Monument Valley and Ahaggar Regions: Similar Geographic Landscape and Cultural Traits

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Abstract: Both Native Americans and the Tuareg people who live in the Algerian Sahara do share some cultural traits. Among the hypotheses, which are listed in my PhD thesis, that help to guess the reason behind such similarities, the geographic landscape theory is stated as an answer to the raised question: Why do these people share cultural traits? When two regions share the same aspect of climate and geographical landscapes, people who live there do have some cultural traits and even eating habits in common. To illustrate this idea, two regions from different continents are taken as an example; the Ahaggar region in the south of Algeria, and the Monument Valley in the United States. What is worth mentioning is that they not only witness some common aspects of life with each other, but with other autochthonous people around the world, where India is supposed to be the starting point of the human life.

Key Words: Ahaggar, Monument Valley, geographic landscape, similar cultural traits, India.

Introduction

I remember once, my father- when alive- told me that the geographic landscape of the Algerian Northern towns looked alike. He told me it was the man who had brought changes to these areas by building bridges, houses and some more amenities.

In fact, when travelling across these towns, we notice that in bare spots we feel that we are still at the same place, and we have not moved further. If there is no road sign, passengers keep asking the driver where they are, and what the name of such a place is.

If these towns relied on land agriculture as a source of life; their populations would strangely share common behavior and social traits. They would be hardy, witty, courageous, and generous. It is the direct contact of man with nature that creates a community which stands on its own. Both man and nature bear the influence of the characteristics of each on one another.

These northern Algerian towns seem to share similar climatic features, mountains, hills, rivers and even trees and plants. The animals that live in these areas are unfortunately rare, probably due to the construction of houses, streets, and so forth. Oran', for instance, is said to have been the place where lions used to exist. None of these seems to exist nowadays.

Man has contributed a lot in changing the environment, but he is at the same time influenced by the climate and the nature of the area where he lives. The impact of the environment and the geographical landscape within which he lives affect his behavior, his beliefs, and his life in general.

When ancient people migrated to Alaska, for instance, they had to adjust to the climate of that area. They had to wear thick clothes to cover themselves from the harsh cold, and to eat the food they could find there. If someone goes to the Sahara, for instance, he has to wear large white clothes that ward off the sunrays so as to keep the body cool and fresh.

People who live in the mountains seem to comprehend easily other people living in rural areas than the people of urban areas do. People who live in the Sahara tend to cooperate easily with some other Saharans than with people of the north, since they live within similar climatic conditions. Besides, people living in the North Pole can live in harmony with people from the South Pole, than they do with other people from the Sahara for instance.

The people who live in northern Algerian towns differ from the ones who live in the southern towns of Algeria. But the people who live within similar geographic landscape and climate comprehend each other more easily. The Algerians who live in the South seem to be all alike, in terms of physical
complexion, architectural construction, traditions, and life style in general.

Similar climatic and geographic features do not exist within the same country only, but they can exist in other countries in distant continents as well. The similarity that exists between the Monument Valley in the United States and Ahaggar in the Algerian Sahara could be the best example ever listed. This similarity is not witnessed at the level of panoramic views of the two regions only, but it stretches to the cultural traits which both populations share. This commonness is so striking that it leads the observer to raise some questions.

What could be the reason behind such similarities? Could it be the fact of having originated from the same ancestry? Could this resemblance be the result of the impact of the climate on these people? Since the primitive people preserve the ancestral traditions and beliefs, they tend to resist to time and to the climate. This might explain why the autochthonous people share similarities though living in different climatic areas in the world.

The Navajo and the Tuareg share similar cultural traits though they live too far from each other. The geographic landscape within which they live is identical. The climate of the two regions where they live seems to be similar too. Could this resemblance serve as evidence that support the theory which states that ancient people used to live in one land mass before the continental drift?

When writing my thesis about the common cultural traits which the Targui women -in Ahaggar- share with the Native American ones –in Navajo nation- it was important to know if they lived in areas that looked alike. In fact, when trying to answer such a question it revealed that both the Ahaggar and Monument Valley resembled each other.

