



The Wakhi People of Gojal (Upper Hunza): Negotiating Tradition and Change

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to study the social, cultural, and economic changes witnessed by the Wakhi community residing in the Gojal region of the northern part of Pakistan since the independence of the country in the year 1947. This study using the research method of field research, interview research, and library research attempts to find out the ways in which the Wakhi community adjusts to the contradictions between traditionalism and modernity with regard to aspects such as their practice of hospitality, their family structure, their behaviour, or the constitution of their politics, the effect of the Karakoram Highway, the effect of the tourism industry followed by the impact of the development schemes introduced by the Aga Khan Development Network, in addition to finding out the ways in which the Wakhi community still manages to preserve the fundamental features of its cultural identification despite the impact of the modernization forces, hybridity's, and elements introduced by the outside forces into the country.



Introduction

The region of Gojal is located at the northern end of Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan. Geographically, it is known as a high-altitude mountainous region placed in the upper valley of Hunza in the northern end of Gilgit-Baltistan in the Karakoram Range in the eastern part of Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan. Internationally, it borders China in the northeast and Afghanistan in the northwest of Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan. add-ons of Gilgit-Baltistan in relation to social, economic, and cultural life have greatly resulted from untamed geography in Gojal, climatic harshness, in addition to geographical inaccessibility itself (Beg & Lapov, 2018; Rasheed, 2019; Rasheed & Ali, 2023).

Major communities in Gojal are the Wakhi, an indigenous Iranian-speaking ethnic group of the area whose culture originally emanates from the nomadic pastoralism, subsistence agriculture, and trans-Himalayan trade networks (Beg & Lapov, 2018). Cultural uniqueness, rich cultural

traditions, and a strong sense of community cohesion characterize the Wakhi. The latter are typically well-structured kin relations, highly developed social rituals, and widely recognized rules of hospitality. Due to the expansion of modern infrastructure, state-led and non-governmental development endeavours, tourism development, and changing regional and geopolitical contexts, the Wakhi culture has undergone a considerable socio-economic and cultural change since 1947 (Rasheed, 2019).

This article deals specifically with the community of Gojal Wakhi, exploring how this community has responded to various socio-economic and cultural shifts that it has witnessed over time. Wakhan is a broad region that is considered to be one of the remotest but geopolitically one of the most important locations in both Central Asia and parts of Southern Asia. It's a location where various chains of mountains converge, including both the Karakoram and Himalayas. This location is also where a historic sea named Tethys used to exist. Wakhan, during various points in time, used to act as a buffer state; however, it gained prominence during a pivotal event that took place during the nineteenth century, known as the "Great Game." It's a location that connects China to a variety of other locations that are further to its west. This location witnessed extremely adverse climate conditions; however, it never favoured a population to stay within this location (Sehar, 2012).

These are some of the valleys and river systems within that are inhabited by the Wakhi community over time. Over time, the Wakhi community has lived in this place with a humble means of livelihood, a simple style of life, a feeling of independence, dignity, self-respect, and love for their land. This has been a key factor for their habitation in this northern area of Pakistan. The Wakhi community generally engages in occupations like agriculture, animal husbandry. People cultivate their fields during the spring season; in summer, people move to pasture lands at high altitudes.

The Wakhi have managed to live a non-violent lifestyle; they keep various domestic animals such as goats, sheep, and yaks, which form a basic economic foundation for their sustained living. In spite of this adaptive lifestyle to survive, the Wakhi have been experiencing various difficulties and problems, including food shortages, lack of education, healthcare, and food insecurity. However, over the last few decades, society and health have been facing new problematic areas; opium is used as a coping mechanism among the population, attributed to the harsh weather and extreme cold they face over the winter. It is, therefore, obvious opium is leading to adverse effects on the health and well-being of this population (Sehar, 2012). The Wakhi people are extremely attached to their environment and have a strong heritage of music and other forms of art. The *rubab*, *dadang*, *qufuz*, *duf*, and *sur nai* are some of the musical devices used to play different kinds of music during social events and functions.

Human societies have faced the reality of change as an integral part of the nature and existence of such societies. Social interactions as well as activities have continually produced processes of change. The Wakhi have traditionally possessed a relatively stable form of living with a more consistent and rational nature. However, such a form of living has increasingly become subject to the effects of the overall prevailing changes in the region (Ozessay.com, nd).

