

**“The West Side Story”:
Urban Communication and the Social Exclusion of the Hazara People in West Kabul**

Thesis submitted to the
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Abstract

Within the framework of urban communication, this thesis attempts to "read" the urban space of West Kabul in Afghanistan, as a social and cultural text in order to understand the social exclusion of the Hazara people, a socially and politically disenfranchised ethnic group who predominantly inhabit that area. Based on data gathered through documentary research and non-participant field observations, this thesis argues that the urban space of West Kabul is the spatial manifestation of a systematic exclusionary process, through which, the Hazara people have been deprived from access to political, economic and cultural resources, services and opportunities. It interprets the city planning, distribution of resources, urbicide, streetscape, architecture and the body as the main sites where the social exclusion of the Hazaras in West Kabul is exercised. This study also provides a discussion about the historical evolution of West Kabul as an ethnic ghetto, as well as the various forms of conflict which led to spatial and social division in Kabul city.

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M. A. Karimi
Ottawa, September 2011

Dedication

تقدیم به جوانی های شهر کابل.
To the *juwalis* of Kabul city.

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List of Abbreviations and Glossary

AI	Amnesty International, an international human rights organization
AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
AIMS	Afghanistan Information Management Services
AJP	Afghanistan Justice Project, an international human rights research group working on Afghanistan
AP	The Associated Press news agency
DW-Dari	Deutsche Welle, an international German radio - Dari service
FLN	<i>Front de Libération Nationale</i> , a socialist political party in Algeria
<i>Hezb-e Islami</i>	Islamic Party, a Pashtun group led by Gulbudin Hekmatyar which has been fighting each single Afghanistan government since 1975 when it was established in Pakistan.
HRW	Human Rights Watch, an international human rights organization
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labor Organization
ISA	Islamic State of Afghanistan, the first Mujahedeen government (1992-1995)
“Jamiyat” (Jamiyat-e Islami)	Islamic Society, the largest Tajik party led by Burhanudin Rabbani which has allegedly ties to Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt
“Junbish” (Junbish-e Milli Islami Afghanistan)	National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, the main Uzbek party in civil war led by Rashid Dostum
<i>Juwali</i>	Dari word for porter, someone who carries loads on his back or on a cart. The common nickname for Hazaras in Kabul.
<i>Kuchi</i>	Nomad, the Pashtun nomadic tribes in Afghanistan
<i>Khalq</i>	One of the two factions of Afghan communist party in 1980s whose members were predominantly from Pashtun ethnic group
LPCD	liters per capita per day; water consumption measurement

MFNA (Markaz Farhangi Newisandagan Afghanistan)	Cultural Center of Afghan Writers, an Afghan literary circle based in Iran
MHS	Marefat High School, a famous private school in West Kabul
MRT/PRT	The Migration Review Tribunal / Refugee Review Tribunal, two Australian government bodies on immigration
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PDPA	People's Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, the main communist party in Afghanistan (1965-1992)
<i>Rupee</i>	The former Afghan currency
SEU	Social Exclusion Unit, a UK government institute
<i>Shuray-e Nizar</i>	Observatory Council, the politico military organization led by Ahmad Shah Masoud in civil war (1990s)
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
“Wahdat” (Hezb-e Wahdat-e Islami)	Islamic Unity Party, the main Hazara party in civil war led by Abdul Ali Mazari

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1. Introduction

"[...] the book said that my people had killed the Hazaras, driven them from their lands, burned their homes, and sold their women. ... The book said a lot of things I didn't know, things my teachers hadn't mentioned. Things Baba hadn't mentioned either".

- Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner* (2003, p. 9)

This thesis explores the relation between the social exclusion of the Hazara ethnic group in Afghanistan, and the built environment of West Kabul where they predominantly inhabit. West Kabul is a deprived urban area with a distinguished morphological, architectural and landscape pattern which demonstrates a systematic geographical marginalization of that place and social exclusion of its inhabitants.

I want to make clear at the outset it is not the intention of this study to produce a formal case study either about the Hazaras or West Kabul. Rather, the approach for this thesis is to use that particular ethnic group and that particular urban place as main *points of reference* in examining the theoretical and conceptual issues related to urban space and the politics of social exclusion from the perspective of urban communication, an emerging field of communication studies with links to urban and cultural geography.

My aim in this study is to "read" the urban environment of West Kabul as a social and cultural text in order to understand the story and history of the Hazara urbanization process in Kabul city. In this context the built environment is perceived as a communicative medium, a "signifying system" (Duncan, 1990 p. 17) which spatializes the collective memory, cultural history and ethnic identity of its dwellers. It is the built environment to which a social group "belongs and from which its members derive some part of their shared identity and meaning" (Groth, 1997 p. 1). All human-touched places are spaces of meaning and memory through which one can read the ideas, ideals, as well as the sufferings and sorrows of a people. Working in the field of urban communication (an emerging field in communication studies, as set out in Gibson and Lowes, 2007), the key research question which guided the research design and methods for this thesis, and its data analysis, is the following:

How does the built environment of West Kabul reflect the social exclusion of the Hazara people who predominantly dwell in that area?

Also, there are two supplementary questions I intend to address:

- (i) How did West Kabul as an ethnic ghetto emerge, historically?*
- (ii) What are the ways in which the social exclusion is demonstrated in urban space of West Kabul?*

1.1. Afghanistan and its People

Located between the three major geopolitically important regions of South Asia, Middle East and Central Asia, Afghanistan has always served as a cross road of Asia with which other nations were greatly obsessed. From Persians (500 BC), Greeks (330 BC), Arabs (642 AD), Mongols (1219), British (1839, 1878, 1918), Russians (1979) and Americans (2001), different powers from different races, religions and regions have invaded this country and have left legacies. One of the legacies of these interventions is the heterogonous population of Afghanistan which consists of several ethnic groups, sects, religions and languages. The major ethnic groups by population in Afghanistan are Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, and the smaller minorities of Turkmens, Aimaqs, Nuristanis and Baluchs. Afghanistan as a new geopolitical reality in the region was founded in 1747 by Pashtun tribes and since then it has been ruled by the Pashtuns (with the exception of 6 years or so in which Tajiks were in power, once for nine months in 1929 and then from 1992 to 1996). As a result of this political monopoly, the Pashtuns have "enjoyed institutionalized military, political, and economic dominance" (Ahady 1995, pp. 621-622) throughout Afghan history, and to the same extent, the non-Pashtun groups have been marginalized.

There has never been a complete census conducted in Afghanistan; all population data are based on rather politicized estimations by the Afghan government. Some scholars argue that the reluctance of the Pashtun-dominated governments of Afghanistan to conduct a national survey is rooted in its policy to over-count the Pashtuns in order to defend their political monopoly and validate the "Pashtunisation" of Afghanistan (Gregorian 1969, Balland 2011, Barfield 2010). In the contradictory estimations by Afghan governments over the years, Hazaras have been particularly underestimated (3 to 9 %) and Pashtuns have been particularly overestimated (up to 62 %) (see Gregorian 1969, p. 415 and 418; Misdaq 2006, p. 7; Ahady

1995, p. 62). Other estimations put Hazaras from 9 % to 25 % percent and Pashtuns from 38 % to 42 % percent (see Monsutti 2005, p.280). However, of all estimations so far, the assertions made by *Encyclopedia Britannica* seem more plausible, which reports the total population of Afghanistan to be at 28,150,000 of which Pashtuns are 40%, Tajiks 25%, Hazaras 20%, Uzbeks and the other ethnic groups comprise the remaining 15% of the population (“Afghanistan”, Britannica 2010; see also Emadi 2002, pp.1-2).

The exclusionary mechanism in Afghanistan has a long history and many forms. Manipulating and falsifying statistics has been one of the tools the Afghan state has used and continues to use in order to exclude the ethnic minorities, especially the Hazaras, from access to resources. The Hazara people live mainly in the mountainous central Afghanistan, known as Hazarajat. Being a religiously, ethnically, linguistically and physically different from other ethnic groups, they are the “Others” of Afghanistan who have been “systematically excluded from almost all government positions and educational opportunities by the Pashtun dominated governments” (Barfield 2010, pp. 26-27). While 99% of Afghans are Muslims, of which 75-80% are Sunnis (Gregorian 1969, p. 38) and predominantly of Arian race, the Hazaras are Shiite Muslims (with some minorities being Sunnis and Ismailis) with Turko-Mongol origin. In terms of physical appearance, the Hazaras have strong Mongoloid and eastern Turkic features with round faces, tight eyes, flat noses and light facial hairs, which make them very distinct from the rest of the country’s ethnic groups, who predominantly look Caucasian with big noses, big eyes and long strong beards. Linguistically, the Hazaras speak a dialect of Persian which is distinct from the rest of Persian dialects and languages spoken in the country.

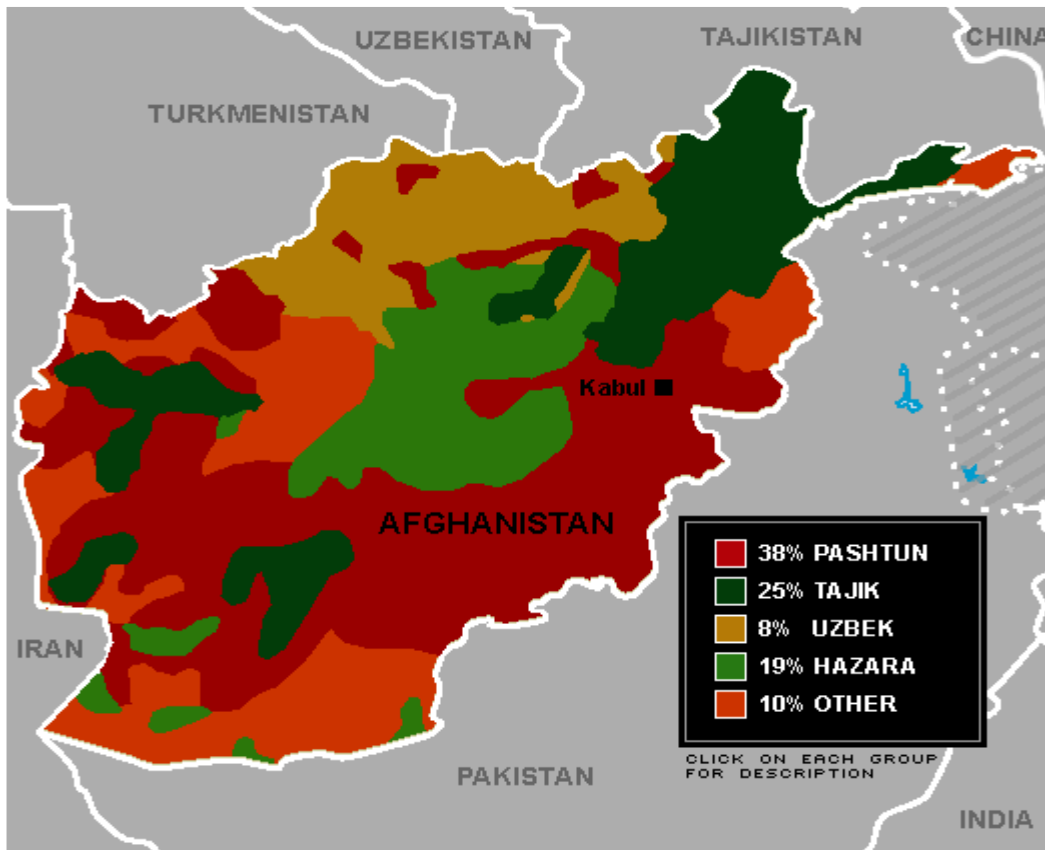


Figure 1. 1. Estimated ethnic composition in Afghanistan based on US government data (<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/map.ethnic.afghan.html>).

Afghanistan has only 13 % of arable lands (Hyman 1992, p.9) and this lack of efficient land has been one of the major sources of conflict throughout its history. According to historic evidence, the ancient homeland of Pashtuns is the Suleiman Mountains in northern India (now Pakistan) where they lived for centuries. The Pashtun nomadic tribes moved from those Indian mountains to areas now known as Afghanistan in the late 14th and early 15th centuries. This population movement caused land conflicts with Tajiks and especially Hazaras who were already living in south, west and eastern Afghanistan (for a more detailed discussion see Noelle 1997, pp. 158-219, 161 and Ariyanpour, 1997, pp 79-118). In the mid18th century when the Pashtuns formed a government, the sequestering of Hazara lands found an institutional form, to the extent that even the Pashtun tribes of Durranis and Ghilzais fought with each other over the Hazara lands in the areas between Kabul and Kandahar (Ghubar 1981, p.316). But the Tajiks, due to their similar physical appearance and the common religious beliefs, apart from loosing part of their properties, did not face major violence from the Pashtuns nomads who lived with them in peace (Elphinstone 1815, pp. 311-313). The Pashtuns has been continuously grabbing Hazara

lands until today which has caused the migration of Hazaras to urban centers like Kabul and even neighboring countries.

1.2. Kabul and West Kabul

Kabul has about 2500 years of history; its mountainous geography which served as a defensive barricade at times of invasion, was the main reason it became an urban center at the first place. Until the 16th century, Kabul was not an important city compared to other urban centers in the country like Herat, Balkh and Ghazni. But after 1504 when Babur, a Mongol prince, conquered Kabul, the city took on a more important trade and political role as a crossroad between central Asia and India. During Babur's time, Kabul was a great metropolitan city with huge commercial life with commodities from all over the world in its bazaar and people of 12 different languages who worked there (Babur 2002, p. 152-6). In 1776 the Afghan king Timur Shah moved the capital from Kandahar to Kabul which gave a more prominent political role to this city. Since then, Kabul gradually expanded to the extent that in the early 19th century its population increased to 60,000 people of which a quarter was Hazaras (Burnes 1834, p. 147, 231; Vigne 1840, p. 165-167). Wars, migrations and ideological regime changes have been the main forces behind the urban development of and destruction in Kabul city during the 20th century. In 1920s the King Amanulla's project of building a new city in West Kabul remained unfinished after being dethroned by a public riot. The next urban development was launched in 1940s and unsteadily continued until 1980s despite of several regime changes.

Kabul today is a city of chaotic paradoxes, which mirrors the true spirit of the post-war Afghan nation. The city's infrastructure was vastly destroyed during the civil wars of 1990s and now it has been expanding very fast, without any proper municipal management or planning. As one of the fastest-growing cities in the world (Kilroy 2007, p. 3), the Kabul population has increased from about 400,000 in the 1970s to an estimated 1.7 million in 2000, 2.8 million in 2003 (ITGA 2004, p. 56), and more than 5 million in 2010 (Ahad 2010) to which many thousand rural-urban immigrants and foreign returnees are being added each year. According to the Kabul Municipality, the city's current urban area is 1,023 kilometers, which is three times larger than what was planned in the 1978-2003 for the city. About 70 percent of the population lives in so called "informal settlements", of which 20 percent are located on hillsides, the rest inhabit

flatlands. Only 23% of the houses in Kabul city have access to piped water with 35 LPCD, and half of the city's drains are not working, only 5% of the houses are connected to the sewage system, the rest have septic tanks or dry latrines (Ahad 2010).

Geographically, Kabul city is divided into east and west by a range of mountains stretching from the southeast towards the northwest. The old city of Kabul is located in the east side between the south bank of the Kabul River and the northeast of Koh-e Sherdarvaza (2,222m). The urban Kabul has 13 municipal districts, of which the districts 5, 6, 7, and 13 are located on the western side of the mountain; thus they are geographically part of what is known as West Kabul (figure 1.2.). West Kabul physically is a vast plain enclosed by a range of hills running from Afshar and Sorkh Kotal in the north; by the Koh-e Asmayee and Koh-e Shir Darwaza in the east; by the Qorugh Mountain in the south and in the west by Koh-e Childukhtaran and its surrounding slopes. The flat fields and the running river in the valley made it a great place for various types of people to inhabit there over the centuries. There were farmers who flourished the bazars of Kabul with seasonal fruits, the government officials who built large villas in the valley known as "Qala", and of course there were the emancipated Hazara slaves and displaced Hazaras who dwelled in West Kabul from the early years they arrived in the city.

The term West Kabul, which is the empirical focus of this thesis, does not have as straightforward a meaning as it sounds. The geographical and political connotations attached to the phrase "West Kabul" as it is expressed in the Afghan media and everyday language requires some explanation.

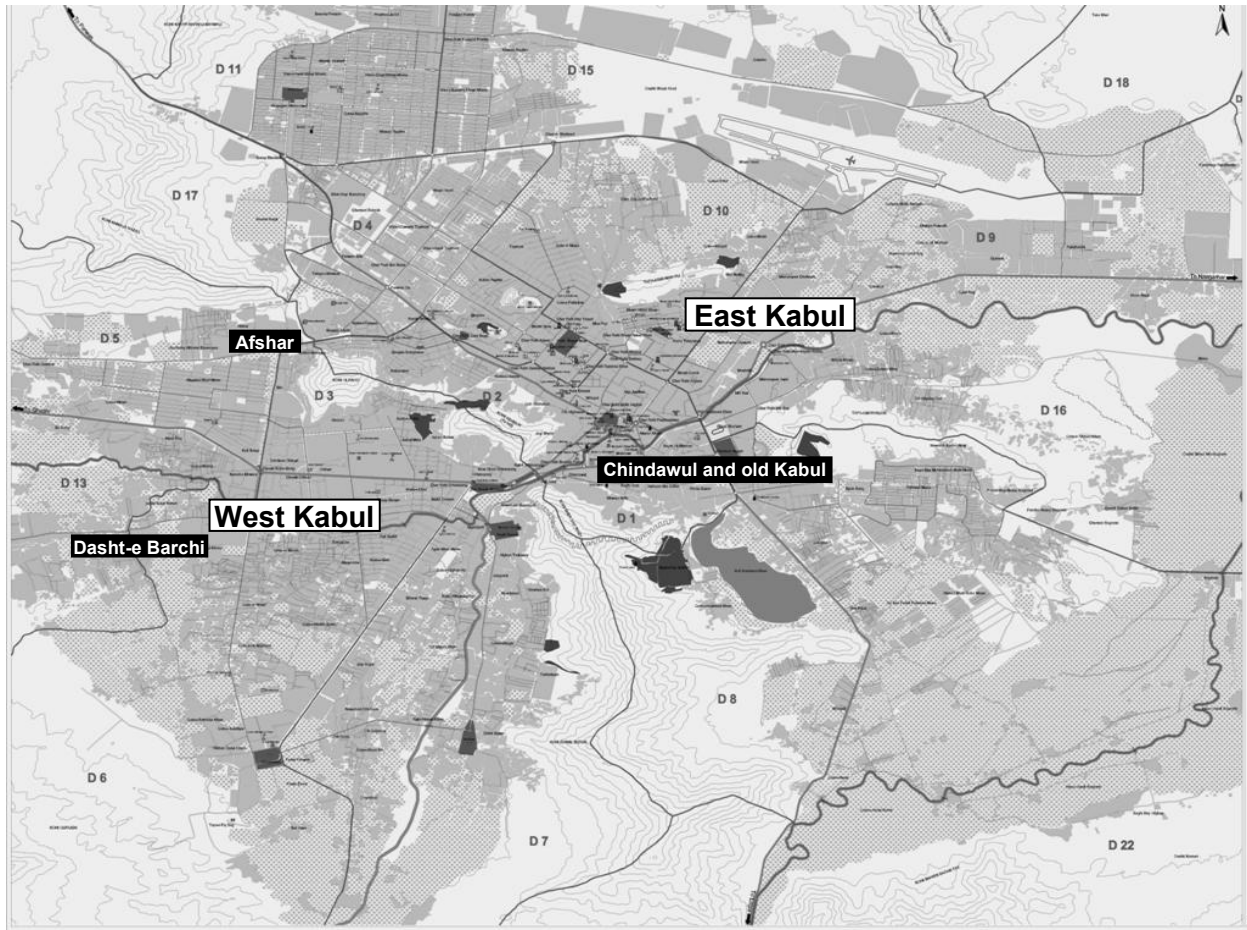


Figure 1.2. East-West division in Kabul city; based on AIMS (2005a) map.

West Kabul, or *Gharb-e Kabul* in Persian, is not merely a geographical term in Afghanistan; it is more a political expression; or better, a geopolitical one. Although geographically West Kabul includes the entire valley on the western side of the city, politically it applies only to those areas that are inhabited by the Hazaras. The region of West Kabul which in the 19th century texts are known as “Chahar Deh Valley”, is a collection of predominantly Hazara neighborhoods and some traditionally non-Hazara residential areas. The places where non-Hazara residents live are well-planned urban neighborhoods consisting of relatively luxurious houses with access to basic municipal services like electricity and running water. In comparison, the Hazara neighborhoods of West Kabul are typically one-story mud houses

twisted in narrow dusty lanes with almost no access to electricity and running water. These two types of residential areas are in sharp contrast to each other (see the figure 1.3.).

The reason why the term West Kabul signifies only the Hazara quarters of the area is due to its initial usage during the interethnic wars of 1992-1995 in Kabul. In that war, the city was divided between different rival militant groups of various ethnic backgrounds and political parties¹. The Hazaras led by Abdul Ali Mazari, controlled the majority of West Kabul. So the city residents, fighters and the media used the term West Kabul to refer to the Hazara strongholds and targets to reduce the sensitivities in the formal language.

Therefore, I would like to suggest that West Kabul is an *imagined geography*²; a geography which was constructed by mental images of interethnic conflicts and hostilities especially over the years of civil war in 1990s. It should also be noted that in this thesis I use the following three terms interchangeably: “West Kabul”, “Dasht-e Barchi”, and “Hazara neighborhoods of West Kabul”.

1.3. Conceptual Framework of the Thesis

The central concept that I employ in order to understand and explain West Kabul and the urban experience of the Hazara people is ‘social exclusion’. Social exclusion refers to a systematic process by which certain social groups are excluded from access to political power, economic opportunities, public services and other resources. As a multidimensional phenomenon, social exclusion has a profound geographical impact as well; it is the primary force behind the spatial exclusion of minorities in the cities (Hull 2004, Madanipour et al 1998, Moffatt & Glasgow 2009). Spatial exclusion is the materialist presentation of social exclusion which I shall explore further in this thesis within the concepts of ghettoization, divided city, urbicide and so forth.

Socially excluded people struggle with this phenomenon in all aspects of everyday life; they are often caught in a cycle of interlinked problems such as discrimination, unemployment, lack of education, poverty, poor housing, bad health and invisibility. It must be stressed at the

¹ In chapter four, I will discuss the Kabul war of 1992-95 in more details.

² Imagined geography, a term coined by Edward Said (2003) as part of his critique of Orientalism, doesn't necessarily imply a false or unreal geography. According to Said, imagined geography is a mentally constructed or perceived geography and refers to the way certain places are perceived through images, texts and discourses. Here I employed this term to describe the complex meaning of West Kabul for the residents of the city, who use it to refer to a mentally mapped geography which is the Hazara residential areas in west of the city. Geographically the entire valley in the west of Shir Darwaza Mountain is West Kabul, but in practice, it is applied only to the Hazara neighborhoods in the valley.

outset that social exclusion is not another form of poverty, for poverty is a widespread problem in Afghanistan which exists among all the ethnic groups. However, poverty is one of the many consequences of social exclusion. As it will follow, my main argument is that the Hazaras' experience of social exclusion is an institutionalized effort which mainly emerged after they survived a systematic series of campaigns to eliminate them through slavery, forced displacement, ethnic cleansing and massacres. So it is not possible to reduce the problematic of social exclusion of the Hazaras in Kabul to urban poverty.