The resemblance of the Monument Valley in Navajo Nation with the Ahaggar region in the Algerian Sahara is so striking that one barely distinguishes between the two regions. They both share harmonious combination of natural components.

Five panoramic views of the Monument Valley were shown to thirty Algerian people from different ages, intellectuals, illiterates, students and even middle and high school learners. They were simply asked to tell me the name of the place which the photos represent. The result of the survey was quite astonishing since they all agreed that they were photos of the Ahaggar region in the Algerian Sahara.

The photos of the Ahaggar region of the Algerian Sahara and the ones of Monument Valley strangely look alike. So to what extent are the two deserts identical? Do they simply share the same panoramic views? Or do they have some geographic and even cultural features in common?

It is easy for a mere researcher – of a literary specialty- to give an overview of the two regions, but it is quite difficult to give strong scientific and geological evidence. It is only a specialized scientist who can provide the reader with strong and valid scientific data. Relying on the spontaneous answer of the thirty Algerian people, let us try to find out some common points between the two regions.

It is necessary to deal with each region, and have an overview of its historical and cultural backgrounds. Much focus is attributed to the geographical landscape of both Ahaggar and Monument Valley, since their similar panoramic views constitutes the essence behind writing this article.

1- Monument Valley

When viewing the photos of either Monument Valley or Ahaggar regions, one just wonders: Is there a world out there? Are there any human beings who have attempted to adapt to the arid climate of the high Rocky Mountains and have managed to live within? The two regions seem too hard to live in, still they are populated and their peoples managed to enter history and the cultural world heritage with their petro glyphs and distinctive cultural traits.

This Valley is a desert like area with dry weather and Rocky Mountains. Wild animals and reptiles feature this part of America. It cannot be the only area that is characterized as such, but since the mass media have focused much on it, people tend to know more about it than any other region. Monument Valley is well known thanks to cow boy films and T.V. serials that attracted the attention of spectators in the twentieth century.

“Within a decade, producer John Ford was filming his classic movies in Monument Valley, with the result that the unique landscape has become instantly recognizable to people around the world”.

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The Monument Valley has been dealt with in many documentaries, and has been used for a number of films. The same thing is witnessed in the Algerian Sahara too. Much focus is put upon the Tassili and Ahaggar; therefore, we tend to know more about them than any other regions of the Algerian Sahara.

The great challenge for writing about both geographic landscapes of both regions was the scarcity of books. Therefore, the only solution remaining was to rely on few books, JSTOR articles and some other Internet resources. Let us first deal with the characteristics of each region to see where the two regions could meet.

Monument Valley’s boundaries stretch from northeastern Arizona till the northwestern New Mexico in the United States. It is the land where the Navajo people live. A variety of terrains, including plains, mountains, forests, lakes and desert, feature this land. It is the largest land area that is retained by a Native American tribe.

The Monument Valley is a region of the Colorado Plateau that is characterized by a cluster of vast sandstone buttes and isolated hills with steep sides and flat tops. The buttes are stratified with three principal layers. The top layer is the Moenkopi Formation, the middle layer is de Chilly Sandstone, and the lowest layer is the Organ Rock Shale.

There exist large stone structures including the famous "Eye of the Sun", which are decorated with ancient petro glyphs. The Eye of the Sun is a cave type natural arch which happens when parts of the wall or floor rupture, and leave an opening that takes the shape of an eye.

The Monument Valley experiences a desert climate that is cold in winter and hot in summer. The heat in this region is tempered by aridity and high altitude. Summer nights are comfortably cool since the temperatures drop quickly after the sunset. Winters are cold and the daytime highs are frequently above freezing. Monument Valley witnesses an occasional light snowfall in the winter which usually melts within a day or two.

The floor of the Valley is largely reddish brown siltstone and fine grained sandstone. The vivid red color of the valley comes from iron oxide that is exposed in the weathered siltstone. The dark blue gray rocks which are found in the valley get their color from manganese oxide. These colours make of the Valley a distinctive inspiring place both for film makers and tourism amateurs.

