem Afghanistan a ‘safe-country’ for return). While post-doctoral researcher Dr Admir Sdoko notes that:

The arrival of 178,200 Afghan asylum seekers to EU countries in 2015 led to an agreement between the EU and Afghanistan on the return of rejected asylum seekers, and an agreement between the EU and Turkey which aimed to halt the transit of Afghans to Europe. In one leaked draft of the EU-

⁶¹ For a brief summary of the EU-Afghan deal see: www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/oct/03/eu-european-union-signs-deal-deport-unlimited-numbers-afghan-asylum-seekers-afghanistan.

Afghanistan agreement, the EU threatened to withdraw aid in the case of non-compliance (2018: 4).

Such a questionable migration policy can directly be challenged by documenting the vast instances of security lapses in Afghanistan and how an inefficient Afghan government is unable to prevent high-level attacks in Kabul and other major cities in Afghanistan. Furthermore, Germany's position on Afghan migrants can be viewed as problematic in light of the decision taken after the May 2017 attack in the diplomatic quarter of Kabul, when deportations of Afghans from Germany were only temporarily halted⁶². Thomas Ruttig specifically dealt with the issue of Afghan migrants in Germany as part of an Afghanistan Analysts Network report on migration to Europe. Ruttig highlights that a major consequence of Germany's policy on Afghan migrants is that the policy '...has contributed to a political climate in which Afghans are increasingly seen as not fully entitled to protection and as economic migrants, not refugees fleeing from war'⁶³.

It is important to highlight the general trend of viewing Afghans as 'economic migrants', due to the fact that NATO combat troops officially withdrew in December 2014, and as a result of political manoeuvring to prevent states from being obliged to grant asylum to Afghans has occurred⁶⁴, given the growing 'refugee fatigue', and more favourable immigration policies towards other refugee communities⁶⁵. However, in spite of this growing trend in treating Afghans as second tier asylum seekers, Italy has in fact constantly accepted Afghan asylum seekers, unlike many other European states. In a 2017 report for the Afghanistan Analysts Network it was stated that, 'Italy has consistently had one of the highest rates for recognising Afghans as asylum seekers in Europe. In 2015-2016, the rate was stable at 97 per cent of all asylum requests, much higher than Germany (55 per cent), Sweden (46 per cent) and the UK (35 per cent)'⁶⁶. This is important to note, in that despite the mounting violence and

⁶² See: www.ecre.org/germany-temporary-suspension-of-asylum-procedures-for-afghan-nationals/.

⁶³ See: www.afghanistan-analysts.org/afghan-exodus-afghan-asylum-seekers-in-europe-3-case-study-germany/.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ See: www.independent.co.uk/news/how-afghans-became-second-class-asylum-seekers-a7591121.html.

⁶⁶ See: www.afghanistan-analysts.org/afghan-asylum-seekers-in-italy-a-place-of-temporary-respite/.

instability in Afghanistan, with heightened Taliban presence in various provinces of the country, many European states are still not aligning their domestic policies on Afghan asylum seekers with the ground realities in the country, which are forcing these vulnerable people to flee Afghanistan. This in turn is impacting the 'destination of choice' for Afghans making the journey to Europe. While in a 2013 report on 'Migration from Afghanistan to third countries and Greece', a member of the 'United Afghans in Greece' organisation relayed to Dr Angeliki Dimitriadi the countries Afghans seek to migrate to, and claim asylum, in Europe, which is still relevant, albeit even if the destinations have slightly altered in the last several years due to harsher immigration policies towards Afghans being enacted by some European states:

People move to certain places. For example the Pashtun tribe and those from Kandahar and Logar all want to go London and England. Those from the [Herat] and especially the Tajiks, primarily wish to migrate to Germany. The Hazaras prefer Sweden and Austria. For example, in 2009 almost everyone wanted to go to England. When England changed its policy, the Afghans turned to Sweden but mostly Norway and Finland. Once these countries reduced asylum recognition, they turned to Germany, Switzerland and Sweden. Families go to Sweden because within two months they know if their asylum claim has been accepted or rejected. Secondly, they receive benefits (2013: 14).

The point made in relation to England (and the UK more generally) is pertinent to note as it reaffirms what many research participants have said during the interviewees for this study, which is, that Hazara migration to the UK has decreased significantly given that the likelihood of asylum applications being accepted in the country severely declining in recent years. A statistic which confirms this assertion can be found in the 2018 UK Home Office 'Country Policy and Information Note' on Afghanistan. It states that, '...since 2008 nearly 40,000 Afghan nationals were returned to Afghanistan by European countries, including Norway; over 10,000 of those returns occurred in 2016. Since 2004, over 10,000 Afghans have voluntarily left or been removed from the UK' (10).

3.9 Conclusion:

In initially documenting a brief history of significant political events in latter 20th Century Afghanistan this chapter has sought to contextualise the waves of Afghan migration that have been taking place regionally, more further afield to Europe since the late 1970s, and Hazara migration to the UK since the 1990s. Within this historic timeline key political events and their aftermath were explored, in order give a backdrop as to why Afghans were forced to seek refuge abroad. In relation to this protracted history of migration, now stemming over four decades, there appears to be limited literature on Hazara migration to Europe and specifically Britain. Therefore the task of creating an introductory migration timeline of the Hazara community in the UK has been undertaken within this chapter. In documenting this history of migration, Hazara research participants shared information about when they and their families migrated to the country (although it should be noted that several interviewees arrived as unaccompanied minors), and the motivations behind the decision to migrate. The limited literature available on Afghan migration to the continent was also referenced, where needed, to ensure that an accurate timeline was constructed. Here policy papers contextualising Afghan migration to Europe and research papers on Afghans in Europe were consulted to see what information was available regarding Afghan migration to Europe.

A significant takeaway from the timeline drawn up in this chapter is that the Hazara community migrated to the country almost a decade and a half after Afghans of other ethnicities had started to make their way to Europe, which literature on Afghan migration to Europe fails to distinguish. The migration timeline of the community falls in line with key events in Afghanistan which saw increased violence against the Hazaras such as the Afshar massacre and Mazar massacre, or when there was heightened insecurity and instability in the country. However, as the literature and interviews highlight, the last decade has seen a severe decline in Hazara and non-Hazara Afghan migration to the UK given the growing number of failed asylum applications for Afghans. This has not meant that Afghans are not arriving in Europe, even if one of their desired destinations is off-limits, instead they are choosing to migrate to other European states where the likelihood of positive asylum outcomes

are higher. As a result, based on the insights provided by research participants it appears that since 2010 Hazara migration to Britain has considerably decreased.

Chapter 4: An oral history of Hazara consciousness:

4.1 Introduction:

This chapter traces the historic collective consciousness of the Hazara community. Drawing on French philosopher Michel Foucault's discussions on genealogy, it seeks to contextualise continuity and change within this collective consciousness over time, both in fixed locations and shared transnational space. In turn this chapter charts how members of the Hazara community demonstrate change within the community through time in relation to the narratives of marginality and overcoming, from being subjugated, peripheral subjects to active citizens who have made multiple collective gains in recent years. In terms of genealogy Foucault states that:

The role of genealogy is to record its history: the history of morals, ideals, and metaphysical concepts, the history of the concept of liberty or of the ascetic life; as they stand for the emergence of different interpretations, they must be made to appear as events on the stage of historical process (1977: 86).

He also adds that, 'The world we know is not this ultimately simple configuration where events are reduced to accentuate their essential traits, their final meaning, or their initial and final value. On the contrary, it is a profusion of entangled events' (ibid: 89). Therefore, this chapter seeks to engage with formal research interviews conducted with members of the Hazara community in London, Birmingham and Nottingham, in order to detail and discuss personal accounts about the self in relation to Hazara history, and how self-identification among the community has altered with time. It also seeks to understand how a historic consciousness was formed in the first instance and its impact on research participants. This chapter additionally analyses how a historic consciousness is dispersed among the community and the content of this historic consciousness. In turn the basis of this chapter is not exclusively restricted to written, documented information about Hazara consciousness but rather personal oral histories of members of the Hazara community in relation to this historic consciousness, which is not accessible in printed material. Here it is pertinent to also note the following quote from Professor Michael Rothberg of UCLA in relation to the

narratives of marginality and overcoming, given how memories of events, both personal and collective, impact these narratives and what they constitute:

...acts of memory are rhizomatic networks of temporality and cultural reference that exceed attempts at territorialization (whether at the local or national level) and identitarian reduction. Performances of memory may well have territorializing or identity-forming effects, but those effects will always be contingent and open to resignification (2010: 7).

Subsequently, this chapter has two aims: to show how fragments of memories become organised into narratives. This in turn links to a consciousness of a history seen as marginal in relation to dominant historical narratives, which merge through observable processes, as this chapter will be documenting a community history of past events, given that this thesis at its core is a genealogy of self-identification. Additionally, this chapter will also highlight how these memories come together in unpredictable, new ways, in line with Rothberg's remarks.

Given that this chapter will be documenting a genealogy of Hazara consciousness a pivotal quote to consider is the following from anthropologist Dr Melissa Kerr Chiovenda, in relation to the lack of incorporation of Hazara history within Afghan history writing, with Chiovenda noting that, 'One of the most common refrains I heard from Hazaras in Bamyan was "Pashtuns have stolen our history." When asked to elaborate, I was told that most (although not all) historians from Afghanistan had been Pashtun, and they had, according to my informants, written histories that entirely left out the Hazara point of view' (2018: 262). These power dynamics have prevented peripheral histories such as that of the Hazaras from being formally documented in Afghanistan as a continued timeline of marginalisation. Constructing an indigenous history from within the Hazara community has been extremely important, as it has given the community an opportunity to expand on dominant accounts of Afghan history. Hence, the creation of an indigenous historiography in the case of the Hazaras allows for a marginal community to narrate their past on their own terms, and push for their community's history to not be side-lined, and further document the growth of Hazara consciousness among the community with time.

As highlighted in the previous chapters, the narratives of marginality and overcoming are now widely circulated among the transnational Hazara community, and in this chapter these narratives will be explored through discussing the formal research interviews conducted for this research, and this will be done in order to assess the extent to which these narratives are reproduced in conversational spaces, as well as to highlight how these conversations have become conduits through which various thoughts about these narratives come together in private homes and community spaces. In turn by engaging with these internally constructed community narratives it becomes easier to distinguish to what extent these narratives impact individual perspectives on Hazara consciousness and to what extent these narratives have penetrated individual community member's awareness of their community and past, alongside social media and history-writing for example. Additionally, this chapter will also examine how the individuals interviewed for this research see themselves in relation to these community histories, and how they perceive their own lived experiences through these histories in order to construct a Hazara community history. Therefore, before engaging with the contents of the semi-structured interviews conducted for this research it is important to briefly look at the themes of history and memory, the extent to which they are interconnected, relate to Hazara self-identification, and the narratives of marginality and overcoming more broadly.

4.2 History and memory:

At the core of the narratives of marginality and overcoming are community history and collective memory. These narratives relate to history in so much as what is being propagated within these narratives are a protracted timeline of oppression against the Hazaras, followed by a more recent timeline of civic accomplishments and gains within the community. Memory is also central to these narratives in so far as recollections of the past help to contextualise and personalise these narratives and become the impetus for Hazara community action, worldwide. Here it is important to briefly engage with relevant literature on history and memory, and to understand the interrelatedness of both these themes. In relation to memory, historian Pierre Nora notes that, 'Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and

appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived' (1989: 8). Here dormancy and revival are important to note as it can be seen that the insurrection of Hazarajat as part of a timeline of historic oppression against the Hazaras is not chronologised as protracted marginality within dominant discourses on Afghan history, for example, but that these memories have instead been revived since the political mobilisation of the Hazara community from the 1980s onwards, and are now permanently documented in online spaces. While Professor Michael Rothberg mentions that, '...memory emerges from unexpected, multidirectional encounters-encounters between diverse pasts and a conflictual present, to be sure, but also between different agents or catalysts of memory' (2010: 9), with quotes from several research participants in the remainder of this chapter substantiating this point. While at the same time the quotes selected from the research interviews in the subsequent sections of this chapter will underscore the intersection of history and memory within this chapter and their significance within this research, given that they are vital tools for minority communities to relate to, and preserve their past. Here it is pertinent to note the work of Maurice Halbwachs who is credited with developing the concept of collective memory, and whose work is discussed in the literature review chapter, with Halbwachs stating that:

What makes recent memories hang together is not that they are continuous in time: it is rather that they are part of a totality of thoughts common to a group, the group of people with whom we have a relation at this moment, or with whom we have had a relation on the preceding day or days (1992: 52).

Maurice Halbwachs also states that through the preservation of memory a sense of '...our identity is perpetuated' (1992: 47). This is a vital concept to note, given that Hazara narratives about the past are very much collective community memories and shared histories that are used to reinforce identity, ethnic consciousness and ethnic solidarity. As a result, these collective memories and shared histories act as the impetus for awareness and solidarity campaigns by Hazaras outside Afghanistan, an example of which is the annual Mazari commemoration, in memory of the pivotal Hazara political leader Abdul Ali Mazari, and the countless demonstrations which occur worldwide in the aftermath of targeted attacks on Hazaras in Afghanistan and

Pakistan. The collective memory of the past also acts as a catalyst for political mobilisation among the Hazara community today. While Pierre Nora also notes that, 'The passage from memory to history has required every social group to redefine its identity through the revitalization of its own history' (1989: 15), and this redefinition can be seen in how historic marginalisation is not solely articulated by members of the Hazara community when discussing their community, but now additionally the post-2001 gains of Hazaras in Afghanistan and elsewhere. This quote from Nora is also important to highlight because in making this assertion Nora is going further than some historians in highlighting the role that communities themselves play in preserving and documenting their history, and the agency they gain through such an exercise. Furthermore, he mentions that it is not only marginalised groups in society who are compelled to retrieve their pasts but also 'ethnic groups and social minorities' (ibid), which is equally applicable to the Hazara community. In instances where memory is not 'experience[d]' collectively, a need arises for individuals to undertake the task to revive and maintain these narratives. This notion of revival is also relevant to Hazaras given that the political mobilisation that gave rise to their ethnic consciousness in Afghanistan occurred reactively late, in the 1980s and 1990s. Similarly, in terms of memory and its role in relation to identity Paul Ricoeur notes that:

...it is through the narrative function that memory is incorporated into the formation of identity. Memory can be ideologized through the resources of the variations offered by the work of narrative configuration. And, as the characters of the narrative are emplotted at the same time the story is told, the narrative configuration contributes to modeling the identity of the protagonists of the action as it molds the contours of the action itself (2004: 84-85).

This section has engaged with relevant literature on history and memory, both personal and collective, to show its relevance to the Hazara community and the narratives of marginality and overcoming. In understanding the importance of history and memory in relation to the narratives central to this research it becomes clear as to why the Hazara community has positioned itself in the way in which it has and why it propagates these specific narratives. In turn, the subsequent sections of this chapter

will engage with the narratives of marginality and overcoming to see how they are engaged with and discussed by members of the Hazara community, with reference to the research interviews conducted for this study.

4.3 Hazara historiography:

Having looked at the themes history and memory in the previous section of this chapter and the extent to which they are interconnected, it is also important to assess written work which details the Hazara community's shift over time from a historic, marginal community, to active citizens who mobilise for their community. This will be done in order to contextualise the research interviews in the next section of this chapter, which show how the narratives of marginality and overcoming are personalised and demonstrate a shift within individual Hazara self-identification.

In terms of the insurrection of Hazarajat being a fundamental theme within Hazara collective consciousness Syed Askar Mousavi notes that:

The fear, hatred and repression inspired by Abdur Rahman persists to this day in the souls and minds of the people of Afghanistan, in particular the Hazaras. More than all the other peoples of Afghanistan, the Hazaras were the subject of the wrath and hatred of Abdur Rahman. There were two main reasons for this. First, it was only the Hazaras who instigated and were able to carry out the largest uprising against Abdur Rahman, inflicting heavy losses and damages on the government in Kabul. According to Temirkhanov, the war against the Hazaras cost Abdur Rahman roughly one half of the country's budget and military force...Thus, the Hazaras constituted a real major threat to his rule. Second, the Hazaras were Shi'a, and so considered as godless infidels by Abdur Rahman, a Sunni, war against them was a religious crusade and obligatory, and so was carried out with vigour and the help of Sunni Mullas (1998: 117).

Mousavi's quote highlights how a shift has occurred in how narrations of a Hazara past now orient themselves to move the focus of the community from being presented as 'deviant' in historical narratives to being an active collective who have their own

history in their own right. In this passage from his book Mousavi chooses to present Hazaras as formidable fighters during the insurrection of Hazarajat. This inverts the dominant narratives present about this period in history which emphasise that the Emir engaged in *jihad* as a means to consolidate his power. In turn, it can be seen that certain aspects of a historical Hazara consciousness develop through positive inversions of prevailing historical discourses, because in the aforementioned quote it can be seen that Hazara selfhood is being established through assertion, instead of a selfhood that manifests through being the 'other'.

Mousavi was writing at a time when Hazaras were still being persecuted, a century after the insurrection of Hazarajat, where marginality was not only part of the community's history but a daily reality at the time. Therefore, having discussed a piece of seminal literature on the Hazara community written in the 1990s it is important to also note the work of anthropologist Bernt Glatzer who has documented his interactions with Hazaras in Afghanistan, before the civil war of the 1990s, as he states that, 'The Hazara are identified by other Afghans as one ethnic group recognizable by their prevailing Central Asian phenotype. Before the war I found the Hazara reluctant to name themselves 'Hazara', maybe because in Kabul Hazara has the connotation of 'very poor' or 'coolie'. The war has changed this attitude; decades of independence from Kabul have led to a remarkable ethnic self-confidence' (2001: 171). Glatzer's observation here is critical to note as it encapsulates a prevailing notion relating to a lack of self-worth among the community which preceded the period of Hazara consciousness that started to take hold in Afghanistan in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, which multiple research participants have discussed at length. Research participants with protracted lived experiences in Afghanistan have noted that on occasion the word 'Hazara' was used as a pejorative term by non-Hazara Afghans towards them when out with Hazara friends or walking down the street in certain neighbourhoods, and that these experiences meant that those who had a command of Hazaragi would switch to standard Persian if non-Hazaras were passing, as a means to prevent further ridicule. Relaying these experiences of racist abuse suffered in public, as well as recounting the community's collective memory of past subjugation during and after the reign of Abdur Rahman Khan, coupled with the awareness of the

prevalence of Hazara slave ownership⁶⁷ meant that ethnic consciousness took hold among Hazaras at a much later stage than that for Pashtuns and Tajiks, for instance. Furthermore, sociologist Grant Farr states that, '[Hazaras] are publicly humiliated with taunts of *Hazara-e mushkhur* (Mice-eating Hazara), *bini puchuq* (flat-nose), and *khar-e barkash* (load-carrying donkeys), relating to their racial features or to their role as menial laborers' (2007: 161).

While in a journal paper on Shiite movements in Afghanistan, Hazara scholar Dr Hafizullah Emadi notes that in 1979, 'The Shiite movement of Afghanistan was divided into three ideological groups: Islamist, Hazara nationalist and Socialist' (1995: 5), while also stating that some of the most prominent advocates of the Hazara nationalist movement, namely Abdul Raouf Turkmani, Muhammad Ismail Mubaligh and Haji Nadir Ali Allahdad were all executed in the early 1980s (ibid: 5-6). In turn, a shift in Hazara ethnic consciousness started to emerge in Afghanistan at this time, when political mobilisation of Hazaras started to take hold in the midst of the Soviet occupation of the country. Here it is also important to note the time in which Emadi was writing this article, which was during the civil war and after the Afshar massacre making his work and words more salient given that the community was still enduring severe violence as a civilian collective almost a decade and a half after Hazara nationalist political figures had been killed. While Marie notes that what began as mobilisation in retaliation to foreign presence in Afghanistan soon turned into promoting Hazara ethnic consciousness (2013: 101). Dissatisfaction among Hazaras for continually being on the margins of society, both politically and socio-economically, led to a vociferous campaign demanding greater inclusion of Hazaras in the 'public sphere', which continues even today. Furthermore, Ibrahim notes that there has been a shift in ethnic consciousness among Hazaras in the last two decades leaving behind localised identities (of clans and villages) to 'large scale' identity being defined as an ethnic

⁶⁷ Historian Dr Hasan Kakar in his book titled 'Government and Society in Afghanistan: The Reign of Amir 'Abd Al-Rahman Khan' notes that, '...[t]he price paid for the [Hazara slaves] was generally the lowest', showing that even with slaves there was a hierarchy (1979: 175). Kakar also cites the British explorer and diplomat Alexander Burnes in his book titled, 'A political and diplomatic history of Afghanistan, 1863-1901', stating that, '...In 1838, Alexander Burnes noted that "All the drudgery and work in Kabul is done by some Hazaras, some of whom are slaves and some free; in winter there are not less than ten thousand who reside in the city, and gain a livelihood by clearing the roofs of snow and acting as porters" ...As previously noted, most Hazaras were Shi'as, and only some were Sunnis, whereas their neighbors were all Sunnis. Consequently, the Hazaras were "...oppressed by all their neighboring nations, whom they served as hewers of wood and drawers of water."' (2006: 126).

group⁶⁸ (2012: 1). Additionally, Grant Farr mentions that ethnic consciousness or 'ethnic nationalism' and ethnic solidarity have grown significantly among Hazara populations worldwide, noting that:

The Hazara have been profoundly politicized by these events of the last three decades, and a newfound ethnic nationalism has developed. As a result the Hazara have formed political organizations, and Hazara leaders are now demanding active participation in the events of Afghanistan and a redress of past wrongs (2007: 160).

Having discussed literature on Hazaras written in the 1990s and reflections on the community's position in 1990s Afghanistan it is also important to note the work Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim here who has written extensively about Hazara collective consciousness. The events which inform Hazara collective consciousness, which in part centre on the insurrection of Hazarajat, (Ibrahimi 2012: 3-4) are commonly referred to in online works published by Hazara scholars and activists, but they are seldom thoroughly discussed in history writing on Afghanistan more generally, despite the scale of violence inflicted on the Hazara people during the reign of Abdur Rahman Khan. This is due to the fact that within Afghan history writing it can be seen that histories are contested, and there is not one shared historical narrative of the 'Afghan nation', even if specific narratives have gained prominence over time, as they may, totally or partially, be disputed by certain segments of Afghan society. In turn the suffering inflicted in the late 19th Century on the Hazaras, which is at the centre of the community's collective consciousness became intrinsically linked to the political mobilisation of the community in the 1980s and 1990s in Afghanistan. Therefore, it can be seen that the marginalisation of Hazaras in Afghanistan both as a historic and racial othering has greatly impacted political awareness and mobilisation among the community, yet is barely addressed in Persian history writing. As a result, this brings to the fore the issue of the contemporary, mainstream form of a Hazara historical vision, in which Hazaras are not positioned as historical or racial others, but are in fact historical subjects in their own right, and are therefore characterised, in narratives of

⁶⁸ Ibrahim also goes on to state that the term *qawm* mostly refers to a trans-local ethnic identity, as opposed to smaller 'tribal' identities.

overcoming, by a future redemption, which can be seen to be a result of this growth in Hazara consciousness during the 1980s and 1990s, and also due to the community's civic gains in recent years. Furthermore, it is also worth noting that some literature on Hazaras and non-Hazara Afghans, has highlighted how certain political events in the country's history have deeply impacted issues of ethnicity and identity among Afghans, as Dr Fariba Adelkhah states the following in relation to ethnicity in Afghanistan:

According to Olivier Roy (1985), the [Afghan-Soviet] war was a crucial vector of ethnic consciousness in Afghanistan. It endorsed our major groups that cannot be defined according to objective and unambiguous criteria: Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras and Uzbeks. By definition, these categories are historically situated. They are contextual, relational and relative: you are a Hazara in relation to the Pashtuns, the Tajiks, and the Sayyids, at a given historical moment that refers to a more or less distant and more or less traumatic past as well as to completely contemporary issues interpreted using the yardstick of this memory (2017: 142).

Therefore, not only does the Hazara community's history act as a catalyst for contemporary political mobilisation, while also being central to the community's collective consciousness, it has also informed and altered the way in which identity is constituted within the community. Furthermore, this protracted history of oppression underscores the master narratives within this research, and this can be seen by the collective action undertaken by the community, where the narrative of marginality is a transnational narrative, in that it not only plays a significant role within the collective consciousness of the Hazara community in Afghanistan, but also among the Hazara diaspora in Europe and Australia. This is further reaffirmed by the countless references made to the insurrection of Hazarajat and more contemporary forms of discrimination against the community, both in the information propagated online on Hazara websites and social media, but also through informal conversations and the formal research interviews that have shaped this study. Hence, understanding a narrative based on marginality has been essential, as it helps in comprehending Hazara ethnic consciousness, solidarity and political mobilisation beyond borders, while a narrative of overcoming highlights how a history of subjugation has been the impetus for civic

engagement and achievements among the community, in recent years, since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.

This section has shown how marginality is a key theme within Hazara history, but how it also relates to more recent incidents of violence which have been inflicted on the community. The insurrection of Hazarajat is used as starting point to anchor a timeline of persecution, that still manifests, albeit in different ways. The work of Glatzer and Farr in this section note how the historical circumstances of the community impacted perceptions of the self within the community, which had mostly been negative but with time became more positive, given the growth of Hazara consciousness among the community in the 1980s and 1990s. While the work of Farr and Ibrahimi cited in this section highlight how this historic marginality became the impetus for change within the community and led to a growth of ethnic consciousness among the community. Furthermore, this consciousness is important to note more generally, as the gains of the community in the region and beyond underpin the narrative of overcoming. In turn the next section of this chapter explores the responses given during research interviews to show how both the narratives of marginality and overcoming are interconnected, personalised and change with time. This also relates to Foucault's work on genealogy as the next section will highlight how the historic consciousness of the Hazara community has not solely been shaped by a linear timeline of available documented Hazara history, but come from various sources, including personal lived experiences.

4.4 Marginality and overcoming over time:

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the aim here is to document the historic collective consciousness among the Hazara community over time. Having discussed history and memory and the interconnectedness of these themes it is important to also discuss individual articulations of the narratives of marginality and overcoming, in order to show the interconnected nature of these narratives, and their hybrid, multiple features. This will be done in order to show the community's shift from an oppressed other to subjecthood, through people's everyday commentary on change within the community overtime. In turn this section will show how the narratives of marginality and overcoming are personalised and are not just top-down

discourses, but are in fact internalised and personalised by community members themselves.

Marginality is a narrative which is central to this research, and has been discussed in various literature on Hazaras when documenting the history of the community, and in certain instances when discussing the current precarity of the community. However, an interesting development which emerged in some interviews was the linking of past oppression to contemporary gains, with some interviewees stating that it is this very history of marginalisation that has been the impetus for the community's changing fortunes in 21st Century Afghanistan. For instance, one research participant, Attahullah Nawrozy, an accountant based in Nottingham, who is in his late 20s, related this contemporary timeline of accomplishments to Hazara consciousness more generally:

Being Hazara in Afghanistan, it differs, I will tell you from two perspectives. Back in the day, [historically] and then today. So being a Hazara back in the day was, people who would do menial jobs. For the very low level of the community. People who were not being labelled as proper human beings, only as labourers, that they would just do labour, like the Black community back in the day in American history, same as that. Back in the day worse than slavery [the conditions for Hazaras]. And now calling as a Hazara, right now, if I say I'm a Hazara, I'm a person that is more into knowledge, which is more into going far, and wanting to become something. I just want to improve myself, want to improve my community, and want to become something that could bring pride into Afghanistan. Now if you are Hazara, like people really respect you. People say we are the community that bring light in the face of Afghanistan to the world.

While, at the same time, in multiple discussions relating to the post-2001 circumstances of Hazaras in Afghanistan the passion for education among the community was referred to time and again. The pursuit of education was referenced to show that Hazaras are 'progressive' and 'open-minded', with an emphasis on the fact that women from the community are also pursuing education. In an article published in November 2018 on Taliban attacks in the Hazara populated Jaghori district of Ghazni

this trend among Hazaras was also noted, as the piece stated that, 'In Jaghori, for example, there is near-universal girls' education, and the number of boys attending school is higher than the national average. Women also work outside their homes and can drive cars, as is the case in most urban areas of Afghanistan but which is banned in areas under Taliban control'. The article also highlighted the perception the community has of any future Taliban rule, 'Hazara will never accept Taliban rule willingly, and will do their best to resist them...Hazara do not want to have any reversal on their civic gains'⁶⁹. Similarly, this is also referred to by Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim who mentions that:

'...the Hazaras more generally, offer the most potent example of a shift from violent conflict towards peaceful and civilian politics and as a result are one of the success stories of...post-2001 Afghanistan. The scale of transformation among Hazaras is often captured by Western newspapers headlines such as 'Afghanistan's success story: The liberated Hazara minority'...'Afghanistan's Hazaras: Coming up from the bottom'...and the 'Hazaras hustle to head of class in Afghanistan'...(2017: 223)

Therefore, within this genealogy it can be seen that pursuing education is also a reaction to the community's past subjugation (hence the high motivation for Hazaras to undertake education), while another motivation to excel is so that the community can work towards the betterment of Hazaras (and for some respondents for Afghans more generally), which was also reaffirmed Shafiq Nawrozie, an architectural designer based in Birmingham, in his late 20s, who stated that:

I guess the Hazaras are moving in that direction, studying and education, as you can see in Afghanistan. The Hazara community is working really hard. I think the fact that they were oppressed, and a lot of people look at the past and see that we were oppressed and they use that as sort of sense of motivation to work harder than others. I think they're generally really

⁶⁹ See: www.rferl.org/a/afghan-taliban-wants-what-it-hasn-t-been-able-to-hold-hazara-regions/29598848.html.

talented people. They're not as strict in the community as other ethnic groups in my opinion, in terms of religion or culture...

Additionally, research participants who passionately embraced their Hazara identity in interviews would generally state how Hazaras strive for education, and support (what they stated as being) Western liberal ideals such as democracy and human rights, with one research participant, Joma Ahmadi, a taxi driver based in Nottingham who is in his 40s stating that:

Hazaras are 'development orientated' people. And they are progressive people. And they wanted to have progression from a hundred years ago, but they were systemically deprived of that. And that's why so usually the Hazaras were looking for other channels to go forward.

While other research participants would link the community's achievements since 2001 to wider political discourses and would state that Hazara gains in recent years mean that the community can no longer be side-lined by Pashtun elites, with one research participant who is based in Birmingham and is in his 30s mentioning that:

[Hazaras] have gone through difficult times because, you know, a group of people like the Pashtun, they had the power, they had the larger population in Afghanistan so they tried to marginalise other ethnic groups in Afghanistan, especially Hazara because of their beliefs...but now Hazaras I think they are gaining confidence through education because now a large number of (Hazara) people are going to school, college and university so they are highly educated, a large number of people (are highly educated)...so this education has given them the confidence now slowly they are rising, now we can say, slowly, Pashtun cannot ignore this minority in Afghanistan because they have now got this power.

Again, these quotes in relation to the narrative of overcoming show that the narrative is concurrently employed alongside the narrative of marginality to highlight that despite the violence and subjugation inflicted on the Hazara people, the community

has taken upon itself the task of working to improve their fortunes in post-Taliban Afghanistan. In these responses there was an emphasis on how past injustices have become the impetus for contemporary achievements within the community. These responses reaffirm how these research interviews in and of themselves can also allow for the development and transmission of ideas within the community. This positive narrative is now not only propagated by the Hazara community itself, but is actually acknowledged and reproduced by people from outside of the community, which further adds to the veracity of this internally constructed community narrative on overcoming.