My theoretical framework is drawn from the urban communication work of Gibson and Lowes (2007), particularly their model for analysis of urban environments as "texts." According to their three part model, which is partly based on Johnson's (1987) "circuit of production" for cultural texts, the urban built environment as a cultural product is a text produced in a structured manner. In this model, the production of urban space is understood in three distinct moments:



Figure 1.3. The difference between the predominantly Hazara neighborhood of Qalai Shada (left) and the non-Hazara neighborhood of Kart-e She in West Kabul. (Source: Google Earth, 2005)

production; text; and context. In the moment of “production” the built form is constructed and encoded into texts; in the moment of “text” built form is considered a form of media through which meanings and messages are communicated. In the moment of “context” the built environment is perceived and interpreted by individuals in the “context” of everyday life. This model provides a solid theoretical basis for understanding the complex social, cultural, and historical nature of urban spaces and the ways in which we produce, perceive and interact with them.

In applying this model to the case West Kabul, I structured this thesis in four chapters (excluding chapter one and two which discuss the introduction and methodology respectively). Chapter three provides a review scholarly literature on the key concepts and theories related to social exclusion such as poverty, divided city and ghetto formation. Chapter four is structured around what Gibson and Lowes (2009) refer to as the 'moment of production', and discusses the historical development of West Kabul and the process of ghettoization of that area. Chapter five is structured around the "moment of text", and constitutes a reading of West Kabul as a text; the focus is on urban area of West Kabul, the streets of west Kabul and the body of the Hazaras as the three spaces of exception and exclusion through which one can read the politics of systematic exclusion in Kabul city. In chapter six, the "moment of context" is explored through a focus on the concept of "urbicide" experienced during the Kabul war of 1992-1995 in order to understand the experience of urbanity in Kabul. In the final chapter I argue that the urban conflict and contestation is the context of urbanity and everyday life in Kabul city. Therefore the violent and destructive urban warfare in early 1990s was the historical result of various sectarian and ethnic conflicts and several forms of exclusion and division which shaped the nature of urban experience over the last two centuries in Kabul.

2. Methodology

This thesis is a qualitative study that uses an interpretative approach anchored in the emerging field of urban communication. In a broad sense, this work examines the "spatialization" of social politics in West Kabul city. Hence, the main body of empirical investigations is focused on interpreting the built environment of West Kabul in the light of history, politics and culture, in order to understand the social exclusion of the Hazara minority group. To address this issue, documentary research and non-participant observation were identified as the two methods most appropriate for data gathering in this context. In general, documentary research constitutes the analysis of "any written material that contains information about the phenomenon we wish to study" (Bailey 1994, p.294).

In this thesis, I did not conduct any interviews with the population for two reasons. First, considering the nature of my thesis and the main research question which is focused on the physical form of the city, I came to this conclusion that interviewing people may mislead or unnecessarily expand the scope of the study which is the interpretation of the built environment of West Kabul. Second, it was time-consuming and risky to conduct interviews. The frequent terror attacks in Kabul plus the ethnic sensitivity of my thesis subject would most likely have caused security problems either for me or my interviewees. Relying on secondary data, among other benefits, is a time-efficient approach; because it is very difficult to conduct a new survey that could adequately capture the myriad historical changes and socio-political and cultural developments which occurred in the Afghanistan historically. The non-participant observation, as my second method of data gathering, was helpful in developing the spatial analyses of the urban environments of Kabul city and comparing the various sources of information I worked with.

Secondary Sources: Although the long years of civil war and conflict has made it difficult to access to reliable sources in Afghanistan, I managed to collect some public domain secondary sources which contained information about West Kabul and the urban experience of the Hazaras in the city. The data included government publications, newspapers, independent social research publications, maps, fiction and non-fiction books, videos, photographs, and other

written and visual sources in paper, electronic or other formats. These are the main online sources from which I gathered most of my data:

- www.afghanistandl.nyu.edu
- www.archive.org
- www.bl.uk
- www.books.google.com
- www.gale.cengage.com
- www.ina.fr

The main keywords for searching these databases were “Cabul”, “Kabul”, “Afghanistan”, “Huzzarah” and “Hazara”.

Direct Observation:

For the fieldwork activity, I visited Kabul city from 12th to 30th September 2010 to conduct non-participant observation. The fieldwork was performed in various parts of Kabul city with West Kabul as my primary focal point. I walked through neighborhoods, streets, alleys and bazaar, and observed the sights, sounds and smells of all places I visited. In most cases, I paid more than one visits to one same area. I visited these places in different times of the day and in different days of the week; along all my observations I took extensive notes and numerous photographs. My concentration was focused around visual aspects of the place and its spatial form. I focused on houses, shops, streets, bodies, cars, vendor carts, architectural characteristics and so forth, but I refrained from interacting with the individuals or concentrating on their behaviors *per se*.

The areas of observations in West Kabul included places mainly populated by Hazaras, since in west Kabul a number of large neighborhoods belong to non-Hazara residents. As I discussed earlier in introduction, the term “West Kabul” connotes the Hazara areas of west Kabul only. Therefore the places I observed were the following neighborhoods in districts 3, 5, 6, 7, and 13 of the city: Mazari Square, Dasht-e Barchi and surrounding neighborhoods, Kut-e Sangi, Afshaar, Kart-e Se, Kart-e Chahar, Qalae Shahada, Shahrak Omid-e Sabz and some other Hazara areas in West Kabul. Although my main area of study was West Kabul, for purposes of comparison I conducted observations in the east side of the city as well.

2.1. Data analysis Procedure and Theoretical Framework

Data analysis: For analyzing the data I utilized Creswell's (2009) procedure for qualitative studies: (a) collecting the raw data; (b) organizing and preparing the data for analysis; (c) reading through all data; (d) identifying the main themes and facts; (e) interrelating the themes and facts; (f) and interpreting the meanings of themes and facts (p. 185).

Theoretical framework: The theoretical framework for interpretation and analysis of the data was broadly based on the concept of "urban communication" and the idea of city as text to be read critically (Gibson & Lowes, 2007). The notion of city as text comes from the idea that a city is like a language in that it consists of signs which possesses textual features and linguistic functions: city plans, streets, architectural forms, cars, crowds, and movements, altogether forms a signifying system through which meanings and messages are mediated. The built form in general and the city in particular serves as a great source of information about the history of a nation. As Kincaid (2007) argues architecture and built environment "is a form of narrating history. ...history is written on the city". (p.111) Urban communication as the blurring boundary of critical theory, cultural studies, urban geography and political economy, provides a solid framework to examine interpret the built environment and the social experience of urbanity.

The structural form of this study is based on urban communication model as developed by Gibson & Lowes (2007). Building on this I employed 'social exclusion' as my primary theory to assess the urban experience of Hazara people in the city of Kabul. Social exclusion refers to a process through which a certain social group is excluded from access to political, economic or cultural recourses based on religious, ethnic or other grounds. This profoundly impacts not only the social status of excluded group but also the spatial environment of their living. As a result, the socially excluded become spatially excluded as well. Social exclusion as a critical social theory is essential in understanding inequalities and power politics in urban spaces, particularly in places like Kabul where war, totalitarianism and ethnic conflict has a long history.

2.2. Validity and Reliability

Many methodologists have argued that the concepts of validity and reliability are "irrelevant", "misleading" and not "applicable" to qualitative research, and that they are positivist notions applicable only in testing quantitative researches. Golafshani (2003), for

instance, argues that if “we see the idea of testing as a way of information elicitation then the most important test of any qualitative study is its quality” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 601). She quotes Eisner, who believes that a good qualitative study should help us “understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing” (Eisner, quoted in Golafshani, 2003, p. 601). But still there are some standards of validity and reliability for qualitative studies as well.

To obtain a measure of reliability in the collection of qualitative data the following steps were taken: (a) using only credible data; (b) multiple viewing, listening and reading the videos, audios and texts for avoiding any possible mistake; (c) and consulting my personal notes throughout the process of investigation and writing for not being misled.

To achieve a measure of validity the following approaches were pursued: (a) comparing the data in several sources; in the current Afghan situation that most of the data can be biased and politicized it helped me to limit to deleterious effects of misinformation; (b) providing rich description of the settings and subjects; (c) clarifying the bias, both my bias as a researcher and clarifying the bias of my data (e.g. if a document was produced by a certain ethnic person or political party, I clarified about its producer in cases I found necessary, so the reader get a context information).

2.3. Author's bias

I should declare that I am a Hazara. Before going to Kabul in 2003 as a Kabul University student, I had a limited knowledge of the Hazaras in Kabul city and their urban experience. As an outsider to that particular geography, my gaze at Kabul and its Hazara residents was a touristic gaze, and it helped me not to take for granted what the inhabitants of the city did. It was the beginning of my interest in urbanism and studying the city. Living for more than six years in West Kabul with fellow Hazaras, provided me an in-depth sense of that place and that people. In spite of all these, I fully understand that in this research, my task as a scholar is documenting meaning, not advocating for rights. Being a Hazara and a former resident of West Kabul had some advantages and some disadvantages. The main advantage was my familiarity with the place and the people, which helped during the fieldwork, not to face any major problems in identifying the sites where I could carry out the observations based on my research question. The main disadvantage was the risk of losing my academic objectivity. To avoid that, I paid particular attention to my language, particular attention in cross-checking the facts by various sources and

also letting my supervisor know of my own background, so he could help me in maintaining my objectivity.

Scholarship on the Hazara people is very limited; I was able to locate only three books in English language published on this ethnic group. Since the 19th century when scholarly studies about the Hazara people began, the main body of scholarship has been focused on anthropology and political history of the Hazaras; other aspects, especially their urban experience has been largely ignored. This work as a humble attempt, intends to understand the social exclusion of the Hazaras in West Kabul and provide a narrative of the ethnic and sectarian conflict through the interpretation of the urban form and the built environment of Kabul city.

3. Social Exclusion in the Urban Sphere

“Any city however small, is in fact divided into two, one the city of the poor, the other of the rich. These are at war with one another”. -- Plato (1973, p.111)

“If you would know what kind of Jew a man is, ask him where he lives; for no single factor indicates as much about the character of a Jew as the area in which he lives. It is an index not only to his economic status, his occupation, his religion, but to his politics and his outlook on life, and the stage in the assimilative process that he has reached”. -- Wirth (1927, p. 68)

3.1. The Concept of Social Exclusion

Prison is where a society punishes criminals. It is the visible embodiment of our crime and punishment system: we know how many people are there, why they are there and when they will be out. But as Travis (2002) observes, we also have invisible systems of crime and punishment where “we punish people in other, less tangible ways”. Of those less tangible ways, is ‘social exclusion’ which he metaphorically calls the “invisible punishment” (p. 15). Although the “punishment” may have been invisible, the “crime” of these excluded groups is rather obvious: being different; they are punished in the form of exclusion for being different from and not belonging to the mainstream race, religion, region or socioeconomic class.

Social exclusion refers to those individuals and social groups who are systematically excluded from access to political power, economic opportunities, and public services within a particular society. This socio-political deprivation and disadvantage has the effect of pushing them away from the mainstream into a marginal place. As a multidimensional phenomenon, social exclusion always has a spatial dimension (Hull 2004, Madanipour et al 1998, Moffatt & Glasgow 2009), although this spatial consequence of the exclusion can be visible in ghettoized urban neighborhoods, still the causes of exclusion remain largely invisible for the public. Socially excluded people struggle with this phenomenon in all aspects of everyday life; they get

caught in a cycle of interlinked problems such as discrimination, unemployment, lack of education, poverty, poor housing, bad health and invisibility. Madanipour et al (1998), who studied social exclusion in European cities, emphasize the spatial component of this phenomenon and argue that that the urban space is the material expression of social exclusion. Therefore, in their formulation social exclusion is

...a multi-dimensional process, in which various forms of exclusion are combined: participation in decision making and political processes, access to employment and material resources, and integration into common cultural processes. When combined, they create acute forms of exclusion that find a spatial manifestation in particular neighborhoods.

Madanipour et al (1998, p. 22)

According to Aalbers (2010), it was René Lenoir, former French Secretary of State for Social Action, who coined the term “social exclusion.” The French statesman wrote a book in 1974 called *Les exclus: Un français sur dix*, in which he argued that up to 10 percent of the population in France is identified as “the excluded.” (Aalbers 2010, p 731). Lenoir’s argument was based on significant problems the French were struggling with in 1970s; when a large-scale unemployment caused economic difficulties in Europe and raised criticism against welfare systems for failing to provide protection for certain groups of people (e. g. disabled, youth, elderly and single parent) who suffered the most (Hull 2004, Murie & Musterd, 2004). Although the concept of social exclusion is now a well-researched issue within scholarship and holds a great deal of critical intellectual influence, but it still has a stronger basis in policy circles and bureaucracy where it was originated in the first place.

From France of 1970s, the concept quickly spread throughout other European countries and found a grand public basis in the UK where the government established a Social Exclusion Unit within the Cabinet Office. Being a contested concept (Murie & Musterd, 2004, Aalbers 2010), the definition of social exclusion is different in each area of study depending to the context. But at least among government policymakers, the perceptions of the term are based more or less, on what the Social Exclusion Unit in the UK defines as: “a shorthand term for what

can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown” (SEU 2001, p. 10).

Despite the fact that the concept of social exclusion emerged from developed countries and was initially referred to those excluded from welfare systems in stable (post)industrial societies in which there is a large population of working class, attempts have been made to apply this concept to developing countries as well. The problem of exclusion in (post)industrial societies is mostly regarded as an economic issue resulted from poverty, but in the context of developing countries, one should consider that exclusion cannot be limited only to economic inequality. Because in some cases, the majority of the population in a country is poor, and as Gore (1994) found out, the poor in developing countries are not necessarily the excluded. The politics of exclusion/inclusion in those regions are far different from developed nations. To understand social exclusion in developing nations, one has to take into account a broad range of issues, on top of all the politics of power.

3.2. Poverty and Social Exclusion

The relation between poverty and social exclusion remains a huge confusion in debates over the meanings, causes and consequences of this concept. A considerable part of the literature (especially in the field of public policy) is based on the assumption that social exclusion is another term for poverty (for instance, Levitas, 1996). Moffatt & Glasgow (2009) refers to some scholars who believed that ‘social exclusion’ came in the UK policy debates because it was “a more acceptable way of discussing ‘poverty’, a phenomenon not recognized by Conservative politicians between 1979 and 1997” (pp. 1292-93).

Reducing social exclusion to poverty is a denial of the systematic exclusionary process and ignoring the multidimensionality of this phenomenon; so is to assume that social exclusion is a form or a consequence of poverty. It is not. Some who are socially excluded are indeed poor, and some poor are in fact socially excluded, but there are many socially excluded people who are not poor. As Aalbers (2010) points out, poverty is a “condition” while social exclusion is a mechanism and a “process” (p. 732) -- there are some overlaps between the two, but they are not the same. According to him, social exclusion is “an umbrella term”, a much broader concept than

poverty and includes many forms of exclusion, including social inequality (Aalbers, 2010, p. 732). As a result, one can claim that poverty is a consequence of the social exclusion, not vice versa.

Those who make attempts to undermine the dimensions and dynamism of social exclusion, in fact, tend to depoliticize this phenomenon (Moffatt & Glasgow, 2009). As Veit-Wilson (1998) argues, there is a trend among the researchers and commentators who blame the poor for being excluded. Veit-Wilson refers to this trend as “the ‘weak’ version of this discourse” which believes that for tackling social exclusion “the solutions lie in altering these excluded peoples’ handicapping characteristics and enhancing their integration into dominant Society”. Veit-Wilson then argues that opposite to the ‘weak’ version, there is also a ‘Stronger’ version of discourse, which “emphasizes the role of those who are doing the excluding and therefore aim for solutions [that address factors] which reduce the powers of the excluded” (Veit-Wilson, 1998, p. 45, quoted in Moffatt & Glasgow, 2009, p. 1293). The ‘weak’ version of the discourse is the dominant point of view, promoted by governments and those who are engaged somehow in the process of making social exclusion happen. They turn a blind eye on the dynamic nature of the problem, reduce it to poverty and blame it on the excluded for not being “normal”.

The way poverty is measured is different from the methods we use to understand the scope of social exclusion. This is another reason why we must be careful not to conflate or confuse these two phenomena. The old and widely practiced method of determining “poverty line” has been used over many years by international organizations and the governments worldwide. This measurement is good only to determine the number of people under the poverty line and to seek for a statistical result on the quantitative condition of the poor in a specific geography. But as Skalli (2001) points out, this method largely fails to find out the details and dynamism of poverty such as lack of access to political participation, lack of access to proper housing and basic services like education, healthcare and equal economic opportunities; “Such an approach” according to her “...does not take into account social, cultural and gender considerations that serve to differentiate the impact of poverty on males and females within and between households” (P. 74). She comes to the conclusion that “the concept of social exclusion enables a better understanding of poverty as a *process* that involves multiple agents as well as institutions” (p. 75).

Poverty is one of the consequences of social exclusion; this ‘invisible’ social reality has many forms and faces. Hence measuring the dynamism and dimensions of exclusion will require a broad range of issues to be taken into consideration. As Moffatt & Glasgow (2009) observe, “establishing appropriate indicators of social exclusion is difficult because it is not a unitary concept that can be captured in a single measure such as relative lack of income” (p. 1294). According to them, in the UK, social exclusion is measured by “examining participation in key activities of consumption, production, political engagement, and social interaction, as this is information that can be obtained from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)” (p. 1294). However, this method of measurement could not be applied in many countries, especially in the developing world. In order to fully understand social exclusion one should assess this problematic in its all forms, starting from spatial exclusion, which is the most materialistic expression of the exclusionary process.

3.3. Forms of Exclusion

Dynamic in its nature, social exclusion can appear in many forms, or as Aalbers (2010) puts it, it is an ‘umbrella term’ which covers a broad range of social inequalities from deprivation and unemployment, to poverty and discrimination. Moreover, the multidimensionality of this concept enables researchers from different disciplines and traditions to study the overlapping social phenomena under one single notion of social exclusion. Aalbers argues that unlike similar concepts, such as “new poverty”, the social exclusion “puts institutional processes at the heart of the debate” and therefore, can address the political aspects of inequality, and highlight the different forms of institutional exclusionary process in a particular society. (p. 732-733). Studying the politics of exclusion/inclusion is a good way to examine the place of justice and democratic principles in urban settings such the one under examination in this thesis. Berghman (2010) suggests that the process of social exclusion is an indication of the failure of system. It demonstrates that numerous institutions in the society including political system, labor market, and community are not able (or willing) to integrate and protect the excluded groups. (Berghman as quoted in Aalbers, 2010, p. 733). In order to fully realize the surreptitious mechanisms of exclusion, and to identify the excluder and the excluded; it’s essential to put the “institutional”

aspect of this process into keen consideration. This will make it easier also to assess the different forms of exclusion and their socio-political consequences.

The city is the scene of complex human relations, the geography of exercising political power and a showcase of socio-spatial spirit of a society. The economic and cultural disparities of a people can be read through the place and geography of their city. The urban form is also where the excluded and the included inhabit, even though in the opposite ends of the city. Although the term ‘social exclusion’ is new, but exclusion as a phenomenon in urban spheres has a long history in many parts of the world. Sometimes legally and sometimes as a result of culture and costumes (LeGates & Stout, 2003), certain groups of city residents have been socially excluded. For instance, Abu-Lughod (2003) has examined how Muslim authorities in medieval Islamic cities legally excluded Jews and Christians from living in certain areas of the city, having certain jobs or wearing the same cloths that Muslims used to wear. This severe exercise of power was based on Sharia law and not only excluded the place where the non-Muslims lived but also their bodies and how they looked. (Janet Abu-Lughod as noted in LeGates & Stout, 2003, p. 181). Almost the same happened, for example, to African Americans in the US, Jews in Nazi Germany and the peoples of nineteenth century colonial countries like Shanghai, where once the Chinese and the dogs were not allowed entering parks (p. 182).

Social exclusion takes place in social life, and as Madanipour (2003) asserts, to understand and analyze it, we should identify the dimensions of exclusion within the wide-ranging aspects of the social world where it is exercised. Madanipour identifies the “economic, political and cultural arenas” as the three main spheres where the exclusionary process occurs and around which the social life takes shape. He then, explains how and where the exclusionary mechanisms operate within these three social arenas. For him, space is the key element in understanding social exclusion; it holds “a major role in the integration or segregation of urban society. ... social exclusion cannot be studied without also looking at spatial segregation and exclusion” (P. 185). The social and spatial geography of a city, he says, is shaped by politics of exclusion/inclusion which operates in the above three main forms and appears in various ways.

According to Madanipour’s analysis, in economic and political exclusion, “access” is the key concept; but in cultural exclusion the mechanisms are more complicated from the first two. In economic arena for instance, access to resources and opportunities is the chief indicator of inclusion and exclusion. He characterizes economic exclusion as the most “painful form of

exclusion” (p. 183), for the chain of difficulties that it causes to the excluded. When a social group is denied of employment or the right to run a business, it will lead them to poverty, and poverty brings hunger, disease and lack of education for their children; hence a chain of social problems will carry on from one generation of the excluded to the next. In the political arena, access to power and decision-making is what some social groups are excluded from. In democratic states, there are public elections to ensure the equal opportunities of all citizens in decision-making and political power. Despite of this fact, there are still certain groups of people like women, racial minorities or immigrants who are under-represented in political institutions and therefore have a limited access to design-making. The case in non-democratic states is more straightforward: in some dictatorship countries even the law doesn’t allow some social groups to have access to political power; and power is retained for a certain family, party and ethnic group who write the law and practice it on the basis of their own interests.

One of the most complicated and multi-layered forms of exclusion occurs in the cultural arena. Cultural exclusion is beyond the question of accessibility of resources. Culture by definition is a set of human activities, beliefs and behaviors which has symbolic structure and significance. Within the cultural arena, as Madanipour argues, social exclusion has been mainly exercised in the three realms of language, religion and nationality. The mechanism of cultural exclusion is usually subtle and is exercised in a variety of ways in everyday social life. Culture as a system of meaning includes “the visual culture, aesthetics of social behavior ... and the common narrative” which are the areas where people seek a sense of shared identity and social integration. Therefore the main form of exclusion in the cultural arena appears as the “marginalization from these symbols, meaning, rituals and discourses” (p. 183-184). The experience of cultural exclusion also varies from one minority to the next based on their race, religion, language, lifestyle and social organization of the excluding society. Different groups may face different modes of exclusion. However, of the three forms of exclusion, the most acute ones “are those that simultaneously include elements of economic, political and cultural exclusion” (p. 183-184), which is very common in societies where social exclusion exists.

Madanipur’s three “arenas” of exclusion is a general categorization of the concept, which embraces a broad range of issues in the realms of politics, economy and culture. Other scholars of various disciplines have also studied social exclusion from a number of different angles. For instance, in their investigations Stoer et al (2003), identified five “sites” of exclusion in European

societies as the following: (i) the body site, (ii) the work site, (iii) the citizenship site, (iv) the identity site, and (v) the territory site. They argue that the processes of exclusion and inclusion mainly function in these five aspects of everyday social life. Although, in a way, it is possible to locate their categories under Madanipour's three "arenas" of exclusion, but their angle of looking at the subject matter is slightly different.

Body is an ages old medium of communication; from its movements and gestures, to its colors and ages it can convey a great deal of meaning in any time and space. According to Stoer et al (2003), body is the site where the exclusionary process operates. They argue that for its ability to carry the visible marks of "social origin, economic status, integrity, belonging and age" (p. 45); body is the physical manifestation of the identity of a person and a site upon which the exclusion or inclusion of an individual is determined.

