

Unit 13: Country Area Studies-- Turkey and Afghanistan

Objectives

At the end of this section, you will

Be aware of the following

- Background of Operation Provide Comfort
- Impact of Turkey and Afghanistan in Middle East affairs
- Role of the Taliban in aftermath of Afghanistan/Soviet conflict
- Gender issues in Afghanistan today
 - Threat to secular state status of Turkey

Identify

- Folk Islam
- Alevi Shia practice
- Anatolia
- Genocide
- Kurds, Kurdistan
- Operation Provide Comfort
- Ataturk, Ottoman Empire
- Pashtuns
- Taliban
 - Mujahideen

Realize

- Islamic/secular friction in Turkey
- Complexities of status of women in Turkey
- Controversies over traditional women's dress in Turkey
- Traditional policy by Turkey of noninterference in Middle East conflicts
- Turkish interest in the Balkans and Cyprus
- Afghanistan's geographic crossroads position

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- **Complicated ethnic picture in Afghanistan**
- **Veiling and seclusion imposition by Taliban on Afghanistan women**
- **Concern of Afghan extremist influence in the Middle East**
- **Extent of the Afghanistan refugee population**

Turkey



<u>Population</u>	63,405,526
% under 15 years	35%
<u>Commo</u>	
TV	1:6
Radio	1:8
Phone	1:5
Newspaper	N/A
<u>Health</u>	
Life Expectancy	69/74
Hospitals	1:463
Doctors	1:1,974
IMR	46:1000
<u>Income</u>	\$5,100
<u>Literacy Rate</u>	79

1. Religious Groups

- Muslim (mostly Sunni) 99.8%

The tariqatlar (tahr-rhee-KAT-lar--Sufi orders or lodges, headed by a teacher or master, where devotees take a path of instruction to perfection) played a significant role in Turkey's religious revival.

Presently, the Islamic aydin (*I-din--Islamic intellectual*), with no connection to Sufi orders, plays a great role. This trend of thought "*does not hesitate to criticize genuine societal ills while simultaneously remaining faithful to the ethical values and spiritual dimensions of religion.*"

Islamist intellectuals are harshly critical of Turkey's secular intellectuals," whom they see as prime movers in popularizing materialism and economic gain at the expense of religious principle. (Country Study, p. 120.)

Folk Islam draws from popular Sufi practice. Pious individuals after death became saints who could mediate between believers and God. Veneration of saints (now frowned upon) and pilgrimages to their shrines and graves became widespread.

Alevi Shi'a (al-leh-VEE) practitioners (between 7 - 30 percent of the population), as a result of Sunni persecution, developed a highly secretive faith and practice. Though seen as heretics in earlier times, presently this minority is recognized as a distinct legal school.

- Christian and Jewish .02%. Syrian Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic (Melchites and Marionites) Churches comprise the Christian makeup.

2. Ethnic/Racial Groups

- "*Since the founding of the Republic of Turkey, the government has sought to diminish the significance of*

- *ethnic, linguistic, and religious distinctions.*"
(Country Study, p. 95.)
- Turkish 80%
- Kurdish 10%
- Arabs (1 million)
- Caucasus peoples (Circassians, Georgians, Laz--small numbers)
- Donme (Jewish--Muslim minority)
- Greeks (20,000)
- Armenians (40,000). "Before World War I, some 1.5 million Armenians lived in eastern Anatolia [an-ah-TOH-lee-ah, Turkey]. Starting in the late nineteenth century, intergroup tensions prompted the emigration of possibly as many as 100,000 Armenians in the 1890s. In 1915 the Ottoman government ordered all Armenians deported from eastern Anatolia; at least 600,000 of the Armenians, who numbered up to 2 million, died during a forced march southward during the winter of 1915-16. Armenians believe--and Turks deny--that the catastrophe that befell their community was the result of atrocities committed by Turkish soldiers following government directives.

Armenians outside Turkey refer to the deaths of 1915-16 as an instance of genocide, and over the years various Armenian political groups have sought to avenge the tragedy by carrying out terrorist attacks against Turkish diplomats and officials abroad."
(Country Study, p. 104.)