Civic gains and accomplishments among the Hazara community since 2001 are now ample, and are widely documented and disseminated through the internet and social media, and have also been referred to within the research interviews conducted for this study. Examples of well-known Hazara accomplishments in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban include sportsman Rohullah Nikpai winning the country's first ever Olympic medal at the Beijing Olympics in 2008, Dr Sima Samar being the first Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and singer Zahra Elham becoming the first female contestant to win the popular national music TV talent show 'Afghan Star' in the show's 14-year history (in March 2019). This in turn also links to the shift in Hazara consciousness that Ibrahimi alludes to, which has dramatically altered the self-perception of the Hazara community and has led to a growth in Hazara ethnic consciousness, stemming considerably from the work of Abdul Ali Mazari and other *Hezb-e Wahdat* members in the 1980s and 1990s, with Esmat Amean, a freelance journalist in his 30s, based in London, who spent his youth in Afghanistan stating that:

...when [Mazari] came to Kabul, he changed everything. He changed the way I see myself, as a Hazara. Before that, I was kind of, basically, was kind of, ashamed to speak Hazaragi, but after that, for me, it was kind of, a huge honour to claim that I am Hazara. Even till now I am proudly claiming that I am Hazara, but before that it wasn't the case.

This section has undertaken the task of presenting an auto-genealogy of Hazara consciousness. The research interviews discussed in this section describe a shift in Hazara consciousness that occurred both on an individual and collective level among the community. An over-arching theme of the research interviews more generally was the historic marginalisation of Hazaras in Afghanistan. While at the same time attempts were made to link past subjugation to contemporary gains, and show how the community's past pushed Hazaras to work hard for themselves and their community. Furthermore, multiple research participants would make a point to emphasise the positive, recent developments of the community as a means to show how the community is working to change its fortunes in present times, predicated on the community's history of subjugation, which denied the community such opportunities in the past. These various snippets of both personal histories and collective memories have therefore impacted Hazara consciousness among these particular research participants. In turn, this combination of personal and collective histories and memories has shown how Hazara consciousness and Hazara self-identification does not necessarily stem from access to a linear timeline of a particular community history, in a similar vein to Foucault, but how in fact many intertwined events can actually influence collective consciousness and self-identification among the Hazara community.

4.5 On experience, memory and narrative:

With the previous section having given an overview as to how community members personalise Hazara-specific narratives, it is also important to discuss the categories of experience, memory and narrative in relation to individuals and the collective, in order to understand what obligations this places on the individual as part of the collective. Here it is pertinent to note the work of American historian Professor Joan W. Scott, who has written extensively on experience. This is because personal lived experiences have been central to individual engagement with the narratives of marginality and overcoming among research participants, and it is therefore important to understand experience in relation to history. Here Scott notes that:

It is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience. Experience in this definition then becomes not the origin

of our explanation, not the authoritative (because seen or felt) evidence that grounds what is known, but rather that which we seek to explain, that about which knowledge is produced. To think about experience in this way is to historicize it as well as to historicize the identities it produces. (1991: 779 - 780).

The historicising of the narratives of marginality and overcoming was seen to occur on multiple occasions during research interviews, as throughout the interviewing process and also during casual interactions with members of the Hazara community these narratives were regularly alluded to, both explicitly and implicitly. This was evident in how members of the community sought to understand Hazara consciousness, and in relation to their own individual conceptualisations of identity. Furthermore, the responses from interviews presented in the marginality and overcoming sections of this chapter emphasise how Foucault's work on genealogy reveals itself in a personal capacity within research interviews, as 'entangled events' that do not necessary occur or manifest in a linear manner, as individual lived experiences and collective memories of the past impact understandings of Hazara history and Hazara identity more generally. Following on from this, the research interviews and informal conversations with and among Hazara community members themselves can also become channels for the dissemination of particular internally constructed community narratives, and is also the case with Hazara social media (which is analysed in chapter six of this thesis).

Here it is also important to consider the role of narrative construction and history writing for marginal communities given how Hazaras have been positioned within Afghan history writing. Historian David Lowenthal writes that certain 'histories' are accepted as fact much in the way that society understands maths to be definitive, given how history is taught. Thus, widely circulated historical narratives are not merely considered as one of many ways in which to understand the past. Instead, when there is then the case of people being presented with 'alternative histories' it becomes hard to persuade people that the narratives they have been presented with as 'historical fact' for so long may not necessarily be a wholly accurate representation of the past. In turn, '...historians find it hard to persuade people that there may be more than one 'accurate' version of the same event' (1998: 117), and this is relevant to note in

relation to the Hazara community as the historical timeline that has been created internally by the community is not one that is widely circulated outside of the community, where the insurrection of Hazarajat is seen as a major event within a continued timeline of oppression, as opposed to dominant accounts of Afghan history which document the violence inflicted on the community during the insurrection as an isolated event prompted by the desire of Abdur Rahman Khan to consolidate his power. In turn this framing of the Hazara past from within the community is then utilised to underscore the importance of a narrative of marginality when discussing the community, their past and their present circumstances, both within the community and to outsiders as well.

In relation to the narrative of marginality and its relationship with memory, Paul Ricoeur notes that, '...the duty of memory consists essentially in a duty not to forget' (2000: 30). This is very evident in the responses given during the research interviews where the suffering of the past was noted as a means to preserve Hazara history. Similarly, the extent to which a history of oppression is preserved and ingrained within the Hazara community as a collective memory was highlighted by Kazem Sharan, who is a graduate of the School of Oriental and African Studies and is currently a technology consultant in his early 20s based in London:

I think the history of oppression, I mean, every Hazara that is born knows about the history and the way that we've been oppressed. You can ask a seven-year-old or a ten-year-old if they know about the oppression that happened during the 1890s under Abdur Rahman Khan, or the Taliban oppression of the 1990s, or the massacre in Mazar, so these are things that you are told when you are growing up. The question is, is that right? That's a bigger debate, but personally I feel like it is good to know you know history, good to know your roots, the good things and the bad things. And yeah, I do agree that we shouldn't may be 100% focus on the oppression that we faced, so maybe we do need to focus on the positives, what we're good at instead of what we're not good at. What we have, not what we didn't have. But at the same time, I think there is a taboo, it's a very sensitive subject, for others in Afghanistan to talk about it (the history of the Hazaras)...because may be

people don't want to acknowledge that these things happened. There's documentation and books and resources that suggest this discrimination did happen. But are people going to acknowledge that, are people going to accept that? Instead of ignoring it and not talking about it, I think for the future of Afghanistan it is important for others in Afghanistan to talk about it.

The response highlighted above has been taken as a snippet to show how a narrative of marginality has been articulated and reproduced by research participants for this study. During research interviews a history of oppression was referred to by the vast majority of research participants, to varying degrees, either with explicit reference to the insurrection of Hazarajat, subsequent instances of injustice or through discussing personal memories of discrimination and racism. Similar quotes which have been taken as a selection, in the previous marginality and overcoming section of this chapter, underscore how research participants engaged with and articulated a narrative of marginality more generally, and show how the research interviews themselves were also an outlet for the proliferation of ideas that are not necessarily wide-spread or easily accessible in academic literature. In turn the research interviews undertaken for this study demonstrate how these conversations are also channels which allow for views on Hazara consciousness to develop and be shared among the community, based on both personal lived experiences and collective memories of the community. By engaging with literature on experience, memory and narrative it can be seen how personal experiences and collective memories work to underscore the narratives the Hazara community choose to articulate about themselves. By relying on personal lived experiences as well collective memories, in relation to the construction of narratives within the community it can be seen that key events, both historical and current, are merged with the lives of individuals within the community in order to further relate to the narratives of marginality and overcoming. Therefore, through discussing personal lived experiences and collective memories in relation to narratives, with time, these community narratives further develop and evolve.

4.6 Abdul Ali Mazari and Hazara consciousness:

Having engaged with the narratives of marginality and overcoming in relation to history and identity among research participants, and literature on experience, memory and narratives, it is fitting to also seek to understand perspectives on figures who are seen as central to these narratives, where collective memories shape present-day understandings of notable figures within the community. In turn this section of the chapter will focus on Abdul Ali Mazari. By focusing on Mazari this section highlights an earlier point presented in the introduction to this chapter in relation to memory and narrative formation, which is that memory rejects attempts to be entirely territorialised and fully assembled into a narrative. And while a historical community consciousness and selfhood grew through the figure of Mazari and his actions, personal and collective memories of Mazari also show diversity. This can be seen through the conversational engagements with research participants on Mazari through the fieldwork for this research, which emphasises this in ways that written histories have not.

Early on, during the course of this research, it became apparent that a particular religious cleric who went on to become a pivotal political leader during the civil war in Afghanistan of the 1990s was a key figure who required further study, with that man being Abdul Ali Mazari. Hazara consciousness has, in recent years, started to be explored in journal articles and research papers, and in many of these works specific reference is made to Abdul Ali Mazari⁷⁰. Mazari is noted as a central figure who was part of the movement that led to a shift in ethnic consciousness among Hazaras in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s. Mazari is drawn upon and celebrated world over in a way that other well-known Hazara figures are not, such as Faiz Mohammad Kateb Hazara, the court historian for King Habibullah Khan in the early 20th Century, General Muhammad Musa Khan, who was the first Hazara Commander in Chief of the Pakistani Army from 1958 to 1966 and Sultan Ali Keshtmand, who was the longest serving leader of the PDPA regime in Afghanistan. For instance, there are annual events commemorating Mazari's passing (usually referred to as the anniversary of his Martyrdom) in March of each year, in various cities in Europe and Australia, as well as

⁷⁰ Mazari is commonly referred to as 'Baba Mazari' as a sign of respect, affection and endearment by some Hazara community members, as the word *Baba* translates from Persian as 'father'.

in Afghanistan⁷¹. Hence why Mazari is a worthwhile figure to examine within this research. As a result, in all the research interviews conducted, attitudes and perceptions of Mazari as a notable figure within the Hazara community were delved into, alongside his role in establishing a Hazara consciousness, if any, as well as general understandings and thoughts on Hazara consciousness among research participants.

This section will first focus on the heterogeneity in responses provided about Mazari, given that of the limited literature available on Mazari in English, dissenting views about his life and legacy are not present. Although these views only constitute a small number of research participants within my work, it is interesting to see how a figure who is valorised by the community is still critiqued by some. The following quote from Professor Joan W. Scott is pertinent in this regard, as she notes that:

Seeing is the origin of knowing. Writing is reproduction, transmission-the communication of knowledge gained through (visual, visceral) experience. This kind of communication...has produced a wealth of new evidence previously ignored about these others and has drawn attention to dimensions of human life and activity usually deemed unworthy of mention in conventional histories. It has also occasioned a crisis for orthodox history by multiplying not only stories but subjects, and by insisting that histories are written from fundamentally different-indeed irreconcilable-perspectives or standpoints, none of which is complete or completely "true" (1991: 776).

Scott's assertion in relation to conflicting viewpoints that might emerge from experience is important to note also, given that not all research participants held particularly positive views of Mazari. The minority of discussants who were ambivalent about Mazari were predominantly female and the major criticism conveyed was that although Mazari did do and achieve a lot for Hazaras in Afghanistan, he was still ultimately a warlord, like many of the well-known Afghan figures of that era, and that in his time, both during and after, working as a religious cleric he did not do enough to

⁷¹ Having extensively followed Hazara social media before and during this doctoral research, I have not come across events celebrating the life and work of other renowned Hazara figures such as Kateb or General Khan. Furthermore, multiple Hazara social media pages make regular reference to Mazari in their posts, but seldom do about Kateb or Khan.

promote women's rights. These criticisms are also important to note given how Mazari is generally portrayed in relation to the narratives of marginality and overcoming, but how even then he is critiqued by some members of the community as he was the leader of an armed faction during the civil war of the 1990s in Afghanistan.

In these specific interviews where criticism of Mazari was aired, the research participants stated that they wanted their responses to be kept anonymous, given that criticism of Mazari is taboo within the community. In relation to this point one respondent stated that although Hazaras are generally an open-minded community they are yet to reconcile with the idea that Mazari was not infallible, given that his armed faction was accused of being responsible for some of the country's civil war civilian casualties⁷². Hence, a minority of respondents have said that they believe that this period of his life and his actions as the head of *Wahdat* at the time need to be critiqued. For instance, three female Hazara research participants from London, all under thirty at the time of their interviews noted an unease that Mazari presented them for them in relation to his time as a cleric and his time as a fighter during the civil war. One research participant stated that, 'For me Baba Mazari is a bit different from other warlords because he came to represent a very marginalised community', and this research participant explained that her use of the word warlord was intentional given that, as noted earlier, Mazari and his faction were armed, and fought, during the country's civil war.

For some younger Hazaras there is a tension with regards to Mazari and how they perceive him, given that he took up arms during the civil war, but as he was also central to the establishment of Hazara consciousness in Afghanistan, with these respondents asking for their responses to be kept anonymous, as noted earlier. These respondents stated that even though the community actively engages in debates on a wide range of issues, Mazari and his legacy is something that is not questioned and brought into disrepute, especially given that after his death his status among the community heightened as he was, and still is, viewed as a martyr who ultimately lost his life in the pursuit of equal rights for his community. In relation to this saint-like

⁷² The following Human Rights Watch report from 2005 has more information on *Wahdat's* ideological positioning and armament during the civil war: www.hrw.org/report/2005/07/07/blood-stained-hands/past-atrocities-kabul-and-afghanistans-legacy-impunity

status Mazari gained after his death, one research participant based in London stated that:

...what makes me uncomfortable is how [Mazari] is being treated as a saint, and also people are making anniversary for him, a second Muharram for Hazaras...And also it is not very much tolerated among Hazaras if you want to criticise him. I have not seen anything, I haven't looked into that part, but I have noticed that people who are honestly want to criticise some of his actions are very badly treated. I remember some people writing something (critical about Mazari) on Facebook and then they had to remove it because it was becoming too much.

Another research participant based in London had the following to say about Mazari and the general perception the Hazara community has of him:

Well the thing is that unfortunately about Mazari, he's been described in the community as a kind of sacred, holy thing that he shouldn't be criticised and nothing negative should be said against him. Well Mazari in the last 3 years was really different from the Mazari who was before. I mean before he was like many other, let's say, warlords or religious leaders. He was conservative, he was mainly, how can I describe, he wanted a system very similar to the religious government of Iran but in the last 3 years of the internal war in Afghanistan he changed. But people like to generalise the whole facts within these two or three years...Even me, at Hazara gatherings, I try to be cautious not to say anything critical about Mazari.

While a research participant based in Birmingham stated that they had reservations about Mazari's political philosophy:

...[I]f you think about his political philosophy I think he was strongly believing in Shia and he was thinking, because he was receiving some support from Iran of course, and different Hazara groups were receiving support from Iran. I think there were eight different groups and they were getting support from

Iran...But I disagree with his [religious] philosophy, as we need a secular country a more open society, a country, a society where everyone can live there with different views, but probably he has got similar views to the regime in Iran, so that was not a good thing. It is not necessary to put that much emphasis on religion in a diverse society.

These were enlightening observations as criticism of Mazari is something that is considered as being off-limits within the community. It should also be noted that these research interviews were conducted separately and not in a group setting, and these respondents were not aware of each other's answers with regards to Mazari, which makes their comments even more intriguing. The requests for anonymity highlight a tension that exists among the community when propagating the claim that the community overwhelmingly shares and promotes the ideals of tolerance, when in some research interviews there had been a nervousness to freely discuss Mazari. While some other research participants who did not explicitly criticise Mazari did note that as much as the community perceives itself, and prides itself, as being open-minded and allows for debate and discussions on a multitude of issues, Mazari has become sacrosanct, where criticism of him as a leader as is rarely, if at all, accepted. These dissenting views of Mazari, although in a minority, are important to note as they show a division with regards to how the narratives of marginality and overcoming are framed, in that when discussing Mazari as a figure and his place within these narratives, there were alternative views as to how he is perceived and situated within the community more generally, and in turn this points to a schism emerging among the community, albeit a small one.

However, the vast majority of research participants discussed Mazari's life and legacy very positively, and mentioned that his shift from a religious to a political figure stemmed from witnessing the marginalisation Hazaras endured during his time in Afghanistan, and how neighbouring Shia-theocratic Iran, had at this time done little to alleviate the suffering of their fellow Shia brethren in Afghanistan. Multiple respondents with protracted lived experiences in Afghanistan stated that witnessing the suffering of Hazaras in the country led Mazari to vocally proclaim the importance of asserting one's ethnic Hazara identity, as opposed to his previous stance of framing

his identity through a religious lens, as a Shia Muslim. In an espousing an ethnic Hazara identity, Mazari was not negating the importance or role of religion for Hazaras, research participants claim, but rather was explaining that to emphasise one's identity as Hazara is no less important than proclaiming one's religious identity as Shia, as they were not mutually exclusive. Promoting a Hazara identity occurred alongside demands for equal rights for Hazaras, as Afghans and citizens of the state. Here it is worth noting that research participants who describe Mazari's shift from a cleric to a politician have constantly highlighted how in embracing a Hazara identity the demand was always for equality, not to claim superiority, and to work for and towards the betterment of all Afghans, which can be demonstrated by the following quote from a school teacher who is in his 30s and based in London:

I mean we Hazara, 90% of us see Baba Mazari as a legend. We see him as a great leader. But his perception was that every small ethnic minority, not just Hazaras, every ethnic minority should have recognition. One of his ideology was that when it comes to government ruling, every ethnic minority should have a role in decision making. Not just Hazara, every other group. Because on quite a few occasions he spoke about other ethnic groups, for example one time he spoke on behalf of Uzbeks. He also spoke on behalf of another community we call Qizilbash. He spoke on their behalf as well, so his ideology was that all minority should have recognition when it comes to decision making, not just the tribe that is in power. And so that was his ideology.

This perception of Mazari can again inadvertently be linked to the two narratives which are central to this research, that of marginality and an embryonic stage of overcoming, constructed specifically as liberalism, in that by explicitly demanding equality for all, Mazari and his Hazara supporters were moving away from the 'tribal politics' which had been dominating the political landscape of the country for decades, and was something Hazaras generally were and are still keen to disassociate their community from, given the view that it is exactly this same system that has oppressed and marginalised the community since the insurrection of Hazarajat. Secondly, in highlighting Mazari's demand of equality for all, the notion of Hazaras as 'distinct' from other Afghan communities was further reinforced by some research participants, as

they spoke in terms of rights and equality, and thus demonstrated their credentials as an ‘open-minded’ community, moving away from embracing practices which are deemed as having prevented the country from progressing and developing. Esmat Amean also noted the following when sharing his thoughts on Mazari which implicitly relate to Hazara consciousness:

Baba Mazari for me, was if I say, he was someone who changed the history of the Hazara people. I’ve seen him, I’ve met him, basically I’ve been with him for a period of time back in the 1990s. He was such a unique character. For me he is someone, if I say, he changed the whole life of Hazaras. If I say personally on my life basically, I was born in Kabul, and I grew up there. Before him, even I was in the capital of Afghanistan, I suffered basically racism myself as being Hazara, even when we were speaking Hazaragi between our friends. The minute someone non-Hazara was passing by automatically our accent changing and we were trying to use different accent, because it was kind of, automatically it was kind of a shame to speak Hazaragi. I’ve been called many, many times Hazara, ‘Hazara *moosh-khor*, which means that Hazaras eat mouse⁷³. And a lot of bad terms to be honest, back home. And it was personal experience, I was basically living in Kabul and I knew that I couldn’t claim as even being from Afghanistan [in areas] just outside of Kabul which were Pashtun.

In certain narrations of Mazari, his character was alluded to in order highlight his appeal and stature among the community, as he was someone who was at the forefront of the fight for equal rights for Hazaras. For instance, one research participant, Aziz Sorabi, who is in his 30s and is a test development engineer based in London, left Afghanistan as a child during the Taliban rule of the country, and had the following to say when discussing Mazari:

Well I think Baba Mazari was amazing, and that’s why he is given the title of ‘Baba’, the father of the Hazaras. And I think it correct for him to have this title. And he was literally a father figure for the Hazaras, looking after the

⁷³ This term also translates as ‘rat-eater’.

entire Hazara people. And he was discriminated against himself, his brother, his family, so he knew the pain, he felt the pain himself. So, for him this was a battle to get this sorted once and for all. Apart from being Hazara and being the father of the people, he was an upright man, he never wanted anything for himself, he only wanted it for the community. And you can see if from the history, the way he and his family lived...To be honest when I was in Afghanistan I used to be called the Hazara rat-eater, the rat-eater, *moosh-khor*. I heard that from my own ears, like 25 years ago. And I must admit, I used to say 'why am I Hazara, I wish I was not Hazara'. Imagine, a Hazara himself, thinking being a Hazara is a bad thing. So, he literally came in and changed that. And this is just immense work. Winning a war is one thing, but changing people's perception is another thing, it's enormous!

Here it should be noted that it was not only male research participants that echoed positive sentiments about Mazari, but similarly most female research participants also stated that he worked to change the trajectory of Hazaras in Afghanistan, with Elaha Soroor, a popular Hazara singer and song-writer who is in her 20s and based in London stating that:

Basically, I heard that [Mazari] helped to make Hazaras confident, to introduce themselves as Hazaras and be part of the society as a Hazara person, and basically contribute in the society and develop themselves, and have the same rights as the other citizens in Afghanistan. And he helped a lot. And he fought a lot. And he led Hazara people towards this goal towards being equal...Now Hazaras are the most educated, and more writers and poets.

Within descriptions of Mazari's vision, activism and character several research participants referred to Mazari as the Hazara community's 'Nelson Mandela', or described him in ways which elevated his status as a means to separate him from other men of his time and generation, because of his role in working to improve the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan. In line with these sentiments one younger Hazara

research participant, Hafi Kadamzadeh, who is in his 20s and is an entrepreneur based in London stated that:

The Hazara community see him as our idol, as our Martin Luther King, our Nelson Mandela, so he is like the most important figure. He is a very important figure, the most important figure in Hazara culture. So, you know, we have a celebration of him once a year, in our household we have pictures of him, he's almost like a Prophet. Not a Prophet, but you know what I mean, like a Saint.

Here it is pertinent to note the following quote from Professor Michael Rothberg (who takes as inspiration the work of Professor James E. Young) who states that, '...sites of memory do not remember by themselves - they require the active agency of individuals and publics' (2010: 8). The responses given during this research about Mazari affirm Rothberg's hypothesis, as Mazari's words and actions are positioned and given meaning through research participants themselves. These individuals further preserve these memories of Mazari and his life through recalling his message and activism. It is also worth considering the work of Foucault on genealogy again, as in a paper on his work Dr Una Crowley of Maynooth University, Ireland states that, 'Genealogy displaces the primacy of the subject found in conventional history and targets discourse, reason, rationality and certainty. Foucault's analyses are against the idea of universal necessities, the search for underlying laws and universal explanatory systems...(2009: 2). This function of genealogy can be seen to be reproduced in the responses given about Mazari in relation to Hazara community members' lived experiences. This is because it was not necessarily the task of learning Hazara history in an ordered manner that impacted personal conceptualisations of the self and what it means to be Hazara, but that it was personal experiences, the opportunity to meet Mazari, listen to his speeches or learn about Mazari's own past and struggles, which influenced research participants. In turn these methods of gaining knowledge about Hazara history and Hazara consciousness do not fit neatly with constructed linear histories of the past. While simultaneously, this section shows how the regulating of discourse allows for the formation of narratives, and in this instance this regulating refers to the dominance of a public Hazara community view of Mazari.

4.7 Conclusion:

To conclude, this chapter has sought to trace the historic collective consciousness of the Hazara community, underpinned by the work French philosopher Michel Foucault on genealogy. At the core of this chapter are quotes taken from research participants to show how they relate to the narratives of marginality and overcoming, and how these narratives are personalised and change with time. The introduction section of this chapter was followed by a section on history and memory which highlighted the role and importance of both history and memory in relation to the propagation of the narratives of marginality and overcoming, given that history helps to establish the contents of these narratives, while memory allows community members to personally relate to these narratives. The next section looked at Hazara historiography and how the community's consciousness and sense of self developed over the decades.

The section on marginality and overcoming over time took as its focus quotes from research participants. It showed how both the narratives of marginality and overcoming are personalised, how marginality informs the community's current forms of overcoming and how the contents of these narratives adapt and change with time. The research interviews discussed in this chapter have shown how members of the Hazara community revisit their communal past and more recent collective memories in order to contextualise the community's historic and contemporary circumstances and situation in Afghanistan. While references to Hazara history in the research interviews more broadly show how a timeline of subjugation is remembered, memorialised and further proliferated by members of the community in present times, and is used as an impetus for political action in present times. Alongside recalling past subjugation multiple research participants did highlight that in post-2001 Afghanistan the community has made significant strides in many fields. At the same time by drawing on these historic events of oppression and recent collective gains, the extent to which Hazara consciousness has taken hold among transnational Hazaras is better understood. While in constructing and propagating a progressive narrative about the community it can be seen that there is not solely an emphasis on circulating a history of oppression within the community. In turn to 'be Hazara' in 21st Century Afghanistan and in the diaspora is to now exhibit the talents and accomplishments of the community and move away from discourses which have historically chosen to present

the community as a deviant 'other'. Additionally, the section on experience, memory and narrative gave an opportunity to engage with literature on these themes in order to underscore how individual lived experiences alongside collective memories influence the Hazara community and the narratives the community chooses to articulate about itself.

Within this chapter there was also an emphasis on the life and legacy of the pivotal Hazara political figure, Abdul Ali Mazari, as Mazari was a figure who was discussed at length in many of the research interviews conducted. This section started by highlighting criticisms that a few research participants had of Mazari, given that the existing literature on Hazara consciousness does not highlight dissenting views of Mazari. Although these views were in the minority they were important to highlight as they show how even though there are wide-spread, positive narratives about Mazari within the community, some community members still have reservations about him. In turn these disparities in the responses given in how Mazari is perceived by research participants shows that although on the whole collective memories of the past inform individual community members' views in the present, these deviating views of Mazari illustrate the limits of this homogeneity within the community, as even though individual thoughts about Mazari do sometimes reinforce one another, they do not always do so.

However, the vast majority of research participants noted the immense work Mazari did for the community and for an ethnic consciousness to flourish among Hazaras. In these personalised narrations of Mazari his proclamations regarding equality for all citizens of Afghanistan led to a new-found confidence among the Hazara community whereby to self-identify as Hazara was seen more positively within the community with time, and simultaneously the historic stigma attached to asserting oneself as Hazara started to diminish. In a handful of these narrations, interviewees referred to their own individual histories and instances of discrimination that they had endured in Afghanistan and how Mazari's words and actions altered their own perceptions of being Hazara, which were initially framed by varying degrees of self-loathing. With time there was a growth in self-pride among these Hazara interviewees once they became aware of and familiarised themselves with the sayings of Mazari. Individual

reflections on Mazari and personal histories show how the narratives of marginality and overcoming are not just overarching community narratives but how they impact personal conceptualisations of identity and the self, in that Mazari's activism for his community stem from past injustices suffered in Afghanistan, and how through his vision Hazara consciousness increased among the community. Therefore, this section of the chapter has shown that in the process of reflection Mazari is reconfigured in different ways based on the views of the individual. This in turn demonstrates how heterogeneity shapes the evolution and adaptation of community discourses themselves.

Chapter 5: A genealogy of religion and secularism among transnational Hazaras:

5.1 Introduction:

The previous chapter of this thesis has shown how ideas related to the narratives of marginality and overcoming circulate within the Hazara community and how they are personalised by members of the community, as well as how they relate to research participants' own lived experiences. In turn this next chapter of the thesis will examine the topic of religion. Religion will be explored in this chapter to show how Hazara research participants perceive and relate to religion, and to what extent religion underpins the narratives of marginality and overcoming.

As this chapter looks at religion, the particular focus here will be on Shia Islam, as the majority of research participants within this research either self-identified as Shia Muslims or came from Shia families, and given the accessibility of literature on Shia Hazaras. However, as noted in previous chapters, the Hazara community is not a monolith, and this also applies to religion. Although Twelver Shi'ism is believed to be the most prevalent sect of Islam followed by the community, Ismaili and Sunni Islam are also followed by some Hazaras (Ibrahimi 2012: 2), and secular Hazaras are also a contingent group within the community. Accordingly, this chapter will be divided several sections, which includes a background section on the Shia orientation of Hazaras. The following section will explore explicit discourse on religion among research participants. While the section on religion and secularism among Hazara organisations and political movements of the Soviet war period will show how the narratives of marginality and overcoming can be both Shi'i religious narratives while also being liberal narratives, and here the work of political theorist Carl Schmitt on political theology will be discussed to underscore how secular politics often contains the traces of religious governmentality. This chapter will end with a section on secularism in contemporary Hazara life to show how the community is working to frame itself as bastions of liberal values, given that the previous chapter showed how Mazari during his life also went from operating within the confines Shi'i politics to later espousing secular, liberal ideals of equality and justice for all.

5.2 On the Shia orientation of Hazaras and its implications:

In relation to the Shia persuasion of the Hazaras, one research participant, based in Birmingham who is in his mid-20s, noted how a lack of information on the conversion made it hard to know how, when and why Shi'ism is followed by the community in a predominately Sunni Muslim state:

So when you say Hazara and Shia it is because the majority of Hazaras are Shia. So automatically in your head you think of it as Hazara-Shia. The part of religion is Shi'ism in Hazaras specifically, I don't know about the history and how it happened, because if you think about it, Afghanistan majority was Sunni at that time in history. I don't know how that changed, that a minority became Shia (in Afghanistan). I don't know how it happened, I'm trying to think, like no one knows the history, how that happened. They forget about that part, maybe it's because we say that we are Hazara. If you've heard the story that there were a thousand Mongolians who were left behind, all that and then they were Mongols, they were Buddhists, so why are we Shia? We could have been Buddhist. So in the history (of Hazaras) there's a gap. We don't know. But you know this is very interesting, even Hazaras themselves they don't know. There's a gap in history, how did it happen (that Hazaras are Shia)? The Hazaras there should have been Buddhists or Sunnis. I don't know how Shi'ism came to Hazaras. There is a gap (in history) there. So when did being Hazara become associated with Shi'ism?

This quote is important to note as it is something that has been brought up both within interviews and casual conversations with Hazara acquaintances, which is that there appears to be a lack of information available as to when the community embraced Shi'ism. Therefore, it is important to briefly engage with literature that explores Shi'ism among the community before moving on to the next sections of this chapter. In relation to the Shia beliefs of the Hazara community Dr Alessandro Monsutti notes that:

The relationship between Hazaras and Shiism must also be seen as a dynamic process. Their religious affiliation is probably the result of two distinct

factors: the part played in their complex ethnogenesis by the Ilkhans, the Mongol dynasty of Iran, whose sovereign Ghazan Khan is said to have converted to Shiism at the end of the thirteenth century; and the later impact of the Safavides, who declared Shiism the official religion of Iran and extended their zone of influence to contemporary Afghanistan under the reign of Shah 'Abbas (1587-1629). Beyond any direct legacy or influence, however, the conversion of Hazaras to Shiism may have been due to a long process of opposition to neighbouring Sunni populations, which has continued down to this day (2007: 175).