Current Status of the Wakhi Community

The modern socialization of the Wakhi ethnic group is largely an indication of a long-lasting adaptation to hard conditions. The current socialization of the group shows the development of cultural practices influenced by physiographic conditions, economic challenges, and social change, which makes the socialization of the Wakhi ethnic group unique, with the group able to endure

cultural aspects despite the challenging conditions it has faced over the years despite its small population size (Shafiq, 2010).

The Wakhi-dominated region in Gojal valley has demonstrated its commitment to education and literacy in the past decades by showing an appreciable rise in educational attainments in the form of the widespread completion of secondary or intermediate education in the region. It may be noticed that this commitment to education by the region's authorities has not been demonstrated with any gender biases or prejudices, as both men and women in the region have been provided with equal opportunities in educational undertakings. The awareness demonstrated by the residents in this valley regarding education and its role in navigating contemporary society may be seen when their efforts at acquiring knowledge and education are compared with their previously disadvantaged position in society (Beg & Lapov, 2018).

The popularity of television seems to have established its place among many Wakhi homes, concluding that traditionally there is a move towards utilization of modern technological facilities within their daily lives. The utilization of media facilities can arguably be seen to have reached this region of Gojal, despite its adverse geographical landscape. The Wakhi people can now access satellite television connections that provide sources for other media installations across the country. In spite of these changes taking place at a slow pace, they denote a powerful change for Wakhi people to move away from isolation to come on board with most prevailing cultural ideas within a highly technological world (Rasheed, 2019).

Hospitality and Social Etiquette

Given the fact that hospitality is an integral aspect of Wakhi culture and interpersonal relations, greetings are characterized by warmth and sincerity, an indication of the deeply rooted values of the community. The tradition of kissing each other's hands has remained an integral tradition of greeting the people. Significantly, it is important to understand the fact that the kiss is not restricted by gender in Wakhi culture (Felmy, 1996).

Such traditions are slowly dying out as the Wakhi people are increasingly adopting modern lifestyle practices and global cultural norms. These traditions, nevertheless, retain their symbolic importance and are an essential part of the collective value systems of the Wakhi people. Moving away from these specific traditions and practices, one of the more overarching realities is the fact the Wakhi people are, for the most part, liberal and tolerant in nature. As a people, the Wakhi are characterized by a lack of ideological extremism in their traditions and practices, despite being a people from a geopolitically strategic region, a region which finds considerable controversy in the context of conflict situations (Rasheed, 2019).

One feature of this kind of openness may be seen in the active engagement and participation of women in social and economic activities in their respective societies. Contrary to other patriarchal societies commonly practiced in various parts of Asia, women in Gojal have been seen actively engaging in activities in the fields alongside their male counterparts in different spheres of their respective societies. Moreover, in education sectors as well, opportunities have been provided equally for the education of both sexes in society with active involvement in different activities in their respective fields. Apart from these activities in educational sectors at various levels in society, adult literacy programs initiated in the mid-2000s—the programs initiated around 2005 have particularly provided opportunities in the educational sector for other members of the Wakhi society as well (Rasheed, 2019).

With respect to the architectural and spatial design of Wakhi homes, an element worth highlighting is the fact that the design has shown a very consistent trend even after an intervening period of

thousands of years, though to a limited extent, whereas the design has shown no fundamental change in terms of conception and style. The philosophical principles behind the construction of Wakhi dwelling spaces are all built around providing comfort, warmth, and the highest level of functionality, even when the resources are low, as a result showing a greater level of pragmatic planning for dwelling spaces (Felmy, 1996).

One of the most notable characteristics of Wakhi dwellings can be observed immediately upon entering the building and seeing a designated place inside for musicians and dancers during social and ceremonial functions.

Community and Social Activities

The Wakhi community assigns a great importance to their music, dancing, or other forms of community entertainment; thus, a particular place in their homes is set apart for this purpose. It is pivotal that leisure or community interaction assumes a position of great importance for the Wakhi community, providing leverage for bolstering their social bonds. Within Wakhi domestic space, there is a traditional distinctive seating arrangement. Traditionally, the seating pattern of Wakhi society is such that the ladies of the family occupy the left side of the room, while the male members of the family occupy the right side. Likewise, the central area is allocated strictly to the heads of the family. Such a seating arrangement is a true manifestation of their respect for their social hierarchy. Yet, despite having internalized modern practices, their traditional customs can be observed in a very flexible manner (Ay, 2019).

