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DEMOGRAPHY

DEMOGRAPHY, the statistical study of characteristics of human populations.

i. IN PERSIA SINCE 1319 Š./1940

Since World War II Persia, formerly a rural and tribal country dominated by elderly notables and with low population growth, has come to have a majority of young urban dwellers, mostly literate and multiplying rapidly. In 1358 Š./1979, for the first time in history, the proportions of urban dwellers and individuals classified as literate both passed the threshold of 50 percent. Such social changes have, however, been accompanied by great stability in natural demographic components, particularly fertility, which has changed very little, thus raising questions about the depth of the changes themselves. Unless otherwise noted, the statistics presented here have been drawn directly from the censuses of the general population conducted by Markaz-e āmār-e Īrān (Statistical center of Persia) in November 1956, 1966, 1976, and 1986 (see CENSUS); a demographic survey was conducted in 1991.

In 1995 Persia had about 63 million inhabitants, increasing at a rate of about

1.8 million a year. Population density (38.5 per km2) differs sharply from that prevailing at the beginning of the century, when the total population of this large country was fewer than 10 million, increasing by only 100,000 a year, with a density of 6.0 per km2. Since World War II the Persian population has nearly doubled every twenty years (2.9 percent a year), and migration to the cities has increased enormously (Table 10). Like most comparable countries Persia experienced a demographic "boom" beginning in the 1950s (with a 2.5 percent annual increase), entering a phase of "demographic transition," characterized by a continued high birth rate and a rapid decline in the death rate. Despite the impression gathered from examining the raw data, however, the rate of population growth has not accelerated but has remained stable. For extraneous reasons (including factors like registration for military service and food coupons) the census of 1365 Š./1986 was more nearly complete, whereas those of 1335 Š./1956, 1345 Š./1966, and 1355 Š./1976 were underreported by 7.5, 5.0, and 2.5 percent respectively (Bharier, 1968); if only natural growth had been taken into account, the Persian population in 1365 Š./1986 would have been recorded at between 45 and 47 million, rather than the nearly 50 million reported in the census (Amani, 1988).

Distribution. The geographical distribution of the Persian population is very uneven. The heaviest concentration is in the western part of the country, northwest of an imaginary line drawn from Ābādān to Gorgān, where 64 percent of Persians live on 27 percent of the territory (72.4/km2). This high density reflects stability among the large rural population, rather than growth of the cities, with the exception of the region around Tehran (308/km2). In the province of Hamadān population density is 77/km2, in that of Māzandarān 73/km2, and in that of Gīlān 140/km2. The rest of the country, comprising 73 percent of the territory, is largely desert (q.v.; 14.9/km2), with a population concentrated around cities and on several irrigated plains. The southern regions (Fārs, Baluchistan, Kermān) have experienced higher population growth than those of the north and west (the central plateau, the Caspian provinces, Azarbaijan, and even Kurdistan), however. The census of 1365 Š./1986 provides evidence of the effects of regional wars, with heavy increases in Khorasan and Baluchistan, where Afghan refugees have settled, and, on the other hand, abandonment of the *šahrestān*s (subprovincial units) on the Iraqi frontier, especially those of Ābādān and Ḵorramšahr (Figure 12).

The continuous high rate of population increase since the 1950s has had the direct effect of lowering the age of the population, 50 percent of which is now

under seventeen years old. The proportion below fifteen years old will drop below 40 percent before the end of the century, however, as the “postwar” generations age; a very gradual increase in life expectancy will not lead to a significant increase in the number of older people (Table 11; Figure 13).

Early census findings that men outnumbered women did not reflect genuine demographic facts; rather, they resulted from cultural features linked to the traditional status of women (underreporting of girls) and the higher value placed on boys (Table 12). The ratio was reversed in the age group between fifteen and thirty years, on the other hand, for men seek to avoid military service, and women, once married, are normally counted (Behnam and Amani, p. 17). In the census of 1365 Š./1986 the sex ratio corresponded more closely to biological reality.

Fertility and mortality. The birth rate is about 43 percent, that is, between six and seven children born alive per woman, among the highest in the world, comparable to rates in several neighboring countries (e.g., Syria 7.5, Turkey 4.3, Jordan 6.5 infants per woman). It has not changed noticeably from that observed in the rural zone in 1344 Š./1965 (Chasteland et al.). In the absence of reliable government figures, the fertility of Persian women can only be estimated, but it is certain that for three decades the level remained stableuntil 1365 Š./1986, while the economic and social development of the country was supposed to have led to a lowering of the number of infants born per woman (Bauer). It is is also certain that the government’s family policies, both before and after the Revolution of 1357 Š./1978-79, have had very little direct impact and that, in this respect, the deeply rooted cultural and social characteristics of Persian women and families have, despite a few innovations, evolved little in forty years (Table 13). Since 1986 the fertility rate has been declining rapidly, the average number of children born to women was only 4.4 in 1991 (compared to 6.2 in 1986). The fertility rate varies noticeably with place of residence (urban or rural) and especially with educational level. Regional differences are equally noteworthy, distinguishing the central plateau and the Caspian provinces from peripheral regions, especially those in the south (Figure 14).