When these two colours are matched, they make a fascinating mixture that attracts the imagination of the viewer. It is said that this place is inhabited by people whose skin is red. Could this be a truth or just a myth? Having never visited the United States bans me from stating if it is real or no. A friend of mine who travelled to the United States in the seventies assured having met some Natives with a red skin.

If her claims were true, one would not keep oneself from raising the following question. Since the floor of the Valley is reddish, and the inhabitants are called ‘Red Skins’, does the colour of the land have an impact on the colour of its inhabitants’ skin?

Some scholars like Al Jahidh explained how the environment could determine the physical characteristics of the inhabitants of a certain community. According to him the human skin’s colour mainly the black skin was the result of the arid environment of the desert. As evidence for his theory, he cited a stony region of black basalt in the Northern Najd, which inhabitants are of a black skin.

To support his theory, he listed some aspects and details which contributed in the existence of some specificities of the Najd desert. He pointed to the blackness of the gazelles of Najd, of its ostriches, insects, foxes, sheep, horses and birds. He said the blackness and whiteness were in fact caused by the properties of the area, as well as by water and soil, by the proximity or remoteness of the sun, and by the mildness and intensity of its heat.

Ibn Khaldoun also pointed to the same idea in the fourteenth century. He said black skin was caused by the hot climate and not by the lineage affiliation of the people to their ancestors. He even dispelled the Hamitic theory which stated that the sons of Ham, the son of Adam, were cursed by being black. He also anticipated the meteorological theory which was proposed later by Montesquieu in the eighteenth century.

According to Montesquieu, the Englishmen would look like the Indians if they grew up in India. He said that one generation was enough to prove such a hypothesis. As a response to such a claim, and to argue that it did not account, some writers pointed to the long settlement of Europeans in Africa. The Dutch remained on the soil of Cape for a period of one hundred and thirty years, but they preserved their physical features, and did not show any change in the colour of their skin.
Within the Navajo lands there are landmarks and parks such as the Rainbow Bridge National Monument, Monument valley and Shiprock Peak. The Canyon de Chilly National Monument is considered one of the most sacred places of the Nation. It is a group of three canyons which lies beneath the Four Sacred Mountains of the Navajo.

According to their creation story, the Navajo People formed four sacred mountains that bordered the Navajo homeland or the Diné Bikéyah. These four mountains are known as Blanca Peak, in the East, Mount Taylor in the South, the San Francisco Peaks in the West, and Mount Hesperus in the North.

These mountains are the homeland of the Navajo people and represent a fundamental part in their culture. These mountains, which they consider as sacred, enable its inhabitants to live in harmony with their Creator and with nature. The Navajo visit the Four Sacred Mountains area to honor their teachings and receive strength and power.

The mythology of Navajo is fascinating and full of secrets. According to their priests, the Zuni, the Hopi and the Navajo nations had a common genesis. They all came out of the earth, from a subterranean world through vents, caves and other openings which are connected to the upper world.

Among the seven major deities recognized by the Navajo, Bakochiddy was the most significant worshiped deity. To take revenge for the kidnapping of his child Kahothsode, a fish god caused a great flood to arise. In order to escape destruction, the Navahos, the Zunis and the Hopis ascended to the surface of the earth.

This myth points explicitly to the Flood that once swept earth. When claiming that their ancestors ascended to the surface of earth, they might mean that they were among those good people who could escape the Flood.

The mythology of the Navajo seems to repeat itself among ancient Africans. Saint Augustan said some of his African contemporaries thought they were near the Creator when they dived underground. He added that the indigenous people believed in the existence of spirits underground.

A Congolese myth states that during the Deluge, since terror and panic stroke people, they turned to their natural state; women became snakes and men turned to monkeys. This African myth points to the safety of their ancestors as the Navajo do in their myth. It might imply that this safety is due to the protection of earth of the people who deserved such a blessing.

