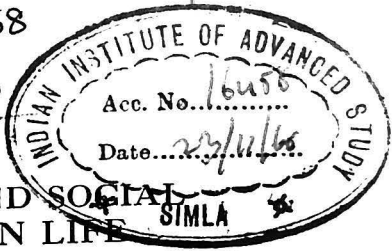


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THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF AFGHAN LIFE

By ARTHUR V. HUFFMAN

From 1943 to 1949 the author of this paper held a chair as Professor in the University of Kabul. During part of that period he was also connected with the Office of International Information and Cultural Relations of the U.S.A. Department of State. He now holds a post at Chicago.

MODERN Afghanistan dates from 1709, when, at Kandahar, Mir Wais Khan issued a Declaration of Independence of Persia. The present ruler, King Mohammed Zahir Shah, son of King Mohammed Nadir Shah, came to the throne on November 8, 1933. He is a member of the Durrani family, the House that has been dominant in the country for two hundred years.

Handwritten initials: TMP

STRUCTURE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Since 1930 the government, seated in Kabul, has been a constitutional hereditary monarchy. The Senate (Majlis Shurae-i-Ahyan) may consist of a maximum of forty members appointed by the king for life. The rarely convoked National Grand Assembly (Majlis Shurae Milli) comprises members who are elected for three years by the people.* Islamic law, in the absence of specific legislation, is interpreted and applied by the courts.

For administrative purposes the State is divided into great provinces, each called a Walijat, with a Naib-ul-Hukma at its head, and into smaller provincial districts called Hukumat Iyala, which are each governed by a chief commissioner called a Hakim Iyala. The great provinces are subdivided into districts at the head of which are found administrators responsible to the Naib-ul-Hukma. Names of the provinces are usually taken from principal towns in each region.† In addition to the Naib-ul-Hukma, the provincial cabinet may include a Financial Commissioner, Police Commander, Educational Officer, and Judge, as well as Directors of Traffic, Foreign Affairs, Statistics, Health, Communications, Revenues, Publications, Mines, Forests, Public Works and Tribal Affairs. In the Herat Province provision is made for a "Director, Scrutiny of Statistics," and for a "Chief, Trade Dispute Settlement Office," while in the Badakhshan Hukumat Iyala there is a "Director, Statistical Intelligence." These offices are not always subordinated to the next higher administrative unit, and the highest ranking official may be required to assume responsibility for the lowest function within the provincial administration.

Cities with more than ten thousand residents have city councillors

* The present senate consists of twenty-four members, while there are 122 considered members of the lower house. Standing committees of the lower house examine the affairs of the various Ministries and Departments.

† The great provinces are: Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Qataghan, Mashriqi, and Janubi. The smaller districts include Maimana, a commercial centre for the most important branch of economy, the breeding of Karakul sheep and the manufacture of carpets; Farah, a truck stop halfway between Kandahar and Herat; Badakhshan, an area allegedly rich in mineral treasures, including rubies, lapis-lazuli and gold.

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(Baladiyah) and a mayor (Reis). The capital city, Kabul, occupies an area of about five square miles and is the largest city in the kingdom. Kandahar is Afghanistan's second city. Most of the seven hundred foreigners reside in Kabul. It has been stated that "less than 10 per cent. of the total population (estimated at from seven to twelve million people) reside in urban centres of ten thousand or more inhabitants."* Towns with more than 10,000 population include: Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, Faizabad, Tashkurghan, Balkh, Gardez, Ghazni, Jalalabad, Shibarghan, Khanabad, Mashriqi, Janubi, Badakhshan, Pul-i-Khumri, Andkhai and Charikar.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION—PRINCIPAL TRIBES

In addition to the formalized administrative set-up, there exists a multifold tribal organization in Afghanistan.† Each tribe can be broken down into the Kaum, or main group, and the Khels or Zais, which represent specific sub-groups whose members live in close proximity and whose members may hold lands in common. The chief of the tribe is the Khan,‡ to whom are subordinated the leaders, Maliks. In addition to these there is also the Kahol or family group, united by kinship. The senior of subdivisions, whose Malik sometimes has dynastic powers, is known as the Khan Khel. The Khans are elected by the clan or tribe, but the loyalty of the latter is more to the community than to the immediate chief. Khans represent a kind of landed aristocracy and they often become members of the Senate or National Grand Assembly. The Central Government may use them in assisting to maintain internal security and harmony in periods of tribal unrest.

