



The Province of Herat is since ever one of the economically and culturally important regions in Afghanistan. Allegedly, the city was destroyed and newly founded by Alexander the Great. It is mentioned in Achaemenian, Parthian, Sassanian, and Hephtalite texts and located on crossroads that linked China, Central Asia, India, and Rome. The remains of these civilizations have not yet been found, they lie buried under river sediments and the modern city. Thus, they are not represented by objects.

During the Islamic period Herat flourished. It reached its peak during the 15th century, when the city developed into the cultural, religious, economic, and political centre. This surge is reflected by the many sites and monuments which until today mark the character of the town.

The National Museum of Herat

was established in 1925 by order of King Amanullah. Originally located near the Masjid-e Djami, it was shifted several times, last to Qala'-e Ikhtyaruddin around 1993 by former Governor Ismail Khan. The collection then comprised of more than 3000 objects. Under the Taliban, and afterwards, it suffered great losses. Many statues and miniature paintings from the famous Herati school were destroyed and hundreds of coins stolen. In 2001, the remaining objects were shifted to the present building, the exhibition opened in 2003.

On display are about 1000 pieces in 57 showcases. Apart from a few ethnographic exhibits, most pieces are archaeological objects, mainly from Herat Province, but also from other regions, such as Tashkurgan and Badghis. In the National Archives that were just inaugurated opposite the museum, about 140 manuscripts and books that date back to the 9th century AD can be seen.



Impressum

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Director: Yahya Khushbeen. Ministry of Information and Culture.
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National Museum HERAT

