



QARABAGH

QARABAGH (Qarabāḡ), a district (*woloswāli*) of Ghazni Province in Afghanistan. The district of Qarabagh covers 1,799 square km and is bounded in the west by Jāgori and Moqor, in the north by Nāwor and Jaḡatu, in the east by Andar and Kiro, and in the south by Āb-band. The total population is estimated by humanitarian organizations active in the region around 76,400 (AVICEN, p. 20; UNIDATA, p. 9). Except the Pashtuns (mostly Ghilzais) established in the lower areas, the population is constituted by two main Hazāra groups, namely the Moḡammad K̲vāja and the Čahār-dasta. The Moḡammad K̲vāja dwell the center and the north of Qarabagh (in places like Qarabagh, Pošt-e Qarabagh, Zardālu, Gol-kōh, Qoluj, Azir, Quliāqul). They are also present further east and north, in the districts of Jaḡatu and Nāwor. The Čahār-dasta populate the western part of Qarabagh (Nay Qal'a, Noktāla, Čambar, Košk, Bolāq 'Ali, Sayyed Khan, Otpur, Sar-Kalān, Sāda, Malki, Ġiḡtu, Gāwmorda, Šāku, Deh-ba'di, Mailur, Deh Bakši, Tamaki). Available sources (Leech, p. 335; Maitland, pp. 363-9; Poladi, p. 37) have drawn different pictures of the tribal sections of Moḡammad K̲vāja and Čahār-dasta (which name indicates they were originally divided into four segments), and it seems vain today to give a definitive list. It would be misleading to impose an arbitrary order on this diversity, which expresses the changing political coalitions in genealogical terms and reflects the social upheaval caused by the subjugation of the Hazāras by the Amir 'Abd-al-Raḡmān at the end of 19th century.

Driven by poverty and by the scarce ecological resources, people have traditionally migrated to Kabul, Ghazni, or Laškargāh (Afghanistan), Quetta



(Pakistan), as well as to Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. This trend increased dramatically after the Communist coup of 1978 and throughout the ensuing years of war. The economy is largely based on the remittances of the men who work out of the region. Agriculture is mostly based on irrigation, but production is low. Autumn wheat dominates, but spring wheat, barley, potatoes, beans, onions, carrots, turnips and fodder plants are also cultivated. Other crops like almonds, mulberries, apricots, apples and grape may be found in some areas.

During the 1980s and 1990s, bitter internal conflicts took place in the district. Different opposing parties (mainly the Ḥarakat-e eslāmi, the Sāzmān-e naṣr, and the Sepāh-e pāsdārān) develop and most hamlets were divided along factional lines. Largely independent of ideological issues, the alliances cannot be accounted for only by local or tribal origin. They are always changing sides in order to maintain equilibrium between the factions, while a real strategy of political diversification of affiliations seems to exist among the families and the larger groups of solidarity.

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