









































































































AFGHANISTAN: THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE

South Asian Area Center, University of Wisconsin - Madison.

1. The country of Afghanistan is divided into two major sections, North and South, by a range of mountains running through the middle. The major route between the Northern and Southern regions is called the Salang Pass, an 11,000 ft. road which includes a 1 mile long tunnel through the mountains. This road was built by the Russians in the mid-1960's and is now of great strategic importance as it leads directly to the capital city of Kabul.
2. Here we see the capital, Kabul, in winter, with the Kabul River in the foreground. The mountains rise above it in the North.
3. The Kabul River also serves as a place to wash the traditional Afghan rugs. Housing rises up the sides of the hills near the city.
4. Winter in the modern part of Kabul sees the city covered with snow.
5. Another major city of Afghanistan is Herat on the border with Iran. The flat rooftops there provide a cool place to sleep in the summer time.
6. From the cities, then we come to a village in the mountainous Nuristan district. The huts in this area are built of stone rather than mud, and are constructed right up the sides of the steep slopes.
- 7 & 8 This agricultural area is in the valleys on the Afghan-Pakistan border. The terraced fields and mud houses are common in this region.
9. This flat plains region is in Southeast Afghanistan. This slide depicts a large walled-in mud compound that is the home of an extended family, perhaps several brothers with their wives and children. The compound is enclosed for their protection against bandits, as well as for privacy.
10. In the central highlands, we find the town of Bamiyan, famous for a huge stone sculpture of a standing Buddha figure dating from before 750 A.D. (seen in the center of the slide.) The small fortress-like compound in the foreground is a single family dwelling. Besides protection against raiders, the enclosed walls keep the public eye off the family women, who are usually secluded in the home.
11. Here we see the backyard field within a one-family compound. The walls and quiet orchard at the side preserve the secluded atmosphere.
12. The Southwestern part of Afghanistan is a very flat desert region. Here we see women of the Kuchi tribe of nomadic sheep herders packing the camels and preparing to move camp.
13. In the Northern part of the country, we see Turkomen women, known by their bright red robes. They are sitting outside a traditional domed tent-like house called a "yurt" which is made mostly from animal skins. This one seems to have been set up as an addition to a mud hut.

14. One of the central focuses of any town or city is the bazaar or market. Here we see on the main market street of the town of Samangan, people coming to the market by donkey, horsecart, cycle and on foot.
 15. Many bazaars are held only once a week. The bazaar here is full of the bustling and bustling of "market day". Notice that all the shoppers and sellers are men, as women generally prefer not to be photographed.
 16. Many shops are nothing more than small wooden shacks, in which the vendor sits to keep off the sun as he sells his wares. This camel driver has probably stopped at such a shop for cigarettes and matches.
 17. This street-side peddler is on his way to the market to sell his radishes. When he finds a good selling spot, he'll simply put the radishes on the ground and sit next to them to sell them to passers-by.
 18. These things hanging against the wall which look like snow-shoes are actually bread called "naan". If, in the winter, one buys them hot right out of the "tandoori" oven, they can be stuck inside your coat to keep you warm all the way home to supper.
 19. Besides the bazaar with its street sellers and small shacks, there are larger permanent shops that operate daily. This shopkeeper has many things: cookies, lump sugar, nuts and several types of raisins (in the foreground). Right in front of the shopkeeper are his balances on which he weighs out his goods.
 20. In these next two shops are baked goods and more general sundries. At the right is a long string of dried figs.
 21. This shop specializes in cooking vessels. In the foreground we see a stack of aluminium pots, while to the back and right are copper ones.
 22. In the village areas, many vessels are made of clay rather than aluminium or copper. Here we see stacks of bowls and water jugs.
 23. This slide shows us the inside of a small tea shop. In the back, we see the copper 'samovar' for make the tea, with raised stools in the front for the customers to sit.
-
24. In this section of the bazaar, both meat and vegetables are sold. Mutton, beef and fowl are eaten in Afghanistan.
 25. This street-side peddler is sitting next to his goods of raisins, nuts and snacks. Some street-side peddlers may always sit in the same spot, while some others change location periodically.
 26. People come to the bazaar not only to buy and sell fruits and vegetables, but animals and livestock as well. Here we see the cattle market, but there are also camel, sheep and horse markets, too.
 27. Wood is very scarce in some parts of Afghanistan and has to be brought in from other areas. This slide shows a lumber yard of cut poles stacked against each other.