- Jewish (18-20,000)

3. Gender Issues

- In 1991, women made up 18% of the total urban labor force.
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- The military is open for women. A moderate amount participate. There are no female enlisted members. Men fill assignments involving combat or hazardous duty.
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- The ambiguous role of women. "Official state ideology extols the equality of men and women. Intellectually, men tend to accept women as equals, and elite women have

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- *been able to achieve high positions in professional careers...Nevertheless, men traditionally view women as emotionally and physically inferior and thus in need of male protection, which in practice means male control.*

Both men and women traditionally have judged a woman's social status not on the basis of her personal accomplishments but by the number of sons she has borne...In 1995, the status of women in Turkey remained a multifaceted, complex issue...the traditional value system elevates gender segregation in the workplace and other public spaces as a social ideal." (Country Study, pages 136, 139).

- *Attire for Muslim women. "During the early 1980s, female college students who were determined to demonstrate their commitment to Islam began to cover their heads and necks with large scarves and wear long, shape-concealing overcoats. The appearance of these women in the citadels of Turkish secularism shocked those men and women who tended to perceive such attire as a symbol of the Islamic traditionalism they rejected.*

Militant secularists persuaded the Higher Education Council to issue a regulation in 1987 forbidding female university students to cover their heads in class. Protests by thousands of religious students and some university professors forced several universities to waive enforcement of the dress code. The issue continued to be seriously divisive in the mid-1990s...

The issue is discussed and debated in almost every type of forum--artistic, commercial, cultural, economic, political, and religious. For many citizens of Turkey, women's dress has become the issue--at least for the 1990s--that defines whether a Muslim is secularist or religious." (Country Study, p. 120.)

4. Conflicts

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- *"Despite its location, Turkey generally has been successful in pursuing a policy of noninterference and noninvolvement in Middle Eastern conflicts."*
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- Kurds. "The major consequence of the Persian Gulf War from the standpoint of Turkish security was the uprising of the Kurds in northern Iraq and the exodus of Kurds toward Turkish territory to escape Saddam Husayn's brutal suppression of the rebellion.

Turkey was decidedly reluctant to accept the Kurds as refugees, considering them a potential destabilizing factor in its struggle with domestic Kurdish dissidents. As an alternative, Turkey supported the UN-approved Operation Provide Comfort, which distributed relief and set up a safe haven in northern Iraq whose security was guaranteed by a coalition force of 2,000 soldiers from five countries.

Incirlik (IN-juhr-lik) served as the base for a rapid deployment of air forces to enforce a no-fly zone in the region.

The Iraqi government's loss of control over Iraqi Kurdistan and elections in the area in May 1992 produced what was in effect an autonomous Kurdish government.

Although Turkey permitted the lifeline to the Iraqi Kurdish enclave to originate on its territory, the Turks feared what they saw as the emerging outlines of an independent Kurdish state in Iraq. For this reason, Turkey resisted any international action that could lead to Iraq's dismemberment and thus endanger the regional status quo." (Country Study, p. 316.)

- Syria. Disputes with Syria, while not hot, center over the Turkish province of Hatay (which Syrian still lays claim to) and Tigris/Euphrates water rights.
 - Iran. Differences of religio-political philosophy cause tensions between these two states. The secularism of the Turkish system versus the Shia orientation of Iran creates conflict.
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- The Balkans. The historical association of Turkey with this area maintains her keen interest in the fate of Muslims in Bosnia, Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Albania.
- Greece and Cyprus. In 1974, Turkish soldiers entered Cyprus with the professed aim of protecting the Turkish minority located there. Eventually they occupied the northern third of the island. The unresolved dispute over Cyprus complicates Turkish participation in NATO.

5. Unique Holidays/Observances

- New Years Day
- 23 Apr--National Sovereignty Day
- 19 May--Ataturk's Memorial Day and Youth Day
- 30 Aug--Victory Day
- 29 Oct 1923--Successor State to the Ottoman Empire (Republic Day)
- 7 Nov--Constitution Day
- On 10 November, silence is held at 09:05 A.M. to remember the exact moment of Kemal Ataturk's death in 1938. Serious insult results if such silence is not observed. (See Kiss, Bow or Shake Hands, p. 392.)