Additionally, Humayun Sarabi, in a master's dissertation on politics and the modern history of Hazaras, also discusses the Shia conversion of Hazaras (and cites the work of American sociologist and historian Herbert Franz Schurmann) noting that:

Schurmann also believes that Hazaras possibly converted to Shiism through Iran by their alliance with Iranian Safavids; perhaps Shah Abbas 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 Shiis to Shiism 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 *imirs* of Day Kundi *idoulat Begi* for eight generations (2005: 40).

While Dr Naysan Adlparvar in his doctoral research on inter-ethnic relations in the Bamiyan valley mentions that prior to the proliferation of Hazara consciousness and ethnic identity among the community, a cross-ethnic Shia religious identity began to manifest and grow among Afghanistan's Shia populations, in the early to mid-20th Century, and he states that:

The consolidation of the Afghan State following the ascension of King Zahir Shah (r. 1933-1973) to the throne, however, expedited the widespread emergence of Shi'i and ethnic identity in Afghanistan (Shahrani, 1986). The

expansion of the Afghan government under Zahir Shah's regime led to rapid growth in the population of Kabul, which was directly correlated with the influx of Hazaraks from the Central Highlands into the capital (Edwards, 1986)...In these urban settings individuals identifying with different Shi'i ethnic categories began to intermingle and, unified by their perception of mutual oppression at the hands of the Sunni state, began to develop a common sense of identity expressed in terms of Shi'i ideology. This sense of oppression was furthered with Zahir Shah's strong orientation toward Pashtun nationalism, which included the appointment of Pashto as the official state language (Shahrani, 1986). Following the reopening of a number of *membars*⁷⁴ in Kabul, sanctioned by Zahir Shah, the mourning rites of Muharram—including *Ashura*— became increasingly commonplace in Kabul and were central to promoting collective Shi'i identity (Edwards, 1986). As these ceremonies were carried out under the watchful eye of the king they were generally apolitical in nature, but that did not stop the emotive and symbolic nature of *Ashura* contributing to the development of a common sectarian identity (*ibid*). (2014: 94-95).

These three excerpts from texts on the Shia heritage and orientation of the Hazaras helps to chronologise their conversion and the strong pronouncement of a Shia identity, at some point during the reign of Zahir Shah, which would be earlier than when ethnic consciousness emerged among the community in the 1980s and 1990s. However, Dr Niamatullah Ibrahimi notes that in his own interactions with Shia Hazaras prior to 1978, which was the year of the Saur Revolution which led to the deposition of President Daoud Khan, Hazaras, '...[hid] their identities at the schools or bitterly complained of the social humiliation and rejection they were exposed to in their classrooms' (2012: 6).

Ibrahimi's observation is not surprising if existing literature on the Hazara community in Afghanistan is considered, given that it shows how the community's Shia identity was historically a burden, as it was used to severely subjugate the community, from

⁷⁴ Dr Adlparvar states that a *membar* is, 'A place of worship dedicated to the Imams. Used by members of the Jafari school of Shi'i Islam' (2014:ix).

being victims of massacres, rape and slavery. Although slavery was outlawed by King Amanullah Khan, Hazara slave ownership was still practiced after the decree was passed (Ibrahimi 2017: 90). These historical circumstances of the community led to a sense of self-loathing to develop among the community, with Dr Bernt Glatzer noting that before the civil war the community was reluctant to label themselves as Hazara (1998: 171), as noted in the previous chapter. However this changed with the formation of community organisations and political movements, which worked to further the Hazara cause and demand greater rights for the community, as citizens of the state, initially in Afghanistan, and in recent years in Pakistan given the growing targeted attacks against the Hazara community in Quetta. In turn marginality stemming from religion, and also ethnicity, can be seen to have plagued the community both in the late 19th century and even in the 20th century, which underscores the double marginality of the community and the status of the community within the country for decades.

At present, to be perceived as 'being Shia' is making the daily lives of Hazaras in certain areas very precarious, especially in the last several years in Kabul, and for over a decade in Quetta. Whether Hazaras choose to assert and relate to a Shia identity is of very little importance in these circumstances as it is people from outside of the community who label the whole community in such a way as to see all Hazaras as Shia, and as legitimate targets of direct violence. This had led to countless attacks on the community in Kabul since 2015, at religious institutions, education centres and sports facilities. While in Quetta the community has become ghettoised and confined to the Mariabad and Hazara Town areas of the city. Consequently, although religion was a tool used to subjugate and oppress the community well over a hundred years ago, it is now making a revival with religion again being used as a reason to justify harm against the community, with ISIS having also referred to Shias as 'infidels' (2017: 6) according to a United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan report, which is reminiscent of the times of Abdur Rahman Khan's reign. Therefore, marginality in relation to one's Shia beliefs, or perceived Shia belief, is also a contemporary issue affecting the region's Hazaras.

Shi'ism also impacts individual identity and the Hazara-specific narratives within this research more broadly, in that Shia theology relates to the notion of martyrdom, which is commonly referenced term in relation to Abdul Ali Mazari. It also brings to the fore how marginality as a narrative refers to the community's specific history in Afghanistan, and currently more widely in the region, while also having religious undertones in its links to Imam Hussain and the battle of Karbala, and universal ideas of justice and oppression. Similarly, the narrative of overcoming as well as being a contemporary Hazara narrative further relates to Shia theology in terms of redemption, and marginality ultimately being overcome. Throughout the research interviews conducted for this study, and the available, existing literature on transnational Hazaras, it can be seen that community members either choose to relate these narratives to Shia theology explicitly or emphasise the unique, Hazara-nature of these narratives, thus presenting these community narratives as secular in their essence, which will be explored further in this chapter. It should be noted that in discussing religion in relation to these master narratives the claim is not that a narrative of overcoming literally stems from Shi'i theology, but to say that both religious and secular perceptions of the narrative resonate and have the ability to give each other meaning, within contexts of marginality. This in turn shows that both understandings of this narrative are now parallel in Hazara contexts, as a result of their extensive interaction.

Having noted the centrality of the 1890s insurrection of Hazarajat within Hazara collective consciousness in previous chapters, this monumental incident within Hazara history is an appropriate starting point when looking to discuss the community's relationship with religion, in particular Shi'ism⁷⁵. As has been highlighted before, the insurrection of Hazarajat resulted in massacres, rape and enslavement of Hazaras, as well as the mass displacement of the Hazara community from central Afghanistan and was justified by the Emir through the new top-down articulation of a Sunni

⁷⁵ It should be noted that some research participants and Hazara acquaintances have stated that they dispute the common claim that Shi'ism is the most prevalent religious ideology followed by the community, and this partly based on the assertion that once Sunni Hazaras, who have in the past been labelled as Tajiks, are accounted for then both the numbers of Shia and Sunni Hazaras even out, or may even show that Sunni Hazaras outnumber Shia Hazaras. However, given the reasons outlined in the first page of this chapter Shi'ism will be the main focus of this chapter, but it is important to note this diverging opinion within the community as to the proportion of Shias and Sunnis within the Hazara community.

majoritarianism, as part of his definition of sovereignty. This historical incident formally set the precedent for Hazaras to be marked as the marginal others, the sovereign exception, as Shia Muslims in a predominately Sunni Muslim state, as well as an being perceived as an unruly, rebellious ethnic minority who needed to be subdued. Although the Shia orientation of certain segments of the community was used to justify the worst atrocity that was carried out against the community, religion has also been central to some of the community's 20th Century political movements. At time same time there were other Hazara political movements which took as their inspiration secular political ideologies, since the 1960s, as a result of liberal policies by the state towards Hazaras, as mentioned in the work of Hazara scholar Hafizullah Emadi (1997: 373). While across the border in Quetta it can be seen that the Hazara Democratic Party (HDP) which was formed in the early 2000s which has sought to fight for the rights of the community is commonly referred to as a secular political party in online articles about the party⁷⁶. Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim further notes different religious and secular Hazara organisations which operated in Afghanistan and Quetta from the late 1970s to the 1990s, including the Shia ordained '*Shuray-e Ittefaq-e Enqelab-e Islami Afghanistan* (Unity Council of the Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan)' which was formed in Bamiyan in 1979 and the secular '*Ittehadiah Islami-e Mujahedin Afghanistan* (Islamic Association of the Mujahedin of Afghanistan)' which was formed in Quetta in 1980 (2012: 13).

Similarly, literature on Hazaras shows how religion is engaged with in different ways by transnational Hazara communities. The seminal study by anthropologist Alessandro Monsutti on Ashura among Hazaras in Quetta, which was mentioned in the introduction chapter, highlights how this commemoration is personalised to reflect how the current circumstances of the Hazaras relate to the life of Imam Hussain. Monsutti states the following in relation to the Muharram sermons in Quetta and the paralleling of Imam Hussain's life to that of the Hazaras:

⁷⁶ See for example:

1) www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/567645-complexity-hazara-killing.

2) www.reuters.com/article/uk-pakistan-blast/bomber-targets-pakistans-hazara-minority-in-run-up-to-elections-idUKBRE93M1AY20130424.

3) www.shiitenews.org/shiitenews/pakistan-news/item/91652-secular-ethnic-parties-unite-to-face-mwm-contestants-in-elections-from-quetta/.

The thirst which tortured the Imam's companions, prevented as they were from drawing water from the Euphrates, was compared to the Taliban blockade of the Hazarajat between summer 1997 and autumn 1998. The profanation of Husayn's body was twinned with the tragic end of 'Abdul 'Ali Mazari, the Hazara leader captured and killed by the Taliban in March 1995; and, more generally, the fate of the victims of Karbala was compared to the massacres inflicted on the Hazaras (for example, the butchery of several hundred civilians in Afshar Mina, a district of Kabul, by troops allied to Massoud in January 1993, or the killings perpetrated by the Taliban in Mazar-e Sharif in August 1998) (2007: 187).

While research conducted by Farzana Marie on 'nonviolent social struggles' among Hazaras in Afghanistan notes that while many sectors of Hazara society hold profound religious beliefs, utilising these beliefs for the purpose of identity was considered to be exclusionary and divisive. A major misconception about the community has been that they are 'monolithically Shi'a', when in fact not all Hazaras are Shia, and not all Shias in Afghanistan are Hazara. One reason as to why religion is not drawn upon in order to mould a 'Hazara identity' by Hazara activists is because of 'internal tensions' within the Shia community. An example stated in Marie's journal paper was the Shia personal status law of 2009, which was approved by former Afghan President Hamid Karzai. To briefly outline, the law allows husbands to deny feeding their wives if they refuse to have sexual intercourse with them, and this law only applied to the Shia population of Afghanistan. However, many Hazaras were outraged by the passing of this law, due to their more 'open-minded' view of women. Thus, Marie states that while '...religiously-based strategies for inspiration or identification may still be relevant in some contexts' her research '...did not show it to be significant for Hazaras in today's Afghanistan' (2013: 89-90). In relation to Marie's statements it is also worth noting a recent statistic which relates to these points. The Afghanistan Survey conducted by the Asia Foundation in 2018 found that in regards to religious leaders' participation in politics, 'Pashtuns are the most likely to support the idea (65.0%), followed by Uzbeks (64.3%), Tajiks (58.1%), and Hazaras (49.8%)' (2018: 143). Therefore, not only are some Hazaras reluctant to conflate their religious beliefs with how they conceptualise their identity, they are also less likely to support religion and politics intertwining more so than the

any other major ethnic group in Afghanistan, which is unsurprising given the community's history in the country. These two examples taken from Monsutti's and Marie's work further reinforce both the narratives of marginality and overcoming. This can be seen by how Hazaras in Quetta remember their community's oppression through specific religious commemorations, while at the same time the Hazaras interviewed in Afghanistan by Marie did not necessarily strongly identify with religion as part of their political identity, which falls in line with an internally constructed image of the community to portray themselves as progressive and liberal to the outside world and to cultivate that ethos within their own community.

To end this section, it is important to consider what Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim has written on Hazara ethnic consciousness, as the issue of religion is touched upon in this working paper. Ibrahim notes that the features which distinguish Hazaras from other ethnic groups are internally contested and is,, '...shaped by particular social and political environments'. An example he shares is the religious identity linked to Hazaras. He states that internally within the Hazara community an emphasis on religion splits the Hazara community into three different sects (Shia, Ismaili and Sunni), and in turn the '...boundary of a shared Hazara identity can both expand and shrink when Shia Islam is activated as an overarching element of identity. It expands because it connects them to the broader Shia world extending to Iran, Iraq and Syria. It shrinks because the Sunni Hazaras will be excluded or recognised to a lesser degree as part of this broader identity' (2012: 2-3). This quote is pertinent to note given that the next sections of this chapter will explore religion in relation to identity, as well as religious and secular Hazara political movements.

This section has sought to explore the Shia orientation of Hazaras. Alongside, how Shi'ism relates to both the historic and current marginalisation of the community in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, and its relationship with the narrative of overcoming. The following sections of this chapter will look at religion in relation to Hazara identity, religious and secular Hazara organisations and political movements during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and secularism in contemporary Hazara life.

5.3 Explicit discourses on religion:

Having discussed the historical place of Shi'ism among the Hazara community and the implications of this minority status in Afghanistan, this section aims to delineate perspectives on Shi'ism among research participants. In turn this section will explore to what extent religion is seen as incidental, integral or neutral to Hazara identity. In this section neutral is used in reference to the fact that some research participants view religion as part of a larger identity, which is neither positively affirmed or negatively perceived.

For most research participants religious and ethnic identities were viewed as distinct, and Hazara identity was not hybridised as an ethno-religious identity as Hazara Shia or Shia Hazara. This is explicitly highlighted by the following quote from Joma Ahmadi, who noted that, 'I believe when we compare, religious identity is very important to me but still it doesn't mean that I neglect or pay little importance to my ethnic identity, because usually you can change your religious identity but you can't change your ethnic identity. You will remain Hazara for thousands of years, and you have been Hazara for thousands of years'. Some Hazara research participants mentioned how an ethno-religious identity was problematic for them as it was exclusionary to equate 'being Shia' with 'being Hazara' given that there are also Ismaili and Sunni Hazaras, with some research participants stating that some Hazaras have converted to other faiths or are atheists, and are excluded from such an understanding of Hazara identity. In relation to this point Esmat Amean stated that, 'We are Shia but that doesn't mean that [Sunnis] are not a part of us. We have got lots of Sunni Hazara, [who are] more 'Hazara' than us, even though they changed their religion. But they have got a strong Hazaragi feeling, but they [were] still [persecuted] for being Hazara, even though they were Sunni'. Similarly, research participant Asadullah Shafai noted a difference in perspectives on religion which diverges based on education and age:

Well the thing is that it seems that the majority of Hazaras are Twelver Imami Hazaras, so for most of the people there is a kind of a mixed identity of being Hazara and Shia. So most of those people especially the Sunni Hazaras were not very known to the Imami Shias, although they knew that there are some Ismaili Hazaras. Well in a way they regard them as Shia although different

sect of Shia, but because of that fact most of the Shia Hazara, I mean Twelver Imami Jafari Shias, they describe themselves as a kind of mix of being a specific kind of ethnic group belonging to a specific sect of Islam. But recently, for the educated people they would like to describe themselves as Hazara's rather than belonging to a specific sect of Islam. So first of all, I mean, the matter of religion is not as important for the new generation as the old generation. And secondly they want to describe, to say, that they belong to a bigger community of Hazaras in which there are some Sunnis as well.

Attahullah Nawrozy spoke of a more personal experience upon learning that not all Hazaras are Shias:

So if I say that I'm Hazara people say that you are Shia. But that is not true. We've got Sunni Hazaras. The worst thing was like I myself, I was labelling all the Hazaras as Shias...until I came across three gentlemen here in Nottingham, and they were Hazara and I was king of relating to them, I am Hazara and we are from the same religious background, and we are from the same community. And then they told me that no we're Sunnis. And then I asked them that Hazaras do we have Sunnis? And they said yes Hazaras have lots of Sunnis. One is from Baghlan province, Pule-e Khumri, and there are like thousands, tens-of-thousands of Sunnis there who are Hazara. And then I spoke to an elder person, back in Afghanistan, and said you guys didn't tell me that Hazaras are not only Shia people, Hazaras have got Sunnis as well. And he told me, well this is not good, but he is a Hazara elder, he told me, if you are Hazara you have to be Shia, because if you are Sunni then you are not Hazara. So this is how Hazara people see themselves. They kind of connect 'Hazaraism' ('Hazaraness') to Shi'ism. So that's how we were brought up and we didn't know that they are Sunnis who are Hazaras.

While Elaha Soroor noted how religious distinctions have separated some members of the community from one another:

I realised Ismaili Hazaras, and like other Twelver Hazaras they are not very connected to each other, but they still consider themselves Hazaras, and only connect in this way, but they do not get married together and they would not have family connections, if they are very religious. If they are liberal then they would (interact) but mainly they would look at each other negatively.

Other research participants noted how religion is something people actively chose while one's heritage and ethnicity is something that people do not have control over. For instance, Abuzar Attifi, a business studies teacher and professional photographer based in London, noted that:

I mean Hazaras can be Sunnis, Hazaras could be Christian, and Hazaras could be Hindus if they want to. Religion is a personal choice, I can change right now to be Buddhist, and it is my choice. I'm not harming anyone. But Hazara is what I am, I cannot change Hazara.

While Hojjat Yaqubi, a recent University of Manchester graduate in history, mentioned that:

Religion is a personal thing. No one can tell you to do this or that. Religion is a relationship between you and God and no one can tell you what to do. Obviously, Shi'ism, you can choose whatever belief you want to follow, but being Hazara you can never change that.

Some research participants were also critical of the espousal of an ethno-religious identity as it was seen as negating the community's pre-Islamic heritage. In this regard, Ezzatullah Zamani, an LPC and master's student based in London, stated that, 'Ultimately, I think to conflate religion with being Hazara deprives us of our very long and rich [pre-Islamic] history'. While, Hasan Raza, a business data analyst in his 30s and based in Birmingham, noted that:

Hazaras were not Muslims to start with. They became Muslims. Some of them later converted to Christianity. Religion is purely your personal affair

between you and your creator...Hazaragi identity is something that your genes determine.

Additionally, one research participant who grew up in Quetta and is now based in London, mentioned that:

Hazaras existed in the pre-Islamic era...and the giant statues of the Buddhas were built in the Bamiyan region which meant they were Buddhist before. And then they converted to Islam, to Shia Islam, and then there were Hazaras who were converted to Sunni Islam during Abdur Rahman's rule.

In relation to this group of research participants it is also worth noting the issue of religious practice and related problems, which were mentioned in multiple research interviews. Numerous interviewees who perceive their religious and ethnic identities as distinct noted how in their view a hyphenated ethno-religious identity among Hazaras has caused a rift among some Hazara communities, in terms of religious practices and rituals, with a specific focus on Muharram. One Hazara community leader noted the outcry that followed when in the previous year a Hazara community association in the Midlands looked to alter the way Muharram proceedings were conducted at the local Hazara *Hussainiya*, in which a Hazara religious studies graduate delivered sermons about Imam Hussain and the battle of Karbala, as well as taking time to address the youth of the congregation about the need for them to work to contribute to their local communities in Britain positively, all in the Hazaragi dialect of Persian. Whilst younger Hazaras lauded this new approach to the annual sermons, some older community members were outraged that the traditional format of the sermons was not preserved and that the yearly invitation of an Iranian scholar to the vicinity had been scrapped, even though for the aged members of the congregation the formal, standard Persian spoken by the Iranian scholar was difficult to understand. These internal community issues in terms of religious practice have become issues of fragmentation among the community, with many research participants stating that after many years their local communities still do not have community spaces, due to arguments as to whether such spaces should solely be used for religious purposes, or if they should be used for cultural gatherings as well. Therefore, not only is religion in

relation to identity contentious, methods of performance of religious rituals are also divisive among the community.

For respondents who hold strong religious beliefs which intertwine with their ethnic identity, two main reasons were given as to why this ethno-religious identity has emerged. Firstly, the history of the community in relation to the insurrection of Hazarajat which was orchestrated on religious grounds plays a major factor in the espousal of an ethno-religious identity. For some of these research participants they could not openly assert their religious identity for fear of reprisals in Afghanistan, but living in Britain gave them an opportunity to proclaim an ethno-religious identity without fear of persecution. It is seen as a means of reclaiming something that was denied for over a century, and has become the impetus for many of these research participants to consciously assert themselves as Shia Hazaras, hence why multiple research participants stated that they actively affirm their religious identity as Shia Muslims, and as Hazaras. This was something highlighted by Asef Ali Mohammed, a photographer and film-maker in his early 30s based between Quetta and London, who stated that:

Being a double minority, Shia and Hazara, it's something that the Hazaras have suffered for decades. Some people call themselves Hazara-Shia, for them it's so important and some call themselves Shia-Hazara, and it's like which one comes first? But when you see things, sensitivities like that, you think it is really important.

Similarly, Mohsen Abbasi, a financial analyst in his 20s, based in London, noted that, 'Being Shia is a big part of Hazaras' identity, and one of the main reasons is because they have been differentiated for others. So it does play a big role for us'. This response highlighted how the community's history also relates to articulations of a religious identity, given that the community's marginality was predicated on their religious beliefs as Shia Muslims. While other research participants mentioned how to 'be Shia' is intrinsic to what it means to be Hazara, as multiple research participants noted that being Hazara and Shia are inter-linked, and formed part of a hybridised

ethno-religious identity. For instance, Haji Asad a shopkeeper in his 50s, based in London, stated that:

Hazara means Shia, Shia means Hazara. So being Shia in Afghanistan means that you're Hazara, or being Hazara people automatically know that you're Shia. So according to him they're not separated, so if you're Hazara, you're Shia, and if you're Shia, you're Hazara. That is how in Afghanistan they would see it (other Afghans). I think that if people know you by being Hazara then they know you by being Shia.

While, a soon to be retired school teacher, based in London, who grew up in Pakistan, noted that:

Well the thing is, to be honest with you, religion is very personal. Everyone has their own views, their own ways of looking at religion. But when somebody says that I am Hazara I automatically think they're Shia.

This Shia essence of Hazara identity was not just limited to more mature research participants, as some diaspora Hazaras also articulated similar sentiments, with one research participant, based in Birmingham and in his mid-20s mentioning that:

I think if you know of a person that's Hazara, straightaway you know that they're Shia, ok. Like I told you I have not come across anybody, unless they've changed their faith...during the course of their own time, that's totally up to them, but I've never met a Hazara that was born and told from the start that hold on you've got to be a Christian or whatever religion. If you know someone Hazara you know straightaway that they're Shia. You know they've been brought up in a house where Islam and Shi'ism was the pillar of that house.

While for other research participants who discussed a hybridised identity it was more so as a matter of fact that the community is ethnically Hazara and religiously Shia. In turn to be a Hazara Shia or Shia Hazara is just a lived reality of the community, where

religion is a neutral fact of a bigger identity. This was a trend that was seen to manifest among research participants of both genders and of various age groups. Furthermore, some research participants noted that it is not only within the Hazara community that a hybridised ethno-religious identity is asserted, but how an assumption still persists among non-Hazara Afghans that all Hazaras are Shia, with Shokryah Mohammadi stating that, 'I think the fact that everybody thinks Hazaras are Shias could be wrong, because maybe we have Hazaras who are Sunni'. While Zahra Zahidi, an optometry student at Aston University in Birmingham, mentioned that, 'If I say to someone I'm Hazara I think that they would know that I'm a Shia, because from the big Hazara band about 90% of Hazaras are Shia and even when you go to Afghanistan they automatically think that you're a Shia'.

Within some of the research interviews the overtly Shia commemorations of Muharram and Ashura were discussed and the importance of these commemorations in connecting to one's Shia beliefs. In engaging with the ritual practices associated with Muharram and Ashura, it is claimed that what was denied for over a century, the ability to openly engage in Shia rituals, is reclaimed and has become the impetus for many of these research participants to consciously assert themselves as Shia Hazaras through ritual practices. In relation to the importance of ritual practice among the community Mohammed Azizi, a pharmaceutical research chemist from London in his early 40s, noted that:

Muharram yes. It's very significant for the community. And it's not only for the Hazaras, all Shias. And one other thing that is quite significant, we see lots of resemblance between what Mazari did and what we're seeing in Kabul, and although we don't see it as equal (to Imam Hussain's death), because that was more on a bigger stage, but this was big in its own terms.

While research participant Rayhana Neyazi, who is a university student in her early 20s, based in London, stated that:

[During] Muharram there are these gatherings and we have to attend every night for the prayers and it's called *Majalis*. So they go there and on the 10th

of Muharram there's a big march and Hazaras are a big contributor to that. And what they do is, again they remember Imam Hussain.

Additionally, literature on transnational Hazara communities highlights how Ashura is particularly significant for the Hazara community as the trials and tribulations of Imam Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, were seen as paralleling the current situation of the Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, with Denise Phillips, a PhD candidate at the University of New England writing, in a journal paper on Hazara Refugees from Afghanistan, that:

Alessandro Monsutti notes that the exiled Hazara community in Quetta meld grief for their own ethnic suffering with Ashura commemorations. I have observed a similar phenomenon among local Hazaras during *Ashura* ceremonies conducted in community halls in Brisbane (2011: 183).

Here the link to Imam Hussain in paralleling the situation of Hazaras at present to the situation of early Shia leaders is mentioned in work by Monsutti and Adlparvar, but appears to manifest among younger Hazaras too, as exemplified by the following quote from Shakiba Alizada, an accounting and finance student at Birmingham City University:

...I think Shi'ism with the Hazaras, well the majority of Hazaras are Shia so I think that's why we place them together. So I think with what Shias say about Imam Hussain and what he went through, I think that's quite similar to what the Hazaras have also been through as well.

This link to a religiously significant incident in the past to the contemporary circumstances of the Hazara community was mentioned by multiple research participants. These interviewees noted that as a Shia minority they connect to the narratives circulated around Imam Hussain's death in a personal capacity, as it directly relates to the current circumstances of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. This in turn further emphasises the observations noted in both the works of Monsutti and Phillips.

This section has shown how for some members of the Hazara community the espousal of an ethno-religious identity was seen not accounting for the fact that religion is a choice and one's ethnic background is not, while also being an exclusionary identity category for not representing non-Shia Hazaras, which also omits the community's pre-Islamic. For some research participants religion is of significant importance in their daily lives. Among some of these research participants this extends to how they conceptualise their identity, as an ethno-religious identity, as Hazara Shia or Shia Hazara. The strong attachment to Shi'ism for some of these research participants stems from their history and heritage as Shias. While for others it specifically relates to the subjugation of the community on religion grounds. However, for other research participants to be Shia Hazara or Hazara Shia is just a factual reality of the community, which is neither perceived positively or negative, but solely as a neutral fact.

Having discussed perspectives of religion among Hazara research participants and its relationship with identity the next section shifts from explicit discourses on religion to resonances with, and legacies of, religious narratives in secularised forms and vice versa. Therefore, a genealogy of Hazara political theology before and during the Soviet war will be the next section of this chapter. The following section will in turn bring to the fore the work of political theorist Carl Schmitt, which at its core states that modern secular states' liberal ideas develop from religious theological sources.

5.4 A genealogy of Hazara political theology before and during Soviet war:

This next section of the chapter is a genealogy of Hazara theological politics from the Soviet war, given that Hazara political movements at the time were both secular and religious in their ideologies. Some of these movements were influenced by Maoist political ideology such as the Hazara-led *Sazman-e Javanan-e Mutarraqi* (Progressive Youth Organization) co-founded by Hazara political activist Akram Yari in 1965, while others drew inspiration from the Iranian resistance and revolution of the late 1970s and Shia theology, such as the *Harakat-e Islami-yi Afghanistan* (Islamic Movement of Afghanistan). To begin this section an overview of Hazara organisations and political movements during the war will be presented. This will be followed by an exploration of the political theology of these numerous groups. The section will then end with an outline of the political theology of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and Iranian sociologist

Dr Ali Shariati, as the work of the latter theorist underscores the importance of social justice in relation to Shia theology, while the Khomeinist ideology itself was linked to several Hazara political movements in the late 1970s and 1980s, during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Here it is important to detail the Hazara war-era organisations present in Afghanistan prior to and during the Soviet occupation. Political scientist, Professor Olivier Roy in his book titled 'Islam and resistance in Afghanistan' details the different social movements among the Hazaras in the mid to late 20th Century. He mentions the emergence of the educated youth in the mid-1960s who were, 'Strongly politicised, progressive and Hazara nationalists, they turned to Maoism (Keshtmand, the present prime minister, is one of the few to be pro-Soviet) or became followers of Khumayni' (1990: 140). During the Soviet occupation Hazara groups came together to become part of the resistance during the war, but internal divisions began to appear among Hazara groups in the early 1980s which separated into three groups, which comprised of:

...the secularists, which included the *mir* and the left (the alliance of Maoists...)...Another extreme group comprised the radical Islamists and included *shaykhs* who supported the Iranian revolution...and who accused... the *sayyads* of corruption and nepotism (a charge which was not far from the truth). There was also a traditionalist and clerical centre dominated by the *Sayyad* (ibid: 141).

Within these movement, as noted above, there were secular political movements among the Hazara community during the Soviet invasion, mainly supported by the educated youth. The early 1960s saw the formation of the ideological Maoist *Shula-i Jawid* (Eternal Flame), which according to Harpviken had '...had a larger membership than Khalq and Parcham combined around 1970' (1996: 35) and mainly comprised of Hazaras (ibid). Another Maoist Hazara group that formed in the 1960s in Afghanistan was the *Sazman-e Javanan-e Mutarraqi* (Progressive Youth Organization, henceforth the PYO), which as noted earlier, was co-founded by Hazara political activist Akram Yari in 1965. However, in discussing the PYO it should be noted that Niamatullah Ibrahimi mentions that, 'The Maoists, that is SaJaM/PYO, became better known in

Afghanistan as the Shola'i, after *Shola-ye Jawed* (Eternal Flame), its first newspaper publication in 1968', stating that the PYO evolved into the Shola with time⁷⁷ (2012: 1-2). Prior to the establishment of the PYO Yari was involved with another organisation known as the *Sazmani Demokratiki Navin-e-Afghanistan* (Neo-Democratic Organization), with Hafizullah Emadi noting that:

Leading Hazara intellectuals who advocated revolutionary armed struggle and supported the people's revolution included Akram Yari and Sadiq Yari. Akram was one of the founding members of the pro-Beijing organization of Sazmani Demokratiki Navin-e- Afghanistan...After the establishment of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul in April 1978, Yari and his associates were arrested and executed (1997: 374).

While more generally in relation to Hazaras who aligned with secular movements at the time Harpviken states that:

The radical seculars were dominant among the educated youth, emerging as an influential grouping within the Hazara community from the [mid-1960s]. Those who had obtained education came mainly from relatively wealthy families, often the sons of the *mir* (1996: 30).

Ibrahimi also makes reference to the fact that PYO supporters were mostly educated Hazaras, who did not support the PDPA (2017: 129). Ibrahimi also refers to secular orientated political mobilisation happening across the border at the time in Quetta within his work, stating that an organisation which was known as the *Tanzim-e Nasle Naw-e Hazara Moghul* (Organisation of the New Generation of the Moghul Hazaras), espoused a 'secular ethnic identity' as Hazaras (ibid: 130), and in turn was more ethno-nationalistic in its ideology than some other Hazara organisations active in the region at the time.

⁷⁷ For the full report by Ibrahimi see: www.afghanistan-analysts.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/09/Nibr-Maoists-final.pdf.