Affiliated with the main tribes are found some alien groups (Hamsayah) which are considered inferior and in which the test of kinship does not apply. Such groups or individuals are united with the tribe by the vicissitudes of common ill-fortune or as a service reward.

The powerful influence of the blood feud or vendetta is frequently the original underlying principle uniting a tribe, and in the course of time

* "Afghanistan — Summary of Current Economic Information," International Reference Service, United States Department of Commerce, March, 1948, Vol. 5, Number 22.

† An adequate ethnological study would include a discussion of the origin of the Afghans, their tribal folkways and mores. Within the limits of this monograph, only superficial ethnographic data are discussed. It should be noted that it is difficult to determine to which tribal group an Afghan may belong because of the nomadic habits of a large percentage of the population and their custom of calling a man by the name of his place or origin, irrespective of his tribal or racial connection.

‡ Not to be confused with the common title "Khan" or esquire. Every man has two names, a combination of which is sometimes prescribed by custom. The son is usually never given his father's name, but combinations such as Mohammed Alam are quite common, and if, as is frequently the case, two men in a small village have the same name, it becomes necessary to add the name of the tribe, or if they be of the same tribe, the name of the father. The most common title of respect is "Sardar," which means prince. Every Afghan calls himself "Khan" as a matter of course, so that a complete name would, for example, be Sardar Abdul Sattar Khan Shalizi, of which only the second and third words constitute his real name. The last means that he is from Shalizi, a village near Ghazni.

merges into the fiction of common blood or kinship. However, among tribes where there are no bonds of kinship or common origin it is inevitable that there should be a greater tendency for members to assert independence of their chiefs.

Village communities exist for mutual protection, but the internal stratification is on tribal lines (except among the Tajiks), and the village operates as a unit only when danger from out-groups threatens. On the whole, the tribal community is democratic, especially in the south-eastern areas, where Pashtu is spoken.* In matters of importance the chiefs have little overt influence over their own clans or tribes, and all important decisions are reached by a public meeting or Jirgah. In the south the natives appear to prefer a more oligarchic procedure in settling matters affecting the group as a whole. A chief of the Ghilzai, for example, is quite able to control his own clan, and through the headmen of other sections may exercise considerable power over the larger tribe.

The hereditary transmission of leadership is not a fixed principle. The unfit are passed over in favour of those who are considered better able to order the men in war or direct their affairs in rare periods of peace. Social status is of little consequence, with the result that a man with a dominant, outgoing personality has a greater opportunity for asserting leadership than seems to be found among most other primitive groups. It is true that the Khan Khel, or senior family, may claim the hereditary right of furnishing at least the nominal chief of a particular tribe, but any member of that family may be chosen, the choice depending on the available candidates, and possibly, in time of danger, a man outside the Khan Khel may be made the leader.

All the principal tribes,† such as the Durrani,‡ the Ghilzai§ and the

* Pashtu is considered to be the official language and is being used in the primary schools as the medium of instruction. In the central and southern parts of Afghanistan, Persian is the more widely spoken of the two languages. In the north, Turkoman is used. Urdu is frequently used by members of the business community, especially in trans-Pakistan deals. Schools in Kabul provide instruction in English, French and German.

† Following is a list of principal tribes within Afghanistan:

<i>Name of Tribe.</i>	<i>Total Numbers.</i>	<i>Fighting Strength.</i>
Durrani	1,200,000	240,000
Ghilzai	1,000,000	200,000
Pathan	601,500	108,000
Tajik	1,500,000	350,000
Uzbek	750,000	150,000
Mogul	30,000	6,000
Hazara	550,000	110,000
Kafir (Nuristani)	70,000	14,000
Safi	40,000	8,000
Baluchi	25,000	5,000
Qizilbash	100,000	25,000

The Moguls are gradually being absorbed by the Tajiks, it is claimed.

