

UNIT 3 – BRIEF 1 / WEEK 4

PROJECTIONS,

Haris Mahmood

ENQUIRY
Updated

**HOW CAN A (CONFLICT-RIDDEN)
BORDER BE VISUALLY REIMAGINED?**

DURAND LINE

Frontier drawn between British India and Afghanistan in 1893.
A 2,670 kilometer border with Afghanistan that bisects the
Pashtuns, the world's largest tribally organized society, into two
neighboring countries.

Two dozen Pashtun tribes are straddled by the line.



پوزه دي کرنه د ډيورنډ ده
دوه اټنگي دي، لرو بر پښتانه دي

**Your nose is shaped like the “Durand” (Line)
the two cheeks are Pashtuns - on this side and that side.**

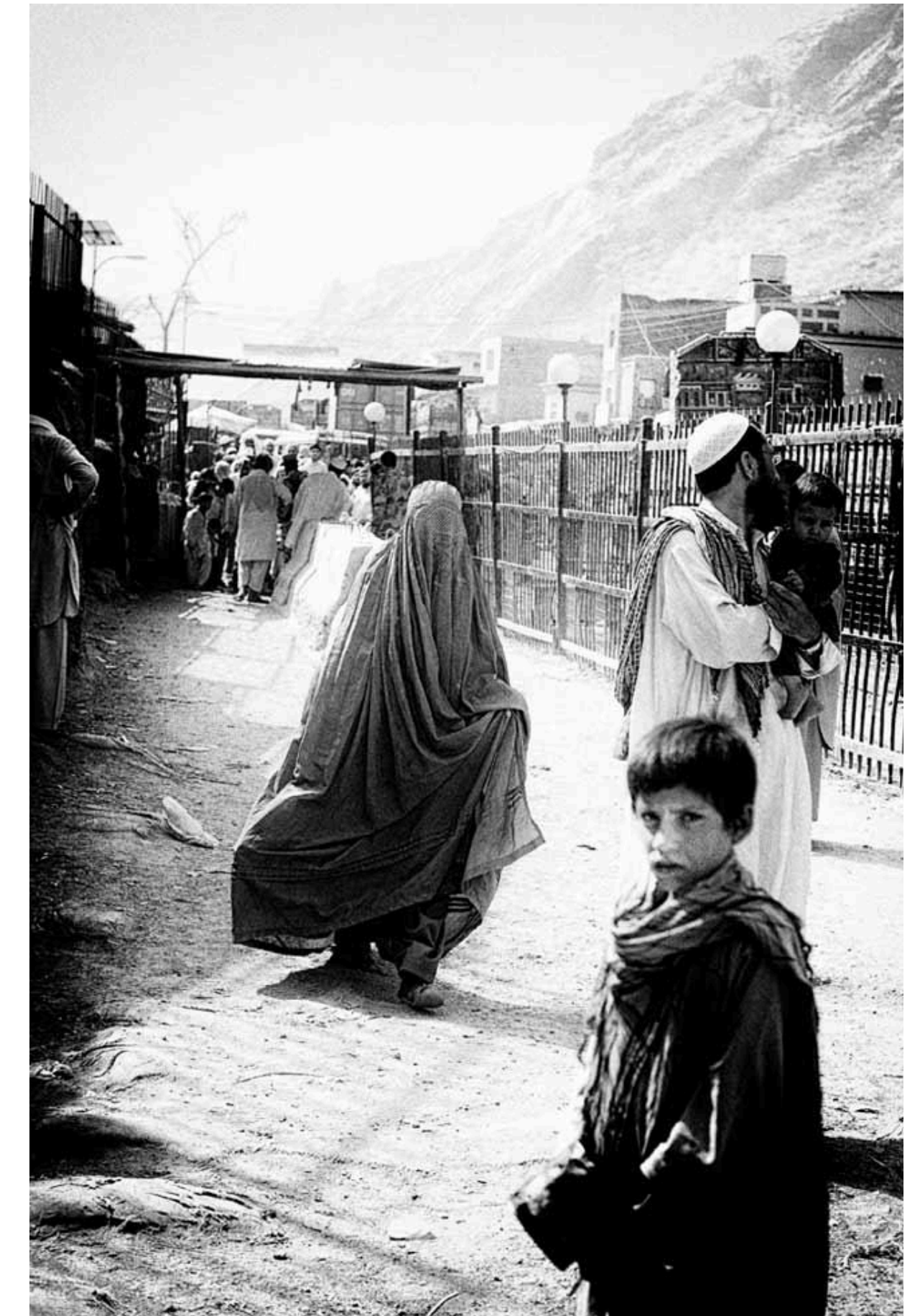
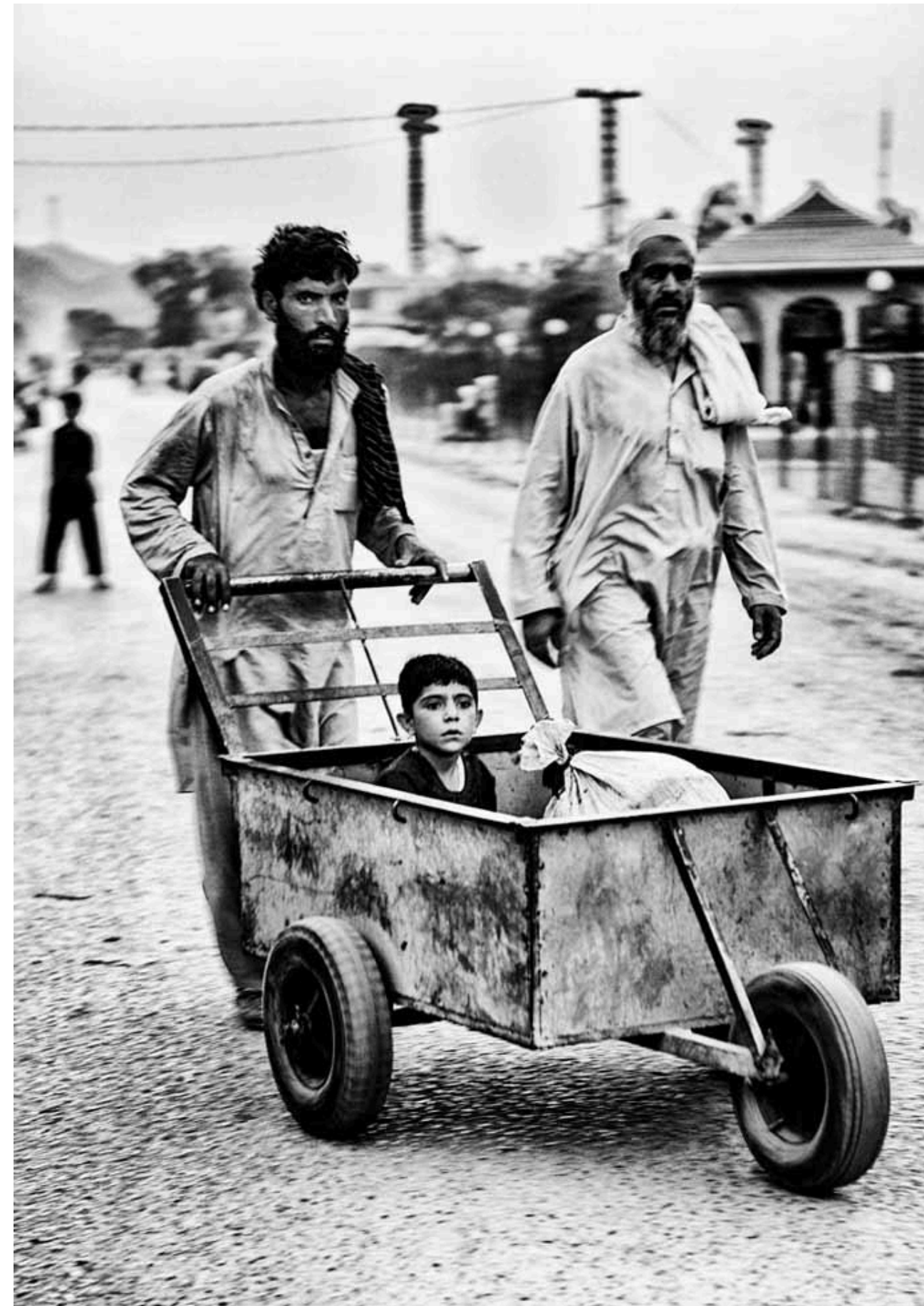
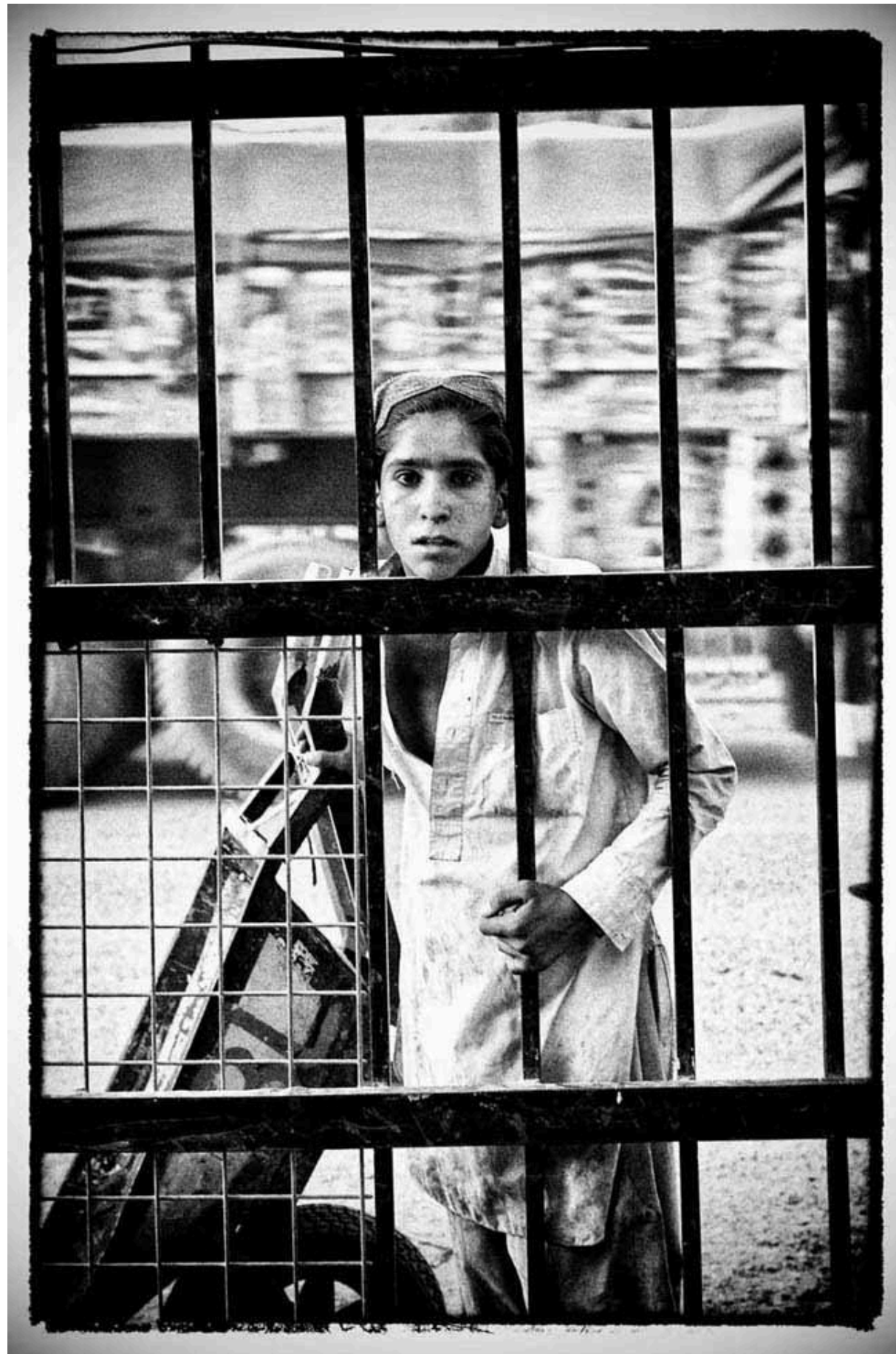
Photos: Bustling Human Traffic Along a 'Mythical' Afghanistan-Pakistan Border