Of the many secular and religious political organisations and movements that have already been discussed, and remain to be discussed in this section, many dissolved over time or had notable members defect to other organisations when ideological differences began to manifest within the higher echelons of these groups. However, towards the end of the 1980s when fragmentation had long been common place among these organisations, a new political movement emerged on Afghanistan's political scene in 1989, the same year the Soviet occupation of the country came to an end. The *Hezb-e Wahdat* was a coalition of several Hazara political movements in Afghanistan, with Canfield noting that:

In July 1989, the disparate Hazara organizations that had been fighting each other endorsed a new alliance in Bamian, calling it Hizb-i Wahdat ("Party of Unity"). Many Hazara fronts joined...Mazari's policy was on the one hand to avoid the coercive influence of Iran and on the other hand to persuade Hazaras of all stripes, including most of the Islamists, that in the long run they had a common interest as an ethno-national entity (2004: 255-256).

Although the party did not restrict itself to Hazara members only, most of the movement's supporters were ethnic Hazaras. The group was led by Abdul Ali Mazari, a cleric turned political leader. Additionally, in a book titled 'Modern Afghanistan: the impact of 40 years of war' edited by Professor Nazif Shahrani, Dr Melissa Kerr Chiovenda notes that Mazari '...decided to open the party to Islamist and secular Hazaras, with a focus on ethnic affiliation rather than religious sectarian affiliation'⁷⁸ (2018: 257). While in a book on 'Militancy and political violence in Shiism' edited by Assaf Moghadam, Brian Glyn Williams states that:

...Mazari was famous for stating. "Our only wish for our people is that being a Hazara should no longer be a crime" and "No society can survive without equality, tolerance, social justice, and brotherhood." This lack of religious or millenarian messages on the Mazari posters, billboards, and calendars is

⁷⁸ It should be noted that multiple research participants have stated that *Wahdat* did not restrict itself to Hazara members only, has always been open to all Afghans, and seeks to promote equality and justice for all people of Afghanistan.

testimony to the strong secular-nationalist character of the Hazaras. In this respect, Mazari is more of an *ethno-nationalist* icon...(2012: 190).

In turn *Wahdat* accommodated members of various political and religious ideologies but framed its aims within a liberal discourse relating to equality, rights and justice for all. These demands, multiple research participants have noted, are not just demands for Hazaras but for all citizens of Afghanistan.

Having discussed secular Hazara movements that emerged before and during the Soviet war, it is also important to explore religious Hazara movements present at the time as they also had strong support among certain segments of Hazara society. Olivier Roy notes that from 1950 to the mid-1980s the Shia clergy 'enjoyed a revival' among the Hazara community 'because of the influence of Iran' (1990: 140), and in his work he also refers to the pro-Iranian *Nasr* Hazara political movement which was '...set up in Iran after the communist coup' (ibid: 143) and was also funded by Iran. The early 1980s also saw the formation of the Afghan *Pasdaran* movement whose leadership were 'educated in Iran' (ibid: 144). At the same time another major religious Shia movement with a Hazara following was the *Harakat-e Islami Afghanistan*, which, as mentioned earlier, was formed in Qom in the late 1970s and led by Ayotollah Muhammad Asif Mohseni. *Harakat* took as its inspiration the Iranian resistance against the rule of the Shah in the late 1970s. In relation to *Harakat* Roy states that it:

...ha[d] been inspired by Islamist ideas; they are few in numbers, but militarily very effective, and they play a pivotal role in the resistance movement. Founded by Shaykh Assef Muhseni Kandahari, who himself speaks Pashtu as his first language, the movement did not originate with the Hazara and has recruited its members from amongst the educated and politicised Shi'a, whatever their ethnic group may be. The movement is strongest in the border areas of Hazarajat... (ibid: 146).

While Hazara scholar Hafizullah Emadi notes that several well-known Hazara-led or Hazara-supported organisations and movements operating at the time in Afghanistan, namely the *Harakat-e Islami-yi Afghanistan* (Islamic Movement of Afghanistan) as

noted earlier, *Sepah-e-Pasdaran* (Revolutionary Guard Corps), and *Sazman-e-Nasr* (Victory Organization) were all formed in the holy city of Qom in Iran, in the late 1970s and early 1980s (1997: 378). However, Dr Kristian Berg Harpviken states that, 'With the exception of Pasdaran, the Hazara groups were not fully dependent on Iran' (1996: 83). While Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim notes that support for Khomeini among some Hazara political activists stemmed from the fact that educated Hazaras returning from Iran to Afghanistan has been exposed to Khomeinist ideas while in the country:

A growing number of Shiite religious students had been returning to Afghanistan since the 1960s after attending religious training centres in Iraq and Iran. Many of them were returning with a higher level of religious education and new ideas regarding matters of religious interpretation. They built new mosques and *madrasas* in cities as well as in rural areas, which further expanded their network and amplified their ideological propaganda (2009: 2-3).

While, at the same time, the traditional ruling class in Hazarajat consisting of *khans* did not appear to have a long-term political agenda to work towards, which further weakened their impact on the society in the region (ibid: 3). Similarly, schisms between the Maoists and nationalists in Hazarajat also limited their influence (ibid). An appealing aspect of Khomeini's worldview, one that moreover resonated with revolutionary communist sensibilities and perhaps helped fold that trend into a religious politics was the '...division of the world's peoples and governments into two distinct camps: the oppressor and arrogant powers; and the oppressed and downtrodden nations...the *Mostakberin* and the *Mostazafin*' (Hunter 1988: 734). This not only relates to how Hazaras, and Afghans more generally, would have perceived themselves in relation to the Soviet occupiers during the 1980s, but is still salient in present times in Hazara discourses in how the community perceives itself in relation to the Afghan government and regional insurgent groups. Here Hazaras both past and present are the *mostazafin* who have been oppressed for decades by the *mostakberin*, representing the government and extremists. This in turn again underscores the contemporary nature of the narrative of marginality.

Having noted the importance of the Iranian revolutionary movement for the *Harakat*, Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim notes that pro-Khomeinist political leaders were also to be found among the Hazara activists of the 1980s. Ibrahim mentions that an ideological schism emerged at the time between Hazara ‘traditionalists’ and ‘Khomeinists’, while also noting how the ‘revolutionary enthusiasm’ of some of these groups was, ‘...inspired by the fresh memory of the revolution in Iran [which] compounded [the] problem’ (2009: 2) as to the what these groups could achieve regarding their influence and power in central Afghanistan. Another Shia group which was also active and present in Hazarajat at this time, the *Shura-yi Inqilab-i Ittefaq-i Islami-yi Afghanistan* (Council of the Islamic Revolutionary Alliance) was made up of both Hazara and non-Hazara Shias. Furthermore, Professor Robert Canfield notes that, ‘Well-to-do non-religious elements initially dominated the council, but within a short time, the leadership of *Shora-ye Elnqelab* was taken over by the sayyid contingent’ (2004: 247). Canfield also lists several other local organisations active at the time with Hazara membership:

- *Nahzat-i Islami-yi Afghanistan* (Islamic Movement of Afghanistan) was founded in 1358 (1979-80). The leaders were from Jaghori; the most notable one was Iftikhari, also (their representative in Peshawar) Rahimi.
- *Niyru-i Islam-i Afghanistan* (Islamic Force of Afghanistan). Prominent leaders were Sayyed Zaher-i Muhaqqiq and his son Sayyed Husayn Muhaqqiq (from Bihsud), and Hashimi (from Sang Charak in Jawzjan).
- *Da'wat-i Ittihad-i Islami-yi Afghanistan* (Invitation to the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan). Its only strength was in Angora, Ghazni province (in 1989).
- *Hizb-i Islam-yi Ra'd-i Afghanistan* (Party of Islamic Thunder of Afghanistan). The leader was Qari Ahmad, also known as Qari Yakdista.
- *Jabha-ha-yi Muttahid-i Inqilab-i Islami Afghanistan* (United Islamic Revolutionary Front of Afghanistan). This organization was formed in 1988 from four very small organizations, all of which were organized in 1978 or 1979: *Ruhaniyat va Jawanan-i Afghanistan* (The Religious Divines and the Youth of Afghanistan); *Islam Maktab-i Tawhid* (Islam, School of Unity); *Ittihad-i Ulama* (Union of Islamic scholars); *Junbish-i Mustaz'afin-i Islami-yi*

Afghanistan (Association of the Islamic Oppressed of Afghanistan);
Fidaiyan-i Islam (Zealots for Islam).

- *Ittihad-i Mujahidin-i Islami-yi Afghanistan* (Union of Islamic Warriors of Afghanistan) led by Abdul Husayn Maqsudi (ibid: 252).

Having discussed pro-Khomeini and religious Shia orientated Hazara organisations it is also important to delve into the political theology of Khomeini and Shariati. This is because several Hazara groups present during the Soviet war took inspiration from the Iranian resistance of the late 1970s, or aligned themselves with Khomeinist ideology. In relation to the political ideology of Ayatollah Khomeini, Ibrahim states that:

By establishing the Islamic Republic of Iran under his leadership as supreme leader, Ayatollah Khomeini provided a role model for the religiously-motivated Shiite clerics around the world. He transformed Shiite Islam into a mass political ideology and spoke in the name of the downtrodden against the corrupt upper classes and traditionalist religious elites that, by their silence and inaction, were endorsing the ills in Islamic society originally spread by the colonial powers. He articulated a wide range of socio-political agendas that entailed reforms in all spheres of society with the ultimate aim of establishing a puritan Islamic society based on the example set by the Prophet Muhammad in the sixth century (2009: 4).

This quote shows why a religiously-motivated political ideology may have been relevant to some Hazara activists during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. In emphasising the dispossessed, members of the Hazara community could directly relate to the words of the Ayatollah given that the upper classes at the time had aligned themselves with a communist regime, which was antithetical to Islam and the views, beliefs and way of life of certain segments of Hazara society. In turn the appeal of an ideology which sought to speak to and uplift the oppressed finding support across the border in Afghanistan is unsurprising, given the turbulent political reality the country was experiencing in the midst of a war, which was framed as both the occupied resisting occupation, while additionally, the righteous believers defying the non-believing oppressors, as Professor Shahrough Akhavi notes that, '...Khomeini's rhetoric

is replete with allusions to the 'oppressed' (*mustaz'af*) (1988: 425). Here it is also important to note the work of the 20th Century political theorist Carl Schmitt, with a journal article on his work stating that to '...maintain political unity within a space it is necessary to have an idea of good. The more it is shared, the greater the unity of form and politics...' (Cerella 2012: 980), this can be seen to resonate with the Iranian revolution itself and its influence on Hazara activists in Afghanistan, while also relating more broadly to Afghan resistance to the Soviet occupation.

Consequently, although the views espoused by Khomeini during the Iranian resistance, and when he became Ayatollah, reverberated and transcended national boundaries and struggles, in how they influenced a segment of the Hazara and non-Hazara Shia Afghan resistance, they also link to the narrative of marginality that the community propagates in present times. This is because even if explicit references to the Ayatollah or religion are not made when referring to this narrative, this narrative still centres around the subjugation of a marginal group by an oppressive state, and successive governments, which is reminiscent of Khomeini's views on social justice. In turn the narrative of marginality although espoused as a wholly secular narrative by some members of the Hazara community can also be seen to have Shi'i religious undertones. Here it is also worth noting Schmitt again as he stated that, 'All significant concepts of the modern theory of state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development—in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example, the omnipotent God became the omnipotent lawgiver' (1985: 36). Therefore, from the perspective of religiously inclined Hazaras it can be claimed that the modernising project itself and the master narratives have secular liberal undertones now, but are still paralleled with a prior religiously-orientated redemption discourse and Maoist liberation discourse, even if one or both of these heritages are commonly renounced now.

Following on from discussing Khomeini's views in relation to the *mostakberin* and the *mostazafin* it is also pertinent to note the work of Iranian sociologist Dr Ali Shariati who has written extensively on Shia Islam. Professor Abbas Amanat in his book titled 'Iran: A Modern History' discusses Shariati's view on the role and function of Shi'ism, stating that:

Shari'ati sought a [message] of liberation in the Qur'anic narrative and in the Shi'i past. He was not interested in the empirical, factual history of Islam, which he dismissed as irrelevant and misleading, produced by oppressive powers and Westerners. Rather, he sought in the early Shi'i sacred past archetypes for his vision of revolt against political and religious oppressions....In this sacred past, the age of the early believers, Shari'ati imagined a dynamic course when the pure, egalitarian, and self-sacrificing Imams and their companions actively resisted their corrupt oppressors. This he called the age of 'Alid Red Shi'ism (2017: 853-854).

While Professor Ervand Abrahamian discusses the importance of social justice within Shariati's conceptualisation of Shi'ism, noting that:

For Shi'ism, in Shari'ati's own words, was not an opiate like many other religions, but was a revolutionary ideology that permeated all spheres of life, including politics, and inspired true believers to fight all forms of exploitation, oppression, and social injustice (1982: 26).

Shariati himself discusses two distinct strands of Shi'ism in his essay, 'On red Shi'ism and black Shi'ism'. In his work 'red Shi'ism' is akin to liberation theology and 'black Shi'ism' is a non-revolutionary form of Shi'ism propagated by the ruling classes, which does not take as its focus social justice and the emancipation of the oppressed. Shariati states that:

[Shi'ism] keeps alive the hope of 'redemption after martyrdom'. It promotes the idea of revenge and revolt, faith in the ultimate downfall of tyrants and the decrees of destiny against the ruling powers who dispense justice by the sword. It prepares all the oppressed and justice-seeking masses who are waiting to participate in the rebellion⁷⁹.

⁷⁹ For the full essay see: www.iranchamber.com/personalities/ashariati/works/red_black_shiism.php.

Shariati's work also relates to the prior discussion of Khomeini's position regarding the oppressed and the oppressor. As Shariati is seen as the '...the main ideologue of the Iranian Revolution' (Abrahamian 1982: 24) his work relating to the true 'essence' of Shia Islam in terms of social justice would also have impacted notions of Shi'ism and social justice across the border in Afghanistan, both explicitly and implicitly. This is because the Iranian revolution made a mark on many political activists in the country, even if the desired outcome of various Hazara political actors in Afghanistan differed from the outcome of the revolution in Iran. Moreover, what Shariati notes here as an essence of Shi'ism is important to note in the context of this research and in relation to the narratives central to this research, that of marginality and overcoming, more generally, as it can be seen that these narratives encompass these elements of Shi'ism relating to oppression and redemption that Shariati discusses in his work. Furthermore, throughout the course of this research reference has regularly be made to historic injustices which have taken place against the Hazara community, but how in spite of the subjugation and marginalisation of the community, Hazaras have made great strides in recent years and strive for peace and prosperity, for themselves, their community, Afghans and the country. Therefore, although the Shia undercurrents of these narratives may not be a parallel that all Hazaras of a Shia background may actively choose to make, it is nonetheless interesting to see the similarities between these contemporary Hazara narratives and historic religious narratives.

With these newer Hazara narratives it is important to note the language being used. Throughout the course of the research interviews and informal conversations undertaken for this research with Hazara community members, in discussing the community's 'redemption', to reference to Shia theology, overcoming was always discussed in terms of community achievements, fundamental rights and peace, again relating back to the community's liberal ideals. This narrative was never framed around discourses on rebellion, uprising or insurgence. The language used by research participants always underscored the need for the community to refrain from engaging in acts of violence which could again harm the community and further destabilise Afghanistan. Instead through engaging in peaceful means of community activism and community development, tangible progress has been made for and among the community, with one example of a well-publicised community achievement being the

success of Hazaras in the *kankor*, the annual university entrance exams. Therefore, although the contemporary Hazaras narratives can be seen to overlap with traditional Shia narratives, they do have a unique and distinct nature which does, at times, set them apart from religiously-orientated narratives, but also relate back to Schmitt's early stated work on political theology in relation to modernity, secularism and religion (Ifergan 2010: 157-158).

This section of the chapter has explored the secular and religious dimensions of Hazara organisations and political movements from the 1960s to the 1980s and 1990s in Afghanistan. This section started with an analysis of the secular Hazara movements present in Afghanistan both prior to, and during the Soviet occupation of the country, with reference to the pivotal *Wahdat* party, whose core aims and message still resonate with the Hazara community, two and a half decades since the passing of Abdul Ali Mazari. This section then detailed the religious Hazara movements active in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation of the country, and their pro-Khomeinist or traditionalist leanings. This section ended with a political theology of both Ayatollah Khomeini and Dr Ali Shariati in order to contextualise the ideology underpinning the pro-Khomeini and Shia orientated Hazara organisations and political movements in the country at the time. While at the same time highlighting how Khomeini's and Shariati's perspectives on social justice and oppression also relate to the contemporary secular narratives of marginality and overcoming within this research.

5.5 Genealogies of secularism in contemporary Hazara life:

Having discussed how religion is perceived among Hazara research participants as either integral, incidental or negligible in relation to their identity, as well as secular and religious Hazara organisations and political movements during the late 1970s to the 1990s in Afghanistan, this section will discuss several recent examples of community activism relating to contemporary secular, liberal ideals that members of the community are choosing to advocate both in online spaces and public spaces.

To begin with it is important to discuss a petition that was circulated online in November 2018. The petition was created through the website www.change.org. The petition was directed to the Washington Post, and print and online media more

generally, and asked that Hazaras be referred to by their ethnicity as Hazaras, and not as Shias, as, 'Not all Hazaras in Afghanistan are Shiite and not all Shiites [in Afghanistan] are Hazaras'⁸⁰. This is something that has become more salient in recent years when articles about attacks on Hazaras refer to the victims as Shias or Shia Hazaras. In some casual interactions with Hazara community members, and through comments shared on social media it is clear that for some Hazaras for international media to constantly mention that the targeted attacks in Afghanistan are against Shias and not specifically Hazaras is seen as problematic. The reason being that for these respondents they believe that attacks on the community are more to do with ethnicity than religion, as the perpetrators wish to attack Hazaras because they are Hazara, so in stating that victims are Shia due regard is not given to who the victims actually are and why they have been targeted. Although these are just an amalgam of anecdotes, they are still important to note because in relation to this specific example of the online petition it can be seen that some members of the Hazara community are taking active steps to move away from being identified within an ethno-religious lens, with one comment on the petition stating, 'Basic education for the reporters to know me, as a secular Hazara...'⁸¹.

It should also be noted that this perspective is not new, given that both Ibrahim and Canfield have noted how the Hazara intelligentsia of the 1980s supported secular ideals, and as *Wahdat* itself also promoted an ethnic Hazara identity within its discourse on equality, rights and justice. Even though the content of this petition is nothing new among the community, given that a separation of religion from an ethnic identity has been supported by certain segments of Hazara society for some time, this particular petition is still noteworthy in that the constant framing of Hazaras through an ethno-religious lens was being challenged online, and the issue at hand was being directed at a well-known Western news outlet. Furthermore, in recent years liberalism has become a strong undercurrent of Hazara identity, which can be seen through the content posted on Hazara social media, as well as through conversations with members of the community. The following quote from research participant Attahullah Nawrozy illustrates this point acutely:

⁸⁰ The petition can be accessed via the following link: www.change.org/p/washington-post-i-want-to-be-called-hazara-not-shia.

⁸¹ *ibid.*

So now if you go back to Afghanistan you see all the sportsmen who bring the gold medals are Hazaras, we have got a system called *kankor* system which means that there are like 15 – 20 public universities, and you can't go there unless you have the top marks, it's an examination that takes place every year. And you know the top person, the person who takes the top score every year is Hazara. And we have got people, like last year like 67 Hazaras were member of the Parliament. And we especially the women's rights in Afghanistan, human rights commission is run by a Hazara, Dr Sima Samar. And apart from that, everywhere you see the Hazara people in every sector of government, in the private sector you see Hazaras thriving at the minute. If you are a Hazara right now [Afghan] people say that these people are modern, educated, have a worldly perspective, and they respect you for that. And this is how we overcame (our past).

Having discussed personal perceptions and experience of religion among research participants it is also important to note the Shia personal status law of 2009, given the Hazara community's reaction to the law. In the context of discussing religion among Hazaras this law is significant to note as the protests held by the community at the time show how they vehemently they opposed the passing of the law, which was seen as an affront to the community's liberal ideals, and was very acute in the diaspora. This moment was therefore a catalytic one, in which Hazaras consciously chose a particular ethos over religion as an identity marker, and consolidated the mapping of overcoming onto political liberalism, the seeds of which were sown in Mazari's late 1980's separation of his particular religious theology from his coalition-oriented politics. In relation to the diaspora activism undertaken with regards to the personal status law, an Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) paper from 2009 notes the following, in one of its footnotes, that:

Of note is that Hazara communities in exile actively mobilised to oppose the law's contents, holding demonstrations in front of Afghan embassies, parliaments or UN offices in the United Kingdom, Norway, Italy, Australia, Germany, Denmark and Austria, with protestors in Australia passing a resolution of solidarity with Shia women in Afghanistan and condemning

discriminatory laws against women. A Hazara diaspora organisation in New York lobbied the Afghan embassy in the US over the law. A much linked-to opinion piece came from an Afghan Hazara woman living in the US, entitled “Why Afghanistan’s Family Shia Status Law Must Be Changed.” (19).

The reactions to this event, in part affirm, Marie’s statement about how the Hazara community in Afghanistan prefer to not solely present the community through the prism of religion, given the sizable negative response to the law, as well as the fact that countless community members took to the streets to protest the law. The paper also noted how women had also organised protests against the law which was seen as an affront to women’s rights, which the community has been championing, both at the time and now. This further relates the how overcoming as a narrative is secularised as it can be seen that it is not centred around redemption through rebellion, as a religious understanding of the narrative relates to, but instead advocates liberal ideals, underpinned by equality for the sexes. Although this secular narrative of overcoming does relate back to the notion of redemption, what this redemption entails is greater access, prospects and gains for the community, as opposed to the traditional Shi’i understanding of redemption predicated on ‘rebellion’, as stated in Dr Ali Shariati’s work on red and black Shi’ism. Interestingly, some critics of the protesters made reference to Western infiltration when trying to delegitimise the protests, as the AREU paper mentions that, ‘A common rebuttal from clerical politicians when confronted by civil society on rights issues is to accuse them of being western agents and of receiving funding from western sources’ (ibid: 24), which also shows how the Hazara protesters themselves were seen as supports of Western liberal ideals, and in turn shows how the notion of redemption is integrated within this liberal order. This specific incident of political mobilisation among the community further relates to both the narratives of marginality and overcoming, in that a formerly marginal community whose religion affiliation was historically side-lined took to the streets to protest against what the community perceived as a misrepresentation of their beliefs and values.

The following quote, also from the AREU paper on the Shi’ite personal status law, is pertinent to note in relation to the importance and leverage of clerics, at present times, among Afghanistan’s Hazaras. The paper states that, ‘[Muhammad Asif]

Mohseni's de-emphasis of ethnicity, as well as the perception that he is closely tied to Iran, has minimised widespread support for him among Hazara [S]hias while also attracting vocal opposition from some Hazara leaders' (ibid: 18-19). This is a very striking point to consider given that up until his death in 2019 Mohseni was the most senior Shia religious cleric in Afghanistan, as he had been granted the title of 'Grand Ayatollah', meaning that he had the authority to make legal decisions pertaining to Islamic law. For such a schism to emerge within the community as to the support given to a senior cleric like Mohseni further highlights the heterogeneity within the Hazara community with regards to the perception of religious authority, religious rulings and religion more generally, as well as the diminishing influence of such figures within certain segments of Hazara society. In relation to this point the article also noted that, 'The divide between [Mohseni and Royesh]⁸² represents in many ways a larger divide between Hazaras who are disenchanted with Iran and turning westwards, and other Shias who seek to carve out a political identity rooted in a sectarian emphasis, and who have accessed Iranian resources to do so' (19). In turn the protests against the personal status law are an example of the Hazara community consciously affirming the distinction between religion and their secular, liberal ideals, even though the Hazara-specific narratives within this research do mirror religious narratives.

Having analysed two examples of activism relating to the challenging of the Shia label ascribed by online publications to Hazaras and the imposition of religiously-orientated law on the community, it is also important to discuss an institution whose work relates to the liberal ideals espoused by the community, even though the organisation's name itself has an explicit reference to religion. The General Council of Sunni Hazaras was established in 2014 in Afghanistan, and in an interview with Dr Daniel Karell of New York University in 2017, Abdul Rahman Rahmani who is the chair of the Public Relations Committee for the organisation stated that:

The General Council of Sunni Hazaras and I believe that there is no difference between Sunni and Shia Hazaras. We can bring our people together once again after the last century. We believe that in a democratic country everyone

⁸² Aziz Royesh is a Hazara teacher and social activist who established Marefat High School in Dasht-e Barchi, Kabul, which is known for its high-performing pupils in the *kankor* exam.

should live equally and in peace...We believe that the country will not be moving in the right direction until political power is equally shared between all the tribes of Afghanistan (2016: 515).

Although the organisation does make explicit reference to religion in its name, the interview with Rahmani is interesting to analyse given that it made multiple references to rights, equality and justice, in turn constantly utilising liberal terms, despite the assumption that could be made about the group's supposed religiously-orientated aims, given the organisations name. However, the content of the interview suggests that the name has been chosen purely to represent an underrepresented demographic within Afghanistan, as opposed to espousing and promoting Sunni religious ideology. In the interview Rahmani repeated the importance of respecting the rights of all citizens of Afghanistan and recognising all the ethnic groups of the country. Rahmani further asserts what many research participants have said, and Hazara social media propagates, about the community's liberal ideals with the following quote:

Even though [both Sunni and Shia] Hazaras are the most educated group in Afghanistan, and they are against extremism and Islamic radicalism, and they are the strongest supporters of the homeland and democracy, the 'social curse' is still alive...The goal is to show that we are all human beings and we are all equal in Afghanistan (ibid).

Rahmani's statements further affirms that the group's aims are to promote Hazaras in Afghanistan, in particular Sunni Hazaras. The organisation is demanding equality and justice for a community which has been invisible for over a century in the country, given that many Sunni Hazaras took on a Tajik identity for decades. Hence the active affirmation of being Sunni Hazara among the community is not being done for religious reasons but to promote and raise awareness of an underrepresented community, that some Shia Hazaras are not even aware of. Rahmani ends the interview by stating that, 'We are Hazaras. We are Afghans. We have the right to ask for our identity. We are equal with other citizens of Afghanistan and finally we are human beings!' This again links back to the liberal ideals of the organisation and its members, which shows the

cotemporary secular orientation of some Hazara activists in present-day Afghanistan (ibid: 516).

This section has shown how secularism manifests in present times among transnational Hazaras. The three case studies discussed in this section relate to an online petition, a public demonstration and a community organisation. The online petition showed how some Hazaras are actively choosing to separate religion from Hazara identity, in a more concerted manner, given that this petition was direction at an English-language online news outlet with a wide readership. While the example of the Shia personal status law of 2009 and the protests related to the law show how the community, overwhelming, reacted negatively to the law which was seen as undermining the community's progressive, liberal ideas. This specific incident highlights how religion can no longer be used as a tool to suppress or undermine the community, especially when such decrees violate the community's liberal beliefs. The last example discussed in this section relates to the General Council of Sunni Hazaras which was established in 2014. The interview discussed in this section, with a leading member of the organisation, also affirms the extent to which in recent years transnational Hazaras are embracing and promoting secular, liberal discourses. In turn this section has shown how the Hazara online domain, collective protests and community organisations are also utilising secular discourses, to further their aims in present-day Afghanistan.

5.6 Conclusion:

To conclude, this chapter examined religion among the Hazara community. The chapter began with an overview of the Shia orientation of the community and the impact this has had for the community both past and present. The following section explored perspectives of religion among Hazara research participants who were interviewed for my PhD research, given that the role of religion in relation to the narratives of marginality and overcoming have taken on various tangents during research interviews. For some research participants the espousal of an ethno-religious identity was problematic. This is because an ethno-religious identity is perceived as being exclusionary, particularly towards Sunni and Ismaili Hazaras and omits neglects the community's pre-Islamic history. While for other research participants to affirm a

Shia religious identity was empowering as it allowed members of the community to preserve an identity that had historically been marginalised in Afghanistan. For some interviewees a hybridised ethno-religious identity as Shia Hazara or Hazara Shia was presented as a neutral, lived reality of the community, given their heritage as ethnic Hazaras and given their religious orientation as Shia Muslims. Here it was also mentioned that it was not just internally within the community where an ethno-religious identity had been constructed, as many non-Hazara Afghans also associated Shi'ism with Hazara identity.

This chapter then looked at Hazara political theology before and during the Soviet war. This section started with an overview of Hazara organisations and political movements active during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan to show the diverse political ideologies of these groups, ranging from pro-Maoist, Khomeinist and traditionalist. This section then detailed the ideological foundations of the pro-Khomeinist Hazara groups in Afghanistan, and how certain Shia discourses relating to oppression and social justice directly link to the contemporary Hazara narratives of marginality and overcoming. Within this section the work of political theorist Carl Schmitt was also referred to given that his political theology states that modernity is still underpinned by religious theology, which again relates to the Hazara narratives within this research.

This chapter ended with a discussion on secularism in contemporary Hazara life. Three case studies were looked at in this section, which comprised of an online petition, a large-scale public protest in relation to the application of a narrow-form of Shia jurisprudence in Afghanistan, as well as a community organisation which was established in the country in the 2010s. The petition stated that an English-language news outlet should refrain from referring to Hazaras as Shias and should in fact refer to the community solely with reference to their ethnic Hazara identity. While the Shia personal status law of 2009 shows how religion was manipulated to undermine rights of members of the Hazara community, and in turn the community's reaction to the legislation exemplified its incompatibility with secular, liberal Hazara discourses. Lastly, the example of the Sunni Hazara council shows how a formally underrepresented segment of the community seeks to utilise liberal discourse to further its aims in

contemporary Afghanistan, as opposed to using religious discourse for greater representation.

Chapter 6: Social media use among transnational Hazaras:

6.1 Introduction:

The previous chapter demonstrated how religion is a tool which provides spaces for collective community affirmation, both at present and in the past, through religious ceremonies as well as political activity during the Soviet war. It also highlighted how these sites contain accounts which reaffirm the wider master narratives within this thesis, and their framing within post-war secular settings. The chapter dealt with narratives in relation to a particular mode of transmission: religion. Similarly, this chapter will also discuss another site of narrative production: social media. Here it will be seen that the narrative of overcoming is now embracing liberal ideas and values, which is circulated online, globally. However, social media in contrast to religious discourse which is personal, private and is mostly internal within the community, is publicly orientated and is aimed at both the Hazara community and the wider world.

The Hazara community has an active presence on social media, and has also amassed a plethora of websites and social media pages dedicated to documenting, preserving and propagating Hazara history, human rights issues and political mobilisation among the community and beyond. Furthermore, given that this research seeks to understand the extent to which the narratives of marginality and overcoming are engaged with by the British Hazara migrant and diaspora community, social media thus lends itself as a key tool which can be utilised to gauge community sentiments on a wide range of issues, while also allowing for an analysis of the narratives within this research and to what extent they are reproduced. In turn social media becomes a mode of communication which helps in assessing these internally constructed community narratives and how they impact community attitudes and direct action. As a result this chapter seeks to highlight how social media is a response to the growing social capital of the Hazara community and how internal community dynamics lend themselves to produce organised networks, which then become a driving force for political mobilisation beyond borders. Thus, these resultant networks formed through engagement with social media lead to both individual personalisations of the Hazara master narratives within this research and the emergence of transnational Hazara politics.