The government first adopted a policy of promoting birth control in maternal- and child-health centers in 1332 Š./1953, but consciousness raising began only in 1339 Š./1960, when importation of birth-control pills was authorized (Sardari and Keyhan, p. 780). In fact, it was not until 1345 Š./1966 that the government began to devote serious attention to this issue, establishing the

High council of family planning (Wāḥed-e jamʿīyat wa tanẓīm-e ḵānavāda), creating a special ministerial post (*moʿāwen-e vazīr*; Sardari and Keyhan), and, on 15 Ḵordād 1346 Š./5 June 1967, adopting the Law for the protection of the family (Qānūn-e ḥemāyat-e ḵānavāda). The new policy received massive support from international organizations, but this support produced a greater impact in the media (e.g., the Isfahan communication program in 1349 Š./1970; Lieberman, p. 149) than on actual behavior. In the private sector 4.2 million sets of birth-control pills were sold in 1350 Š./1971, compared to 900,000 in the public centers (Moore et al., p. 403). In 1355 Š./1976 abortion, already widely practiced (11-17 percent of births in the years 1339-46 Š./1960-67; Jalali et al., p. 218), was legalized, but by 1357 Š./1978 only 11 percent of Persian women had accepted the principle of family planning (Aghajanian, 1992). In 1358 Š./1979 the government of the Islamic Republic abolished the laws for protection of the family and legal abortion; although contraception was not forbidden, the administration ceased all significant activity in this area until 1359 Š./1980, when a *fatwā* (legal opinion) from Ayatollah Rūḥ-Allāh Ḵomeynī (Khomeini) confirmed the lawfulness of contraception, permitting the Ministry of health (Wezārat-e behdārī) to resume its contraception programs. Between 1362 Š./1983 and 1366 Š./1987, 6-7 million people, 31 percent of the relevant population, received contraceptive devices each year, aside from sales in the private sector (according to data published in Markaz-e āmār, 1367 Š./1988). The new family-planning policy thus reached populations that had previously been hesitant or poorly informed, which naturally helped to lower the birth rate more rapidly than before, though it remained very high. After the war between Persia and Iraq the demographic policy of the Islamic government changed radically. Following a conference on population and development, held at Mašhad on 18 Mehr 1367 Š./10 September 1988, all propaganda encouraging large families was abandoned, and a new Malthusian policy has been very actively pursued, in order to bring about a reduction in the rate of population increase to 2.3 percent by 1377 Š./1998.

The general mortality rate (9 per thousand), and especially the mortality rate among children (88 per thousand), dropped markedly after 1329 Š./1950, but it, too, remained high (Table 14). The differences between city and country were particularly great because of the lack of medical equipment in rural areas: According to the *Population Growth Survey* (Markaz-e āmār, 1357 Š./1978), the infant mortality rate was 130 per thousand in the country for the years 1351-55 Š./1973-76, compared to 76 per thousand in the city (general mortality: 13.9 and 8.3 per thousand respectively). Life expectancy at birth rose from

forty-six years in 1338 Š./1959 to sixty-two years in 1369 Š./1990; in contrast to the situation in most countries, in Persia men seem to live longer than women, but the hypothesis of a higher mortality rate among women has not been confirmed. The war between Persia and Iraq, in which almost 50,000 people died each year, did not alter the overall demography of Persia but did result in changes in numbers of female heads of household (7.1 percent of households) and the rates of remarriage.

The main consequence of longer life expectancy has been the spread of permanent cohabitation of two and even three generations. This situation has consequences for behavior, both demographic (fertility, marriage) and social (aggravation of generational conflict), the effects of which are just beginning to appear. Average family size (five people) has remained stable or increased slightly, further evidence of both the decline in mortality and the stable fertility rate. The differences between city and country reflect both greater fertility in rural areas and increasing cohabitation of generations, which is easier and more traditional than in the urban zones.

Marriage. The average age for first marriage (nineteen years for women, twenty-three years for men) and the proportion of married women between ten and forty-nine years old (58 percent in 1355 Š./1976, 57 percent in 1365 Š./1986) remain generally quite stable, and celibates are still rare (1.1 percent in the age group fifty to fifty-four years; Table 15). These figures reveal a conservatism in behavior that is in sharp contrast to the upheavals that the country has experienced in other areas since World War II. The difference in ages of men and women at first marriage dropped from 5.9 years in 1335 Š./1956 to 3.5 years in 1370 Š./1991. In 1358 Š./1979 the legal marriage age was lowered from eighteen to thirteen years for girls and from twenty to fifteen years for boys. In 1344 Š./1965 an investigation of rural areas revealed that 19.7 percent of girls were married before the age of fourteen years (33.3 percent in the Kāzerūn region; Chasteland et al., p. 180), reflecting a deeply rooted social practice independent of the law.