The process of exclusion in the body site takes place almost unconsciously; because the physical characteristics demonstrated on the body of a racial or religious minority, immediately single them out from the mainstream crowd on a street or any other public space. Occasionally the body of the excluded is not distinct enough to be easily recognized from the mainstream. In that case, as an extreme example of politicization of the body, the excluded body is marked by an external sign, like the David Star on the shoulder of Jews in Nazi Germany and the Scarlet Letter on the chest of adulterous women in medieval Europe; a method to exclude the 'others' even if they look like the 'ours'.

According to Stoer et al, work is another site of exclusion. Work as a construct of personal identity, plays a major role in social status and personal identity of individuals. 'Who are you?' is a question to which people most likely answer with, for instance, 'I am a bank manager' or 'I am a porter'. The title of occupation, the place of work and the set of activities a person performs in his or her work, are the main areas with which people identify themselves. Therefore, a person's identity basically depends upon the place that one occupies within "the occupational structure" (p. 49). This social attitude towards work, according to the authors, was a product of modernity a particular of early capitalism, a time when to be included "meant being incorporated into the labor process and into the wage relations. ...[and] to be excluded meant, in large part, not having a place in the labor process" (p.48). Now, in the new globalized capitalism, the authors believe that the work and its organization has been transformed, but it seems that it

must be the case only in post-industrial western countries; since in most part of developing world the patterns of labor market remain largely the same as in the past.

Of the three other sites of exclusion, citizenship is a form of political, and identity and territory are forms of cultural and spatial exclusion. Building on Santos's (1995) 'structural places', Stoer et al (2003) emphasize on spatial aspect of construction of identity: "the household-place, the workplace, the citizen-place, the community place, the marketplace and the world-place, hold both a central and a relative place in identity construction" (p.83). They highlight the exclusionary process in identity construction in the context of place. Identity, according to them, is a "process of meaning creation by groups and by individuals" (p.83); therefore it can be a site of exclusion and struggle, where certain social groups are unable to create their own narratives, meanings and sense of identity.

Social exclusion as an 'invisible punishment' of certain social groups, is evident in a great number of cities, and is operated in a variety of forms. Social exclusion is a painful fact of contemporary urban life; it parts the city residents and changes the image of the city in an unpleasant way. Cities with a large number of excluded populations are always in danger of falling into violent conflicts between the two groups of excluded and included. The excluded wants the city to be a home for him also, where he can feel secure, where he can have his voice heard and have the chance to take part in decision making. Otherwise, as long as he feels excluded and labeled as an 'outsider', he remains the embodiment of injustice in the city. The geography of a city takes shape in accordance to social relations of the residents; hence, urban space is where the most profound impact of exclusion is to be found. The systematic exclusion of city residents, not only divide the people but also the place of the urban environment. Social exclusion is what the 'divided city' emerges from, and is the prime cause of social division and of spatial partition of the cities (Madanipour et al 1998, Calame & Charlesworth 2009).

3.4. Divided City

Exclusion of certain social groups in urban areas, among many other consequences, will reshape the geographical and social organization of the city. There is an apparent correlation between social exclusion and what is known as the "divided city" in urban sphere. The systematic exclusion of a certain social group from economic opportunity, political participation and public

services, will lead to creation of urban ghettos, where this culturally and often racially-homogenous population seek shelter. As a result of this social segregation, a spatial polarization emerges in the geography of the city; and subsequently the city will be divided. The developments of urban ghettos are closely associated with symptoms of social exclusion. Ghettos are almost invariably overcrowded areas of a city in which racial, religious or economic minorities inhabit. This residential disparity practically signifies this idea, that the socially excluded is compelled to be spatially excluded as well. As Plato (1973) has observed, each city, in fact is a divided city; however the depth and range of the division, varies greatly from one city to another.

‘Divided city’ is a term referring to urban areas with physical and/or socio-economic barriers by which both the people and place of the city is segregated. These barriers, in general, prevent the residents from social interactions; they effect “the distribution of infrastructure and services”, and, in some extreme cases, end up to “parallel jurisdictions” (Carr, 2010, p. 225). There are many cities in the world being divided on the basis of religion (Jerusalem), race (Nicosia), or political ideology (Berlin, now reunited). Jerusalem, Nicosia and Berlin are among those physically divided cities in which, as a result of political tensions and violent conflicts, concrete walls and security guards separate the geography and population of the city. Such physical divisions mostly occur in conflicted regions where the wall is built in order to stop the inter-state hostility; therefore it serves at the same time as a form of national border also.

Most often the wall that divides a city is not as visible as it was the Berlin wall. Culture, economy and political ideology are some of the bases in urban environments, upon which invisible walls are being erected and socio-spatial boundaries are being drawn. In the cities where the walls of division are rather social and not physical, the city residents are still identified by the place of their inhabitation. In particular, the residents of ethnic ghettos and urban slums -- which are very common in developing countries throughout the world -- are being considered as strangers in neighborhoods of wealth and power in the same city. The height of walls and depth of division in this type of divided cities are even higher and deeper than physically walled divided cities. Jerusalem, as Klein (2005) notes, is one of the divided cities where the visible and invisible walls of division exist in many forms. This ancient city is divided deeply as the result of years of violent conflicts and ethnic hostilities between Arabs and Jews. A compilation of the cultural, economic, ethnic and political boundaries have made Jerusalem a city of walls divided

into east, where Arabs inhabit, and west, which is the Jewish side. But it is the invisible walls that really separate the population of the city. Klein observes, for instance, when an Arab from East Jerusalem comes to the Jewish west, he not only finds himself politically an outsider but culturally as well: He can't speak the language and he can't appreciate the western-oriented Israeli culture, plus he carries the memory of years of hostility between the two ethnic groups, "he is aware that he is different". This invisible "wall of consciousness" as Klein calls it, is more difficult to cross than the visible wall of concrete; because it is the wall of social identity and political ideology, a wall that holds a more complex set of measurements of "control and supervision" (p.60).

There is evidence of urban segregation and socio-spatial division of cities even from ancient Egypt, but 'divided city,' as Calame & Charlesworth (2009) suggests, is a geopolitical phenomenon emerged from the ashes of the Second World War. The second half of the 20th century was the time of a global decolonization movement which radically changed the political map of the world. This storm of independence-seeking currents involved resistances and conflicts and therefore, the resulted shifts in national boundaries were not smooth at all; many wars war waged and millions of lives were lost, Marshal calls the ethnic-based civil wars of late 20th century "the third world war" (Marshal 1999). The result of these conflicted movements was many new states being founded and many countries and cities being divided. In South Asia, for instance, India was divided into Pakistan (1947), Bangladesh (1971), and Kashmir (where still an ethnic-religious war is going on); and in the Far East, Korea was divided into south and north in 1948 based on political ideology. Among all, Israel is a great example of post-war ethnic identity struggles: the catastrophies of the Second World War, and in particular the Jewish tragedy brought the Holocaust survivors and Jewish Diaspora to this conclusion that, in order to avoid the repetition of Auschwitz and to reconstruct the Jewish collective identity, they needed to build a Jewish state where they could call "home". It seems that most of the post war conflicts are comparable to (successful) Jewish pursuit of ethnic identity.

In early 1990s when the Soviet Union collapsed, 15 new states in Eurasia and central Asia were formed, all based on ethnic origin and language of the people in specific regions. In other parts of the world, especially in Africa struggle for independence has been the common currency of politics for a great part of the last century. In fact, the construction of ethnic identity based on independent sovereignty over a particular geography, has been a global trend, which

was particularly accelerated in late 20th century. According to records (Figures from Strand, Wilhelmsen, and Gleditch 2003, as quoted in Calame and Charlesworth, 2009, p. 2-3), from 1945 to 1988, 64 wars were waged from which 59 of them were civil wars, and 80 percent of the victims were killed by someone of their own country. Moreover, if during the Second World War (one of the deadliest wars of history) 59 percent of the killed were civilians, in the ethnic-based civil wars of second part of the last century, 74 percent of all those killed in the battles are civilians. This indicates that unlike the Second World War, where nationality determined the identity of the enemy, in civil wars it's the ethnicity that differentiates enemy from the friend. The "threatened collective identity" makes the nations depart and brings ethnic groups face to face on battle grounds. As a result of these intrastate wars of late 20th century, 127 new independent states were founded and new national borders were drawn which significantly changed the geopolitics of the world. As of 2007, 23 intrastate or civil wars were going on in the world, of which 80 percent of them were based on collective ethnic identity. The conflicts in Afghanistan, Sudan, Rwanda, East Timor and Israel-Palestine are some of the well-known examples of this new form of warfare.

Carr (2010) puts divided cities into two different categories: divided by internal causes and divided by external causes. By external causes, he points out to war and violence as factors of division as they forcefully cause the physical partition of a city. This category of the divided cities is most common in shifting national boundaries and enforcing construction of border walls. By internal causes, he considers the social factors; causes that make cities divide by invisible walls, this category according to him, is a particular of almost all cities, you can find internally divided cities in each country, even in most integrated ones. Carr believes that the walls in internally divided cities are even taller than walls in externally divided ones; he says, internally divided cities which contain "ghettos or barrios" suffer "a much higher degree of separation" (p. 229) than cities which are separated by physical walls.

Berlin provides an instructive historical example of how invisible walls of urban division are thicker than the physical ones. More than twenty years after reunification, Berlin is still struggling with socioeconomic inequalities which keep the former communist East side of the city parted from the capitalist West. Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor who is originally from East Germany, has said "the process of German unity has not ended yet" ("German reunification", 2010). Income inequality, higher unemployment rate, lifestyle differences and

different political beliefs are some of the issues around which the socioeconomic divisions take place in the German capital and keep the city invisibly divided. As Carr suggests, the German government since reunification has invested heavily in East Berlin to diminish the socialist image of the urban landscape and replace it with capitalist signs of wealth and power. For this purpose, the government had to build new bridges, roads, metros and office buildings to bring the urban infrastructure and services to the standards of West Berlin. In spite of all these largescale projects, East Berlin remains distinct visually and socially from the west part of the city. The reunification project was initially a western initiative, in a way that little attention was given to maintain the positive aspects of socialist urban management in the East. This is why many observers believe that the post-reunification problems in Berlin have roots in those one-sided policies. According to Carr, “the transition from socialism to capitalism posed many problems, and many felt that the west had simply expanded eastward without assessing the merits of the former system” (p. 227). Of those “merits” of east was the ability of the government to tackle unemployment, homelessness and having women fully educated and giving them opportunities to take top positions in labor market. Above all, there was no urban segregation on the basis of economic status; a phenomenon totally new to East Berlin and its residents after reunification.

It seems that the reunification of politically divided cities is still easier than ethnically divided urban domains. The Berlin Wall was a political one; therefore the division lasted until the political conflict between the two German countries was resolved and they were reunited. As a symbolic flame of the cold war, the Berlin wall was built on the basis of communist ideology in 1961 by German Democratic Republic. When it fell down in 1989, it symbolized the end of cold war and the beginning of a new era. Thus, the problem of division and reunification in Berlin, both on geographic and social levels had no ground in ethnic tendencies and were merely political. Thanks to Germany’s stable economic and political system, the Berlin reunification process has been considered (in spite of all the flaws) the most smooth and successful reunification of a divided city, comparing to other examples in recent history.

There are many once-divided cities that are geographically reconnected but remain divided socially. As Calame and Charlesworth (2009) argue “unifying but not integrating” is one the major problems in formerly divided cities that then, under specific circumstances, reunify. Because of the need for a healthier economic growth and a better ‘city image’, in general, “urban

partition is rarely sustainable” and the peoples of both sides of the wall tend to demolish the barrier in some points of their history. Although they manage to remove the physical barrier, but they fail to overcome the psychological barrier which has been built upon years of hostility and mistrust between them. This psychological mindset “prevents residents who lived through the periods of partition from occupying formerly forbidden areas.” (p. 222) This situation is what the authors call “voluntary segregation”, a very common trend which is evident in the aftermath of reunification in almost all the formerly divided cities. This type of segregation is one of the processes that cause the formation of modern ghettos in contemporary urban environments. However, voluntary segregation is not always the only cause of ghettos; since a variety of other social factors are involved in the formation of urban ghettos.

3.5. The Ghetto

Although a global phenomenon, ghettos are now more common in American metropolitan regions than other parts of the world (Morrill 1965, Rose, 1970, Hilberg 1980, Ward 1982). However, as Nightingale (2006) observes, it was the “Europeans, not Americans [who] invented urban residential segregation by color and race”. Nonetheless, since the second half of the last century racial segregation and ghettos are considered to be American urban characteristics, or in Nightingale’s words, this “ideological virus [of] institutionalized racial inequalities, is one American product no one should seek to import” (p.687). But it is too late to heed Nightingale's words because the racial ghetto (whether imported or homegrown) is already an urban reality in a great number of cities in the world.

The ghetto, by definition, is arguably the most clear-cut excluded geography in an urban environment. It is an overcrowded part of a city where a particular racial, ethnic or religious group inhabits. Ghettos first emerged in medieval Europe (Wirth 1927, Hilberg 1980) where the Christian authorities obliged the Jews to live in a particular quarter of the city, so they were practically separated from the rest of the population. This type of institutionally formed ghettos, reached to its deadly peak during the Second World War, when the Nazis established large Jewish ghettos in Germany and other European countries. But much has been changed since then. The post-war ghettos in west and elsewhere, no longer refers exclusively to closed-off Jewish enclaves, it now is the term to describe the residential place of other urban minorities as

well, who live in large homogenous neighborhoods known as Chinatowns, little Italies, black belts (to name the romanticized ones) and so forth. It is believed that The Chicago School of urban ecology is credited for the generalization of the meaning of 'ghetto' to other ethnic urban areas (Ward 1982, p. 257), as they conceptualized the idea that the ethnic neighborhoods aka ghettos, are naturally grown areas of a city.

Writing in the early twentieth century, Louis Wirth, a member of the Chicago School of sociology who was himself a migrated European Jew living in the US, argued that the modern ghetto was no longer an "officially regulated settlement of the Jews" but rather a "local cultural arena which has arisen quite informally" (1927, p.57). This idea, in a way, put the foundation for contemporary studies of ethnic ghettos in worldwide urban regions and directly informs the conceptual framework of this thesis.

In order to fully understand the ghetto and its broader relation to urban communication, one should start with addressing the question of ghetto formation. This question is of course a contested one. The historical studies (Lerner 2002, Brenner 1993, Debenedetti-Stow 1992) show that the Jewish ghetto (the place and the name) is a product of medieval Europe as it was created for the first time in Venice, Italy in 1516 referring to a Jewish settlement. According to these records, the Jewish minority throughout medieval Europe was under constant pressure from both the church and state to live in closely controlled walled-off ghettos, so they would have a very limited interaction with the Christian citizens. But there are other theories on creation of ghettos. Wirth (1927), for instance, provides a different narrative of the Jewish ghetto experience in medieval Europe. According to him, the concentration of Jewish population in segregated areas in Medieval European city was not due to forceful regulations of the church or state; but rather a natural process, emerging from "the unwitting crystallization of needs and practices rooted in the costumes and heritages, religious and secular, of the Jews themselves" (p.59).

Wirth argued that Jewish spatial isolation was a voluntary action although influenced, somehow, by the urban culture and politics of cities on that time. Jews choose to dwell in separated areas of the city in order to feel more secure in keeping their ethnic costumes and traditions alive and practicing their religion freely. On the other hand, it was also desirable for the state to have the Jews in a separate quarter of the city, so it would make it easier to better control them: being key players in the economy of most European cities, Jews were a great source of revenue for the governments. All these indirect external factors coupled with the

conventional desire of the Jews in protecting their religious and cultural traditions were the basis of geographic and social isolation of the Jewish population in the cities of medieval Europe. Although from a sociological point of view the Wirth's account seems plausible, but as he himself implies, the Jews of medieval Europe would not be willing to segregate themselves if they felt secure among the mainstream. In either case, it seems that the institutional social exclusion of the Jews played the main role in formation of the ghettos.

Writing his now classic essay "The Ghetto", Wirth (1927) was yet to witness the extreme versions of Jewish ghettos during the Second World War, which were built for anything but the 'protection of Jewish traditions'. The Jewish ghettos under Nazis in Europe were restrict state-run establishments; but the ghettos (especially after the war and before that), have been naturally emerged settlements in the cities where the members of a certain social group inhabit them to maintain a shared sense of community and psychological security. Sometimes the term ghetto is used to describe even non-deprived and normal areas of the city where an ethnic group is clustered (Ward 1982 p. 257-8), however in general, the ghetto still remains as a place of none or bad public service (for example, education, health, security, employment, transportation, leisure activity, environmental sanitation, housing and etc); where dense homogeneous population is only one of its characteristics. A ghetto, as Wirth asserts, is the spatial expression of social organization in a city, through which you can examine the society at large, and in particular the social minorities who "has effectually been subordinated to a dominant group". Historically, he observes, the ghetto has served as an "instrument of control" (p. 58) and punishment, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly.

In the United States, (Rose 1970, Ward 1982, Morrill 1965) the ethnic ghettos were formed at the end of the nineteenth century by newly arrived European immigrants who were not able to easily assimilate with the American society for linguistic or other barriers. Those ghettos however, gradually disappeared as their residents started to incorporate within the mainstream population. Nevertheless, of the American ghettos it is the black residential areas, known as Negro ghettos, which have been the longest lasting excluded spaces in American urban landscape. The Negro ghettos were formed when the African Americans started to migrate *en mass* from the southern regions of the country to the north. This mass migration of early twentieth century, in fact was in response to the widespread racism among white southerners against the people of color. The black community fled to large cities of the north first and

foremost to save their lives; they were uneducated and unskilled, and so they had no choice but to inhabit in overcrowded slums located on the margins of the cities. After more than a century of social changes in the US, African American ghettos still exist in almost the same distressing conditions in most of American metropolitan areas. They are historical scars on the body of American cities and that country's culture.

Whatever the condition and wherever the location, to those minority groups who live there, "the ghetto implies a rejection, a stamp of inferiority (Morrill 1965, p.339) and an acutely expression of social exclusion and spatial isolation. In the course of this discussion, the central role of social exclusion was highlighted as a mechanism that is based on enormous structural forces which shape the social and geographical organization of the city. It was noted that there is a close interrelation between social exclusion, spatial segregation, deprivation, inequality, divided city, "ghettoization" and various forms of conflicts on the basis of race, religion or region. Social exclusion is both the result and resource of deeply rooted sociopolitical tensions exhibited on urban spatial form and resulted in violent conflicts. A multidimensional process, social exclusion operates in many forms, of which we examine some of them in the following chapters in the context of west Kabul and Hazara people.

Urban social exclusion and its consequences, as discussed in this chapter, is a complex problematic related to several fields of study. In this thesis, urban communication, being interdisciplinary in nature, is employed as the key tool by which this multi-layered issue is addressed. Urban communication which has links to city planning, architecture, sociology, geography, history, politics and economy, serves as the unifying element which frames all these disciplines into one structured body. To understand the urban experience of the Hazara people in Kabul, I shall draw insights from various sources and perspectives, but urban communication will remain the main framework which will guide the process of reading West Kabul as a communicative text and identifying the politics of exclusion in the city.

4. Ghettoization: The Production of West Kabul

“There is hardly a household ... [in Kabul] that has not got its Hazara slave”.

- Lillias Hamilton, *A Vizier's Daughter: A Tale of the Hazara War* (1900, p. 96)

“When God created the donkey, the Hazaras wept”.

- An Afghan saying (*The Economist*, Feb 15, 2007)

“Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (from evil)?”

- Qur'an (4:97)

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the process of “production” of West Kabul as an ethnic ghetto. I will start with discussing the history of Hazara migration to Kabul city, which will help us understand the nature of the Hazara urban experience in Afghan capital and the exclusionary processes that marginalized this people both geographically and socially in that city. My principal aim in this chapter is to map out the historical development of West Kabul and highlight the sociopolitical factors in the emergence of this ethnic ghetto as an excluded urban geography. Building upon Wirth's (1927) theory of ghetto formation, as described in the previous chapter, I argue that West Kabul as an urban space was developed naturally; but as a social and cultural reality, can be considered a product of the institutional exclusionary processes that the Hazaras of Kabul went through. In other words, the Afghan authorities did not force the Hazaras to settle in West Kabul, but the policies that they pursued in regard to this people, made them to inhabit collectively in the ghetto, for security and economic reasons.

The social theorist Henri Lefebvre (1991) posits that urban space is like a sculpture: it is *produced* and it has meaning (p. 73). In his influential book *The Production of Space*, he outlines the social and mental dimensions of space and provides an analysis of the city and how it is produced under certain political and economic circumstances. Lefebvre argues that urban space

is not a neutral, pre-existing entity, but a social product shaped by the complex interactions of people and place. In this sense, he conceptualizes the city as a platform upon which the class struggles and power relations in the course of a nation's history are manifested. Every class of urban dwellers is identified by the space they have produced and inhabited: the social groups in the society “cannot constitute themselves, or recognize one another, as ‘subjects’ unless they generate a ... space” (p. 416). For Lefebvre the city is a product of its dwellers; it bears the identity, ideas, values and history of those who reside in it. Partly based on Lefebvre’s idea of production of space, the principal question I am going to address in this chapter is: how was West Kabul produced as an urban space? The necessary conceptual framework for such an undertaking is drawn from the field of urban communication (see Gibson and Lowes, 2007, chapter 1 for a full discussion).

The American anthropologist Robert Canfield (1973a), has studied the spatialization of religious and ethnic differences in rural areas in Bamiyan, central Afghanistan. According to his findings, in all Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries there is a pattern in rural locations of religious groups shaped by political dominance: “the dominant sects, those locally considered ‘orthodox’, are found in the central places, usually lowlands, while diverse ‘heretical’ groups having uncertain or variable loyalties occupy marginal territories such as mountains, deserts, and marshes” (p.1511). He concludes that in Bamiyan, being a multi-sectarian province in Afghanistan, the Sunni groups of Tajik and Pashtun occupy the best arable lands in the flat areas of the valley and the Hazaras (both Shia and Ismaili) are pushed back to the highlands where land is scarce (Canfield 1973a, also Canfield 1973b, p.5). This pattern can also be generalized in other provinces as well, like in Badakhshan where the Hazara Ismailis live in highlands and the Sunni Tajiks reside in flat areas. Generally in Afghanistan, this is the spatial pattern of distance and difference in rural settings. However, in urban areas, although the lowland versus highland dichotomy is not applicable, there is a strong spatial marginalization pattern on the basis of ethnic and religious boundaries which in Kabul city is expressed in ethnic ghettos. For instance, the Hazara ghetto in West Kabul is a good example of how political marginality of an ethnic and religious minority ends up in their spatial exclusion as well.

4.1. Migration and Urbanization

The production of urban centers has always been linked to the human mobility and mass migration. Cities emerge when a collection of heterogynous social and ethnic groups settle in a particular geography and engage in a network of social and economic activities. Migration played a great role in the making of West Kabul as well. However, the Hazara migration, for the most part, was not a natural urbanization of rural communities but rather a consequence of various exclusionary mechanisms that drove them out of their villages in central Afghanistan towards urban centers in the country, in particular Kabul. Thus, I argue that each Hazara migration pattern can also be regarded as a form of social exclusion.