28. This Afghan knife sharpener not only comes to the bazaar to sharpen knives for people, but also carries his heavy sharpening wheel around the town from house to house getting paid just a few cents for each knife he sharpens.
29. In this large fruit shop in Kabul, we can see both Persian and water melons, tomatoes and peaches. Much of Afghanistan's fruit is exported to Russia.
30. Near the city of Herat, there are seasonal winds that blow only from one direction. To make use of this, the people there build windmills open only in the direction of the wind, so to catch its strength. The windmill here is used to grind grains.
31. To thresh the grains from the stalks, the Afghans drive their bullocks over them; the grains fall from the stalks as the bullock tread on them.
32. The major form of travel in rural Afghanistan is by horsecart. Here we see just three people riding, but many times up to six may travel in one cart.
33. This slide shows someone about to cross a river in an ox-hide raft. In the foreground, we see a bundle of ox-hides tied up, ready to be inflated and tied together into a raft.
34. This next slide shows the raft being built. Some of the ox-hides have been inflated and tied together already, while another inflated hide is being lowered into the river. When the raft is completely put together it can be used to take sheep across the river or to transport goods. This also seems to be a favorite way of smuggling.
35. This slide shows us a village elder in Afghanistan. His cloak is of silk and typical of Northern Afghanistan.
36. Here we see the male population of one extended family, along with some of their children and a few Peace Corp volunteer friends. The women are made to stay inside the house, out of public.
37. These children are Girl Scouts lined up along the road to see the King pass by. Some of the girls are wearing their Girl Scout uniforms while others have put on special traditional Afghan costumes for the occasion. (This picture is from the late 1960's before the King was ousted. He is now in exile in Rome.)
38. Here also we see people waiting to see the King. Normally these women would keep their veils over their faces in public, but in order to see the King, they have raised them.
39. This picture was taken at a Girl's School. Notice that, as in many Asian countries, the girls must wear uniforms in school. Being of ages 16 and 17, they do not yet have to veil their faces.
40. Here is a Boy's School in the Northern city of Samangan. This is a senior class, but because many children start school at a late age, these seniors may be as old as 25 and still in high school. This particular classroom is unusual because each student has his own desk.

41. This school in Herat is for elementary school girls. They seem to be practicing for a school performance.
42. These boys are 9th graders at a school picnic. They no longer have on their school uniforms, but have put on their regular clothing for the outing.
43. These boys are playing outside of school.. The beautiful beaded caps are traditionally from Southern Afghanistan. The boys' heads are shaved or closely cropped for cleanliness and coolness.
44. The major festival for all Muslim Countries is Ramadan, when the Islamic people fast. The day when the fast is broken is call Id (eed), when there is a big celebration and every one puts on new clothes. The children enjoy the festival by riding on the wooden merry-go-round.
45. This merry-go-round has brightly painted carved wooden horses.
46. Along with this merry-go-round, we can also see a wooden ferris wheel. The children sit in the wooden baskets while someone pushes them around.
47. This next series of slides shows the national sport of Afghanistan - Buzkashi (boozee-kaashee) or "goat dragging". It is a team sport something like polo, but very rough. It is played with the body of a goat (or calf) instead of a ball. Basically each team tries to capture the goat and keep it away from the other team, while trying to reach a goal. In this picture, one player is riding full speed ahead with the captured calf-body hanging on the side of his horse.
48. Here one player grabs the calf from someone else. Notice the man on the white horse carries a whip in his mouth; this is not only used to spur the horse on, but to whip the opponent and make him drop the body of the calf. His horse is also ready to bite the opposing player on the arm.
49. One team has now captured the calf's body and is rushing headlong in a group to their goal.
50. The people of Afghanistan are Muslim, followers of the religion of Islam. The sabbath day for them is Friday, and while they may worship daily at small mosques, 'masjids', on Fridays they will go to the major mosque of the town or city. This big mosque will be called then the Friday Mosque, or Masjid-i-Juma. ~~This slide then pictures the Masjid-i-Juma of the city of Herat.~~
51. In this slide we see the men praying in front of the Friday Mosque during the celebration of Ramadan. They start their prayers in a standing position and then.....
52. kneel and bow their heads as they continue. This series of standing, kneeling and bowing is done several times during one prayer session. The Muslim people pray five times daily.

SOUTH ASIAN AREA CENTER
 Outreach Office
 1249 Van Hise Hall
 University of Wisconsin
 Madison, Wisconsin 53706