April 17th, 2013

palpable | 'pʌlpəbl | adjective

1 (of a feeling or atmosphere) so intense as to seem almost tangible: *a palpable sense of loss.* [more](#)

Borders still remain the most palpable geo-political phenomena.



The Durand line inherited by Pakistan in 1947 created a frontier that at best is a geo-political myth. Border crossings are very common, especially among Pashtuns who cross the border, sometimes daily, to meet relatives, attend schools, work or sometimes just to play a game of cricket before dusk. The movement of people crossing the border has largely been unchecked or uncontrolled. This constant human migration along the border disturbs what was previously considered immobile by the state and consolidates what was thought to be divided.

<https://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/photos-bustling-human-traffic-along-mythical-afghanistan-pakistan-border>

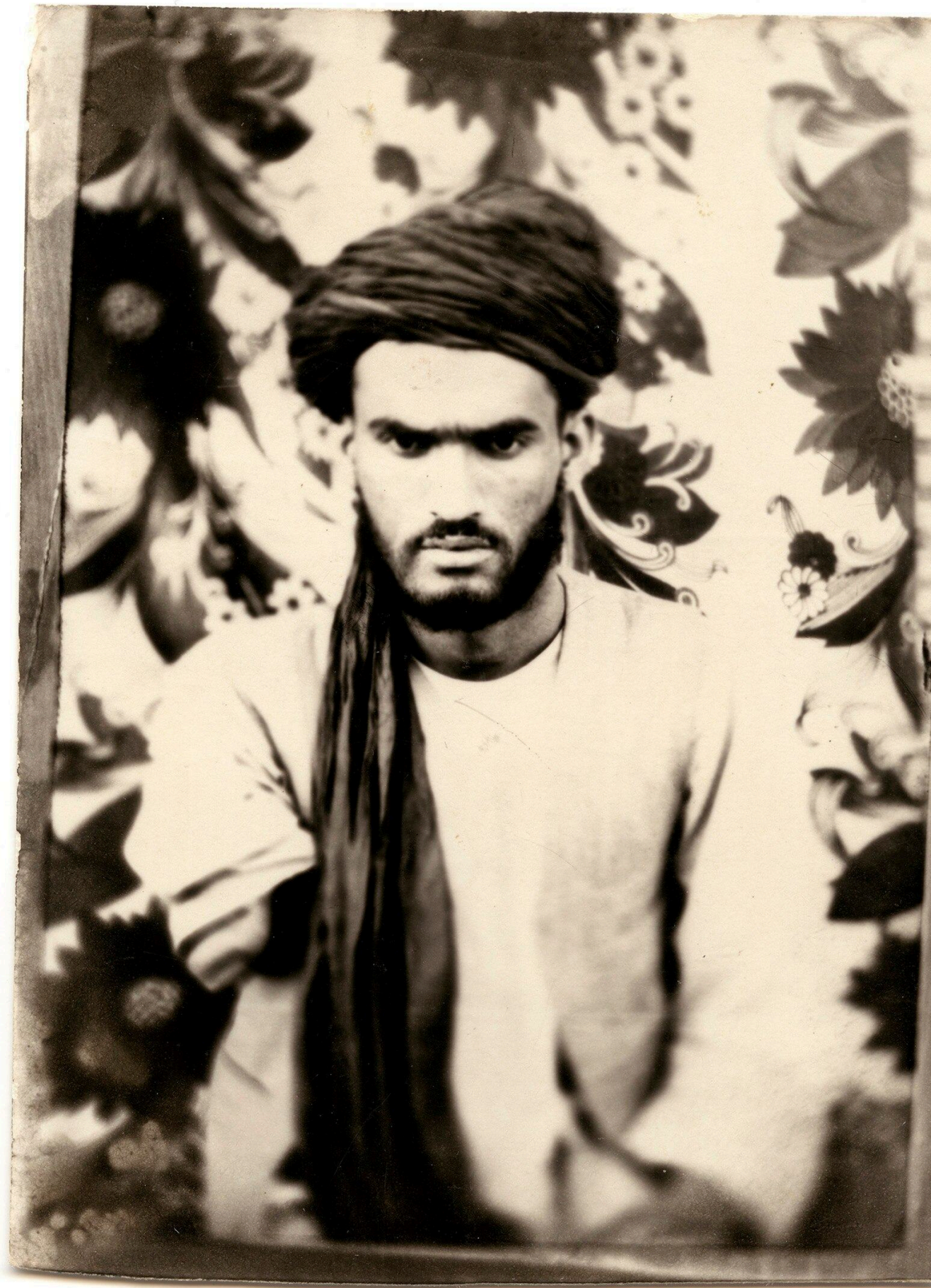
Disasters Of War: Afghan Box-Camera Portraits

Khalid Hadi

Hadi used a primitive wooden box called a "kamra-e-faoree" that served as both his camera and a self-contained darkroom. Using sunlight and 19th-century photography skills largely forgotten in the West, he could produce a black-and-white portrait within minutes -- first making a paper negative, then photographing the negative to make a positive print.

From 1992 to 1994, Hadi documented the injuries of 10,000 of the foundation's aid recipients. One photograph he took in early 1993 became the world's most famous Afghan box-camera portrait: the only known photo of future Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar.





