



AFGHANISTAN LAW & POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

2026

Annual Conference



17–18 October 2026

American University · Washington, DC

SIS Building, 4400 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20016

LEAD EDITOR

Fariwar Abed

ALPA

ALPA 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

With thanks to our partners

This conference is made possible by the institutions and organisations that supported its sessions, workshop and speakers.



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2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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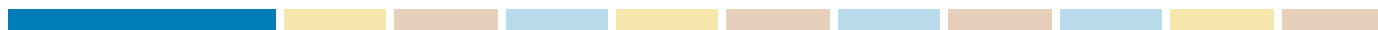
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Cover: Washington, DC, across the Potomac. Contents: the Lincoln Memorial and Reflecting Pool.

01

WELCOME MESSAGE & KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

SECTION 01





Bashir Mobasher

PRESIDENT, ALPA

Washington, DC
17 October 2026

WELCOME

It is a true honor to welcome you to the 2026 ALPA Annual Conference at American University in Washington, DC. This gathering brings together scholars, practitioners, and thought leaders from around the world to engage in meaningful dialogue on some of Afghanistan's most urgent political, legal, and social challenges. The panels will explore issues ranging from girls' education, women's resistance, and the struggle against gender apartheid, to Taliban rule and the economy, state building and the collapse of the Republic, geopolitics and international responsibility, and Afghanistan's changing media and public sphere.

The purpose of this conference extends beyond analysis and critique. It is an invitation to connect, collaborate, and inspire. Through the exchange of diverse perspectives, the building of networks, and the elevation of Afghan voices, I hope to advance scholarly inquiry and contribute to the policy conversations that shape Afghanistan's future and influence global understanding.

I am deeply grateful for your participation and commitment to this collective effort. I hope that the discussions and connections formed here spark new collaborations, fresh ideas, and a renewed dedication to justice, knowledge, and resilience.

BASHIR MOBASHER

PRESIDENT, ALPA

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Heather Barr

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, WOMEN'S RIGHTS DIVISION, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Heather Barr is associate director of the Women's Rights Division at Human Rights Watch. She has researched human rights in countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, South Korea and the US on issues including child marriage, girls' education, women's access to health care, domestic violence, online gender-based violence, so called "moral crimes", "honor violence" and "virginity exams", the rights of refugees and prisoners, torture, civilian casualties, freedom of expression and association, and human trafficking. She was the interim/acting co-director of the Women's Rights Division from 2018–2021.

She joined Human Rights Watch in 2011 in Kabul, Afghanistan, as the Afghanistan researcher, after working for the United Nations on human rights and legal reform in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burundi and Jordan.

Mirwais Balkhi

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY · FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION OF AFGHANISTAN

Dr. Mirwais Balkhi is an adjunct professor at James Madison University and president of Rumi House (Khane Mawlana), a cultural and educational institution in the Virginia, Maryland & Washington, D.C. area. He was a Fellow at the Wilson Center and an affiliate of the Afghanistan Policy Lab at Princeton University. From 2015 to 2020, he served as Afghanistan's Minister of Education and minister counsellor at the embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in India.

Dr. Balkhi holds a PhD in politics and international studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University and is the author and editor of numerous books on foreign policy, regional studies, and state-building. He has taught at Georgetown University, Kabul University, and the American University of Afghanistan.



02

PROGRAM AGENDA

SECTION 02



Friday, 16 October

ONLINE SESSIONS · EASTERN TIME

9:00AM
5:00PM

2026 ALPA-AIAS Intense Research Workshop

Research workshop

9:00AM
10:30AM

PLS 1

چشم‌انداز زن‌گرایانه؛ از روایت‌های رسمی تا تجربه‌ی زنانه

Online · p.17 · آمنة آزر، الپا

9:30AM
10:30AM

PLS 2

Gender, Education, Economy, and Social Change in Afghanistan

Alexandra Parrs, ALPA College · Online · p.17



TONIGHT · KABUL EVENINGS

An evening of professional networking, dinner and live Afghan music hosted by Kabul House.

Fri 16 Oct · 6:00–9:00 PM · SevaSpaces, Vienna, VA

\$100 · ALPA members & guests \$40

[Scan to register](#) · [more on page 122](#)



REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE

ALPA 2026 Annual Conference, 17–18 October, American University.

[Scan to register on Eventbrite](#)

Saturday, 17 October

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY · EASTERN TIME

8:30 AM
9:00 AM

Registration

9:00 AM
10:00 AM

Opening and Keynote Speech

Bashir Mobasher · Heather Barr · Mirwais Balkhi · **Founders Room**

10:30 AM
12:00 PM

PLS 3 International Intervention and Global Responsibilities

Reva Rasstack, American University · **SIS 120** · [p.18](#)

PLS 4 Women Education and Resilience Under the Taliban

Jisun Jeong, George Mason University · **SIS 233** · [p.18](#)

PLS 5

ریشه‌های تاریخی و ساختاری فروپاشی جمهوری در افغانستان

SIS 333 · [p.19](#) · هارون نجم پور، خانه مولانا

12:00 PM
1:00 PM

LUNCH

1:00 PM
2:30 PM

PLS 6 Gender Apartheid and Women Resistance Under the Taliban

Farida Razaqi, Harvard University · **SIS 120** · [p.19](#)

PLS 7 Taliban Rule: Law, Economy, and Society

David Lublin, American University · **SIS 233** · [p.20](#)

3:00 PM
4:30 PM

PLS 8 Book Talk I & II: Women & Peace

Omar Sharifi, Johns Hopkins University · **SIS 120** · [p.20](#)

PLS 9 Geopolitics: Borders, Resources, and Security

Annie Pforzheimer, Pace University · **SIS 233** · [p.21](#)

5:00 PM
6:00 PM

PLS 10 Plenary Panel I (Afghanistan Journal): "Afghanistan: A Neglected Reality"

Scott Worden, Afghanistan War Commission · **Founders Room** · [p.21](#)

Sunday, 18 October

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY · EASTERN TIME

9:00AM
10:30AM

PLS 11

روند دولت‌سازی و فروپاشی دولت‌ها در افغانستان؛ از آسیب‌شناسی تا راه حل

عظیم الله ورسجی · **SIS 120** · [p.22](#)

PLS 12

Book Talk III: Afghanistan's Changing Public Sphere(s): Media Structures, Communicative Rupture, and Transnationalization

Poya Hashimi, Afghanistan International, Reach Media · **SIS 233** · [p.22](#)

11:00AM
12:30PM

PLS 13

The Dos and Don'ts of State Building in Afghanistan

Mujib Rahimi, Political Scientist · **SIS 120** · [p.23](#)

PLS 14

میزگرد اول (رواداری): بررسی پیامدهای حملات نظامی پاکستان بر غیر نظامیان در افغانستان

حسبیا اتکپال · **SIS 233** · [p.23](#)

12:30PM
1:30PM

LUNCH & AWARD

Founders Room

1:30PM
3:00PM

PLS 15

A Transnational and Trans-Temporal Reading of Afghanistan National Project

Anila Daulatzai, University of California, Santa Cruz · **SIS 120** · [p.24](#)

PLS 16

Roundtable II (ADVP): Afghanistan's Five Years under the Taliban

Omar Sadr, Princeton University's Afghanistan Policy Lab · **SIS 233** · [p.24](#)

3:30PM
5:00PM

PLS 17

Plenary Panel II. Gender Apartheid: A Multidimensional Analysis

Metra Mehran, End Gender Apartheid Campaign · **Founders Room** · [p.25](#)

Zoom directory

FRIDAY, 16 OCTOBER · EASTERN TIME

	2026 ALPA-AIAS Intense Research Workshop	9:00 AM 5:00 PM	No online link	
PLS 1	چشم‌انداز زن‌گرایانه؛ از روایت‌های رسمی تا تجربه‌ی زنانه	9:00 AM 10:30 AM	us06web.zoom.us/j/82081439612?pwd=ZuAf8HKZpNyXXmB9ZYq5POaF472uVU.1 MEETING ID 820 8143 9612	P.17
PLS 2	Gender, Education, Economy, and Social Change in Afghanistan	9:30 AM 10:30 AM	us06web.zoom.us/j/86153077428?pwd=q506NaXFx0SoUdbRjtPqsXB9QsFL9f.1 MEETING ID 861 5307 7428	P.17

Zoom directory

SATURDAY, 17 OCTOBER · EASTERN TIME

	Opening and Keynote Speech	9:00 AM 10:00 AM	us06web.zoom.us/j/83909909487 ?pwd=vy5dERxf7366qqatai1RnKVbZPZenr.1 MEETING ID 839 0990 9487	
PLS 3	International Intervention and Global Responsibilities	10:30 AM 12:00 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/83755873044 ?pwd=zzj6dunVwEO3kaUnj3ZUIcwEg4QYxt.1 MEETING ID 837 5587 3044	P.18
PLS 4	Women Education and Resilience Under the Taliban	10:30 AM 12:00 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/86790564636 ?pwd=ZTXtylwvwwSABjBpWh6CoAfMkQcBpWB.1 MEETING ID 867 9056 4636	P.18
PLS 5	ریشه‌های تاریخی و ساختاری فروپاشی جمهوری در افغانستان	10:30 AM 12:00 PM	nyu.zoom.us/j/95963498633 MEETING ID 959 6349 8633	P.19
PLS 6	Gender Apartheid and Women Resistance Under the Taliban	1:00 PM 2:30 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/87670076793 ?pwd=Jv44QFMesmUudXB8e1Mx8qiOH48qci.1 MEETING ID 876 7007 6793	P.19
PLS 7	Taliban Rule: Law, Economy, and Society	1:00 PM 2:30 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/83598090216 ?pwd=6yFfyjGfoihv1PwMd9BxN0QZ84HDSa.1 MEETING ID 835 9809 0216	P.20
PLS 8	Book Talk I & II: Women & Peace	3:00 PM 4:30 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/85369381685 ?pwd=LY2eDyE1AthPbS8RYDCv7v0sfbC1Er.1 MEETING ID 853 6938 1685	P.20
PLS 9	Geopolitics: Borders, Resources, and Security	3:00 PM 4:30 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/86144639373 ?pwd=dmAOrwaXPx2fQfbTHK7JQvFl31zjDr.1 MEETING ID 861 4463 9373	P.21
PLS 10	Plenary Panel I (Afghanistan Journal): "Afghanistan: A Neglected Reality"	5:00 PM 6:00 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/86204603932 ?pwd=KzQOYtllUObFVa06dY0GcxjC3sxfC9.1 MEETING ID 862 0460 3932	P.21

Zoom directory

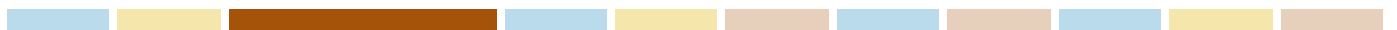
SUNDAY, 18 OCTOBER · EASTERN TIME

PLS 11	روند دولت‌سازی و فروپاشی دولت‌ها در افغانستان؛ از آسیب‌شناسی تا راه حل	9:00 AM 10:30 AM	us06web.zoom.us/j/82337892802?pwd=13NjY8MwmWMBBoB4mOSdVS4pmgEpqI9.1 MEETING ID 823 3789 2802	P.22
PLS 12	Book Talk III: Afghanistan's Changing Public Sphere(s): Media Structures, Communicative Rupture, and Transnationalization	9:00 AM 10:30 AM	us06web.zoom.us/j/89066283729?pwd=CbNGIruUrVdTxCtFEjfbYj9ZMbluk.1 MEETING ID 890 6628 3729	P.22
PLS 13	The Dos and Don'ts of State Building in Afghanistan	11:00 AM 12:30 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/88331999666?pwd=P5sS3QBnoTVcWdHVNBbabaO7Xwn56X.1 MEETING ID 883 3199 9666	P.23
PLS 14	میز گرد اول (رواداری): بررسی پیامدهای حملات نظامی پاکستان بر غیر نظامیان در افغانستان	11:00 AM 12:30 PM	No online link	P.23
	Lunch & Award	12:30 PM 1:30 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/88000354890?pwd=SnOZP6i9YLVBL7BfRdKnNunN3VtRF4.1 MEETING ID 880 0035 4890	
PLS 15	A Transnational and Trans-Temporal Reading of Afghanistan National Project	1:30 PM 3:00 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/81478296086?pwd=BFkIMRHc1knQZEr7CSeDEJQd13nHkY.1 MEETING ID 814 7829 6086	P.24
PLS 16	Roundtable II (ADVP): Afghanistan's Five Years under the Taliban	1:30 PM 3:00 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/84593908213?pwd=RnabIJMS3Yba7egkXQCoTRuBb6zzqT.1 MEETING ID 845 9390 8213	P.24
PLS 17	Plenary Panel II. Gender Apartheid: A Multidimensional Analysis	3:30 PM 5:00 PM	us06web.zoom.us/j/88945903008?pwd=iOzPq0vClReZmyhf09V2ZYwtWzag7G.1 MEETING ID 889 4590 3008	P.25

04

PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

SECTION 04



Guidelines for *panelists*

MODERATORS

1. Moderators also serve as discussants unless a separate discussant has been invited, commenting on both the papers and the presentations and asking initial questions to guide the discussion.
2. Familiarize yourself with panelists' bios so you can introduce them correctly.
3. Reach out to panelists before the meeting to coordinate and ensure a smooth flow.
4. Arrive ten minutes before the scheduled start so the session begins on time.
5. Invite the audience to sit closer to the front — better engagement, better photographs.
6. Keep panelists to their allotted time: with five panelists, 10 minutes each; with four, 12 minutes each; with three, 14 minutes each. Co-presenters share one time slot.
7. Signal presenters at least 3 minutes before their time is up. Volunteers will assist with timekeeping.
8. Conclude the session after 80 minutes, including questions, so participants can take the scheduled break.
9. Reserve sufficient time for audience questions and engagement.

PRESENTERS

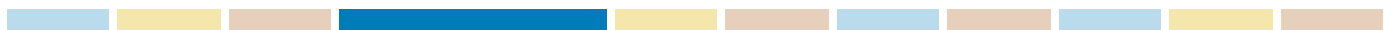
1. Share your draft paper with the moderator in advance, allowing time for constructive feedback.
2. Arrive ten minutes before the session to upload slides and ensure a timely start.
3. Adhere to the time limits and follow the moderator's guidance — these sessions are designed to strengthen draft projects.
4. Bring a USB copy of your slides to share with the moderator or the room volunteers.

Running late? Every room has an ALPA volunteer in a yellow lanyard from fifteen minutes before the session starts.

05

PANELS AND PRESENTERS

SECTION 05



PLS 1

MODERATOR

آمنه آزر، الپا

ROOM

Online

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 820 8143 9612

TIME

Friday, 16 October

9:00AM – 10:30AM

چشم‌انداز زن‌گرایانه؛ از روایت‌های رسمی تا تجربه‌ی زنانه

فخریه سمندری، استاد دانشگاه آنلاین زن، موسس مکتب آنلاین گوهر شادیگم p.27
حق آموزش دختران افغانستان؛ راهکاری مبتنی بر عدالت آموزشی

پویا براتی، کالج آلیا p.28
زندگی یک دختر افغانستانی

شهلا فرید، کالج آلیا p.29
زن بودن، زن ماندن: داستان‌هایی از زیست و مقاومت زنان افغانستان

شبانہ کامرانی، دانشگاه زن p.30
از آرزو تا مقاومت

PLS 2

MODERATOR

Alexandra Parrs, ALPA
College

ROOM

Online

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 861 5307 7428

TIME

Friday, 16 October

9:30AM – 10:30AM

Gender, Education, Economy, and Social Change in Afghanistan

Noria Mohammadi, Universitas Padjadjaran p.31

Representing Religion and Gender Stereotypes in Homeira Qaderi's Dancing in the Mosque

Atefa Hussaini, Former Lecturer of Baghlan University p.32

Examining the Impact of the Misery Index on the Happiness Index in Afghanistan's Economy

Hamidullah Hamidy, American University of Afghanistan p.33

Determinants of Customer Satisfaction in the Restaurant Industry

Mariam Amiri, Forward International Academy p.34

The Role of Girls' Education in the Development of Afghanistan

PLS 3

MODERATOR

Reva Rasstack, American University

ROOM

SIS 120

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 837 5587 3044

TIME

Saturday, 17 October

10:30AM – 12:00PM

International Intervention and Global Responsibilities

Annie Pforzheimer, Pace University p.35

How can the international community support a consultation mechanism that realistically empowers Afghanistan's citizens to negotiate for their own just and stable future?

Negina Khalili, Loyola University p.36

Can a People's Tribunal Serve as Legal Accountability? Evaluating the People's Tribunal for Women of Afghanistan as a Supplementary Mechanism

Aftab Hussain, Deakin University p.37

Network Politics and External Intervention: How Political Networks Transformed Afghanistan's Security Sector Reform (2001-2021)

Khushal Nabizada, King's College London p.38

Governing Health Through Conditionality: World Bank Financing, Health System Governance, and State Transformation in Afghanistan (2001–2024)

Fiona Costello, University of Birmingham · Ali Ahmadi, Anglia Ruskin University · Catherine Barnard, University of Cambridge p.39

A socio-legal analysis of the UK's Afghan Citizen Resettlement Schemes post-2021.

Sanaa Talwasa, New Jersey Judiciary p.40

Supporting Afghan Asylum Seekers Who are not Considered "Allies"

PLS 4

MODERATOR

Jisun Jeong, George Mason University

ROOM

SIS 233

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 867 9056 4636

TIME

Saturday, 17 October

10:30AM – 12:00PM

Women Education and Resilience Under the Taliban

Ateffa Jalali, Hiroshima University p.41

Social and Emotional Well-Being in Alternative Education Settings: Preliminary Findings from LEARN Schools in Afghanistan

Zahra Tawana, University of Virginia p.42

Understanding Impact and Change in Contexts of Educational Exclusion: A Constructivist Grounded Theory Study of Afghan Girls and Educational Service

Mariam Alamyar, American University of Afghanistan p.43

The Status of English Education in Afghanistan: A Pre-and Post Taliban Take Over Analysis

Naresh Naman Solanki, Indira Gandhi National Open University p.44

Beyond Formal Education: Digital Learning for Afghan Women after 2021

R. Ah & Ro. Mu, ALPA College

The Price of A Promise: Investigating Predatory Behaviors in Some Online Education Programs

Ibrahim Dawran, University of Calabria p.46

Interrupted Futures: The Psychosocial Meaning of Girls' Educational Deprivation under Taliban Rule in Afghanistan

PLS 5

MODERATOR

هارون نجم پور، خانه مولانا

ROOM

SIS 333

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 959 6349 8633

TIME

Saturday, 17 October

10:30AM – 12:00PM

ریشه‌های تاریخی و ساختاری فروپاشی جمهوری در افغانستان

p.47 شفیق الله شفق, **Fulda University of Applied Sciences Germany**p.48 فضل الرحمن رحمانی, **Carleton University**

قبیله گرایي و شکنندگی دولت مدرن؛ یک رویکرد تطبیقی میان افغانستان و عراق

p.49 منان دهبازد, **Kabul School of International Relations**

تأثیر ناسیونالیسم قومی داوودخان بر افزایش رقابت‌های منطقه‌ای در افغانستان

p.50 تمیم حیدری, **مکتب روابط بین الملل کابل**

نقش جهانی شدن در توسعه سیاسی افغانستان

p.51 احمد طارق نورزا ده, **مركز صلح و مطالعات بین الملل افغانستان**

رویکرد کشورهای عربی به افغانستان پس از بازگشت طالبان به قدرت

p.52 محبوب الله افخمی, **مکتب روابط بین الملل کابل**

بازاندیشی امنیت افغانستان در چارچوب نظریه مجموعه‌های امنیتی منطقه‌ای: از دولت عایق تا فضای عایق امنیتی

PLS 6

MODERATOR

Farida Razaqi, Harvard University

ROOM

SIS 120

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 876 7007 6793

TIME

Saturday, 17 October

1:00PM – 2:30PM

Gender Apartheid and Women Resistance Under the Taliban

p.53 **Rashmi Dangol, University of Pittsburgh***Women's Resistance and Online Activism against Taliban Oppression*p.54 **Mehri Rezaee, University of Oklahoma***Overview of Afghan Women's Rights under the Taliban rule*p.55 **Benafsha Yaqoobi, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicines (LSHTM)***Multiple and Intersecting Discrimination Against Women in Afghanistan: Legal and Social Challenges*p.56 **Salma Abid, Griffith University***The Politics of Women's Rights and the Contradictions of International Intervention in Post-2001 Afghanistan*p.57 **Maryam Sadr, Columbia University***Women's Nonviolent Resistance under the Taliban Regime*

PLS 7

MODERATOR

David Lublin, American University

ROOM

SIS 233

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 835 9809 0216

TIME

Saturday, 17 October
1:00PM – 2:30PM

Taliban Rule: Law, Economy, and Society

Sediqa Zaki, International Food Policy Research Institute p.58

Afghanistan's Post-2021 Economy: Policy Success or Economic Compression?