In Qur'an, the holy book of Muslims, God asks the oppressed communities: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (from evil)?" (Qur'an 4:97). The prophet Mohammad also, under pressure from his opponents, took the historical journey from Mecca to Madina in 622 AD and encouraged his followers to move and migrate. As a tradition, the Hazaras have always embraced migration as a way of survival. During times of war and oppression, if they survived killing and enslavement, they usually abandoned their homes and moved either to the urban centers inside Afghanistan or even abroad, especially to the neighboring Pakistan and Iran. The cities have always served as shelters, not only for Hazaras in Afghanistan, but for any oppressed community anywhere in the world.

When the first Hazaras arrived in the city of Kabul in 17th century, they were already an excluded and condemned community. They were slaves in chains and were brought there for sale¹. Some of them were taken away by merchants to other cities; some of them found masters in Kabul city and stayed there. They remained an invisible minority for a long time, until other groups of Hazaras such as the forcefully displaced and the economic migrants as well as other flow of slaves arrived in Kabul. Gradually by the late 18th century they became a visible minority in the urban space of Kabul city.

Mobility has always been a method for human beings to defend themselves in the time of danger. We emigrate from one place to another, in order to survive war, political oppression or economic hardship. For centuries the peoples of different ethnicities and regions, particularly the

¹ Specific historic evidences supporting this date for arrival of Hazara slaves in Kabul is scarce. However, since they converted to Shi'sm in 17th century (Mousavi 1997, pp. 73-5), I assume that their enslavement began right after abandoning Sunni Islam, therefore it is possible that the first Hazara slaves might have been taken to Kabul in that century.

minorities, have been crossing borders, oceans and continents in pursuit of freedom, happiness and safety. In the United States for example, the African-Americans migrated en masse from southern regions to northern cities as a result of repression in early twentieth century. They used migration, as a method of survival. As Jong (2005) puts it, the “politically conscious migrants ‘voted with their feet’ to reject their subordinate place in the southern social order. [...the] enslaved Africans and African Americans asserted their right to liberty by running away from slaveholders” (p. 387). The newly-arrived African Americans in the city were poor and mostly had no education; in addition, the segregation forced them to be socially and spatially excluded from the rest of urban dwellers. It was how the black ghettos were founded in American cities.

Ralph Ellison opens his classic novel the *Invisible Man* (1952) with this line: “I am an invisible man” (Ellison 1995, p. 3). His novel was received as a true representation of the black man in mid-20th century America. He masterfully illustrates the picture of the socially excluded urban blacks and how they struggled to define their identity in a world of segregation and discrimination imposed by the dominant class. This urban invisibility has been the same for Hazaras in Kabul, who either be forcefully displaced, economic migrant, slave or freed slave; arrived as rural people in the city with no education, no money and almost no opportunity for either. They naturally found a job as “coolies” who would carry the loads on their shoulder from bazaars of the businessmen who were mainly the Tajiks urbanites to the homes of men of power who were mostly the Pashtuns. This pattern of urban labor more or less remains the same until today, even though there are some improvements since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

4.2. The Four Patterns of Hazara Migration to Kabul

The formation of ethnic ghettos is usually the result of mass mobility and migration of certain social groups to urban centers (Wirth 1927). Ghettos emerge when these newcomers, for various reasons, are rejected by the dominant social groups. The urban experience of the Hazaras in Kabul city and the historical development of their settlement in West Kabul is a typical phenomenon of urban ghettoization and social exclusion. The settlement of Hazara people in Kabul city took place in several phases and in different times which could be outlined in the following four main categories.

The Hazaras lived for centuries in central Afghanistan as a rural community, arguably since the time of Alexander the Great in 300 BC (Ferrier 1856, p. 221-3) and remained a

politically autonomous¹ and economically self-sufficient agrarian community until the 17th century. Their encounter with the cities was limited to the time when the wealthiest ones journeyed for pilgrimage to Iran, Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia. Thus, they were familiar with Afghan cities like Ghazni, Kandahar and Herat which are located on their route in the west and south of their country and even they inhabited these cities. Kabul was located on the east side of the Hazara areas towards which they rarely journeyed (except for the Hazaras of Behsud who lives close to Kabul). In addition, until the 16th century, when it became the summer capital of the Mongol Empire, Kabul was commercially smaller and strategically less important comparing to other cities the country. In 16th century when Babur conquered the region, there was no substantial number of Hazaras inhabiting Kabul city. In his famous memoir *Baburnama*, while describing the peoples of Kabul and its surrounding places, he notes that the Hazaras were not city dwellers but mostly lived in the countryside (Babur 2002, P. 166).

The migration of Hazaras to Kabul cannot be reduced to a simplified economic *rural-urban* migratory issue. It is more complicated and requires taking into account wide-ranging historical events as well as the political apparatus in the past several centuries by which the Hazaras were deeply affected in one way or another. I argue that the patterns of migration of the Hazaras to Kabul can be categorized in the following four forms which in fact can be considered as forms of exclusion as well. The ghettoization of West Kabul is a product of these four migrant groups who arrived in the city over the last several centuries:

4.2.1. Slaves The arrival of this category of Hazaras who settled in Kabul, most possibly started from mid-17th century, when the Hazaras were declared infidels and subject to slavery for converting to Shi'ism², and lasted until they were finally emancipated by law on July

¹Some parts of Hazarajat, particularly the Daizangi and Daikundi in the heart of this region remained autonomous until 1890s. The eastern parts of the Hazarajat (Behsud, Qara-Bagh, Jaghuri and part of Bamiyan) for being geographically close to Kabul, were mostly under control of the Afghan authorities. For instance, in 1830s these parts of Hazarajat "paid regular tributes" to the Afghan king, in a way that "at no periods did the kings of Cabool drive so much revenue from them, as is now procured by Dost Mohamed Khan" (Burnes 1839, p. 44).

² The question of when the Hazaras adapted Shi'ism is a contested one. Some think that the Hazaras converted to Shi'ism when they converted to Islam, but the majority of scholars seem to believe that the Hazaras adapted this sect of Islam under the influence of a Persian Safavid king, Sahah Abbas (r. 1587-1629) sometime in 17th century (Mousavi 1997, pp. 73-81). However, we know that this kind of fundamental social changes in belief systems does not occur over night; it might have taken up until mid-17th century for Hazara population of Afghanistan to fully convert to the new doctrine. In spite of this mass conversion, still there exist a minority of Hazaras who profess the Sunni Islam. On the other hand, it took some times for Sunnis to define their relation with Shias and subsequently

20, 1924 (Karimi 2011). Slavery, as the extreme form of social exclusion, has served as the oldest and the most important migratory pattern through which the Hazaras began their urban experience in Kabul.

The enslavement of the Hazaras took place into two historical periods: the first period (which is largely unnoticed by historians) began from the mid-17th century when Hazaras converted to Shia sect of Islam. In this period, although the slave trade was widespread, it was not institutional. The Sunni clergy declared the Hazaras as infidels and all Sunni ethnic groups, particularly, Turkmen (Conolly 1838, pp. 117-19, vol. 1), Uzbeks (Burnes 1834, p. 349, Vol. 2), Tajiks (Lal 1846a, p. 200, vol. 1) and to some extends Pashtuns (Bellew 1880, p. 116; Elphinstone 1815, pp. 243-45) began to trade Hazaras as slaves in the cities.

The second period of Hazara slavery began when the Amir Abdur Rahman seized the power in 1880. He launched two campaigns against the Hazaras one in 1888 and the other between 1891-1893 in which 62 percent of the Hazaras were either killed, enslaved or displaced. During his reign, the Kabul city was flooded by thousands of Hazara slaves who were usually sold cheaper than donkeys (for full discussions, see Kakar 1979, pp. xxiii, 39, 52,-53, 173-176; Mousavi 1997, 120-138; Lee 1996, pp. 74 , 532, 551; Temirkhanov 1993, pp. 194-268; and Kateb 1992, vol. 3).

4.2.2. Economic refugees At least since the early 19th century the Hazaras have been moving to Kabul and other urban centers in and outside Afghanistan as economic refugees. In 1830s the Hazaras, some of whom were slaves and others free, used to come from Hazarajat to Kabul during winters to “gain a livelihood by clearing the roofs of snow, and acting as porters” (Burnes 1842, P. 231). This migration has been a steady process and was accelerated in the second half of the last century. Although rural-urban migration is common in Afghanistan among every ethnic group, the situation of the Hazaras is “complex” and “unique” (Jung 1972, p. 10) therefore in 1960s, Hazaras were the largest ethnic group who migrated to Kabul city contributing 31 percent of Kabul’s total migrants. Their migration had a number of different causes, among them; the “effective political and economic isolation of the region and its people” played a major role (Jung 1972, pp. 7, 9). The central region of Afghanistan where the Hazaras lived never was included in the government’s development plans; with the exception of a few

issue *Fatwas* of slavery of Shia Hazaras. Therefore, I believe the practice of enslaving the Hazaras in Afghanistan might have not begun sooner than the middle of 17th century.

examples, there existed no school, hospital, road, communication facility or any other form of basic services for decades. (for more discussion about the exclusion of Hazarajat from development plans, see Mousavi 1996; Dowlatabadi 2007, Yazdani 1989, Emadi 1997, Cullather 2002)¹

Grötzbach (2011) notes that between the years 1965-1970 the population of Kabul rapidly grew from 435,000 to 913,000 and by arrival of internal refugees it reached to an estimated 2 million in 1987. I believe a considerable number of this newcomers to capital, were the Hazaras who escaped the hardship of life in their region. In 1992, according to one estimation, the Hazaras formed one half of the entire city population (Mousavi 1997, p. 197). This category of Hazara economic IDPs, continue to land in Kabul until today, since the Hazarajat is still an excluded geography where the government as well as the international community “haven’t had anything done” (Quoted in MRT/PRT 2006, p. 10).

4.2.3. Forcefully displaced This category along with the Hazara slavery is one of the oldest forms of Hazara population mobility in Afghanistan. From the moment the Pashtun nomads started to take over their lands in south-central and western regions from 15th century onward (Noelle 1997, pp. 158-219 and Ariyanpour, 1997, pp 79-118), a great number of Hazaras were displaced; the majority moved further back to the mountains of central region and some particularly the Hazaras of Maidan, Ghazni and Parwan provinces which are geographically close to Kabul, took shelter in the this city.

This forceful displacement was reinforced after 18th century and particularly in late 19th century and continues today. The Hazara lands are confiscated and given to Pashtunns nomads and as result they had no choice but moving to Kabul and other cities (for a discussion of this issue see Kakar 1979, p. 125-6; Mousavi 1997, pp. 133-138; Jung1972, pp. 9-10). This traditional Hazara-Kuchi conflict continues even in recent years, forcing 10,691 Hazara families out of their villages to Kabul only 2008-2010 (AIHRC 2010).

The various wars between 1978 and 2001 also forcefully displaced Hazaras who mostly moved to Kabul. The population of Kabul in 1978 was estimated at being 800,000; in 1991-92 it was increased rapidly to around 3 million (Kakar 1997, p. 294), of which about half of them were the Hazaras (Mousavi 1997, pp. 64-5, 197).

4.2.4. Returnees from abroad This group of Hazaras in Kabul is the people who have mostly returned from Iran and Pakistan in the past 10 years. In early 1990s Afghanistan had 6 million refugees who had left the country due to the Afghan-Soviet war, a great number of them returned after the collapse of the communist regime in 1992. Of the two million Afghan refugees in Iran, the majority of them are Hazaras (Emadi 1997, p. 377). The Hazara returnees are settled in various neighborhoods of West Kabul particularly on the western side of Pul-e Khushk area¹ and also in south of the West Kabul plain in Darul-Aman area.

Since 2002, when the Taliban was overthrown in a US –led military action, Afghans started to return from abroad in great numbers, especially from Iran and Pakistan. The biggest wave of returns was between 2002 and 2005, but in the year 2010 also more than 112,000 people returned home, most of them settled in urban areas (Edwards/UNHCR 2010). Most of the returnees in Kabul are the Hazaras, because according to UN data the neighborhoods of West Kabul house the majority of returnees from Iran and Pakistan (ILO/UNHCR 2006, p13).

West Kabul is a product of these four forms of Hazara migration to the Afghan capital. Virtually without exception, Hazaras falling into all of these categories have been the victims of various forms of social exclusion. One of the most profound exclusionary processes which deeply affected the socio-spatial experience of the Hazaras in Kabul city was the institution of slavery. This trade of the Hazara body was the foundation of the social exclusion the Hazaras have been going through in this city. The people of Kabul saw the Hazaras for the first time as wretched men and women in chains of slavery around their necks and feet, standing in the corner of street to be sold. They never forgot this image. It was the definitive moment in the Hazara urban experience in Kabul. These Hazaras along with others who arrived in Kabul under better or worse circumstances put the foundation of the largest ethnic ghetto in the city.

From an urban communication perspective, the urban built environment is produced as a “text”, this text is then “read or interpreted by individuals in concrete social contexts” (Gibson and Lowes 2007, p. 5). In this regard, West Kabul as an ethnic ghetto is a spatial text which is produced as a result of certain social processes. The interpretation of this geography entails

¹Shahrak Zawaru (“The town of pilgrims”) is the name people have given to the new neighborhood the returnees from Iran have developed in the far west of West Kabul, however the actual name of the place is Shahrak Almahdi, but since in Hazara culture, anyone who has visited the city of Mashad in Iran where the Imam Reza’s shrine is located, they call him/her Zawar which in Persian means “pilgrim”.

considering the various forms of migration as the social context through which the ghettoization took place. Although, the physical emergence of this ghetto in West Kabul was a natural process, it was not a neutral one. The practice of place-making and the production of built environment is inherently a political exercise. Place creation is determined by those in control of resources, therefore the production of any urban space suggests the existence of an institutional force which attempts to control and conduct the social organization and the spatial development of the city. Using the concept of urban communication, I intend to examine the “production” of West Kabul and highlight the systematic exclusionary processes that forced the Hazaras to dwell in that distinguished geography of exclusion and neglect.

4.3. The Emergence of the Hazara Ghetto

The question of how West Kabul emerged as a Hazara ghetto requires some more elaboration, particularly as it relates to the broader concerns about urban communication that this thesis addresses. In this final part of the chapter, based on ghettoization theories developed in Wirth’s (1927) classic study of Jewish ghettos, I intend to sketch the historical evolution of West Kabul as a Hazara ghetto.

Wirth argued that the Jewish settlements in the west (except during the World War II) developed gradually and naturally in urban centers independent of any institutional enactment. Unlike to Jewish ghettos under Nazi Germany which were walled and controlled spaces like large prisons; the traditional Jewish ghettos in Europe existed for more than 500 years as social institutions where the Jews inhabited freely and safely. However, as Wirth also points out, the very existence of an ethnic ghetto is an evidence of social exclusion and lack of freedom. In this sense, the nature of the urban ghetto as a socio-spatial entity is a contradictory one which cannot be fully understood unless taking both the geographical and social factors into consideration.

Wirth defines the ghetto as “a form of accommodation through which a minority has effectually been subordinated to a dominant group” (1927, p. 58). This definition is at the core of this study of West Kabul. The geographical development of West Kabul as an urban ghetto took place as a result of exclusionary processes that the Hazaras experienced over the years. In accordance to Wirth’s theory of the Jewish ghetto formation process, West Kabul similarly is not an institutionally built ethnic enclave to separate the Hazaras from the rest of the city residents;

rather it is more correctly conceptualized as a naturally developed quarter which the Hazaras adapted under certain socio-political circumstances.

Although the ghetto formation process in West Kabul shares similarities with that of black ghettos in the US, there is one major difference between the two. The black ghetto was formed on the basis of racial segregation which is basically related to “the refusal of Whites to share residential space with Blacks on a permanent basis” (Rose 1970, p. 1). Consequently, blacks were forced to seek housing in neighbourhoods where the population is overwhelmingly African American so they feel more welcomed. The Hazara ghetto on the other hand was not formed because other ethnic groups did not allow them to inhabit their neighbourhoods, but it was the Hazaras themselves who *did not* want to share space of dwelling with other groups. The Hazaras refusal to share residential space with other groups has roots in their deep-seated fear of these groups: these were the same groups who hunted and traded Hazaras for slavery, who launched several ethnic cleansing campaigns against them, who regarded them as infidels and constantly (until today) invaded their villages and take over their lands. It is certainly true that African Americans experienced slavery as well, but at the beginning of 20th century when they began their urban experience in the north, they were already emancipated and were not the subjects of institutional prosecution in the same way experienced by the Hazara (not to suggest that African Americans no longer suffer systemic racism and discrimination, which they do).

Against this background I argue that the Hazara ghetto is, to some extent, a unique case which can only be compared to the Jewish ghettos of the pre-war Europe. The Jewish populations, as Wirth has shown, as a result of a long history of persecution, were not willing to inhabit where the Christians lived. Their ghettos were not only a geographic expression of how the Christians socially excluded them, it was also an indication of the extent to which a historic fear existed within the Jewish community which kept them apart from the mainstream. In the same way, the Hazara ghetto was partly formed on the basis of social exclusion, a more crucial factor in its formation was the deadly threat they felt from the other groups.

In 1773 Kabul had a small population of 10,000 inhabitants who were predominantly Tajiks. When the capital moved to Kabul in 1776, the city started to transform socially and spatially. Different ethnic and religious groups arrived in the city and Kabul became the center of national politics and economy, and as a result conflict and rivalry among the heterogonous residents was on rise. In the early 19th century the population of Kabul increased to 60,000

people of which half of them were Shias (Burnes 1834, p. 147; Vigne 1840, p. 165). Of the Shia population, around 20,000 were Kizilbashs (Vigne 1840, p. 167) and about 10,000 were the Hazaras (free and slaves) (Burnes 1842, P. 231). We can conclude that in 19th century the Hazaras constituted 25 percent of the city population in Kabul. The Sunnis were traditionally on bad terms with the Shias, and this social dichotomy led to emergence of geographical segregation in the city.

Chindawul, a predominantly Kizilbash neighbourhood in east Kabul was the first ghetto in the city formed on the basis of religious differences in mid 18th century. During the 18th and 19th centuries, it was the religious hostility in Kabul that profoundly affected the spatial fabric of the city. In 1830s for instance, the Kizilbash community in Kabul although being “the most powerful and influential body in the city” (Masson 1842, p. 297 vol. 2), had to build this separately located walled quarter, because of the hostility they faced from the Sunni community. In Chendawul both Shia groups of Kizilbashs and the Hazaras lived together where they had their own mosques, bazaars, schools, courts and everything they needed to keep a geographic and social distance from the Sunni neighbours (Noelle 1997, pp. 24-29). Same quarters were built in Murad Khani (Masson 1842, p. 260, Vol. 2) and Afshar (Burnes 1843, pp. 234-7), both away from the city center.

There are two places in Chendawul and Murad Khani called “Qala Hazara-ha” (Hazara quarter)¹ which indicates the co-existence of Hazaras with the Kizilbashs from early days. These quarters can also confirm Wirth’s theory that excluded minorities who have a common ground of any sort tend to inhabit the same area. Apart from the Shia belief there was no any common similarity between the Hazaras and the Kizilbashs, the former a Mongolian looking social outcast who were vastly enslaved, the latter an elite Caucasian looking originally Iranian community of government trouper and bureaucrats. But the Sunnis detested both groups and several times attacked their quarters which made them to build the surrounding walls of their ghetto even higher (Noelle 1997).

¹Balkhabi (1994) asserts that *Qala-e Hazara* is older than Chindawul. According to him, Chidawul and its 11 *Guzars* were initially built around this Qala (p. 95). If he is right, probably the residents of Qala Hazaras had been a number of families from Behsoud who are believed to be the oldest Hazaras in Kabul for the geographical proximity of their home province to this city.

Of the three Shia quarters in 18th and 19th centuries in Kabul city, Chindawul and Murad-Khani were located in east Kabul and Afshar was in West Kabul which remained an isolated enclave on the skirt of northern hills of the valley until it was surrounded by more houses in 20th century. However, the current Hazara ghetto in West Kabul in Dasht-e Barchi area is a product of the 20th century. Because until the early 20th century, Kabul city was a small area limited to its boundaries in today old Kabul in the east side; and the current West Kabul in that time was not part of the urban area. Until late 19th century, West Kabul was a valley of small villages with gardens and compounds (*Qalas*) owned by prominent members of the government and some big merchants. Major urban development projects did not exist prior to the 1920s (Popalzai 1996, pp. 140-172 Hahn 1972; Dekhoda 2011, “Kabul”). In west Kabul although there was a small number of Hazara villages who were there probably as slaves or free people since the 18th and 19th century, the vast majority of Hazara settlements were gradually developed from 1930s onward (Hahn 1972).

The ghettoization of West Kabul has initial links to the Hazara experience of slavery. The prominent landowners in West Kabul had slaves who worked for them on their lands. Although the slaveholders in Afghan culture had all the rights “to sell, kill, or do as he pleases with his slaves”, in general the slaves were treated well (Gray 1901, pp. 211-212). According to Elphinstone’s (1815) account, slaves even had the right to have property of their own. The masters would buy wives for their slaves and slaves could buy their freedom. The female slaves were generally kept in house as “concubines” (pp. 243-245). In Kabul the slave population was increasing, since most of them were home born (p. 243). This was due to the customs of “a servant marrying a slave becomes also a slave” (Vigne 1840, p. 145) and the children born from two slaves were also kept as slaves (Jamshed 1896, p. 154).

Cutler et al (1999) have shown that the black ghettos in the US cities emerged as the African Americans migrated in large numbers to northern cities. They argued that the increase of the black population created racial tensions in these cities, and this led to a geographical segregation of the new coming minority group. A similar pattern of ghettoisation took place in West Kabul. The area of West Kabul as a Hazara stronghold was mostly developed as a result of those five migratory processes through which the Hazaras settled in Kabul. Particularly the IDPs, economic refugees and in recent years the returnees from abroad have shaped the spatial

organisation of the West Kabul. The heart of West Kabul is Dasht-e Barchi¹ a vast area of mostly one story mud houses with an explosively increasing population. Reliable data about the current populating of Dasht-e Barchi is not available, however the municipality estimates it to be around one million (Royee 2010) but the Hazaras themselves put the number at more than two million people (MHS 2011). However we know that in 1960s and 1970s the 31 percent of those who migrated to Kabul were the Hazaras making them the largest ethnic group who settled in the city (Jung 1972, pp. 7, 9). Since then no survey has been conducted, but there are evidences suggesting that the migration of the Hazaras to Kabul has been increasingly steady (Mousavi 1997).