6. Customs

- Though over 99% of the country is Muslim, Turkey's constitution is secularist/nationalist.
- Islam in the military. Turkish soldiers receive religious instruction "*stressing how Islam ennobles military service and that martyrdom is the greatest honor on the battlefield.*" (Military Review, Sep/Oct 1995, p. 35.)
- National hero Kemal Ataturk's life is fused with that of Turkey's history. (See Kiss, Bow or Shake Hands, p. 388.)

- In the former U.S.S.R., influence between Iran and Turkey over the region is marked by language. Turkey exports their Roman alphabet language, Iran the Arabic. As many of these countries desire to drop the Russian Cyrillic alphabet they currently possess, analysts closely watch the direction they take. (See Kiss, Bow or Shake Hands, p. 390.)

7. Sources for Further Study

Allen, Thomas, "Turkey Struggles for Balance," National Geographic, May 94, pp. 3-35.

Bohlen, Celestine, "Turkish Army in New Battle In the Defense of Secularism," New York Times, 30 Mar 96, p. A5.

Hitchens, Christopher, "Struggle of the Kurds," National Geographic, Aug 92, pp. 32-62.

Kinzer, Stephen, "For Ankara, a Chance to Hit Kurdish Rebels," New York Times, 7 Sep 96, p. A4.

Kinzer, Stephen, "Islamic Victor Has Faith, Too in Peaceful Politics," New York Times, 1 Jan 96, p. A2.

Kinzer, Stephen, "Strange, That's Santa In the Seat of the Sultans!" New York Times, 20 Dec 96, p. A2.

Afghanistan



<u>Population</u>	21,251,821
% under 15 years	42%
<u>Commo</u>	
TV	1:203
Radio	1:14
Phone	1:443
Newspaper	11:1000
<u>Health</u>	
Life Expectancy	46/45
Hospitals	1:2054
Doctors	1:6,866
IMR	153
<u>Income</u>	\$200
<u>Literacy Rate</u>	29% (44% men, 14% women)

1. Religious Groups

- Muslim 99%. Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi school make up 84% of the Islamic population. Shia Muslims of the Twelver (Imamic and Ismaili) schools comprise the remaining 15%.
- Others 1%. Hindus and Sikhs, originally traders from India, make up this minority.

2. Ethnic/Racial Groups

"Ethnicity is extremely complicated in [Afghanistan], and any simple classification is bound to have many exceptions...Ethnicity has been extensively explored by scholars studying Afghanistan, and they often disagree, further complicating an already labyrinthine phenomenon." (Country Study, p. 107.)

- Pashtuns 38%. These peoples primarily speak Pashtu (a language belonging to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family.)

They are the most politically powerful group in the country. "Doing Pashtu" means acting in accord with a behavior code stressing honor (and its defense), independence, bravery, self-respect, and respect for others. The Sunni Pashtu see their ethnic codes as equivalent to Muslim teachings. When at odds with strict Sharia interpretation, this group will most likely "do Pashtu."

- Tajiks 25%. Dari and related dialect speakers.
- Hazaras 19%. Located in Central Afghanistan, these peoples speak a dialect of Dari. The largest predominantly Shia group in the country, Hazaras value generosity, poetry recitation and government jobs. Their status is rather low. Unskilled labor is their most common employment.
- Uzbek 6%. These northern border dwellers, speak a Turkic dialect (Uzbek) which galvanizes their feelings of ethnic identity.
- Assorted other groups, 12%

3. Gender Issues

- Suffrage: Only males aged 15-50 may vote

- Property: *"Women and children tend to be assimilated into the concept of property and to belong to the male."*

- Veiling and seclusion: *"Scholars agree that the practice of seclusion rests on the conception of women as property and the belief, long current in the Middle East, of the inherent danger and irresistibility of sex. Women are thought to have less moral control and capability for physical restraint than men and therefore must be placed out of harm's way."* (Country Study, p. 126.)

- High bride prices postpone marriage ages in men. The result is males are often ten years older than their brides.
- Fulfillment: For the majority of Pashtun nomad women, the principal goal in life is a successful marriage with many sons.

- Military: *"In 1985 women were admitted to militias on a volunteer basis. They were encouraged to enlist, and female 'martyrs' were glorified in the Afghan press."* (Country Study, p. 128.)