In the Wakhi community, communication has increased considerably both in linguistic expression and in communicative practice. The development may be partly explained by an increase in electronic media and communicational technologies even in the remote valleys of Gojal. More significant, however, these changes underscore the substantial adaptation capacity of the Wakhi in engaging with new tools while integrating them into their existing social framework.

Improved utilization and of the language at the local level have also made social life in the community more vibrant. Interacting socially has become more systematic and expressive, and daily communication is overall more eloquent and confident compared to previous decades. Whereas there are those who might describe Wakhi styles of conversing as blunt or even rude, these features are better understood as the embodiment of cultural values that place a premium on straightforwardness and truthfulness rather than any lack of social subtlety (Reinhold, 2006).

Generally, the region has managed to take advantage of the fact that access to mass media, such as radio, occurred relatively earlier compared to many other tribal settlements in the mountainous regions. Radio has greatly influenced the improvement of the level of linguistic competence as it has advanced the ability to enhance communication by being exposed to wider vocabularies as well as standardized speech patterns. Radio has also greatly influenced the ability of the people to be aware of culture by introducing the Wakhi to other languages and ways of living. In this case, it indicates that the radio has had more influence compared to other mass media in the community. Nonetheless, even to this day, one of the most used media among the Wakhi people remains to be the radio, both as a source of information as well as entertainment. In line with the fact that the Wakhi people highly value leisure activities as well as music, this media still remains the most preferred source of music among them to listen to during performances such as when working on agricultural activities (Dawn, 2008).

Family Structure and Kinship Patterns

The strong values placed on families and other kinship bonds can also be noted as a key factor among the Wakhi people. The Wakhi families have been seen to have a strong bond since they take part in each other's daily activities and even have a say as they make important life decisions together, which is a prerequisite to socially interacting and living together as a community. The strong familial bond is a clear reflection of the social lifestyle among this community. From a social theory perspective, an individual's behaviour, thinking, and feelings were understood as greatly impacted by social interactions with other members or affiliation with certain social groups (Rasheed, 2019).

In relation to the social case of the Wakhi people, one can clearly identify an application of this social theory. Within social interactions, one can identify those social contacts, especially one's immediate family members, have played an important role in determining any individual's attitude, values, or opinions. Under such an understanding of social theory, it becomes significant to note that elder members of the social group, such as one's own parents, have played an important role in determining the social, moral, or cultural values of the younger social members of such a social system or social circle in general (Felmy & Parkes, 1996).

Therefore, the degree to which Wakhi community social development is shaped from within is significantly rooted in the consistent interaction between members of the community. The implication is that the close nature of the Wakhi community is the major explanation behind the level of similarity identified in the community. For instance, it is evident that the Wakhi have quite a high similarity in values, attitudes, and opinions (Rasheed, 2019).

Geographical Location: Geographically speaking, Gojal Valley enjoys a strategically located border area status that historically provides it political significance. In terms of political significance, under the government of Britain, it was well understood that in terms of geopolitical impacts, the region remained strategically located; therefore, it gained political significance even under colonial rule. This political significance never diminished; instead, it remained even after independence because, in 1959, it was conceptualized as the Karakoram highway project, aimed at providing assistance in trade between China and Pakistan, marking a new beginning in terms of geographical locations in 1967, when it commenced, and another eleven-year span that marked its completion, bringing about significant changes in terms of economic change in Wakhi population (Ali, 1990).

Impact of the Karakoram Highway

However, the Karakoram Highway finally became fully operational in the year 1978, after more than a decade of construction, and this, to a great extent, represents a critical turning point in the lives of the Wakhi people. Therefore, the construction of the Karakoram Highway gave the people of the Wakhi tribe the much-awaited economic opportunities as well as the much-needed increased visibility, thereby providing the people of the Wakhi tribe a sense of regional, as well as national, identity (Beg & Lapov, 2018; Shafiq, 2010).

As part of the analysis, the Karakoram Highway can be viewed as a life-changing development for the people of the Wakhi tribe, which brought the people onto the economic map of the country known as Pakistan. Besides providing a means for trade and movement, another important contribution of Karakoram Highway is that it greatly boosted tourism within a previously relatively isolated area. Contact with outsiders by means of tourism helped the local population benefit greatly through interaction with outsiders in other parts of Pakistan or elsewhere. This can

be seen by a noticeable enhancement in their quality of life. The new tourism created new opportunities for work, thereby encouraging the Wakhi to acquire new skills through adapting to new economic challenges (Shafiq, 2010).