The new immigrants and IDP Hazaras started to settle in Qala-e Shada in the south Kart-e Dehburi which at the time was a large agricultural land and the price was very cheap. The Hazaras in Chendawul and other areas who lived as tenants in other people's houses (Kateb 1993, p. 140), also started to move to the West since Hazara communities were growing. It was the beginning of the ghetto formation in West Kabul. The typography of the houses resembled those of rural Hazarajat with small windows, low ceilings, and materials available on the field which were usually mud, raw brick and straw. The government totally ignored them in terms of town planning, even though at the time there were new neighbourhoods being planned and built by the government agencies just on the other side of the river in Kart-e Seh, Kart-e Char and Deh Buri. With absence of the government, the landlords sold every piece of their lands to the homeless Hazaras, and left very tight and twisting lanes as paths of communication in the neighbourhood (Hahn 1972; Deljo 2011, part 14). Their neighbourhoods are not only excluded

¹ About the genealogy of Dasht-e Barchi ("land of porters") nothing is clear yet. Popalzai (1996) says that Dasht-e Barchi was an official title during the Ahmad Shah (r. 1747–1772) applied to the government workers who handled the loads (p. 143-144). He implies that Dasht-e Barchi was a person who received lands in that area of West Kabul from one of the Durrani kings and then the place was named after him like other villages in West Kabul. The second possibility is that since there is a small ethnic group in the eastern Iranian province of Kerman called Barchi (Khosravi 2011) this place might have been named after this people; for we know that a great number of Persians were brought to Afghanistan from eastern Persia during Ahmad Shah and Timur Shah and were given lands in the Chardeh valley (Popalzai 1996, p. 144). The third possibility is that Dasht-e Barchi which in Persian means "the land of porter" is the name given by other Kabulis to this place since it was where the Hazara porters started to build houses in 1960s (Hahn 1972; Deljo 2011, part 14). Since the maps before the 1960s has not mentioned such area in West Kabul as Dasht-e Barchi, in spite of mentioning all other small villages (War Office 1942). I'm not very sure which of the three possibilities is closer to reality. During the Kabul war of 1992-1995, Dasht-e Barchi was renamed as Dasht-e Azadagan (Fayyaz 1996, p. 82) which means "the land of freemen". This name which was promoted by the cultural division of Wahdat party, could not find public usage.

from the city's networks of streets, power, communication and sewage system, there is no prospect of access to these facilities in future as well.

With each flow of the Hazaras to Kabul the west Kabul ghetto expanded in all directions. Although some villages like Unchi Baghbannan, Mahtab Qala, Qala-e Nazir, Qala-e Wahid and Yosuf Bangi (now called Se Bangi) existed from 18th century in the valley, the Dasht-e Barchi was a plain agricultural land separated from other villages with no inhabitant. The initial decision of the first Hazaras to start building houses in Dasht-e Barchi in early 1960s was a difficult one, since they felt unsafe to settle in the middle of deserted land, but on the other hand they had no choice. Of those handful of Hazaras who dared to settle for the first time in Dasht-e Barchi is Haji Khodadad Hussaini. According to him, in the first year after they built their houses they couldn't live in them for fear of being raided at night by the Sunnis. But finally in the second year about eight families dwelled in their own houses for the first time in Dasht-e Barchi. To stay safe, they stretched a long rope through all their houses with a bell hanging in each house. If something happened to one family, they would move the rope and all bells would ring and wake other families up. It took several years until more and more Hazaras arrived in Dasht-e Barchi and the area geographically expanded as it is now today (Deljo 2011, part 14).

Wirth noted that the Jews were outsiders in the larger western cities, but in the ghetto "they felt at home" (p. 61). The home is what the Hazaras call Dasht-e Barchi, where they have developed a great sense of community. They have the freedom to practice their religion in public, organize political events and in the case of 1990s, they came together to defend their territory during a devastating civil war. Today Dasht-e Barchi is growing very fast; a small group of middle class (in Hazara standards) families are emerging who has already begun to change the landscape of the area by their cars, cement and glass buildings and new life style. They are mostly the returnees and the political elite who enjoy the relative freedom established in the post-Taliban era. The township of *Omid-e Sabz* in the south of west Kabul is an example of the new spatial transformation of West Kabul.

The majority of Hazara returnees from abroad (especially from Iran) are either well educated or skilled workers (Edwards/UNHCR 2010), therefore unlike other Hazara groups in West Kabul, they are able to get jobs that formerly were not offered to the Hazaras. They have managed to positively change the image of the Hazaras in Kabul city, and bring some socio-spatial refinement to the West Kabul in recent years. Their homes are better built comparing to

the typical mad houses of the Hazaras in the ghetto and their women are better educated and therefore more socially active. Considering the new developments in the built environment of West Kabul, one can realize the emergence of a small group of middle class Hazaras who are represented in the new house buildings, restaurants and a few shopping malls, the places which were rare in the history of the ghetto.

Nevertheless, the identity of West Kabul as an excluded geography is associated with the Hazara *Juwalis* and emancipated slaves who initially produced this ghetto under certain political and social circumstances. These Hazaras who dominated the cityscapes of Kabul city since 17th as slaves and porters, hugely affected the social and spatial composition of the city. The built environment of Kabul expressively bears the presence of these Hazaras and symbolises the multi-layered exclusionary processes that this people experienced in this city. West Kabul remains as a historical scar on the geographical body of Kabul, where the traumatised collective memories of the Hazaras are engraved on every corner of it. The Afghan government justifies the exclusion of West Kabul from public services for its “informality”, it tries to reduce West Kabul to another “informal settlement” and downplay the political and historical significance of this geography.

Wirth argued that the ghetto “is not merely a physical fact, but also a state of mind” (Wirth 1927, p. 71). The West Kabul and in particular, Dasht-e Barchi is the spatial manifestation of the Hazaras’ “state of mind”, this place is the symbolic evidence of their struggles, resistances and survival over the course of Afghanistan’s turbulent history. The West Kabul as a Hazara ghetto emerged as a result of various forms of migratory patterns from one hand and a systematic social exclusion on the other. This process of ghettoization, although being developed naturally, the ghetto itself as a social entity was rather the result of institutional exclusionary processes that were imposed upon the Hazara residents. The historical analysis of West Kabul and the process of its production bring us to Wirth’s theory of ghetto formation as a natural urban experience of the ethnic minorities. However, as discussed in this chapter, the production of urban space is not a neutral process; power and politics is the force behind any place-making effort in the city space.

5. The Three Realms of Exception: The City, The Street, The Body

“The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the “state of emergency” in which we live is not the exception but the rule”. -- Benjamin (1969, p. 257)

“The most successful ideological effects are those that have no words, and ask no more than complicitious silence”. -- Bourdieu (1977, p. 188)

We discussed the ghettoization process of West Kabul in the last chapter, where we argued that the Hazara ghetto in West Kabul was shaped gradually by arrival of the emancipated Hazara slaves along with other groups of Hazaras who took refuge in Kabul for various reasons. In the ghetto, they had both the freedom and safety which they lacked as slaves in Kabul and as victims of Pashtun nomads in Hazarajat. In the present chapter, I focus on the post-ghettoization period of West Kabul, the period through which a more subtle form of political power and exclusionary process marginalised the Hazaras both spatially and socially in the urban environment. The chapter is divided into three parts: the city, the street and the body. I examine the built form and urban sphere of West Kabul as well as the body of the Hazara in the urban Kabul to understand the politics of exclusion and the state of exception by which the socio-spatial organisation of the city has been constructed. The core argument of this chapter is that although the “law” includes the Hazaras as citizens of Afghanistan and West Kabul as part of the urban area of the capital, in reality however, this law is being suspended by “politics” and the Hazaras and West Kabul remain exceptions in the Afghan political and cultural apparatuses. Framing from an urban communication perspective, I employ critical theories in interpreting the built environment of West Kabul and the spatial dimension of political power in that place.

The state of exception, according to Giorgio Agamben (1998 and 2005) is what the governments declare at the supposed times of crisis. In these times, questions of citizenship and

individual rights can be diminished, suspended and rejected in the process of claiming extension of power by a government. Agamben, defines the state of exception as “a position at the limit between politics and law...an ambiguous, uncertain, borderline fringe, at the intersection of the legal and the political.” (2005, p. 1)¹ Agamben’s theory is primarily based on Schmitt’s definition of sovereignty who once said: “sovereign is he who decides on the exception” (Schmitt 1985, p. 5). According to Agamben, the totalitarian states are in a constant state of exception (or “legal civil war”), that “allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated into the political system” (2005, p. 2). Based on this definition, the Afghan political establishment has been in a constant state of exception since 1880, when it was first established under Amir Abdur Rahman; as a result, the various forms of physical and political elimination of Hazara people can be best understood in connection with this “legal civil war”. However, in Kabul city the state of exception affected the Hazara people in different ways of which the most important one has been the emergence of West Kabul ghetto as a space of exception, where the “political” might of the establishment has diminished the “legal” rights of the people; a classical suspension of law in favor of politics.

Agamben argues that there is a paradigm shift in the political culture of the modern world, where we live in a constant state of exception and the rule of law is regularly displaced and people are made subjects to extra-judicial institutional violence. He refers to Nazi camps in WWII and the current US camp in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as examples of the space and state of exception where law is suspended by politics. His theories of political sovereignty, state of exception, space of exception and bare life, to a great extent, have influenced the ongoing debate about the geopolitics of race, difference, terror and violence.

Agamben’s notions of space of exception and bare life have already been adopted by several scholars in their analysis of geopolitical issues related to Afghanistan and the discourse of ‘war on terror’ (Gregory 2004 and 2006; Minca 2005; Fluri 2011; Elden 2007). These studies are examples of the new approach in understanding the geographies of conflict in the post-9/11 era. In this chapter, however, Agamben’s critical reading of power and place will help us construct a meaning of West Kabul beyond the issues of 9/11 and international terrorism. I argue

¹ Agamben quotes the second part of the sentence from Fontana (1999, p. 16).

that Afghanistan -- at least from 1880 that the foundation of a central government was established, has always been in a state of exception, in which the Hazara people have been subject to extra-judicial violence and their geography of living has been reduced to a space of exception.

5.1. *West Kabul as a Space of Exception*

Gibson and Lowes (2007) have proposed a model for analysis of urban environments as "texts." According to their three part model, which is partly based on Johnson's (1987) "circuit of production" for cultural texts, the production of urban space is understood in three distinct moments: production; text; and context. In the moment of "production" the built form is constructed and encoded into texts; these "texts" then are perceived and interpreted by individuals in the "context" of everyday life. In applying this model to the case West Kabul, ghettoization can be conceived as the moment of production which was discussed in the previous chapter; the urban sphere of west Kabul could be the socially constructed text which is the focus of the present chapter. The contextual moment shall be discussed in the next chapter where we will concentrate on the conflict as part of the lived experience of the everyday life in West Kabul.

In Kabul city, the Hazara ghetto in west side of the mountain is a geography of exception where the rule of law is suspended and does not provide the same protection as it does for other areas. The law obliges the state to treat equally all the citizens of the country regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds, but the Afghan state does not follow that law when it comes to the Hazara people and their place of living, this is the reason why most parts of the Hazara areas in West Kabul are systematically excluded from basic public services and facilities, in comparison to non-Hazara areas in the city.

However, West Kabul was not a space of exception from the beginning; it became one when the Hazara population began to outnumber other ethnic groups in that area from mid 20th century. In 1920s for example, when the Hazara population in West Kabul was not significant in number, King Amanullah Khan planned that area to be the main site of modern urban development projects. The king built a number of roads and new buildings in south-west of Kabul as part of his visionary *Nawi Kabul* ("New Kabul") project (Dehkhoda 2011, "Kabul";

Arez 1998, p. 29). The project was terminated in 1929 when the king was dethroned by a Tajik riot. The next governments did not undertake any major urbanization initiative in the city until 1940s, when king Zahir started a series of infrastructural development projects which continued until the reign of his successor in late 1970s. From 1950s the Hazara population in the city increased, but being a politically disenfranchised community, they were spatially excluded from urban development plans; as a result, they began to form their own ghetto in West Kabul.

The politics of exception has been enforced on West Kabul through the implementation of Kabul's Master Plan as well. Although Arefi (1975) and some other scholars try to depoliticize the urban development of Kabul and reduce it to economic limitations of the government, we can see there are political as well as economic factors in uneven implementation of the Master Plan. In 1964, the first Master Plan for Kabul city was created by Russian experts



Figure 5.1. In the city master plan all the areas of West Kabul are subject to development. In practice however, the Hazara areas were excluded from the road network and city planning shown in this sketch. (Source: Kabul Municipality)

who were hired by the government of Afghanistan (Dupree 1975, p. 408). Later in 1970 and 1978 the plan was slightly revised due to unexpected population growth. Based on this master plan the government built new residential neighborhoods in west and east Kabul which consisted of adequate urban infrastructure and modernist western architectural style. Although the Hazara areas in the city were included in the master plan (figure 5.1.), in practice, the government refused to bring development projects such as road network, piped water, communication infrastructure and other facilities in those areas according to the master plan. The implementation of this Master Plan, demonstrate the state of exception of the Hazara ghetto, where the “law” (Master plan) is abandoned by the government in favor of the “politics” (the Afghan ethnic-based development policies). Therefore, parallel to modern housing projects in the city, the Hazaras had no option but to develop their own ghettos in West Kabul which in the new bureaucratic jargons are called “informal settlements”, *vis-à-vis* “formal settlement”¹.

The “formal” refers to areas located within the master plan and “informal” is the areas which are situated out of the master plan. The informal settlements as the spaces of exception; are largely excluded from the government’s urban development plans. The Afghan officials have been arguing that since the informal settlements are built out of the controlled master plan, it is justified to be excluded from municipal services and urban infrastructure (see Esser 2009). As earlier mentioned, these settlements (except for the squatters on the slop of the hills), particularly the Hazara ghetto in West Kabul, are included in the master plan. All areas of the Hazara ghetto for instance, are part of the 13 official municipal districts in Kabul which gives them a legitimate urban status, but still the government has been imbalanced in implementing urban development projects according to the plan. The master plan was only implemented on lands belonged to non-Hazaras in West Kabul such as Karte She, Karte Char, Jamal Mina, Khushal Khan, and part of Deh Bouri. Not only the government did not undertake any housing projects for the Hazaras, it even failed to construct, or at least determine the spaces allocated for road network as drawn in the master plan. The authorities seemed to ignore the existence of the Hazaras; the lack of financial resources, which sometimes is stated as the main excuse, cannot justify this unjust process. As a German urban scholar has argued, what lacks in the government is a “political

¹ According to a World Bank survey about 80 percent of Kabul’s population live in “informal settlements” which covers over two-third of its residential land area (World Bank 2006). The Hazara ghetto in West Kabul houses the largest informal settlement in the city. In the east side, there are informal settlements as well, which ironically one of the largest one is a Hazara area called Char Qalai Wazirabad in District 10 (see Google Earth and AIMS 2005a).

will” to consider these settlements for urban development projects, not financial resources (Schütte 2005, p. 20).

The spatial dimension of the exception in West Kabul is indicated by the lack of roads, electricity, water, sanitation services, poor housing, and lack of educational and healthcare facilities in the area, which all are linked to the systematic social exclusion of the Hazara people in the country at large. The physical features of exclusion in West Kabul could be better highlighted by comparing it to the east side of the city. The city of Kabul has a contradictory morphological pattern. First, there is a profound physical distinction between west and east sides of the city. In the east side, the majority of government ministries, government housing schemes, cinemas, sport complex, business centers, better and more roads and recreational spaces are located (AIMS 2007 and 2005b). This concentration of power and money in the east draws a visible line of difference between east and West Kabul.

Then, in West Kabul itself, there is a strong pattern of difference drawn upon ethnic lines: the Hazara neighborhoods are visually, architecturally and morphologically distinguishable from the neighborhoods where the residents are predominantly non-Hazara. The areas where the non-Hazara population live are carefully planned and have access to basic municipal services. The Hazara neighborhoods on the other hand, lack any city planning, proper roads, piped water, electricity (only some parts are linked to the power grid as of October 2011), sewage system, home telephone or any other services available to non-Hazaras in the city.

Being the most densely populated area in Kabul where typically in each house more than one and up to four families live, the Hazara ghetto in West Kabul has only one road, named Mazari which was constructed in 2006 after years of persistent civil and political pressure on the government. This lack of a viable road network has caused numerous economic, social and health problems in the area where it is extremely difficult to travel from one side of the ghetto to the other. In Dasht-e Barchi’s dusty, narrow and twisted lanes sometimes cars get stuck for hours as they are not large enough to fit two cars passing by each other. In these situations the drivers have no option but to drive all the way back to make space from the other car coming from the opposite direction. No government health centers exist in the Hazara area and schools are scarce. The Abdur Rahim Shahid high school is a good case to illustrate the educational exclusion of the Hazaras in West Kabul. In this school about 18,000 students study in three shifts which makes it arguably the largest high school in the world. Although the school has a number of small

buildings constructed by the Japanese in recent years, most of the classes are held either under tents or in rented houses in the surrounding area (DW-Dari 2009). The wave of Hazara children going to school in post-Taliban years is unprecedented (Zabriskie 2008; Böge 2010; Opperl & Wafa 2010), despite of this widespread enthusiasm, the government has failed to provide sufficient opportunities for them. Most the Hazara children take a long journey everyday and go to schools in other parts of the city.

Even this limited access to educational opportunities is a new phenomenon among the Hazaras which was made possible by the Western-backed post-Taliban regime since 2001. In the past, the presence of the Hazara children at schools were either legally banned or they could not afford going to school, as they had to work with other members of the family in order to survive. Although before 1980s a limited number of Hazaras were enrolled in schools and colleges, “they were not promoted to high positions in the state bureaucracy” after graduation (Emadi 1997, p. 371). This exclusionary mechanism, forced the Hazara children to pursue the occupation of their fathers in becoming *Juwalis*. After the 1980s when the communist party took power, especially under the *Parcham* faction whose members were predominantly non-Pashtun, more educational opportunities were provided to the ethnic minorities. The tables number 1 and 2 show an estimation of Hazaras who had access to education before 1980s.

Table 1. *Estimated percentage of Hazara and other Shia children enrolment in major schools in Kabul (1950s-1970s)*

Institution	Percentage
Habibiya High School	2.5
Estiqlal High School	0.0
Gazi High School	5.5
Nejat High School	1.5
Military School	0.0
Other state schools	0.0
Private	3.9

Source: Emadi (1997, p. 372)

Table 2. *Estimated percentage of Shias in colleges of Kabul (1950s-1970s)*

College	Percentage
Law & Politics	0.0
Medicine	0.0
Economics	0.2
Sciences	0.1
Humanities	0.3
Islamic Law	0.0
Military Academy	0.1

Source: Emadi (1997, p. 372)

Kabul was initially designed on the basis of “Multiple Nuclei Model” for its topographic characteristics (Arez 1998, p. 31); however the distribution of urban development projects remains very uneven. Most of the ministries, embassies, cinemas, sport complex, and the presidential palace itself are located in the east side (AIMS 2005b and 2007); these are the centers which can greatly bring cultural and economic prosperity to urban areas. The only important urban entity in West Kabul is the Kabul Universities plus the parliament building (both in non-Hazara areas) which is built in recent years. This spatial difference between the two sides of the city is an indicative of the politically-charged development policies and social inequality existing in Kabul.

One important spatial demonstration of the Hazara urban experience in Kabul is to be found in the architectural pattern of Kabuli houses. The Hazaras, as discussed in previous chapters, have a long history of slavery in Kabul, which has left traces on the housing architecture in the city. The architecture of houses in old Kabul encloses a large courtyard with rooms built around the yard in one or two stories. Typically most of the old houses (built before 1980s) contain a small suite for the “servants” (the common term in Kabul for slaves and emancipated slaves who didn’t leave their masters) which was usually located right on top of the courtyard door, or sometimes inside the courtyard just beside the main gate. In the big traditional Qalas there were several *Ghualamm Gardesh* (literally “slave stops”) in the hallway to the master’s residence, in which the slaves would live and would greet the visitors (Ahang 2008, p. 34-35). In the post 1940s houses in Kabul which were usually built with modern architectures, materials and plans, the slave rooms were still included in the house. Typically these new houses in Wazirr Akbar Khan, Shahr-e Naw, Kart-e Char and other areas are villa buildings with a

courtyard. The slave suite in some of these houses are built on top of the main gate, or inside at some corner of the courtyard, where usually the “servants” would live.

Two English language novels about Kabul city, *Born Under a Million Shadows* (2009) and *The Kite Runner* (2003) both have described the slave corner in Kabuli houses in similar ways. In *The Kite Runner*, the son of the master in 1970s describes the residence of his servants/slaves as follows:

“In the eighteen years that I lived in that house, I stepped into Hassan and Ali’s quarters only a handful of times.... When we were done playing for the day, Hassan and I parted ways. I went past the rose bushes to Baba’s mansion, Hassan to the mud shack where he had been born, where he’d lived his entire life. I remember it was spare, clean, dimly lit by a pair of kerosene lamps. There were two mattresses on opposite sides of the room, a worn Herati rug with frayed edges in between, a three-legged stool, and a wooden table in the corner where Hassan did his drawings. The walls stood bare, save for a single tapestry with sewn-in heads forming the words *Allah-u acbar*”. (Hosseini 2004, p. 6)

These slave suites inside the houses, were a spatial expression of the status of the slaves themselves in the households: at the same time that the slave suites were part of the house, they were excluded from the rest of the house, just like the slaves themselves who were part of the family and they were not part of the family at the same time. This is best understood with Agamben's concept of “exclusive inclusion”, which means in order to exclude something or someone, you include that thing or that person.

Although there are no Hazara slaves in Kabul anymore¹, this architectural pattern in Kabuli houses remains one of the few physical evidences of Hazara slavery in the city. Being a major part of the Hazara urban experience, the slavery as a historic event, is woven into the collective memory of the Hazara people in Kabul, even though it is a taboo to talk about it.

¹ Although it is true that Hazara slavery does not exist anymore, there are many Hazara men and women in old Kabuli households who have been “servants” for several generations. They were born in a household, lived there and during the wars when the master family migrated abroad; they remained in the house and kept it until post-9/11 era when the master family returned. I personally know a number of such Hazara servants that I believe are home-born slaves or the children of ex-slaves. Talking publicly about slavery of the Hazaras in Kabul is a taboo both among the Hazaras and other city residents.

5.2. The Street

For the Hazara people in West Kabul "the street" is more than a mere street in the literal sense of the word; it is a conceptual space. If the upper class in the city uses the street as a means of communication which takes them to their offices and shops, for the Hazaras, street itself is the destination. In West Kabul as well as in the east side, the *Juwalis* ("porters") are predominately Hazaras. Every morning before sunrise the Hazara porters of Dasht-e Barchi flow into the dusty Mazari Street pushing their carts and having their *Juwali* ropes on their shoulders. They walk the streets, work on streets, eat on streets, take their nap on street, pray on street, live on streets and die on streets; street is the only space of the urban they know. *Juwalis* is the only job the Hazaras have been associated with for centuries, therefore the street serves as their everyday workplace and as a result, the single source of survival.

The street in West Kabul, however, is a space of more than economic activity. It is a site of political representation and cultural memory which construct a shared sense of belonging that the Hazaras fail to find on the other side of the city. In particular, Mazari square (figure 5.2.) and Mazari Street are the key realms of historical significance lying at the heart of West Kabul. Mazari square is a roundabout of three wings connecting the Hazara ghetto of Dasht-e Barchi to the more prosperous areas of West Kabul such as Kot-e Sangi, Kart-e Seh and Kart-e Char. The north wing goes to Kot-e Sangi an ethnically mixed commercial area, the southern wing goes to Darulaman, but the most important wing is the Mazari street which serves as the backbone of Dasht-e Barchi ghetto stretching westward for 13 km to the end of the ghetto. This square and street are named after Abdul Ali Mazari (1946-1995) a charismatic leader who led the Hazaras in fight against the Soviets and then in the civil war, before he was killed by Taliban in March 1995.



Figure 5.2. Mazari monument in Mazari square in West Kabul. Photo: author, sep. 2010

In order to provide a sense of the place of Mazari Square, I quote a portion of my notes from field observations conducted in September 2010:

“Mazari square is a key transitional location in West Kabul. All people coming from Dasht-e Barchi and southern areas of West Kabul should pass this square or change buses here. This is why all types of people are visible in this place, from old Juwali men, to young university students, and a small number of emerging middle class who drives Toyota cars. Women look very colourful, most of them are unveiled, some are under Burqa, a great number of them dress as Iranian or Pakistani women which indicates they are returnees from abroad. A paradoxical human mosaic is intermingling in the Mazari square.