To begin with it is essential to highlight why social media as a research tool can be useful within academic studies, as, for example, it has the ‘...potential as a recruitment platform, [with a] reach into a particular demographic, and the behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions that are readily observable and extractable...’ (McCay-Peet and Quan-Haase 2017: 20). While at the same time it is worth noting that:

Examining social media often gives the impression that it is a universe unto itself that exists in isolation from other spheres of life. This kind of perspective is myopic, however, and disregards how social media and the phenomena that emerge within it are closely interlinked to other spheres of life. Perhaps most importantly, social media usage is closely interwoven with everyday life’s rhythms and patterns’ (ibid).

This quote is particularly pertinent in relation to this research given the public social media pages and webpages engaged with throughout this study seek to understand how issues affecting transnational Hazara communities are propagated, analysed and discussed online, and as they show how online spaces directly connect with people’s daily lived realities, and in turn Hazara political mobilisation worldwide. This then goes beyond the work of Pierre Nora who structures memory within a national framework (1989: 22-23), and subsequently shows how memory is being organised in a transnational space. While at the same time in relation to social media, the work of Maurice Halbwachs is also relevant. This is because the online domain has become a place where past events in people’s lives are reproduced and altered, in order to give them a heightened standing (1992: 52).

As it will be seen through the course of this chapter on social media and the internet, there is an emphasis on Hazara history given how Hazara conceptualisations about the community’s past underscore the narratives the community seeks to promulgate to non-Hazaras about their community. This is partly done in order to raise awareness about their situation in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, predicated on a history of marginalisation. For example, the internet and social media are significant tools with regards to constructing Hazara historiography. This is because it allows

Hazaras to be part of discourses on Afghanistan and means that their collective voice is given an outlet in a way that has not previously occurred in the community's history. Social media places Hazaras within the framework of Afghan history production, as it gives a voice to a subaltern group who have been on the periphery in relation to various discussions about Afghanistan and its people, and in turn the Hazara community can now shape the narratives that they as a collective wish to disseminate about themselves and their community. In propagating a 'Hazara account' of the events of the late 19th Century online, such information is in the public domain and is accessible to anyone who wishes to engage with it. However, in Afghanistan the opportunity to vocally challenge dominant historical narratives and discuss Hazara grievances would be extremely difficult, hence the importance and value of the internet for the Hazara community in this regard. While in the section on Hazara history within this chapter, widely followed Hazara social media pages and Hazara websites will be referred to show the content that is proliferated through these online domains and how this content works to reinforce the narratives of marginality and overcoming. This chapter then turns to the issue of political mobilisation among the Hazara community and how the information provided online about the community and its past become a catalyst for contemporary forms of action and how this collective action ties into the broader narrative of overcoming.

6.2 Propagating Hazara history online:

As noted earlier, Hazara social media has become a site where among others things, Hazara history is documented and shared. The use of the internet and social media allows the community to construct and propagate a history of Afghanistan through a Hazara lens, making the insurrection of Hazarajat, 20th Century massacres against the Hazaras and the subsequent migrations of the community out of the country, the focal point of this historiography. From the momentum built through remembrance of the past, through the content shared online, it can be seen that the Hazara community in Europe can effectively mobilise for the community in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, which lessens the opportunity for the community to be solely viewed as victims. It also allows the community to challenge dominant accounts of Afghan history, and this is empowering for the community given that there is limited literature available on the Hazara community, and of the literature that does exist, the

insurrection of Hazarajat and the turmoil that followed is seldom discussed from a Hazara perspective. This is because the way in which the insurrection of the region is recounted is at times devoid of acknowledging the power structures that were at play during the war, and consequently some accounts about the insurrection portray the subjugated as conspirators, and the aggressors as merely people suppressing a violent revolt, as Dr Robert D McChesney, a scholar of the social and cultural history of Afghanistan, notes that, '[The insurrection of Hazarajat] has been characterized by pro-Muhammadzai historians as suppression of a "rebellion"' (1999: 8). While other accounts of the insurrection emphasise the collusion of certain local Hazara leaders with the Emir and his army as indicative of Hazara entanglements being testament to the community's own role in their subjugation, although such a claim disproportionately lays blame at the hands of Hazara *mirs* in the conflict. Furthermore, in relation to historiography, in a journal paper on 'teaching history' Dr Robert J Parkes a lecturer at the University of Newcastle in New South Wales states that:

...we must understand the act of teaching and learning history, as one of engaging in interpretive acts, as we read the histories that are made available to us. Acknowledging and pedagogically emphasizing the interpretive act, or the practice of 'reading', that is required if we are to engage with multiple histories, opens up the possibility for a transformative history pedagogy that does not automatically or inevitably result in a turn to relativism. That is, acceptance of the existence of multiple, and indeed rival narratives, does not in and of itself, doom us to indecision about which narratives are more likely to present an adequate representation of the past (2009: 126).

Parkes' intervention in relation to becoming familiar with 'multiple histories' is important to consider, as accepting numerous parallel historical accounts at any given time in history allows for the opportunity for holistic historical discourses to develop, across regions and borders, both locally and transnationally, in any given socio-political context. Subsequently, in engaging with multiple narratives of past events an opportunity arises for historians to work towards establishing a more inclusive approach to representation and understanding the past, as various accounts of history are then incorporated into discussions about the past, because as in the case of the

Hazaras it can be seen that the experiences of the community have been marginalised within dominant historical narratives. At the same time, with regards to online content, indigenous sources of information on peripheral histories shared online cannot simply be dismissed due to the method taken to disseminate the information being seen as less credible to written sources, because it is dominant power structures that have prevented such histories from being documented through official means in the past, which is why there is a growing use and reliance on alternative media sources, in order to preserve and propagate these neglected histories. Therefore, within this research the internet and social media have been utilised as key spaces of knowledge production which are of as much weight and value as traditional sources of information within academia.

In discussing contemporary attempts to document Hazara history online an opportunity arises for a marginal history to be engaged with, while also allowing those from outside the Hazara community to learn about key moments in Hazara history, and this is pertinent to note if it is considered that, ‘...there have always remained many gaps of coverage [with Afghan history writing], not least in terms of women, lower classes and minority religious and ethnic groups’ (Green 2015: 47). Consequently, in engaging with contemporary modes of documenting Hazara history it can be seen that this ‘gap’ in Afghan history is being filled with emerging knowledge produced from within the Hazara community, as can be seen by Hazara websites such as, ‘Hazara.net’ and ‘Hazara International’, as well as through some of the information being circulated on Hazara social media, alongside contemporary literature being produced by Hazara scholars such as political scientist Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim and anthropologist Dr Khadija Abbasi. Subsequently, although there may be some knowledge about this history among Afghans more generally, the Hazara community has taken upon itself the task of linking multiple instances of oppression and framing it into a timeline of continued marginalisation, which fits into a new narrative structure that is working to reinforce and preserve newer instances of injustice, within this internally constructed historical timeline.

Within the Hazara community it can be seen that a recurrent theme is the attempt to emphasise historical and current grievances, as a mechanism to preserve past

memories, as Nora notes that, 'Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past' (1989: 8). This in turn allows the community to remember the marginalisation, suffering and loss they have endured, which becomes the impetus for one of many Hazara narratives, such as that of marginality. Subsequently, this narrative acts as a catalyst for change from within the community. In Britain an attempt has been made to broadcast multiple Hazara narratives, including that of marginality. In this regard social media is an important tool in disseminating information about the history of Hazaras, drawing parallels with current issues affecting the community mainly in Afghanistan but also in Pakistan. Given the scope of social media to reach many people at any given time, and in any given place, it has a heightened significance with regards to preserving and propagating certain historical narratives of the past. Here it is apt to briefly note the work of Michel-Rolph Trouillot, as he states that people's understanding of what constitutes history is shaped not necessarily by what evidence can be produced to establish historical fact, but rather due to who communicates a given narrative and the accessibility of this narrative (1995: 2-4). Thus, it can be seen that marginal histories are at times preserved through alternate means to established history and governing narratives. Furthermore, as noted earlier, Trouillot notes in his work the power dynamics at play within dominant historical narratives that are widely propagated (ibid: 5), while also stating that, 'Each historical narrative renews a claim to truth' (ibid: 6). And with regards to the Hazara community this can be seen through the information propagated on social media, Hazara websites and through community organisations, as well as at events, and in everyday conversations.

In terms of the effective dissemination and preservation of Hazara history online, a significant source to consider is the website 'Hazara.net', which publishes content in English and Persian, and also has a Facebook page and Twitter account of the same name, which have just over 23,000 'likes' and 5,000 'followers', respectively⁸³. The mission statement on their Facebook page states that they are the, 'First Hazara website on Internet (Sept 28, 1998) in response to Hazara Genocide in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan. [With the] [s]ingular purpose: NEVER AGAIN!', while their website states that, 'Hazara.net is a non-profit website mostly focused on the human rights of the

⁸³At the time of writing, April 2020.

most-persecuted Hazara community'. The website has many sections divided into several tabs, including: 'news', 'history', 'culture', 'human rights' and [Hazara] 'women', among other sections. The history section of the website covers a timeline from 247 BC when it is stated that Buddhist monks from India came to Afghanistan, and this historical timeline of events in the country brings readers up to the recent, late 20th Century Hazara history in the region, through the various articles provided. The Buddhist connection is important to mention as multiple Hazara research participants have stated that before embracing Islam, (be it the Shia, Sunni or Ismaili sects of Islam) the community was predominantly Buddhist. Furthermore, irrespective of whether this assertion is based on facts is irrelevant, in so much as it has persisted in the collective consciousness of some segments of Hazara society who genuinely believe this claim and in turn link it back to the Buddha statues of Bamiyan as being a part of Hazara cultural heritage, with research participant Hakima Arefi, who was born in Iran and is now based in London, stating that, 'A Hazara can be a Shia or not, because in history we know about the first Hazara religion in Afghanistan, [it] was Buddhism...'. Therefore, it becomes apparent why some Hazara websites and social media pages choose to make reference to pre-Islamic Buddhist Afghanistan, as it is seen as directly relating to the community's pre-Islamic history in the country, by members of the community that ascribe to this heritage claim, with Dr Melissa Kerr Chiovenda noting that:

...many [Hazaras] expressed a deep connection to the Buddha statues and the Buddhist past of the Bamiyan valley. They made the claim that their own faces looked the like the faces of the statues, which were destroyed long ago, and yet were supposed to look the same as the faces of figures painted inside the caves and cells surrounding the statues. Hazaras often state that their resemblance to the statues proves they have inhabited the land for "4,500" years. They also express deep sorrow because of the destruction of the statues, seeing it as a destruction of part of their heritage (2019: 26).

Among the articles presented on Hazara.net the insurrection of Hazarajat is widely written about, and information is also provided about Hazara slavery, the Hazara pioneers regiment of the British Indian Army, and the Afshar and Mazar massacres of

1993 and 1998. Although some online Hazara publications do make reference to an assumed pre-Islamic Hazara heritage and history, it should be noted that the general focal point of this contemporary Hazara historiography project situates itself around the late 1800s, during the time of the insurrection of Hazarajat, given the substantial socio-political shift these events triggered for the Hazara community. This is also because the wide-scale abuse inflicted on the community at the time has become a central theme of Hazara collective memory and collective consciousness. While in relation to the content of this specific website it is also worth briefly considering the importance of the 'women' section of Hazara.net. This section of the website has information about inspirational Hazara women from both Afghanistan and Pakistan, such as Dr Habiba Sarabi, the first female governor in Afghanistan, Kalsoom Hazara, a martial arts champion from Pakistan and Laila Haidari, who runs Afghanistan's only private drug rehabilitation centre. In turn the description given of the subjugation mentioned on the website and the information provided about high-achieving Hazara women directly link to the narratives of marginality and overcoming, with the former being more explicitly referred to on the website, while the latter is implied, and highlights their reach among transnational Hazara communities. Thus, it can be seen that not only does Hazara.net work to preserve and disseminate Hazara history, the website also propagates the narratives within this research, and as a result can be seen as influencing how members of the Hazara community and non-Hazaras perceive the community in general, as both victims of continued discrimination, and as a progressive collective. In relation to this online content proliferated on Hazara websites and social media, Mohammad Yonus Entezar in a 2016 master's thesis on online Hazara activism notes that:

Hazara activists claim they are promoting democratic values and fighting for social justice in the websites. They have constructed Hazaras as victims and out-grouped other ethnicities as oppressors. Some Hazara writers went further and constructed a polarization between Hazara people and Hazara politicians. Regardless of whether such polarization strategies in Hazara discourse is discriminatory or not, it highlights and problematizes ethnic media discourse that does not promote civic and democratic values in Afghanistan (57).

Although Hazara.net claims to be the oldest Hazara website, its social media presence is a fraction of the popular Facebook page and website known as the 'Hazara International', which also publishes content in English, as well as in 'Hazaragi|Dari', Urdu and Italian, and has just under 276,000 likes on Facebook and almost 7,300 followers on Twitter⁸⁴. Hazara International also has the same informational tabs on their website as Hazara.net, but has additional sections on 'art', 'sport' and 'Hazaristan'. Their website also mirrors the themes proliferated on Hazara.net and again the narratives of marginality and overcoming are drawn upon and propagated through the information shared about the website about the 'genocide' of the Hazaras, which refers to historic and contemporary instances of oppression in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as through information shared about Hazara accomplishments. However, in terms of the information provided on Hazara history there is a greater emphasis on contemporary Hazara history on this website as opposed to Hazara.net, as the massacre in Mazar is written about on numerous occasions, as well as the website providing resources about attacks on Hazaras in Quetta and materials on the widely publicised 'Enlightenment Movement', which gained widespread support both from Hazaras in Afghanistan and the diaspora, from around 2016 onwards. As with Hazara.net the Buddhas of Bamiyan are also written about on the Hazara International website, with the subtext of one article on the topic stating that the statues were, 'A Symbol of Hazara Culture, Art and History in Hazaristan', which shows that the content creators of this website are sympathetic to the Hazara heritage claim that some members of the community espouse in relation to the origins of the statues. There is also a brief but informative piece on the Hazara court historian Fayz Muhammad Kateb Hazara on the website titled, 'The Father of Modern History of Afghanistan'.

Unlike Hazara.net, Hazara International is very open about its support and proliferation of the 'Hazaristan' movement⁸⁵. Although the website does not explicitly explain what Hazaristan is or embodies, it is evident from the information presented on the website that it relates to Hazara nationalist politics, as the website has an

⁸⁴ As above.

⁸⁵ Hazara.net does make two implicit references to the Hazaristan movement, as the website has two articles on Hazaras in Afghanistan and Hazarajat which use the image of the flag of Hazaristan within the articles, but no information is actually provided about the Hazaristan movement in these articles.

article dedicated to the flag of Hazaristan which details how part of the flag represents 'Hazara transparency, loyalty, and honesty'. The website has also published an article on Hazara nationalism in Hazara music and literature, with an emphasis on the songs of Sarwar Sarkhosh, the late brother of acclaimed Hazara musician Dawood Sarkhosh, who the article states was, 'The first person who started (singing) revolutionary songs...'. Additionally, on the Hazara International website, overcoming is again referred to through the dissemination of information about prominent Hazaras, both in the fields of arts and sport, in Afghanistan and the diaspora. Having noted the content and information detailed on both the Hazara.net and the Hazara International websites, it is worth considering the following remark on the impact of social media for Hazaras and Afghans more generally, from a research participant based in London:

I think it has created, not only for Hazaras but for Afghans in general who are in different countries, first it has created a place, a platform to exchange ideas. For instance, I notice that Hazaras who live in the West they have this notion of democracy and human rights, and then they exchange this with Hazaras inside (Afghanistan), so they use these themes to ask them to fight for their rights. So this flow of information and ideas is easier...

In turn Hazara social media is becoming more methodical with time, and is being utilised for various purposes by the community, both in Afghanistan and abroad. Furthermore, given the content proliferated within these online spaces it appears that the central objectives of these community-orientated Hazara social media pages is to raise awareness about the human rights situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region, co-ordinate political mobilisation worldwide, as well as being a significant tool in documenting, preserving and proliferating Hazara history. As a result, some of the most influential and important Hazara websites and social media pages have overlapping themes, such as presenting an indigenous Hazara history to diverse audiences online, as well as providing information above the contemporary accomplishments of the community.

This section has discussed the specific content available on Hazara websites and social media pages relating to Hazara history. At the same time it can be seen that there is an

overlap among these online sources and the content they proliferate in relation to Hazara history. While the timeline constructed on the websites encompasses a longer history than what the everyday conversations and research interviews have produced within this study, which generally start at the insurrection of Hazarajat, these online timelines seek to emphasis and promote a pre-Islamic history of the Hazara community, stemming from a Buddhist past. While simultaneously engaging with the narratives of marginality and overcoming in highlighting the brutality of Emir Abdur Rahman Khan in Hazarajat, and the recent community achievements of Hazara in sports, politics and music. The next section will thus examine more contemporary issues and how social media acts as a catalyst for Hazara political mobilisation worldwide.

6.3 Hazara solidarity and mobilisation beyond borders:

As previously noted, the growing prevalence of social media has seen Hazaras relying heavily on its use. Online portals available to the Hazara community have made them a powerful force when it comes to indigenous constructions of Afghan history online, as well as with regards to political mobilisation. The preceding section highlighted how information about Hazara persecution and marginalisation is preserved and disseminated effectively through social media, especially outside Afghanistan, in Europe and Australia, as the migrant and diaspora community outside the region have a very active social media presence. However, social media is also a powerful tool for the Hazara community in working to co-ordinate demonstrations worldwide against human rights violations, and also for online awareness campaigns.

In an article by Afghan journalist Fariba Nawa she notes that, 'The advent of satellite TV and social media in the last decade has brought the diaspora closer to those inside the country. Afghans are communicating transnationally, and those who live on the outside are in daily contact with their compatriots at home' (2014)⁸⁶, which can be seen by how Hazaras outside Afghanistan engage with social media. Furthermore, it can be seen that documenting the community's history online and undertaking political mobilisation through engaging with the online domain becomes a form of empowerment for the Hazara community and works to weaken their previous

⁸⁶ See: www.himalmag.com/many-faces-diaspora/.

marginal status. Here it is also worth mentioning how online awareness campaigns undertaken by the community result in concrete action, as there are now lobby groups advocating alongside the community, such as the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Hazaras, with the group having organised multiple events at the UK Parliament with MPs about the plight of the Hazaras. This is in addition to the slow but steady increase in literature on the Hazaras being written by Hazara scholars, helping to shed light on this under-represented community in literature on Afghanistan and the country's history, which is widely proliferated online.

The proliferation of social media in recent years has been extremely beneficial for Hazaras, with regards to activism. The increasing use of social media as an information-sharing platform by Hazara activists has allowed for members of the Hazara community to openly engage with Hazara-specific issues and the global Hazara *qawm*. Social media can also play a formative role in addressing issues of misrepresentation and misinformation, no more so than in relation to historiographies of marginal communities. The Hazara community has utilised social media not only to raise awareness about the current attacks and discrimination against the community in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, but also to redress issues of the past. This is evident with the issue of Hazara historiography, as Maurice Halbwachs notes that, 'While the collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent body of people, it is individuals as group members who remember' (1992: 142). For instance, the aforementioned 'Hazara.net' website documents Hazara affairs, states that the site is 'a non-profit site focused on the human rights of Hazaras and the promotion of Hazara culture'. The website has a section dedicated to Hazara history which lists some of the massacres against the community since the late 19th Century. Thus, in turn the work of Hazara.net in documenting the history of the community is a means of preserving a past that dominant narratives of Afghan history may only do partially. Hence, within this research it is a worthwhile endeavour to include a sections dedicated to assessing social media's impact on Hazara consciousness and Hazara historiography, as it is the past the acts as the impetus for collective action in the present, while also fuelling contemporary political movements. Here an intriguing phenomenon to consider is the online 'Hazaristan' movement. The Hazaristan movement promotes the idea of an independent 'Hazara nation', within the current

territory of Afghanistan in the central Hazarajat region, with anthropologist Robert Canfield noting that:

In the last two decades there has been a striking rise in the political consciousness of the Hazaras of Afghanistan...[which is] evident in the appearance of several nationalistic Hazara websites. What is striking about the websites is the pointed assertions of a Hazara ideology. In these sites the homeland of the Hazaras is now referred to as "Hazaristan" and in the latter weeks of 2001 they warned in "Declaration of a People," subsequently posted on the Wahdat web site, that the Hazaras could no longer be disregarded: "Hazaras will no longer sit idly by while our Afghan brothers decide what is best for them" (2004: 241).

The Hazaristan movement is explicitly working towards establishing a Hazara nation within the current boundaries of Afghanistan, in turn directly challenging the Afghan state. In advocating such a movement, members of the Hazara community are actively choosing to disrupt the notion that all those with a link to Afghanistan are Afghans, which acts as a form of dissent, as there are multiple photos, which have been shared on Hazara social media, showing people holding the flag of Hazaristan in various locations across the country, even outside Mazar's modest mausoleum in Mazar-e Sharif. These Hazaras are choosing to reject identifying as Afghan, as for these people the term Afghan is synonymous with Pashtun, given that some Pashtun nationalists chose to equate the term Afghan solely with the Pashtun community, as well as the fact that historically the term Afghan was the Persian word for the Pashtun people, which has been stated by multiple research participants. Instead, these people chose to promote an ethnic Hazara identity to further their aims for separate state, relying on invoking a Hazara consciousness by emphasising the community's historic persecution, and current marginalisation in Afghanistan. However, it should be noted that this movement is quite a divisive topic among the Hazara community. The reason being that some Hazaras believe that given their community's precarious situation in Afghanistan at present, all effort should be made to elevate their status and improve the daily lives of Hazaras in Afghanistan, rather than causing relations between the various communities in the country from becoming more fragmented, by advocating

such a movement. Nonetheless, the movement is interesting to consider in so much as it works to reinforce the belief that the community in recent years has very overtly chosen to express themselves in relation to their historic past and recent achievements, as the history of Hazaras in Afghanistan has driven some community members to espouse secessionist sentiments, while the recent gains of the community have paved the way for a new found confidence among the community, predicated on the influence of Mazari and his contemporaries, which in turn allows for segments of the Hazara community to then hold and share such bold views.

Another significant movement to consider is the Hazara 'Enlightenment Movement', which is an on-going global movement aimed at challenging the rerouting of part of a Central Asian electricity project from the Hazara majority province of Bamiyan to the Pashtun-Tajik populated area known as Salang. This is in addition to highlighting the general lack of infrastructure and development in the broader Hazarajat region. The partial change of the electricity route caused wide-spread outrage among members of the Hazara community both in Afghanistan and outside of the country. As a result the movement was widely publicised through social media, first when the planned route change had been announced, and then again when a mass protest against the route change in Kabul was bombed by ISIS in July 2016, which at the time was the deadliest attack in Kabul since 2001. In the aftermath of the attack the hashtag 'enlightenment' started 'trending' on twitter in Afghanistan. This gave more exposure to the Hazara community and their demand that the proposed route change should not go ahead. In coming together in such a bold way, members of the Hazara community were publicly voicing their dissatisfaction with the government's decision to deprive their region of development. Such collective action in such a public arena can be seen as being a bold act given the heightened number of attacks against the Hazara community in Afghanistan in recent years, by both the Taliban and ISIS, which did not deter thousands of protesters from assembling for the demonstration. Furthermore, a report by the United States Institute of Peace, published in February 2019, on 'Youth Protest Movements in Afghanistan' notes how the bombing in July 2016 did not alter the movement's activism and demands:

The movement, angered by the government's failure to meet its demands, announced a new round of "indefinite protest" that was to commence on September 27, 2016. On September 26 the coordinating body of the Enlightenment movement announced it would enter into negotiations with the government under UN supervision, reiterating that it would continue with its civil resistance if the negotiations failed to yield results (2019: 13).

Although the Enlightenment Movement demonstration ended in tragedy, prior to the attack on the protesters, the demonstration and the community's general frustration regarding the electricity route change did gain media attention, both domestically and internationally. Furthermore, after the attack the demonstration and the community's objectives in protesting were given wider coverage by international media. This again feeds into both a historic timeline of oppression and contemporary modes of resistance, as the demonstration was held to highlight what the community perceived as discrimination by the government for rerouting the power line, by engaging in collective action in the country's capital city.

Demonstrations and condemnations of the rerouting of the TUTAP project resulted in the government postponing the move. Abdul Basir Azimi who is a spokesperson for the Ministry of Energy and Water said in an interview with Al Jazeera about the TUTAP project in May 2016 that, '[The route change] is totally [a] financial and technical issue, and it's not subject to any kinds of discrimination. Financial resources are so limited in Afghanistan and we have to utilise our financial resources effectively and efficiently...'⁸⁷, and he further stated that rerouting the project back from Salang to Bamiyan at that time would instead delay 28 months' worth of power supply to 12 provinces, as well as the fact that the Bamiyan TUTAP route is 80km longer than the Salang route, and would cost 40 million more than the Salang route, and would take 10 months extra to construct. However, it should be noted that Azimi did not discuss the cost benefits gained from initially moving the route from Bamiyan to Salang, but rather the obstacles that would result in undoing the decision, financially. While in the same interview, Thomas Ruttig stated that if there had been transparency on the part of the

⁸⁷ For the full interview see: www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2016/05/afghanistan-hazaras-marginalised-160517165454303.html.

current and previous governments when the project started, then a lot of the resultant problems could have been avoided. With regards to the demands for greater development in Bamiyan, Dr Melissa Kerr Chiovenda notes the following in relation to the availability of electricity in the region which helps to contextualise the frustration of the Hazara community in relation to underdevelopment in Hazarajat, and why the community undertook collective action:

The electricity situation in Markaz Bamiyan was nearly untenable while I conducted my research. Almost everyone had at least a weak solar panel or battery, but few had any power source more effective than this, which provides only several hours of weak electricity a day, perhaps enough to run one television and charge a couple of cell phones. Many of the most impoverished still relied on oil lanterns, although this was seen as a last resort as it is considered dangerous and old fashioned. Some paid into a local generator project, in which one neighbourhood member buys a generator and maintains it, and others pay a fee (2014: 455).

Here it is also important to note an incident that took place in 2017, which again went viral on Hazara social media pages. A Kabul-based newspaper called *Etilaatroz* which translates from Persian to 'Daily Information' leaked a memo which had been drafted by the deputy chief of monitoring and observation at the Administrative Office of the Afghan President. In short, the memo stated that non-Pashtun officials in the government should be replaced by Pashtuns, and it also stated the following about a Hazara government employee, 'Ali Khan is working well, but he brings Hazaras and appoints them to good positions. In his place we should find a capable Pashtun who would speak all languages and is a writer'⁸⁸. The leak of this memo was shared on Hazara social media to give credence to the assertion that Hazaras are still discriminated against and marginalised, over a century after many were forced to flee Hazarajat. This is an important incident to note given the small number of Hazaras within the government, but how, even as a minority, they are seen as a threat by some members of the Pashtun elite. This in turn can be seen as an example of disrupting

⁸⁸ See: www.hazara.net/2017/09/leaked-memo-of-ashraf-ghani-govt-implies-soft-purge-of-non-pashtuns-from-govt/.

Pashtun hegemony in Afghanistan, as through working within government and other established institutions, the Hazara community is given greater public exposure and is able to protect and promote the interests of its community on a national level, which prior to the Bonn Agreement of 2001 would have been a grand and unattainable goal.

In contrast, an incident which took place in 2018 shows how the Hazara community not only wants to raise awareness about their past and current marginality, but how they seek to utilise online spaces to inform and promote instances of Hazara achievement. This incident relates to an image which went viral on Hazara social media in 2018. The image was of a Hazara lady, Jahantab Ahmadi, which was also broadcast by the BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera, as well as other international news outlets. An image of Jahantab was widely circulated which showed her nursing her two month old baby while sitting on the floor at an outdoor examination, which was a university entrance exam, and she had travelled on foot for several hours to take the exam. Hazara social media shared her image with captions denoting how Hazaras value education, women's rights, and how Jahantab demonstrates the community's resolve to succeed. Therefore, it can be seen that the image was utilised to further the narrative of Hazaras as distinct from other Afghan communities, as a 'forward-looking' community. This can be demonstrated by an article in the Telegraph about Jahantab Ahmadi's viral photo which noted that, 'Mrs Ahmadi's story has resonated with social media users across the country, who have praised her determination to be educated'⁸⁹ and cited the following as an example, "'You are a true world champion, you have shown that a Hazara girl can do anything in any conditions or circumstances,'" Nazar Hussain Akbari wrote on Facebook, referring to the fact Mrs Ahmadi is part of the persecuted Hazara ethnic group'.

With the photo of Mrs Ahmadi having gone viral on Hazara social media and Afghan social media more generally, there was even a 'Jahantab' hashtag on twitter in March 2018, which people were using to tweet about Jahantab, with some tweets congratulating her for her fortitude and wishing her greater success⁹⁰. While in relation to community mobilisation, through the use of social media, an online fundraising page

⁸⁹ See: www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/03/26/afghan-students-crowdfund-university-fees-young-mother-photo/.

⁹⁰ See: www.twitter.com/hashtag/jahantab.

was set up by the Afghan Youth Association, which is run by UK-based Hazara youth, in the days that followed the circulation of the image, and £10,000 was raised for Jahantab in three days, as she had passed her entrance exam but could not afford to pay the university fees, with CNN mentioning that the online donation site had been set up to assist Jahantab⁹¹. Subsequently, Jahantab's story which on a personal level was one of overcoming personal struggles and determination, became part of a wider narrative among the Hazara community, to show that despite the adversity that individual Hazaras and the community more generally endure, the resolve to access and seek education is widespread among the community, which again shows the community's support of liberal ideals and in this particular example that of gender equality. This example is also central to the narrative of overcoming, in that community members are looking to alter their individual and the collective fortunes of the Hazara community, principally through utilising education, both in Afghanistan and among the diaspora.

Here it can be seen that there are multiple examples which show how the Hazara community in asserting themselves as Hazaras online, are empowering their community through political mobilisation and through community events, as well as lobby groups, demonstrations, and through rewriting and propagating Afghan history from the community's perspective. Asserting Hazara identity also disrupts Pashtun hegemony in Afghanistan, as it allows a marginal group to demand greater visibility in domestic politics, sees Hazaras as senior MPs and governors for various districts and provinces in Afghanistan. Hence, this shows an understanding that the 'Hazara vote' and Hazara alliances are now necessary for even a Pashtun leader to gain legitimacy, as the prominent Hazara political leader Muhammad Mohaqiq was chosen as the second vice chief executive officer after the 2014 presidential elections in the unity government led by ethnic Pashtun, Ashraf Ghani. Lastly, through the Hazara community's work in government and civil society, we can see that some Hazaras are asserting their national identity as Afghans, directly challenging ethno-nationalist narratives which equate the term Afghan solely with the Pashtun community. Therefore, the next section will seek to assess Hazara social media use more broadly and examine the documentation of history.

⁹¹ See: www.edition.cnn.com/2018/03/20/asia/afghan-mother-university-exam-nursing-intl/index.html.