4. Conflicts

- Internecine warfare has been common in the country's history.

- The Taliban (tahl-ee-BAHN, Religious Student Movement) currently controls 70% of the country.

- Aftereffect of Afghan/Soviet war: The fear that trained fundamentalist extremists (battle hardened Islamic radicals) will export their militancy throughout Arab and near eastern circles.

- Mujahideen (muh-jhah-hi-DEEN, Islamic holy warriors) declared the war against the Soviets to be a holy war, thus causing a long-term morale incentive for their struggle.

5. Unique Holidays/Observances

- 28 Apr--Victory of the Muslim Nation
- 4 May--Remembrance Day for Martyrs and the Disabled
- 19 Aug 1919--Independence Day (from the United Kingdom)

6. Customs

- Some 32 languages and dialects are spoken

- In the mid-1980s, an estimated 2.5 to 3 million Afghans lived in refugee camps in Pakistan, up to 1.9 million were in Iran, and 150,000 lived elsewhere. UN figures projected Afghanistan with the largest refugee population in the world (mid-1980s).

- *"Afghanistan's history, its internal political development, its foreign relations...have been largely determined by its location at the crossroads of Central, West, and South Asia. Waves of migrating peoples poured through the region in ancient times, leaving a human residue to form a mosaic of ethnic and linguistic groups."* (Country Study, p. 3.)

7. Sources for Further Study

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13 "Afghan Fights Islamic Tide: As a Savior or a Conqueror?"
Oct 96, p. A1.

"Afghan Says Restrictions Will Not be Eased," 9 Oct 96, p. A8.

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"Afghanistan's New Rulers Soft-Pedal Their Hard Line," 2 Oct 96.

"Afghanistan's Professional Class Flees Rule by Ultra-Strict Clerics," 6 Oct 96, p. A1.

"Fighters in Afghan Mountains Live for the Next Battle," 15 Oct 96, p. A3.

"For Afghan Adulterers, It is Death by Stoning," 3 Nov 96, p. A8.

"How Afghan's Stern Rulers Took Hold," 31 Dec 96, p. A1.

"Kabul's Rulers Face Rivals and Popular Unrest," 21 Oct 96, p. A6.

"The West in Afghanistan, Before and After," 18 Feb 96, p. 5.

"War at Its Clumsiest, and Now a Necessary Healer," 26 Dec 96, p. A3.

"With Ignored Tea and Caustic Rules, an Afghan Leader Explains Himself," 24 Nov 96.

Hedges, Chris, "Foreign Islamic Fighters in Bosnia Pose a Potential Threat for G.I.'s, New York Times, 2 Dec 95, . p. A1.

MacKenzie, Richard, "Afghanistan's Uneasy Peace," National Geographic, Oct 93, pp. 58-89.

Sciolino, Elaine, "State Department Becomes Cooler to the New Rulers of Kabul," New York Times, 22 Oct 96.

Vocabulary List: Country Area Studies-- Turkey and Afghanistan

Alevi Shia (al-leh-VEE) Minority Islamic practice in Turkey which often faced persecution. Though now recognized as a distinct legal school of thought, practitioners still follow a highly secretive faith and practice.

Anatolia (an-ah-TOH-lee-ah) Historically, Asia minor. Refers now to the Asian portion of Turkey (Eastern Turkey).

Ataturk (AT-ah-tuhrk) 1st president of Turkey

Folk Islam Draws from popular Sufi practice. Pious individuals after death become saints who can mediate between believers and God. Veneration of saints and pilgrimages to their shrines and graves became widespread.

Genocide Systematic killing of a nation or ethnic group

Islamic Aydin (I-din) Turkish Islamic intellectual

Kurdistan Portion of southwest Asia inhabited primarily by Kurdish peoples

Mujahideen (muh-jhah-hi-DEEN) Islamic holy warriors who declared the war against the Soviets to be a "holy war."

Operation Provide Comfort UN approved relief effort which set up a safe haven in northern Iraq for Kurdish refugees. Incirlik, Turkey serves as the base for rapid deployment of air forces to enforce a no-fly zone in the region.