The sociology of marriage was upset by the revolution in Persia in 1357 Š./1978-1979. There was an immediate boom in marriages, which increased from 1.8 million in 1357 Š./1978 to 3.0 million in 1358 Š./1979, reaching 4.1 million in 1362 Š./1983 before stabilizing at 3.4 million. This phenomenon was provoked not by Islamic legislation but by the arrival at marriageable age of larger generations and by the “revolutionary spirit,” which had caused ruptures in the traditional family structure and permitted meetings (e.g., at

demonstrations and in political action) that led to marriage alliances contrary to familial traditions. The divorce rate remained stable (10 percent of marriages).

Polygamy accounts for 2-3 percent of all marriages and thus remains marginal demographically, except in certain rural regions of Fārs (Chasteland et al., p. 195) and Ḵūzestān, as well as in traditional lower-income social groups; the rate reached as high as 3.5-13.8 percent, depending upon age, among the skilled laborers of the Iranian Oil Refinery Company in 1335 Š./1956 (Miller and Windle, p. 309). Long-lasting "temporary" marriages (*ṣīḡa*) have never been counted but do not seem to have a notable effect on demography.

Migration. Migrations involve only a small, though growing part of the population; the proportion of people counted in the *šahrestān*s of their birth dropped from 89 percent in 1335 Š./1956 to 77.6 percent in 1365 Š./1986 (Table 16). International migrations were of little importance until the end of the 1970s, but, owing to the Revolution of 1357 Š./1978-79 and then to the war between Persia and Iraq, about 3 million people went into exile in the United States and Europe (Bozorgmehr and Sabbagh, p. 33), as well as in India and Turkey. Emigration on this scale is a new phenomenon but one with ancient roots; it has involved particularly the middle classes and the most highly educated and skilled groups. Large-scale foreign immigration is also new in Persia. In the 1970s more than 1 million Afghan and southeast Asian (Philippine) workers, as well as workers from industrialized nations, lived in Persia on a temporary basis and were rarely counted. In the census of 1365 Š./1986 the nationalities of the 865,307 foreigners counted were specified for the first time: 87.3 percent Afghans, 9.7 percent Iraqis, 1.5 percent Pakistanis, and so on. Refugees from Iraq, mainly Kurds and Iraqis of Persian origin, were not counted because they had been assimilated or lived provisionally in camps. These census data are underestimates, but they reflect a new situation; according to some estimates (Amani, 1988, p. 547), there were actually about 3.5 million foreigners (7 percent of the total population) in Persia in 1365 Š./1986.

Since 1335 Š./1956, 90 percent of internal migrations have been from the country to the cities, the population of which has multiplied 4.5 times (Clark, p. 105), whereas, in the period 1279-35 Š./1900-56, 61 percent of such migrations were between cities, especially toward Tehran, where 48 percent of the inhabitants were migrants; the proportion of migrants was 52 percent in Ābādān, 45 percent in Arāk, and only 25 percent in Mašhad (Bharier, 1972).

This very rapid development of the cities reflects the departure of about 50 percent of the natural demographic surplus of the villages, the population of which has grown 71 percent in four decades (Table 17). This migration does not, however, fit the definition of a "rural exodus." On the contrary, Persia is confronted simultaneously with the growth of new districts surrounding already heavily populated cities (Zandjani, 1992) and the persistence of a very large rural population.

The proportion of migrants in Tehran is declining, even though the absolute numbers are growing. Julian Bharier (1972, p. 58) has calculated that, between 1279 Š./1900 and 1335 Š./1956, 42 percent of migrants settled in Tehran and 22 percent in the oil cities; from 1335 Š./1956 to 1345 Š./1966 this proportion rose to 50 percent for Tehran (with only 5 percent for Isfahan and Mašhad), but in 1355-65 Š./1976-86 only 33.3 percent of the 3,277,794 migrants from their native *šahrestān*s moved to the capital, 7 percent to the province of Isfahan, 6.7 percent to Khorasan, and 5.8 percent to Fārs. The position of Tehran as an urban center remained stable over four decades (26.2 percent of city dwellers in 1355 Š./1956, compared to 25.7 percent in 1365 Š./1986, including the suburbs), but in the same period the population living in cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants grew from 15.7 to 36.4 percent, of which 21 percent were concentrated in the five largest cities, each larger than 1 million inhabitants. The concentration of migrants in cities was accelerated by the war between Persia and Iraq and particularly affected the large provincial cities, which evolved from regional centers into urban metropolises (Zanjānī and Raḥmānī). With the arrival of the Afghans and the peasants of southern Khorasan Mašhad became the second city of Persia (1,463,000). Shiraz (850,000 in 1365 Š./1986) was disrupted by the influx of refugees coming from Ābādān, and Tabrīz (971,000) received a large number of Kurds. Tehran received populations from all over the country, mainly Azarbaijan and Kurdistan; like all the large metropolises of Persia, the capital has become surrounded by immense suburbs with a population of 900,000 people, swallowing up rural areas from Varāmīn to Haštjerd (Rahnemaʾi).