Sarajuddin Isar, Radboud University Nijmegen p.59

From Rebel to Ruler: How the Taliban Govern the Economy in Afghanistan

Lutfur Rahman Saeed, ALPA p.60

The Architecture of Illegitimacy: An Analysis of Taliban Law on Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice Through the Lens of Maqasid al-Shari'ah

Mustafa Saqib, Rutgers University p.61

From Rebelocracy to Theocratic Sovereignty: Explaining the Durability and Contradictions of Taliban Governance in Afghanistan

Ahmad Mohammadi, University of Warwick p.62

The Political Economy of Fragility: Why Economic Development Failed in Afghanistan (2001–2021)

Abdul Saboor Matin, University of Lancashire p.63

Sovereignty Without Capacity: Regulatory Fragility, Sanctions, and the Politics of Access to Medicines in Afghanistan

PLS 8

MODERATOR

Omar Sharifi, Johns Hopkins University

ROOM

SIS 120

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 853 6938 1685

TIME

Saturday, 17 October
3:00PM – 4:30PM

Book Talk I & II: Women & Peace

Kawun Kakar, Kakar History Foundation · Jawan Shir Rasikh, Publication Editor p.64

In Search of Peace for Afghanistan: Historical Letters of President Najibullah and Dr M. Hassan Kakar - A Collection of Essays

Zohra Orokzai, StrongHer Organization p.65

Heala - A Story Of An Afghan Girl

PLS 9

MODERATOR

Annie Pforzheimer, Pace University

ROOM

SIS 233

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 861 4463 9373

TIME

Saturday, 17 October
3:00PM – 4:30PM

Geopolitics: Borders, Resources, and Security

Kamal Davidson, NIOD p.66

The Limits of Coercion: Pakistan's Pressure Strategy, the Afghan Taliban, and the TTP

Najibullah Loodin, Texas A&M University p.67

Assessing the Emotional Landscape of the Borderland Communities to the Flow of the Shared Watercourse: A Comparative Study

Arshpreet Kaur, Jamia Millia Islamia p.68

Afghanistan's Critical Minerals: Between Resource Wealth and Geopolitical Competition

Lema Salah, Radboud University Nijmegen / Royal Academy for Arts & Sciences p.69

Infrastructure after Intervention: Roads, Regional Power, and the Political Economy of Taliban-ruled Afghanistan

Maryam Danesh, Washington and Lee University p.70

The Exiled Mind: Afghan Diaspora, Digital Identity, and the Future of a Nation Beyond Borders

Javeed Ahwar, Nazarbayev University p.71

From Geographic Space to Geopolitical Strategy: The Evolution, Politicization, and Modern Resurgence of "Turkestan" (12th–21st Century)

PLS 10

MODERATOR

Scott Worden, Afghanistan War Commission

ROOM

Founders Room

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 862 0460 3932

TIME

Saturday, 17 October
5:00PM – 6:00PM

Plenary Panel I (Afghanistan Journal):
"Afghanistan: A Neglected Reality"

Thomas Barfield, Boston University p.72

Why Constant Failures? Alternative Models of Governance for Afghanistan

Said Reza Huseini, Georgetown University p.73

Afghanistan: A Neglected Reality

Mirwais Balkhi, James Madison University

Fragmented Foundations: Factors for Failure of Nation-State Building in Afghanistan

Sayed Abdullah Ahmadi, Afghanistan Democracy and Development Organization (ADDO)

The Effects of Centralism in Undermining Democracy in Afghanistan: A Comprehensive Analysis (2001–August 2021)

Amin Saikal, Australian National University p.74

Afghanistan: America's failed intervention

Hannah Hassani, St Andrews University p.73

Afghanistan: A Neglected Reality

PLS 11

MODERATOR

عظیم الله ورسجی

ROOM

SIS 120

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 823 3789 2802

TIME

Sunday, 18 October

9:00AM – 10:30AM

روند دولت‌سازی و فروپاشی دولت‌ها در افغانستان؛ از آسیب‌شناسی تا راه حل

کامبخش نیکویی، دانشگاه رنا p.75

تحلیل گفتمانی دولت‌های افغانستان

میرویس علمدار، دانشگاه انلاین زن p.76

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خلیل الله افضل، مؤسسه پژوهشی بایسنر p.78

میراث زبانی شبه‌قاره در افغانستان؛ تحلیل واژه‌گزینی در فارسی دری در سده بیستم

رویین پویل، تربیت مدرس p.79

ماجرای تجزیه‌خواهی افغانستان در معادلات سیاسی افغانستان (سیاست، قومیت و هویت)

عبدالمجید دانشیار، دیپلمات اسبق p.80

نقش همکاری‌های علمی مصر در نخبه‌گان افغانستان

PLS 12

MODERATOR

Poya Hashimi, Afghanistan International, Reach Media

ROOM

SIS 233

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 890 6628 3729

TIME

Sunday, 18 October

9:00AM – 10:30AM

Book Talk III: Afghanistan's Changing Public Sphere(s): Media Structures, Communicative Rupture, and Transnationalization

Kefayat Hamidi, Leipzig University p.81

Afghanistan's Communicative Rupture after 2021: Fragile, Participatory, and Transnational Public Sphere(s)

Hamid Obaidi, Leipzig University p.82

Journalism of Afghanistan after 2021: Media and Public Sphere(s) across Borders

Laily Habib, Leipzig University p.83

YouTube and Public Communication of Afghanistan after 2021

Ramin Kamangar, Leipzig University p.84

Afghanistan-Linked Publics in Germany: Digital Networks, Actors, and Narratives in a Post- Migration Society

Abumoslem Khorasani, Leipzig University p.85

Online Terrorism and Fragmented Public Sphere(s): ISKP's Intermediated Communication in Afghanistan after 2021

PLS 13

MODERATOR

Mujib Rahimi, Political
Scientist

ROOM

SIS 120

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 883 3199 9666

TIME

Sunday, 18 October
11:00AM – 12:30PM

The Dos and Don'ts of State Building in Afghanistan

Sayed Ziafatullah Saeedi, Bonn International Center for Conflict Studies p.86

Redefining Subnational Governance in Afghanistan; A Study of 52 Community-Implemented Projects in Qarabagh, Ghazni

Michael Sullivan, ALPA College p.87

Competing Models of Social Engineering: Legal Reform in Kandahar under Soviet and NATO Intervention

Mirwais Parsa, Seton Hill University p.88

Rival Taxation, Foreign Aid, and State Building in Afghanistan

Jena Karim, University of London p.89

Making Constitutional Guarantor Institutions More Politically Resilient: Lessons from Afghanistan

Manizha Wafeq, Global Women's Trade Caravan

Afghan Women as Economic Actors: Evidence, Challenges, and a Roadmap for Enterprise Resilience and Growth

M. Ayub Yusufzai, Afghan Online Education · Shabnam Ahmadi, Afghan Roshan Online University p.90

Women's Rights in the Absence of Constitutional Order: A Case Study of Afghanistan

PLS 14

MODERATOR

حسبیا انکپال

ROOM

SIS 233

ZOOM

No online link

TIME

Sunday, 18 October
11:00AM – 12:30PM

میز گرد اول (رواداری): بررسی پیامدهای حملات نظامی پاکستان بر غیر نظامیان در افغانستان

حنیفه گریوال, **Women's Rights First**

عارف دوستیار, دانشگاه نوتردام

J.D, رواداری

PLS 15

MODERATOR

Anila Daulatzai, University
of California, Santa Cruz

ROOM

SIS 120

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 814 7829 6086

TIME

Sunday, 18 October

1:30PM – 3:00PM

A Transnational and Trans-Temporal Reading of Afghanistan National Project

Naseema Zeerak, Middlebury Institute of International Studies p.91

Modernity's Brutalism: The Intimacies of Ethnic Politics and Tyranny in the Making of Afghanistan

Mortaza Mandegar Hassani, History Department, UCLA p.92

Islamic Knowledge, Nationalism, and Transnational Networks in 1930s Afghanistan

Ameneh Eskandari, Politics Department, UC Santa Cruz p.93

Experiencing Nationhood Beyond the State: Afghan Communities in Iran

Sayed Reza Hussaini, University of Hertfordshire p.94

Between History and Myth: Elite Narratives of the Past and the Construction of Political Reality in Afghanistan

Brian Glyn Williams, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth p.95

The Uzbeks of Afghan Turkistan from Medieval Conquests to Dostum "the Taliban Killer." Fieldwork with a Warlord in Sheberghan and Mazar i Sharif.

Wasal Faqiryar, Notre Dame University p.96

Youth Expression and Communication Strategies in Post-August 2021 Afghanistan

PLS 16

MODERATOR

Omar Sadr, Princeton
University's Afghanistan
Policy Lab

ROOM

SIS 233

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 845 9390 8213

TIME

Sunday, 18 October

1:30PM – 3:00PM

Roundtable II (ADVP): Afghanistan's Five Years under the Taliban

Aref Dostyar, University of Notre Dame

Sebqatullah Ghaznavi, Afghanistan Dialogue and Visioning Process

Moqadasa Yurish, Albright Stonebridge Group

Shoaib Rahim, Zabuli Center p.97

PLS 17

MODERATOR

Metra Mehran, End Gender
Apartheid Campaign

ROOM

Founders Room

ZOOM

[Join on Zoom](#)

Meeting ID 889 4590 3008

TIME

Sunday, 18 October
3:30PM – 5:00PM

Plenary Panel II. Gender Apartheid: A Multidimensional Analysis

Halima Kazem, Stanford University

Confronting Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan: Legal, Political, and Social Perspective

Omar Sadr, Princeton University p.98

Gender Apartheid: Cultural Relativism and The Taliban's Politics of Representation

Nazeela Elmi, Afghanistan Accountability Collective p.99

Gender Apartheid and Intersectionality

Aryana Mahmood, The Australian National University (ANU) p.100

Translating from the intermediary: Afghan women's legal advocacy, post-2021

Tahmina Sobat, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities p.101

Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan: Beyond Symbolic Recognition Towards Genuine Accountability and Transnational Feminist Solidarity

06

ABSTRACTS

SECTION 06



ALPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026

ALPA

حق آموزش دختران افغانستان؛ راهکاری مبتنی بر عدالت آموزشی

فخریه سمندری

استاد دانشگاه آنلاین زن، موسس مکتب آنلاین گوهر شادبیگم

آموزش یکی از بنیادی‌ترین حقوق بشری و از مهم‌ترین عوامل توسعه پایدار در جوامع معاصر به شمار می‌رود. دسترسی برابر زنان و دختران به آموزش نه تنها یک حق اساسی انسانی، بلکه نقشی تعیین‌کننده در رشد اقتصادی، ثبات اجتماعی، توانمندسازی، مشارکت مدنی و تقویت عدالت دارد. با این حال، در سال‌های اخیر، دسترسی زنان و دختران به آموزش در افغانستان با چالش‌های جدی مواجه شده و به یکی از مباحث مهم حقوقی و اجتماعی در سطح ملی و بین‌المللی تبدیل گردیده است.

این پژوهش با رویکرد توصیفی - تحلیلی به بررسی ابعاد حقوقی حق آموزش زنان در افغانستان می‌پردازد و جایگاه این حق را در اسناد بین‌المللی حقوق بشر و اصول عدالت آموزشی مورد مطالعه قرار می‌دهد. همچنین، پیامدهای اجتماعی، فرهنگی و اقتصادی محدودیت‌های آموزشی بر زندگی زنان، خانواده‌ها و روند توسعه جامعه بررسی می‌شود. یافته‌های پژوهش نشان می‌دهد که محرومیت از آموزش، علاوه بر نقض حقوق بنیادین انسانی، موجب کاهش فرصت‌های اشتغال، تضعیف مشارکت اجتماعی زنان و محدود شدن ظرفیت‌های توسعه انسانی می‌گردد.

این مقاله ضمن تحلیل چالش‌های موجود، بر اهمیت بهره‌گیری از شیوه‌های نوین آموزشی، توسعه آموزش آنلاین، حمایت از نهادهای آموزشی و تقویت همکاری‌های ملی و بین‌المللی برای حفظ حق آموزش تأکید می‌کند. در پایان، راهکارهایی برای گسترش دسترسی آموزشی و تقویت نقش زنان در فرآیند توسعه پایدار ارائه می‌شود. نتایج نشان می‌دهد که این پژوهش می‌تواند برای سیاست‌گذاران، پژوهشگران، نهادهای آموزشی و فعالان حوزه حقوق بشر در جهت حمایت از حق آموزش و ارتقای عدالت آموزشی مفید واقع شود.

MODERATOR

آمنه آرم، الپا

TIME

Friday, 16 October

9:00AM – 10:30AM

ROOM

Online

PANEL

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BIO

p.106

زندگی یک دختر افغانستانی

پویا براتی
کالج آلیا

این مقاله روایت زندگی یک دختر افغان است که در محیطی سنتی و محدودکننده با باورهای جنسیتی سخت‌گیرانه رشد کرده است. هدف این مطالعه نشان دادن تجربه زیسته او در مواجهه با محرومیت آموزشی، مقاومت فردی و تلاش برای ادامه یادگیری در شرایط دشوار است. در این روایت او در خانواده‌ای سنتی با نگرش محدود به آموزش دختران رشد می‌کند و در کودکی با این باور مواجه می‌شود که نقش دختر محدود به کارهای خانگی تعریف شده است. با وجود این محدودیت‌ها او علاقه شدید به آموزش و پیشرفت دارد و همواره در مدرسه تلاش می‌کند تا شاگرد برتر باشد.

پس از محرومیت از رفتن به مکتب در صنف پنجم، او به صورت پنهانی به ادامه تحصیل می‌پردازد و برای حفظ کتاب‌ها و هویت آموزشی خود از روش‌های مخفی استفاده می‌کند. با افشای این موضوع با خشونت خانوادگی مواجه می‌شود و مدتی از آموزش محروم می‌گردد که منجر به افسردگی شدید و بحران روحی در زندگی او می‌شود. با وجود این بحران او دوباره با اتکا به اراده شخصی خود مسیر یادگیری را از طریق آموزش‌های آنلاین و یادگیری دینی ادامه می‌دهد و حتی برای تأمین هزینه اینترنت به مهارت خیاطی روی می‌آورد.

این تجربه نشان می‌دهد که مقاومت فردی و امید به آموزش می‌تواند در شرایط دشوار نیز ادامه یابد. در نهایت این روایت بر اهمیت آموزش دختران و نقش آن در توانمندسازی فردی و اجتماعی تأکید می‌کند و نشان می‌دهد که هویت جنسیتی نمی‌تواند مانع تحقق آرزوها شود. این مطالعه همچنین الهام‌بخش توجه بیشتر به حقوق آموزشی دختران در جوامع محدودکننده است.

MODERATOR

آمنه آرم، الپا

TIME

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زن بودن، زن ماندن: داستان‌هایی از زیست و مقاومت زنان افغانستان

شهلا فرید
کالج آلیا

MODERATOR

آمنه آرم، الپا

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در افغانستان، زن بودن نه صرفاً یک هویت، بلکه تجربه‌ای مداوم از مقاومت است. در جامعه‌ای که قدرت، معنا و مشروعیت، در بسیاری از دوره‌ها عمدتاً در اختیار مردان بوده است، زن بودن اغلب با سکوت، حذف، محدودیت و انکار همراه شده است. با این حال، در دل همین ساختارهای ناپراب، زنانی زیسته‌اند که نه خاموش مانده‌اند و نه ناپدید شده‌اند؛ بلکه هر یک به شیوه‌ای، ایستاده‌اند، معنا ساخته‌اند و بقا را به کنش تبدیل کرده‌اند.

«زن بودن، زن ماندن، داستان‌هایی از زیست و مقاومت زنان افغانستان» روایت همین ایستادگی است؛ روایت زنانی که در خانه، مکتب، دانشگاه، جامعه، تبعید و زندان، برای حفظ کرامت و حقوق انسانی خود تلاش کرده‌اند. این مقاومت همیشه در قالب اعتراض آشکار ظاهر نشده است؛ گاه در آموزش پنهانی، نوشتن در خلوت، تربیت فرزندان، حفظ هویت، گفتن حقیقت و امتناع از فراموش کردن معنا یافته است. از این منظر، مقاومت فقط ایستادن در برابر قدرت نیست؛ گاهی خود زنده ماندن، معنا ساختن و حفظ انسانیت، شکلی از مقاومت است.

این کتاب تلاشی برای ثبت بخشی از حافظه‌ی جمعی زنان افغانستان است؛ زنانی که تاریخ رسمی، در بسیاری موارد، صدای آنان را نشنیده یا نادیده گرفته است. روایت‌های این کتاب برای بازتولید رنج و ترجم‌برانگیزی گردآوری نشده‌اند، بلکه شهادت‌هایی از زیست زنان در شرایطی‌اند که سکوت به یک قاعده و سخن گفتن به یک خطر تبدیل شده است. این صداها تلاش می‌کنند تاریخ را از حاشیه به متن بیاورند و نشان دهند که تجربه زنانه می‌تواند منبعی برای شناخت، نقد و تغییر اجتماعی باشد.

نویسنده در این اثر، پیش از آنکه راوی باشد، شنونده است. روایت‌ها از دل گفت‌وگوهای طولانی، تجربه‌های زیسته و رابطه‌ای مبتنی بر اعتماد شکل گرفته‌اند. روش گردآوری روایت‌ها، کیفی و تجربه‌محور بوده و از سنت‌های مطالعات زنان، انسان‌شناسی، جامعه‌شناسی، تاریخ شفاهی و اتوبیوگرافی خلاق الهام گرفته است. گفت‌وگوها عمدتاً غیرساختاریافته و عمیق بوده و بر گوش دادن فعال، همدلی و احترام به مرزهای روانی و عاطفی راویان استوار بوده‌اند.

در این شیوه روایتگری، نویسنده گاه به‌عنوان شنونده، شاهد و مشارکت‌کننده در روایت حضور دارد. مرز میان روایت شخصی و حقیقت اجتماعی آگاهانه سیال نگه داشته شده است؛ با این تأکید که وفاداری به حقیقت تجربه زیسته، بر زیبایی‌شناسی و پیرایش ادبی اولویت دارد. آنچه در این کتاب آمده، بازآفرینی داستانی واقعیت نیست، بلکه تلاشی برای نزدیک شدن به حقیقت زندگی زنانی است که فرصت یا امکان بیان تجربه‌های خود را کمتر داشته‌اند.