The Amazing Rise And Fall Of Century-Old Afghan Box Cameras

Ron Synovitz

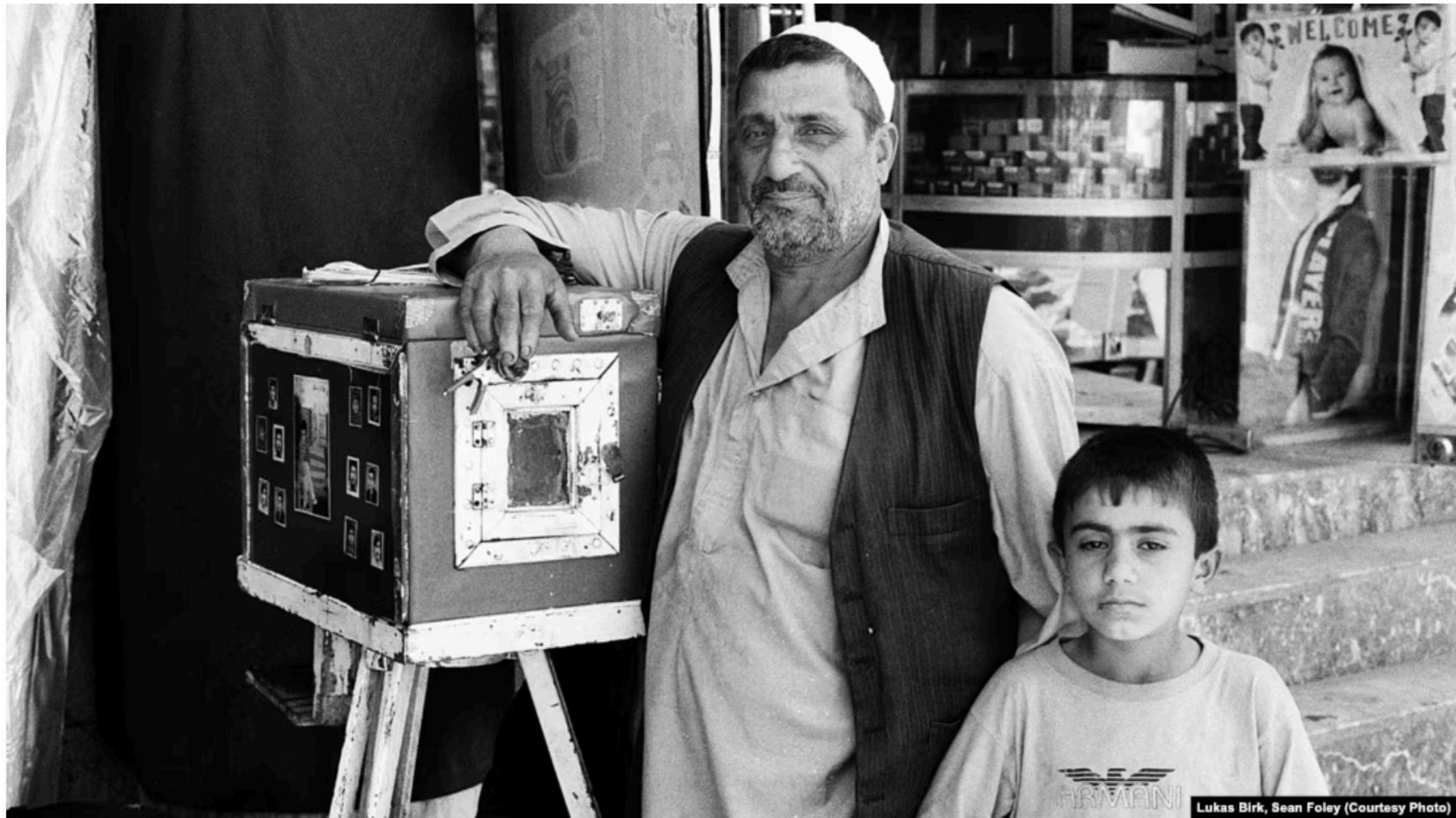
AFGHANISTAN

The Amazing Rise And Fall Of Century-Old Afghan Box Cameras

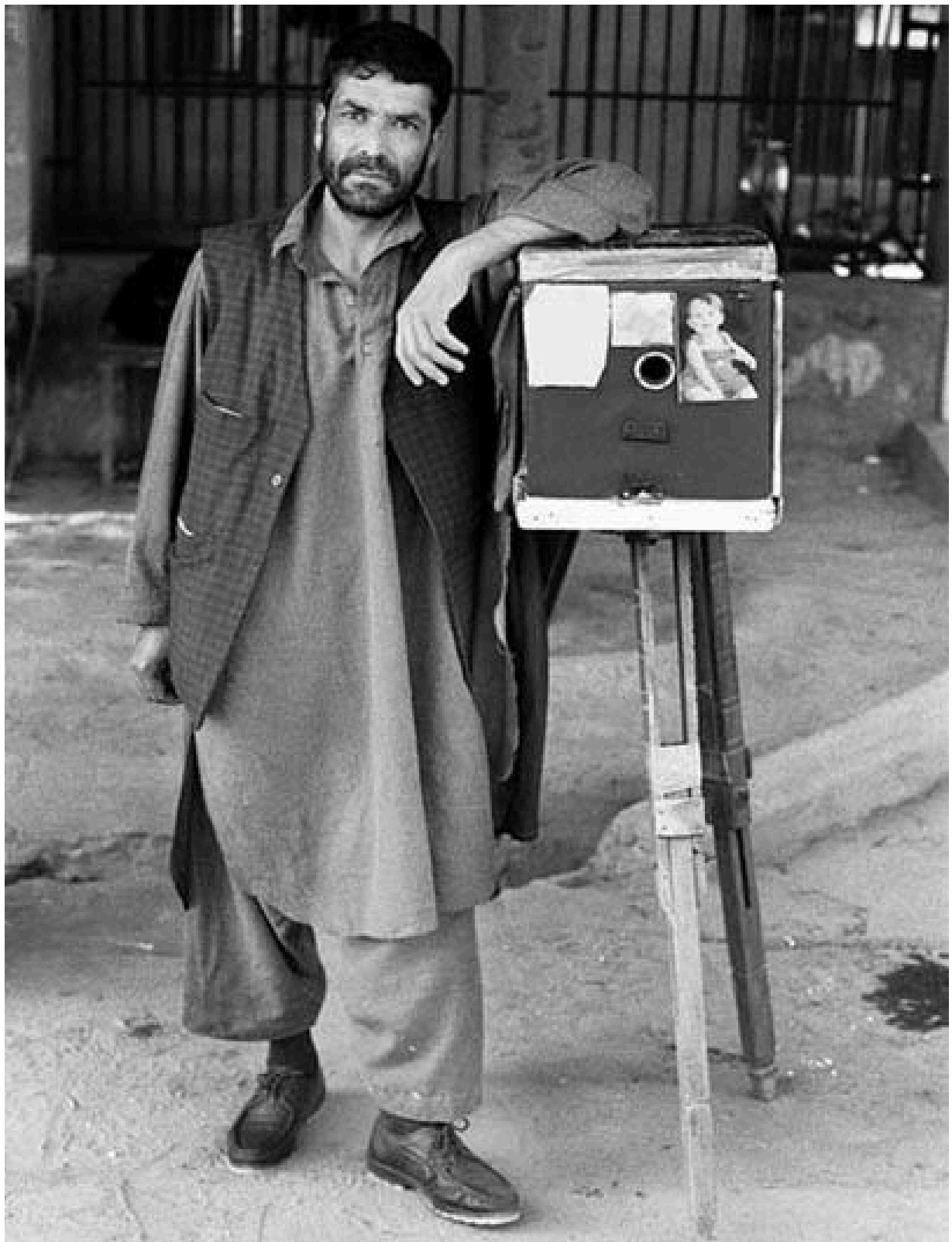
By Ron Synovitz

May 19, 2021 14:52 CET

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Rohullah, a Kabul box-camera street photographer, with his son in 2011.



Afghan Box Camera Project

Lukas Birk and Sean Foley



Afghan Box Camera Project

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ABOUT THE AFGHAN BOX CAMERA PROJECT

This project was initiated early in 2011 by Austrian artist Lukas Birk and Irish ethnographer Sean Foley. The aim of the project from the outset was to create an urgent record of the disappearing art of Afghan box camera photography and make that information freely available online for all. Funding for the project in 2011 as in 2012 came primarily via crowdfunding on the KICKSTARTER website. The Visual Anthropology Dept. at Goldsmiths University, London has also contributed funding.