‡ To the Panjpai branch of Durrani belong Barakzais, Achahzais, Popalzais; while to the Zirak branch belong the Nurzais, Ishakzais and Ajizais.

§ The principal Ghilzai clans are the Burhan or Ibrahim Khel and the Turan or Sodi. The former is subdivided into the Sulciman Khel, Ali Khel, Andars and Tarakis, and the latter into Hotaks, Tochis, Nassirs, Kharotis, Lohanis, Niazis and Dotannis.

Tajiks, are Sunni Moslems.* While members of the Shiah sect are found among subordinate groups, the Nazaras are essentially Shiah. The most nationalistic are the Durrans and the Ghilzais.

The Durrans, originally from the Ghorat, are the rulers, and only an insignificant number of them are migratory. Members of this group enjoy numerous special privileges concerning property, military conscription and government-service preference.

The Ghilzais have been identified traditionally with a Turanian tribe (the Khilji) said to have come to Afghanistan from beyond the Amu Darya in the tenth century with Mahmud of Ghazni's father, Sabuktighin. Unlike the Durrans, the Ghilzais are, for the most part, nomads, and annually several thousand of them migrate to the North-west Frontier Province and Punjab area of Pakistan, where they remain for the winter, returning with their flocks in the spring to the highlands of Afghanistan.

The Tajiks live mostly in the north and north-east sections of the kingdom and are essentially a fixed population. With this group the community, rather than the tribe itself, is most important. Those who live in rural areas are horticulturists and agriculturists and are noted for their natural ability in landscape gardening. Recruits for the Royal Afghan Infantry come almost exclusively from this tribal group, which is said also to have provided mercenaries for Mogul armies in the ages past.†

Nearly one million Pathans are completely independent and approximately three million are subjects of Pakistan. Pathans are distributed over the area from Afghanistan into Baluchistan and Kalat down to the Indus river. The Pathans are closely involved in transborder traffic, legal and otherwise. Their attitude toward the Government at Kabul fluctuates, and sometimes is formulated by their Khans, Pirs and Faqirs. At the time of the partition of India, the Government at Kabul presented demands to the British Government. Claims to territory in which Pathans resided were carefully avoided. The Afghan demand was for certain options in the plebiscite beyond accession to India or Pakistan. Strong exception to the Afghan note was taken by the Indian and Pakistani Governments and considerable additional tension was created by the Afghan press, which took the position exemplified by the following editorial: "We cannot understand why England should decide that Peshawar and its suburbs of Derajat and Kurram and other Afghan

* Islam of the Sunni doctrine is the State religion of Afghanistan. Missionary activity on behalf of other religions is prohibited by law. Tajiks were originally all Shiah. The Kafirs of Nuristan are recent converts to Islam.

† The principal Afghan-Pathan tribes from northern areas southward are:

<i>Tribe.</i>	<i>Clans.</i>	<i>Population.</i>
Wardak	Mayars, Mir Khels, Nuris ...	100,000
Mahmund	Salarzais, Mandozais ...	65,000
Shinwari	Sangu Khel, Sipai Khel and Ali Sher	85,000
Khugiyani	Mullagori, Kharbun and Sherzad	60,000
Mangal ... ..	... ..	45,000
Khostwal ... ..	... ..	50,000
Waziri	Darwesh Khel	50,000

territories incorporated in British India, but separated from India by the mighty Indus, should now be required to choose inclusion in either Hindustan or Pakistan only. In fact, the inhabitants of those areas should have the right to decide their future themselves and without any restraint, as has been decided in the case of the independent brethren residing in tribal areas. It is quite possible that these people might choose to unite with their own Afghan brethren."* The press of Hindustan regarded Afghanistan's action as open intervention in the affairs of another country, while the Pakistan press chided the Afghans for seeming to find a potent danger in the progressive influences stirring within the North-west Frontier Province and the tribal territories, and suggested that Afghanistan was using this annexation clamour as a "red-herring technique" in an attempt to suppress progressive influences from spreading into Afghanistan. The *Pakistan Times* declared: "The irredentist principle that Afghanistan is invoking is not calculated to serve her interests best. Her territories include non-homogeneous, ethnic groups whose separatist claims would threaten her territorial solidarity. Afghanistan's leaders† would do well to show a more correct appraisal of facts in their behind-the-scene dealings with Pakistan, who is anxious to remain on friendly terms with Afghanistan."