The nomadic population (see ʿAŠĀYER) was counted for the first time in the summer of 1987 (Tīr 1366 Š.) by the Statistical center of Persia (Markaz-e āmār, 1367 Š./1988). The total was 1,152,099 people, grouped in 96 tribes (*īl*) and 547 independent clans (*ṭāyefa-ye mostaqell*); the figures are not comparable with the estimates in the previous general censuses (337,176 nomads counted in 1355 Š./1976; Amirahmadi). Because of economic development and an

authoritarian settlement policy, particularly under Reżā Shah (1304-20 Š./1925-41), the number of people practicing pastoral nomadism has been sharply declining since the beginning of the 20th century, when it was estimated at 2.5 million, 32 percent of the rural population, compared to 5 percent today (Bharier, 1972, p. 59). From the cultural and economic point of view this population is little favored; 83 percent are illiterate, and only 32 percent of children between six and eleven years old are in school, compared to 81.7 percent for Persia as a whole.

Social and economic characteristics. The literacy rate of the population (54.2 percent) has risen rapidly since 1335 Š./1956, especially in rural areas, which nevertheless remain far behind the cities (Table 18). These signs of progress go hand in hand with attendance at primary school (91.5 percent in the cities, 72.6 percent in the villages). Young adults are thus largely literate (75.2 percent of those between fifteen and twenty-four years old), especially in the cities, but 58.1 percent of the generation between twenty-five and sixty-four years old were still illiterate in 1365 Š./1986 (Markaz-e āmār, 1365 Š./1986).

The census of 1365 Š./1986 for the first time furnished information on the knowledge of Persian among the population; 82.7 percent of Persians claimed to speak Persian (73.1 percent in rural areas), but the differences were very great between the central plateau, where nearly all inhabitants spoke it, and the peripheral regions, where people claiming inability to speak Persian were sometimes in the majority (Kurdistan 60 percent, Azarbaijan 59 percent, Īlām 47 percent, Zanjān 34 percent). It is not surprising that the level of literacy is lower where there are fewer Persian speakers (Hourcade and Taleghani, 1988, p. 22; Figure 15).

From the religious point of view the Persian population is quite homogeneous, as 99.3 percent are Muslims, either Shiʿite or Sunni (Table 19). Religious minorities, more and more concentrated in the cities (52.3 percent in Tabrīz in Tehran in 1365 Š./1986; cf. de Mauroy, 1973), are less numerous because of accelerating emigration (Jews, Armenians); only the Zoroastrians have increased. Many Assyro-Chaldean refugees from Iraq have passed through Persia but have not settled there.

Economic activity among the population has profoundly altered in four decades, reflecting the decline of agriculture, the increase in the service sector, and the decline of industrial employment (Table 20). The political and economic crisis revealed by the census of 1365 Š./1986 is clear evidence that

modernization of the economy and of Persian society has often been only superficial and easily reversed (e.g., female employment). The decline in private white-collar employment and the equivalent rise in the number of government bureaucrats (almost one third of the employed population) do not reflect the reality of the labor market, which is actually dominated by an informal economy. Reported unemployment remains low (5.5 percent), but it involves mainly the young (10.4 percent of the generation between twenty and twenty-four years old).

Despite urban development and its direct consequences, the population of Persia has preserved for more than forty years a large part of its basic cultural and economic character. This stability is particularly clear in the status of women and the demographic evolution of the country, reinforced by crisis conditions and the recent decrease in the rate of population growth.

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ii. IN AFGHANISTAN

The demography of Afghanistan is one of the least known in the world, owing to the lack of a complete census (q.v. ii) combined with important but poorly documented structural changes since 1359 Š./1980. It is thus difficult to ascertain the current situation. As recently as thirty years ago the total population of the country could be estimated no more precisely than at 8-15 million inhabitants (Office suisse [OSEC], p. 11; cf. Pulyarkin, p. 34). Even more problematic than the scarcity of statistical material is the reliability of what is available. Most data are mere estimates, subject to government manipulation, with the result that conflicting figures have often been released (N. H. Dupree, 1987, p. 367; Table 21). The best-known example, and the most important factor contributing to demographic uncertainty about Afghanistan, is the successive estimates of the nomadic population, which have been constantly and capriciously inflated (Khalidi, 1991, p. 104). Moreover, official figures became more and more unrealistic in the 1980s, as the government

deliberately ignored the flight of millions of refugees (see below) and the resulting decline in the resident population; instead an increase was officially proclaimed. In such a context any attempt to reconstruct the demographic evolution of the country involves insuperable difficulties and can be only very approximate; it is nevertheless certain that there has been a considerable increase in the population during the last century.

Vital statistics. Whatever the actual growth in population has been, the basic determinant is clear: Afghanistan has entered a period of "demographic transition," characterized by a decline in the crude death rate and stability or even growth of the crude birth rate, hence a boom in natural growth. This transitional phase began comparatively late: An antimalaria program was launched in 1327 Š./1948, and it was only in the late 1950s that the first steps were taken to control other endemic lethal diseases like typhus and smallpox, measures that eventually reduced the general mortality rate. Progress remained slow, however. In 1358 Š./1979, according to the results of the partial census conducted in that year, mortality, and especially infant mortality, was still very high (28.7 per thousand and 190 per thousand respectively), and life expectancy at birth (thirty-nine years) was one of the lowest in the world (Khalidi, 1989, pp. 18 ff.). Lack of safe water supplies (accessible to only about 10 percent of the rural population and 30 percent of urban dwellers; Ministry of Public Health, p. 7), poor health-care facilities (1 physician per 9,840 settled inhabitants in 1358 Š./1979, 1 hospital bed per 2,400 settled inhabitants), and low literacy rates, especially among women (8.8 percent), contributed to a high, though declining morbidity.