Ottoman Empire Area of Turkish domination (c. 1300-1918) including at its peak much of SE Europe, SW Asia, and NE Africa

Pashtun Politically powerful ethnic group in Afghanistan. They speak Pashtu and follow a rigorous ethical teaching.

Taliban (TAHL-EE-bahn) Religious Student Movement in Afghanistan which currently controls some 70% of the country

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Tariqatlar (tahr-rhee-KAT-lar) Sufi orders or lodges, headed by a teacher or master, where devotees take a path of instruction to perfection

Review Quiz: Country Area Studies-- Turkey and Afghanistan



Part 1--Matching: Circle the letter of the most correct answer.

1. _____ Tarikatlar A. Minority Islamic practice in Turkey which often faced persecution.
 2. _____ Islamic Aydin Though now recognized as a distinct school of thought, practitioners still follow a highly secretive and practice.
 3. _____ Folk Islam faith
 4. _____ Alevi Shia
 5. _____ Anatolia B. Historically, Asia minor. Refers now to the Asian portion of Turkey (Eastern Turkey).
 6. _____ Genocide
 7. _____ Kurdistan C. 1st president of Turkey.
 8. _____ Operation Provide Comfort
 9. _____ Ataturk D. Draws from popular Sufi practice. Pious individuals after death become saints who can mediate between believers and God. Veneration of saints and pilgrimages to their shrines and graves became
 10. _____ Ottoman Empire widespread.
 11. _____ Pashtuns E. Systematic killing of a nation or ethnic group.
 12. _____ Taliban F. Islamic intellectual of Turkey.
 13. _____ Mujahideen G. Portion of southwest Asia inhabited primarily by Kurdish peoples.
- H. Islamic holy warriors who declared the war against the Soviets to "holy war."
- be a

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- Iraq for
Turkey
rapid
forces to enforce a
the region.
- I. UN approved relief effort which set
up a safe haven in northern
Kurdish refugees. Incirlik,
serves as the base for
deployment of air
no-fly zone in
- much of
Africa.
- J. Area of Turkish domination (c. 1300-
1918) including at its peak
SE Europe, SW Asia, and NE
- teaching.
- K. Politically powerful ethnic group in
Afghanistan. They speak Pashtu and
follow a rigorous ethical
- controls
- L. Religious Student Movement in
Afghanistan which currently
some 70% of the country.
- devotees
to
- M. Sufi orders or lodges, headed by a
teacher or master, where
take a path of instruction
perfection.
-



Part 2--Multiple Choice

Place the letter of the most correct answer in the blank provided.

1. _____ Within Turkey, folk Islam draws primarily from
- A. Sunni practice.
 - B. Shi'a practice.
 - C. Sufi practice.
2. _____ An ethnic group, originally in Turkey, which experienced great persecution in 1915-16 is the
- A. Circassians.

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B. Kurds.

C. Armenians.

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3. _____ Concerning gender topics, what divisive issue continues to generate controversy in Turkey?
- A. Women's dress--covering heads in universities and colleges
 - B. Enlisted positions for women in the Turkish military
 - C. Women political candidates
4. _____ Generally, Turkey has been successful in not interfering or becoming involved in Middle East conflicts.
- A. True
 - B. False
5. _____ Turkey is hesitant to accept Kurdish refugees from Iraq because
- A. there is an overpopulation problem in Turkey.
 - B. additional refugees may destabilize current Kurdish dissidents in Turkey.
 - C. Kurdish people refuse to adapt to new customs.
6. _____ Throughout her history, Turkey has had a long association with
- A. the Balkans.
 - B. Italy.
 - C. Afghanistan.
7. _____ Though currently a secular government, roughly what percentage of Turkey's people are Muslim?
- A. 66%
 - B. 85%
 - C. 99+%
8. _____ Afghanistan's ethnic composition is simple to classify.
- A. True
 - B. False

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9. _____ The Taliban (Religious Student Movement) currently controls what percentage of Afghanistan?

- A. 50%
- B. 70%
- C. 95%

10. _____ One aftereffect of the Afghan/Soviet war concerns fears that Mujahideen (Islamic holy warriors) may

- A. start gambling and organized crime syndicates.
- B. export militancy through Arab and near eastern circles.
- C. invade Tibet.



"Congratulations"