The fish god Kahothsode might refer to the Deluge that swept earth as it might simply point to the sacredness of the fish among the Native Americans. The fish symbol is witnessed in both African and American art crafts. Some scholars claim that this symbol refers to the water which comes in the third position after the sky and the earth. Sky, earth and water are great worlds which are dominated by the Great Mother.

The belief in the Great Mother is witnessed among all matrilineal kinship societies. The Navajo people are one of these societies. In their ancestral beliefs and traditions, women were viewed as extensions of the Spirit Mother, and therefore they were vital to the continuation of their people. The choice of a woman, rather than a man, as a key sacred figure indicates the Native American’s reverence for feminine qualities. Earth is close to them while the Sun is far from them; this explains why they cherish Mother Earth more than Father Sun.

The petro glyphs which are found in the valley reveal some hints of the Navajo’s culture. Besides the women’s presentations, legendary human heroes and supernatural beings that accompanied those heroes are drawn on rocks. In addition to those pictures, natural phenomena, animals and thunders are depicted and may be personated as human beings.

The following quote is taken from an article which links between the sand paintings and the geographic landscape that feature the Monument Valley. The writer does rely on those paintings as evidence because they continue to serve as vivid memories of ancient times. The spiritual powers which are depicted in such paintings do tell about the ancient beliefs of the Navajo people.

“The Navajos sand paintings bore greater spiritual power, so the Navajos gave them greater artistry and symbolism. Perhaps only the Tibetan Buddhists, with their complex mandalas, developed sand painting with greater sophistication. Navajo sand paintings are similar to the mandalas in being mirrors of the cosmos, lenses through which the powers of the cosmos could be focused into human lives.”
The writer explains the great importance of these sand paintings in representing the culture and history of those people. If these people did not leave written records of their ancient history, the sand paintings, which they left, serve as a monitory guide to the Navajo’s ancient beliefs, traditions and culture.

When trying to find any Native American oral story or myth that tells about the Tuareg of Algeria, or vice versa, failure was the result. It was a real challenge for the pursuit of writing my thesis. Luckily, a sand painting that exists in the Hoggar region of the Algerian Sahara does represent a tall and a slender Native American man in his traditional costume. This petroglyph shows a tall man wearing two feathers on his head and a kind of featherings around his feet. It resembles the representation of a star constellation – that is near Sagitarius and Libra – which the Navajo use and name as the First Great One.

This sand painting could imply that once, both nations did visit each other. Otherwise how would the Tuareg of Ahaggar know of the Native American traditional costume? And how would they know of the Navajo star constellation?

**Hoggar/Ahaggar Region**

The Hoggar, also known as the Ahaggar, is a mountainous region in the central Sahara of Algeria, along the Tropic of Cancer. It is located on a northerly circle of latitude on Earth at which the Sun may appear directly over the head at its culmination. The average elevation of this rocky desert is estimated at more than 2,908 meters above the sea level. Its highest mountain is Mount Tahat.

The rich environment of the landscape of Ahaggar influences and combines with the colorful and lovingly decorated handmade crafts. When one considers the depth and the beauty of the geographic landscape of Ahaggar, he can grasp the richness and diversity of the local people’s crafts, which have resulted from the diverse Saharan environment.

This region consists of beautiful touristic areas among which are Assekrem. Besides being well known for its wonderful sunset view, it is also famous for Charles de Foucault chose it as his favorite place to stay in order to accomplish writing his dictionary of the Tuareg language.

The inhabitants of the Hoggar massif are the Tuareg who call themselves Kel Ahaggar. The Tuaregs relate their self-identification to their specific Kel, which means ‘those of’, like the Kel Dinnig, and the Kel Ataram.

The Tuareg or Tawarek are known with the veil with which the men cover their faces. This veil is called ‘tagelmoust’ in the Targui language, to which different interpretations have been attributed. Some of their myths pretend that the Targui men started wearing the veil because once they surrendered during a battle and fled their opponents, after which women took over and defeated the enemy. Consequently, the men veiled their faces as a sign of shame.