6.4 An analysis of Hazara social media use:

The previous sections in this chapter have highlighted how social media is being utilised by the Hazara community to document and propagate Hazara history online. While at same time the internet and social media are sites where political mobilisation can flourish, as a result of the internal community cohesion generated through the use of these online spaces. This is in relation to activism regarding the human rights situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. In turn, this section seeks to analyse Hazara social media use more generally. In a journal paper on 'activism and knowledge' Dr Mahvish Ahmad and Dr James Caron discuss 'non-academic intellectual production' in marginal spaces and regions, stating how certain local forms of knowledge production are preserved and propagated among the masses and are seen to have more agency and value among these communities, yet are viewed as having limited significance within some academic circles (2016: 3-4). This hierarchal nature of knowledge production is important to note with regards to this research, given how academia in the global north generally favours what are perceived as traditional sources of academic knowledge, such as books and scholarly journals articles, which do not account for alternate forms of knowledge production, such as current information propagated online on neglected, peripheral histories (such as that of the Hazaras). Here Ahmad and Caron further note that, 'Hybrid print and digital modes of publication mean that we can present articles that are enhanced by participative oral media online or critical oral media that are enhanced through their articulation to scholarly networks and translators...' (ibid: 35). This allows for a wider scope and engagement with non-traditional information sources, as, 'Innovative scholarship can even stem from user-contributed analysis, citizen journalism and testimony' (ibid: 6).

This wider engagement with non-traditional information sources can be seen to be occurring in online Hazara circles, where information about Hazara history is being written and preserved, as well as being a space where non-traditional information sources such as social media and websites become platforms for disseminating information about contemporary Hazara resistance to perceived governmental suppression and discrimination. This is ultimately done through global political mobilisation, which has been instigated by the use of various social media platforms,

allowing for new histories to be written. Although this information is well-known with the Hazara community itself, the contemporary forms of resistance stemming from a protracted timeline of oppression is not widely discussed within sources of modern Afghan history. Hence, given that social media has been a key tool for Hazaras in publishing and distributing information about their community, it is useful to study the role of social media and the internet in relation to contemporary forms of knowledge production relating to Hazara historiography. Therefore this online domain is worth examining given its public usage and accessibility globally. With this in mind it is worth considering the following quote, from a report mentioned earlier, on ‘Youth Protest Movements in Afghanistan’, in order to contextualise Afghan social media use. The report states that:

The use of social media platforms (such as Facebook) to promulgate information did emerge as a persistent trend, with many Afghan youths regarding themselves as “brokers” in the contentious politics of the post-2014 era. Young Afghans today understand that they have the ability, and are incentivized, to write history as they see it, posting their opinions online in the hope of influencing national and international audiences. Thus, an increasingly skilful use of social media to organize, influence, engage, and oppose may be a durable outcome of the youth movements essaying change (2019: 16).

This quote also shows how social media not only acts as a medium for information sharing, but how it is also a platform which allows users to engage in the process of history writing, with an emphasis on the fact that this task is being undertaken by Afghan youth who now have more opportunities to access knowledge and education, since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. The use of the internet and social media is also pertinent to note given their accessibility in modern times. In turn these online spaces play a significant role with regards to political mobilisation in areas blighted by instability, which is relevant in the Afghan context given growing instability in the country. Similarly, in relation to this issue, Dr Wazhmah Osman, an assistant Professor in Media Studies & Production and Globalization at Klein College of Media and Communication in Philadelphia, notes that:

Although vibrant and productive, public space is also fraught and exclusionary. At protests in Afghanistan against the problematic Iranian Shiite Marriage Law (otherwise known as the Rape Law), for example, I witnessed women protesters being attacked by radicalized youth from the massive mosques that Iran has built and funded. As news of these attacks spread, fewer women and girls attended subsequent protests. Under such dire circumstances, social media became a more democratic and inclusionary sphere. Similarly, when Afghan government officials refused to investigate the deaths of female journalists and television personalities, local college students and voices from the Afghan diaspora demanded justice via Facebook fan pages as well as blogs, which afforded the safety of anonymity and distance but do not constitute a public sphere in Afghanistan (2014: 880).

During the course of this research Hazara social media's impact on Hazara historiography has been assessed, because as noted in the aforementioned quotes social media is now being thoroughly utilised by the Hazara community to circulate information about the community's history, without a considerably heavy reliance on external sources. Having stated that social media has been a key tool within the research it is therefore relevant to briefly explain why social media is central to this particular research project. Social media has been a key tool in linking Hazara 'movements' around the globe, and as a result has heightened Hazara ethnic solidarity. During a conference at the University of Oxford in July 2016, anthropologist Dr Khadija Abbasi discussed Hazara utilisation of social media in a presentation titled, 'The Republic of Silence: An imagined community of Hazaras in diaspora'⁹². Dr Abbasi stated that the Hazara-run 'Republic of Silence' website and social media more generally, were spaces which allowed the Hazara diaspora to connect and interact with one another, and that this space also gave a marginalised community a 'voice'. Furthermore, Abbasi noted that the Republic of Silence website served as a tool for political mobilisation. It was also mentioned in the presentation that social media allows Hazara community members to recall and preserve specific narratives of the community's past. While in recent years there has been a growth in the proliferation

⁹² The conference was a two-day event on Afghan migration. I attended the second day which focused on Hazara migration, and attended Dr Khadija Abbasi's presentation. The abstract of Dr Abbasi's presentation can be found at the bottom of the following link: www.afghanmigration.org/abstracts/.

of Hazara websites and social media pages dedicated to telling the history of the Hazara people and documenting attacks against the Hazara communities in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In turn this has had a significant impact on the mobilisation of Hazaras in Europe and elsewhere (Olszewska 2013). Other prominent Hazara websites and social media pages working to create larger, less localised Hazara networks include the 'World Hazara Council', and the aforementioned 'Hazara International' and 'Hazara.net', to name a few.

Alongside the points mentioned by Abbasi, social media is also utilised by the Hazara community to highlight personal experiences of migration, persecution and marginalisation. It further allows for the construction and proliferation of a Hazara historiography created from within the community, which impacts individual and community conceptualisations of identity, as Geoffrey Roberts notes that '...the discipline of history is essentially a narrative mode of knowing, understanding, explaining and reconstructing the past' (2001: 1). This is significant to bear in mind in relation to the Hazara community and the contemporary historiography project that the community is engaged in, as it allows for parallel understandings of historical events, which go beyond widely proliferated accounts of history, which undermine or misrepresent marginal or minority communities. Subsequently, social media has a dual role, as it also becomes a vessel through which dominant narratives of Afghan history, which neglect the Hazara community are challenged, and where alternative histories are presented. Here community organisations also have a role, as events such as the annual Baba Mazari commemoration allow speakers and attendees to remember and revisit the community's past. Thus, social media allows for personal experiences, narratives, historiography and identity to interact. However, the following quote by Professor Anne Marie Musschoot of Ghent University is also pertinent to consider in relation to the history writing that is now prolific on the internet and social media:

New historians...cut off from the assumption of ever being able to reconstruct the past as it really was, turn to narrative techniques in order to present possible reconstructions of the past as it may of could have been. The basic assumption here is that our knowledge of historical reality will

always be restricted and conditioned by the necessarily biased opinions of the narrating subject or that narrating instance (2016: 144).

Musschoot's quote is important to note as she highlights how all history is a series of historical events which are framed within given narratives, which means that all history of all peoples world-over cannot always be represented through such techniques, and as such only segments of history are characterised and proliferated. In turn all history is embedded within a process of selection. The question then arises as to why certain histories are represented in the particular ways that they are constructed? This is a question that this chapter, alongside the previous chapter and the subsequent chapters, seeks to answer through showing the various methods being utilised to construct and propagate Hazara history, which would not have been possible in the past.

Branching out further, the content shared on Hazara social media pages shows how everyday experiences of violence is narrativised and converted into transnational politics by the Hazara migrant and diaspora community worldwide. The Hazara community outside of Afghanistan and Pakistan utilise social media to organise demonstrations, petition parliamentarians and spread awareness about the community's history, and persecution, both past and present. Thus, tangible outcomes relating to political mobilisation through social media have taken place among the Hazara migrant and diaspora community. In Britain for example, there was for a few years a very active All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the Hazara community, which aimed '...to raise awareness of the human rights of Hazara communities in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to encourage appropriate governmental and international action'⁹³, with twenty Members of Parliament (MPs) acting as the group's 'qualifying members' and two MPs as its 'officers'. The APPG held events at Parliament on the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan, with MPs from constituencies

⁹³ For information on the Hazara APPG see:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmhallparty/register/hazara.htm.

It should be noted (as mentioned by several research participants) that the Hazara APPG is no longer active as the MPs that initially supported the initiative either resigned or lost their constituency seats in subsequent elections, but Hazara community members did articulate a desire for wanting to work to re-establish the Hazara APPG.

with large Hazara populations speaking at such events, which included the former MP for the Southampton Itchen constituency, John Denham.

More recently Adrian Bailey and other British MPs raised the issue of safety and security of Hazaras in December 2018 during a session in Parliament, and again in a parliamentary session in January 2019. Adrian Bailey sought answers regarding humanitarian assistance for Hazaras as a result of a deadly Taliban offensive in the Hazara-dominated area of Jaghori in Ghazni province, which took place in late 2018⁹⁴. Both these incidents saw British parliamentarians explicitly highlighting the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan at the House of Commons, which is generally as a result of constituents writing to, and meeting with, their local MPs in order to persuade them to take action on an issue of importance for them and their wider community. The actions taken by politicians like Adrian Bailey and others, in Parliament, in late 2018 and early 2019 display the effective mobilisation of the Hazara community when it comes to raising awareness and support for community issues, namely in relation to human rights, as Hazara activists based in London have noted that Hazaras in the country have taken to lobbying their MPs in order to raise awareness about the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan, in previous years. In turn, as a result of social media use and engagement the number of demonstrations instigated by the Hazara community in multiple cities globally, has grown.

Furthermore, in relation to Hazara refugees Amy Elizabeth Neve notes the following, while citing the work of Diana Glazebrook:

Hazara refugees in Australia have a documented history of using technology to enable their transnational lives. Glazebrook (2005) looks at the use of mobile phones among Hazara refugees in Melbourne to manage their social networks within Australia and overseas. She argues that the phones provide a mechanism for Hazara to gain and manage their social capital within the community and access and transmit news from their home countries and family (2014: 165).

⁹⁴ For more information on the proceedings of both sessions in Parliament see:

1) www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2018-12-04e.646.1.

2) www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2019-01-09a.345.5.

Glazebrook's intervention here is quite important to note as this use of 'social capital' is very evident in how transnational Hazara communities work to co-ordinate demonstrations and online 'twitter storms' world-over, in the aftermath of bombings and attacks on the community in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. This is also relevant in relation to mobilisation against the Afghan government in Europe when the president or other high-ranking official representatives from Afghanistan visit various cities abroad, with this specific form of political mobilisation being undertaken in order to highlight and raise awareness of the perceived discrimination of Hazaras by the Afghan government and lack of security afforded to the community in spite of multiple attacks on Hazaras in Afghanistan by IS-Khorasan since 2015.

Having highlighted the centrality of social media within this research it is also essential to analyse discussions on historiography, given that it is the dominant theme within this chapter, as it is relevant to the construction of a Hazara history from within the community. Here it is worth noting the work of historian Alun Munslow who examines the major role and position a historian has when it comes to how the past is discussed. Munslow states that, '...what is represented (told) as history is the historian's choice' (2007: 4), which can be seen in the Afghan context as literature on Hazaras is limited. This in turn makes it very difficult to produce a definite history and 'origins story' of the Hazaras. What is now occurring is a Hazara led initiative to construct and preserve the community's history, and disseminate information about this history through the internet and social media. Munslow's assertion links to anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot's more 'moral' point in relation to historians, namely that, '...the role of the historian is to reveal the past, to discover or, at least, approximate the truth' (1995: 5). However, even if there is general agreement that such is the role of a historian, this does not necessarily mean that they adequately fulfil such a role in all instances. Thus, with regards to Afghan history, and all histories more broadly, there are conflicting narratives about the past, as Professor Nile Green notes that this viewpoint is prevalent in the work of historian Sayed Askar Mousavi:

A milestone work in writing Afghan history from the Hazara minority [perspective] was written by Syed Askar Mousavi (1956-), who studied at Oxford University during his years as a refugee. In his book, Mousavi rejected

the nationalist version of Afghan history (and with it, collective identity) as the monopolizing discourse of ruling elites. Indeed, to describe this process of the hegemonic Pashtun denial of alternative pasts and pluralistic identities, Mousavi coined the pejorative term 'Afghanistanization' (2015: 45).

Therefore, it can be seen that Hazara history is being documented and constructed simultaneously online, in order to show how the national history writing project of Afghanistan is not holistic. This is because historic Hazara grievances resulting from the community's wide-scale subjugation have not been given sufficient consideration in these dominant accounts of Afghan history, although they may at times have been noticed. This in turn has meant that accounts of Hazara history have not been consolidated into distinct themes within the main sources of Afghan historiography. Consequently, in propagating accounts of Hazara history online a new outlet is provided to the community where Hazara-specific narratives can be spread far and wide, which then becomes a mechanism for political mobilisation beyond Afghanistan. Thus, this online engagement shows how a marginal community has taken it upon itself the task to preserve and propagate its history.

Another equally pertinent quote by Munslow is the following which states that, '...there was much uncertainty about the creation of historical knowledge, and specifically the ability of being able to 'turn' our knowledge of the past into an objective written representation' (2007: 9). This is why, in the case of the Hazara community, indigenous and contemporary constructions of the past are important, as such marginal groups have comparatively less documented history. In this regard oral history plays a vital role, as it allows Hazaras to narrate and preserve the history of a marginal community on their terms. Furthermore, accounts of Hazara history are significant for the purpose of this research given that central to this history is the belief of wide-scale oppression which underpins the narrative of marginality within this research. Although, it should be noted that this narrative may be contested by some Pashtuns who believe that the Hazara community's aim in disseminating these accounts of oppression are not actually an attempt to reconfigure Hazara history, but are instead intended to demonise Pashtuns by linking their community to acts which

members of their community may perceive as fabricated narrations. With regards to historiography, Munslow also states that:

Most [historians] accept the 'common-sense' or practical realist position [to history] that there is a reality beyond us, and, fortunately, we possess a capacity to satisfactorily represent (re-present) it. So as a result truthful historical statements can be produced because they match or correspond to the facts of known reality (ibid: 11).

However, this quote implies that historians can represent all forms of truth holistically, which is not realistically possible, so instead an issue of importance that emerges here is the ability to represent marginalised realities, which critical deconstructionist historians should seek to do as an ethical responsibility within the field. Furthermore, as noted in the preceding pages, Trouillot emphasises that critical historians have an ethical duty to represent marginalised historical accounts (1995: 5). Otherwise, it becomes harder to know about histories which do not already fit within academically codified narrations of the past. What is now occurring among the Hazaras is a community led initiative to construct and preserve the community's history, and disseminate information about this 'Hazara history', and this is partially constructed and propagated through the use of the internet and social media. Here it should be noted that as a result of this campaign to document and propagate Hazara history online a tension is now arising between Hazaras and Pashtuns in relation to the extent to which the Hazara community have been 'victims' under Pashtun rule in Afghanistan, and the need to engage in such a project at a time when Afghans of all ethnicities are suffering in the country as a result of increased instability and growing insurgent activity. Consequently, this documentation of Hazara history works to fuel animosity between the two communities, which appears to be a continuation of hostilities of the past, further fragmenting both communities. While in relation to Munslow's earlier point about choice, and with the above emergent conflict in mind, it is worth remembering that some individuals may purposefully choose to not engage with historical narratives critically, and that they may seek to perpetuate certain dominant accounts of history given that they have remained largely undisputed or as they may appear to benefit certain communities, for instance, by reinforcing a dominant

community's sense of worth or in working to serve that community's material interests, and in turn such communities may seek disrupt the production and proliferation of various forms of information which undermine dominant historical narratives.

Based on the aforementioned points, Hazara historiography has been vital to discuss in this section given the developing trend among the community to attempt to record and disseminate information about the community's past online. It has given the Hazara community an opportunity to engage in presenting a history of the community from within the community, challenging or expanding on Pashtun accounts of Afghan history, because as noted by Professor Nile Green, '...there has never emerged an effectively hegemonic (still less, consensual) history acceptable to the different communities of Afghanistan' (2015:3), while Michel-Rolph Trouillot states that, '...theories of history actually privilege one side as if the other did not matter' (1995: 22). Therefore, the creation of an indigenous historiography in the case of the Hazaras allows for a marginal community to narrate their past on their terms. It also allows for the community's collective memory of persecution and marginalisation to be explicitly highlighted, discussed and critiqued within the purview of Afghan history more generally, and it also allows for the incorporation of a more positive, contemporary history of Hazaras, since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, which documents the recent achievements of the community in Afghanistan. This allows for the construction of a history that does not solely focus on accounts of oppression and marginalisation, but also looks to modern-day community accomplishments, embodied in the narrative of overcoming. Thus, this community led initiative to produce a Hazara historiography has been significant to engage with as it impacts the narratives the community propagates about itself and what members of the Hazara community articulate about their own personal conceptualisations of identity.

This section has shown how Hazara social media is being utilised by the community to propagate an internally constructed community history of the Hazaras. As a result numerous Hazara social media pages and websites have emerged over the last few years which document this history. This history seeks to document a protracted

timeline of oppression alongside a recent history of community triumphs in spite of continued adversity.

6.5 Conclusion:

To conclude, it can be seen that in recent years the Hazara community has taken upon itself the task of documenting, preserving and propagating their community's history in Afghanistan. The most effective tool in achieving the aims of this historiography project has been the use of the internet and social media. This is because, globally, this online domain has wide-scale accessibility and reach. The accessibility of online media has meant that Hazaras can easily share information about their community and history, where acquisition of such material by Hazara communities can easily be done, wherever they may be based, be it in Afghanistan, the neighbouring region, or further afield in Europe or Australia. Given this level of accessibility, it has also meant that anyone within the community has the ability to circulate sources of Hazara history that may be available to them, while also being able to utilise social media to mobilise for Hazara political causes and undertake collective action. This engagement and resultant activism stemming from Hazara social media use thus emphasises the social capital of the community, which in turn creates cohesive networks. These networks then work to undertake collective action in support of Hazara communities world-over, and subsequently results in individual personalisations of the master narratives within this research and visible transnational politics externally.

Within the historical narratives being propagated online, the late 19th Century insurrection of Hazarajat is widely discussed, and the violence inflicted on the Hazara people by Emir Abdur Rahman Khan and his army is greatly emphasised (while on occasion an assumed pre-Islamic history of Hazaras in Afghanistan is also highlighted). Therefore, an underlying feature of these narratives is that the history of the community since the late 1800s is heavily shaped by continued subjugation and marginalisation of the community, albeit to varying degrees than at the time of the insurrection of Hazarajat. As a result Hazara websites and social media pages document incidents such as the Afshar massacre and that of Mazar within a continued timeline of marginality. Concurrently, a more optimistic timeline of contemporary Hazara history is also being circulated online. What is documented here is the

achievements of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region and the gains made since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. Similarly, in the contemporary sources being propagated online reference is also made to the educational attainments of Hazaras, their accomplishments in the arts and sports, and their support for women's rights and education. In turn it can be seen that two parallel timelines of Hazara history dominate the content of Hazara websites and social media pages: that of marginality, documenting historic and more recent examples of oppression, and the other of contemporary instances of overcoming where Hazaras are taking it upon themselves to work hard for themselves and their community, in order to alter the trajectory of their community's fortunes in 21st Century Afghanistan.

At the same time social media is being utilised for political mobilisation among Hazara communities worldwide. While the section within this chapter on Hazara social media and political mobilisation has shown how the online domain is a powerful tool for the community when working to air community grievances about the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. This has resulted in multiple demonstrations taking place across various continents and cities, as a collective response to targeted attacks against the community and perceived discrimination by the Afghan government. In vocally airing their grievances and working to challenge the status quo in Afghanistan it can be seen that the transnational Hazara community has gained a new found confidence which has become the impetus for greater visibility for the community, taking to the streets in Afghanistan and elsewhere in order to demand safety and security for their community. The examples of political mobilisation discussed in the section on Hazara social media and political mobilisation within this chapter all gained wider coverage through the use of social media. While at the same time the information propagated online with regards to Hazara campaigning and demands have shown how the gains of the community since the fall of the Taliban regime have allowed the community to assert themselves in ways that would have been unthinkable during Taliban rule and prior. In using social media as a conduit for political activism it can be seen that the community is in fact linking both the internally constructed community narratives of marginality and overcoming, in that the former narrative becomes the motivation for political mobilisation itself, while the latter narrative has allowed for the community to become bold in their demands for their

community and has heightened their visibility globally. This subsequently shows how the online domain is being used as a space to work to change the fortunes of Hazaras in Afghanistan. Furthermore, in utilising social media for political mobilisation and voicing Hazara grievances it can be seen that the narrative of overcoming is embodied through the words and actions undertaken by the community worldwide.

Chapter 7: Political mobilisation, collective action and community events among transnational Hazara communities:

7.1 Introduction:

The previous chapters have highlighted how a Hazara past predicated on subjugation and recent community achievements and civic gains have been central to how members of the community engage with their history, and how they present themselves to the outside world, be it through conversations, community events or the online sphere. However, these two narratives can also be seen to be influencing collective action among the community, post-2001, since the fall of the Taliban regime. In turn this chapter will look at Hazara political mobilisation, both in Afghanistan and overseas, to show how this mobilisation has led to direct action and prominent community events, given that, 'Since the fall of the Taliban...[t]he traditional 'under-class', the Hazaras, have gained in political influence and, at the grassroots level, some are trying to reverse gains made by Pashtuns favoured most recently by the Taliban' (Simonsen 2004: 717), which can now be seen to be giving the community greater visibility in Afghanistan. Alongside political gains, the community is also now excelling in education and numerous international articles now discuss achievements of the community since the fall of the Taliban regime. This is particularly evident in relation to women's rights and democracy. Online, English-language publications have made reference to accomplished female Hazaras in Afghanistan, while also noting, for instance, the high turnout in elections among Hazara women, as well as writing about the continued Hazara success in the *kankor*, the national university entrance exams, which attests to the liberal attitudes the community claims to promote. Therefore, these examples of community achievements and the aforementioned quote exemplify how the narrative of marginality has been used as an impetus for community gains, while the community is also working to alter its fortunes and not to be constantly defined by past marginality.

With the above in mind, it can be seen that community achievements underscore the narrative of overcoming and a new chapter in contemporary Hazara history, predicated on liberalism and liberal ideals, where these community gains are now acknowledged and discussed in relation to the place and role of Hazaras in 21st Century

Afghanistan. Some features of these liberal values, which will be explored in this chapter, include the use of material culture as symbols of identity, such as the dambora festival in Bamiyan, with the dambora now becoming a symbol of Hazara identity, the promotion of a secularised Hazara identity online, political mobilisation against the enforcement of rigid religious decrees like the 2009 Shia personal status law, in turn supporting the separation of religion and state, alongside civic engagement in the community as a marker of liberal values. At the same time these liberal ideals manifest in situations where the rights of citizens within supposed liberal states are not upheld, leading the community to engage in political protests. This chapter will therefore show how the liberal ideals of the community underscore their political mobilisation, civic engagement and community events, as well as how specific instances of political or social mobilisation catalyse the narratives of marginality and overcoming alongside the precise content of these acts⁹⁵.

The liberalisation of these master narratives was not always so prominent or evident. Therefore, in order to understand how these narratives have become framed in such a way, we need to briefly explore the situation in Afghanistan just before 2001, to help contextualise why 2001 is the historical starting point within this chapter. 2001 was the year which saw the fall of the Taliban regime, a regime which had been in power for five years, since September 1996. Prior to NATO presence in the country there had been instances of severe violence carried out by the Taliban against the Hazaras, namely the massacre in Mazar-e Sharif in 1997 and the Yakawalng massacre of 2001. While in 2002 mass graves were found in Bamiyan which locals claimed contained the remains of victims who were killed by the Taliban just before the collapse of the regime in 2001⁹⁶. The autumn of 2001 thus marked the end of a brutal era of repression and dispossession of the Hazara people, and ushered in the opportunity for the community to reposition itself within Afghan society. However, in taking late 2001 as the starting point for this new timeline, documenting Hazara collective action, it is

⁹⁵ On how specific mobilisations catalyse narratives see the following literature: Akbarzadeh, Shahram et al. "The Iranian Kurds' transnational links: impacts on mobilization and political ambitions." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2019, pp. 1-20, and Baser, Bahar. "The Awakening of a Latent Diaspora: The Political Mobilization of First and Second Generation Turkish Migrants in Sweden." *Ethnopolitics*, vol. 13, issue 4, 2014, pp. 355-376.

⁹⁶ See: www.nytimes.com/2002/04/08/world/nation-challenged-afghanistan-mass-graves-reportedly-tied-last-days-taliban-rule.html.

important to note that Hazara political mobilisation had in fact been established in Afghanistan a decade and a half prior to the Taliban's capture of Kabul, in turn showing that the community was no longer willing to accept a marginal status within the country and the national political framework going forward. A pivotal study to consider here is the work of Dr Kristian Berg Harpviken whose doctoral thesis of 1996, titled, 'Political mobilisation among the Hazara of Afghanistan: 1978-1992', details Hazara political mobilisation throughout the late 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s. In relation to the *Hezb-e Wahdat* political movement Berg notes that:

Hezb-e Wahdat was only one of several groups to be based in an ethnic minority. Historically, the rulers of Afghanistan had come exclusively from within the Pashtun ethnic group. This also applied to the period of Communist domination, from 1978 to 1992. The removal of the government in April 1992 was initiated by the so-called Northern Alliance, which consisted of four groups, all representing ethnic or sectarian minorities. Among these groups, Hezb-e Wahdat was the most clear-cut ethnically based organisation. It represented a majority of the Hazara population, and it launched political demands aimed at overturning discriminatory practices (1996: 1).

While Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim mentions that:

Wahdat's leaders were endeavouring to strike a balance between ethnicity and religion. The result was an Islamic ideology used to express and further the rights of a historically disadvantaged community; a strong desire for unity of the Hazaras was its main driving force (2009: 5).

Wahdat's role in Hazara political mobilisation is necessary to consider here, given that the group, with Abdul Ali Mazari as its leader, was able to bring various Hazara factions together to strive for greater rights and political representation for the community. However, as monumental a figure as Mazari was for bringing various Hazara political leaders together for the community, he was not able to negotiate peace with the Taliban, because it was the Taliban who took Mazari's life in 1995 under the guise of peace talks. Although, in taking Mazari's life there was a belief that his political

ideology would also dissipate, this has immensely backfired, as the opposite has occurred with his legacy living on among Hazaras both in Afghanistan and overseas. The Hazara consciousness and social media chapters of thesis have shown how Mazari continues to be revered among the community as a martyr. While at the same time his demands for equality are still eulogised by Hazaras who were only children when he was a political leader. In turn his life is also seen as a personification of both the narratives of marginality and overcoming, with marginality relating to his brutal death and overcoming relating to his actions and legacy.

Following on, this chapter will be divided into three events sections. The first section will focus on city-specific incidents in Quetta, the second on national action in Afghanistan, and the third on transnational diasporic events. In these sections reference will be made to certain post-2001 political events, Hazara mobilisation or community events and their significance in relation to the narratives of marginality and overcoming, in chronological order. In relation to the subsequent Hazara events which will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter it is important to note the following quote from Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim who states that:

Ethnic narratives and symbols, which are accumulated historically and interpreted in specific socio-political settings, are some of the resources that people draw on to make sense of uncertain environments and respond to rapid changes (2016: 640).

Ibrahim relates this statement to two post-2001 examples, these examples being political factions in Afghanistan, as well as the diaspora who returned to country. However, the events discussed in the following sections will show how Ibrahim's assertion links to community events and political mobilisation as well, both nationally and internationally. While also showing how it also relates to the diaspora who choose to remain, rather than return to the homeland. Therefore, this chapter will show how the Hazara community is engaging in public forms of dissent to demand protection of their rights and person as citizens of the state whose fundamental rights have not been upheld, be it in Quetta or Afghanistan, again showing how the narrative of marginality is still a lived reality for the community. At the same time this chapter will

show how precarity faced by the community will not deter them from working to improve the circumstances and future opportunities of the community, as the previous example of the *kankor* has shown. Similarly, the post-2001 gains of the community means that they will no longer tolerate being side-lined or dismissed, and events such as the annual *dambora* festival in Bamiyan, which will be discussed further in this chapter, show that the community will continue to be visible and occupy spaces that they have not been able to in their history. While the section on diaspora in this chapter shows how the community's liberal ideals are underpinning global action for the Hazara communities in Quetta and Afghanistan. Subsequently, this chapter will highlight how Hazara community consciousness post-2001 and the community's liberal ideals are fuelling activism among the community both at home and overseas.

7.2 Quetta events:

The trajectory of the Hazara community in Quetta was historically markedly different to that of the Hazara community in Afghanistan. As noted in the introduction chapter, Hazaras started to arrive in Quetta during the late 1800s during the insurrection of Hazarajat. They soon made their mark on society, at the time in British India and then in newly established Pakistan, with the formation of the Hazara Pioneers regiment of the British Indian army and General Musa Khan who was the first Hazara Commander in Chief of the Pakistan Army from 1958 to 1966. This allowed for ethnic consciousness to flourish among the community in Quetta decades before it did so for Hazaras in Afghanistan. However, since the 2001 NATO intervention in Afghanistan and growing terrorist and sectarian violence in Pakistan, the Hazara community of Quetta have become victims of insurgency, with multiple targeted attacks taking place against the community since the early 2000s. These continued attacks on Hazaras in Quetta have not been curtailed by the state and has instead led to the Hazara community in the city taking to the streets to voice their demands for protection and justice after years of violence being inflicted on the community. In turn this section will focus on and detail instances of collective action undertaken by the Hazara community of Quetta. Here it is important to briefly detail some statistics about attacks on Hazaras in Quetta, in order to underscore the precarity of the community in the city. In a Human rights Watch report on Balochistan's Hazaras from 2014 it was noted that, 'More than 500 Hazaras have been killed in attacks since 2008', up until 2014 when the report was

published, and that, 'In 2013, nearly half of Shia killed in Pakistan were Hazaras'⁹⁷. While in 2018 they also reported that, 'At least 509 members of the Hazara community have been killed and 627 injured in militant attacks in Quetta'⁹⁸.

Here it is important to also refer to the work of Michel Foucault given its relevance to the collective action undertaken by Hazaras in Quetta, which will be discussed in the remainder of this section. In Foucault's work on biopower and biopolitics it is noted that the nature of sovereign power has altered from what it was before. At the centre of his work on biopower and biopolitics, the former being the current form of how power is manifested and the latter being the application of this power, the old formulation of power was the state's ability and right to the preside over and determine death of individual state subjects (1998: 139). However, this means of utilising state power is no longer the norm as this has been '...carefully supplanted by the administration of bodies and the calculated management of life' (ibid: 140). In discussing this change in the understanding of power Foucault refers to the French Revolution, stating that:

Power would no longer be dealing simply with legal subjects over whom the ultimate dominion was death, but with living beings, and the mastery it would be able to exercise over them would have to be applied at the level of life itself; it was the taking charge of life...(ibid: 143).

Foucault's work thus locates the change in sovereign power to a specific time in history. In turn if the state is now the custodian and protector of life, in the context of this chapter and research, it can be seen that the Pakistani state has fallen short of upholding its duties towards its citizens, particularly in this case the safeguarding of the Hazara community. This has therefore led the community to engage in collective action, demanding that the state act to protect the community, given that their most fundamental rights as citizens have constantly been denied.

⁹⁷ See: www.hrw.org/report/2014/06/29/we-are-walking-dead/killings-shia-hazara-balochistan-pakistan.