However, it is important to note that while carrying out this responsibility, the Wakhi have made an active economic contribution to the economic development of the wider region in Gilgit-Baltistan. Indeed, their economic contribution has been substantial enough for them to rank as one of the most important economic contributors in Gilgit-Baltistan. Historical records have documented instances where Gojal generated nearly four out of every five of the total revenues collected in the former state of Hunza, despite the Wakhi population accounting for merely one out of every five of the total population of Hunza. Nonetheless, this contradicts economic indicators of population contributions, highlighting the economic significance of the Wakhi population relative to their demographic size as a contradiction in itself that warrants further economic analysis (Ali, 2008). While statistically speaking, it is highly unlikely both in its volume relative to the population of Wakhi in Gilgit-Baltistan, it is important to note that such economic indicators relative to their population size call for further economic analysis in light of what can be deemed as less probable economic contributions in comparison with taxpayers in Gilgit-Baltistan. Nonetheless, the details highlighted above indicate the resolute dedication of the Wakhi population to overcoming the challenges within the region despite the persisting issues with the environment, the economy, and the social scene itself. For the purpose of development within the respective region, it appears that the Wakhi population is the true champions, far surpassing the efforts of many others in the region itself. This accounts for the comments made about the remarkable differences which exist between the Wakhi population living in the high mountain regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan (Kreutzmann, 2003).

While the Wakhi community as a whole is still struggling with issues of poverty, minimal skills, and resource scarcity, the Wakhi populace settled in Gojal present a relatively better lifestyle compared to many other mountain communities along the border areas of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and China. In contrast to their population size and contribution towards economic activity, the rate of development in Gojal specifically seems rather remarkable. Indeed, economic diversification has had an important contribution to make toward this development. Geographical proximity and traditionally friendly relations have for a long time allowed Wakhi residents of Gojal to engage in cross-border trade with the adjoining regions of China. Reciprocal confidence, hospitality, and social openness have helped cross-border trade contacts run more smoothly, making trans-border exchange a crucial subsidiary source of income. This is particularly important in the high-altitude environment where subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry alone are inadequate for sustaining livelihoods.

Traditionally, their grazing lands had been located in areas that are currently in neighboring countries following the establishment of border countries. Earlier on, it would be quite easy for various border groups to migrate to different countries; however, this situation has been interfered with by the onset of the Cold War. This situation has limited their movements following a series of strict border laws that were put in place. This has greatly affected their conventional ways of operation economically, thereby requiring them to be more adaptive to new situations within a fixed border environment (Tarrar, 2000).

The Amu Darya River, which had been an easily traversable border previously, began to emerge as one of the most heavily regulated and hard boundaries to be encountered in this region of the world. Around this time, a heavily regulated border area emerged, measuring some thirty kilometers wide and including a significant degree of metal fencing on both sides of the border,

effectively putting an end to all forms of border crossing activity. The communities experienced a move to remain within newly defined territorial areas as a result of this behavior. Large high-altitude meadows were an important aspect in the past of the Wakhi lifestyles. Restrictions in migratory patterns and limited access to grazing lands located in other political jurisdictions have been an environmental and economic disaster in its own right, as the grazing lands were important in their subsistence and survival. Since arable land is scarce in the high mountains, high altitude nomadism is a grazing lifestyle formulated by the concept of optimizing the sites of natural grazing lands. Cattle grazed in high-altitude meadows in the summer, while in the winters, grazing moved to lower meadows due to incompatibility in the cold climate (Rasheed,2019).

There were also historic chances in the mountain lands beyond the conventional resources of the mountain territories. For instance, the urban oases of the Southern Route, together with regions in the Soberton neighborhood and the Fergana Basin, furnished chances for grazing in the course of the seasons. Animals fed upon agricultural residues as well as the organic growth of grasses, at the same time returning manure to the soil. This cyclic process constitutes an integrated system aimed at improving land management in terms of livestock as well as agricultural territories an integrated system heavily disrupted as a result of border interdicts as well as rigid territorial arrangements (Felmy, 1996).