In the same census the unadjusted birth rate was 47.9 per thousand, but it has been suggested that it could actually have been near 52 per thousand (Trussell and Brown, pp. 142, 146; Spitler and Frank, pp. 2-3). The natural growth rate was therefore close to 2.6 percent a year, higher in villages (2.7 percent) than in towns (2.2 percent). High natality was supported by four factors. First, marriage was nearly universal, only 1.9 percent of the population remaining single at sixty-five years of age or older (Chu et al., p. 64). Second, women were exposed to long periods of childbearing, owing to the prevalence of early marriages: About 31 percent of the population married before the age of twenty years; in a survey conducted in 1351-52 Š./1972-73 on a sample of 20,257 households scattered throughout the country it was found, in addition, that 6.3 percent of females aged ten to fourteen years and 49.7 percent of those aged fifteen to nineteen were married, compared to only 0.6 and 7.6 percent of

men in the respective age groups (Chu et al., pp. 65 ff.). The individual mean age of marriage has been estimated at 17.8 years for rural females, 19.5 for urban females, 26.2 for rural males, and 26.7 for urban males (Trussell and Brown, p. 138). Third, the divorce rate was very low (less than 0.1 percent). Finally, there was no official family-planning policy. The only body concerned with family planning, the privately sponsored Afghan Family Guidance Association, founded in 1347 Š./1968, had a negligible impact: In 1351-52 Š./1972-73 only 3 percent of all married women aged fifteen years or older reported having knowledge of contraception, and only one third of that total claimed actually to have used contraceptive methods; moreover, few among those who had never used contraceptives expressed a desire to use them if available (Chu et al., pp. 117 ff.). As could be expected, knowledge and practice of family planning were more widespread in the better-educated middle and upper urban classes, hence the large differential in fertility observed between towns and villages (respectively 5.3 and 8.8 children per woman of childbearing age in 1358 Š./1979, corresponding to respective crude birth rates of 29 and 51.3 respectively; Khalidi, 1989, p. 13). The average household was, however, larger among city dwellers (6.31 persons) than among villagers (6.16) or nomads (5.6; de Benoist, p. 87), owing to lower infant mortality in towns (130 per thousand) and to the fact that many migrants to towns shared living quarters with friends or relatives.

The age structure of the Afghan population exactly reflected these vital statistics. In 1358 Š./1979, 45.4 percent of the population was less than fifteen years old, and only 3.9 percent was sixty-five years old or older (Khalidi, 1989, p. 7). Such an age structure supports a prediction of continuous high and perhaps increasing population growth.

There was an excess of men over women (51.4 and 48.6 percent of the population respectively, 106 men per 100 women) in 1358 Š./1979. This disparity seems mainly to reflect underreporting of young, marriageable women, possibly combined with high maternal mortality.

The results of the 1358 Š./1979 census (Central Statistics Office [C.S.O.]; Khalidi, 1989) are on the whole consistent with those of the demographic survey in 1351-52 Š./1972-73 (Kerr, pp. 62 ff.; Chu et al.). The only significant exception is life expectancy at birth, put at 34.6 years in the survey, though it has been suggested that this figure is an underestimate (Trussell and Brown, p. 146; Spitler and Frank, p. 7). It can therefore be assumed that the demographic situation in the late 1970s was fairly well established. The same cannot be said

about the 1990s.

The civil war, which began in 1357 Š./1978, brought considerable change, especially in mortality, which has not only ceased to decline but has actually increased. The immediate causes have been both situational and structural. First, it has been convincingly suggested that approximately 875,000 people, that is, about 7 percent of the total prewar population, lost their lives in the fighting and bombing between 1357 Š./1978 and 1366 Š./1987 (Khalidi, 1991, p. 106); as the victims were mainly men, there are indications that the traditional deficit of females has been succeeded by a deficit of males (Khalidi, 1991, pp. 110-11, estimating that the sex ratio had dropped to 86 men to 100 women in 1987). Similarly, greater losses in adult age groups have increased the dependency index, especially the proportion of those under twenty years of age (about 60 percent, up from 55 percent). Structural changes include significant deterioration of health facilities, reduced access to health care, and resurgence of malaria as a major epidemic disease, owing to the disruption of the control mechanism (420,000 reported cases in 1364 Š./1985-86, compared to only 36,000 in 1358 Š./1979). Life expectancy at birth must thus have dropped to thirty-eight years, the lowest in the world, while infant mortality has increased to 220 per thousand and maternal mortality to 690 per 100,000 deliveries; in the mid-1980s 21 percent of all pregnancies were unsuccessful because of malnutrition and poor health (U.N. Coordinator, 1988, pp. 80 ff.; idem, 1991, p. 23).

Owing to these factors and provided that natality has kept to its prewar level, natural growth should have slowed, but that cannot be stated with certainty.

