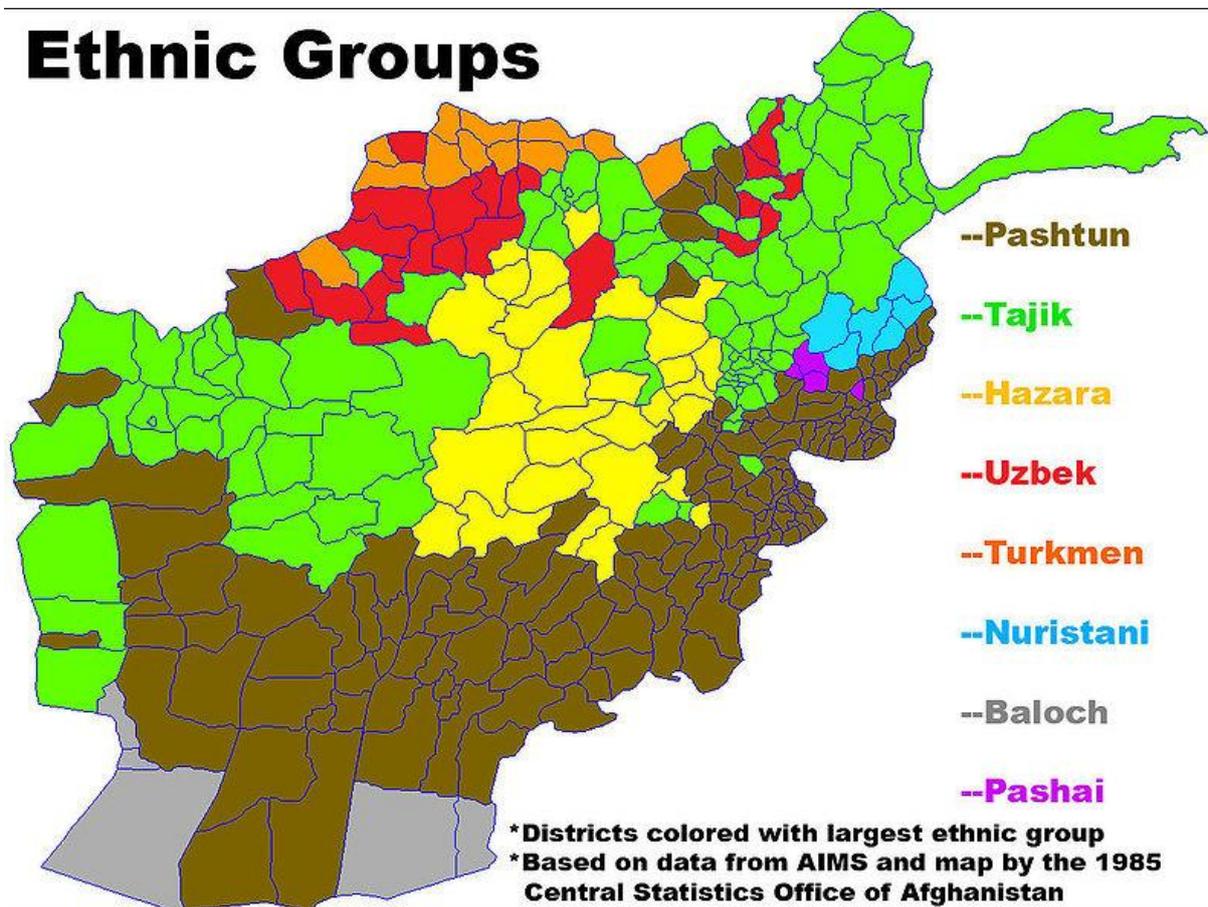


# Afghanistan Population and Religious groupings

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## Ethnic Groups



## A – Research Findings

Afghanistan's population is mainly rural. Throughout recent history as a result of civil war and destruction has resulted in mass emigration of Afghani people into neighbouring countries Pakistan and Iran, as well as internal resettlement to the comparative safety of the city Kabul. The life expectancy for a man is 47 years old and 46 years for a woman.

At different times in the past the population of Afghanistan has consisted of Dravidians, Indo-Aryans, Greeks, Scythians, Arabs, Turks, and Mongols. The physical and cultural traits of some of the current population groups resemble those that have lived Afghanistan throughout history.

The last national census was an only partial count in 1979. Years of war have made an accurate ethnic count impossible, but it is estimated that less than 40% are Pashtun, approximately 25% are Tajiks and Hazara make up almost 20% of the Afghani population. It is also estimated that Uzbeks and Chahar Aimaks each make up slightly more than 5% and Turkmen even less.

Almost all Afghani people are Muslims. Of the Muslims about three-fourths are Sunnites of the Hanafi branch. Other Muslims (in particular those from the Hazara and Kizilbash ethnic groups) follow the practices of either Ithna Ashari or Ismaili Shiite Islam. Sufism is widely practiced and there are a few thousand Hindus and Sikhs.

## **B – Link to our context study**

This information is relevant to encountering conflict as it is the differences in beliefs that is a part of what led to the persecution of the minority ethnic group Hazara which is predominantly Shiite Muslim. It also links to the context study as it is because of the turmoil within Afghanistan that many people emigrate away from particularly the more rural areas and it also contributes to many people dying when they are still quite young.

## **C – Link to our text**

The information that is relevant to our text the Rugmaker of Mazar-E-Sharif is the facts that are about the Hazara and Shiite Islam as the protagonist of the text, Najaf Mazari is a part of both groups and where factors of why he was forced to flee Afghanistan to Australia.

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