Traditionally, trade and other small-scale economic activities used to be conducted within these valleys. After this, seasonal movements to higher-altitude pasture areas took place during summer. Over time, this tradition has disappeared. The pasture lands used during winter are being engulfed by burgeoning irrigated agriculture. This has minimized accessibility for animal herds during these periods. Therefore, it has been difficult to introduce animal herds within these regions. This is because of rapid urbanization, which has further worsened this situation. This has led to the gradual displacement of nomadic pastoralists from participating in economic undertakings, coupled with their animal herds.

The broader changes in the domain of politics have been seen in policies undertaken in the areas of collectivization and planning, and their profound impact on traditional systems of animal breeding and raising activities within countries. The remote mountain areas with low populations often faced the challenge of adapting to changes brought in by interventions in institutional areas and even in policies adopted in the domain of agriculture. The advantages still being accorded in the contemporary period to some systems of agriculture in connection with access to unrestored pastures have shown the effects in an uneven way (Dawn, 2015).

Local Politics and Governance

Political conditions present themselves as an important factor for the limited success of modern modes of farming in the high mountain region. For example, the conditions experienced by the Wakhi mountain region, who introduced crop farming with irrigation, present an instance of the extent to which natural resources can be over-exploited with the rise of crop farming. For instance, the rise of agricultural activities resulted in the over-exploitation of resources in an area which is usually prone to a lack of arable land coupled with the lack of access to water resources, despite the area being insulated to an extent by the lack of urbanization influences. At the onset, the Wakhi herders face a problem, especially during the summer, when they are urban-rural migrants because of increased competition for the already limited range resources found in the higher altitudes, especially when these pastoral resources are to be shared with the pastoral Kyrgyz nomadic population (Rasheed, 2019). During the winter season, fodder cultivation becomes a critical problem facing the herding population because of increased competition with food crop cultivation in the household holdings, a problem brought about by the limited cultivable land coupled with the

ecological imperatives of the already uncertain crop yield resulting from the variable climatic changes in the higher altitudes. Under this environment, it should be understood that gains in agriculture are extremely limited; however, expansion options are few owing to ongoing issues with land. Therefore, animal husbandry plays an increasingly critical role within this local economy. Though various socio-economic impacts of recent periods have been viewed in both favorable and unfavorable ways for this group, underlying reactions may be considered favorable. However, at the same time, socio-cultural issues have enhanced complexity, depending on the gradual transformation of pastoral societies, which is largely governed by various forms of political frameworks defining how people use certain pastures. The efforts aimed at the development of pastoral societies by governments, such as the creation of roads, fenced pastures, and subsequent restructuring of the land, have reduced the economic value of traditional pastoral regions significantly. Conversely, Wakhi populations residing in other parts of the high mountains, for example, in Afghanistan, continue to employ very specialized modes of subsistence. Such modes are fundamental to their ability to maintain their livelihoods through agriculture and pastoralism. This is especially so since it remains embedded within traditional modes of ecological understanding. Exchange relations based on barter systems continue to exist; however, their viability has been undermined by a lack of tradition in this trade and a lack of reliable trade partners (Rasheed, 2019).

In contrast, what is noteworthy in the case of Gojal is significant variation in developmental dynamics. As in the case of Wakhi settlements in Gojal, increasingly, income for Wakhi households has begun to come from outside developmental initiatives, particularly linked with the Aga Khan Development Network, along with seasonal or perennial migration patterns. As such, it is clearly evident that within the high-mountain scenario, Wakhi settlements in Gojal have emerged as relatively advanced settlements in comparison with other Wakhi settlements in the high-mountain scenario.

Role of the Aga Khan Development Network

The Aga Khan Development Network, coupled with the efforts of the government in modernizing the region, has significantly helped in the development of infrastructure in Gojal. The efforts of the AKDN, which range from the founding of learning centers, rural development programs, health networks, among others, have remarkably transformed the region socially and economically (Beg & Lapov, 2018). The Wakhi living in the valley of Gojal have exhibited great enthusiasm towards these developments, especially with regard to the educational reforms. In fact, there is almost full turnout in educational institutions to the extent that both girls and boys are seeking to take up educational inputs, showcasing collective dedication to the educational process. People in the community have managed to attain educational milestones, leading to the acquisition of various professions as a result of the education received in the valley. This has lessened the dependency on the agricultural sector as the only form of economic activity.