Migration patterns. Geographic mobility, both internal and external, has always been significant in Afghanistan, even without reference to nomadic migrations among its population. During the war, however, it took on unprecedented dimensions. Data on migration patterns gathered in the 1358 Š./1979 census have never been processed, and it is thus difficult to determine the prewar figures. According to the sample survey of 1351-52 Š./1972-73, about 75 percent of the settled population was living in the localities of birth, 16 percent elsewhere in the same provinces, and 8 percent in different provinces; 0.6 percent had been born outside Afghanistan. Mobility was much higher in towns; 50 percent of urban dwellers were not living in their birthplaces, but the proportion was only 20 percent in the rural population (Kerr, p. 71), an indication of strong currents of migration from rural to urban settings. These currents are deeply rooted: Hazāra villagers, for example, were

already migrating to Kabul in the 19th century (Burnes, p. 231). Such migrations accelerated rather slowly after the mid-20th century, following the extension and modernization of the road network (Jung, p. 5): In 1358 Š./1979 only 15 percent of the total sedentary population lived in cities, a proportion that is reported to have increased to more than 18 percent during the decade of the civil war. Kabul has been the main destination of rural emigration, the only urban center to draw migrants from the entire nation (Barrat, pp. 125 ff.; Jung, pp. 4-5); all other towns have continued to draw migrants only from their own regions. Migrations from one rural region to another, mainly the permanent transfers of nomadic groups, were also important in the past, especially from southern to northern Afghanistan (Tapper; Barfield; Kakar, 1979, pp. 131 ff.), but data that would permit determination of their present importance and permanence are lacking (but see examples in Gille, pp. 14-15).

Permanent or temporary emigration of labor to foreign countries, especially India, is another long-established tradition (Balland, 1991). Longer-distance emigration, for example, to Australia (Schinasi; Cigler; Stevens), was always marginal. In recent decades emigration has taken two successive forms. After the first oil “shock” (1352 Š./1973) temporary emigration of Afghan workers to Persia and the Persian Gulf states was paramount; the numbers in the late 1970s have been estimated at 400,000 and 300,000 respectively (Wiebe, p. 98). Such economic emigration was followed by political emigration of “refugees” (*mohājerīn*), not at all a novelty in Afghan history; in the past several refugee colonies had been established in neighboring countries, for example, by Sadōzī in Multan in the second half of the 17th century (Khan, pp. 3-4) and Hazāra in Quetta and Persian Khorasan (where they became known as Barbarī) in the 1890s and again in 1903-04 (Banbury, pp. 9-10; Kakar, 1971, p. 174). But the events of 1357-58 Š./1978-79 (the communist coup, civil war, Soviet intervention) provided unprecedented impetus to political emigration, which took on the dimensions of a hemorrhage (Table 22). In a few years more than one Afghan of every three became a refugee, constituting the largest community of refugees in the world (see DIASPORA ix-x). In 1366 Š./1987, 3.3 million were enumerated in Pakistan, 2.2 million in Persia, 40,000 in India, 20,000 in Europe, 15,000 in the United States, and 10,000 in other countries, including Canada, Australia, and the Gulf states (Gille, p. 4). Most of these refugees were crowded into hundreds of camps and spontaneous suburban settlements scattered along the Persian and Pakistani borders, where they found a cultural environment close to their own. Refugees came from all regions of Afghanistan, in proportions broadly inverse to their proximity to

the relevant boundaries. Consequently the geographical distribution (Figure 16 and Figure 17), as well as the ethnic composition, of the resident population of Afghanistan underwent dramatic change. How durable these changes will prove remains to be seen, however. As soon as the communist regime collapsed in April 1992 a massive movement of voluntary repatriation began. In 1992, 1.275 million refugees from Pakistan and 250,000 from Persia reportedly returned to Afghanistan, assisted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (U.N.H.C.R.) and the World Food Programme. It seems, however, that some of them returned only temporarily (U.N. Office, pp. 6-7). It was anticipated that up to 2 million more refugees would return in 1993, but actual repatriation lagged far behind those expectations; an estimated half-million returned during the first nine months of 1993, 350,000 of them from Persia. The U.N.H.C.R. anticipated only 235,000 returns during the following six months (U.N.O.C.H.A., p. 5). Whatever the pace of repatriation, it seems obvious that a certain proportion of refugees will neverreturn, for example, those Khirghiz and other Turkic-speaking peoples who were resettled in Anatolia in 1361 Š./1982, a total of about 4,500 individuals (N. H. Dupree, 1987, p. 388; Franz), but also many of those who have been successfully integrated into the labor market in Persia and Pakistan.

Foreign immigration also played a role in the historical demography of Afghanistan. Aside from the successive waves of conquest that have produced the present-day ethnic kaleidoscope of the country, mention should be made at least of the 300,000-400,000 refugees from Soviet Central Asia who arrived in the 1920s and 1930s (Balland, 1975-77, p. 33; Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont) and of 100,000 refugees from war-torn Tajikistan in 1371 Š./1992.