⁹⁸ See: www.hrw.org/news/2018/04/30/pakistans-hazara-community-under-attack.

In terms of collective action, in 2013 in Quetta there were widespread protests undertaken by thousands of Hazaras in the city against targeted killings of civilians. In relation to one of the bombings, at the time, the BBC stated that, 'Reports said thousands of angry Hazaras moved the bodies to a local mosque but then began chanting and protesting instead of proceeding with the burials'⁹⁹. While Al Jazeera reported that:

Thousands of Shias in Pakistan have held a sit-in in the city of Quetta, refusing to bury their dead for a second day, demanding that security forces protect them from armed Sunni groups. More than 4,000 women blocked a road in the southwestern city on Monday, vowing to continue their protest until the authorities take action against those behind the attack that killed 84 members of the Hazara Shia community. Protesters chanted "stop killing Shias"¹⁰⁰.

This specific incident is important to note as it saw such a large number of Hazara civilians take to the streets to protest. The lack of state intervention with regards to continued sectarian attacks against Hazaras in Quetta brings to the fore the peripheral nature of the Hazara lived experience in Quetta which eludes the mainstream Pakistani society's consciousness. Here a pertinent quote to note is the following from a female Hazara protester, which is referenced in a book on faith-based violence in Pakistan. The protester stated that:

I must share what it means to be a Shia Hazara. Today, I am going to share a bit of my story – the story of me and my people. When one of us comes in front of you, you mostly label us Chinese or Korean. Our complexions are not like yours, neither is our race or genetic composition. We are the "others". And our pain is that of the others. We are Pakistanis but not even considered a part of you. Very few will raise their voice for us, even when 27 of us are taken off a bus and are shot and killed just because we are Shias. Just because we have Mongol-like features. Just because we migrated here

⁹⁹ See: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21495975.

¹⁰⁰ See: www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2013/02/201321813486399438.html.

from Afghanistan. But what is the reality? How many of you can relate to 5 dead bodies being taken out of a house—father, brothers, sons (Ali 2016: 177).

This quote is important to note as it encapsulates the extent to which the Hazara community in Quetta has been pushed to the margins so much so that most Pakistanis are not even aware that they are interacting with their co-nationals when they meet Hazaras, even after a decade and a half of violence has been inflicted on the community. This also explains why the Hazara community in Quetta have to undertake such drastic collective action in order to gain media attention, to penetrate the national consciousness to create greater awareness of the community's plight and the need for state intervention. Here it is important to note the following statement from a journal paper by Dr Katia Genel, an associate Professor at the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, where Genel notes the following in relation to Foucault's work on biopower and biopolitics, 'The new technologies of power are situated in effect below the power of sovereignty: power is increasingly less the power to put to death, and increasingly more the right to intervene in order to make live' (2006: 47). This quote is significant to consider in relation to the Hazara community in Quetta as it can be seen that state's intervention to protect life has not occurred since the beginning of the targeted attacks on the Hazara community in Quetta.

On multiple occasions members of the community have stated that in protesting they are seeking protection by the Pakistani state, as citizens of state, within the Constitution. Article 4.1 of the Constitution of Pakistan of 1973 states that, 'To enjoy the protection of law and to be treated in accordance with law is the inalienable right of every citizen. Wherever he may be, and of every other person for the time being within Pakistan'¹⁰¹. However, the normative framework of who is considered a 'Pakistani' places Hazaras, as Shias, outside of this categorisation and in turn the state does not give due regard to the precarity of the community. Consequently, the inability of the state to uphold one of the most fundamental rights of certain citizens has led to an already marginalised and dispossessed community to have to take upon

¹⁰¹ The full text of the Constitution can be accessed from the following link: www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1333523681_951.pdf.

themselves the task of highlighting the state's failure of upholding their rights, through undertaking drastic means of collective action, as well as occupying public spaces. Additionally, in relation to the Hazara community in Quetta refusing to bury the deceased, Forbes reported that in a conversation with Hazara community leader Qayyum Changezi, Changezi had said that:

...the provincial government had failed to protect the life and property of citizens. "All we are asking for is security for our lives. We will not move from here until the government gives us assurances that [Lashkar-e-Jhangvi] will be punished. We will not bury the bodies of our loved ones until then'...¹⁰².

Changezi's statement further emphasises how the continued attacks on Quetta's Hazaras brings to the fore the issue of the inability or unwillingness of the state to intervene to protect its citizens, which again is in direct contravention of the country's Constitution, as the law explicitly states that citizens have a right to protection, under the law. Here it is important to note the following quote from Foucault in relation to Changezi's quote, as, 'It is not that life has been totally integrated into techniques that govern and administer it; it constantly escapes them' (1998: 143). This statement can be seen to apply in a multitude of contexts, both past and present. It is particularly pertinent to the Hazara community in Quetta given that the state has not been able to curtail the attacks against the community which have been taking place for years. However, in propagating a certain model of who constitutes a citizen or who belongs to state, which explicitly occurred during the Presidency of Zia Ul Haq in the late 1970s and 1980s, and is yet to be officially dismantled as state policy, it becomes glaringly apparent why in the Pakistani context it is extremely difficult, and will take time, for the lives of Hazaras to be 'integrated' and protected. In turn it can be seen that the collective action of the community in Quetta also relates to the narrative of marginality as continued insurgent violence is leading the community to have to engage in protests in order to bring attention to the violence being inflicted on the community which the state has not dealt with in any meaningful way.

¹⁰² See: www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2013/01/14/in-pakistan-100-dead-remain-unburied-out-of-protest/#39129cfe4b74.

In terms of a more recent example of community action, 2018 saw members of the Hazara community in Quetta engage in another form of protest in order to again highlight their grievances against the state for failing to protect the community. In this instance members of the community went on a hunger strike. At the time of the hunger strike in April 2018 the Voice of America reported that several attacks against the community had occurred in that month alone¹⁰³. Hazara lawyer and human rights activist Jalila Haider who became the face of the hunger strike is quoted in the same article as saying that:

I want to request army chief (Qamar Javed) Bajwa to come here as a common man, as a father, as a husband, and feel our pain. We have 3,000 widows and 10,000 orphans. Face them. Tell them why their loved ones are being killed¹⁰⁴.

These hunger strikes are important to note as it was the first time that Hazara protesters were engaging in a form of protest which as an act had the negative implication of causing direct harm to these specific protesters, despite the fact that it was the harm that the community endures that lead to these protesters to engage in such a drastic political act. With this point in mind, it is important to consider the work of Professor Ewa Płonowska Ziarek in relation to hunger strikes as a form of protest. In a journal paper on 'Biopolitics of Race and Gender' Ziarek discusses hunger strikes in relation to Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben's work on biopolitics. She notes that, '...it was militant British suffragettes who in 1909 revived and redefined the hunger strike as a modern political weapon of an organized movement by linking it for the first time with the discourse of human rights' (2008: 99). Ziarek later cites a letter from a suffragette who was on hunger strike at the time to explain the motivation behind engaging in this specific form of protest, noting that, '...subjugated groups resort to violence against their bodies when rational law-based arguments fail—that is, when instituted political speech is deprived of its performative power...' (ibid: 100), as well as stating that, 'The suffragettes' usurpation of the sovereign decision over mere life in the struggle for political rights negates their exclusion...' (ibid: 102).

¹⁰³ See: www.voanews.com/east-asia/pakistans-shiite-hazara-hunger-strike-protest-targeted-killings.

¹⁰⁴ ibid.

The rationale of the suffragettes a century ago can be seen to be mirrored by the Quetta Hazara protesters, as the superficial messages of support and solidarity, as well as official state visits have not resulted in a change of circumstances for the Hazara community in the city, and in turn has led members of the community to engage in an extreme form of protest as a means to gain attention for their cause. The point about exclusion in Ziarek's paper is also important to note in relation to Quetta, as it is the exclusion of the Hazara community within dominant understandings of what constitutes a state subject which has partly allowed this cycle of violence to continue against the community. However, in engaging in such a severe form of political protest, the excluded community has now claimed some space for manoeuvring and negotiating, as this form of political action is being linked to state inaction, and temporarily removes Hazaras from their state of exclusion while they are undertaking such a visible form of collective action. Here a relevant statement to consider is the following from Dr Zeynep Gambetti of Boğaziçi University, taken from her work on the Gezi park protests in Turkey in 2013, but which also relates to the collective action of the Hazara community in Quetta. In relation to the collective action undertaken at Gezi park Gambetti states that:

I call it a "politics of the body", literally speaking. Any "body" who was discontented or outraged by police violence or felt choked by the authoritarian regime was out in the streets. The emphasis here is on "out in the streets" rather than on any body's specific or personal motive for being there... Making the resistance visible thus became a major stake. In order for any demand addressed to the government to be heard, the bodies in the streets and squares had to first to make visible the claim that they were a force to be reckoned with, whatever the specific reason for the frustration may be (2014: 95).

Such collective action therefore allows the community to be seen as active agents as opposed to passive victims of state aggression in the case of the Gezi protesters, and insurgent violence in the case of the Hazara community in Quetta. In relation to Quetta it can be seen that when all other avenues of dialogue and diplomacy are exhausted the Hazara community then has had to literally rely on 'the body' as a space of protest

as all other means of raising attention of community grievances have failed. However, how effective this use of the body is as a means of protest for the community in Quetta is debatable given that limited concrete steps have actually been taken by the state to ensure the safety of Hazaras in the city.

Hazara protesters also demonstrated in April 2019 after a bomb blast killed over twenty civilians and left dozens wounded, again demanding greater security for the community in the city. At the time the BBC reported that, 'Both the Pakistani Taliban and the Sunni militant group Islamic State (IS) said they had carried out the attack'¹⁰⁵. While Reuters mentioned that Quetta Hazaras had organised a sit-in in response to the attack, which was blocking traffic in the city¹⁰⁶. The Reuters article stated that at the protests crowds chanted "Stop killing Hazaras," [and] "Down with terrorism and sectarianism"¹⁰⁷, while also noting that, 'One police official said there were about 200 people taking part on Sunday, blocking the key arterial Western Bypass leading into Quetta'¹⁰⁸. The assembly of the Hazara community in public in 2019 shows that several years from the bold community action of refusing to bury the victims of the 2013 targeted attack on the community was undertaken, visible political mobilisation of the community has had no impact on the state's ability or desire to go after the perpetrators of these repeated attacks.

Having discussed multiple examples of Hazara collective action in Quetta, it is important to also engage with the work of Giorgio Agamben on biopower and biopolitics. In his book 'Homo Sacer' Agamben discusses sovereign power in relation to Foucault's work on biopower and politics. Taking from the work of political theorist Carl Schmitt, Agamben states that, 'For what is at issue in the sovereign exception is, according to Schmitt, the very condition of possibility of juridical rule and, along with it, the very meaning of State authority. Through the state of exception, the sovereign "creates and guarantees the situation" that the law needs for its own validity' (1998: 17), and in turn allows for the suspension of the law, which works to further justify a

¹⁰⁵ See: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-47921535.

¹⁰⁶ See: www.uk.reuters.com/article/uk-pakistan-blast/minority-hazaras-in-pakistan-protest-for-third-day-after-quetta-attack-idUKKCN1RQOGX.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*

particular state of exception. In the specific case of the Hazaras of Quetta it can be seen that the community is perceived as being outside of the normative and mainstream understanding of 'who' constitutes a Pakistani citizen, irrespective of what the Constitution has declared and the rights enshrined in law for every citizen, given the Hazara community's marginal status as both a religious and ethnic minority, who do not belong to the county's dominant community, Sunni Punjabis. The paradoxical nature of this specific state of exception is that the victims and protesters in this instance are in fact citizens of the state who are to be guaranteed state protection in law, but find themselves having to explicitly state that they are citizens who have a right to state protection, and in turn are not exceptions for the state to ignore, but that these calls for recognition are either repeatedly being ignored or are met with hollow declarations of sympathy and no state intervention. Here the following quote from Dr Katia Genel is also pertinent to note. She states that, 'From the moment of the crisis of the nation-state, life no longer succeeds in appearing within the system. Life becomes the stakes and the problem of politics' (2006: 55) and this is very relevant in the context of Pakistan (and Afghanistan also) in that in post-2001 Pakistan there was a dramatic increase in terrorism and sectarian violence, that the state either through incompetence or unwillingness was unable to curtail effectively, with a remnant of this particular crisis being the continued attacks on Hazaras in Quetta, which underscores Genel's specific statement on 'life'. Genel also mentions that, 'Power is above all a decision on life in the form of a qualification of life, a decision on its value and therefore also its nonvalue' (ibid: 56) which is an ever-present reality for Hazaras in Quetta and how the state chooses to, or not to, respond to sectarian violence in the city.

Having discussed community responses to sectarian insurgent violence in Quetta it should be noted that this has not deterred the community from engaging in community events which promote the community's culture and heritage. In spite of the violence inflicted on the community over the years the Hazara community in Quetta organised a 'Hazara Culture Day' Quetta in the summer of 2019. Several Pakistani papers published articles about the event, with many stating that the event was taking place again for the first time in twenty years. The Independent reported that the event was undertaken in order to '...celebrate and showcase [the Hazara

community's] history, music and traditions'¹⁰⁹, with Abdul Khaliq Hazara, the chairman of the HDP stating more generally that, 'The community strives to keep its protests peaceful, despite unrest stirred up by militants looking to pit people of different sects against each other...'¹¹⁰. While images from the event show Hazara girls dressed in traditional Hazaragi outfits dancing on stage, a large crowd gathered at the Qayum Papa stadium in the Mariabad area of the city to listen to traditional Hazaragi music and a Hazaragi musical performance by Afghan Hazara singer Zahra Elham. The cultural event and the statements by the HDP chairman Abdul Khaliq show how the community will not be silenced in the face of continued adversity, and how maintaining peace is still central to the community's political activism and collective action, years after the first targeted attack against the community, which feeds into the narrative of overcoming.

In turn it can be seen that over the years the Hazara community in Quetta has engaged in multiple forms of protest in order to demand state action against the continued targeted attacks on the community in the city. However, the state response in each instance has been minimal, with very limited concrete action being taken against insurgent groups engaged in sectarian violence in the city and country as a whole. Therefore, the Hazara community in Quetta has not only occupied public spaces as part of their protests but has also engaged in more drastic forms of collective action, such as refusing to bury the deceased and undertaking hunger strikes. With the latter example, it can be seen that protesters have taken to using their bodies as sites of protest to further compel the state to intervene, which also shows how the narrative of marginality is still relevant to the circumstances of the community in Quetta. Similarly, as mentioned in the work of Agamben, Foucault and Genel, in this section, it can be seen that the state has failed in upholding a basic right of its citizens, the right to life. While at the same time the community has chosen to not let these attacks define the community, as the city saw its first major Hazara cultural day take place in 2019, which acted as an outlet to showcase and promote the community's culture, while also being a distraction from the precarious nature of daily life for the Hazara community in Quetta, which further highlights the community's resilience and how the

¹⁰⁹ See: www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/photography/pakistan-hazara-ethnic-minority-community-quetta-a8995466.html.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*

narrative of overcoming is itself showcased through the act of organising such a cultural event.

7.3 Afghanistan events:

Having discussed political mobilisation, collective action and community events in Quetta in the previous section, this section will be focusing on several pivotal events since 2001 in Afghanistan, relating to the Hazara community. As noted in previous chapters, the history of the Hazara community in Afghanistan is central to the collective memory of the community, which underscores much of the political mobilisation and activism seen to be taking place by the Hazara community in recent years. A pertinent quote to note here is the following from Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim:

...the region, with its history of conquest and subjugation by the Afghan state, is central to the formation of Hazara 'ethnoscape' whereby, in the words of Smith, 'community is thereby "naturalised" and becomes a part of its environment, its landscapes become conversely "historicised" and bear the imprint of the community's peculiar historical development' (2016: 639).

The following political events which are to be discussed in this section of the chapter will show how Ibrahim's statement in relation to a Hazara 'ethnoscape' is ever-present in the collective action undertaken by the community, not just in Afghanistan, but globally. This is because Hazara collective action can be seen to be taking place among the diaspora too, where demonstrations against the Afghan government for its failure to protect its citizens, particularly Hazara citizens, is very acute. Similarly, in these transnational diaspora spaces the community has at times engaged with the domestic political framework, in order to raise awareness about the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. Furthermore, through engaging with the various state apparatuses available to them as citizens of Western democracies it can be seen that Hazaras in the diaspora are seeking to position themselves as bastions of liberalism and as model citizens, whose co-ethnics in Afghanistan are seen as a threat to the prevailing status quo due to their liberal ideals.

In turn the first case study to be examined here will be the controversial Shia personal status law of 2009, also known as the Shia marriage law, which was alluded to in previous chapters. At its core the law allowed Afghan Shia men to refuse basic provisions to their wives if they refuse to be intimate with their husbands. In some articles the law was referred to as a 'marital rape law', with Farzana Marie noting that a sizeable number of Hazaras were furious at the passing of the law which was seen as 'highly regressive' by the community (2013: 89). While in a book on peace in Afghanistan by reporter and columnist Terry Glavin it was stated that, 'Mohammad Mohaqiq, one of Afghanistan's most influential Shia parliamentarians, called the law "an offence to the Hazaras"' (2011: 5). This backlash to the passing of this law is significant to note on multiple levels. In the first instance it showed how Shias in Afghanistan are not a monolith, given that some Shia clerics in the country had supported this law, but that the public reaction to the law was mostly negative. This also relates to a broader point that the community does not want to solely be seen through Shia lens, as mentioned in Ibrahim's and Marie's work. It also highlighted how the community was not willing to accept state endorsed and imposed legislation being thrust upon the community. Finally, as the earlier words of Mohaqiq have shown, certain segments of Hazara society were not going to accept association with a religious decree which was seen as antithetical to their liberal principles, which further relates to the narrative of overcoming, where the community is choosing to present itself as a community that values and supports human rights, women's rights and democracy.

In terms of community action, in a 2013 article for the Afghanistan Analysts Network Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim detailed a hunger strike which was undertaken by approximately eighty students from Kabul University in front of the Parliament, in relation to 'discrimination against certain student groups and nepotism' with many Hazara student protestors present, but with very little information available as to the actual nature of the discrimination. Although it was mentioned that in recent years the number of Hazara students has grown considerably at the university, but that Hazaras '...remain underrepresented among its faculty members', with Ibrahim noting that:

Over the past few days, Afghans have taken a keen interest in the protest on social media websites such as Facebook pages featuring news and photos of the hunger strike...Most of them were also Hazara, but other students joined in, supporting demands for new teaching materials, a new library and reliable internet access at the university. The hunger strikers' camp became quite a busy scene with visitors from Afghan civil society and members of parliament. Most were Hazara, too, but among them were also influential non-Hazara such as the speaker of parliament's lower house, Abdul Rauf Ibrahimi, an Uzbek, and the first deputy of the lower house Mirwais Yaseni, a Pashtun. Additionally, 250 Afghan writers, artists and university lecturers abroad and in Afghanistan signed a letter in support of the hunger strikers, including filmmaker and author Atiq Rahimi and writer Rahnaward Zaryab.

Even though the validity of the claims being made by the protesters were ambiguous in this specific instance, this act is significant to note as it saw members of a historically marginalised community undertake their protest outside a building of significant importance, the Afghan Parliament, which is meant to uphold the rights of citizens and protect citizens. Therefore, purely on a symbolic level it was a very powerful message being sent from Hazara protesters that they will not tolerate or accept a regression to past forms of societal behaviour and discrimination. Similarly, in gaining the support of prominent Afghans who are not Hazaras, this incident further shows the impact this specific form of protest had among the wider community given the solidarity shown by non-Hazara Afghans towards those engaged in the hunger strike. Furthermore, it is also pertinent to note the work of Professor Asef Bayat here on the significance of 'streets' in his book titled 'Life as politics'. Bayat states that:

...the use of public space as a site of contestation between the actors and the authorities...makes the streets a political site is the active or participative (as opposed to passive) use of public space. This is so because these sites (sidewalks, public parks, intersections, etc.) are increasingly becoming the domain of the state power, which regulates their use... (2010: 62-63).

This is important to note in relation to this specific protest outside the Parliament, given the wide reach it ultimately had, as it allowed those unfamiliar with the protest and its demands to access it by virtue of the fact that it took place out in the open, in an area that is accessible to the public.

It is not just instances of discrimination that have resulted in Hazaras taking to the streets to protest, but also acts of violence targeted against the community which have also been the impetus for some of the community's political mobilisation in recent years. In a book titled 'Afghanistan: Politics and Economics in a Globalising State' co-authored by Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim and Professor William Maley, it is mentioned that:

One of the largest such protests took place of 11 November 2015 in Kabul. The protest that became known as the Tabassum Movement was triggered by the abduction and subsequent killing of several civilian Hazaras in the southern province of Zabul. Among those killed in this incident were Shukria Tabassum, a nine-year-old girl and her parents. The protestors carried the coffins of the victims as they marched towards the presidential palace to demand that the government provide security against insurgent violence. During the previous months, the insurgents had launched a campaign of abducting civilian Hazaras along highways in the north and the south of the country (2020: 65-66).

The Tabassum movement is a significant reminder of how the narrative of marginality is still significant in relation to Hazara collective action, given that this specific movement resulted from a grotesque instance of insurgent violence against the community. However, it should be noted that these abductions of Hazara civilians were not the first example of such insurgent violence, but were in fact '...part of a series of kidnappings of mostly Hazaras by insurgent groups along the highways in several provinces in 2015' (Bose et al. 2019: 12). Furthermore, in spite of these targeted attacks against the community, Hazaras in Afghanistan did not stay quiet and took to the streets to protest against these attacks, insurgency in the country and the President. Therefore, although the motivation for this collective action was a tragic

incident, the community was defiant in the face of targeted attacks and channelled their grief into direct action.

Another instance of collection action to consider is a protest which took place on the 23rd of July 2016 in Kabul. Hazara protestors gathered in the Deh Mazang area of Kabul to demonstrate against the partial rerouting of the TUTAP project from Bamiyan to Salang, which has become part of a wider movement to demand greater development for the Hazarajat region. As has been mentioned in previous chapters the rerouting decision was not well-received by members of the Hazara community who saw it as a government ploy against the community, to deprive a Hazara-majority region of electricity and development, in spite of the official government justification that the move was necessary on the grounds of cost and as the new route was shorter (which is discussed in greater depth in the previous social media chapter). It should be also noted that President Ghani had personally addressed the issue of underdevelopment in Hazarajat, according to a 2016 journal article by Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim on ethnicity and the 2014 Afghan elections. Ghani's response to the issue of underdevelopment was negatively received by most of the Hazara community with Ibrahim stating that:

[A] phrase which Ghani used very frequently in his communication towards the Hazaras was *zندان-e joghrafiaye* or geographical prison. In his manifesto as well as the radio message, Ghani recognised the problem of 'unbalanced development' between different regions of the country, but pointed towards natural features of these regions such as mountainous terrain as the cause of their underdevelopment. Regardless of his intention, many interpreted it as his attempt to shift blame for underdevelopment from the Afghan state towards nature (2016: 646).

However, it is important to also mention that distrust runs deeper than just with the Pashtun elite. The research for this thesis has shown that distrust also manifest towards high-profile Hazara politicians such as Mohammad Mohaqiq, Karimi Khalili and Sarwar Danish. While in work with Hazara civil society activists Dr Melissa Kerr Chiovenda noted that the same view is held of Hazaras involved with state institutions:

Hazara activists in Bamyan are equally distrustful of the locally elected provincial council. A Hazara who becomes affiliated with state institutions is in some way sullied, and most of the provincial council members are considered to have achieved their positions based on patronage networks, or as one informant told me, “through the means of the mafia” (2018: 267).

The TUTAP demonstration itself showed how the Hazara community, whose social capital has substantially increased since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, are no longer willing to accept being side-lined, in a way that has occurred multiple times in the community’s history. Here it is important to again note the work of Professor Asef Bayat on the politics of presence, as he states that, ‘The art of presence is ultimately about asserting collective will in spite of all odd, circumventing constraints, utilizing what is possible, and discovering new spaces within which to make oneself heard, see, and felt’ (2007: 202). This can be seen to have occurred during this protest as thousands of Hazara demonstrated in the country’s capital against the President and the TUTAP decision. Furthermore, the decision taken to organise a protest at the time was a particularly bold move on the part of the Hazara community because in the previous year IS-Khorasan had been blamed and claimed responsibility for attacks against Shias in Afghanistan, according to Dr Antonio Giustozzi (2018: 62). Giustozzi further notes that ‘...in January 2015, night letters bearing the IS logo appeared in the Hazara neighbourhoods of Kabul, denouncing Shi’as as infidels’ (ibid). However, it is important to note that since the 2016 bombing of the Hazara TUTAP demonstration the community has not engaged in such a large protest, given the huge increase in targeted attacks against Hazaras in Afghanistan.

In relation to the Deh Mazang protest the ‘Youth Protest Movement in Afghanistan’ report by the United States Institute of Peace notes that, ‘According to International Crisis Group reporting, the Roshnayi protestors “alleged that the new route was yet another ‘deliberate attempt’ by Pashtun leaders ‘to systematically discriminate against Hazaras’ by depriving them of the benefits of an economic development project”’ (2019: 13). The TUTAP protests were a striking example of ‘the body’ being used as a space of protest, as the prior verbal appeals made by the Hazara community relating to the project had been dismissed, undermined or ignored. With diplomacy failing as a

tactic, Hazara youth took upon themselves the task of physically presenting themselves in a public space in the country's largest city to show their disdain at the lack of action on the part of the government in relation to their requests. This again relates to Foucault's work on biopower and biopolitics, which was discussed in the Quetta section of this chapter, as the Afghan state, similar to the Pakistani state, has also fallen short of upholding its duties towards its citizens, and in this example, the Hazara community. In the case of the Hazara community political mobilisation can be seen to be having a cyclical effect, as the community comes out to protest against a particular grievance and are met by violence or hostility which in turn fuels further resentment among the community, who again feel compelled to undertake collective action against the state and insurgent groups.

Having discussed instances of Hazara political mobilisation in Afghanistan it is also important to discuss a recently established cultural event which also relates to how the community seeks to position itself on the international stage post-2001. In relation to this new positioning of the community the 'Bamiyan Dambora Festival' is an interesting case study. The Bamiyan Dambora Festival first began in Bamiyan in 2017, and was initially promoted online by the Bamiyan Cultural Centre, (a community space currently under construction with financial support from the 'Republic of Korea, the Government of Afghanistan and UNESCO'¹¹¹). This cultural festival has been covered by TOLONews, Khaama Press and VOA Dari. Online, the Bamiyan Dambora Festival has been used as a means to promote Hazara culture with many images of the event being circulated on Hazara social media, as well as to distinguish the community from non-Hazara Afghans. Some comments online have done so by making claims that the regions populated predominately by Hazaras, like Bamiyan, are the only places where one would see such a music festival taking place, with no segregation of male and female performers, no compulsion in observing *purdah*¹¹², and where no threats of violence would manifest. The further relates to the liberal community ideals that are being propagated online which state that the Hazara community is tolerant and open-minded, which feeds into the narrative of overcoming. While at the same time, the

¹¹¹ The centre's website states that the purpose of the project is to '[establish] an anchor and model for what a creative hub can look like in the Afghan milieu, trying to integrate local communities as well as to identify Bamiyan's rich cultural backgrounds'. See: www.bamiyanculturalcentre.org/about-us.

¹¹² A term used in Persianate and South Asian cultures in reference to veiling and modest dress.

festival itself is now an example of a motivating and inspiring community event which has now become entrenched within the Hazara community as a community institution.

In terms of how the community chooses to present itself online, in relation to such cultural events and other community initiatives, it is also important here to briefly discuss the dambora in relation to Hazara identity. This is because of the shift that has occurred among the community since the proliferation of Hazara ethnic consciousness since the 1980s, as the dambora is now a central pillar of Hazara cultural events and is now a symbol that is widespread on Hazara social media relating to the culture and cultural heritage of the community. The dambora as a symbol of Hazara identity was discussed in a journal paper by Dr Ali Karimi, titled 'Medium of the Oppressed: Folk Music, Forced Migration, and Tactical Media'. Karimi mentions how a revered Hazara singer Sarwar Sarkhosh would make reference to the dambora in his songs in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as that in Quetta Hazara dambora folk music was popular at that time and was '...one of the last remnants of [Hazara] identity' (2017: 736). Karimi notes that the dambora was not always seen as a positive element of Hazara culture and identity and was previously shunned by the community, as it is noted that '...oral poetry and folk singing were common among the Hazaras, but they maintained a negative view of instrumental music, considering it un-Islamic' (ibid: 729), and that '...the journey of dambora music from a stigmatised un-Islamic practice to a proud symbol of ethnic identity was long and rough' (ibid). A fascinating parallel can be seen here between the dambora and Hazara ethnic consciousness in that an instrument which is now seen as a symbol of Hazara identity was previously viewed negatively by the community, much in the same way that a culture of self-loathing permeated within the community due to their Hazara ethnicity given the community's historic subjugation, and prior, low socio-economic status, both of which have reversed with time and are now seen positively by the community and are promoted. This is similarly highlighted by Karimi who states that:

...[T]oday, dambora music is not only socially acceptable among the Hazaras, but it has also become a popular symbol of Hazara identity. The journey of dambora music from a stigmatised un-Islamic practice to a proud symbol of ethnic identity was long and rough. It was, in a certain way, similar to the

journey of the Hazaras themselves from a voiceless, invisible, excluded community to one that, despite continuous persecution by state and nonstate groups, has been increasingly visible in Afghan politics and culture (ibid: 729-730).

This section has undertaken the task of discussing several high-profile instances of Hazara political mobilisation, collective action and community events among the community in Afghanistan, since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. A variety of examples were given relating to the narratives central to this study, that of marginality and overcoming. With the former narrative it can be seen that the community is now victim to targeted attacks in Afghanistan, which have become more prevalent since 2015 with the presence of IS-Khorasan in the country. This also highlights the state's inability to protect its citizens, which again shows a failure of the state in upholding its duty to its citizens, as per Foucault's work on biopower and biopolitics. At the same time certain government policies and instances of institutional racism are leading members of the community to occupy public spaces in order to air their grievances, given limited governmental or institutional action against attacks and discriminatory practices, and this also shows how the narrative of marginality is also a contemporary reality for Hazaras in Afghanistan. While the increased civic gains of Hazaras in Afghanistan has seen the community engage in cultural events that would have been impossible to organise during Taliban rule. It can also be seen that these gains of the community are also leading the community to assert itself in very overt ways, given that the *dambora* itself, after which the Bamiyan *dambora* festival is named, is seen as a symbol of Hazara identity. These civic gains and community events also highlight how the narrative of overcoming also occurs parallel to the narrative of marginality for Hazaras in contemporary Afghanistan.

7.4 Diasporic events:

The previous two sections of this chapter have discussed collective action and community events undertaken by the Hazara community in Quetta and Afghanistan. However, it is not only Hazaras in this region who have engaged in political activism and the promotion of Hazara culture, as the diaspora is also active in working to raise awareness about the Hazara community in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Given that the

Hazara diaspora also mobilises for the community back home, this section will explore a selection of transnational Hazara community action and community events.