Accordingly, more and more Wakhi from Gojal find employment in urban centers in northern Pakistan, such as Gilgit, and in metropolitan cities like Islamabad and Karachi. Furthermore, migration has also transcended national boundaries to include various Gulf states, the United States, and Canada for purposes of seeking employment or higher education.

Within this changing socio-economic environment, education and entrepreneurship have become not only key aspirations but also role models of success for the Wakhi of Gojal, epitomizing a wider move toward diversification of livelihoods and deeper integration with national and international economies.

Tourism and Cultural Interaction

However, after a series of destabilizing events experienced within the region in 2001, tourism activities have experienced a significant decline and have thus remained low compared to their levels before. Consequently, government subsidies and development support have been invested mainly in the lives of individuals within this region as a way of diversifying their income and laying the foundation for more stable enterprise and business formations. Similar models of external support can also be cited in the erstwhile Soviet Empire, where central funding models enabled infrastructure development in even more remote areas of that country. Perhaps one of the most similar models of external support can be compared to that of China, although in terms of success, it must be acknowledged that it was less so in terms of education support programs (Rasheed, 2019). In these dynamically changing structures of economic development, women have come to be facilitated in their involvement in economic activities as well as in certain kinds of work traditionally associated with men in society. Such developments have come in line with wider societal dynamics in relation to gender inclusivity in economic development in these respective regions (Islamuddin, 1995).

The traditional aspect of livestock husbandry has been a key feature of the Wakhi way of life and still is an essential part of Gojal Valley living; however, from a larger context and setting thereof considering high-mountain agriculture, livestock husbandry is no longer a survival mechanism but is a part of a complex survival mechanism as it is used as a combination thereof along with other activities such as farming, trading, and wages.

However, in recent years, disputes over property rights in grazing lands tend to occur more frequently in nearby villages in Gojal due to increased competition for limited land resources. There are changes in agricultural patterns due to market-oriented production. These changes include the farming of potatoes as cash crops. This is due to the fact that it requires less labour and has more financial gains in comparison with other vegetables. The building of Karakorum Highway has proved a vital tool for the Wakhi people of Gojal, improving their access to marketing channels. It provides a channel for economic growth through a move away from local bartering systems to regional economic systems. The Wakhi people are currently actively participating in regional trading systems within Pakistan, including in frontier trade with China. Many of them are currently participating in diverse economic businesses taking place within different parts of the country. These economic changes represent the kinds of adaptations practiced by the Wakhi ethnic community as they address their environment in light of political and market factors while maintaining aspects of their traditional subsistence patterns. Traditionally, persons in the role of religious leaders, often termed shamans, frequently acted as conduits in terms of facilitating relationships between the human world and the spiritual world in terms of the Wakhi culture. For instance, in terms of addressing disease, an ill person was often brought to these types of leaders as they were thought to hold the capacity for healing (Rasheed, 2019).

In addition to this, with the advent of time, cultural changes can also be observed, which affected health care seek behavior in this region. The construction of medical facilities or dispensaries has encouraged people to seek health care at these venues for treating illness.

Even though the revered ability of shamans to cure ailments is still conceived by many individuals, across the aged population in particular, there is an observable trend towards rationalized patterns of handling health. This is an aspect of the more general developments of modernization and altered views of health, knowledge, and authority in Wakhi culture.

Conclusion: Tradition, Change, and Resilience

The peoples in the Wakhi community of Gojal, since 1947, have shown resilience in coping with the intricate relationship between tradition and modernity. The peoples in this community, in spite of being in a geographically inferior region, have managed to hold on to their basic aspects of their culture, which essentially revolve around their hospitality, their sense of community, and their kinship structures, which exist around them to date. The construction of modern infrastructure, especially across the Karakoram Highway, has changed its degree of accessibility, creating new avenues while also creating new axes of social change.

The various development initiatives, especially those by the Aga Khan Development Network, have additionally impacted the culture of the Wakhi society by ensuring improvements in education, healthcare facilities, and income-generation activities in conjunction with promoting activities at the community level that promote and support their culture. Similarly, increased tourism activities have resulted in greater interactions with other Near East cultures by the Wakhi society, providing opportunities for growth while posing certain risks regarding their culture as well.

To sum it all up, it may be said that the Wakhi tribe of Gojal is a good example of a very significant subject regarding how indigenous populations across the highlands of the range respond toward issues of continuities and change. This subject may be very helpful for understanding more regarding how indigenous populations within these parts respond toward issues of change.

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