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(DANIEL BALLAND)

iii. IN TAJIKISTAN

The population of Tajikistan grew at an unprecedented rate during the 20th century. From an estimated 1,034,400 people in 1913 within the present boundaries of the republic (143,100 km2), it rose to 5,092,603 in 1989, the year of the last Soviet census, and to an estimated 5,600,000 in 1993, an increase of 440 percent over eighty years. The increase was not a steady one, however. Two phases can be distinguished. Between 1913 and 1922 the population dropped to 956,300 (-7.6 percent) as a consequence of civil war and famine (for a general review, see Buttino). Recovery was slow; during the period 1929-59 the population grew only 64 percent (from 1,207,000 inhabitants in 1929 to 1,484,900 in 1939 and 1,980,547 in 1959), but in the next thirty years it grew more than 157 percent (to 2,899,602 inhabitants in 1970 and 3,806,220 in 1979), as the region continued in the phase of demographic transition (see below). There has thus been an almost fivefold overall increase in less than sixty-five years. The average population density, which barely exceeded 7 inhabitants per km2 in 1913 and 10 in 1939, is now approaching 40.

Causes of demographic evolution. Two main factors account for this evolution.

The primary factor is high natural growth. The Soviet regime emphasized modernization of health services through such measures as vaccination campaigns, construction of hospitals and dispensaries, and provision of safe drinking water. In Tajikistan the ratio of hospital beds per 10,000 inhabitants rose from 0.4 in 1913 to 28.6 in 1940, 98.8 in 1980, and 105.8 in 1990; the ratio of physicians per 10,000 inhabitants from 0.2 in 1913 to 4.1 in 1940, 23.5 in 1980, and 27.1 in 1990 (*Narodnoe khozyaistvo TSSR* [The national economy of the Tajik S.S.R.], various editions). The mortality rate consequently declined from 14.1 per thousand in 1940 to 8.2 per thousand in 1950 and 5.1 per thousand in 1960; for reasons that are unclear, perhaps more efficient registration of deaths, it then increased to 6.3 per thousand in 1970 and 8 per thousand in 1980 before declining again through the 1980s (7 per thousand in 1985, 6.2 in 1990). Life expectancy at birth reached 69.4 years in 1990, the highest figure in former Soviet Central Asia, with a comparatively slight difference between that for males (66.8 years) and that for females (71.9 years). Infant mortality remained high, however (58.1 per thousand in 1980, 40.7 in 1990, the second highest rate in the U.S.S.R., after Turkmenistan); even in the capital, Dushanbe, where the medical infrastructure is comparatively advanced, infant mortality was 32.9 per thousand in 1990, though it had declined significantly from 59 per thousand in 1980. In the provincial town of Kurgan Tyube, in the Vakhsh (Vaḵš) valley south of Dushanbe, it dropped from 80.5 to 40 per thousand in the same period. A comparative analysis of selected causes of death in the republics of the former U.S.S.R. shows that Tajikistan had the highest rate of death from infectious disease (12.8 percent of all deaths) but the lowest rate of deaths from neoplasms (8.4 percent) and afflictions of the circulatory system (31 percent); the epidemiology of the region thus clearly reflects the low level of socioeconomic development in Tajikistan (Cole and Cole, pp. 6 ff.).

On the other hand, the birthrate remained very high, owing to lack of sex education, prevalence of Muslim conservative attitudes, and early marriage (see below). It has steadily increased from 30.6 per thousand in 1940 to 33.5 in 1960, 37 in 1980, and 38.8 in 1990, by far the highest in Soviet Central Asia. The corresponding fecundity index was 174 births per 1,000 women aged fifteen to forty-nine years in 1990, compared to 150 in 1960. This increase may be explained by a general improvement in female health and by the fact that the steadily increasing number of women of childbearing age counterbalances the effects of a real decrease in individual fertility (from a maximum average of 6.3 children per woman in 1975 to 5.5 in 1984 and 5.1 in 1989; Blum, p. 357;

Gosudarstvennii Komitet [G.K.S.], p. 314).

The natural growth rate consequently soared from 16.5 per thousand in 1940 to 28.4 in 1960, 29 in 1980, and 32.6 in 1990, with an absolute maximum so far of 35.2 in 1986, a typical example of “high” demographic transition.

Tajikistan was unique in Soviet Central Asia in the age and sex structure of its population. It had the highest proportion of youngsters fourteen years old and under (43.2 percent in 1990), the lowest proportion of elders aged sixty-five years or more (3.8 percent), and the highest dependency index (i.e., population in these two age groups as a percentage of population aged fifteen to sixty-four years: 88.6 in 1990, compared to 92.3 in 1979). Tajikistan also had the highest ratio of males to females: 98.7 in 1990, compared to 97.7 in 1979. The excess of females reflected higher mortality among adult males.

Marriage statistics reflected the impact of traditional Muslim standards. The marriage rate was very high and concentrated among young people. In 1970, 40.4 percent of women aged eighteen and nineteen years were married (49.6 percent among rural women in this age group), a proportion that had declined only slightly since 1959 (43.8 percent and 52.3 percent, respectively) and was the highest in Central Asia (Blum, p. 346). It was undoubtedly an important factor in the high fertility rate and generally large family size.