پرسش بنیادین کتاب این است که زن بودن در شرایط سرکوب چه معنایی پیدا می‌کند و زنان چگونه هویت، عاملیت و کرامت انسانی خود را حفظ، بازتعریف یا از نو خلق می‌کنند؟ در کنار این پرسش، کتاب به سازوکارهای اجتماعی و فرهنگی قدرت نیز می‌پردازد: نظام پدرسالار، هنجارهای فرهنگی، مناسبات خانوادگی و نهادهای رسمی چگونه بر زندگی زنان اثر می‌گذارند و زنان چگونه در دل همین ساختارها، راه‌های گوناگون مقاومت را می‌آفرینند؟

از سوی دیگر، کتاب به اهمیت روایت زنانه در حفظ هویت و حافظه جمعی توجه دارد. روایت، در اینجا صرفاً وسیله‌ای برای بازگویی رنج نیست؛ بلکه ابزاری برای بازپس‌گیری صدا، معنا و عاملیت است. روایت زنانه می‌تواند تصویر زن افغان را از «موضوع رنج» به «سوژه تجربه، معنا و کنش» تغییر دهد.

هدف این کتاب تولید یک تحلیل دانشگاهی یا ارائه یک پژوهش آکادمیک نیست؛ بلکه تلاشی انسانی و روایت‌محور برای ثبت بخشی از تجربه زنان افغانستان است. این اثر می‌خواهد میان روایت و نقد، میان درد و همدلی، و میان سکوت و صدا پلی ایجاد کند؛ پلی میان نسل‌هایی از زنان که هر یک به شیوه خود زیسته، مقاومت کرده و بخشی از تاریخ زنان افغانستان را ساخته‌اند.

از نظر مفهومی، این شیوه روایتگری از سنت‌های فمینیستی، به‌ویژه فمینیسم پسااستعماری، روایت‌محور و نظریه‌های جنسیت و قدرت الهام می‌گیرد. در این نگاه، نوشتن صرفاً بازنمایی واقعیت نیست؛ بلکه می‌تواند شکلی از کنش اجتماعی و سیاسی باشد. در این نگاه ثبت صدای زنان، در برابر خاموش‌سازی، حذف و تحریف تجربه‌های آنان، خود شکلی از مقاومت است. مقاومتی برای حفظ صدا، معنا و حافظه.

«زن بودن، زن ماندن» نه کتابی درباره قربانی بودن زنان است و نه روایتی از پیروزی نهایی آنان. این کتاب درباره بقا، ایستادگی و حفظ انسانیت است؛ درباره زنانی که در برابر حذف، ایستادند و در برابر خاموشی، صدا ساختند.

هنوز زن برمی‌خیزند؛ نه به این معنا که رنج پایان یافته است، بلکه به این معنا که انسان بودن هنوز از او گرفته نشده است. این کتاب، شهادت همین ماندن است.

از آرزو تا مقاومت

شبانه کامرانی
دانشگاه زن

موفق شدن از کجا شروع می‌شود؟ از یک خواسته، شاید هم یک آرزو؛ آرزویی که در سکوت دل جوانه می‌زند و در تاریکی‌ها نفس می‌کشد. آدم‌های زیادی آرزو می‌کنند؛ آن‌ها همه فکر می‌کنند. وقتی از آن‌ها پرسیده شود، می‌گویند: «ما کجا و این موفقیت کجا». گویی فاصله میان انسان و رؤیا فاصله‌ای پایان‌ناپذیر است.

این همان صدایی است که امروز در گوش هزاران دختر افغان می‌پیچد: نمی‌شود، حالا وقت درس نیست، حالا وقت تلاش نیست، این کشور آینده ندارد، دختر هستی، در این دوره درس به دردت می‌خورد. صداهایی که مثل سایه بر دیوار امید می‌افتند.

در میان این همه تردید، پرسشی آرام اما عمیق سر برمی‌آورد: آیا دخترها در برابر این صداها مقاومت می‌کنند یا نه؟ پاسخ تلخ و واقعی است؛ همه نه. تمام دخترها این کار را نمی‌توانند. امروزه دختران وطنم به ازدواج اجباری مجبور می‌شوند و در دست حکومت و خانواده قرار می‌گیرند. دختران وطنم گویی حق نفس کشیدن ندارند؛ با آن‌ها چنان رفتار می‌شود گویی جامعه آن‌ها را نادیده گرفته است.

اما در دل همین تاریکی‌ها چراغ‌هایی نیز روشن است؛ دخترانی که مثل نور خاموش نمی‌شوند و مثل گل سرخ در میان خارها سبز می‌شوند. آن‌ها با همین امکانات محدود، بهترین موفقیت خود را به دنیا نشان می‌دهند.

در جاهایی می‌رویند که خار بودن و محدودیت قانون است و در سرزمینی تلاش می‌کنند که در آن دختر بودن جرم شمرده می‌شود.

با این همه، آینده روشن است؛ نوری که از باور آن‌ها جان می‌گیرد. آن‌ها به آینده خود باور دارند و می‌دانند که خوشبختی این سی‌وشش میلیون انسان از همین‌ها آغاز می‌شود. امروز نمونه تلاش تمام جهان، همین دختران افغان است و هرگاه سخن از شجاعت به میان آید، نام آن‌ها بر زبان‌ها جاری می‌شود.

نمونه شجاعت و قهرمانی، اشک شب و لبخند صبح آن‌ها است. حلقه چشم، نشانی از آزادی آینده آن‌ها است و شکستن این زنجیرها امید فردای آن‌ها است.

این بار ما می‌سازیم... این بار ما آباد می‌کنیم... این بار ما تاریخ می‌نویسیم... و جهان و تاریخ روزی از شجاعت دختران وطنم یاد خواهد کرد.

MODERATOR

آمنه آرم، الپا

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REPRESENTING RELIGION AND GENDER STEREOTYPES IN HOMEIRA QADERI'S DANCING IN THE MOSQUE

Noria Mohammadi

Universitas Padjadjaran

This study examines how religion functions as an ideological mechanism in the construction of gender stereotypes in Afghan society, as represented in Homeira Qaderi's memoir *Dancing in the Mosque* (2020). Structured as an epistolary letter addressed to her son, from whom she was forcibly separated, the memoir embodies both personal grief and communal resistance, set against the backdrop of Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, where silence is equated with virtue and obedience with piety. The study applies Susan Lanser's feminist narratology, which conceptualizes narrative form as inherently mimetic and ideologically inflected, to analyze how voice, focalization, and symbolic space operate within the text and connect narrative structure to lived social reality. Through close reading, the research demonstrates that religious discourse is consistently instrumentalized to legitimize patriarchal restrictions on women's education, mobility, and public presence, naturalizing female obedience and silence as religious duty rather than social custom. At the same time, the study argues that Qaderi's act of narration constitutes a form of resistance, as she reclaims discursive authority and reappropriates religious symbols, most notably using Qur'anic study as cover for clandestine girls' education, thereby destabilizing the religious justifications underpinning women's subordination. Particular attention is given to shifting focalization between the narrating self and the experiencing self, which exposes the ideological gap between religious doctrine and lived reality. By foregrounding religion as an active narrative force rather than a passive backdrop, this study departs from prior thematic readings of the memoir and contributes to feminist narratology and Afghan literary studies, demonstrating how narrative structure itself becomes a site for both the construction and contestation of gender stereotypes, and underscoring the broader importance of literature in exposing oppression and strengthening feminist critique.

MODERATOR

Alexandra Parrs, ALPA College

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EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF THE MISERY INDEX ON THE HAPPINESS INDEX IN AFGHANISTAN'S ECONOMY

Atefa Hussaini

Former Lecturer of Baghlan University

Inflation and unemployment are among the most important macroeconomic variables that directly affect people's living conditions and the level of social welfare. An increase in these two variables can intensify economic pressures and reduce individuals' satisfaction with life. The Misery Index, which is calculated based on the combination of inflation and unemployment rates, is one of the indicators used to measure unfavorable economic conditions. In contrast, the Happiness Index, as a composite indicator, reflects different dimensions of well-being and life satisfaction. Although Afghanistan has experienced lower levels of severe inflation compared to many developing countries in recent years, the increasing unemployment rate, particularly after 2014, has become one of the country's major economic challenges.

This study aims to examine the impact of the Misery Index on the Happiness Index in Afghanistan's economy during the period 2005–2022. The required data were collected from the World Bank statistical databases and relevant Happiness Index reports. To examine the long-run relationships among the variables, the Generalized Least Squares (GLS) method with a Random Effects model was employed. The estimation results indicate that inflation and unemployment, as components of the Misery Index, both have negative and statistically significant effects on the Happiness Index in Afghanistan. However, the negative effect of unemployment on reducing the level of happiness in society is considerably greater than that of inflation, with its impact estimated to be approximately twelve times stronger than inflation. Furthermore, the results show that the relationships among these variables are statistically significant in the long run. The findings of this study emphasize the importance of reducing unemployment, creating sustainable employment opportunities, and maintaining economic stability to improve welfare and increase the level of happiness in Afghanistan.

KEYWORDS Misery Index, Happiness Index, Inflation, Unemployment, Economic Welfare, Afghanistan.

MODERATOR

Alexandra Parrs, ALPA College

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DETERMINANTS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

Hamidullah Hamidy

American University of Afghanistan

This is the first study to examine customer satisfaction in the restaurant industry in Kabul, Afghanistan. The study aims to identify the determinants of customer satisfaction and examine whether service quality factors influence customers' overall satisfaction. Specifically, the study investigates whether (1) restaurant atmosphere, (2) employee conduct, (3) food quality, (4) harassment, (5) respect for family privacy, (6) competition, and (7) restaurant location impacts the level of customer satisfaction. A quantitative approach was used, and the data were analyzed using linear regression. The findings provide important insights into customer preferences in Kabul. Unlike studies conducted in other contexts, the results show that customers place greater importance on cultural factors than on traditional service quality dimensions. Respect for family privacy and a safe, harassment-free environment, particularly for women and families, were the strongest predictors of customer satisfaction. In contrast, food quality, employee conduct, and restaurant atmosphere had a weaker influence than expected. The findings also suggest that limited competition in Kabul's restaurant industry has shifted customer priorities toward restaurants that provide privacy, comfort, and a family-friendly environment. This study contributes to the limited literature on Afghanistan's hospitality sector by providing the first empirical evidence on customer satisfaction in Kabul's restaurant industry. The findings offer practical implications for restaurant managers by showing that cultural factors, particularly respect for family privacy and a safe environment, are more important to customers than traditional service quality attributes. The study concludes that restaurants seeking to improve customer satisfaction should prioritize these cultural expectations alongside service quality.

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Alexandra Parrs, ALPA College

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THE ROLE OF GIRLS' EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

Mariam Amiri

Forward International Academy

Girls' education in Afghanistan is not only a fundamental human right, but also one of the most critical drivers of transformative leadership, social innovation, and sustainable development. In the current context, Afghan girls are not merely recipients of education; they are active agents of change, storytellers of resilience, and emerging leaders of a new generation.

This research adopts a transformative leadership perspective to highlight the stories of girls who have refused silence and instead chosen expression and creation. By taking up the pen, producing written works, creating art, and engaging in innovative practices, they have amplified their voices beyond imposed limitations. These girls use education as a powerful tool to redefine identity, strengthen personal agency, and create meaningful social impact.

Despite restrictions on access to formal education, this generation continues to grow through alternative pathways such as self-directed learning, digital platforms, and community-based initiatives. From within constraints, they have developed new models of empowerment, demonstrating that leadership begins from within through belief, resilience, and the ability to transform barriers into opportunities.

This study further emphasizes the role of education in strengthening human capital, fostering creative thinking, and building influential networks at both national and global levels. Afghan girls, through their intellectual and creative contributions, are not only shaping their own futures but also redefining the trajectory of their country's development.

Ultimately, this research argues that investing in girls' education is an investment in sustainable leadership, peace, and progress in Afghanistan—because when girls learn, create, and lead, a nation moves forward with strength, awareness, and hope.

MODERATOR

Alexandra Parrs, ALPA College

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HOW CAN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT A CONSULTATION MECHANISM THAT REALISTICALLY EMPOWERS AFGHANISTAN'S CITIZENS TO NEGOTIATE FOR THEIR OWN JUST AND STABLE FUTURE?

Annie Pforzheimer

Pace University

Addressing Afghanistan's complex challenges and breaking its historical cycle of violence requires the participation of a broad range of its citizens; one side taking power while excluding the other has been a pattern that repeatedly derails peace. The UN Security Council's 2023 Special Assessment Report called for the international community to support Afghan stakeholders to ensure inclusive and representative participation in a political dialogue with the de facto authorities about the future of their country, specifically the creation of predictable, lawful institutions and a representative constitutional order. Defining these principles will involve debate and compromises, the exact nature of which rests with the people of Afghanistan. External support is needed to prepare for a dialogue and come to agreement on a negotiating platform, because Afghanistan's civil society is prevented from speaking freely inside the country, while outside its people are financially unsupported, physically dispersed and under pressure as countries increase deportations.

The success of eventual negotiations with the Taliban will rest on the overwhelming political legitimacy of those who oppose Taliban rule – which requires exhaustive consultation. While designing and operationalizing an internationally-supported consultation mechanism is difficult, it is feasible. There are various models and intermediaries for international support for a consultation mechanism, such as the Syrian Civil Society Support Room. It is possible to consolidate and analyze various post-2021 roadmaps, statements of principles, and relevant declarations, issued by groups inside and outside Afghanistan, and create a draft negotiating platform. What needs to come next is a technical conference for experts in survey design, marketing, community outreach, and mediation, to produce a plan for a reaching Afghans in exile and inside the country, using the draft negotiating platform and focusing on the key issues identified by the UN Security Council: inclusive governance and Afghanistan's human rights obligations.

MODERATOR

Reva Rasstack, American University

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CAN A PEOPLE'S TRIBUNAL SERVE AS LEGAL ACCOUNTABILITY? EVALUATING THE PEOPLE'S TRIBUNAL FOR WOMEN OF AFGHANISTAN AS A SUPPLEMENTARY MECHANISM"

Negina Khalili

Loyola University

Since the Taliban regained power in Afghanistan in August 2021, the country has experienced a systematic erosion of fundamental rights, particularly for women and girls. The Taliban's policies have restricted female education, employment, freedom of movement, and participation in public life, creating conditions that constitute structural gender-based discrimination and, in some analyses, gender persecution under international law (Qaane, 2023; Rome Statute, 1998). These conditions have created an urgent need for documentation, advocacy, and accountability, but formal mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and UN investigative bodies face severe limitations arising from lack of access and limited on-the-ground presence in Afghanistan, as well as reflecting political constraints. Resultantly, evidence collection and enforcement are extremely challenging (Qaane, 2023; ICJ, 2023).

In response to this accountability vacuum, Afghan civil society and women's rights activists initiated the People's Tribunal for Women of Afghanistan (PTWA). The initiative is modeled on the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PTT), a non-state tribunal mechanism historically used to document human rights abuses in contexts where formal accountability is absent (Permanent Peoples' Tribunal, n.d.). PTWA held its inaugural public hearings in Madrid in October 2025, providing a platform for Afghan women and civil society actors. (Mehta, 2025; PTWA, 2025).

While non-binding, PTWA produces well-documented testimonies, detailed reports, and legal arguments that can influence international discourse, inform policy debates, and potentially into formal accountability mechanisms. PTWA also plays a crucial role in norm-setting, defining standards for what constitutes gender-based persecution under Taliban rule, and bringing attention to patterns of systematic discrimination against women in Afghanistan (Hasht-e Subh, 2025).

MODERATOR

Reva Rasstack, American University

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NETWORK POLITICS AND EXTERNAL INTERVENTION: HOW POLITICAL NETWORKS TRANSFORMED AFGHANISTAN'S SECURITY SECTOR REFORM (2001–2021)

Aftab Hussain

Deakin University

Afghanistan's post-2001 Security Sector Reform (SSR) represents a critical case study for understanding how external interventions interact with local political networks to shape governance outcomes in fragile states. This paper examines how structural constraints - constitutional centralisation, financial dependency, and institutional capacity deficits - systematically empowered informal political networks over formal state institutions, fundamentally transforming the meaning and practice of local ownership in security governance.

Drawing on network analysis of 30 semi-structured interviews with Afghan stakeholders in exile (government officials, security sector leaders, international actors, civil society representatives) and extensive documentary analysis, the research employs mixed-methods analysis combining Epistemic Network Analysis (ENA) with qualitative process tracing. The study maps relationships between external actors, Afghan political networks, institutional constraints, resource mechanisms, and governance outcomes across Afghanistan's security sector.

The research reveals three critical mechanisms through which external interventions shaped network behaviour: Direct interventions involved conscious partnership selection and resource allocation that created systematic network hierarchies. Indirect interventions operated through policy frameworks and institutional designs that forced network adaptation to access resources. Unintended interventions emerged from capacity building programmes and coordination failures that inadvertently strengthened the very networks they sought to replace.

The analysis demonstrates that multiple regional powers systematically empowered different Afghan networks aligned with their strategic interests, creating competing patronage systems that fragmented rather than consolidated security governance. Critically, local networks developed sophisticated multi-patron strategies, simultaneously accessing competing external supporters to preserve autonomy through strategic manipulation.

These dynamics transformed local ownership from collaborative institutional governance into competitive network-mediated control, where different networks served different external patrons whilst fragmenting national security governance. The research contributes to understanding how structural constraints create opportunities for network competition and regional proxy dynamics, with implications for contemporary Afghan governance challenges and broader South Asian regional security.

The paper offers insights into how informal networks function as primary governance actors in contexts of institutional weakness, external intervention, and regional competition - dynamics increasingly relevant to Afghanistan's post-2021 trajectory.

MODERATOR

Reva Rasstack, American University

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GOVERNING HEALTH THROUGH CONDITIONALITY: WORLD BANK FINANCING, HEALTH SYSTEM GOVERNANCE, AND STATE TRANSFORMATION IN AFGHANISTAN (2001–2024)

Khushal Nabizada

King's College London

How do international financial institutions shape state institutions beyond providing development finance? This paper examines how World Bank conditionalities influenced the governance architecture of Afghanistan's health system between 2001 and 2024. While conditionality has received considerable attention within macroeconomic policy, its role in restructuring sectoral governance in conflict-affected states remains insufficiently understood. The paper argues that World Bank conditionalities operated not merely as financing requirements but as governance instruments that reorganised institutional authority, accountability mechanisms, and service delivery arrangements.

The study employs a qualitative single-case design combining documentary analysis with semi-structured interviews. It draws on an original database of 258 conditionalities extracted from eleven Development Policy Financing (DPF) operations and seven health-related Investment Project Financing (IPF) projects, complemented by approximately 150 policy and project documents and interviews with policymakers, donors, and implementing organisations. Guided by Political Economy Analysis and the Health System Governance framework, the research examines how conditionalities were designed, negotiated, implemented, and adapted across successive political periods.

Preliminary findings indicate that DPF conditionalities primarily reshaped the broader governance environment through fiscal, institutional, and public-sector reforms, whereas IPF conditionalities governed operational arrangements including NGO contracting, performance management, monitoring systems, and service delivery. Together, these financing instruments institutionalised a hybrid health system characterised by donor dependence, outsourced service provision, and performance-based governance, while simultaneously redefining relationships between the Afghan state, international donors, and non-governmental actors.

By conceptualising conditionality as a mechanism of governance rather than merely an economic policy instrument, the paper contributes to debates on global health governance, political economy, and state-building in fragile contexts. It also offers lessons for designing more context-sensitive and nationally owned health reforms in conflict-affected countries.