Photographer Collections from Pakistan and Afghanistan

Afghan Box Camera Project

GALLERY



HEKMATULLAH
COLLECTION



MUHAMMAD ISHAQ
COLLECTION



ALI AHMAD COLLECTION



FADING AFGHANISTAN



JEAN-MARIE JUD
PHOTOGRAPHS



BOX CAMERA
PHOTOGRAPHERS



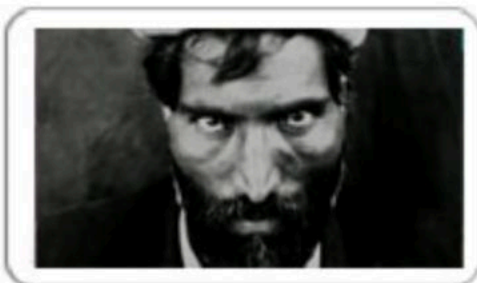
PHOTOGRAPHERS,
PHOTOJOURNALISTS &
MORE



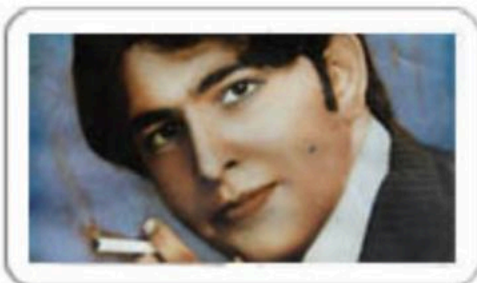
LAURA LEAN FEAT.
QALAM NABI



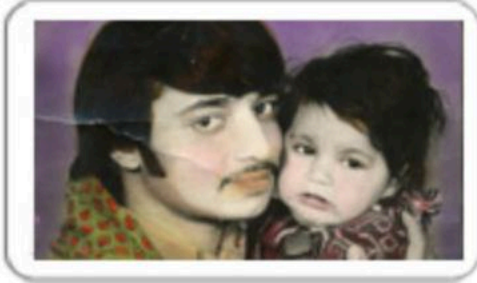
EDWARD GRAZDA
COLLECTION



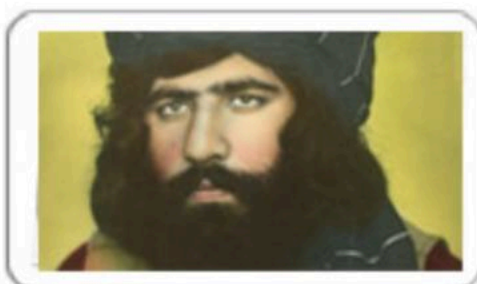
RODRIGO ABD



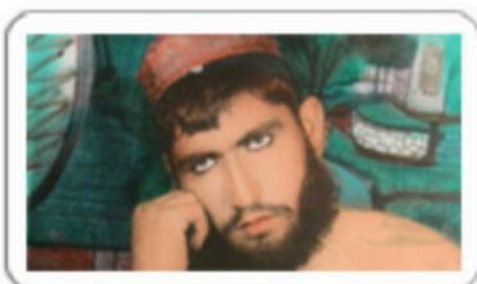
HAND-COLOURED
PORTRAITS FROM
AFGHANISTAN



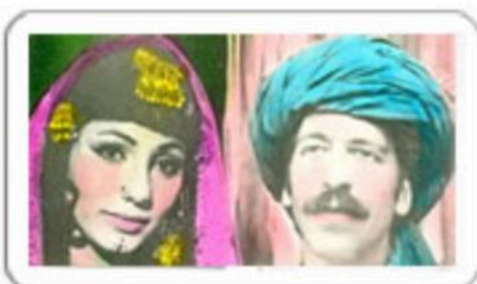
HAND-COLOURED
PORTRAITS FROM
PESHAWAR



BENJAMIN GILMOUR'S
HAND-COLOURED
COLLECTION



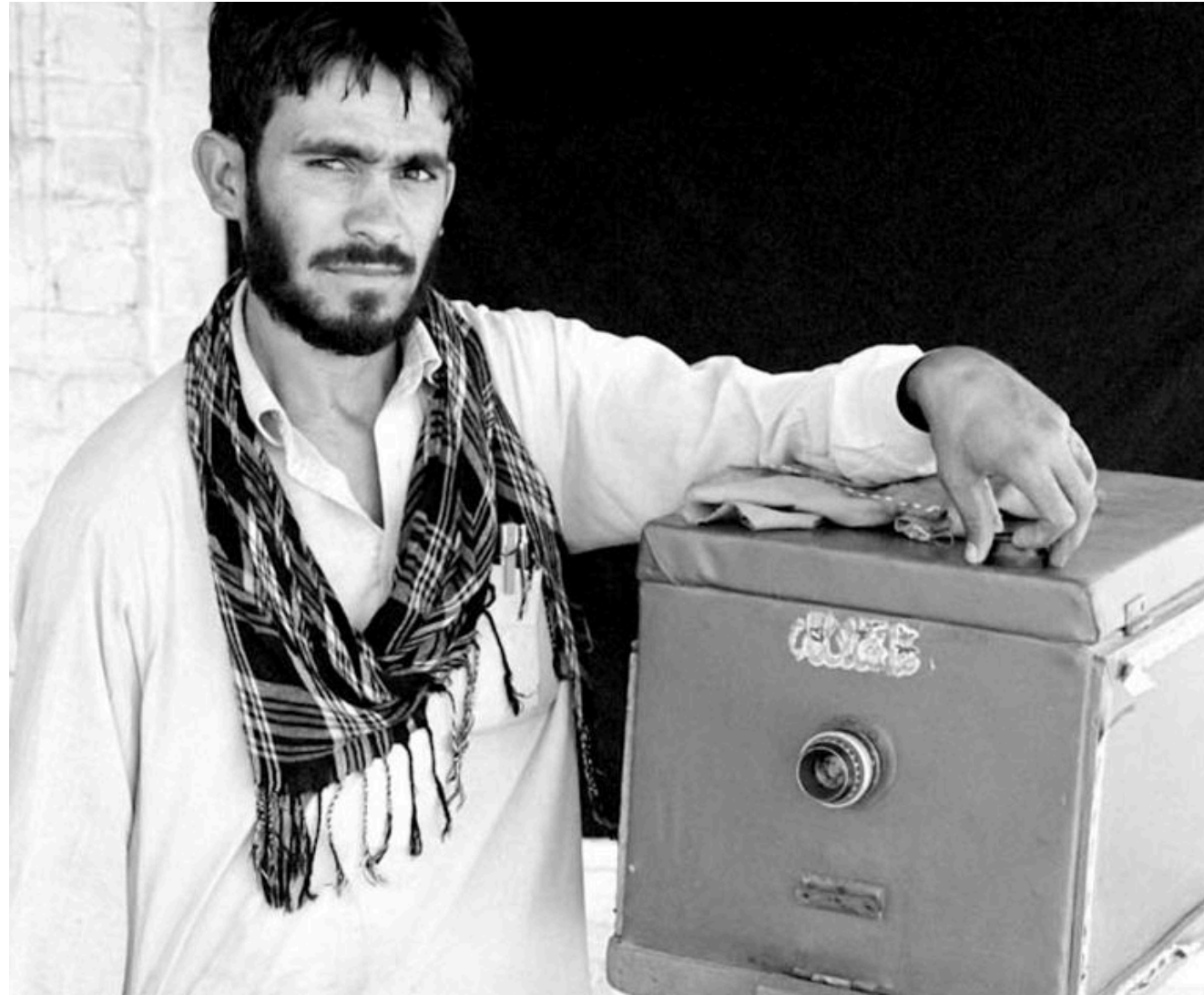
RODOLPHE BAUDEAU
COLLECTION



NOOR KHAN COLLECTION



8500 KM OF PORTRAITS

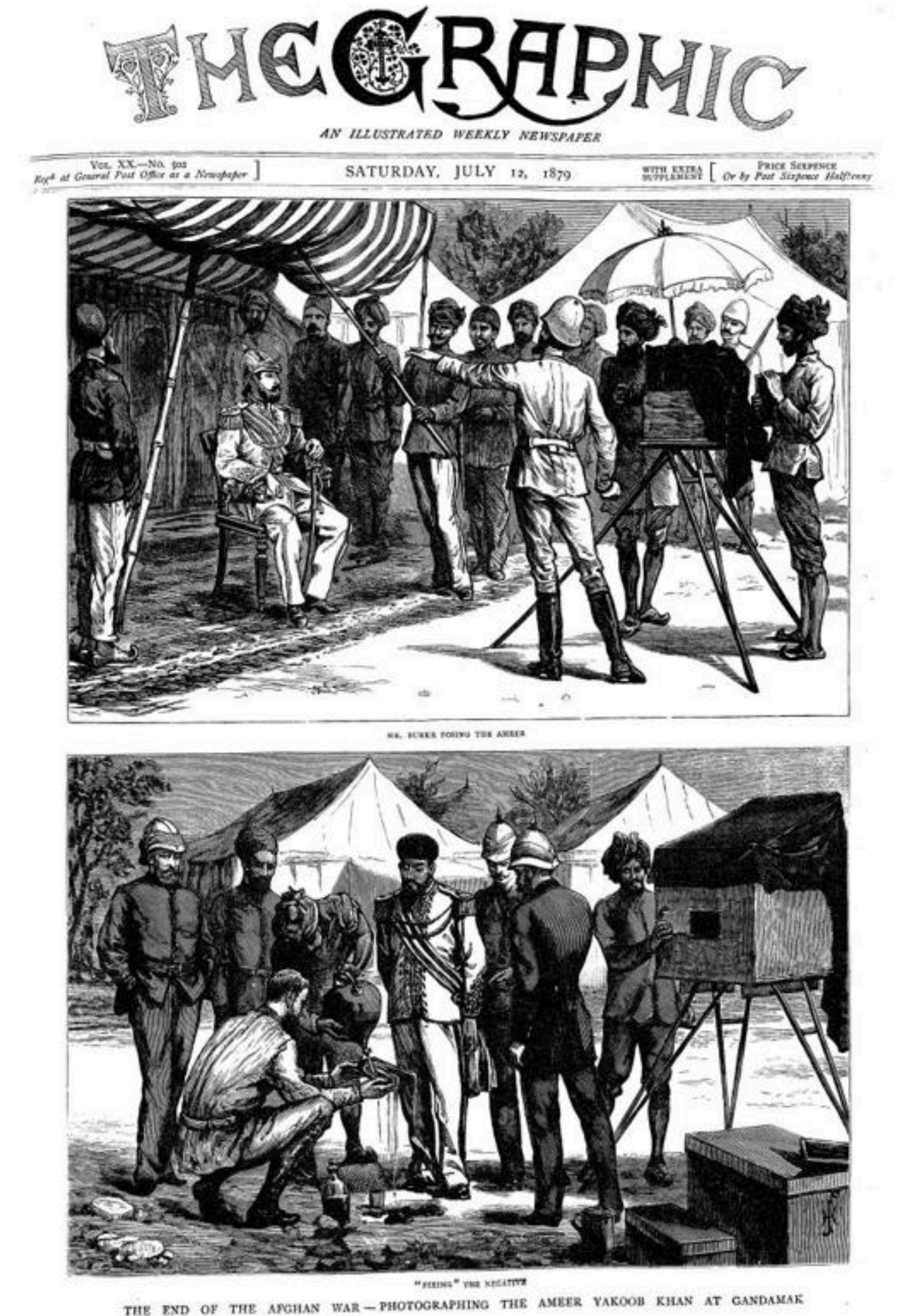


History of Photography in Afghanistan and KPK

Afghan Box Camera Project

ANGLO-AFGHAN WAR(S)

In May 1879 about seventy miles east of Kabul an Irish photographer by the name of John Burke was producing some of the first photographs ever taken in Afghanistan. Burke had been travelling with the British army since 1878, initially advancing towards Kabul from present-day Pakistan in a military