Some scholars say that the importance of wearing the veil lies in the protection of the wearer from the evil spirits. Johannes Nicolaisen and Ida Nicolaisen have quite a different interpretation of wearing the veil among the Targui men. They think that male dominance over women is actually emphasized by male face veiling. According to them, this custom is not only an expression of social distance in connection with rules of avoidance towards in laws and foreigners, but is also another kind of distance between males and females, in that the veil serves to underline and underscore the high status of males.

These interpretations are quite different from the ones given by the Tuaterg. They say that the foreign writers misunderstand their traditions and interpret them according to their personal and religious convictions. When someone wears the veil for the first time, the event is celebrated in a ceremony called ‘Ahal’.

This evening celebration ‘Ahal’ is attended by Tindi musicians. During the French colonization of Algeria, this evening celebration was seen by general Laperrine as a libertinism event that ought to be banned. He wanted to keep some cultural traits and delete some others which they saw as inappropriate. When he tried to stop this ceremony, he risked the raising of the Tuareg of Ahaggar.

The French could not understand the true meaning of this evening celebration. According to the Tuareg, this event contributes to the meeting of young people to choose their mates for a sacred union. And during this feast, the adults teach the youth respect and good behavior. When the Imzad vibrates for instance, no one is allowed to drink tea in order to learn retaining oneself.
The Tuareg relate celebrating the ‘Ahal’ with the face veiling. They say that men veil their faces in order not to reveal their weaknesses. Whatever happens to them, they keep hidden behind the veil. It is important to state that all the interpretations we have seen so far, and which were given as explanations to the veil wearing, do not match with what the Tuareg think and say.

The Tuareg think that it is better to hide behind a veil than behind a bush like a frightened kid. They say that the ‘Ahal’ is as saint as the milk of the camel. This animal that is so sacred for them that one of their myths claim that once the camel ‘Fakhar’ used to feed a whole nation.

According to some books, during the ‘Ahal’ evening celebration the youth could meet each other in tents, and are isolated from their elders without modesty. The Tuareg simply say that this kind of events was overused by literature since they considered it was unavailable according to their own perceptions. The Tuareg say their children are taught honour since their early age, and the discretion of their parents is a value among many others upon which the education of children is based.

So many interpretations are attributed to this people that one finds himself wandering and wondering which reference is more appropriate. During any evening celebration, young people meet each other, and they know they are watched by their elders. If some Targui men decide to wear blue indigo dyed clothes, it is because this substance is available where they live.

If men veil their faces, it is because they are in constant motion on the Sahara, and need to protect themselves from the weather circumstances. They are not the only people who wear a head gear on their heads. They should not be scrutinized as if we were the scientists, and they were the species to analyze and study. Whenever I tried to ask them direct questions concerning their food, their traditions, beliefs, clothes and so forth, they abstained from giving answers.

Some scholars refer to them as the’ Blue Men’ or even as the ‘Red Skins’of the Sahara. They are called blue because they use a fabric dyed by a process which involves pounding indigo powder into the cloth with a stone. They consider this blue coloring a means to have a beneficial and cosmetic effect. It seems that it does actually help hold moisture in the skin, and protects them against reptiles and insects ‘bites.

And if some writers refer to them as ‘the Red Skins of the Sahara’, it is probably because they have witnessed the striking natural similarity that characterizes both the Native Americans and the Tuareg. This spontaneous reaction to the commonness between both nations makes us wonder why they seem to belong to each other.

Unfortunately, any attempt about knowing whether they shared some mt DNA failed. There seems to be no advanced DNA analyses about both peoples. Much focus is attributed to their origins, and to where they came from.

The Greek historian Herodotus mentioned the Tuareg in his travelogue during his travels to the North of Africa in the fifth century BC. In speaking of the population of North Africa, he introduced the geographical term Lybians, referring to the whole area west of the Nile basin and north of Equatoria.