KEYWORDS Afghanistan; World Bank; conditionality; health system governance; political economy.

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Reva Rasstack, American University

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A SOCIO-LEGAL ANALYSIS OF THE UK'S AFGHAN CITIZEN RESETTLEMENT SCHEMES POST-2021.

Fiona Costello

University of Birmingham

Ali Ahmadi

Anglia Ruskin University

Catherine Barnard

University of Cambridge

Fiona Costello (University of Birmingham), Catherine Barnard (University of Cambridge), Ali Ahmadi (University of Cambridge)

This paper examines the UK's Afghan Resettlement Scheme using a socio-legal perspective, exploring how legal frameworks, public policy and local practices shaped the resettlement and integration of Afghan nationals following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021. It analyses the key legal resettlement pathways offered in the UK including the ARAP (Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy), the ACRS (Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme) and the Afghanistan Response Route (ARR) resettlement programmes, assessing their legal foundations, eligibility criteria and implementation. The paper also investigates the challenges encountered by individuals resettled under the scheme including housing issues, access to legal advice, delays, as well as issues around access to healthcare, education and employment among others. Drawing on legislation, government policy and qualitative insights from both Afghan nationals and professionals working on the resettlement schemes the paper evaluates whether the scheme fulfilled the UK's international legal obligations and met its objectives. It also analyses the UK government's use of 'legal routes' through bespoke resettlement programmes such as these. It argues that while resettlement routes provided protection for many at-risk individuals, implementation and structural barriers impacted its effectiveness, leaving many more Afghans to seek irregular routes to safety in the UK, often via small boat crossings. This suggests a failure on the part of the resettlement programme to meet the needs of the community it was seeking to protect. The paper concludes by identifying lessons for future bespoke resettlement policies and highlighting the importance of aligning legal commitments with practical (local) delivery on the ground.

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Reva Rasstack, American University

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SUPPORTING AFGHAN ASYLUM SEEKERS WHO ARE NOT CONSIDERED “ALLIES”

Sanaa Talwasa

New Jersey Judiciary

This proposal advocates for expanding expedited asylum processing and legal support to all Afghan asylum seekers in the United States, regardless of their immigration entry path. Following the fall of Kabul in August 2021, many Afghans were evacuated through Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) or entered on Special Immigrant Visas (SIV), receiving expedited asylum procedures, temporary protections, and coordinated resettlement services. However, a significant number of Afghans—including students, scholars, professionals, and others who entered on F or J nonimmigrant visas—remain excluded from these benefits. Despite facing the same well-founded fears of persecution by the Taliban regime, they often lack access to timely legal counsel, risk falling out of status, and face years-long asylum processing timelines.

This exclusion creates a two-tiered system among Afghan asylum seekers. Those outside the “allies” designation are not only ineligible for expedited USCIS interview scheduling but also do not benefit from legal status extensions, pro bono legal aid access, or resettlement assistance. Many missed the one-year asylum application deadline due to trauma, disorientation, or misinformation—factors beyond their control, who will be facing deportation.

To address this disparity, the proposal recommends that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) extend expedited processing and equal protection to all Afghan asylum seekers. Legal advocacy organizations and law schools should be mobilized to provide accessible legal support through pro bono and “low-bono” initiatives. Ensuring a more inclusive and equitable approach aligns with the U.S.’s humanitarian commitments and recognizes the shared experiences of all Afghan asylum seekers—regardless of how they arrived. In doing so, the U.S. can create a fairer, more consistent, and morally sound immigration response.

KEYWORDS Afghan Asylum Seekers, non-immigration visa holders, speedy process, USCIS

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Reva Rasstack, American University

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SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION SETTINGS: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM LEARN SCHOOLS IN AFGHANISTAN

Ateffa Jalali

Hiroshima University

This study presents the preliminary findings of an internal evaluation of LEARN schools in Afghanistan, focusing on the social and emotional well-being of both students and teachers. The study compares outcomes between well-established LEARN schools (old schools) and recently established LEARN schools (new schools). Using a mixed-method research design, data were collected between September 2025 and April 2026 from students and teachers across multiple provinces of Afghanistan, including Kabul, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Herat, Balkh, Badakhshan, and others. The quantitative dataset consisted of three surveys: old-school students' social and emotional well-being surveys ($n = 73$), new-school students' social and emotional well-being surveys ($n = 23$), and teachers' social and emotional well-being surveys ($n = 69$). This was followed by semi-structured interviews with 10 teachers and 20 students.

In the social and emotional well-being surveys, the study evaluated teachers' and students' positive feelings, challenging feelings, supportive relationships, engagement with teaching, and sense of belonging. The findings indicate generally positive experiences among students and teachers. Participants reported supportive relationships within schools and families, strong engagement with learning, and positive feelings toward their educational experiences. However, concerns related to personal safety, family well-being, and future opportunities emerged as common challenges across participant groups. Overall, the findings suggest that LEARN schools provide a supportive educational environment that promotes both academic engagement and emotional well-being. At the same time, broader social and political uncertainties continue to shape participants' experiences and should be considered in future program development and support initiatives.

KEYWORDS Girls' education, alternative education, social and emotional well-being, online schools

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Jisun Jeong, George Mason University

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UNDERSTANDING IMPACT AND CHANGE IN CONTEXTS OF EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION: A CONSTRUCTIVIST GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF AFGHAN GIRLS AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

Zahra Tawana

University of Virginia

This preliminary qualitative report examines how Afghan girls and women and educational service providers define impact and change in the context of girls' educational exclusion in Afghanistan. Using Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory, the study draws on interviews and written responses from Afghan girls and women affected by educational restrictions and representatives of educational initiatives serving Afghan girls. The study is grounded in an interpretivist and critical orientation and treats impact not as a fixed programmatic measure but as a meaning constructed through experience, position, power, and context. Preliminary categories suggest that impact is layered and conditional: it may appear as existential survival, substantive opportunity, relational support, recognition, or structural change. The analysis develops the provisional category of usable impact, meaning educational support that girls can realistically convert into hope, skills, opportunity, recognition, and future possibility under restrictive conditions. The report presents these categories as preliminary because the study will continue beyond the semester through further coding, additional data collection, and refinement of the grounded theory model.

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Jisun Jeong, George Mason University

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THE STATUS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN: A PRE-AND POST TALIBAN TAKE OVER ANALYSIS

Mariam Alamyar

American University of Afghanistan

The socio-political and economic changes in Afghanistan over the past two decades have greatly expanded and impacted the uses of English in the country. This study explores the functional allotment and the spread of English within the socio-cultural context of Afghanistan in the complex and diverse linguistic context of Afghanistan prior to the Taliban take over, between 2001-2021 and highlights the changes in the status of English education following the Taliban's second take over, particularly with respect to the impact on women. This study draws on autobiographical methods, including personal experiences, observations, videos, and photographs, alongside published journal articles, special issues, government and NGO reports, and news articles. The sources were carefully evaluated, selected, and analyzed based on their accuracy and relevance.

The findings indicate that English gained status in different domains from 2001 to 2021, and it became as important a language as one of the second official languages (Pashtu), largely because of the presence of the international community and the different opportunities that English provided. After the re-emergence of Taliban rule in 2021, the uses of English have precipitously declined due to the imposed restrictions and ban on women's education, the closing of English language institutions and private universities with English as the medium of instruction, the decline in the enrollment of male students, the presence of more Islamic schools, the transformation of the curricula, the replacement of female teachers with unqualified male teachers, the withdrawal of the international community and the reduction in foreign aid, and limited opportunities and obstacles for studying abroad. These issues have exacerbated the country's humanitarian crisis and have led to significant changes in the linguistic landscape of the country, particularly for women. This research calls on the international community to support English education in Afghanistan, particularly for women.

KEYWORDS Socio-cultural, English in Afghanistan, English Status, Expanding Circle, Functional allocation of English, Uses of English

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Jisun Jeong, George Mason University

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BEYOND FORMAL EDUCATION: DIGITAL LEARNING FOR AFGHAN WOMEN AFTER 2021

Naresh Naman Solanki

Indira Gandhi National Open University

The restrictions on girls' and women's education in Afghanistan since 2021 have created an unprecedented crisis in educational access. Girls have been excluded from secondary education beyond Grade 6, while women have been barred from universities since December 2022. As formal educational opportunities have become inaccessible, digital technologies and internet-based learning have emerged as important alternative spaces through which Afghan women and girls can continue their education. This paper examines the role of digital learning in sustaining educational access for Afghan women after 2021. It explores the growing use of online courses, virtual classrooms, educational platforms, distance-learning programmes and other internet-based initiatives that have sought to provide learning opportunities beyond conventional schools and universities. Initiatives such as Begum Academy, which provides digital access to the Afghan curriculum for Grades 7 to 12 through thousands of video lessons in Dari and Pashto, and the ALPA College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, which provides Afghan women access to academic programmes denied to them under Taliban restrictions, illustrate the emergence as well as use of digital spaces as alternative sites of educational continuity. At the same time, these initiatives form part of a wider landscape of digital and online educational opportunities that has developed in response to the restrictions. The paper argues that digital learning has created important opportunities for educational continuity, but access to these opportunities remains uneven. Limited internet connectivity, restricted access to digital devices, economic constraints, gaps in digital literacy and geographical inequalities continue to determine who can access and benefit from online education. Digital learning, therefore, offers an important alternative pathway but cannot be considered an equivalent replacement for formal educational institutions. By examining the wider landscape of digital education alongside the opportunities and structural limitations surrounding it, this paper explores how technology is reshaping access to learning for Afghan women and the extent to which digital spaces can sustain educational aspirations in the absence of formal educational opportunities.

KEYWORDS Afghanistan, Afghan Women, Digital Learning, Online Education, Educational Access, Gender and Technology.

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Jisun Jeong, George Mason University

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THE PRICE OF A PROMISE: INVESTIGATING PREDATORY BEHAVIORS IN SOME ONLINE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

R. Ah & Ro. Mu

ALPA College

Afghan girls have been denied access to secondary and higher education since the August 2021 political upheavals. Many online and underground education programs have been launched in recent years to support Afghan women in their pursuit of education. Most of these institutions offer quality education with a clear mission to support Afghan women. There are, however, some programs that have reportedly taken advantage of this situation and exploited these students. Using a mixed-methods design, this study reveals some predatory behaviors of some online education programs that Afghan girls have experienced.

MODERATOR

Jisun Jeong, George Mason University

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INTERRUPTED FUTURES: THE PSYCHOSOCIAL MEANING OF GIRLS' EDUCATIONAL DEPRIVATION UNDER TALIBAN RULE IN AFGHANISTAN

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This paper examines how the Taliban's bans on girls' and women's education have reshaped the inner lives, social worlds, and future horizons of Afghan girls and young women. Rather than treating the ban only as an educational policy, the study approaches it as a lived psychosocial rupture: a moment in which dreams, daily routines, family expectations, and the meaning of self are violently interrupted.

Drawing on a qualitative phenomenological study based on five online semi-structured interviews with Afghan girls and young women affected by educational restrictions, the paper centers participants' own narratives of loss, endurance, and resistance. Through thematic analysis, six interconnected themes emerged: education as dignity and future-making; the ban as rupture and suspended life; psychological distress and embodied suffering; patriarchal governance and gendered control; family and relational ecologies of support and pressure; and resilience, self-preservation, and quiet resistance.

The findings show that participants experienced educational deprivation as more than the loss of classrooms. It produced anxiety, depression, isolation, disrupted sleep, diminished motivation, and a painful sense of being pushed outside society's future. Yet their narratives also reveal forms of agency that survive under restriction: self-study, faith, reading, online learning, family support, peer solidarity, writing, and hidden educational initiatives.

By situating these experiences within broader debates on Afghanistan, gender, human rights, and psychosocial well-being, the paper argues that the Taliban's education bans constitute both a violation of rights and a deep assault on women's dignity, personhood, and social belonging. At the same time, the study highlights Afghan girls' ongoing struggle to preserve knowledge, hope, and selfhood under a patriarchal regime designed to silence them.

KEYWORDS Afghanistan; Taliban; girls' education; psychosocial well-being; gender; patriarchy; resilience; human rights; phenomenology.

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چالش های حاکمیت قانون و نا استواری دولت در افغانستان

شفیق الله شفق

Fulda University of Applied Sciences Germany

حاکمیت قانون و دولت از مفاهیم بنیادی در حقوق عمومی و فلسفه سیاسی به شمار می آیند و در سنت مدرن غربی، به ویژه در پیوند با اندیشه های ارسطو که منبع قانون را عقل می دانست، تکوین نظری یافته اند. در ادبیات معاصر، حاکمیت قانون عموماً در دو سطح «نظریه شکلی یا صوری» (حکومت با قانون) و «نظریه محتوایی» (حکومت مبتنی بر قانون) تحلیل می شود و به صورت ناگسستگی با ایده و ساختار دولت مدرن گره خورده است؛ از این رو، فیلسوفانی چون کانت، دورکین و هابک با تأکید بر آزادی، حقوق بشر و اصل برابری، جایگاهی محوری برای حاکمیت قانون در سامان قدرت سیاسی قائل شده اند و به درستی، همان گونه که وینگست تصریح می کند، دوام و کارکرد دولت بدون حاکمیت قانون ناممکن است. حاکمیت قانون مرز میان حوزه های عمومی و خصوصی را تعیین، قدرت و نهادهای دولتی را سازماندهی و آزادی ها و حقوق فردی را تضمین می کند؛ بدین ترتیب، فروپاشی آن به گسست نظم سیاسی و بروز وضعیت هابزی «جنگ همه علیه همه» می انجامد؛ وضعیتی که هانتینگتون از آن به عنوان «فاجعه سیاسی» یاد می کند و آن را عرصه رقابت های منفی و فرساینده میان خانواده ها، قبایل و جوامع محلی می داند. با تکیه بر رویکرد توصیفی - تحلیلی و استفاده از منابع کتابخانه ای، این پژوهش نشان می دهد که در افغانستان سده اخیر، حاکمیت قانون هرگز به گونه ای پایدار و نهادینه استقرار نیافته و به طور مستمر با چالش هایی چون گروه گرایی، قوم گرایی و گرایش به قومی سازی قدرت سیاسی مواجه بوده است؛ عواملی که در پیوند با ضعف نهادینه سازی اقتدار قانونی - عقلانی، به تعمیق فساد سیاسی، ناکارآمدی نهادهای عمومی و در نهایت، نااستواری دولت انجامیده و فرایند شکل گیری دولت به مثابه اداره عامه بی طرف، قواعدمحور و پاسخگو را مختل کرده است. بر این اساس، مقاله استدلال می کند که بدون مهار سازوکارهای غیررسمی قدرت، تحدید منطق قوم و شبکه های خویشاوندی و تقویت برتری هنجاری و ساختاری قانون، نه استقرار حاکمیت قانون در افغانستان امکان پذیر است و نه بر ساختن دولتی پایدار، کارآمد و مشروع.

MODERATOR

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کلیدواژه ها حاکمیت قانون، نظریه های حاکمیت قانون، تطبیق پذیری، ناکارآمدی دولت، فساد سیاسی

قبیله گرایی و شکنندگی دولت مدرن؛ یک رویکرد تطبیقی میان افغانستان و عراق

فضل الرحمن رحمانی
Carleton University

قبیله گرایی به عنوان یکی از مهم ترین اشکال سازمان اجتماعی در جوامع خاورمیانه، همواره نقشی دوگانه در فرآیند دولت سازی ایفا کرده است. از یک سو، ساختارهای قبیله ای در شرایط ضعف نهادهای رسمی، به تأمین امنیت، حل منازعات و حفظ انسجام اجتماعی کمک می کنند و از سوی دیگر، با تقویت وفاداری های خویشاوندی و محلی، مانعی جدی در برابر شکل گیری دولت مدرن مبتنی بر حاکمیت قانون، شهروندی برابر و نهادهای فراگیر محسوب می شوند. این پژوهش با هدف بررسی رابطه میان قبیله گرایی و شکنندگی دولت مدرن، به مطالعه تطبیقی افغانستان و عراق می پردازد؛ دو کشوری که با وجود تفاوت های تاریخی و اجتماعی، هر دو تجربه دولت سازی پس از منازعه، مداخلات خارجی و بحران های مشروعیت را پشت سر گذاشته اند. پرسش اصلی تحقیق آن است که ساختارهای قبیله ای چگونه بر ظرفیت دولت، مشروعیت سیاسی و کارآمدی نهادهای حکمرانی در این دو کشور تأثیر گذاشته اند. این مطالعه با بهره گیری از رویکرد مقایسه ای و چارچوب نظری نهادگرایی تاریخی و دولت شکننده، از روش تحلیل کیفی اسناد، قوانین، گزارش های سازمان های بین المللی و ادبیات علمی استفاده می کند. یافته های اولیه نشان می دهد که هرچند قبیله گرایی در هر دو کشور به عنوان سازوکاری برای بقا و نظم اجتماعی عمل کرده است، اما ادغام ناقص یا ابزاری قبایل در ساختار دولت، موجب تضعیف اقتدار مرکزی، گسترش شبکه های حامی پروری، فساد اداری و تشدید رقابت های قومی و فرقه ای شده است. همچنین، تفاوت در الگوهای تعامل دولت با قبایل در افغانستان و عراق، مسیرهای متفاوتی از شکنندگی دولت را رقم زده است؛ به گونه ای که در افغانستان رقابت های قومی و قبیله ای نقش برجسته تری در تضعیف دولت داشته، در حالی که در عراق، هم پوشانی قبیله گرایی با شکاف های مذهبی و فرقه ای بر پیچیدگی بحران حکمرانی افزوده است. این پژوهش با ارائه تحلیلی تطبیقی، به درک بهتر موانع نهادینه سازی دولت مدرن در جوامع قبیله محور کمک کرده و می تواند مبنایی برای سیاست گذاری در حوزه دولت سازی، اصلاحات نهادی و تقویت حکمرانی فراگیر در کشورهای شکننده فراهم آورد.

MODERATOR

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تأثیر ناسیونالیسم قومی داوودخان بر افزایش رقابت‌های منطقه‌ای در افغانستان

منان دهزاد

Kabul School of International Relations

ناسیونالیسم جزو میوه‌های مدرنیته است، که ظهور آن در غرب منجر به خودآگاهی، بیداری، هم‌نوع دوستی و میهن‌گرایی شد؛ اما به افغانستان به صورت سلبی در قالب قوم‌گرایی ظاهر شد. محمود طرزی این ایده را به عنوان یک پروژه «برتری‌خواهی قومی» و دیگرس‌تیز به افغانستان آورد و به کمک دستگاه رسانه‌یی حکومت، آن را تبلیغ، تشریح و توجیه کرد. داوودخان با همین ذهنیت طبل دشمنی با پاکستان را با پیش‌کش کردن «داعیهٔ پشتون‌ستان» کوبید و راه مداخلهٔ دایمی این کشور را به افغانستان هموار ساخت. مقالهٔ پیش‌رو به بررسی ناسیونالیسم قومی داوودخان و تأثیر آن بر افزایش تنش با کشورهای منطقه‌یی، به این پرسش می‌پردازد که ناسیونالیسم قومی داوودخان چه تأثیری بر تنش‌های منطقه‌ای در افغانستان داشت؟ این پژوهش در قالب نظریه ازلی‌انگاری قومی به اساس این فرضیه بنا شده است که ناسیونالیسم قومی داوودخان نه تنها قوم‌گرایی را در افغانستان نهادینه ساخت، بلکه دشمنی میان افغانستان و پاکستان را ماندگار ساخته و همچنان زمینهٔ مداخلهٔ اتحاد جماهیر شوروی را نیز به افغانستان هموار نمود. یافته‌های این پژوهش نشان می‌دهد که ایدهٔ ناسیونالیسم قومی در دیدگاه رسمی حکومت‌های افغانستان، نه تنها مانع همگرایی شهروندی، توسعه اقتصادی، سیاسی، فرهنگی و اجتماعی شده؛ بلکه زمینهٔ دست‌اندازی کشورها و قدرت‌های منطقه‌ای را نیز افزایش داده است. موارد یادشده در این مقاله به شیوهٔ تحلیلی-توصیفی و با استفاده از منابع پژوهشی-کتابخانه‌ای و با رعایت معیارهای علمی نگاشته شده است.