Since Afghanistan's two most important ports of entry, Chaman and Peshawar, are in Pakistan territory, the frontier problem did not become a prolonged source of friction. Furthermore, the policies of the leaders of the new Pakistan State, including "Operation Curzon," a military and tribal policy of withdrawing troops from fortified posts within interstitial transborder areas, seemed to appeal to the tribes generally and Pathans in particular. Promises of assistance in their hazardous struggle for existence, and long-range plans for education, economic development, irrigation and stable administration, were given the Pathans by the new leaders. Several personal tours by the Qa'id-i-Azam, his colleagues and his successor were politic.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Most of the population depends upon agriculture for a livelihood. It is difficult to secure reliable statistics on the agrarian situation, and almost impossible to provide exact data on land distribution. In any case, most cultivable land is owned by a few zamindars, who employ tenant and

Jaji	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	35,000
Barachi	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20,000
Kakar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20,000
Gurbaz Wazir	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15,000
Tani, Zadran, Chakmani and Makhbil	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	50,000

* Translation from an editorial, "The Future of India and the Destiny of the Afghans," which appeared in the Kabul news daily, *Islah*, on June 9, 1947. See also Ahmad Ali Kozad's editorial, "Afghanistan and the Destiny of Afghans beyond the Frontier," *Ariana*, Vol. 3, 1947.

† The most vociferous Afghans were Hajji Najibullah Khan, ex-Minister of Education, and at present Afghan Ambassador to India, Abdul Husain Khan Aziz, ex-Minister to the United States, and Sayid Qasim Rishiya, Chief of the Department of Press, Kabul.

itinerant peasants for the cultivation of their lands.* In the summer seasons the nomads travel to the higher grazing lands, where they carry on extensive cattle-breeding, subject to the feudatories who control grazing areas.

The urban population is divided into small upper classes of government officials, larger middle classes of merchants and artisans, and the largest lower classes of casual labourers living in great poverty. Industry has had little opportunity to develop satisfactorily. Many traditional home industries deteriorated as a result of an increasing dependence upon imported industrial products. With few exceptions, existing industries belong to joint-stock companies in which high government officials hold control and which operate primarily in order to supply the Afghan army and the Government. All factories are built at State expense and, with the exception of home industries, little private capital has been invested in industry.† Other installations, sometimes referred to as factories, are in reality nothing more than artisan shops.

Products of home industries continue to meet the demands of the native population in the lower economic levels. In cotton districts home industries are engaged in weaving, and they produce all manner of fabrics. Sheep wool is used for the manufacture of felt, rugs and clothing. Herat, Maimana and Qataghan are rug-weaving centres. Some silk fabrics are

* Arable lands amount to approximately 3 per cent. of the total surface of Afghanistan, and yet agriculture sustains, marginally, about 70 per cent. of the population. Agricultural techniques are undeveloped, and the primitive forked plough is the most generally used agricultural implement. Fields are raked with toothed boards, and harvesting is done with hand sickles and cradle scythes. Wheat is the most important grain cultivated. Barley, rice, millet, legumes, cotton, poppy seed and pistachio nuts are grown. The produce of truck gardens and vineyards (raisins, grapes and apricots) is a most important factor in export trade and the subsistence of the population. Although Afghanistan has over six hundred known deposits of mineral resources, including chrome, copper, lead, asbestos, coal, oil, silver, iron, sulphur, quartz, mica, nickle, slate and salt, lack of capital and transportation difficulties have prevented mining development, and the kingdom continues to depend upon agriculture and sheep-breeding. These mineral resources may play a more important rôle in Afghanistan's future economy, for it is claimed that the national economy cannot much longer continue primarily to depend upon karakul and agriculture. The war savings, estimated at about sixty million dollars, will probably be spent before 1950. The only hope for the future lies in a fourfold plan: (1) To develop the resources of the country; (2) To improve the quality of exported goods like dried fruit and karakul through better technical processing and scientific breeding; (3) Drastically to cut general imports and bring the standard of living to a still lower level, though such a move is dangerous and can result in internal discontent; and (4) To secure a loan or financial assistance. (The lender should, in such case, ask for special guarantees and concessions.)