In April 2012 a protest was held in London against Hazara killings in Quetta. Although diaspora protests are not unusual among the Hazara community what was unique about this demonstration was that a British Member of Parliament, Alan Johnson, also attended the event in solidarity with the Hazara community. One news article noted that Johnson had the following to say at the demonstration:

“I am here to stand in solidarity with Hazaras who face ethnic [cleansing] in Balochistan yet the government of Pakistan is showing no concern. In the last 10 years more than 700 Hazaras have been killed which is a scandal. The government doesn’t seem concerned and has shown no interest in catching the killers,” said the former Home Secretary, who called on Interior Minister Rehman Malik, his former counterpart, to take action and not only rely on issuing statements¹¹³.

The presence of Johnson at this protest is important to note as multiple research participants and non-Hazara Afghan acquaintances have mentioned that the Hazara community is very united when it comes to engaging in political mobilisation for Hazara causes. The linkages with MPs discussed in previous chapters in relation to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Hazaras shows how the community manages to tap into its social networks effectively for collective action. This in turn can allow for worthwhile outcomes for the community, given that this particular demonstration had a senior politician present lending his support to the community and as a result raising greater visibility for the situation of the Hazara community in Quetta. However, this was not the only international solidarity demonstration that was held for the Hazara community in Quetta, because in relation to the 2013 burial refusal incident discussed previously in this chapter, Forbes reported that protests had been organised internationally in solidarity with the community in Quetta, and also stated that, ‘As the media blackout continues, peaceful demonstrations continue throughout Pakistan and

¹¹³ See: www.thenews.com.pk/print/90962-ex-home-secretary-joins-protest-against-hazara-killings-in-london.

more are scheduled for the 14th in London, Birmingham, Canada, Norway (Oslo), and the U.S. in front of Pakistan Embassies'¹¹⁴.

Here it is also important to discuss a small-scale, isolated protest which was instigated by a handful of UK-based Hazara activists. This specific incident relates to an event which took place in London in May 2016, when Afghan President Ashraf Ghani was delivering a talk as part of an 'anti-corruption summit' at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). A video clip of this specific incident at the talk went viral on Hazara social media pages, and there were many debates and discussions in the aftermath of the video's circulation. The incident relates to interruptions by two audience members five minutes into President Ghani's speech at the venue. Both these audience members were from the Hazara community and the second Hazara audience member, Jafar Attai, declared that, 'He [hates] Hazaras. He's a racist!', 'he' in reference to President Ghani. After Attai's admonishment of the President, he was assaulted and dragged by Ghani's security personnel at the event. In reaction to the treatment of Jafar Attai, multiple Hazara social media sites circulated a video of the attack claiming that it showed how Pashtuns still consider Hazaras as inferior, a century after the insurrection of Hazarajat. While according to a blog post by Hazara activist Saleem Javed another Hazara attendee at the event, Ahad Bahaduri, also interrupted the President to say that, 'You are a liar. You lied to people of Afghanistan. And now you lie to the world', and these were comments which were directed at Ghani himself¹¹⁵. Attai's treatment at the event was used to rally for solidarity by the Hazara community in Europe, based on the claim that even in a democratic country like Britain Hazaras are still not safe from Pashtun aggression.

The incident with Jafar Attai and President Ashraf Ghani is important to note, as there was a temporary shift in the power dynamics between the historically marginalised Hazaras and the dominant Pashtuns, as a Hazara was directly challenging and criticising the country's president in a public setting. Although, this incident may have done little to improve the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan, it at least brought to the

¹¹⁴ See: www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2013/01/14/in-pakistan-100-dead-remain-unburied-out-of-protest/#39129cfe4b74.

¹¹⁵ See: www.saleemjavid.wordpress.com/2016/05/27/activists-assaulted-injured-in-london-by-afghan-president-ashraf-ghanis-bodyguards/bodyguards/.

fore the fact that a section of Afghan society feel that their community has been let down, time and again, by the country's government. This was seen as an important act by members of the Hazara community as it gave members of the community a chance to challenge the Afghan ruling elite in an international setting, and raise awareness about the situation of the Hazara community in Afghanistan. While at the same time it further emphasised the confidence of the community to not be side-lined as has been done in the past, as the community will now vocally air their grievances when it is seen that the state has failed the community, and therefore a substantial number of Afghanistan's citizens. In turn this incident relates to both the narrative of marginality and overcoming, in that the injustice of moving the TUTAP route was the motivating factor for this visible and open verbal attack on the President, but how members of community in engaging with more direct action and transnational solidarity over the years were willing to highlight an issue that does not directly impact Hazaras in Britain but is still seen as important given the implications it has for Hazaras in Afghanistan. Here it is important to briefly note the following quote from Dr Naysan Adlparvar who has carried out extensive research on inter-ethnic relations in Bamiyan, which can also be seen to apply to transnational Hazara communities:

...the widespread oppression experienced by inhabitants of the Central Highlands also acted as a catalyst in the *redefinition* of sectarian and ethnic identities. They are still commonly recounted in the Bamiyan Valley today. Numerous, and very emotive, examples of persecution and injustice were available that could be drawn upon to (re)construct these identities (2014: 93).

Having mentioned the RUSI incident involving President Ashraf Ghani another instance of political mobilisation related to the President took place in April 2017 in Australia. Online, it was reported that Australian Hazaras has organised a demonstration in Canberra against President Ghani's state visit to the country. In a Guardian article on the protest it was mentioned that, 'He is especially unpopular within the Hazara community, which argues he has failed to protect it from attack from anti-Shia insurgent groups, and over the Tutap powerline, a major electricity line which was re-routed away from the Hazara-majority area of Afghanistan, and which would have

brought electricity and industry to Hazara communities'¹¹⁶. In a similar vein to the RUSI protest this protest is important to note as the President was being challenged in an international setting where the protesters knew that they could not be silenced and could in fact be very blunt and honest in their feelings towards the country's ruling elite. Again, such a protest allowed the Hazara diaspora to raise awareness about the situation of the community in Afghanistan and diminished the authority of Ghani in a this specific international setting. This in turn relates to both the narratives of marginality and overcoming, in that it is the current circumstances of the Hazara community in Afghanistan which became the impetus of these demonstrations, while at the same time in choosing to protest in a diaspora space the community could confidently air their grievances knowing that they would not suffer harm for engaging in a peaceful political protest which they are entitled to do as citizens of Australia, which Ghani or no other Afghan politician would be able to stifle.

Having highlighted several instances of political action in this section, it is also important to discuss a community cultural event that I attended during the course of the field research for this project, as it relates to the newfound confidence of the community, not only Afghanistan, but also in diasporic spaces. This specific event was a Nowruz celebration which was held in the town of Burton-upon-Trent, which is located approximately thirty miles outside of Birmingham. The Burton Nowruz event took place in March 2018 and was organised by the town's local Afghan Hazara community. At this Persian New Year gathering Hazara women and girls were dressed in traditional Hazaragi¹¹⁷ outfits, which comprised of wearing either blue or green knee-length dresses with scarfs and trousers of the same colour. The dresses had silver, diamond shaped embroidery on the upper-half of the shirts. Some women were wearing traditional Hazaragi head-dresses and jewellery, which consisted of silver head pieces and thick chokers around the neck. Additionally, many men and boys at the event were wearing traditional Hazaragi hats, which commonly have diamond shapes sown in black, orange and purple thread, usually with a pom-pom at the front, whilst others

¹¹⁶ See: www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/03/australian-hazaras-protest-visit-of-afghan-president-ashraf-ghani.

¹¹⁷ During the course of this research, through informal conversations, research interviews and attendance of community events, it has become apparent that the term 'Hazaragi' is not only used by Hazaras in reference to their specific dialect of Persian, but also in reference to Hazara culture and cultural items, such as traditional clothes, ornaments and musical instruments.

were wearing traditional waistcoats depicting the same diamond shape pattern in red, black and white embroidery. There was also a painting of Bamiyan displayed, which showed one of the iconic statues of the Buddha from the region, as well as a Hazara boy and girl in traditional Hazaragi dress. Alongside this image there was also a painting of women with headscarves in a mud-hut, cooking. A Hazara attendee at the Nowruz event explained to me that the painting depicted old, traditional Hazara houses. 'Hazara culture' was on display everywhere at this event, and further affirmed a larger transnational ethnic consciousness, where in this case, clothing, ornaments and musical instruments were of great importance.

It was also mentioned to me on multiple occasions at the gathering how there is now growing pride in asserting a Hazara identity and promoting Hazara culture, which is extremely visible online, on Hazara social media pages. One research participant present at the event said to me that in the past the trend had been for Hazara women to wear *kuchi* dresses to important, formal occasions, but that in recent years Hazara women are choosing to wear traditional Hazara outfits. Another guest at the Nowruz event also mentioned how singing in the Hazaragi dialect has become very popular in recent years, with many well-known Hazara singers choosing to sing in Hazaragi instead of standard Persian, and with more non-Hazara Afghan singers opting to do the same, such as the renowned Afghan singer Aryana Sayeed, who was born into a Pashto and Persian speaking family.

The above examples were also noted alongside a trend of Afghans singers also choosing to wear traditional Hazaragi dresses and head-dresses, as has been worn by Afghan Pashtun singer Seeta Qasemi on multiple occasions, who also sings Hazaragi songs, alongside those in Pashto and Persian, and this was also noted by research participant Elaha Soroor who stated that, 'Since Hazara singers have started singing in Hazaragi other non-Hazara pop-stars have started singing in Hazaragi too like Farhad Darya, and also Aryana Sayeed too'. Furthermore, a musician was also in attendance at the Nowruz event I that attended, and he sang old Hazaragi folk songs while playing a dambora. As noted earlier in this chapter, in recent years the dambora has become a

symbol of Hazara identity¹¹⁸, with images online expressing Hazara culture through the use of images of damboras. The reason I chose to give a brief description of this particular Nawroz event in this section is because the images, symbols and sounds I personally witnessed at this event further emphasise the growth of Hazara ethnic consciousness among the transnational Hazara community, and how these objects are now very visibly imbedded within community events.

Having discussed both political and cultural events in this section, a key example of community engagement to consider to conclude this section is the Hazara community response to the Australian bushfires of 2019 and 2020. In January 2020 several Australian news articles mentioned the Hazara community's response to the bushfires that had been ravaging the country for several months. These articles detailed how this refugee community from Afghanistan had been engaged in multiple donation campaigns across the country in their local Hazara communities. In several of these articles Hazara community members who had been central to the fundraising efforts were interviewed. An SBS article reported that, 'The Kateb Hazara Association, a large Sydney-based community organisation, was among the first groups to raise in excess of \$18,000 for the [New South Wales] Rural Fire Service in mid-December'¹¹⁹. While in an article published by the ABC particular focus was given to a young Hazara community member, Murtaza Hussain, who at the time of the report was eleven years old and donated just over \$200 to the bushfire appeal, which amounted to all the pocket money he had accumulated since moving to Australia at the age of four, as a refugee¹²⁰. In this article it was noted that Murtaza had lost his mother and older brother at a young age in a terrorist attack and in turn his personal trauma '...helped instil a strong sense of compassion [within Murtaza]'¹²¹. While an article published by the Australian-based Settlement Services International organisation mentioned that Hazara communities across the country had raised over \$100,000 for the Australian bushfire appeal¹²².

¹¹⁸ Although it should be noted that the instrument is also played by other Central Asian communities.

¹¹⁹ See: www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/this-is-our-country-bushfire-assistance-a-duty-for-one-of-australia-s-newest-communities.

¹²⁰ See: www.abc.net.au/news/2020-01-27/afghan-refugee-donates-pocket-money-to-sa-bushfire-appeal/11898622.

¹²¹ *ibid.*

¹²² See: www.ssi.org.au/news/ssi-news-blog/1608-hazara-communities-across-australia-raise-over-100-000-for-bushfire-relief.

An overarching theme of all these articles on the Hazara community's response to the Australian bushfires was how reference was made to the suffering that these Hazara community members had themselves endured, either on an individual level or in more general terms, and how as a community which has endured so much hardship and loss Australian Hazaras could directly relate to the plight of Australians suffering due to the bushfires. Hence the heartfelt community response to the catastrophe which saw multiple articles written to highlight the Hazara community's generosity towards their co-nationals. Again, the stories relayed in these news articles intertwine both the narratives of marginality and overcoming, as violence of the past, both underscored by personal and collective memories, have become the impetus for the community to work to assist their co-nationals. In one article published by SBS the focus was on a Hazara resident of western Sydney, Arif Nabizada, and his efforts to fundraise for the bushfire appeal. The article itself was titled, 'I'm helping the bushfire appeal because I know what it's like to lose everything', with Arif further noting that, 'We came from a fire zone country; that fire was in terms of bullets and guns and suicide attacks, here it's a physical fire, but we know the pain of the people who lose their properties'¹²³. While, Australian labor party MP Zoe Bettison in a parliamentary speech from February 2020 thanked the Hazara community of South Australia for their fundraising effort, noting that, 'The community saw it as their duty to stand with their Australian brothers and sisters during such a difficult time'¹²⁴. In turn the charitable acts undertaken by the community, show that in spite of their past difficulties the Hazara community in Australia has been able to rebuild itself since seeking refuge in the country, and as a result Hazara community members are now seen as exemplary citizens among the wider community, which further relates back to both the narratives of marginality and overcoming.

This section has shown how the transnational Hazara community and diaspora also engages in political, cultural and community events, both for the Hazara community in Afghanistan and Pakistan and non-Hazara co-nationals. The political protests described in this section show how the diaspora can utilise links with parliamentarians in

¹²³ See: <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/insight/i-m-helping-the-bushfire-appeal-because-i-know-what-it-s-like-to-lose-everything>.

¹²⁴ See: www.facebook.com/watch/?v=492427691703140.

diaspora countries to support the community's cause and further raise awareness about the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and this in turn shows how the narrative of marginality continues to affect the Hazara community in the region. While diaspora spaces themselves allow for the community to challenge ruling elites in ways which may not be possible in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which subsequently relates to the narrative of overcoming, as these diaspora Hazaras, most of whom were refugees themselves or whose parents were refugees, fled persecution and precarity to safety. While the cultural event discussed in this section that I attended shows that Hazara ethnic consciousness has proliferated far and wide and is now central to the cultural events the community organises, which also further emphasises the narrative of overcoming. Lastly, the case of the community activism undertaken in relation to the Australian bushfires shows how the history of the community frames the community's collective action, while the opportunities afforded to the community in diasporic spaces has been the impetus for the community to positively engage with their co-nationals in a time of need.

7.5 Conclusion:

To conclude, it can be seen that the transnational Hazara community has taken part in multiple instances of collective action since the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001, which are underscored by the liberal ideals the community professes to support and promote. Communal gatherings have taken place for numerous reasons in Quetta, Afghanistan and further afield in Europe and Australia. In Quetta it can be seen that the community has had to resort to collective action in order to get the state to respond to demands for protection and action against perpetrators of continued attacks and violence against the community in the city. Hazaras in Quetta have even had to resort to drastic action in order for senior government officials to take note and finally meet with the community. While the Hazara cultural day of 2019 shows that the community still seeks to strive for a semblance of normality in such precarious circumstances. Similarly, in Afghanistan the Hazara community has engaged in multiple forms of peaceful political action against acts that are deemed as prejudicial and discriminatory, by the state and other institutions, in order for the community to seek fundamental rights as advocates of liberalism, from a state system which undermines these fundamental rights. While at

the same time the annual dambora festival shows that large Hazara public presence is not just limited to politics, as the community is now choosing to present its culture and heritage to the world in a way that would not have been possible decades prior. In certain instances diaspora activism was undertaken in order to show solidarity with Hazaras in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the diaspora context it can be seen that demonstrations and solidarity protests have occurred in multiple cities and spaces. While at the same time political mobilisation was also undertaken to raise awareness about the situation of the Hazara communities in these countries. This diaspora activism shows that the transnational community seeks to work with, and utilise, liberal institutions in order to highlight the human rights situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. In turn it can be seen that transnational Hazaras are seeking to use liberal ideals, specifically in relation to human rights, racial equality and gender equality, to raise awareness, demand greater rights and better protection for the community in Afghanistan and Quetta. While achievements within the community post-2001 highlights a new chapter in contemporary Hazara history which is underscored by liberalism and liberal values, where these gains are now recognised and accentuated with regards to the position of Hazaras in 21st Century Afghanistan.

Chapter 8: Conclusion:

At the start of this PhD research the aim had been to study how British Hazaras conceptualise their identity, relate to their Hazara heritage and what it means to be 'Hazara'. However, once I began engaging with existing literature on Hazaras and upon reflection on my own interactions with members of the community, it became apparent that there were two recurrent themes in the academic sources being consulted and informal conversations with community members, which required further investigation. These recurrent themes related to a Hazara past which centres on the insurrection of Hazarajat in the late 19th Century, and subsequent instances of discrimination against the community in Afghanistan, and the contemporary gains of Hazaras in the country since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. These two timelines of history, one spanning over one-hundred and twenty years, with the other less than twenty years old, were constantly relayed to me in interactions with members of the community, both young and old, in the years preceding this PhD. Therefore, within the first year of this PhD a decision was made to change the focus of this research to look at these two timelines of history, in order to understand what the contents of these two timelines are, how they are interacted with by members of the Hazara community and how they are personalised and propagated to the outside world.

Chapter one of this thesis begins with an overview of this PhD research. This introduction chapter then moves on to looking at my research methodology and discusses the research methods used for my data collection. The main research method employed within this research were semi-structured interviews, which were undertaken by fifty Hazara research participants in the cities of London, Birmingham and Nottingham. Alongside conducting semi-structured interviews, participant observation was also utilised as a research method on several occasions, at Hazara political events and cultural events. Additionally, as this thesis has a chapter on Hazara social media, the ethics of social media research were also discussed here. The chapter further goes on to examine the shortcomings of the research methods and research interviews themselves, namely demographic representation in the fifty interviews. This is followed by several sections on the Hazara-specific narratives of marginality and overcoming and personalised articulations of these narratives. Here an overview of the

narratives is presented to illustrate how the narrative of marginality refers to both historic and current instances of oppression and discrimination, while also highlighting how the narrative of overcoming relates to the recent history of Hazaras in Afghanistan and their community gains since 2001.

The introduction chapter is followed by the literature review. The reading and research for this chapter highlighted the lack of existing research on Hazaras in Europe. The literature review was divided into several sections, which consist of the following: 'ethnicity, identity and diaspora', 'on 'imagined communities'', 'Hazara social networks', 'collective memory' and 'narrative and history'. Given that most literature on Hazaras refers to the community as a distinct ethnic group it was important to engage with discussions on the term ethnicity itself and understand its relevance and position in contemporary academic discourses. While the literature on identity in this chapter took as its focus academic research on Hazaras in Europe and Australia to show how these communities navigate between their home cultures and country of residence, and how the participants within these studies conceptualise their identity. Additionally, it was important to discuss and unpack the term diaspora within this chapter, as just over twenty research participants within my study constitute the Hazara diaspora, as they had come to the UK in early childhood, grew up in the country and subsequently acquired British citizenship. Here both essentialist understandings of the term diaspora and more contemporary, fluid definitions of the term are examined. This is followed by a section on the political scientist and historian Benedict Anderson's seminal book on Imagined communities in order to explore his claims about the centrality of print media (referred to as print capitalism in his book), in constructing and promoting the idea of the nation and various nationalism since the 19th Century.

The literature review then engages with research on 'Hazara social networks' to show how group identity and perspectives can be shaped or preserved through these networks, while also showing how these social networks help those within these networks in practical ways. In the literature on Hazara social networks it can be seen that social networks are vital tools for vulnerable communities such as Hazara refugees given the information and financial support they can provide to new arrivals overseas. This is followed by a section on collective memory focusing on the work of French

philosopher Maurice Halbwachs, to whom the concept of collective memory is attributed. It was important to discuss Halbwachs' work on collective memory in this chapter given its relevance to both the narratives of marginality and overcoming, and how collective memory as a concept relates to Hazara community members' personal conceptualisations of identity, community and history. Discourses on narrative and history were also pertinent to discuss within this chapter, to show how accounts of the past are personalised and framed by individual themselves.

Political events in Afghanistan from the 1960s onwards and Hazaras migration to Europe is detailed in chapter three. This first few sections of this chapter discuss a handful of significant political events in the country from the 1960s to the early 2000s, which contextualise the destabilisation of the country and the subsequent wars that resulted in several waves of migration out of Afghanistan to the neighbouring region, and further afield to Europe. These sections on history within the chapter are necessary to include as they allow for an understanding as to why and when Afghans fled the country. This chapter then analyses the situation of Hazaras in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. They in turn allow for an understanding of the history of the community in these countries and their present circumstances, which is overwhelmingly defined by precarity. In Afghanistan it can be seen that since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 Hazaras have made significant gains in the country. However, the community is still victim to targeted attacks, which in recent years are most commonly attributed to IS-Khorasan. Therefore, in spite of the collective gains made by the community in recent years they are still vulnerable in Afghanistan. While the section on Hazaras in Pakistan showed how historically the community excelled in the country, as they easily acquired legal status as citizens of the state. Presently, the community has become the target of sectarian violence, which has resulted in them becoming ghettoised and confined to two areas of the city where the community predominately resides, Mariabad and Hazara Town. While for Hazaras in Iran it is noted that the religious and linguistic commonalities of Hazaras and Iranians made Iran an appealing destination for Hazaras fleeing the country since the late 1800s. Nonetheless, the last few decades have been very difficult for the community in Iran given that they are denied legal status as citizens and are trapped in low-paid menial jobs.

The final section of this chapter explores Hazara migration to Britain. The earlier phases of the war in Afghanistan are detailed here and how Hazaras migrated to places where they already had long-standing social networks, namely Quetta and Mashhad. However, since the 1990s Hazaras have been migrating in greater numbers to Europe. In turn, the main purpose here is to present a timeline of Hazara migration to Britain as there is limited academic literature on Hazaras in Europe and very little information about the community's presence in the Britain and when this migration began. A key source in constructing this timeline has been the oral histories of research participants where personal migration histories were shared. These personal histories of migration helped to pinpoint key periods in Hazara migration which correlated with instances of increased violence and instability in Afghanistan. Within this timeline several periods emerged as pivotal years in the migration of Hazaras to Britain. Alongside these personal migration histories, these periods of migration also fell in line with the available literature on Afghans in Britain. Subsequently, the time periods in which Hazaras migrated to Britain were the mid-1990s, the late 1990s, the early 2000s and, lastly around 2007-2008, with migration to the country since then being minimal.

The oral history of Hazara consciousness is the focus of chapter four. Taking from French philosopher Michel Foucault's work on genealogy, the aim of this chapter is to look at how the narratives of marginality and overcoming change with time within the Hazara community. Here the themes of history and memory are analysed in order to understand the extent to which they intertwine, while also underscoring how history and memory are central themes in relation to the Hazara-specific narratives of marginality and overcoming. The work of Maurice Halbwachs on collective memory is drawn upon again, as well as literature by the French historian Pierre Nora and French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, both of whom have written about history and memory. Hazara historiography is also addressed within this chapter to show the shift within the community from their historic, marginal status to becoming assertive citizens working to improve the conditions of their community and country. At the core of this chapter are the responses provided through the semi-structured interviews conducted with Hazara research participants. The quotes discussed in this section of the chapter on marginality and overcoming over time take a departure from examining existing literature to show how community members themselves relate to both these

narratives, what the contents of these narratives are for research participants, and how these narratives come together in these personalised articulations.

The research interviews discussed here show the awareness the community has about their history of suppression, and how 'to be' Hazara was perceived negatively, both externally and internally, but that in recent years the perception and circumstances of the community are changing. These interviews also showed how the narrative of overcoming is also underpinned by liberal ideals that some literature on the community has also alluded to. In these interviews it is stated that Hazaras are now pursuing education in greater numbers, are excelling at school and university, and are now a highly educated community who are gaining confidence through education. These quotes show how liberal values are now part and parcel of a particular Hazara community narrative. The following section deals with the themes of experience, memory and narrative to show how personal lived experiences and collective memories are central to the narratives Hazaras choose to propagate about the community. This chapter concludes with a discussion on Abdul Ali Mazari and Hazara consciousness. The focus on Mazari as a figure within this chapter is due to the profound impact Mazari's words and actions have had on the community, and given how the community has memorialised Mazari through annual commemorative events in March of each year, which mark his death anniversary. These quotes highlight how by and large, Mazari and his legacy are viewed positively by the community and he is seen as a central figure who worked to elevate the status and position of Hazaras in Afghanistan, as well as promoting Hazara identity. This section also shows how for a small segment of community Mazari is viewed as a problematic figure, given his position as the leader of an armed faction during the country's civil war, which is seen as being at odds with the community's liberal ideals. In turn, Mazari relates to both the community narratives of marginality and overcoming. However, the discourses the community articulates about community figures may at times be at odds with how such figures are perceived internally by some members of the community.

A genealogy of religion and secularism among transnational Hazaras is discussed in chapter five. This chapter looks at how research participants perceive and relate to religion, while also analysing to what extent religion is central to both the narratives of

marginality and overcoming. The chapter begins with an overview of the Shia orientation of Hazaras and what effect this has had on the community, as a religious minority in Afghanistan. Here it is noted how belonging to this minority sect of Islam (in the context of Afghanistan and Pakistan) is particularly dangerous for the community at present, given the increase in attacks by IS-Khorasan in Afghanistan and sectarian violence in Quetta. This section ends by briefly discussing literature related to Hazaras and religion to show how religion is personalised within the community, but also at the same time how it is not used to mould a Hazara identity given that not all Hazaras are Shia Muslims. This chapter subsequently assesses explicit discourses on religion with reference to the semi-structured interviews conducted for this research. The responses from these interviews show that for some interviewees religion is seen as being very important within their daily lives. While for others, religion is perceived as being central to the construction of a Hazara identity, as an ethno-religious identity, with both religion and ethnicity being key components of what it means to be Hazara. A number of research participants also noted that to be Shia-Hazara or Hazara-Shia is just a lived reality and fact of life for the community without necessarily being viewed as having positive or negative connotations. However, not all research participants were particularly fond of the notion of a hybridised ethno-religious identity as it is seen as exclusionary given that some Hazaras belong to the Ismaili and Sunni sects of Islam.

This chapter then presents a genealogy of Hazara political theology before and during Soviet war, in order to show to what extent religion played a role within the Hazara political movements and organisations present at the time. The movements and organisations established between the 1960s and 1980s had various political ideologies, both leftist and religious. For some of the secular groups Maoism was a guiding force, while for other groups the Iranian revolution and Ayotollah Khomeini were greatly influential. The political theology of Ayotollah Khomeini and sociologist Dr Ali Shariati were also highlighted in this section, as some of the Hazara groups present in the late 1970s and 1980s took inspiration from the work of these two figures. In discussing Khomeini and Shariati it can be seen that their views on religion relate to both the narratives of marginality and overcoming, since there an emphasis within Shi'ism on oppression being overcome by the oppressed themselves. Here the work of political theorist Carl Schmitt is also important to note, given he claims that at the core

of the modernising project are religious theological ideas. The final section of this chapter looks at genealogies of secularism in contemporary Hazara life to show how secular, liberal ideals are now being propagated by the community both in public spaces through political protests and community events but also online, through Hazara social media pages and websites, with the focus here being three distinct cases studies: a change.org petition demanding that a Western online news publication refer to the community as Hazara and not as Shia, the community's reaction to the Shia personal status law of 2009, and the liberal vision of the General Council of Sunni Hazaras.

Chapter six examines online spaces, with an emphasis on Hazara social media and its use among transnational Hazaras. Social media has been a vital tool within this research as it has allowed for an understanding of community sentiments on various issues, while also helping in establishing to what extent the narratives of marginality and overcoming are propagated online. In having a chapter on Hazara social media within this thesis, Hazara historiography can also be explored given that many Hazara websites and Hazara social media pages are documenting Hazara history on their platforms and creating an indigenous timeline of Hazara history. The content of these online sources present a history that was formerly marginal, from a Hazara lens. This section takes as its focus two popular Hazara websites both of which also have corresponding Facebook pages and Twitter accounts, 'Hazara.net' and 'Hazara International'. Within the contents of these websites it can be seen that the narratives of marginality and overcoming are also relayed online. These websites make reference to massacres and genocides committed against the community, while also noting multiple instances of community accomplishments, such as prominent Hazara women in the fields of politics, sports and community service, and the nationalist Hazaristan movement.

The chapter then discusses Hazara solidarity and mobilisation beyond borders to show how social media is also being used as a tool to coordinate and organise collective action, globally. In this section multiple instances of community action are examined to highlight how events in Afghanistan shape diasporic activism. This chapter ends with an analysis of Hazara social media use in order to underscore the importance of this

online space for the community and for the Hazara historiography project. The work of historian Alun Munslow and Haitian anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot are mentioned here. This is in order to illustrate the reasons as to why we are now seeing an online Hazara historiography project unfold, which is due to the fact that dominant discourses of history mostly neglect marginal histories and the lived realities of marginal communities, and this is especially pertinent in relation to the Hazara community given that the most prominent sources on Afghan history do not adequately chronologise a Hazara past. In turn Hazara social media is an alternative information source to academic literature on Afghanistan, as it allows for us to engage with Hazara sources and a Hazara timeline of the community's history.

Chapter seven examines political mobilisation, collective action and community events among transnational Hazara communities. The sections within this chapter assess political mobilisation at the city level, national level and transnational level. At the core of this chapter is the work of Michel Foucault on biopower and biopolitics, and Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben's supplementary literature also on the same topic. Biopower and biopolitics are central to this chapter given that these notions relate to how power manifests and the application of power. At the city level I take Quetta as the focus to show how Hazaras in the city have become the victims of targeted, sectarian attacks for over a decade and a half. This section details how the continuing failure of the state to protect its citizens is resulting in the community undertaking drastic measures to be seen and heard, and be afforded the right to life. In Quetta specifically we can see how the body is now a site of protest, given that hunger strikes are now employed as a form of protest by some Hazaras in the city. Yet this extreme form of protest has not resulted in any meaningful state intervention to protect the community in Quetta from targeted attacks. However, the community in Quetta does not allow itself to be defined by these instances of violence as the Hazara cultural day organised in the city last year shows that the community still strives to live a peaceful and dignified life in spite of the daily precarity they endure.

On a national level this chapter looks at Afghanistan. Here it can be seen that protests not only occur in the country when the community is targeted due to sectarian violence by groups such as IS-Khorasan, but that the community has also mobilised to

protest against multiple instances of discrimination, with a very well-known example being the protests against the rerouting of the TUTAP project from Bamiyan to Salang. However, similarly to how the community in Quetta is striving to maintain a sense of normalcy in their daily lives, the Bamiyan Dambora Festival which has been taking place in Bamiyan for the last few years shows that the Hazara community in Afghanistan are also not allowing instances of violence or discrimination to define the community or be side-lined.

Lastly, in terms of transnational mobilisation, it can be seen that the community has come together on multiple occasions to protest against human rights violations against Hazaras in Afghanistan, in both Europe and Australia. The diaspora community has also effectively mobilised to gather political support for their cause, with an example of this being when a senior British parliamentarian joined and spoke in solidarity with Hazaras at a 2012 demonstration in London. The community outside of Afghanistan are again not allowing themselves to be defined as victims, but are also striving to be active citizens in their host societies. A very stark example of this is the 2019-2020 Australian bushfires, and its aftermath. At the time that the bushfires were ravaging the country multiple Australian news outlets noted the generosity of the Hazara community, given that various Hazara community organisations raised donations in the tens of thousands of Dollars. Subsequently, these examples of political mobilisation and community action show how marginality and overcoming are narratives that still, at present, relate to the daily lives of Hazaras world-over.

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