MODERATOR

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کلیدواژه ناسیونالیسم، ناسیونالیسم قومی، داوودخان، ازلی‌انگاری قومی، خط دیورند، پشتون‌ستان، افغانستان

نقش جهانی شدن در توسعه سیاسی افغانستان

تمیم حیدری

مکتب روابط بین الملل کابل

جهانی شدن بارزترین وجه تمایز نظم جدید جهانی با عصر حاکمیت انحصاری و مطلق دولت-ملت‌ها در پساوستفالیاست. فرایند روبه گسترش این پدیده درگذر زمان، همه‌ی عرصه‌های اقتصادی، اجتماعی-سیاسی و فرهنگی جهان را در بستر وابستگی‌های اقتصادی، توسعه ارتباطات، تکنالوژی مدرن و هم‌پیوندی‌های سیاسی و فرهنگی، متحول و دگرگون ساخته است. و این به‌گونه‌ای است که امروزه در ادبیات سیاسی، از موج‌های فراگیر و اجتناب‌ناپذیر جهانی شدن اقتصاد، جهانی شدن فرهنگ و جهانی شدن سیاست سخن گفته می‌شود. فرایند گذار و دولت-ملت‌سازی که در افغانستان روند توسعه سیاسی را پسا-حمله نظامی امریکا به افغانستان، در چارچوب اهداف استراتژیک و به منظور ریشه‌کن‌سازی تروریسم بین‌المللی، محار گروهِ‌های افراطی، گسترش دموکراسی، تأمین آزادی‌های فردی، حقوق بشر و حقوق زن در جامعه افغانستان تحقق بخشید؛ نیز متأثر از همین مقوله است که درسایه‌ی اهداف راهبردی امریکا، حمایت سیاسی سازمان ملل متحد و نهادهای وابسته به آن تحقق یافته است.

در پاسخ به بنیادی‌ترین پژوهش حاضر، این که جهانی شدن از سال 2002 تا 2020 چه نقشی در توسعه سیاسی افغانستان ایفا کرده است و ره‌آوردهای آن چیست؟ این فرضیه مطرح می‌شود که جهانی شدن در چگونگی انتخاب سرنوشت سیاسی، تغییر ساختار قدرت، مشارکت سیاسی، آزادی‌های فردی و انسانی، نقش فزاینده‌ای داشته است. ازاین‌رو، مسئله یاد شده با استفاده از چارچوب نظری «نظریه جهانی شدن» و روش توصیفی تحلیلی مورد بررسی قرار گرفته است.

نتایج به دست آمده حکایت از آن دارد که فرایند جهانی شدن — زیر چتر حمایتی مثلث ایالات متحده آمریکا، جامعه جهانی و کارگزاران داخلی افغانستان — در یک بازه زمانی مشخص ره‌آوردهای قابل توجهی در خصوص مشارکت سیاسی، حاکمیت مردمی، بازتولید احزاب سیاسی، آزادی بیان و رسانه، و بهره‌مند شدن زنان از حق مشارکت سیاسی داشته است.

واژه‌های کلیدی: جهانی شدن، توسعه سیاسی، مشارکت سیاسی

MODERATOR

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رویکرد کشورهای عربی به افغانستان پس از بازگشت طالبان به قدرت

احمد طارق نورزا ده

مرکز صلح و مطالعات بین الملل افغانستان

MODERATOR

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افغانستان و کشورهای عربی حوزه خلیج فارس دارای پیوندهای تاریخی، دینی، و فرهنگی قابل توجهی هستند. انتظار می‌رود چنین مشترکاتی زمینه‌ساز توسعه همکاری‌های سیاسی، اقتصادی و امنیتی میان طرفین باشد، اما بررسی روابط دو طرف، به‌ویژه پس از سال ۲۰۰۱، نشان می‌دهد که کشورهای عربی حوزه خلیج فارس، با وجود این اشتراکات، در مقایسه با کشورهای غربی و حتی برخی همسایگان افغانستان، نقش محدودتری در تحولات سیاسی و امنیتی این کشور ایفا کرده‌اند. این رویکرد پس از بازگشت طالبان به قدرت در سال ۲۰۲۱ نیز تا حد زیادی ادامه یافته است.

این پژوهش با تمرکز بر عربستان سعودی، قطر، امارات متحده عربی، مصر و اردن تلاش می‌کند عوامل مؤثر بر سیاست این کشورها در قبال طالبان را بررسی کند. در حالی که عربستان سعودی و امارات متحده عربی در دوره نخست حاکمیت طالبان (۱۹۹۶-۲۰۰۱) از اولین دولت‌هایی بودند که طالبان را به رسمیت شناختند، اما در دوره دوم سلطه این گروه، از اتخاذ چنین رویکردی خودداری کرده‌اند. این تغییر بیانگر تحول در اولویت‌ها و محاسبات سیاست خارجی این کشورها در قبال افغانستان است.

فرضیه اصلی این تحقیق آن است که کاهش سطح تعامل کشورهای عربی با طالبان بیش از آنکه ناشی از کاهش مشترکات دینی یا فرهنگی باشد، نتیجه تغییرات گسترده در محیط منطقه‌ای و بین‌المللی و بازتعریف منافع ملی این کشورها است. در سال‌های اخیر، دولت‌های عربی حوزه خلیج فارس تلاش کرده‌اند سیاست خارجی خود را بیش از گذشته بر توسعه اقتصادی، جذب سرمایه‌گذاری خارجی، تنوع‌بخشی به اقتصاد، ثبات داخلی، همکاری‌های امنیتی و گسترش روابط با قدرتهای جهانی استوار سازند. در چنین شرایطی، تعامل گسترده با حکومتی که هنوز از سوی بخش عمده جامعه بین‌المللی به رسمیت شناخته نشده است، و رویکرد به شدت دینی - مذهبی و شریعت با روایت طالبانی را در پیش گرفته است، با اهداف راهبردی این کشورها همخوانی ندارد.

برای روشن شدن بیشتر موضوع دو عامل زیر در مقایسه به سایر عوامل می‌تواند نقش بیشتر داشته باشد.

عامل اول: تغییر محیط امنیتی منطقه و کاهش تهدید شبکه‌هایی مانند القاعده نسبت به دو دهه گذشته است. در سال‌های پس از حملات یازدهم سپتامبر، بسیاری از کشورهای عربی با چالش بازگشت یا فعالیت شهروندان افراط‌گرا مواجه بودند و افغانستان به دلیل حضور طالبان و القاعده، یکی از کانون‌های اصلی فعالیت این گروه‌ها محسوب می‌شد. اما امروزه، اگرچه تهدید گروه‌های تروریستی همچنان به طور کامل از میان نرفته است، اما توان عملیاتی و نفوذ شبکه‌هایی مانند القاعده نسبت به گذشته کاهش یافته و کشورهای عربی نیز سازوکارهای مؤثرتری برای مقابله با افراط‌گرایی در داخل مرزهای خود ایجاد کرده‌اند. از این رو، انگیزه‌های امنیتی گذشته برای تعامل نزدیک با طالبان تا حد زیادی از میان رفته است.

عامل دوم: پیشرفت قابل توجه کشورهای عربی حوزه خلیج فارس در حوزه فناوری، اطلاعات و ظرفیت‌های امنیتی است. سرمایه‌گذاری گسترده این کشورها در فناوری‌های نظارتی، هوش مصنوعی، کنترل مرزها و همکاری‌های اطلاعاتی بین‌المللی، توانایی آنان را در شناسایی و مهار تهدیدهای امنیتی به میزان قابل توجهی افزایش داده است. در نتیجه، برخلاف گذشته، این کشورها برای کنترل جریان‌های افراطی یا مدیریت تهدیدهای امنیتی خود، وابستگی یا نیازی به همکاری با طالبان احساس نمی‌کنند.

در نتیجه، می‌توان گفت که سیاست کشورهای عربی حوزه خلیج فارس در قبال طالبان بیش از آنکه بر پایه مشترکات دینی و فرهنگی استوار باشد، تابع ملاحظات ژئوپلیتیکی، امنیتی و اقتصادی است. این کشورها ضمن حفظ کانال‌های ارتباطی و همکاری‌های محدود در حوزه‌های بشردوستانه و کنسولی، از شناسایی رسمی حکومت طالبان خودداری کرده‌اند و ترجیح می‌دهند تا زمان ایجاد تغییرات اساسی در رفتار داخلی و خارجی طالبان، سیاست تعامل محتاطانه و مدیریت‌شده را دنبال کنند. این رویکرد نشان می‌دهد که در سیاست خارجی کشورهای عربی، منافع ملی و الزامات نظم منطقه‌ای و بین‌المللی بر اشتراکات ایدئولوژیک و مذهبی اولویت یافته است.

بازاندیشی امنیت افغانستان در چارچوب نظریه مجموعه‌های امنیتی منطقه‌ای: از دولت عایق تا فضای عایق امنیتی

محبوب الله افخمی
مکتب روابط بین الملل کابل

امنیت افغانستان طی چند دهه گذشته غالباً با مفاهیمی مانند تروریسم، مداخله خارجی، ضعف دولت، افراط‌گرایی، منازعات قومی یا رقابت قدرت‌های منطقه‌ای تبیین شده است. هر یک از این عوامل بخشی از واقعیت را توضیح می‌دهند، اما هیچ‌یک به‌تنهایی قادر نیستند چرایی استمرار ناامنی را در افغانستان توضیح دهند. پرسش اساسی این است که چرا با وجود دگرگونی‌های بنیادین در ساختار نظام بین‌الملل، تغییر رژیم‌های سیاسی در افغانستان، حضور و خروج قدرت‌های بزرگ و تحول موازنه‌های منطقه‌ای، الگوی ناامنی همچنان بازتولید شده و این کشور نتوانسته است به ثبات پایدار دست یابد.

پاسخ این پرسش را باید در جایگاه ژئوپلیتیکی افغانستان و نحوه قرار گرفتن آن در میان نظم‌های امنیتی پیرامونی جست‌وجو کرد. پایان جنگ سرد و فروپاشی اتحاد شوروی موجب شد که مناطق بیش از گذشته به واحدهای اصلی تحلیل امنیت تبدیل شوند و نظریه مجموعه‌های امنیتی منطقه‌ای باری بوزان و اول ویور اهمیت ویژه‌ای پیدا کند. بر اساس این نظریه، امنیت دولت‌ها بیش از آنکه در سطح جهانی شکل گیرد، در تعامل با محیط منطقه‌ای و الگوهای دوستی، رقابت و تهدید میان همسایگان تعریف می‌شود. از این منظر، افغانستان نمونه‌ای کم‌نظیر از کشوری است که در تقاطع چند مجموعه امنیتی قرار گرفته، اما به طور کامل در هیچ‌یک از آن‌ها ادغام نشده است.

در نظریه مجموعه‌های امنیتی، مفهوم «دولت عایق» به کشورهایی اطلاق می‌شود که در مرز دو یا چند مجموعه امنیتی قرار دارند، بدون آنکه بخشی از هیچ‌یک از آنها محسوب شوند. این مفهوم بخش مهمی از موقعیت افغانستان را توضیح می‌دهد، اما تحولات دو دهه اخیر نشان می‌دهد که برای تبیین وضعیت کنونی افغانستان کافی نیست. افغانستان امروز افزون بر آن‌که یک دولت عایق به شمار می‌رود، به فضایی تبدیل شده است که رقابت‌های امنیتی چندین مجموعه منطقه‌ای و فرامنطقه‌ای به طور هم‌زمان فراتر از ویژگی‌های جغرافیایی و تحولات ژئوپلیتیکی در آن جریان دارد. از این رو، مفهوم «فضای عایق امنیتی» و موقعیت عایق می‌تواند ظرفیت تبیینی بیشتری برای فهم وضعیت امنیتی افغانستان فراهم آورد.

فضای عایق امنیتی توضیح می‌دهد که چگونه چندین مجموعه امنیتی، بدون آنکه کشور را در نظم امنیتی خود ادغام کنند، به طور هم‌زمان بر آن اثر می‌گذارند و آن را بخشی از محاسبات امنیتی خود می‌دانند. کشمکش‌ها، تحولات، سمت و سودهی بحران از فضای کلان منطقه‌ای به سوی کشور از مهمترین پیامدهای تقابل در فضای عایق است. در چنین وضعیتی، قلمرو مورد نظر نه به عنوان حلقه اتصال، بلکه به عنوان میدان رقابت، مهار و موازنه میان بازیگران مختلف عمل می‌کند. نتیجه این وضعیت، انتقال مداوم رقابت‌های منطقه‌ای به درون کشور، تضعیف ظرفیت‌های دولت، افزایش مداخلات بیرونی و بازتولید بی‌ثباتی است.

افغانستان دقیقاً با چنین وضعیتی روبه‌رو است. از نظر تاریخی، فرهنگی تمدنی و مذهبی، این کشور در چهارراه ارتباطی آسیای مرکزی، جنوب آسیا و آسیای غربی قرار دارد، اما هیچ‌یک از این سه حوزه امنیتی آن را به عنوان بخشی از نظم امنیتی خود نپذیرفته‌اند. در مقابل، هر یک افغانستان را از منظر دغدغه‌های امنیتی، ژئوپلیتیکی و راهبردی خود تعریف می‌کنند. چون نگاه امنیتی محض نسبت به تحولات منطقه‌ای و امنیتی سازی، همه ویژگی‌های مشترک را در سایه قرار می‌دهد. در نتیجه، افغانستان هم‌زمان تحت تأثیر سه محیط امنیتی متفاوت قرار دارد، بدون آنکه از مزایای عضویت در هیچ‌یک از آنها برخوردار باشد، این کشور را به یک نقطه ضربه گیر در موقعیت عایق و فضای عایق قرار داده است. همین وضعیت، موقعیت عایق افغانستان را از یک ویژگی صرفاً جغرافیایی به یک وضعیت ساختاری در نظام امنیت منطقه‌ای تبدیل کرده است.

بررسی جایگاه افغانستان در هر یک از این مجموعه‌های امنیتی نشان می‌دهد که منطق حاکم بر روابط منطقه‌ای، بیش از آنکه بر همکاری و ادغام استوار باشد، بر رقابت، موازنه و مدیریت تهدید، دشمنی نسبتاً ثابت استوار بوده است. همین منطق، افغانستان را در موقعیتی قرار داده است که امنیت آن همواره تابع تحولات پیرامونی باشد و فرصت شکل‌گیری یک نظم امنیتی با ثبات در داخل کشور محدود بماند.

MODERATOR

هارون نجم پور، خانه مولانا

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WOMEN'S RESISTANCE AND ONLINE ACTIVISM AGAINST TALIBAN OPPRESSION

Rashmi Dangol

University of Pittsburgh

When the Taliban took over Afghanistan on August 15, 2021, they imposed a regime of gender apartheid, stripping women of their fundamental rights and freedoms. Women did not remain silent. They confronted the Taliban through street protests demanding the restoration of their rights. As arrests, torture, and threats against activists and their families intensified, many were forced into exile, but displacement did not end their resistance. They kept organizing and mobilizing women inside the country and building international solidarity online.

This paper asks how women in Afghanistan use social media activism to resist and exercise agency under Taliban rule. Drawing on postcolonial feminist theory, it foregrounds women's political agency and strategic decision-making under authoritarianism, challenging the "savior" narratives that cast them as passive victims and contributing to debates on gendered resistance, digital activism, and repression.

The study draws on three qualitative sources. A protest event database documents 78 women-led protest events from September 2021 to August 2023, compiled from X (formerly Twitter) and print and digital media, capturing frequency, patterns, location, size, and state repression. Semi-structured interviews with six activists inside Afghanistan and in exile were conducted throughout 2023. A thematic analysis of hashtag activism on X from August 2022 to March 2024 examines digital mobilization, messaging, and transnational coordination.

The findings identify multiple, evolving forms of resistance: public protests demanding "Bread, Work, and Freedom"; everyday resistance such as rejecting the full hijab; indoor and hashtag activism; and encrypted coordination linking women inside Afghanistan with the diaspora. Digital media works as both a critical tool for resistance and a site of surveillance and vulnerability. By documenting how women shape political discourse despite isolation, repression, and exile, the study dismantles assumptions of women's voicelessness under gender apartheid.

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OVERVIEW OF AFGHAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS UNDER THE TALIBAN RULE

Mehri Rezaee

University of Oklahoma

Since the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan in August 2021, women's fundamental human rights have been systematically and severely violated. This paper critically examines the regression of women's rights under Taliban rule, focusing on key areas including the rights to education, employment, political participation, freedom of movement, freedom of expression, and freedom of dress. Drawing upon international human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the study demonstrates how the Taliban's policies constitute violations of Afghanistan's international legal obligations. Through analysis of recent United Nations reports and credible human rights documentation, the paper highlights the extensive exclusion of women from public life, including the dissolution of women's courts, restrictions on employment, denial of educational access, and violent suppression of peaceful protests. These actions not only perpetuate gender-based oppression but also contribute to worsening humanitarian conditions and socioeconomic instability. The research argues that such systematic discrimination meets the threshold of violations of jus cogens norms and urges the international community to implement coordinated diplomatic, political, and, if necessary, legal interventions. It concludes by calling for robust global accountability mechanisms and long-term strategies to protect and restore the rights of Afghan women, including sustained pressure on the Taliban to comply with international human rights standards.

KEYWORDS Afghan women, human rights violations, Taliban, right to education, freedom of movement, dress code, international law, CEDAW, ICCPR, UDHR

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MULTIPLE AND INTERSECTING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN: LEGAL AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES

Benafsha Yaqoobi

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicines (LSHTM)

Political developments in Afghanistan since 2021 have created unprecedented challenges for women's rights. These developments have also created complex and intertwined patterns of discrimination. In this context, women face multiple forms of deprivation and social exclusion based not only on gender, but also on disability, poverty, geographical location, and ethnic affiliation. These intersecting factors further restrict access to education, public services, employment, and justice. This situation demonstrates the value of intersectionality as an analytical framework for examining women's rights in Afghanistan. Using a descriptive-analytical method, the article draws on international human rights instruments, intersectionality theory, and contemporary approaches to social justice to examine the legal and social dimensions of multiple and intersecting discrimination against women in Afghanistan. The article asks how intersecting forms of discrimination shape the experiences of women in Afghanistan and restrict their enjoyment of fundamental human rights. It argues that legal restrictions, policies, and institutional practices introduced or enforced in Afghanistan since 2021 violate the principles of equality and non-discrimination and have disproportionately affected women facing multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage. The findings suggest that legal approaches addressing discrimination on a single ground are insufficient to explain the diverse experiences of women in Afghanistan. An analytical framework attentive to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination is therefore necessary. Effective protection of women's rights requires inclusive policies, stronger human rights accountability mechanisms, and particular attention to women exposed to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and structural disadvantage. The article concludes that future legal and policy frameworks to protect women's rights in Afghanistan should be grounded in inclusion, substantive equality, and responsiveness to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

KEYWORDS women in Afghanistan; intersectional discrimination; multiple discrimination; women's rights; substantive equality; social inclusion; social justice.