engagement that would be known as the Second Anglo- Afghan War (there had already been a 'First' between 1839 and 1842 and there would in due course be a 'Third' in 1919). The sketch above which appeared on the front page of a British publication *The Graphic* shows Burke posing Yakub Khan, the then ruler of Afghanistan for a portrait; in the bottom sketch Burke is explaining the development process to the monarch.



History of Photography in Afghanistan and KPK

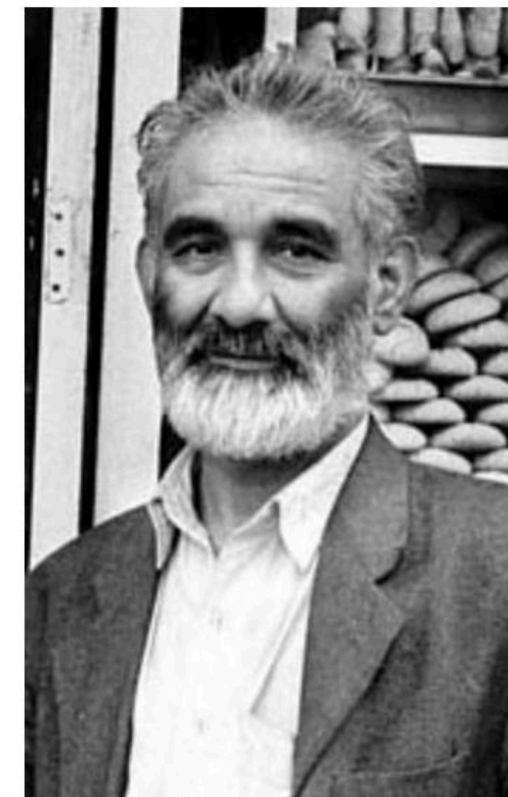
Afghan Box Camera Project

MIGRATION

Many of the Afghan photographers we met, including those shown below, had at some stage of the Russian-Afghan war, or the proceeding civil war, relocated with their families to Peshawar as well as the surrounding region.

After 1979 a number of Afghan box camera photographers set up pitches on Cinema Road, renting space on the street outside photo stores from local studio owners (see [Muhammad Iqbal's](#) portfolio).

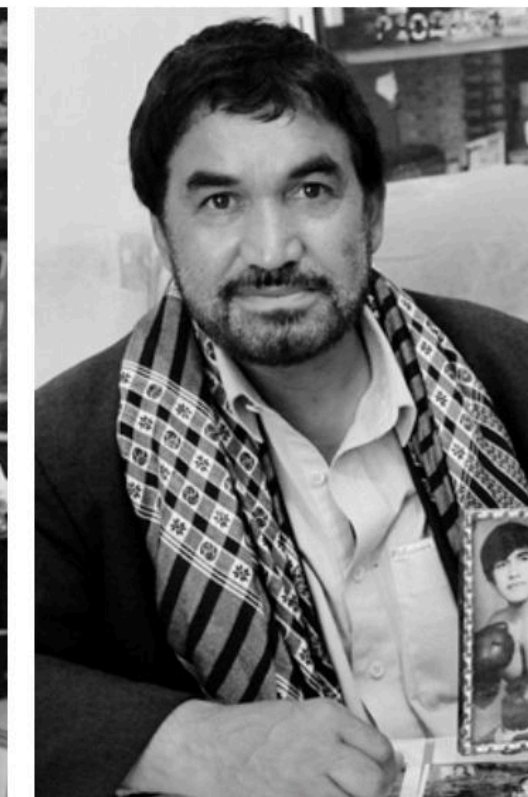
Occasionally, these Afghans passed on their skills in box camera photography to locals. Tahir, below, worked on the box camera for eight years after being taught by an Afghan; he's also a skilled hand-colourist. The hand-coloured photo on the right (his work) is of his daughter.