Ibn Batuta, in his writings about his famous trips to Africa, said that the Tuareg were a Morabiteen state belonging to the Tuareg tribes of Sanhaja. Ibn Khaldoun also classified them in the second layer of Sanhaja, and called them the masked people, El Moulathameen.

According to their oral history, some Tuareg assert that they originated from Yemen in Hamiriya region. From there, they moved to settle in Tafilalt and expanded southward. Later, they moved to the Sahel with their legendary queen Tin Hinen, who is assumed to have lived in the fourth or fifth century. She united the ancestral tribes and founded a unique culture that continues to the present day.

Some other historians claim that Tuareg descended from the Amazigh branch of Berber ancestors who lived in North Africa some centuries ago. Recent genetic studies of Tuareg’s Y-chromosome DNA support the assertion that Tuareg are of North African origin, as it is mentioned in the following quotation.

“The studies found out that E1b1b1b (E-M81), the major haplogroup in Tuaregs, is the most common Y chromosome haplogroup in North Africa, dominated by its sub clade E-M 183. It is thought to have originated in North Africa 5,600 years ago.”

According to the DNA results, the Tuareg seem to have populated Africa fifty six centuries ago. This pre history period is mandated as the era during which there were no recorded writings. The
question that one should raise is: Why are the Tuareg claimed to have populated Africa since fifty six centuries whereas the reign of their legendary ancestress Tin Hinen did not precede the fourth century, sixteen or seventeen centuries ago?

Their history is only restored in the people’s memory, and transferred from generation to generation through oral stories, which are narrated by women. These stories tell about their ancestry, origins, ancient beliefs, traditions and even medicinal practices. It is said that it is women who teach the children the Targui Tifinagh script, since the father is most of the time absent in search of a living for his family.

The woman is supposed to be the family member who is responsible of preserving the tribe’s cultural heritage. She does indeed enjoy a high position and is well respected within her tribe. When asking an inhabitant from Tamanrasset about the constitution of the Tuareg tribe, he told me that it is a hierarchical constitution which takes the form of a pyramid, at the top of which a woman stands as the main chief.

The Tuareg’s culture focuses much on female ancestry, and has blessed women with a high position within their society. Women’s opinion has always been sought and taken into consideration when taking big decisions. Since ancient times, Targui women have had access to property, freedom of expression, freedom of choosing their partner and of being sheltered from physical abuse. A conduct code called Asshak was established and imposed on men xxxv. This conduct code consists of guiding principles and rules which impose good behavior and treatment towards women.

The Tuareg’s religious belief can be described as a combination of Muslim and Animistic influences, with Islamic belief taking a primary role. They center on Islam, believe in Allah and carry out religious practices in accordance with the Quran, but they also practice indigenous practices like the belief in spirits.

The concept of essuf and the belief in spirits are central to Tuareg mediumistic healing. Johannes Nicholaisen said that the spirits are tied to deserted places, obscurity and distant places. Life for them comes from the spirits at birth and returns to the spirits at death.

“The Tuaregs seem to believe that the dead are turned into spirits (kel-essuf, “people of the wilderness”). However, it is difficult to find confirmation of this, since such a belief conflicts with orthodox Islam”. xxxvii

The Tuareg manifest their belief through worshipping the spirits of the departed; they even elaborate rituals and give things away in charity to show reverence to the departed ancestors. The belief in spirits is also common in Native America where people used to believe that the dead people would return to earth after death, and wander as spirits.

Some of their ancestral beliefs are related to astrology. They rely on the stars constellations when navigating the desert and the clear skies allow them to be keen observers. They recognize constellations of stars in the night sky and name them. The constellation Orion is called Amanar, which means in their language the warrior of the desert. The Azzag Willi constellation is said to indicate the time for milking the goats. Shet Ahad, refers to the seven sisters that light the way at the night. Talemt means the she-camel, and Awara means the baby camel.xxxvii

Besides the star constellations which are attributed to ancient people living in deserts, there exists an art that seems to be specific to these places too. It is the rock art which interpret life in those areas, since there were no left recording documents of ancient times.