At the center of Mazari square is the Mazari monument, located at the middle of a circular space of greenery. The monument is a relatively medium-sized hexagon granite structure standing 5.12 meters with four distinct parts. On the highest part a red stone tulip is installed which in Afghan culture symbolizes the martyrdom. At lower part, is a

pedestal holding mid-relief portraits of Mazari on white stones on the three sides of it. On the middle part of the monument, poems and quotes about Mazari written in Persian are shown in six stone plates. Finally, on the lowest part of the structure, relief portraits of six commanders who were killed together with Mazari in March 1995 by Taliban are craved in white stones.

Hazara men and women come here and take photos with Mazari's monument in the background. Some people come to sit down and talk in its shadow. All around the square is surrounded by one or two story shops plus a military high school. The shops are far from luxury, they are covered in dust and some have home-made signs. There is a restaurant, a number of grocery shops, a Hammam or public bath with a thick pillar of smoke erupting from its roof, a drugstore, some butchery shops, a candy shop, a bakery and three photo shops. The military high school is just at the south of square; and in the east side inside a lane is a Shia seminary known as Madras-e Ayatulla Muhaqiq, these are the two educational institutes in this square”.

Conceptually, Mazari Square looks like any public square in other cities; it is a multi-purpose space of walking, shopping, eating, a mixed environment of commerce and culture with a profound symbolic significance. However, in Mazari square all these things are different in their shapes and sizes which indicates the level of socio-economic status of the Hazaras and the widespread poverty among them (figure 5.3.). The bookstore is a small cart with a few dozen of books covered with dust, the restaurants are only two, one which has a building, the second is a small booth on the corner of street where the *Juwalis* come to eat bread and tea, some of course liver kebab. The educational institutions include a well-guarded military high school signifying the high degree of institutional control, and the other is a religious center where the Shi'ism is taught, a belief system for which the Hazaras were enslaved, massacred and constantly suppressed, and still they want to preserve it.

The street plays a vital economic role in West Kabul. The Hazaras who have generally little place in shops (economic opportunity) and offices (power), remain on public streets where they fight for survival. The following field note tries to illustrate a glimpse of street life in West Kabul:

“The concept of pedestrian space, like most parts of Kabul city doesn’t exist in this place. The street vendors not only have occupied a great part of the sidewalks but also they are sitting on the edge of the streets as well. This makes the walkers to blend into cars and carts and don’t use the sidewalks. The street vendors are the sprite of the square, there is one newspaper booth, two book-selling booths, show repair vendors, money exchangers with their small boxes sitting on the corner of street, a street restaurant run by an old man who cooks liver kebab and make tea to serve fellow street vendors and Juwalis at lunch time. His restaurant is a large table with a carpet on it, men are setting on the carpet and he cooks in front of them, all the space is about three square meters with a tent fabric as its roof. The big restaurant with loudspeakers is possibly for provincial travelers, wealthy shop-owners and those who earn a wage of higher than 4.00 Dollars a day”.



Figure 5.3. A street restaurant in Mazari sq. where usually the Hazara Juwalis and other street workers eat. Photo: author, Sep. 2010

On the streets of West Kabul I frequently encountered street vendors who charged mobile phone batteries for people. I never saw this type of vending in other parts of the city; it simply indicates how the Hazara quarters in West Kabul are excluded from electricity that people had to pay for charging their mobile batteries on street¹. The vendors are young men sitting on a chair with one or two big car batteries in front of them. The car batteries are wired in a way to have several outputs for charging several phone batteries at the same time (figure 5.4.).



Figure 5.4. People charge the battery of their mobile phones in Gulayee Dawakhana, a street close to Mazari sq. West Kabul. Photo: author, Sep. 2010

The center of all these street activities in West Kabul is the Mazari square, which can be perceived as the spatial demonstration of the Hazara history, psychology and current sociopolitical status. I particularly found a great deal of symbolic significance attributed to the Mazari monument as well as the toponymy (place name) of the Mazari square and street.

Abdul Ali Mazari is a controversial personality in Afghanistan. Although some other ethnic groups do not consider Mazari to be a national hero, for Hazaras he is *Baba Mazari*

¹ I have heard from late 2010 the Government has supplied electricity to some parts of Hazara area in West Kabul, though, a large part of the ghetto from Pul-Khushk westward still remains without electricity as of October 2011.

(“Father Mazari”) who protected them during the Kabul War of 1992-1995 and eventually gave his life for them. The Mazari’s struggles in West Kabul greatly changed the perception of other ethnic groups about the participation of the Hazaras in political system. As a result of his leadership in the Hazara resistance, in the first post-Taliban government in 2001 which was formed on the basis of participation of all ethnic groups, about 20 percent of the cabinet seats were allocated to the Hazara people, which is considered a historical millstone. In 2006, under immense civil pressures and also as a populist move, the government decided to rename the formerly known Dasht-e Barchi Street and Pul-e Sukhta square as Mazari Street and Mazari square, respectively to acknowledge the influence of this figure in the Afghanistan contemporary history. On March 15, 2006 the second vice president Karim Khalili, who is an ethnic Hazara and Kabul mayor Gulam Sakhi Noorzad along with some other officials, uncovered the new street sign in a ceremony (Wahdat 2006). Later on that year, the municipality allocated funds to pave the street. On April 11, 2008 the Mazari monument in the Mazari square was opened in a ceremony by officials from the government and Hazara community in West Kabul. Mohammad Rahi, a Hazara designer created the monument with a 6 million Afghani donated by a Hazara developer Haji Nabi, a brother of the vice president Karim Khalili (Mosharekat-e Milli 2008).

Prior to Dasht-e Barchi Square, the post-Taliban regime had done the same with Sehat Ama square in east Kabul which was renamed after Ahmad Shah Massoud (1953-2001), a Tajik mujahidin commander who interestingly was the main rival of Mazari and together they fought severely against each other during the Kabul wars of early 1990s. These two squares are examples of how history affects urban geography and, consequently, the meanings communicated by that space, and how the reconciliation efforts made by the government in the post-Taliban politics have taken a socio-spatial form.

In the post-Taliban era, Kabul has not witnessed an urban armed conflict as it had in the 1990s. However, the political conflict over cultural recognition has been intensely fought in the spatial arena which is shown through street re-naming and memorial buildings in the city. As Till (2003) argues the memorial place-making efforts, is more about setting certain historical narratives. According to her, the battle over the spatialization of social memory and cultural recognition is primarily about determining “whose conception of the past should prevail in the public realm” (p. 290). In Kabul, Mazari and Massoud are both dead, but their popularity among the Hazara and Tajik communities respectively is very high. Both men are contested figures in

Afghan history; each has extreme followers and extreme detesters. Therefore, their memorial sites do not reveal much about the men personally but they do reveal a great deal about their contemporary community of supporters. In particular, the Mazari monument connotes the cultural recognition of the Hazaras by the post-Taliban system and triumph of collective memory over the institutional efforts for memory erasure. Till (2005) believes that “social memory and place-making activities tell us more about the people building a memorial than the peoples and pasts being commemorated” (p. 18). The most important message the Mazari monument as an example of commemorative place-making effort, can convey to us is a ray of hope emerging in the Hazara political life in post-Taliban Afghanistan.

For centuries the Hazaras were excluded from cultural meta-narratives in the city of Kabul, for instance, the absolute majority of places and streets were named after Pashtun figures, thus, the appearance of the name of a Hazara guerrilla fighter on a street sign is greatly significant politically and culturally. Alderman (2000) asserts that place names are part of “larger struggles over social and political identity and are used for resisting the hegemonic order as well as reproducing it” (p. 672). In this respect, the Mazari square and the Mazari street shall be perceived as sites of symbolic victory and social remembrance for the Hazaras of Kabul, who spent a century of struggle and resistance to see finally their names printed on a street sign—within their own ghetto of course.

In a famous metaphorical essay about history, Walter Benjamin (1969) depicts the *Angelus Novus*, a painting by Paul Klee, as the angel of history. He says: “this is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet” (p. 257). I argue that the Mazari monument in West Kabul is an angel of Hazara history gazing at the catastrophic history of this city. On the upper pedestal of the monument, three relief portraits of Mazari are placed toward the three sites of great historical events. One faces towards north which is the direction of Afshar hill, where a catastrophic massacre of Hazaras took place in 1993, the other portrait is faced toward west which is the main concentration of Hazara ghetto or in other words, “piles of wreckage”, the third portrait is faced toward east but his eyes are fixed on Asmayee mountain on the northeast where Massoud forces were used to be based and launch the deadliest rocket attacks on West Kabul during the civil war. If the Hazaras see a “chain of events” in the past history of themselves, the Mazari’s eyes

see a “single catastrophe”: the West Kabul. Benjamin says that the angel of history “would like to stay, awaken the dead” (p. 257), and this is what the Mazari’s figure is trying to do in the square, to awaken the Hazaras and remind them of the historic catastrophes they experienced. His face is a symbol of Hazara’s historical experience, from slavery to resistance, fight, massacre, hope, past and future; his portrait is the stone of memory resisting the institutional amnesia. Mazari’s face is the only face of the Hazaras in the public realm of Kabul city which bears a faint smile.

5.3. Nose: The Body of the Hazaras

The body serves as a universal language of communication which produces meanings with sound, movement, emotion and appearance. The body is also considered one of the prime sites of exclusion and exception as it is closely related to the built space and social interactions (Stoer et al. 2003). Lefebvre (1991) believes in the spatial dimension of the human body. According to him, apart from the “social body”, there is the “spatial body” which does not differ from the space; it is conceived and produced in the same manner as the production of space (p. 195). In this sense I argue the body in the context of urban space can be interpreted as a spatial entity and perceived as a socially constructed and aesthetically significant phenomenon.

Agamben’s (2000, p. 93) idea that “the face is solely the location of truth” can be used to further extend the scope of my quest to understand the spatial body of the Hazara in Kabul city. In this last part of this chapter, I intend to study the face of the Hazaras, chiefly their nose, as it is one of the most important physical components of the face in general, and the Hazara’s face in particular. The physical features of the Hazaras are the prime sites of difference which instantly set them apart from the rest of ethnic groups in the public scene of Kabul city. The Hazaras being a mixed Turko-Mongol race are smaller in physical form, have high cheek bones, round face, small Mongolian eyes and nose shapes and very light facial hair. In Afghanistan culture their nose is perceived as the signature feature of their physical appearance.

After the Mongol invasion of the region in 13th century, the standard of beauty was set by the Mongolian look, the poets and painters for centuries praised Mongolian beauty in their divans and their miniatures. The political demise of the Mongols in the early 18th century marked the end of their cultural hegemony and a consequent resurfacing of the Caucasian/Arian race as

the attractive. In Afghanistan, Hazaras being a social outcast, their look was stereotyped as the unpleasant, even a colonial agent from British India described them as “white, but very ugly” (Lal 1846b, p. 82). Khaled Hosseini’s (2004) novel, *The Kite Runner* is a very instructive source illustrating this attitude towards the Hazara body. Throughout the book, the Hazaras are labelled by other people as “flat-nose” (pp. 9, 10, 42) or in the original Dari *bini pochuaq*. It is in regard to other ethnic groups’ nose shape which is typically Caucasian and big. Being a flat-nose, means you don’t have a nose, the place of nose on your face a flat space as if your nose is being cut off.

In “The Nose” a classic short story by Nikolai Gogol (1998), a Russian officer named Major Kovalyov awakens in the morning to find out his nose is missing. The Major who used to dress up and stroll down the Nevsky Prospect in St. Petersburg every day, with a missing nose he cannot appear in the public and therefore desperately look for his nose to gain his power and social status back. Some critics have interpreted the loss of nose in this story as an anxiety referring to castration complex, because not only it threatens the Major’s status in the power ranks, but also his marriage and sexuality (Gogol 1998, p. xix). In Afghanistan big nose equates beauty, sexual appeal and social status; therefore the Hazara’s flat nose connotes “otherness” and posits them in a lower niche in the Afghan ethnic hierarchy.

The cultural significance of the nose in Afghanistan is also to be found in the practice of nose-cutting. However, this ancient tradition of facial mutilation is recorded in many cultures in



several parts of the world and is not unique to Afghanistan. The nose-cutting as a cultural practice is closely related to the notions of shame and honor in the region of South Asia and Middle East (Frembgen 2006). In Afghanistan, “you cut my nose off” is an idiom which means "you embarrassed me" or "you have dishonoured me in public." When someone has his or her nose cut off, he or she would not be able to face with people and pursue a normal social life.

In particular, among the Pashtuns, cutting nose is a form of socio-cultural punishment. In

Figure 5.5. Bibi Aisha’s nose was cut off in 2010 as a tribal punishment in Oruzgan province, Afghanistan. (Source: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2007415,00.html>)

1831 Arthur Connolly, a British officer traveled from Persia to Herat in western Afghanistan within the company of an Afghan *sirdar*. In the caravan there were a number of Hazara service men who marched in front of the caravan as guides. Once they made a mistake and took the wrong turn, the Sirdar “ordered some of their noses to be cut off and others to be severely beaten” as a punishment (Conolly 1838, vol. 1, p. 314). In recent years, during the presidential election of August 20, 2009, Lal Mohammad a farmer from Gizab district of Daikundi province went to polling station to vote; Taliban had already warned the villagers not to do so. On returning home the 40 year old man was caught by the Taliban, and both of his ears and his nose were cut off (AP 2009). A more shocking case hit the news about one year later with the story of Bibi Aisha, a Pashtun teenage girl whose ears and nose were cut off by her relatives after she ran away from her abusive husband. The picture of her mutilated face appeared on a controversial cover of *Time* magazine on August 9, 2010 and brought broader attention to the barbaric nature of bodily mutilation as a tribal code of punishment in Afghanistan (Barker 2010, see the figure 5.5.). Therefore being a “flat-nose” in Afghanistan equates being a socially rejected and honourless individual whose nose is cut off (by God). The nickname “flat-nose” serves as the basis upon which the Hazara body image is constructed and conceived in the Kabul city’s public sphere.

However, the small nose of the Hazara is not the only nose with negative connotations. The Jews, who are noted for their distinctive large noses, are also subject to social stereotypes in the western context. This, of course, confirms how the dominant ideology establishes bodily “differences” between the excluded community and the mainstream in order to mark them as “Others” in the public realm as well as in other arenas. In 1850, a well-known anthropologist Robert Knox, when describing the facial features of the Jew, highlighted the Jewish nose as follows: "a large, massive, club-shaped, hooked nose, three or four times larger than suits the face – there are features which stamp the African character of the Jew, his muzzle-shaped mouth and face removing him from certain other races ... Thus it is that the Jewish face never can [be], and never is, perfectly beautiful. (quoted in Efron 1994, p.51)

There has always been a culture of marking the body of the excluded so they are identified easily in the public space. In medial Europe the adulterous women were made to wear the Scarlet Letter on their chest; in Nazi Germany the Jews had to wear the Star of David since some of them were not easily distinguishable from the non-Jews. The African Americans did not

have to wear anything for they had/have an easily distinguishable skin color. The Hazaras, apart from their popular Shia names (like the Jews), they could be identified by their faces, in particular the shape of their “flat-noses” as well¹. Their physical features are very expressive and obvious that easily betrays them in circumstances of threat and danger such as mass arrest and ethnic cleansing campaigns which have been common in the past. For example, in 1998 the Taliban forces had little trouble in identifying the Hazaras on street of Mazar-e Sharif a mixed city in the north, during an ethnic-based massacre. As documented by Human Rights NGOs, and as described by Hosseini in *The Kite Runner*, the Taliban just walked on streets and shot down any Hazara they faced. According to one account, if “their families tried to sneak out to drag [the bodies] back into their homes, we’d shoot them too. We left them in the streets for days. We left them for the dogs. Dog meat for dog” (p. 291).

Turning back to Agamben, I argue that the Hazara is the *Homo sacer* in the Afghan history. According to Agamben (1998), in Roman law *Homo sacer* referred to someone who committed a crime and was excluded from all rights of citizenship. Thus his or her life was reduced to a *bare life* which anybody could kill him or her without being prosecuted. The *Homo sacer* was included in the law at the same time that he was excluded. In a great part of Afghan history the Hazara has been a socially excluded *Homo sacer* whose bare life was not protected by law. His body was excluded and his geography of living in West Kabul was considered an exception against all the rules. For Agamben, *Homo sacer* is a “life unworthy of being lived”. (p. 137). He argues that life is political and the sovereign powers, decides on whose life should and whose life should not be lived (p. 139). The Hazaras have always been treated as bare lives in Afghanistan, for instance before the 1924 emancipation, the Hazara slaves were “simply a question of property”, the slaveholder had all the rights to “to sell, kill, or do as he pleases with” them (Gray 1901, pp. 211-212). In the post emancipation era, they still remained *homo sacers* whom the government and public regarded as bare lives with no legal protection, as these Pashtun solders told a Hazara family in West Kabul after robbing their house: “We are from the

¹ Although the Hazara physical features are usually enough to distinguish them from the rest of Afghans, Michael Barry (Spring 2011), a prominent Middle East scholar has noted that the Taliban even forced the Hazaras of Kabul “to wear a patch of cloth on their shoulder to designate them as unbelievers” (p. 77). If he is right, the practice of political violence on the Hazara body under the Taliban must have been more excessive and more systematic that it was previously believed to be.

government and you can't do anything. We are thirsty for Hazara blood. I can kill you and put you in the well. We are the enemy of the Hazaras" (HRW 2003, p. 31)

The body of the Hazara in the Afghan context is the frontline of their social exclusion; they are marked and mocked by the shape of their body and the accent of their Dari language (which I do not discuss in this study, for a review of the attitudes toward Hazara accent see Jamal 2010). The Hazara body which has always been perceived either as a slave or a *Juwali* in Kabul's urban space (figure 5.6.); in the post-Taliban time, is in the process of reconstructing itself. Although the dominant image of the Hazara in Kabul is still the old "flat-nose" *Juwali*, it is not the "dog meats" anymore, which of course is a great progress.

The body itself, as a flesh and blood reality, is not considered space; however there is a strong relation between the body and the urban space. Lefebvre's (1991) idea of "spatial body" tries to explain this relation on the basis of how the body and the built form interact and give meaning to each other. The social public sphere not only constructs the body image but also functions as site of representation of body image. Therefore, I argue that the body is one of the constructive components of cityscape and public space which gives meaning to, and drives meaning from the urban space. The body as a form of communication is a well-established field of scholarly investigations; my aim, however, is to link the body to urban space as another form of mediation of meaning. Human beings, before using their language – let alone other media, used their body as an instrument of communication. This form of communication can perform in the public space as a site of exclusion/inclusion as well. Stoer et al. (2003) have described how race, disability, age, piercing, tattoo or fashion can provide a message of belonging and identity and as a result attract acceptance and refusal from the public. According to them, each space generates a set of norms in respect to body posture, gesture, body attitude, fashion and so forth, which serves as a mechanism of exclusion and inclusion. They note that a child of a rural laborer, for instance, will appear 'out of place' in a city school. Same could be thought about the Hazara body in a space other than street, and in a role other than *Juwali* – porter.



Figure 5.6. Three Hazara Juwalis in West Kabul. It is the typical occupation associated with Hazaras in Kabul city. Photo: [jsmithinistanbul](http://www.flickr.com/photos/jsmithinistanbul) 2002 (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/7869439@N06/2294635794/in/set-72157603827098460>)

The Hazaras' body as their most distinguishable racial feature in Afghanistan's mosaic of ethnic groups serves as the primary site of social exclusion. I argue that in order to understand the Kabul cityscape, it is crucial to take into account the body of the Hazara and its relation to the public space of the city. The Hazara either as a slave or as a Juwali has always been living on street, on the public space. Street is the place where the Hazaras' experience of urbanity takes place, as it is where they earn a living as porters and vendors and represent their bodies in the public realm as a protesting political practice. If other ethnic groups, generally, are inside their shops or offices, the Hazara being excluded from access to power and equal economic opportunities, have no place but stay on street and functions as porters for the men of wealth and power.

The body image is a socially constructed entity, and can be reconstructed in accordance to the political and social changes taking place within the society. For instance, until 16th century that the region was under the Mongolian political and cultural authority, the Asian body was perceived as the socially standard and aesthetically attractive. Since then that Mongols are no longer in power, the Asiatic physical features have been associated with undesirability in Afghanistan, and subsequently the Hazara body has been the subject of degrading stereotypes. In

particular, the Hazara nose, as the chief bodily indicator of difference in the Kabul's urban crowd, has been the symbol of the Hazara's repression, exclusion and the state of exception.

The city, the street and body are the three sites of social exclusion through which the Hazara urban experience in Kabul can be understood. West Kabul as a space of exception has been constantly excluded from access to basic services and resources. The Hazaras as *homo sacer* whose lives were not worthy of living and were not legally protected have been residing in that geography of exception as criminals. Abul-Ali Mazari, the Hazara leader during the Kabul war of 1992-1995 in a now well-known quote said: "I fight so being a Hazara not to be a crime any more". The crime of being a Hazara was what motivated him and many other Hazaras during the civil war who wanted to be recognized as equal citizens and not as excluded criminals. In the next chapter I discuss the fate-changing civil war of 1992-1995 in Kabul city and how West Kabul was transformed into a battleground and the Hazara porters turned into guerilla fighters.

6. Urbicide: The Kabul War 1992-1995

“Kabul must burn.”

___ General Akhtar Abdur Rahman, the head of Pakistani intelligence agency in 1980s (Yousaf and Adkin 1992, p. 142)

“A new and very disquieting feature of the current conflict has been the use of aerial bombardment of residential areas of Kabul, with highways reportedly being used as runways for the fighter jets.”

___ UN special reporter in Kabul (quoted in AJP 2005, p. 65)

“A riot is the language of the unheard”.

___ Martin Luther King Jr.

The principle aim of this chapter is to examine the ways in which the social exclusion of the Hazaras was implicated in the deliberate destruction of West Kabul during the civil war. Based on the concept of urbicide and in the framework of urban communications, I argue that the physical annihilation of West Kabul during the war was a form of systematic exclusion against the Hazara people which was expressed in spatialized political violence.

The Kabul war of 1992-1995 was not only a war within the city but a war *of* the city. The city space was the site, the source, and the subject of violence. On April 1992, after a decade-long internal conflict, the communist regime of Afghanistan collapsed and the various factions of guerilla fighters known as *mujahedin* entered the city. Kabul, which was already an ethnically divided city, became a fragmented urban setting where each of its neighborhoods was controlled by a different ethnically-homogenous militant group. These rival militias soon began to fight each other in order to expand the territory of their presence. As a result of this devastating urban warfare, about half of the city was destroyed and thousands of people lost their lives. Although parts of the east and south Kabul were also damaged, West Kabul which was mainly inhabited and controlled by the Hazaras, remained the main battleground in those four years and received the widest scale of destruction.