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THE POLITICS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THE CONTRADICTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION IN POST-2001 AFGHANISTAN

Salma Abid

Griffith University

Since 2001, Afghan women have occupied a central place within international narratives of democracy, human rights, and state-building. Gender equality became a visible marker of progress in post-9/11 Afghanistan, with international institutions and donor frameworks presenting the empowerment of women as both a political objective and a justification for intervention. Yet the long-term social consequences of these interventions remain contested.

This paper critically examines how liberal feminist agendas and international governance frameworks interacted with Afghanistan's political, cultural, and religious realities between 2001 and 2021. Drawing on feminist sociology, postcolonial theory, and the sociology of religion, the study explores how externally driven gender projects often produced tensions between global policy frameworks and local social structures. While intervention created important opportunities for some Afghan women in education, employment, and public participation, it also generated new forms of inequality, symbolic representation, and institutional dependency.

The paper argues that dominant international approaches frequently framed Afghan women through simplified narratives of liberation and victimhood, overlooking the diversity of women's lived experiences and the complex role of religion, class, ethnicity, and local agency in shaping social change. It further considers how these fragile institutional gains became increasingly vulnerable following the Taliban's return to power in 2021.

Rather than treating Afghan women as passive subjects of international intervention, this research highlights the multiple ways women negotiated, resisted, and redefined political and social change across two decades of conflict and transformation. In doing so, the paper contributes to broader debates on interventionist feminism, global governance, and the sociological consequences of foreign intervention in Afghanistan.

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Farida Razaqi, Harvard University

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WOMEN'S NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE UNDER THE TALIBAN REGIME

Maryam Sadr

Columbia University

This chapter documents how repression has shaped women's nonviolent resistance during the Taliban's second rule in Afghanistan by redirecting it from public forms of protest into indoor and digital forms of action. It examines the possibilities and limitations of nonviolent resistance under the Taliban's gendered and religious authoritarianism using the theories of nonviolent resistance, particularly Gene Sharp's strategic nonviolent action and James C. Scott's concept of everyday resistance. Women's acts of resistance in Afghanistan are expressed through cultural, social, and everyday practices. Through their resistance, the women of Afghanistan preserve networks of solidarity and reaffirm their social and gender identities, thereby challenging the regime's legitimacy. For instance, organizing gatherings, forming underground networks for education and employment, and engaging in cultural and symbolic practices are the tools through which they preserve solidarity networks and publicly challenge regime norms. However, the feasibility of sustained and coordinated nonviolent action within these resistance patterns is limited due to both structural and economic constraints such as restrictive policies, high surveillance, and the systematic exclusion of women from the labor force. Consequently, the standard nonviolent strategies like boycotts, strikes, and group noncooperation are likely unattainable. This analysis contributes to the study of nonviolent resistance under a gendered and religious authoritarianism through documenting the patterns of women's nonviolent resistance in Afghanistan. In doing so, it highlights how repression and gendered exclusion limit coordinated mass action while shifting resistance into symbolic, and network-based forms, thereby, exposing the limits of existing frameworks, particularly those of Gene Sharp and James C. Scott.

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AFGHANISTAN'S POST-2021 ECONOMY: POLICY SUCCESS OR ECONOMIC COMPRESSION?

Sediqa Zaki

International Food Policy Research Institute

Since the Taliban's return to power in 2021, Afghanistan's economy has been the subject of competing interpretations. While improvements in inflation, exchange rate stability, and domestic revenue collection have been cited by some as signs of economic recovery and effective policy management, others point to persistent poverty, unemployment, and weak investment as evidence of continued economic distress.

Drawing on data from the World Bank, IMF, UN agencies, and official Afghan statistics, this paper analyzes trends in macroeconomic indicators such as inflation, exchange rates, fiscal performance, poverty, employment, investment, and sectoral activity between 2021 and 2025. It addresses two related questions: To what extent do recent macroeconomic outcomes reflect policy interventions rather than the structural conditions that emerged after 2021? And even if policy measures contributed to these outcomes, do they constitute meaningful economic progress?

The paper argues that improvements in indicators such as low inflation and exchange rate stability may largely reflect post-2021 structural conditions, including subdued domestic demand, financial sector constraints, restricted monetary expansion, limited access to international finance, and sustained humanitarian inflows, rather than policy interventions alone. Furthermore, even if these outcomes are partly attributable to the policy measures highlighted by the Taliban authorities, they have done little to address Afghanistan's most pressing challenges, including widespread poverty, unemployment, weak investment, and low productive growth. Exchange rate stability and low inflation have not been accompanied by stronger employment growth, productive investment, export expansion, or significant improvements in household welfare. In this context, macroeconomic stability may reflect economic compression rather than economic dynamism or broad-based economic recovery.

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David Lublin, American University

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FROM REBEL TO RULER: HOW THE TALIBAN GOVERN THE ECONOMY IN AFGHANISTAN

Sarajuddin Isar

Radboud University Nijmegen

Following their military victory in August 2021, the Taliban transitioned from an insurgent movement into a governing authority, creating a rare opportunity to examine how a victorious rebel group manages a national economy, particularly its fiscal and monetary sectors, an area that remains underexplored in both academic and policy debates. The Taliban have consistently claimed success in economic stabilisation, citing improved revenue collection and lower inflation. This paper critically evaluates these claims by analysing the Taliban's fiscal and monetary governance between 2021 and 2026.

Since the Taliban's return to power, Afghanistan's economy has experienced consecutive years of contraction, resulting in the loss of nearly one-third of national income. Economic activity across the three major sectors—agriculture, industry, and services—declined sharply, pushing the country into recession and contributing to rising unemployment, poverty, and deteriorating livelihoods.

Economists argue that governments facing recession should adopt expansionary fiscal and monetary policies, including lower interest rates and reduced taxation, to stimulate investment, support businesses, and create employment. The Taliban, however, pursued the opposite approach.

On the monetary front, they prohibited interest-based banking and announced a transition to Islamic banking, although little progress has been made. The interest ban weakened the banking sector, caused substantial losses, reduced financial intermediation, and increased reliance on informal mechanisms such as hawala.

Fiscally, the Taliban intensified revenue extraction through new taxes and coercive measures targeting businesses and poor households. Although domestic revenue collection improved, taxation often relied on intimidation and lacked transparency and accountability, thereby undermining state–society relations and hindering the development of a fiscal social contract.

By examining the economic governance of a victorious insurgent movement, this study contributes to the literature on rebel victory, rebel-to-state transitions, and the political economy of rebel state-building, highlighting the tensions between coercive control and effective economic management following insurgent success.

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David Lublin, American University

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THE ARCHITECTURE OF ILLEGITIMACY: AN ANALYSIS OF TALIBAN LAW ON PROPAGATION OF VIRTUE AND PREVENTION OF VICE THROUGH THE LENS OF MAQASID AL-SHARĪ'AH

Lutfurahman Saeed

ALPA

Since August 2021, the Taliban's Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (PVPV) has become one of Afghanistan's most powerful institutions, regulating social behavior, gender relations, and religious practice through sweeping directives presented as applications of Islamic law. Although the international community has widely condemned the PVPV law and its enforcement as violations of international human rights, particularly regarding women, the Taliban dismiss such criticism as externally imposed and incompatible with Islamic values. This has created a persistent analytical and strategic impasse.

This research addresses that impasse by offering an internal critique grounded in the Islamic legal tradition. Using the theory of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah (the objectives of Islamic law) as its primary analytical framework, the study evaluates the legal authority and substantive content of the PVPV law against the objectives articulated by classical jurists such as al-Ghazālī, al-Shāṭibī, and al-Sarakhsī: the preservation of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property, together with the promotion of justice ('adl) and public welfare (maṣlaḥa).

The study argues that the Taliban's PVPV regime, rooted in a narrow and decontextualized literalism, fundamentally undermines these universally recognized objectives. By prioritizing coercive moral enforcement over the ethical purposes of the Sharī'ah, the law produces outcomes that contradict both the spirit and structure of Islamic jurisprudence. The research demonstrates that the Taliban's approach constitutes a dual violation: it conflicts with international human rights norms while departing from the foundational moral and jurisprudential commitments of Islamic law. In doing so, it offers a more credible, internally grounded framework for challenging authoritarian interpretations of Islamic law and for re-centering Islamic legal discourse on justice, dignity, and human welfare.

MODERATOR

David Lublin, American University

TIME

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FROM REBELOCRACY TO THEOCRATIC SOVEREIGNTY: EXPLAINING THE DURABILITY AND CONTRADICTIONS OF TALIBAN GOVERNANCE IN AFGHANISTAN

Mustafa Saqib

Rutgers University

The Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan in August 2021 presents an important challenge to conventional theories of rebel governance, state formation, and post-conflict reconstruction. Despite the collapse of the Islamic Republic, the suspension of international assistance, economic crisis, diplomatic isolation, and widespread international condemnation, the Taliban have maintained territorial control and established a functioning administrative system. This article argues that the durability of Taliban rule is rooted in institutional foundations developed during two decades of insurgency. Through parallel courts, taxation systems, provincial administrations, education commissions, and regulatory mechanisms, the Taliban developed a system of wartime governance that increasingly functioned as a shadow state. Following the fall of Kabul, these institutions were transformed into sovereign administrative structures while the Taliban simultaneously incorporated and subordinated the existing state bureaucracy.

The article conceptualizes this transformation as a shift from rebelocracy to theocratic sovereignty—a political order in which bureaucratic administration coexists with centralized religious authority that supersedes constitutional and representative institutions. Drawing on scholarship on rebel governance, wartime state formation, insurgent organizational cohesion, and authoritarian institutionalism, the article examines the institutional, political, economic, and organizational foundations of Taliban rule. It argues that the regime's resilience should not be equated with long-term stability. Taliban governance contains significant contradictions between ideological absolutism and administrative pragmatism, bureaucratic functionality and centralized clerical authority, economic sustainability and restrictive policies, and domestic control and international legitimacy. The Afghan case demonstrates that wartime institutions can provide durable foundations for post-conflict authoritarian rule while simultaneously generating structural tensions that may shape the future sustainability of the Islamic Emirate.

MODERATOR

David Lublin, American University

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THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF FRAGILITY: WHY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FAILED IN AFGHANISTAN (2001–2021)

Ahmad Mohammadi

University of Warwick

After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan became one of the largest international reconstruction projects of the modern era. Foreign governments and international organisations invested billions of dollars in ministries, public services, elections, banks, development programmes and security institutions. The expectation was that these reforms would help Afghanistan move from war, poverty and political fragmentation towards a more stable state and productive economy. However, by 2021 the Afghan government had collapsed, the Taliban had returned to power, and the country remained deeply poor and fragile.

This study investigates why two decades of international assistance and formal institution-building produced such limited and unstable outcomes. Existing research often highlights corruption, weak governance and low institutional capacity. Although these problems were significant, the study argues that they were symptoms of a deeper political-economic structure. It therefore examines how power, resources and influence were organised after 2001, how political elites gained access to state resources, and how informal networks, patronage and elite bargains shaped the functioning of formal institutions.

The research uses the concept of a Limited Access Order, in which powerful groups restrict access to wealth, jobs, contracts and organisations in order to preserve their position and manage conflict. From this perspective, Afghanistan's institutions may have performed political functions, such as distributing rents and maintaining elite cooperation, without creating sustainable economic development.

The study contributes by explaining why Afghanistan remained fragile despite massive external support, by extending theories of fragile states to include informal networks, ethnicity and political ideas, and by challenging the assumption that formal institutions alone can produce development. Using documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews, it aims to provide a grounded explanation of Afghanistan's failure and identify lessons for other conflict-affected and aid-dependent countries.

MODERATOR

David Lublin, American University

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SOVEREIGNTY WITHOUT CAPACITY: REGULATORY FRAGILITY, SANCTIONS, AND THE POLITICS OF ACCESS TO MEDICINES IN AFGHANISTAN

Abdul Saboor Matin

University of Lancashire

Access to essential medicines is traditionally theorised through the lenses of Research & Development (R&D), supply-chain, pricing, or intellectual property (IP) protections. However, in fragile and conflict-affected countries, the deeper challenge lies within the country itself: a lack of local regulatory capacity. This paper examines how legal commitments to access to life-saving medicine clash with weak institutions, financial limits, border dependencies, and political instability. Using Afghanistan as a case study, this paper argues that the main barrier to getting medicine is not just global IP landscape and other international rules, but a government's inability to negotiate, implement, and enforce them. Although Afghanistan is a member state to the World Trade Organisation, the World Health Organisation, and IP systems, its regulatory agencies are paralysed by limited technical negotiation expertise, heavy reliance on foreign actors, and broken supply chains. The result is a severe gap between what the law promises on paper and what people can actually access.

Furthermore, the paper analyses how international sanctions, banking restrictions (financial de-risking), and border closures create hidden barriers that block medicine independent of formal legal rules. While humanitarian exceptions and international IP flexibilities such as compulsory licensing under the TRIPS Agreement theoretically allow for medicine imports, actual transactions are routinely blocked by broken payment systems, banking bans, high insurance costs, and supplier uncertainty. These dynamics are especially critical in Afghanistan, where the pharmaceutical supply has historically relied on regional trade routes, particularly imports from Pakistan. Recent political tensions and sudden import restrictions show how border politics can instantly jeopardise the availability of life-saving medicines.

To explain this crisis, the study introduces the concept of “sovereignty without capacity”, a situation where a state is recognised as independent on the global stage but lacks the actual institutional tools to govern effectively. The paper concludes that current international mechanisms fail because they ignore these operational realities on the ground.

Resolving the medicine crisis requires policy reforms that bypass political deadlocks to protect humanitarian trade channels, secure cross-border supply lines, and safeguard the distribution of life-saving supplies from geopolitical conflict. Ultimately, this paper argues that access to medicine in fragile environments is not a technical puzzle, but a critical failure of global governance and power, where vulnerable populations are left to bear the consequences of a dysfunctional legal and financial landscape.

MODERATOR

David Lublin, American University

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IN SEARCH OF PEACE FOR AFGHANISTAN: HISTORICAL LETTERS OF PRESIDENT NAJIBULLAH AND DR M. HASSAN KAKAR – A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

Kawun Kakar

Kakar History Foundation

Jawan Shir Rasikh

Publication Editor

The presenters intend to introduce *In Search of Peace for Afghanistan: Historical Letters of President Najibullah and Dr M. Hassan Kakar*, an edited volume based on exchange of three letters between Afghanistan's last socialist head of state Dr Najibullah and historian Dr. M. Hassan Kakar. The letters were exchanged in 1990 when different attempts were made by both Afghans and international actors to search for a peaceful settlement of the war after Soviet withdrawal to save Afghanistan from further conflicts and political collapse.

The Volume was published as a collection of essays three months prior to the collapse of Afghanistan's Republic in August of 2021 when the U.S. was completing its withdrawal. The timing of the publication was intended to share lessons learned from the previous failed attempts at peace and national reconciliation.

President Najibullah was eventually outrun by the Mujahideen factions who captured Kabul in the spring of 1992 and turned it literally into a "bleeding capital" for Afghan people after they fought each other along new party, ethnic, and regional lines. It also was during this period of "civil war" and collapsing of the Afghan central state when the country as a whole was compromised by the emergence of the Taliban and gathering of various international terror networks that eventually resulted in the tragic attacks of 9/11 and the subsequent invasion of the country by the US and coalition forces.

By reading the Najibullah - Kakar correspondence from a historical perspective and as lessons learned from history to search for peace in Afghanistan, we hoped to get a rare first-hand view into how an embattled Afghan President and a leading Afghan historian, who was at one point a "Prisoner of Conscience", viewed the prospects and conditions for national reconciliation and peace. In addition to providing a view into how Afghan people themselves understood and sought to resolve the conflict in their country, the correspondence outlines in candid terms a number of key themes including steps needed for transition to peace and a responsible and representative state to ensure national sovereignty and respect for the rights of all its citizens.

We invited 22 senior and emerging scholars and policy practitioners from both inside and outside Afghanistan to read and put in perspective the correspondence among other relevant themes. The 22 essays placed the correspondence in historical context and considered whether lessons could be drawn from the previous failed episodes of national reconciliation and peace negotiations. Eleven additional essays on the correspondence were also published as a separate volume in Pashto and Dari. The tangible outcome was the publication of two edited volumes in June of 2021 when Afghanistan once again was at a pivotal moment in its national history as President Biden had made his mind to end "the forever war" and Afghan factions were unable to come to an agreement internally. For those interested, digital copies of the volumes are available on the website of Kakar History Foundation and on Amazon and Lulu.

In this joint reflection, in addition to sharing the discovery and key themes of the correspondences, Kawun and Jawan will put in perspective the various lessons we learned from publishing this volume and its relevance to ongoing national and international debates and dialogues concerning bringing and strengthening enduring peace in Afghanistan.

MODERATOR

Omar Sharifi, Johns Hopkins University

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HEALA – A STORY OF AN AFGHAN GIRL

Zohra Orokzai

StrongHer Organization

In a village north of Kabul, Afghanistan, young Heala dreams of becoming a doctor. When her father dies of sickness, the family falls into poverty. Her mother weighs options and agrees to marry Heala to Malik, a wealthy older man, hoping his payment and property will save them.

Heala refuses. With help from a local young guy, Sultan, she runs away. They fall in love and imagine a future together. Malik will not stop; he follows her trail, determined to claim the marriage he was paid to secure.

To protect her, Sultan takes Heala to a secret women's shelter in Kabul. He knows he must return home because his family is in danger and within Malik's reach. He leaves, heartbroken.

Heala begins her education. She studies with fierce focus, turning every attempt to silence her into determination. Later, she earns a chance to move to the United States and continues studying, working toward medical training.

When she receives an assignment with Doctors Without Borders, Heala returns to Afghanistan to reunite with her family and Sultan. She finds them, embraces them, and feels her hope surge, until the country collapses in 2021. Amid the chaos, Sultan rushes her toward the airport.

As Heala boards, Sultan is shot in front of her.

Brokenhearted, she returns to the United States. Her purpose carries her forward, but her grief never fully leaves. She stays in touch with her family and honors Sultan through the love and sacrifice that shaped her journey.

She believes tomorrow can still be better in her beloved country. Heala's story is strength and hope and the proof that girls from Afghanistan can pursue education and keep a dream alive with determination.

MODERATOR

Omar Sharifi, Johns Hopkins University

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THE LIMITS OF COERCION: PAKISTAN'S PRESSURE STRATEGY, THE AFGHAN TALIBAN, AND THE TTP

Kamal Davidson

NIOD

Since the Taliban's return to power in 2021, relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have soured sharply. Pakistan has responded to the growing threat posed by Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) by increasing diplomatic, economic, and military pressure on the Afghan Taliban, hoping to force them to distance themselves from the group. This approach is based on the assumption that sufficient pressure can change Taliban behavior. Yet despite escalating Pakistani pressure, the Taliban have shown little willingness to abandon the TTP. Why has Pakistan's pressure strategy failed?

This paper argues that Pakistan's pressure strategy rests on a flawed understanding of the Afghan Taliban's decision-making, ideological commitments, and historical experience of resisting external coercion. It argues that many existing policy analyses place too much emphasis on strategic calculations and too little on the movement's ideological foundations, organizational identity, and the relationships forged over more than two decades of conflict.