DNA analyses have proved that the Tuareg existed in Africa fifty six centuries ago. The time when these petro glyphs were drawn seem to precede the existence of the Tuareg on their soil. If the following result were valid, so these paintings dated to 10,000 years ago, that is to say, one hundred centuries ago.

“Petroglyphs, (carvings) and pictograms (paintings) dating back at least 10, 000 years are visual documents of what life was like in those early days. The region was far more lush and fertile than today, and the art depicts the diversity of animal life, as well as activities of the day.” xxxviii

According to this quote, there used to be a verdant and a prosperous life in this place; known now with its arid climate. When depicting these petro glyphs, one can say that ancestral humans who used to populate the present day Sahara did witness a prosperous life before it dried out. If the Tuareg did
not draw these rock paintings, who else could do it then?

These petro glyphs are said to be found in many parts of the world, and not only in Native America and the Algerian Sahara. Besides these two regions, they are witnessed in different places of the continents, which the world map of the Regions of the World and Indian Rock Art Sites shows.

These petro glyphs reflect the reigning animism among these autochthonous people. Animism is one of the oldest beliefs which are based on the spiritual idea that the universe and all natural objects have spirits or souls. It is a term applied to hunter gatherer groups and tribes. This belief is spread among the primitive or heathen societies, for whom spirits exist not only in humans, but animals, rocks, trees, plants, and all natural forces such as the rain, the sun and the moon. This kind of belief is witnessed in both Native America and the Algerian Sahara.

Similar to the Monument Valley, the Hoggar Mountain range is chiefly volcanic rock where rainfall is rare, the weather is very hot in summer, and very cold in winter. The Hoggar Mountains constitute a major location for biodiversity and relict species. Slightly to the west of the Hoggar range, a population of the endangered Painted Hunting Dog used to exist till the twentieth century. These elusive and very rare carnivores are also said to have existed in the Monument Valley in America.

In both nations, the traditional society was organized through matrilineal kinship. Their inhabitants used to be mobile hunters and gatherers, and considered as being ‘noble savages’ for the good qualities that feature their behavior, mainly in favor of strangers. Both of the two societies are sky spirit and Earth mother spirit. They both live in deserts’ landscape that is a favorable home for imagination and spirituality.

They both name the new born babies after animals or natural phenomena which occur on the day of their birth. The Tuaregs idealize the Agadez cross because it leads its wearer to the four directions of earth: east, south, west and north. The Native Americans in the Navajo Nation consider the four mountains of the Monument Valley as sacred because they direct people to the four directions of the world too.

Like the Navajo women, the Targui ones are fond of wearing silver jewels and weaving clothes and baskets. One of their prominent silver ornaments which have attracted the attention of many writers is the silver cross they wear. This cross has been a subject of a long debate, since some French writers tried to assert that it was of a Christian origin. This kind of cross is deeply rooted in ancient times. During the Neolithic era, there existed some symbols- like the cross swastika- which were special to the Great Mother. The same symbols were witnessed in India, among the Red Indians, and later during the era of Jesus (PBUH) and his mother Mary, the last Great Mother.

Conclusion

Both the Monument Valley and Ahaggar share similar panoramic views and climate as well as cultural traits and ancestral beliefs. If the climate had a crucial impact on the commonness of the culture of both people, what explanation would we give to their resemblance to other autochthonous people living in other parts of the world?

The similar cultural traits which the Tuaregs of Ahaggar and the Native Americans of Monument Valley share are also witnessed among other autochthonous people, though they do not share the same geographic landscapes. So, what makes these peoples share distinctive common aspects of life with each other? Why do they seem to make a characterized flock of people that are different from the sedentary people?

India can be traced as the best example of a nation that shares these aspects of life with Africa and America. Some historians believe that the matrilineal society and goddess worshiping started in India and spread in the whole world. This claim might give evidence for the presence of such beliefs everywhere in the four corners of the world.

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