The momentum of natural growth was further enhanced by the second determining factor, massive immigration of European populations, mainly Russians. In the first decades of the Soviet regime the number soared from a mere few thousand to several hundred thousand; a parallel though perhaps less massive influx of Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Germans also took place (Table 23). Half this immigrant population, mainly technicians, professionals, and skilled workers, was established in Dushanbe (195,000 Russians out of a total population of 388,000 in 1989). Until the 1960s continuing immigration of Europeans considerably lowered the ratio of Tajiks (Table 23). Since the mid-1970s, however, the number of Russians leaving Tajikistan has surpassed immigration; the trend approached a hemorrhage after the proclamation of Tajik independence in 1991. It is reported that more than 75 per cent of the Russian population (300,000 out of 388,000) left Tajikistan between 1989 and 1993 (Rotar’). Russian Jews and Tatars have also left in massive numbers.

The population of Tajikistan is characterized by high mobility; in 1989, 22.8 per cent of the inhabitants were not living in their birthplaces. Mobility was

significantly higher among Russians (56.7 percent) than among Tajiks (18.4 per cent) or Uzbeks (17 per cent).

Ethnic and geographical factors. All these general trends and characteristics conceal considerable demographic variation among national groups. In general the European minorities have accepted family planning and birth control (Watters, p. 80), for example, whereas local Muslims have not. This difference has contributed to the continuous decline of the European proportion of the total population from a peak of more than 16 percent in 1959 to 12 percent in 1979 and 9 percent in 1989 (Table 23). The Muslims themselves are not demographically homogeneous. The Uzbeks, who account for almost a quarter of the total population, are less fertile than the Tajiks, whose birth rate was as high as 42.9 per thousand in 1989, 4 index points above the general birth rate for the republic (Watters, p. 76; G.K.S., p. 185).

The proportion of the population in cities, thus more secularized, better educated, and more receptive to such Western (Russian) cultural ideas as family planning, sharply increased, from about 9 percent in 1913 and 7 percent in 1922, when the region was the least urbanized in Central Asia, to 17 percent in 1939, 33 percent in 1959, and 38 percent in 1975. Since 1975, however, it has been steadily declining (35 percent in 1979, 32 percent in 1990) because of the increasing differential in fertility between cities and villages: Respective birthrates were 28.5 and 43.6 per thousand in 1990, with respective extremes of 22.4 in Dushanbe and 48.8 in rural Kurgan Tyube oblast; in 1989 the fertility index was 3.4 children per woman in towns, 6.1 in the countryside. Urban and rural death rates were, however, very similar: 6.4 and 6.2 per thousand respectively, with respective extremes of 4.8 in Khorog city and 6.9 in rural Gorno-Badakhshan. The similarity reflects differences in age structure, rather than medical facilities. The gap in natural growth between urban and rural dwellers thus reached 15.3 per thousand, to the advantage of the latter, an unprecedented figure (cf. 13 per thousand in 1980, 14 per thousand in 1985). It should be emphasized that ethnic Tajiks remain predominantly village dwellers (74.5 percent in 1970).

It is not yet possible to assess all the demographic consequences of the civil war that broke out in 1991. Current press estimates are 40,000 dead and another 40,000 refugees in northern Afghanistan at the end of 1993 (compared to 60,000-70,000 in 1992).

See also CENTRAL ASIA ii.

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Figure 12. Distribution of population and growth in Persia, by šahrestān, 1365-70 Š./1986-91.

Figure 13. Population tree, Persia, 1370 Š./1991. After Markaz-e āmār, 1371 Š./1992.

Figure 14. Birth rate in Persia per 1,000, by šahrestān, 1365 Š./1986.

Figure 15. Knowledge of Persian, as represented by percentages of those claiming to understand it, by šahrestān, 1365 Š./1986.

Figure 16. Population density in Afghanistan, by province, according to the censut of 1 1358 Š./1979; figures represent inhabitants per km². After Central Statistics Office.

Figure 17. Population density in Afghanistan, by province, at the end of the 1980s; figures represent inhabitants per km². After Eighmy.

Table 10. Evolution of the Population of Persia, 1900-91

Table 11. Evolution of the Persian Population by Age Group, 1335-1379 Š./1956-2000

Table 12. Percentage of Males in the Total Persian Population, 1335-65 Š./1956-86

Table 13. Fertility in Persia, 1900-91

Table 14. Mortality in Persia, 1329-69 Š./1950-90

Table 15. The Persian Family, 1335-70 Š./1956-91

Table 16. Migratory Populations in Persia, 1335-70 Š./1956-91

Table 17. Urbanization in Persia, 1335-70 Š./1956-91

Table 18. Literacy Rates in Persia, 1335-70 Š./1956-91

Table 19. Religious Minorities in Persia, 1335-65 Š./1956-86

Table 20. Employment Trends in Persia, 1335-65 Š./1956-86

Table 21. Estimates of the Population of Afghanistan at Various Dates

Table 22. Officially Registered Refugees in Pakistan and Persia

Table 23. Ethnic Composition of the Tajik A.S.S.R./S.S.R.