Asad Ullah



Abdul Satar



Zia Uddin Taufiq



Faiz Muhammad



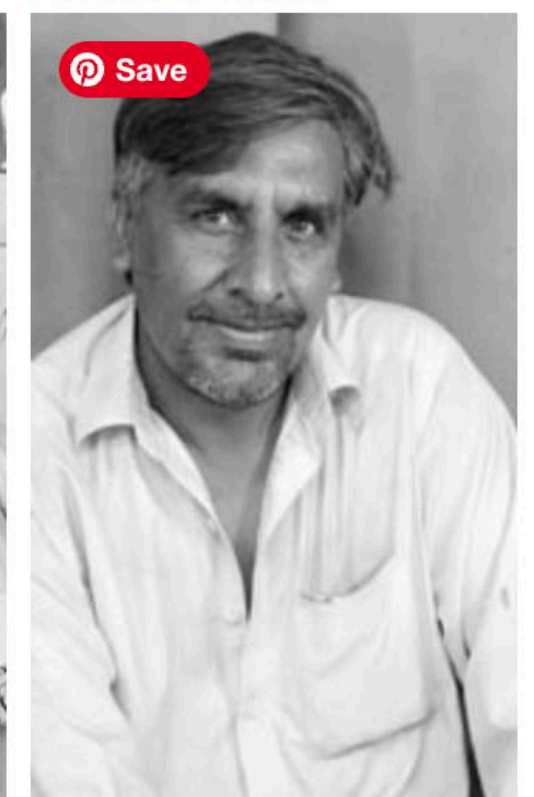
Muhammad Ishaq



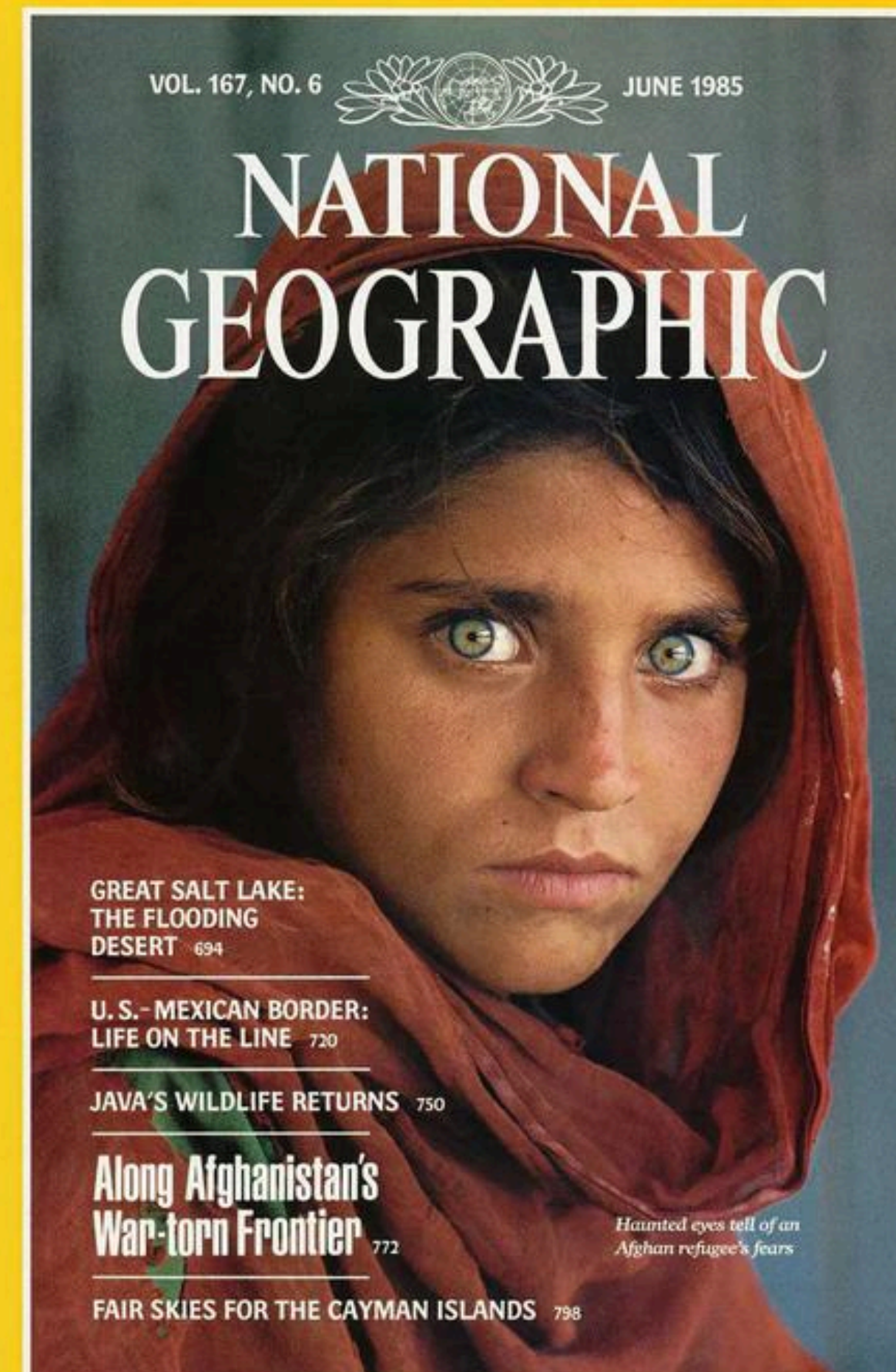
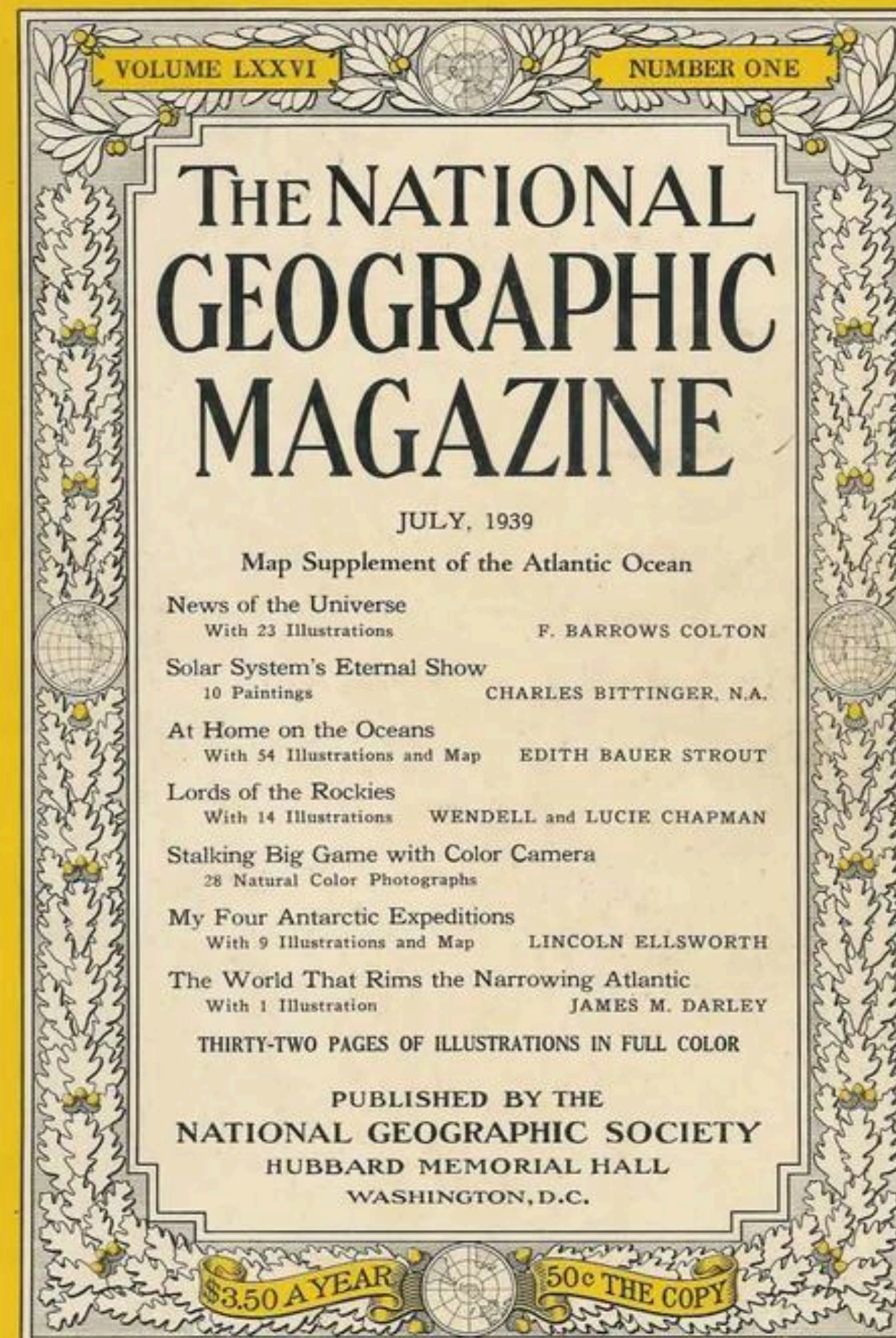
Kamal



Abdul Rehman



Daoud



SEE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPLORER EVERY SUNDAY ON NICKELODEON CABLE TV

Sharbat Gula

The world's most famous photograph of an Afghan was taken in the Nasir Bagh refugee camp in Pakistan in 1984, highlighting the deep shared history of photography between the two nations.