The paper shows that the relationship between the Afghan Taliban and the TTP is not merely a temporary alliance of convenience but is rooted in decades of shared struggle, ideological affinity, personal relationships, and mutual obligations forged during the two decades of war. It further argues that the Taliban's experience resisting sustained military, political, and economic pressure has reinforced a leadership culture unlikely to abandon what it regards as core commitments in response to external coercion. As a result, demands to sever ties with the TTP are far more politically, ideologically, and organisationally difficult than many policymakers assume, making Pakistan's current pressure strategy unlikely to achieve its intended objectives and increasing the risk of further tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Drawing on rare field access and first-hand interviews, this paper offers new insights into one of the most important yet least understood security challenges in South Asia. More broadly, it contributes to debates on the limits of coercion against ideologically driven armed groups and insurgent alliances, as well as on the future of Pakistan–Afghanistan relations.

MODERATOR

Annie Pforzheimer, Pace University

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ASSESSING THE EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE OF THE BORDERLAND COMMUNITIES TO THE FLOW OF THE SHARED WATERCOURSE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Najibullah Loodin

Texas A&M University

Najibullah Loodin, Rosario Sanchez, Vijay P. Singh, Gabriel Eckstein, Sarah N. Gatson (Texas A&M University)

Due to the complexity in governance and management of the shared watercourse, some sociologists and psychologists have recently explored the role of emotion in decision-making processes over the use and allocation of the shared water among the co-riparian nations. Taking an integrated approach incorporating Terror Management Theory, Neoclassical Realism and Emotional Political Ecology into a comprehensive theoretical framework, this research aims to track the emotional dispositions of the borderland farming communities of the Lower Rio Grande Valley (shared between US and Mexico) and the Helmand River (shared between Afghanistan and Iran) concerning water misallocation given the evolving impacts of climate changes and over-utilization of the shared water for irrigation and agricultural development. It is argued that the marginalized farming communities whose farming lands have been irrigated by the flow of Rio Grande and the Helmand Rivers for centuries establish intrinsically spatial and temporal emotional ties to the flow of the shared waterbody. In the face of changing climate and water scarcity, these manifested emotional dynamics (spatial and temporal dimensions), while widely narrated and recorded in historical and poetic epics, are influenced and manipulated by the political agenda of political provocateurs resulting in water inequity—excessive supply of water in one riparian at the expense of depriving the other—in the borderland farming communities leading to escalated water disputes among the co-riparian nations of the shared watercourse. These inflamed emotional entrapments, while incited due to water injustice and misallocation in the transboundary waterway, have the potential of shaping or co-shaping decisions concerning the use and allocation of the shared watercourse among riparians.

KEYWORDS Borderland Communities; Emotions; Farming Communities; Transboundary Water; Riparians

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Annie Pforzheimer, Pace University

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AFGHANISTAN'S CRITICAL MINERALS: BETWEEN RESOURCE WEALTH AND GEOPOLITICAL COMPETITION

Arshpreet Kaur

Jamia Millia Islamia

Afghanistan's significant mineral resources have increasingly attracted international attention due to their potential importance for strategic industries, advanced technologies and the global transition towards clean energy. As access to critical minerals becomes increasingly linked to economic security and geopolitical competition, Afghanistan's resource potential has acquired renewed strategic significance. Yet the development of these resources remains constrained by political instability, security challenges, inadequate infrastructure and an uncertain international environment. This paper examines how Afghanistan's critical mineral resources are emerging as a new arena of geopolitical competition among external powers. It explores the interests and engagement of major and regional actors, with particular attention to China, and analyses how the pursuit of strategically important resources intersects with broader concerns relating to regional influence, security and economic connectivity. The paper argues that Afghanistan's critical minerals cannot be understood solely as an economic asset. Their growing strategic importance has the potential to reshape the country's relationship with external powers and intensify competition for political and economic influence. At the same time, Afghanistan faces a central dilemma. While its mineral resources could contribute to economic recovery and long-term development, weak institutions, political uncertainty and unequal external engagement may increase the risk of resource dependency and geopolitical vulnerability. By situating Afghanistan within the wider global competition for critical minerals, this paper examines the intersection of natural resources, strategic interests and regional power dynamics and considers whether Afghanistan can convert its mineral potential into sustainable development and greater strategic autonomy.

KEYWORDS Afghanistan, Critical Competition, Regional Security, Minerals, Geopolitics, External Powers, Resource

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INFRASTRUCTURE AFTER INTERVENTION: ROADS, REGIONAL POWER, AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TALIBAN-RULED AFGHANISTAN

Lema Salah

Radboud University Nijmegen / Royal Academy for Arts & Sciences

Infrastructure has long occupied a central place in international strategies to stabilize and transform Afghanistan. During the international intervention (2001–2021), roads were promoted as instruments of security, economic development, statebuilding, and governmental legitimacy. Yet these projects simultaneously generated new political economies of contracting, local brokerage, armed protection, and territorial control, often strengthening informal power structures alongside formal state institutions. Following the Taliban's return to power in 2021, these infrastructures have acquired new political significance as regional actors increasingly pursue economic, diplomatic, and strategic interests in Afghanistan.

This paper examines how roads and infrastructure have evolved from instruments of Western counterinsurgency and statebuilding into assets within emerging regional geopolitical competition. Drawing on historical analysis of the Dutch intervention in Uruzgan Province and broader developments in Afghanistan, the paper traces how infrastructure projects reshaped local authority, facilitated new forms of governance, and produced unintended political consequences that continue to influence contemporary Afghanistan. The paper conceptualizes infrastructure as a political tool through which authority, legitimacy, mobility, and economic power are negotiated. Drawing on archival material and interviews, this paper examines how road construction and infrastructure projects were part of a broader political and economic system leading to both wanted and unwanted consequences during the intervention and post 2021. These developments raise important questions regarding the relationship between infrastructure, political legitimacy, economic governance, and security under Taliban rule. By situating current geopolitical developments within the longer trajectory of international intervention, the paper argues that today's infrastructure politics cannot be understood independently from the institutional and political landscapes produced during the previous two decades.

The paper contributes to debates on post-intervention Afghanistan by linking state building and political economy, while also offering policy recommendations on regional engagement, development cooperation, and the long-term governance implications of infrastructure investment under Taliban rule.

MODERATOR

Annie Pforzheimer, Pace University

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THE EXILED MIND: AFGHAN DIASPORA, DIGITAL IDENTITY, AND THE FUTURE OF A NATION BEYOND BORDERS

Maryam Danesh

Washington and Lee University

Following the Taliban's return to power in 2021, Afghanistan experienced not only political collapse and humanitarian crisis, but also the large-scale displacement of its educated and professional population. Thousands of academics, journalists, women professionals, civil society actors, and intellectuals were forced into exile. While this phenomenon is often described as "brain drain" or forced migration, this paper argues that post-2021 Afghanistan has produced a more complex and historically distinctive condition: the emergence of an "exiled mind" existing beyond the territorial boundaries of the state.

This study examines how the Afghan diaspora continues to shape political discourse, collective memory, and national identity through digital spaces and transnational networks. Through social media platforms, online advocacy, virtual academic communities, and diaspora-led media initiatives, displaced Afghans remain actively engaged in debates surrounding legitimacy, representation, resistance, and the future of Afghanistan. The paper argues that Afghanistan today exists simultaneously as a territorial state under Taliban rule and as a digitally interconnected transnational sphere sustained by its diaspora.

Using qualitative and interdisciplinary analysis, including digital discourse observation and diaspora theory, this research explores how digital communication has transformed exile from a condition of political absence into a form of remote civic participation. The paper further investigates whether the Afghan diaspora is contributing to the formation of a new kind of virtual public sphere that challenges conventional understandings of nationhood, political belonging, and state-centered identity.

By introducing the concept of "The Exiled Mind," this study contributes to emerging scholarship on digital identity, transnational politics, diaspora studies, and post-territorial forms of civic engagement in conflict-affected societies.

MODERATOR

Annie Pforzheimer, Pace University

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FROM GEOGRAPHIC SPACE TO GEOPOLITICAL STRATEGY: THE EVOLUTION, POLITICIZATION, AND MODERN RESURGENCE OF "TURKESTAN" (12TH–21ST CENTURY)

Javeed Ahwar

Nazarbayev University

This paper examines the conceptual evolution of the term Turkestan from the 12th to the 21st century, tracing its symbiotic transformation from an expansive fluid geography into a highly politicized geopolitical construct. Initially conceptualized as an amorphous, imaginary frontier or "land ruled by Turks," the term underwent a radical semantic shift with the advent of modern Turkism ideology. This ideology decontextualized and politicized the phrase, transitioning its definition from a porous political zone to an exclusionary, ethno-nationalist domain: "the land of Turks."

The paper demonstrates how this shift served as an ideological engine for the systematic de-Persianization of Central Asia—most notably within modern Uzbekistan—by erasing centuries of deep-seated Turkic-Tajik (Perso-Turkic) cultural symbiosis in favor of a homogenized, hegemonic interpretation of the past.

Finally, this study critically analyzes contemporary manifestations of this ideology, specifically Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's recent calls to rename Central Asia as "Turkestan." We argue that this modern framing is deeply problematic; it risks weaponizing anachronistic historicism across Central Asia and Afghanistan, exacerbating ethnic fractures, and serving revisionist regional hegemonies rather than historical reality. By deconstructing this millennium-long semantic trajectory, this paper challenges essentialist narratives and highlights the dangers of mobilizing medieval geography for modern geopolitical gain.

KEYWORDS Turkestan, Turkism, De-Persianization, Central Asian History, Historical Revisionism, Geopolitics.

MODERATOR

Annie Pforzheimer, Pace University

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WHY CONSTANT FAILURES? ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF GOVERNANCE FOR AFGHANISTAN

Thomas Barfield

Boston University

The collapse of central governments four times in Afghanistan since 1929 (Amanullah, PDPA, Taliban, Republic) should have raised questions about the viability of highly centralized states in Afghanistan implementing contested political and cultural policies, and yet the Taliban return to power in 2021 marks a new attempt to implement this same model. Why have such governments with such radically different ideologies failed and are there models of governance that might prove more stable in Afghanistan? While regimes relying on foreign aid and external military intervention survived without seeking a domestic political consensus, their state structures routinely disintegrated upon the withdrawal of superpower backing. The paper therefore argues that achieving long-term stability in Afghanistan requires abandoning failed zero-sum autocratic governance in favor of decentralized, federal, or democratic structures that respect local autonomy and reflect the population's existing institutional realities.

KEYWORDS Afghanistan, state building, rentier regimes, political organization

MODERATOR

Scott Worden, Afghanistan War Commission

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AFGHANISTAN: A NEGLECTED REALITY

Said Reza Huseini

Georgetown University

Hannah Hassani

St Andrews University

This panel brings together eight senior, mid-career, and early-career scholars from diverse academic backgrounds to discuss Afghanistan: A Neglected Reality, a special issue to be published by Edinburgh University Press in August 2026. The panel provides an overview of their contributions, highlighting both the external and internal factors that contributed to the collapse of the government in August 2021. Structured as a roundtable discussion and moderated by a senior academic, the panel will explore the key insights emerging from this publication and consider the lessons it offers for understanding and addressing the recurring cycle of state failure in Afghanistan.

MODERATOR

Scott Worden, Afghanistan War Commission

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AFGHANISTAN: AMERICA'S FAILED INTERVENTION

Amin Saikal

Australian National University

Many factors contributed to America's failure in Afghanistan. Most prominently, they included the US's lack of a firm understanding of Afghanistan's historical and prevailing conditions; its inability to uproot the Taliban and Al Qaeda, resulting in a long "hunt" for Osama Bin Laden; its conflation of the Afghanistan campaign with two broader goals of democracy promotion and war on terrorism; its lack of effective and reliable partners on the ground; and the absence of a viable strategy to coordinate the political, security and developmental dimensions of state-building. These critical variables enormously advantaged the Taliban and their supporters. In the end, they left the US, along with its allies, no choice other than to exit Afghanistan in defeat of the very objectives that had underpinned its intervention. With the Taliban regaining power, Afghanistan has faced an unprecedented dark period in its turbulent historical evolution.

KEYWORDS Afghanistan, USA, history, politics, conflict, Taliban

MODERATOR

Scott Worden, Afghanistan War Commission

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تحلیل گفتمانی دولت‌های افغانستان

کامبخش نیکویی
دانشگاه رنا

دولت‌سازی در افغانستان همواره از بیرون توسط قدرت‌های بزرگ وقت با همکاری شرکای منطقه‌ای و داخلی شان صورت گرفته است و در این راه با شکست‌هایی نیز همراه بوده است. هدف این مقاله، تبیین فرآیند شکل‌گیری گفتمان‌های دولت‌سازی و سازوکارهای سیاسی در افغانستان است و می‌کوشد نشان دهد که چه گفتمان‌هایی با چه مؤلفه‌هایی در روند دولت‌سازی این کشور ظهور و تحول یافته‌اند. بر این اساس، پرسش اصلی پژوهش چنین صورت‌بندی می‌شود: گفتمان دولت طالبان بر پایه کدام متغیرها در پایان قرن بیستم مغلوب گفتمان مردم‌سالاری شد و از طریق چه سازوکارهایی در قرن بیست‌ویکم بار دیگر به یکی از گفتمان‌های غالب در عرصه تعاملات سیاسی تبدیل گردید؟ یافته‌های پژوهش نشان می‌دهد که گفتمان طالبان با بهره‌گیری از راهبردهای غیریت‌سازی، به‌ویژه پیرامون مفهوم «اشغال»، و نیز در تقابل با ساختارهای مدرن دولت-ملت‌سازی، توانسته است در بستر تحولات اجتماعی-سیاسی افغانستان بازتولید شود و با مفصل‌بندی مجدد دال‌های گفتمانی، جایگاه هژمونیک خود را احیا کند. این پژوهش با بهره‌گیری از رویکرد تحلیل گفتمان، مبتنی بر نظریه لاکلا و موف، و در چارچوبی تحلیلی-توصیفی انجام شده است. داده‌ها از طریق ترکیبی از مشاهده مشارکتی، منابع تاریخی و مطالعات کتابخانه‌ای گردآوری شده و با تمرکز بر سازوکارهای هژمونیک و رقابت‌های گفتمانی، مورد تحلیل قرار گرفته‌اند.

MODERATOR

عظیم الله ورسجی

TIME

Sunday, 18 October
9:00AM – 10:30AM

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کلیدواژه‌ها گفتمان، دولت-ملت‌سازی، مردم‌سالاری، اسلام سیاسی، طالبان، افغانستان

فرا تراز ملی گرایی قومی: بازاندیشی هویت ملی فراگیر در افغانستان پس از ۲۰۲۱ بر اساس نظریه میهن دوستی قانون اساسی هابرماس

Mirwais Alamdar

دانشگاه انلاین زن

The return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan in 2021 intensified long-standing disputes over national identity and state legitimacy. In the aftermath, many political and cultural actors, particularly among non-Pashtun communities, increasingly challenged the official Afghan national identity, arguing that it reflects the historical dominance of a single ethnic group rather than a genuinely inclusive national framework. As a result, alternative identity narratives such as Khorasanism, Turkestanism, and Hazarastanism gained greater visibility. While these narratives offer important critiques of exclusion and unequal power relations, they remain largely rooted in ethnic or regional imaginaries and have struggled to provide a unifying framework capable of transcending communal boundaries. This paper examines the post-2021 identity crisis in Afghanistan through the theoretical lens of Jürgen Habermas's concept of constitutional patriotism. Rather than treating national identity as an extension of ethnic, linguistic, or historical homogeneity, Habermas proposes a form of political belonging grounded in shared democratic principles, equal citizenship, and commitment to common constitutional norms. Drawing on discourse analysis of political statements, intellectual debates, social media discussions, and identity narratives circulating among Afghan actors in exile and within Afghanistan, this study investigates why both the dominant national narrative and its competing alternatives have failed to generate broad-based legitimacy. The paper argues that the central challenge of nationhood in Afghanistan is not the absence of collective identities but the lack of an inclusive civic framework through which diverse identities can coexist on equal terms. It concludes that a sustainable and legitimate national identity is more likely to emerge from a citizenship-based political community founded on equality, pluralism, and shared rights than from competing ethnic-national projects. By connecting debates on Afghanistan with broader discussions on nationalism, state-building, and post-conflict societies, this research contributes to contemporary scholarship on inclusive nationhood in deeply divided societies.

MODERATOR

عظیم الله ورسجی

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کثرت گرایی سیاسی- هویتی و نظام غیرمتمرکز؛ راه‌حل‌های بنیادین مسله سیاسی- حقوقی افغانستان

تواب دانش
دانشگاه کورنل

از زمان تأسیس دولت مدرن افغانستان ساختار حکمرانی این کشور همواره بر محور تمرکز قدرت سیاسی استوار بوده است. با وجود دگرگونی نظام‌های سیاسی، از پادشاهی و جمهوری گرفته تا حکومت کمونیستی، جمهوری اسلامی و امارت اسلامی، ویژگی مشترک تمامی این نظام‌ها تمرکز قدرت در حکومت مرکزی و سلطه غالب یک گروه قومی بر ساختار تصمیم‌گیری سیاسی بوده است. این الگوی حکمرانی در طول تاریخ نه تنها موجب به حاشیه رانده شدن سایر اقوام شده، بلکه زمینه‌ساز بی‌ثباتی سیاسی، تداوم منازعات داخلی و تضعیف نظام حقوقی افغانستان نیز گردیده است. تجربه تاریخی افغانستان نشان می‌دهد که فروپاشی نظام‌های سیاسی، همواره با فروپاشی نظم حقوقی همراه بوده و این دو پدیده ارتباطی تنگاتنگ و جدایی‌ناپذیر با یکدیگر داشته‌اند. این پژوهش در پی آن است تا بررسی کند که شمولیت قومی در چارچوب یک نظام غیرمتمرکز چگونه می‌تواند بر ثبات سیاسی-حقوقی تأثیر بگذارد. فرضیه اصلی پژوهش بر این مبنا استوار است که تنوع قومی افغانستان، همراه با پراکندگی جغرافیایی و تمرکز نسبی اقوام در مناطق مختلف کشور، بستر مناسبی را برای استقرار یک نظام غیرمتمرکز فراهم می‌سازد؛ نظامی که ضمن تضمین مشارکت عادلانه تمامی اقوام در ساختار قدرت و فرایندهای تصمیم‌گیری، بتواند وحدت ملی، حاکمیت ملی و تمامیت ارضی کشور را نیز حفظ کند. در چنین چارچوبی، افزایش مشارکت اقوامی که در طول تاریخ از دسترسی مؤثر به قدرت سیاسی محروم بوده‌اند، می‌تواند مشروعیت حکومت را تقویت، شکاف‌ها و نارضایتی‌های قومی را کاهش، و زمینه استقرار نهادهای سیاسی و حقوقی پایدار و فراگیر را فراهم سازد. این پژوهش با بهره‌گیری از روش تحلیل کیفی در حوزه حقوق عمومی و علوم سیاسی، از طریق بررسی تاریخی نظام‌های سیاسی در افغانستان و مطالعه تطبیقی و تجربه کشورهای پس از منازعه، ظرفیت نظام غیرمتمرکز را در مدیریت تنوع قومی، تقویت نهادهای حقوقی در سطوح ملی و محلی و برقراری توازن میان خودمختاری منطقه‌ای و حاکمیت ملی مورد ارزیابی قرار می‌دهد. یافته‌های این پژوهش نشان می‌دهد که یک نظام غیرمتمرکز مبتنی بر شمولیت قومی، در صورتی که با سازوکارهای مؤثر همراه باشد، می‌تواند چارچوبی مناسب برای ثبات سیاسی-حقوقی و زمینه تحقق صلح و ثبات پایدار را در افغانستان فراهم آورد.