The term 'urbicide' is relatively new in the social sciences. It is a compound of the two Latin words of 'urbs' (city) and 'cide' (killing), and literally means 'the killing of the city'. It is believed that the term was coined in 1966 by a number of American urbanists who opposed the construction of World Trade Center in lower Manhattan, in New York City, where this large-scale redevelopment initiative caused the "killing" of traditional social spaces in the area. At that time, the critics used urbicide only to describe the destruction of built environment in US cities as part of aggressive urban planning and redevelopment projects. They believed that the place-annihilation for commercial purposes is an act of violence against the city and the urban experience. Later, critics such as Marshal Berman used urbicide to conceptualize the process of modern urbanization. He argued that urbicide existed from the late 18th century when violent modernization emerged as the force behind the rapid transformation of European cities like Paris. A process to which, once Frederick Engels referred as "Haussmanization" to describe the endless series of destructions and constructions in capitalist cities inspired by Baron Haussman, for the purpose of economic expansion. In the French capital for instance, where Haussmann fundamentally restructured the city by his massive 'renovation plan', the process was viewed as a war-like act of violent destructions that not only affected the old fabric of the city, but the social life of the residents as well (Campbell et al. 2007; Coward 2009; Graham 2004).

Since the 1990s, the scope of meaning for the term urbicide has been considerably extended. Now it is used to describe the act of urban warfare and military attack against the city. Urbicide particularly found a wider usage in academic and journalistic language after the civil war in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina which interestingly took place simultaneously with Kabul war from 1992 to 1995. After this war, urbicide was not a word only for describing the destructive capitalist urban redevelopment activities, but the actual killing of the city by military forces; or in Campbell et al. (2007) words, urbicide which was used for critiquing the violent urbanism, found a renewed popularity in examining the urban violence. There is also a connection between urbicide and genocide, as the former was initially inspired by the latter. Urbicide as the deliberate destruction of the built environment during the armed conflicts; is the spatial aspect of genocide or mass murdering of human beings which is a common occurrence in times of war and violence. As Coward (2009) argues, urbicide is not a by-product of attack on the inhabitants of the city, but a deliberate act of violence against the built environment itself. He notes that "the destruction of the built environment has a meaning of its own, rather than being

incidental to, or a secondary feature of, the genocidal violence” (Coward 2009, p. 36). In what follows, I will examine the urban warfare of 1992-1995 in Kabul city as a unique form of violence which somehow, shaped Afghanistan’s contemporary politics and society. Working within the conceptual framework of urban communication which was outlined earlier in this thesis, I argue that the urbicide, or spatial aspect of war in Kabul, particularly in West Kabul, is essential to understand the full magnitude of atrocities committed against the city and its Hazara residents within those four years.

6.1. Power and Place

After nine years of struggle, the Soviet army withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989 and the People’s Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (PDPA) as the last Afghan communist regime, collapsed in 1992. The Pakistan-based Afghan Mujahedeen groups immediately signed the Peshawar Accords, an agreement to form an interim government which took power in the late April 1992 and subsequently the Islamic State of Afghanistan (ISA) was declared. In this interim government which was supposed to be the first multi-ethnic government in the country, Hazara political groups were totally excluded from power sharing deals on ethnic and religious grounds (Harpviken 1996, p. 109; Harpviken 1997, p. 280; AJP 2005, p. 88).

Kabul as the largest city in the country, at the time had three million multiethnic population and had a great political and symbolic meaning to the new players. The conquest of Kabul by mujahedeen groups was equal to conquest of all Afghanistan. On April 25, 1992 the day PDPA left power, 11 different mujahedeen groups (including Hezb-e Wahdat the main Hazara party) entered the city. Soon it was proved that even those Sunni groups who signed the agreement for interim government, had little interest to share power. Each tried to occupy strategic locations in the city like the palace, TV station, miniseries, military centers, and hill tops. Each group struggled to secure a larger representation in the government, some even was thinking of an ethnic monopoly. The same day the civil war began.

Kabul city was remapped on the basis of ethnic boundaries. Khair Khana and the central part up to Dehmazang were controlled by two alli-Tajik groups, Rabbani’s *Jamiyat* and Masoud’s *Shuray-e Nizar* (hereafter “ISA” as these two men, the former as president and the latter as defense minister literally controlled the entire “Islamic State of Afghanistan” and their military

actions in Kabul were closely aligned); from the airport up to Bala Hissar was the domain of *Junbish* led by Dostum an Uzbek general; the far eastern and southern parts were dominated by the Hekmatyar's *Hezb-e Islami*, the main Pashtun party; the western part (Karte Char, Meer Wais Maidan, Dasht-e Barchi and surroundings) was controlled by *Wahdat* the main Hazara party led by Abdul-Ali Mazari; and Khushal Maina and beyond up to the Paghman valley was under the control of *Ittehad*, a fundamentalist Pashtun group led by Sayyaf who was also a close ally of ISA (Kakar 1995, p. 227; see also figure 6.1.).

All the warring groups had direct forging military, financial and political supports from different countries in the region. ISA and its allies (*Jamiyat*, *Shuraye Nizar*, *Ittehad*) had the support of Saudi Arabia, India, Russia, plus they owned the entire military equipments and facilities left from the previous government. *Wahdat* initially had the support of Iran but soon Iranians began to support ISA as well. Hekmatyar's party was mainly supported by Pakistan and Dostum was supported by Uzbekistan (Khalilzad 1995). Over the course of four yours, several alliances and agreements were made and were broken by these warring groups. The way political events were unfolded in those four years of war in Kabul, with numerous untrustable agreements, deceptions, treacheries and briberies, was not new, it was exactly the way Afghanistan' realpolitik has been working since 1747 when this country was established. A British agent in 19th century who spent several years in Afghanistan, learned the local language and engaged deeply with Afghan politicians, summed up his thoughts about how politics worked in Afghanistan as the following: "The chiefs of Afghanistan do not value education as the first quality, for they must only know how to ride, fight, cheat and lie, and whoever excels in these acquirements gains the renown of the time" (Lal 1846a, vol. 1, p. 205). His observations were played out practically during the Kabul war; there were no ethics or principles, politics and governance were reduced to treachery and violence. Even today, the same judgement is accurate for the complex political landscape in Kabul.

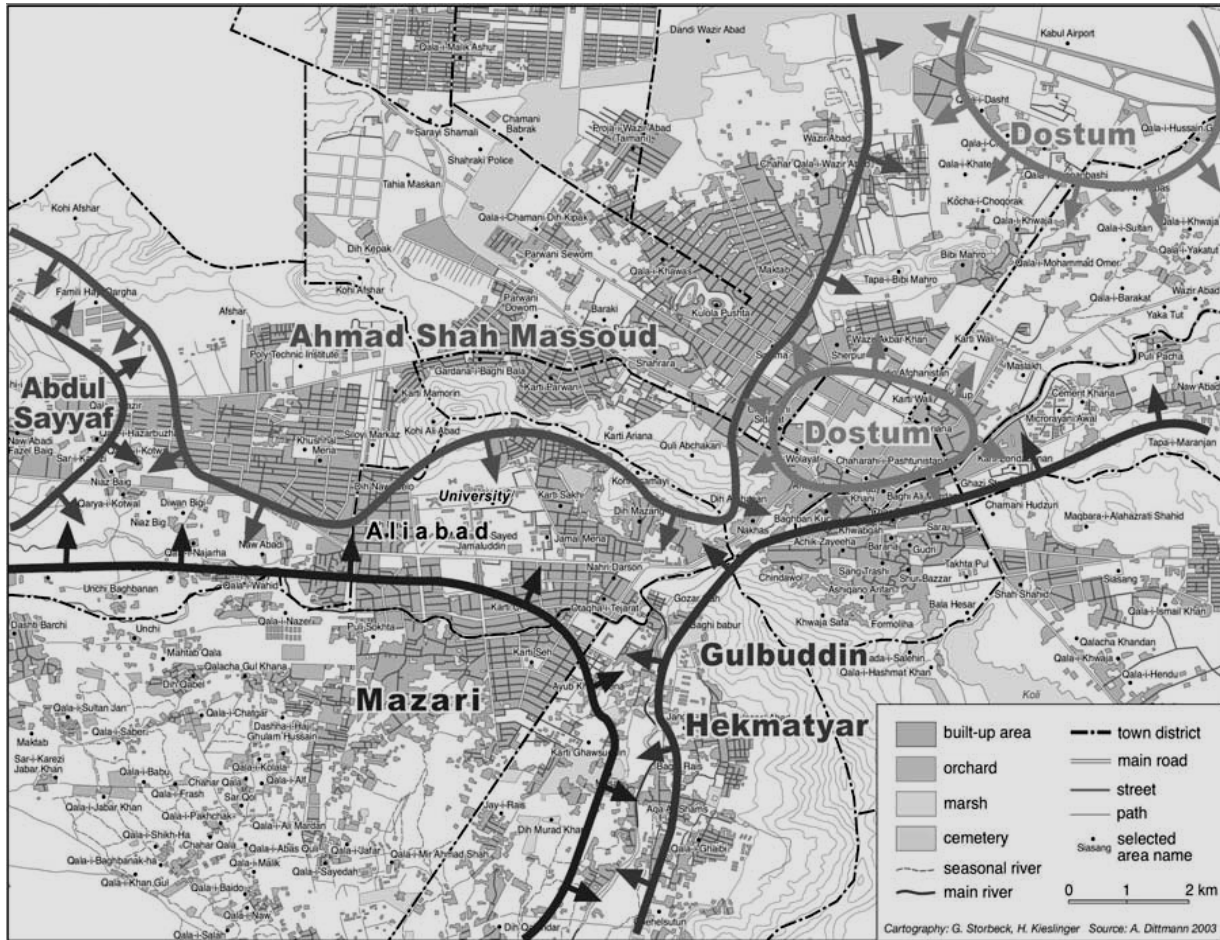


Figure 6.1. Partition of Kabul city between main rival groups during the 1992-1995 war. Source: (Dittmann 2007, p. 37).

On April 25, 1992 the first fight in Kabul broke out between Hikmatyar who was also the ISA’s prime minister on one side, and ISA’s president and defense minister on other side who also enjoyed the military support of general Dustom. A few days later the Dustom and ISA forces managed to push Hekmatyar’s men out of the city center towards the southern areas where the Pashtuns predominantly lived. Hekmatyar then started to indiscriminately fire rockets on Kabul downtown and residential areas. West Kabul and the Hazara people were still in peace (Kakar 1995, AJP 2005).

The first clashes in West Kabul erupted on April 2nd between Sayyaf’s Ittehad who was allied with ISA and Mazari’s Wahdat. It is unclear how the initial conflict sparked and who was behind it. However the majority of sources cite an incident in Silo area in West Kabul where allegedly the Ittehad forces shot a Wahdat car and killed four high profile members of the party

(HRW 2005, p. 24). Some others, however, believe that it was the Tajik members of ISA particularly Masoud who caused the incident and blamed it on Ittehad in order to provoke a Pashtun-Hazara war in Kabul, so the Tajiks could monopolize the power (Sayed 2009, p. 300; Emadi 1997, p. 381; Afsurda-Khater 1992, pp. 2-6). Whatever the story, it was the beginning of war in West Kabul. The Wahdat forces, in response to this incident clashed with Ittehad which resulted in many deaths and severe destructions of urban spaces. It was the beginning of a four year war, which not only transformed the physical organization of Kabul city but also the Afghan political paradigm.

The year 1992 was the first time the Hazara people was able to raise their voices on the Afghan political stage, after almost a century of forced silence. At the time, the Hazara people formed one half the population of Kabul (Mousavi 1997, p. 197), of which most of them were Juwalis and ordinary laborers. In April 1992 when the Wahdat men arrived in Kabul, they took the control of all the Hazara areas both in west in east Kabul which formed the 50 percent of the entire city (Harpviken 1996, p.112; Harpviken 1997, p. 280). Soon the Hazara population of Kabul was mobilized behind Wahdat and its charismatic leader, as the ethnic hostilities erupted and anti-Hazara attacks were carried out by rival groups. Harpviken (1996) notes that the “massive engagement in collective action within a wide variety of organizations, underlines the common perception of grave threat. Wahdat served as the ultimate guarantor, both on security and future opportunities in politics or business” for the Hazaras people (p. 109). The war in West Kabul was heavy and the Hazaras suffered a lot, but it gave the Hazaras an opportunity to be heard and seen in the Afghan politics and public sphere.

6.2. *Urbicide*

Although Giustozzi (2009) argues that only Hekmatyar’s Hezb-e Islami “partially” intended to destroy the city spaces and that “there were no Genghis Khans amongst them” (p. 10); the fact is there were others also who used the deliberate destruction of non-militant targets in the city as a political tool, especially those who had access to stronger artillery fire and air bombardment. On the east side, particularly the old Kabul, Maiwand Street, Chindawul and surrounding areas were severely damaged. However, the physical evidence and all the studies (AJP 2005, HRW 2005) show that it was the West Kabul, the Hazaras’ side that was literally

leveled to ground. My aim in this chapter is to find the relation between the urbicide of West Kabul and political exclusion of the Hazara people during the war.

All accounts of the Kabul war emphasize that almost all combatant groups were involved in the destruction of the city, looting, killing, torturing and imprisonment of civilians (Kakar 1995, HRW 2005). However the scale of violence committed by each group was dependent on their military power and organization, financial sources and political agendas. There are issues that are important to be highlighted in order to understand the mechanism of urbicide and political violence in the Kabul war. As Kakar (1995) notes, after the fall of communist regime, the military personal with their weaponry from the communist army joined the mujahedeen groups based on their ethnic belonging. The Tajik army officers joined the forces of Masoud and Rabbani (ISA), the Pashtuns joined Hikmatyar and Sayyaf, and the Uzbecks joined Dustom. The Hazaras however “did less well in the carve up of army weapons and former military personnel”; due to the long-standing social exclusion of Hazaras who had very little presence in the army. Only two Hazara officers joined the Wahdat forces (AJP 2005, p. 74). This weaker military abilities, made Wahdat and its leader to be cautious with other groups and not volunteer for fight. Mazari always emphasized in his public speeches that he wanted to negotiate his demands, and throughout the years of war he referred to the conflict as “the imposed war” (MFNA 1994). On the other hand, this lack of military personal and weaponry, gave this idea to the ISA and its allies that they could easily defeat Wahdat by areal and heavy bombardment and the Hazaras will abandon their demands of power sharing.

But the ISA and its allies in the entire war had little success in forcefully eliminating the Hazaras from the political scene. Although Wahdat lacked sophisticated weaponry and trained fighters, it had the “local men who were good at street to street fighting, where light weapons were more useful than heavy weapons” (AJP 2005, p. 74). The Kabul war was mostly fought on streets, and streets of Kabul were where the Hazaras lived and worked for the last century, they knew the streets inch by inch and they had the ability to survive on streets. Most of the Wahdat’s men were either young teenagers or aged men, who were former Juwalis and street vendors for their entire lives. They had nothing to lose, that was why all the other parties, although destroyed their houses and neighborhoods by aerial bombardments; they could not capture their areas in West Kabul (MFNA 1994, Dawlatabadi 2007, France 3 1994, see also figures 6.2.).



Figure 6.2. A young Hazara guerilla fighter in Kabul 1992. A large number of teenage Hazaras took part in the Kabul war of 1992-1995. Photo: Steve McCurry

parts of the city as well, the Massoud forces were “particularly deadly ... and a significant proportion of the destruction of the Afghan capital was caused by its rockets and artillery” (AJP 2005, p. 65). The scale of this urbicide was as large as after a decade still “much of West Kabul remains in ruins as of mid-2005” (HRW 2005, p. 23).

Kakar (1995), who partly witnessed the events, writes that “the main features of the conflict were rocket attacks by the Islamic Party [Hekmatyar] and aerial bombardment by the Islamic state and its allies (p. 229). Particularly West Kabul was subjected to indiscriminate rocketing and shelling by heavy artillery and aerial bombardment, both military and residential areas were deliberately targeted. This “disproportionate shelling and bombardment of residential areas of west Kabul by Massoud’s forces” (AJP 2005, p. 63; also France 3 1996) not only destroyed the Hazara ghetto but also the places like Kabul Museum, Kabul University, hospitals, schools, and parks which were located in the luxury parts of West Kabul. In other

The everyday street battles in Kabul produced complex spatialities which fragmented the geographical composition of the city spaces. The city was divided into myriads of bordered territories protected by armed men who usually abused the passengers who did not belong to their ethnic group. Checkpoints were installed on every main street, sometimes there were checkpoints of two rival groups at the two ends of the same street. Civilians had to carefully plan their travel and transportation in the city almost like a military operation in order not to get caught by rival combatants. All parties had militias who abused civilians on streets, even the Wahdat party. However unlike to other parties and ISA, the Wahdat's abuses of civilians were not systematic, it was more because of the nature of the party's military organization which was composed of guerilla fighters were not familiar with discipline and hierarchy. According to Afghanistan Justice Project report, Mazari himself approved major operations, but "Wahdat's command structures were less formal than other factions, and attacks were not always coordinated by the senior leadership" (AJP 2005, p. 76). Mazari personally was regarded as a strict man of ethics.

"Research carried out by the Afghanistan Justice Project does not indicate that the Wahdat senior command and leadership ordered the abuses against civilians. Some testimony refers to the leadership, Mazari in particular, receiving complaints about the behavior of their commanders. For example, witness Sami reports "in my presence, Ustad Mazari warned and threatened them (sub-commanders Abu Sharif Mazari and Morteza) not to commit these crimes which had dishonored them" (AJP 2005, p. 95).

In comparison, AJP reports that the ISA leaders especially the defense minister Masoud "had overall responsibility for planning and command of military operations [and] directly controlled the Jamiat-i Islami units and indirectly controlled the Ittihad-i Islami unit [in] the largest and most integrated use of military power undertaken ... up to that time" in Afshar (AJP 2005, p. 82).

During the Kabul war, the crimes against humanity and against the city were unprecedented in Kabul history. Kakar (1995), a history professor who fled the city because of the war, writes "I know of no other groups of people in history who have, in the course of their

struggle for power, destroyed the capital city of their own country the way these groups have (1995, p. 237). A comprehensive review of the Kabul war and its social and spatial consequences in West Kabul is beyond the limitation of this thesis. However, I only focus on one incident, namely the Afshar campaign, which can demonstrate the magnitude of the urbicide in West Kabul and the scale of atrocities committed against its inhabitants.

6.3. Afshar



Figure 6.3. Afshar landscape after the massacre in 1990s. (Source: <http://kabulpress.org/my/spip.php?article2985>)

In early February 1993, the senior ISA leaders from Jamiat, Ittihad and Shuraye Nizar decided to take action against Wahdat by attacking its main positions in West Kabul and in

particular, its positions on the top of the Afshar mountain and in the Social Science Institute to the east of the Afshar residential area at the foot of the mountain (figures 6.3. and 6.4). AJP confirms that before the attack, ISA contacted some “Shia commanders” in West Kabul and “obtained their commitment to cooperate with the Islamic State offensive” (p. 84). These commanders were non-Hazara Shias from Harakat party who were paid by ISA to betray Wahdat (MFNA 1994). The day before, they had heavily fired artillery and air bombardment almost on the entire West Kabul. On February 11 at 4.00 am the ISA forces attacked on Afshar. The Wahdat commanders in charge of Afshar Mountain abandoned their positions and Masoud and Ittehad forces arrived in the residential area of Afshar from west and north sides. After realizing the situation, the Wahdat officials including Mazari left the Social Science Institute and returned to Dasht-e Barchi. AJP (2005) and HRW (2005) have documented the details of the atrocities which took place under the direct command of ISA leaders. Physical destruction of the entire area, summary execution of civilians, mass rape of women, looting, abduction, forced labor were all part of the campaign. Afshar became the scene of an apocalyptic orgy of murder, rape, looting and destruction. The rest of West Kabul residents could see the fires and smokes erupting from the neighborhood, but no one knew what was going on inside. One year later, the ISA forces left the area and the surviving Hazaras were allowed to return to their home which was literally a ghost town (AJP 2005; HRW 2005; MFNA 1994).

An American journalist, who was in Kabul during the war, describes a “particularly grisly attack” by Ittehad forces in which five Hazara women “were scalped” (Gannon 2004, p. 35). In Afshar campaign, Kakar reports that eighty Hazara women were abducted and were “offered for sale.” (Kakar 1995, p. 230). A report by Amnesty International (1995) also notes that Ittehad forces abducted Hazara women “in order to be sold into prostitution or to be given as "gifts" to financial supporters” (p. 27). This especially reminds us of the Hazara slavery about a

century earlier. During and after the 1891-1893 campaign, according to an Englishman at the court of the Afghan Amir, the Hazara female slaves in Kabul who were taken as war booty “became so plentiful that His Highness would often reward a faithful servant or officer by



Figure 6.4. An aerial image of Afshar in 2005 shows the area was still largely in ruins. Photo: Google Earth 2011: http://maps.google.ca/maps?hl=en&safe=off&q=kabul&bav=on.2,or.r_gc.r_pw.&biw=1366&bih=641&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=N&tab=wl

presenting him with one or more as an addition to his Harem” (Gray 1901, p.213).

The atrocities in West Kabul against the Hazara men and women during the war, indicates how the “body” of the Hazaras along with their built environments became a battleground. Although in the times of conflict, physical violence against the woman body is common in other parts of the world as well, it had a greater political meaning for West Kabul and the Hazara people. As explained in previous chapters, there has been a strong relation between the Hazara body and the built environment of West Kabul in respect to the mechanisms of social exclusion within Afghan politics and society. The Hazara body in Kabul’s urban sphere whether as a slave, Juwali, rebel or guerilla has always been highly politicized and has always

served as the main front of various forms of exclusion. Therefore to understand the Hazara urban experience, I believe both the social and the spatial body of the Hazara should be taken into consideration.

Afshar was a place where genocide and urbicide took place at the same time. The residents of West Kabul, even the non-Hazaras were startled by the scale of violence. The survivors were in shock, they did not return to Afshar until almost a decade later. In mid-2005, AJP reports that “the area remains largely flattened, although some former residents have returned to the ruins of their former homes” (AJP 2005, p. 88; see also figure 6.4. which shows most of the area is ruin as in 2005). But the Afshar catastrophe – as it is known among the Hazaras, will always remain as an open scar on the body of Kabul city and in the memory of its inhabitants.

6.4. Fight for Recognition

How to understand the nature of urban violence in Kabul and the armed struggle of the Hazaras as a socially excluded urban community? A similar question is posed by Asef Bayat in a larger context of “urban disfranchised in the Third World” and the way “they respond to the larger social process that affect their lives” (Bayat 2009, p. 178). Bayat examines the various sides of urban exclusion and poverty and its relation to the emergence of social movements in the cities. He rightly argues that the Islamist movements in Middle East (not the current Arab Spring which is not necessarily Islamist) cannot be categorized as “urban social movements” which are more common, for instance, in Latin American cities. Because the Islamist movements, for the most part, have “no concern for urban disfranchised”, instead, aim at larger goals and tend to mobilize the middle class who are the main political players in these societies (p. 183). I argue that the Hazara resistance in West Kabul, although being led by an Islamic scholar, it was not an Islamist movement in its nature, because the Wahdat party was not fighting ISA and its allies to establish an Islamic government, rather their aim was political and very specific: “to make itself accepted as a full political partner, but this was bound to fail due to the anti-Shia and anti-Hazara prejudice of the other parties” (Dorrnsoro 2007, paragraph 18). Therefore the Hazara resistance in West Kabul was an urban social movement which is best understood in the larger context of minorities’ struggle for recognition.

According to Fraser (1996) and Honneth (1995), the struggle for political and cultural recognition is the paradigmatic form of political conflict which emerged in late 20th century. They and several other scholars, argue that social groups who have been excluded on the basis of their ethnicity, race, citizenship, sexuality or religion, not only demand a just distribution of resources, but also recognition and representation of their cultural and social identities in the society. Based on this assumption, in the following I review the historical geography of ethnic and religious violence in Kabul city to examine how the urban space of Kabul became the scene of struggle and resistance of the Hazara people for political and cultural recognition and equal rights. In these struggles, which have been the main force behind the spatial division of the city since the 18th century, religion played a major role. These conflicts which all included systematic uricide, and civilian casualties, somehow gave the ground for the ultimate urban warfare which we witnessed between 1992 and 1995.