History of Photography in Afghanistan and KPK

Afghan Box Camera Project

TALIBAN RULE / 2000'S

The Taliban leadership considered representations of human and animals as unIslamic; and the Ministry of Vice and Virtue, the Taliban's moral watchdog enforced an edict banning photography. In short, the hanging of portraits and the general display of images of living creatures, whether it be on a bottle of shampoo or a treasured piece of family memorabilia became a crime punishable by beatings and imprisonment.

But as colour-portraits of Taliban from the time reveal, as with those below by A. Samdi in Kabul, it wasn't necessarily a view shared by all recruits.

The ban did, however, force some individuals to destroy or hide their photographic collections. And the livelihoods of photographers were threatened by the edict, which at first encompassed a blanket ban on all types of photography.

It should be noted that the Taliban stance on photography was not necessarily the only or the greatest challenge to kamra-e-faoree photography. The infighting of various Mujahedin factions and warlords for control of the country after the Soviets left in 1989 wreaked havoc in Afghanistan. Kabul was a major centre of the conflict and saw a brutal period of bombardment which at its height was estimated to have killed twenty-five thousand civilians.

Many photographers in Kabul had their studios destroyed or looted during this time. Those who survived and stayed on often lived in atrocious conditions.



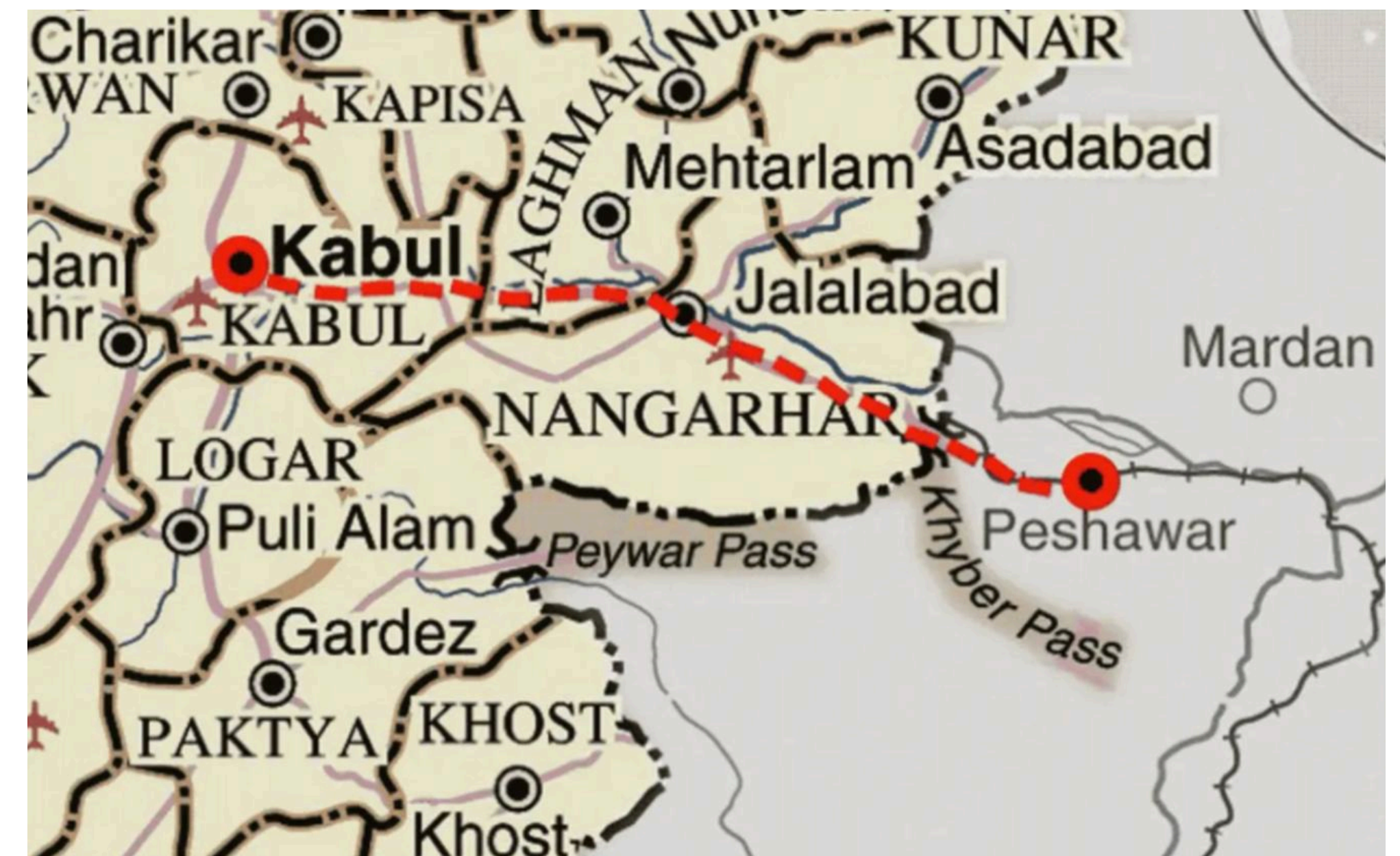
History of Photography in Afghanistan and KPK

Afghan Box Camera Project

SMUGGLING?

Some photographers turned to a trade in 'clandestine' photographs during the Taliban-era. This meant taking full-body or coloured portraits of clients secretly with a film camera and smuggling the film across the border to photo studios in Peshawar in the north-west of Pakistan for development. After the film was developed in Pakistan the illegal prints were returned to Kabul and handed over to the customer. This activity risked imprisonment for all involved on the Afghan side of the border. Such smuggling also occurred between Kandahar in southern Afghanistan and Quetta in Pakistan.

Here's a map of the Taliban-era film smuggling route between Kabul and Peshawar; the route travels through the tribal areas of north-western Pakistan and over the Khyber Pass.



McCurry remained for several weeks and then – as he had to cross back into Pakistan illegally – he hid his film in the seams of his clothes before returning to Chitral and then Delhi in order to send his shots to his agent back in the United States. In those pre-digital days, photographers had to rely on ‘hand carries’ – usually passengers or crew members flying back by plane – or the more expensive courier dispatches to get their film back. In this case, a friend took his film.

In 1979, disguised in local attire and without a passport, photographer Steve McCurry was smuggled into Afghanistan just before the Soviet invasion closed the country to all western journalists. He later returned to Pakistan with rolls of film sewn into his clothes and delivered the first photographic evidence of the conflict. Since then he has continued to venture into "government unadvisable" regions, crossing national borders in order to transcend cultural ones.

Other References



A Season Outside
by Amar Kanwar



The Pilgrim of a Beauty
by Imtiaz Ahmad Sahibzada

SHUKRIA

THANK YOU