† State industries include an arsenal and crucible foundry, match factory, cement factory, furniture factory, lapidarium, tannery and boot factory in Kabul; a fruit cannery and dehydrating plant and wool-weaving mill in Kandahar; a sugar refinery in Baghlan; a cotton-seed oil and soap plant in Kunduz, and a textile mill in Herat. These industries are greatly handicapped by inadequate transportation facilities, for there are no railways, commercially navigable waterways, air routes or surfaced arterial highways. Terrain favourable to heavy industrial traffic is rare. These industries are operated by water power, since the production of coal has been insignificant. Power for industry located at Kabul is transmitted by exposed cables which have been known to claim the lives of inquisitive tribesmen.

woven in Herat, Kandahar, Ghazni and Kabul. Leather goods and pottery are produced almost universally, but metal working seems to be confined to urban bazaars.

Although the Afghan Government has never gone as far as the Turkish and Iranian Governments in introducing Western customs and European clothing, since Amanullah's reforms Western culture has been accepted to some extent, particularly among the upper classes. Under the administration of the Ministry of Education, schools and colleges have opened and are being supported. Although primary school attendance is compulsory, it is not always enforced. In most of the larger villages and provincial centres there are elementary schools with from four to six grades in which basic training in Islam, reading, writing and arithmetic are offered. Primary schools providing instruction up to the eighth standard are in existence in only the large cities. In Kabul there are four secondary schools (twelve grades), a girls' school, a trade school, a teachers' training school, and an agricultural institute. The University of Kabul, opened in 1932, now consists of four colleges: Law, Medicine, Science and Literature.

Kabul has few libraries but one noteworthy museum built up with the efforts of members of the *Délégation Française d'Archéologie*. The Ministry of Education is in charge of all excavations and the protection of historically important sites. Several literary societies publish Afghan books and periodicals which are printed by the Government.

CONCLUSION

Afghanistan has been an unknown entity for too long a time. We can no longer afford to remain in ignorance about a nation that may have an important rôle to play in Eastern politics in the currently developing pattern of world powers.

The contemporary social order within Afghanistan is beset by disintegrating forces that might well be studied by the sociologist and student of international affairs. Dynamic social changes of a world-wide nature are reaching into this remote region and challenging its fixed, formalized controls. Young Afghans are beginning to demand opportunities for a life in which they may attain greater political and economic freedom; a developing middle class in Afghanistan is beginning to ask for representation and protection of its special interests; the hereditary power to mould public opinion and its manner of expression formerly held by tribal feudatories is disappearing; religious controls exercised by mullahs are being weakened by their own irresponsible leadership. Ultimately, the peasant masses will be reached by an enlightenment which carries with it a sharpened sense of social justice and a realization of the effect of adverse conditions. First to change may be the existing archaic feudal system of land ownership and tenure, with its attending complexity of socio-economic problems. One sees evidence of such change already in Pakistan.

Afghan leaders will need to evaluate critically existing institutions and formulate constructive proposals looking toward the development of an active citizenry to whom will be available the essentials of good living more equitably distributed, or it may find itself supplanted by another way

of life and another type of leadership. But while the improvement of the material conditions of the majority of the population is eminently desirable from every standpoint (for it would not only raise the general well-being, but would give an outlet to existing aspirations, which are stifled under depressing poverty), such reform of itself would not produce attitudes whereby the Afghan people would be able to take full advantage of the improved facilities for developing their capacities in democratically constructive ways. It is our obligation to help the development of such ambitions, not only in Afghanistan but throughout Asia; our obligation to acquire a systematic knowledge of all society so that adequate measures of progress can be adopted.