In 1992 the Wahdat fighters in Dehmazang square hung a fabric sign on the square close to their checkpoint which held a quote from Ali Shariati, an influential Iranian public intellectual in 1960s and 1970s: “if you can, perish; if you can’t, get perished”¹ (Fayyaz 1996, p. 79). Dehmazang square was a strategic place during the war, it connected West Kabul to the east side of the city and received severe destructions from the artillery fires coming from the TV hill. Anyone passing the street could read the sign and it would give a chilling sense of fear to the passer bys. This quote, as violent as it seems, was what defined the revolutionary nature of Shiism and the Hazara political resistance.

Ali Shariati (b. 1933-1975) was a Sorbonne-educated sociologist whose ideas of revolutionary Shiism and Islamic left not only made him the architect of the 1979 Iranian Islamic revolution (Abedi 1986), but also a source of inspiration for many other Shia and Islamic movements in the region, including the Hazaras. He along with Ayatollah Khomeini had huge influences amongst the Hazara religious scholars, intellectuals and guerilla fighters some of whom had lived in pre and post revolutionary Iran. It is important to consider the Shiism factor in the Hazara resistance of West Kabul, as this minority sect in Islam has always been a “religion of protest” (Dabashi 2005, p. 91) in its entire history. Shariati was an internationalist, while in Paris he collaborated with Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN), and translated some of

¹ The original Persian:
”اگر می توانی بمیران، اگر نمی توانی بمیر“.

Frantz Fanon and Che Guevara's works into Persian. Upon his return to Iran, he soon emerged as a charismatic public speaker and a leading ideologue of revolution inspired by Marxism and Shiism, two revolutionary doctrines. Jean-Paul Sartre is quoted to say: "I have no religion, but if I were to choose one, it would be that of Shariati" (Aysha 2006, p. 377).

Abdul Ali Mazari (b. 1946-1995), the Wahdat leader, was greatly influenced by Iranian revolutionaries, particularly Ayatollah Khomeini and Shariati. He studied in Qum, Iran and Najaf, Iraq where he closely collaborated with Iranian revolutionaries during the Shah's rule and was imprisoned and tortured for doing so. As someone who spent his youth years in 1960s, he was an internationalist revolutionary within the Islamic region. He frequently travelled between Afghanistan-Iran-Iraq for promoting the fight against the oppressive regimes. After the Soviet invasion he and his family were more active in the Afghan jihad, his father and brother was killed in fight against the Russians. Although being a faithful practicing Muslim, he incorporated several Marxist Hazaras into the Wahdat party, against all the disagreements from the senior party members (Dawlatabadi 2007). His involvement in the resistance of West Kabul was mainly a response to the historical social exclusion of Hazaras, but partly inspired by the theological nature of Shia beliefs as a religion of protest against oppressive powers.

Fight for political and cultural recognition was the center of the Hazara resistance in West Kabul. Shiism, the sect the Hazaras followed was not recognized by the Afghan constitution, and the Hazara people suffered throughout their history for practicing it. In Kabul, as a socio-spatially divided city, the politicization of space and the geographical fragmentation of the city on ethnic and religious boundaries have always been visible. The spatialization of ethnic and religious hostilities in Kabul city dates beyond the civil war in 1990s, it has a longer and more complicated history. In late 19th century that the city was flooded by thousands of Hazara slaves after the 1891-1893 campaign, Lady Hamilton the English physician at the court of Amir Abdur Rahman, somehow predicted a slave rebel in future of the city: "there is hardly a household ... [in Kabul] that has not got its Hazara slave; and there are the labourers, the donkey drivers, the water carriers, men by the thousand, who, if they only rise in the city, would oblige the Ameer to call back his solders from the hills to protect his home" (Hamilton 100, p. 96). Witnessing the overwhelming number of the Hazaras in Kabul, and the scale of atrocities committed against them, she was convinced that one day the streets of Kabul will become the stage of a bloody battle between the establishment and the Hazaras. She was proved right and urban social

conflicts broke out several times in Kabul which included severe physical destructions of the city quarters and social fragmentation of the city residents.

Contrary to common beliefs, the spatialization Shia-Sunni differences in Kabul is not new, it began in 18th century when Chindawul, Afshar and Muradkhani quarters were built as separate ethnic and religious ghettos housing the two Shia groups of Hazaras and Kizilbashs. In 1803 the first Shia-Sunni war turned the city into a brutal religious battleground and caused uricide in the center of the city. After a Sunni mulla issued a *fitwa* allowing people to plunder and kill the Shias, thousands of Kabuli and Kuhistani men attacked on the Shia quarter of Chindawul and set their houses on fire, while the government officials supported them. This intense religious hostility which was repeated several times in Kabul made the Shias live in walled quarters and form ghettos in Kabul to protect themselves¹ (Noelle 1997).

In 20th century, the first devastating urban warfare broke out in 1929 between the Tajik Islamists from the north of Kabul led by Habibulla Kalakani known as Bacha-e Saqaw (“the water carrier’s son”) and the supporters of the ill-fated modernist king Amanulla Khan. Kalakani managed to take and hold the throne only for 9 months (January 18-October 13, 1929), but it was enough to destroy the city and bring the ethnic and religious hostilities to a new level. King Amanulla was the first Afghan ruler who emancipated the Hazara slaves in 1924 and illegalized the practice of slavery. Therefore, the Hazaras of Kabul especially those thousands of emancipated slaves were the main supporter of his government during the Tajik riot in 1929. Kabul which was transformed into a boom town in 1920s as a result of the rapid urbanization and the King’s ambitious development projects; the uprising not only did stop all the projects but destroyed the existing ones. Under Kalakani’s reign, 150,000 people perished, women were raped, properties were looted, public and private spaces were destroyed and Fitwas were issued

¹ Two other major uricide took place in Kabul of 19th century that despite of large destructions had no religious background. The first took place during the first invasion of the British Army (1842-1845) in which “the destruction of the capital, Kabul, became an aspect of war” (Issa & Kohistani 2007, pp. 53-54). As a revenge for losing a unit of their soldiers, the British invaded the city in 1842 and destroyed the great Char Chatta Bazaar, a historic arched mart which was the heart of urban life in Kabul city. The second incident was caused by the British during their second invasion of Afghanistan (1879-1880). The British Army engaged in deliberate destruction of the built environment of the city as a political and propaganda tool; this time they destroyed Bala Hisar, the ancient citadel on the eastern heights of Shir Darwaza Mountain where the king’s palace and government offices were located. It was too an act of revenge after a group of Afghans killed the British envoy in Kabul (Hensman 1881). After this destruction, the next king Abdur Rahman abandoned Bala Hisar and built a new palace in the northern bank of Kabul River. Bala Hisar still lies in ruin.

declaring the Hazaras as infidels and urging Sunnis to kill them, and over the nine months the entire city was paralyzed. Kateb the Hazara historian who personally witnessed all the events noted in his journal: “if there were no further fighting in the country, it would still take a hundred years to return to the status quo” (McChesney 1999, p. 232). Actually it took less than a hundred years until the next war was broke out, and Kabul city never found an urbanist ruler like king Amanulla whose dangerously modernist visions cost him the throne.

Decades later, the Hazaras of Kabul again came out on streets. In 1979 after the communist regime of PDPA took power by a military coup, particularly the Khalq faction of the party, was engaged in target killing of elite and educated community leaders from all ethnic groups particularly the Hazaras. On June 23, 1979 the Hazara residents of Chindawul organized the first anti-communist uprising in Kabul which resulted in many deaths and imprisonments of the protestors. The clashes began by attack on a police station on Maiwand Street and immolation of government vehicles. The uprising which had religious and political motivations was brutally repressed, and the regime arrested hundreds of Hazara elders and intellectuals from Kabul and provinces. This uprising however inspired other public riots in other parts of the country (Emadi 1995). On February 22, 1980 the Hazara and other city residents again marched on streets of Kabul in protest against the communist regime, an event described as “the greatest uprising in [Kabul’s] history” (Kakar 1997, p. 114). This public protest was also initially started from Chindawul and the other Shia quarters in Kabul. According to Kakar, although it was not an organized revolt, the Hazara Islamic scholars and some Hazara Maoists from the Shulae Jawid party played important roles in bringing the people on streets. The Hazaras of West Kabul who had the least representation in political or economic system were on the frontline of the protest. Although other ethnic and religious groups also participated in the riot, the Hazaras “who started their protest from the town of Dasht-e-Barchi were the largest of all the groups” (Kakar 1997, p. 115). The predominantly Hazara neighborhoods of West Kabul such as Dasht-e Barchi, Deh Dana, Afshar-e Darulaman, Qalai Shadah, Dehburi, Jamal Maina and Kart-e Sakhi contributed largely in the protest. Deadly street clashes broke out between armed government soldiers and defenseless protestors. Kakar notes that “Eight ... Hazara coolies... were found dead near Dehburi with their sacks on their backs” (Kakar 1997, p. 119; see also Emadi 1995). The “coolies with their sacks on their backs” was in fact, the public image of the Hazaras in Kabul’s urban sphere. The dominant class was used to see the Hazaras on streets as invisible

porters; they were afraid of seeing a rebel Juwali with his sack on his back, occupying the streets as a political protester.

The Hazaras and their provinces in central Afghanistan have mostly remained politically autonomous throughout the Afghan history, until Amir Abdur Rahman's 1891-1893 campaign (Mousavi 1997) in which 62 percent of Hazaras were killed, enslaved or forcefully displaced (Kateb as quoted in Dawlatabadi 2007); after that destructive campaign they became under the control of Afghan rulers. Since then, exactly for 101 years, from 1891 to 1992, the Hazaras especially in cities like Kabul lived as a marginal community who were systematically excluded from almost all aspects of life. The several uprisings we just discussed were mainly reactions to the actions of others, and cannot be considered as an organized urban social movement. However their uprisings which considerably affected the religious and ethnic geography of Kabul city, served as a historical and psychological setting for the full-scale Hazara resistance in 1992-1995. The Hazaras who fought and suffered greatly during the jihad against the Soviets, and were the first ethnic group to liberate their provinces, were excluded from power by the mujahedeen government. During the civil war, Wahdat demanded 20 percent of political representation for the Hazaras and Shias in the government - based on the percentage of their population, but the Sunni groups rejected this demand (Emadi 1995, p. 10). Mazari himself summarized his objectives of resistance in three: a) official recognition of Shi'ism as a sect of Islam; b) just reorganization of administrative structure¹; c) Participation of the Hazaras in decision making (quoted in Dawlatabadi 2007). He was killed in 1995, without being able to witness the result of his struggles.

The west Kabul struggle, to which the new generation of Hazaras refers as *Junbesh-e Adalatkhahi* ("Justice Movement"), (see the popular Hazara website: <http://urozgan.org>) profoundly transformed the social and geopolitical landscapes of power in the country. Ahadi (1995) a hardliner Pashtun politician and scholar interprets the civil war of 1992-1995 as the end

¹ This was a crucial issue that Mazari insisted to change. In order to marginalize the Hazara's role in politics the Afghan governments partitioned the Hazaras into five different provinces in central Afghanistan, so they become minorities in each province. "In so doing the state intended to eliminate the collective bargaining power of the community and to emasculate their political strength. By partitioning Hazarajat the state also intended to deprive the region from international aid allocated for its development and also to minimize the number of Hazaras' political representation (on the basis of majority of votes) in the Wulusi Jirga (the House of Parliament)" (Emadi 1997, p. 370)

of Pashtun dominance in Afghanistan. He cites the absolute dominance of the Pashtuns in politics, military, economy and culture since 1747, and argues that the civil war let the minorities emerge and challenge the Pashtun establishment. Although still Pashtuns are in charge of the majority of key governmental positions in the post 2001 era, the minorities have more representation than they had in pre civil war era.

In 1992, the Whdat party changed the name of Dsht-e Barchi neighborhood, the heart of Hazara ghetto in West Kabul, to Dasht-e Azadagan (Fayyaz 1996, p. 82). Although the new name did not find popular acceptance, and was forgotten soon after the civil war, it indicated how the party tried to rebrand the Hazara ghetto by a symbolic place-naming effort. Dasht-e

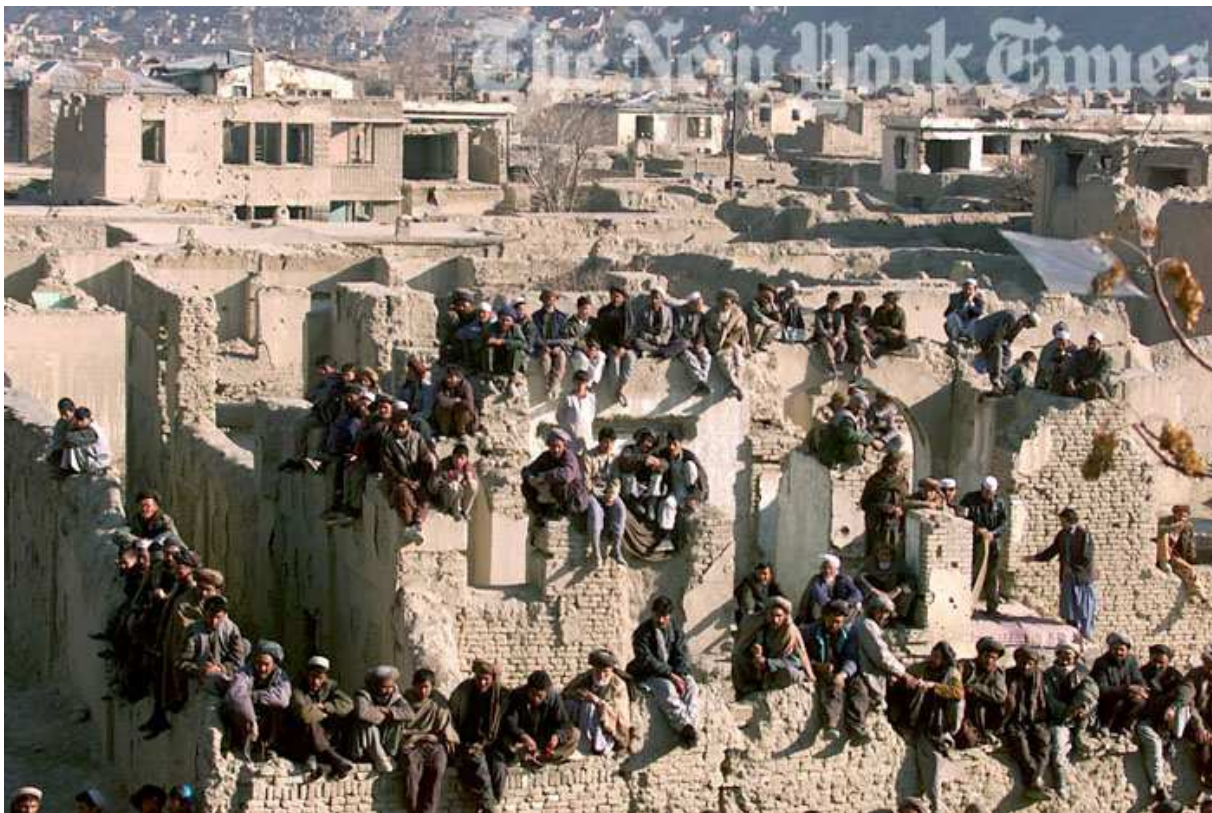


Figure 6.5. Hazara men in the ruins of West Kabul listening to home-coming speech of Karimi Khalili, the new Wahdat leader in 2001. Photo: Chang W. Lee/The New York Times (http://www.nytimes.com/Gathering-In-Kabul--2001_p_3939.html)

Barchi which literally means “the land of porters”, housed the Hazara people in Kabul for decades, the new name, Dasht-e Azadagan which means “the land of freemen” was meant to manifest the new image of the Hazaras in Kabul not as an excluded community of Juwalis but as equal citizens of the country who were free from traditional institutional repressions. The re-

naming effort constitutes the spatialization of politics aimed at reconstruction of Hazara identity. It did not work well due to communication difficulties of the war years and the emergence of Taliban in 1996, but in practice, Dasht-e Barchi and its people were “freed” as a result of the Hazara resistance in West Kabul. During the civil war, although West Kabul was reduced to an apocalyptic scene of death and destruction, the Hazara people managed to have their voice heard in the political system of the country.

In 2001, after the Taliban was overthrown by US-led military intervention, almost the same Sunni leaders who had excluded the Hazaras from power sharing a decade ago got together in a hotel in Bonn, Germany to form another interim government. This time all the Hazara and Shia parties were invited to the conference without having to fight for it. It resulted in Bonn Agreement and the formation of an interim government in which five ministers and two vice president posts were given to the Hazaras and Shias, about 20 percent of the seats that Mazari demanded in 1992. A couple of years later Shiism was also officially recognized in the constitution as one of the two sect of Islam and one Hazara province was created in central Afghanistan. Almost all the three points, Mazari cited as the reasons he was fighting were realized, at least on paper. It was a millstone event in Afghan history which obviously had roots in the Hazara resistance of West Kabul. Today after ten years since 2001 Bonn Conference, apart from the symbolic political representation and some minor progresses in education and employment, the Hazara people are still a socially excluded community who struggles for justice and equality.

West Kabul even today is an excluded geography suspended between a painful past and an uncertain future. This situation is best expressed in a historic photo printed in *The New York Times* in 2001 (figure 6.5). In the photo which is shot in West Kabul right after the fall of Taliban, we see a large group of Hazara men squatting on the ruins of houses in Kart-e Sakhi area listening to Karim Khalili the new leader of Hezb-e Wahdat who was appointed as the second vice president in the interim government. The men look as if they were part of the built environment of the ruins: anything in sight looks war-torn and destroyed, the houses have no roofs, doors or windows, and the scars of the war are everywhere. The scene looks like a ghost town where the ghosts have risen from rubles and ruins after years of silence. A mixed sense of hope and despair is visible in the air. The men are gathered there to build the future of the Hazaras on the ruins of West Kabul.

Today, almost ten years since the photo was taken, the same hope and despair is sensible in West Kabul: the Hazaras are caught in a complex exclusionary mechanism which is worsening under the current corrupt administration, they are struggling to survive on street economy and building shelter on the ruins of urbicide left from the civil war. No one, however, can deny the improvements in West Kabul and the more visibility of the Hazaras in the public sphere. Thanks to the international involvement in the country, access to education, employment, and resources are better than the pre-2001 era for the Hazaras and other minority groups, but still there is a long road ahead of the Afghan people and government to fix the centuries of religious and ethnic discrimination and create a just, inclusive and cohesive society.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to address the following question: how does the built environment of West Kabul reflect the social exclusion of the Hazara people who predominantly dwell in that area? The ways in which the built environment of West Kabul mediates the politics of power and difference in Afghanistan were examined from different perspectives. The findings and discussions in this thesis were mainly focused on understanding West Kabul as a geography of exclusion and the Hazara people as an excluded community who have been subject to various forms of discrimination and institutional violence. I argued that social exclusion has been the basis of Hazara urban experience in Kabul city since the 17th century when they first arrived there as slaves.

Social exclusion refers to a systematic mechanism through which a certain social group is excluded from access to political, economic and cultural resources; this multilayered phenomenon has a profound spatial consequence which makes the socially excluded being marginalized geographically as well. The Hazara social exclusion is not another form of poverty, for there is a large percentage of Afghan population living under the line of poverty from all ethnic groups. Poverty is just one of the many consequences of social exclusion. Considering the Afghan history, the Hazara's experience of social exclusion is part of an institutionalized effort for elimination of this ethnic group from Afghan public life. The Hazaras have experienced slavery, ethnic cleansing, genocidal massacres and forceful displacements which in comparison, the West Kabul's socio-spatial exclusion can be perceived as a very delicate mechanism of repression.

The first encounter of the Hazaras with Kabul city may have been taken place in 17th century with they arrived there as slaves. Although there were both free and slave Hazaras in the city, there were not much difference between their public images in Kabul. If the slaves were concubines and domestic servants, the free Hazaras worked as porters or other menial street jobs. In general, the Hazaras came to Kabul either as slaves or survivors: survivors of ethnic cleansing, survivors of land conflicts with Pashtun nomads, survivors of drought and disease, and survivors of economic hardship who found their ways from the mountains of central Afghanistan to Kabul city which has been serving as a place of refuge and security for Hazara people for centuries. While in Kabul, the Hazaras soon found themselves marginalized in the city both socially and

geographically. Their place of dwelling in West Kabul did not receive any urban planning, roads, water, electricity or any other public services, for being an “informal settlement”, according to the government. This social exclusion of the Hazara people led to spatial exclusion and eventually to the emergence of the largest ethnic ghetto in Kabul city.

The experience of social exclusion has also a complex series of economic consequences which have an enduring effect on employment of the Hazaras in Kabul. Lack of proper access to education, made the Hazaras to pursue *Juwali* as their main urban livelihood for generations. Those who had some educations were mostly faced with the problem of unemployment or employability. The Hazaras were excluded from access to equal education and employment opportunities and this very fact, was the force behind the spatial development of West Kabul as an excluded ethnic ghetto.

In 1992 when a shift in political paradigm turned Kabul city into an apocalyptic battle space of ethnic conflicts, it was West Kabul which experienced the largest scale of destruction and casualties. The West Kabul warfare although being very deadly and destructive, gave an opportunity for the oppressed minorities, in particular the Hazaras to raise their voices after 100 years of silence and subjugation. The built environment of West Kabul was reduced to rubble during the war, but the Hazaras managed to have their voice heard in both national and international levels.

In the post-Taliban Kabul, the Hazaras are in the process of reconstructing their image by place-making efforts and political struggles. It is possible that the children of Hazara *Juwalis*, who have now better opportunities to go to school, would find better jobs and have a better life than their parents. In the southern skirts of West Kabul, a new Hazara township is being developed which houses the emerging Hazara middle class whose access to education and employment led them to better housing and services. The Hazara ghetto in West Kabul however, is likely to remain as an excluded geography as long as the Hazaras are socially excluded and the urban planning and distribution of resources and services in Kabul are based on ethnic and religious affiliations. In the post-Taliban era, although the Hazara people have been granted more opportunities in politics, education and culture, thanks to the presence of international forces in Afghanistan, the social exclusion is still as strong as ever. It requires time to turn a centuries long exclusion mechanism into an inclusion and integration policy.

The built environment is not only a unique source of historical and archeological knowledge, but social and political as well. Particularly in totalitarian regimes, where tongue and pen are bound to silence, it is the built environment which can tell us the untellable. In these regimes, where information is fabricated in accordance to the interests of the establishment, and the state tries to produce meta-narratives through manipulation, censorship, erasure of cultural memory and other forms of control, the built environment remains one of the rare realms of knowledge where one can “read” the true history of the city and its people. Even the ruined environments and fabricated built forms can serve as materialistic expressions of a counter-narrative historical knowledge. Afghanistan being a country shaped on the basis of centuries of ethnic and religious hostility, institutional violence and non-democratic states, the built environment of its cities, especially the capital Kabul, not only expresses the Afghan people’s ideas, ideals, and identities, but also their sufferings and sorrows.

This thesis was an attempt to understand and explain the social exclusion of the Hazara people as one of the urban issues existing in Kabul city. I believe for solving a problem such as this, you first need to know it well. You cannot solve a problem without fully understanding it, or worse, pretending it does not exist.

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