MODERATOR

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واژه‌های کلیدی: نظام سیاسی-حقوقی، عدم تمرکز، تنوع قومی، فروپاشی نظام‌های سیاسی

میراث زبانی شبه‌قاره در افغانستان؛ تحلیل واژه‌گزینی در فارسی دری در سده بیستم

خلیل الله افضلی
مؤسسه پژوهشی بایسنغر

زبان فارسی در افغانستان در سده‌های اخیر و به ویژه سده نوزدهم و بیستم، تحت تأثیر پیوندهای اداری و فرهنگی با شبه‌قاره هند، مجموعه‌ای از ساختارهای زبانی را جذب کرده است که آن را در حوزه واژگان از فارسی رایج در دیگر کشورها اندکی متمایز می‌کند. برخلاف پنداشت رایج که این واژگان را محلی می‌نمایاند، بسیاری از این اصطلاحات ریشه در نظام اداری، علمی و فرهنگی هند در دوره‌های گورکانی و بریتانیایی دارند. این مقاله با روش توصیفی-تحلیلی با دسته‌بندی واژگان به بررسی چگونگی انتقال آن‌ها از طریق کتب چاپی، مکاتبات دیوانی و نفوذ تکنولوژی از مسیر هند به افغانستان می‌پردازد. در این دوره، کتب چاپ سنگی (لیتوگرافی) منتشر شده در مطابع شبه‌قاره، نقشی بنیادین و تعیین‌کننده در شکل‌دهی به ساختار نگارشی و انشایی زبان فارسی در افغانستان ایفا کردند. این آثار فراتر از محتوای علمی، به عنوان الگوهای معیار برای آموزش املا و سبک نگارش در میان عامه مردم و کاتبان محلی شناخته می‌شدند.

یافته‌های پژوهش نشان می‌دهد که واژگانی نظیر «شفاخانه»، «چپراسی»، «میدان هوایی»، «آبدات»، «تشناب» و «تهداب» نه تنها میراثی از فارسی کلاسیک و محصول واژه‌سازی در جغرافیای افغانستان نیستند، بلکه نتیجه بازتولید زبانی فارسی‌گویان در حوزه تمدنی شبه‌قاره هند هستند که به دلیل نبود نهادهای واژه‌گزینی متمرکز (فرهنگستان) در افغانستان و نیز عدم برنامه‌ریزی حکومت‌های این کشور جهت رشد و پالایش زبان فارسی، در بدنه اصلی زبان رسمی این کشور تثبیت شده‌اند.

واژه‌های کلیدی: شبه‌قاره هند، افغانستان، فارسی دری، واژه‌گزینی، سده بیستم، گورکانیان هند.

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ماجرای تجزیه خواهی افغانستان در معادلات سیاسی افغانستان (سیاست، قومیت و هویت)

روبین پوپل
تربیت مدرس

در تاریخ سیاسی افغانستان، مسئله هویت ملی، جغرافیای سیاسی و روایت‌های تاریخی همواره از موضوعات بحث‌برانگیز و تعیین‌کننده بوده است. در کنار برداشت‌های مختلف، مفاهیمی چون (اریانا)، (خراسان)، (لوی افغانستان)، و حالا (ترکستان جنوبی) در گفتمان‌های سیاسی، فرهنگی و هویتی جایگاه ویژه‌ای یافته‌اند. این مفاهیم، بسته به دیدگاه‌های سیاسی و فکری، گاه به‌عنوان بخشی از حافظه تاریخی و گاه به‌عنوان پروژه‌های نمادین و آرمانی مطرح می‌شوند. امروزه شماری از سیاستمداران خارج از کشور بیشتر به تجزیه خواهی، انقسام قومی و بر چندپارچگی کشور کوبیده‌اند. امروزه تجزیه‌خواهی نه یک پروژه بازتولید بحران است بلکه زمینه ساز یک جنگ داخلی جدید است. خراسان خواهی نه در داخل افغانستان زمینه عملی دارد و نه کشورهای همسایه مانند تاجکستان و دیگر کشورهای همسایه از آن حمایت می‌کنند. در مقابل، اندیشه (لوی افغانستان) هنوز در ذهن بخشی از مردم دو سوی مرز، بیشتر به عنوان یک حافظه تاریخی و پیوند فرهنگی مطرح است نه یک پروژه فوری تجزیه طلبانه. همین تفاوت سبب است که این گفتمان در مقایسه با طرح‌های دیگر زنده تر باقی بماند. اما از سوی دیگر طرح‌هایی مانند (ترکستان جنوبی) با واقعیت‌های ژئوپولیتیک همخوانی و توانایی ایجاد اجماع منطقه‌ای را ندارد. کشورهای منطقه نیز حاضر نیستند ثبات و نظم موجود را قربانی پروژه‌های شعاری کنند. تجربه دهه‌های گذشته ثابت ساخته که هرگاه افغانستان تضعیف شده، تمام اقوام و نسل‌های بعدی بهای آن را پرداخته‌اند.

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نقش همکاری های علمی مصر در نخبه گان افغانستان

عبدالمجید دانشیار

دیپلمات اسبق

افغانستان و مصر دو کشور با تاریخ کهن و با پیوندهای عمیق دینی و اسلامی بتاریخ ۱۰ می ۱۹۲۸ رسماً روابط دیپلماتیک امضا نموده اند. امضای مناسبات دیپلماتیک در اولین سفر شاه افغانستان امان الله خان در سال ۱۹۲۷ تحت عنوان معاهده ای شناسایی و دوستی میان دو کشور شاهی رقم می خورد. با آنکه همکاری های اقتصادی مصر در طول عمر مناسبات سیاسی دوجانبه چشمگیر نبوده، اما حضور این کشور در عرصه های علمی و همچنان امنیتی در برخی از برهه های تاریخ برجسته است. مصر در زمان تجاوز اتحاد شوروی سابق به افغانستان در کنار مردم افغانستان می ایستد. بهمین ترتیب همکاری های علمی- فرهنگی و سیاسی در تمام دوره های بحرانی افغانستان ادامه پیدا می کند و تا آنجاکه بخش از رهبران طراز اول سیاسی و دینی افغانستان دانش سیاسی و دینی خود را از نهادهای معتبر مصری فرا گرفته اند. از این میان دو نهاد علمی مصر: دانشگاه ازهر و قاهره در صدر لست قرار دارد.

این نوشته با نگاه ویژه به همکاری های فرهنگی و علمی مصر با افغانستان نقش این کشور را در تحولات سیاسی و امنیتی افغانستان بررسی می نماید. پرسشی اصلی این است که آیا نقش علمی نهاد های آموزشی مصر در تکوین فکری و علمی نخبه گان افغانستان در تقویت مناسبات دیپلماتیک که تقریباً ۹۸ سال پیش به امضا رسیده است مثبت بوده و آیا مصر با آرایه دانش دینی و سیاسی در تحولات سیاسی افغانستان نقش بایسته ایفا کرده است؟ و دور نمای نقش مصر در افغانستان چگونه خواهد بود؟

MODERATOR

عظیم الله ورسجی

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AFGHANISTAN'S COMMUNICATIVE RUPTURE AFTER 2021: FRAGILE, PARTICIPATORY, AND TRANSNATIONAL PUBLIC SPHERE(S)

Kefayat Hamidi

Leipzig University

The featured presentation introduces the central theoretical argument of the research project and the edited volume. It examines August 2021 as a communicative rupture that changed the institutions, actors, spaces, and conditions of public communication related to Afghanistan. This rupture did not end public communication. It altered its institutional foundations, restricted public participation inside the country, and accelerated its digital and transnational reorganization.

The presentation connects four processes: institutional fragility, restricted participation, digital transformation, and transnationalization. It places the developments after 2021 in relation to the structural weaknesses of the media and communication order established after 2001.

The concept of fragile and participatory public sphere(s) addresses a central tension. Public communication remains active and diverse, while the institutional conditions for open and equal participation have weakened. Public voice is produced under repression, displacement, unequal access, platform dependency, and political conflict.

The presentation provides the shared framework for the six panel contributions and discusses the wider meaning of these findings for the study of public communication in fragile and transnational contexts.

MODERATOR

Poya Hashimi, Afghanistan
International, Reach Media

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JOURNALISM OF AFGHANISTAN AFTER 2021: MEDIA AND PUBLIC SPHERE(S) ACROSS BORDERS

Hamid Obaidi

Leipzig University

This contribution examines the transformation of journalism after the Taliban takeover. It focuses on repression, professional insecurity, displacement, exile media, and cross-border journalistic work. It asks how journalism and public communication continue when national media institutions lose autonomy, resources, and public reach.

MODERATOR

Poya Hashimi, Afghanistan International, Reach Media

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YOUTUBE AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATION OF AFGHANISTAN AFTER 2021

Laily Habib

Leipzig University

This contribution examines YouTube as a space for Afghanistan-related public communication. It studies how media actors, journalists, political commentators, and other content producers use the platform for news, debate, interpretation, and cultural communication.

MODERATOR

Poya Hashimi, Afghanistan International, Reach Media

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AFGHANISTAN-LINKED PUBLICS IN GERMANY: DIGITAL NETWORKS, ACTORS, AND NARRATIVES IN A POST-MIGRATION SOCIETY

Ramin Kamangar

Leipzig University

This contribution examines how Afghanistan-linked public communication is organized in Germany through digital networks, media actors, civil society organizations, diaspora communities, and individual content producers. It analyzes the actors and narratives that shape digital communication related to Afghanistan and asks how developments in Afghanistan become part of public debate in a post-migration society. The contribution shows how diaspora communication connects contexts inside Afghanistan with political, social, and media debates in Germany, creating a transnational communicative space across national borders.

MODERATOR

Poya Hashimi, Afghanistan International, Reach Media

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ONLINE TERRORISM AND FRAGMENTED PUBLIC SPHERE(S): ISKP'S INTERMEDIATED COMMUNICATION IN AFGHANISTAN AFTER 2021

Abumoslem Khorasani

Leipzig University

This contribution examines the communication of the Islamic State Khorasan Province after 2021. It analyzes how extremist messages gain visibility through digital platforms, journalistic reporting, public reactions, and other intermediaries. It addresses the relationship between extremist communication and fragmented public sphere(s).

MODERATOR

Poya Hashimi, Afghanistan
International, Reach Media

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REDEFINING SUBNATIONAL GOVERNANCE IN AFGHANISTAN; A STUDY OF 52 COMMUNITY-IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS IN QARABAGH, GHAZNI

Sayed Ziafatullah Saeedi

Bonn International Center for Conflict Studies

This paper looks at 52 community projects designed, run, and completed between 2021-2025 by the residents of Qarabagh Province in Ghazni. Costing 800,000 USD and raised mainly through donations, the projects include construction of school buildings, water wells, mosques, clinics, Madrasas, streets, and footstall gymnasiums. Looking at the type, timeline, costs, sources, location of projects, and decision-making process, this study 1) outlines the governance functions fulfilled through these projects, 2) compares them with the functions outlined in the political setup of the Republic (2001-2021) for subnational governance and 3) offers initial thoughts on introducing double taxation as a procedure for fixing local governance and strengthening state-society relations in Afghanistan.

MODERATOR

Mujib Rahimi, Political Scientist

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COMPETING MODELS OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING: LEGAL REFORM IN KANDAHAR UNDER SOVIET AND NATO INTERVENTION

Michael Sullivan

ALPA College

This paper compares Soviet-supported governance reform in 1980s Kandahar, Afghanistan with NATO-backed rule-of-law programming during the 2010–2013 surge, arguing that both interventions advanced distinct models of social engineering through legal and administrative reform.

During the 1980s, the Afghan government, supported by Soviet advisers, pursued a state-centered modernization agenda that sought to expand centralized administration, strengthen formal courts, and advance land reform and cadastral initiatives intended to formalize property relations. These efforts reflected an assumption that durable political order required the rationalization of authority, documentation of land tenure, and subordination of customary practices to state institutions. Implementation, however, was uneven and constrained by ongoing conflict and limited rural reach.

Between 2010 and 2013, NATO and its civilian partners advanced a different model. Rather than ideological transformation, rule-of-law initiatives emphasized institutional capacity-building, judicial mentoring, anti-corruption measures, and development programming. Stabilization efforts included cash-for-work projects and infrastructure rehabilitation, including support for traditional karez irrigation systems. These initiatives operated on the premise that strengthening formal institutions and incentivizing participation would foster legitimacy and stability.

The paper argues that while differing in ideology and method, one redistributive and explicitly transformative, the other technocratic and incentive-based, both interventions sought to reshape social relations historically governed through customary norms and hybrid legal orders. A comparative perspective highlights both recurring constraints and important distinctions in externally supported efforts to engineer governance in southern Afghanistan.

MODERATOR

Mujib Rahimi, Political Scientist

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RIVAL TAXATION, FOREIGN AID, AND STATE BUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN

Mirwais Parsa
Seton Hill University

For two decades, two rival tax systems operated on the same territory and the same tax base in Afghanistan. The internationally supported republic was financed largely without taxing its citizens: on-budget grants exceeded domestic revenue in eight of the ten fiscal years between 2010 and 2019, before counting the far larger off-budget flows. The Taliban insurgency, by contrast, financed itself almost entirely by taxing citizens, developing receipts, ledgers, and appeal procedures alongside its levies. We develop a model of rival taxation in which presence-intensive extraction, chokepoint revenue, payroll, and investment respond differently to insurgent control, and test its predictions with a newly assembled transaction-level database of public finance merged with digitized coalition territorial-control assessments, luminosity, and conflict data. The predicted configuration appears throughout: inland revenue fell at least one-for-one with insurgent reach while customs did not; and the aid-financed state paid wages identically everywhere (elasticity 0.11) while investment and extraction retreated steeply from insurgent-held provinces (both -1.3)—a severed fiscal contract whose payroll flowed into districts where the insurgency taxed it. The Taliban administration's post-2021 revenue performance—meeting collection targets amid economic collapse, without aid or recognition—is consistent with the model's legacy prediction that rebel taxation builds durable fiscal capacity. We draw implications for aid modalities and fiscal state building in fragile settings.

MODERATOR

Mujib Rahimi, Political Scientist

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MAKING CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTOR INSTITUTIONS MORE POLITICALLY RESILIENT: LESSONS FROM AFGHANISTAN

Jena Karim

University of London

Formal institutional design assumes that actors within constitutional institutions will act on constitutional commitments. Drawing on fieldwork and interviews related to Afghanistan's post-2004 constitutional order, this paper argues that assumption is insufficient: people act on incentives, not mandates alone. Using Khaitan's framework of "guarantor institutions," or constitutional bodies tasked with protecting norms that powerful actors would otherwise erode, this paper examines why three institutions created under the same 2004 constitutional settlement, the Independent Election Commission (IEC), the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), and the Independent Commission for Overseeing the Implementation of the Constitution (ICOIC), exhibited markedly different levels of resilience under executive pressure. All three operated against the backdrop of Article 60, which concentrated executive, legislative, and judicial authority in the presidency, making proximity to executive power more valuable than constitutional independence.

The paper proposes four conditions shaping institutional resilience. They are constitutional enshrinement specific enough to raise the cost of executive overreach; expertise and professional culture that create incentives competing with patronage; formal inter-institutional rules of engagement that prevent disputes from defaulting to executive arbitration; and non-state engagement that generates accountability independent of donor presence. Each condition is examined not simply as a design feature but as a mechanism altering the incentive calculus facing individuals inside institutions are subject to political pressure.

The paper concludes that these conditions are not guarantees but attempts to make constitutional commitment rational and capitulation costly. Afghanistan's experience suggests that institutional resilience in fragile constitutional contexts depends on design that accounts for incentive structures, including donor-dependent ones, that shape the people executing it.

MODERATOR

Mujib Rahimi, Political Scientist

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WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE ABSENCE OF CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER: A CASE STUDY OF AFGHANISTAN

M. Ayub Yusufzai

Afghan Online Education

Shabnam Ahmadi

Afghan Roshan Online University

Women's rights have long been considered as a significant and central topic in the public law scholarship, constituting an integral component of fundamental rights and a key indicator of constitutionalism, the rule of law, and human dignity. In constitutional systems, the protection of these rights is ensured through institutional, judicial, and normative mechanisms embedded within the constitutional framework and reinforced by international human rights law. However, following recent political developments in Afghanistan and the collapse of the constitutional order, these institutional and legal safeguards have been significantly weakened. Against this backdrop, this study examines how women's rights can be conceptualized and assessed in the absence of a functioning constitutional order, and whether public law and international human rights law may operate as alternative or complementary normative frameworks under conditions of constitutional breakdown. The study is grounded in constitutional theory and human rights law and adopts a public law approach. Methodologically, it employs a doctrinal and descriptive-analytical framework based on primary legal sources, international human rights instruments, Afghanistan's previous constitutional framework, and relevant academic literature. The findings indicate that the replacement of the constitutional order with de facto rule in Afghanistan has resulted in the effective suspension of institutional mechanisms for the protection of basic rights, particularly women's rights. In practice, access to secondary and higher education for girls has been systematically restricted; in addition to that, women's participation in employment, public administration, and political life has been severely curtailed. Moreover, the absence of independent judicial and supervisory institutions has eliminated meaningful domestic legal mechanisms for rights enforcement. Under these conditions, international human rights law continues to function as a normative benchmark for assessing violations; however, in the absence of rule-of-law institutions and accountability mechanisms, its practical effectiveness remains largely declaratory and externally oriented.

KEYWORDS Women's Rights, Constitutional Order, Constitutionalism, Public Law, International Human Rights, Contemporary Afghanistan.

MODERATOR

Mujib Rahimi, Political Scientist

TIME

Sunday, 18 October
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MODERNITY'S BRUTALISM: THE INTIMACIES OF ETHNIC POLITICS AND TYRANNY IN THE MAKING OF AFGHANISTAN

Naseema Zeerak

Middlebury Institute of International Studies

This paper examines the colonial discourses and knowledge production during the late nineteenth century formation of modern Afghanistan's boundaries. Like other colonized contexts, the Afghan nationalist sovereign project emerged through the colonial encounter with the territory we recognize as Afghanistan today. I read colonial archives alongside anti colonial theories and archives to trace the instrumentalization of ethnicity and tribalism towards the consolidation of a nationalist sovereign project. Specifically, I examine how the nascent colonial state absorbed and reified local social and political structures, ignoring what Achille Mbembe terms the 'plasticity' of pre-colonial tribal life. In doing so, I argue that the co-constitution of tyranny and tribalism in contemporary Afghanistan is an expression of modernity's brutality, rather than an archaic "tribalism".

KEYWORDS Coloniality, modernity, Afghanistan, sovereignty

MODERATOR

Anila Daulatzai, University of California, Santa Cruz

TIME

Sunday, 18 October
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ISLAMIC KNOWLEDGE, NATIONALISM, AND TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS IN 1930S AFGHANISTAN

Mortaza Mandegar Hassani

History Department, UCLA

My research examines the transnational circulation of religious knowledge production in Afghanistan in the 1930s. It was a period when the ideologies of Afghan/Pashtun nationalism and Aryanism dominated the print public in Afghanistan. However, the religious establishment had their own public and publications. This research is primarily based on reading the monthly magazine of Hayya 'ala al-Falāh that was published by the institution of Jam'iyyat ul-'Ulamā (The Association of the 'Ulamā) of Afghanistan from the 1930 to 1964. This study asks: How did religious metaphors and Quranic references shape narratives of Afghan unity, history, international relations, geopolitics, and future vision of national progress and reform? As the first magazine by the state-affiliated religious institution, how was Hayya 'ala al-Falāh situated vis-à-vis the secular nationalist periodicals in Afghanistan and the regional religious networks and debates in South Asia?

Based on close reading Hayya 'ala al-Falāh, I argue that the magazine operated in a public that was distinct from that of the secular periodicals in the 1930s. The magazine's contributors drew their sources from the Muslim periodicals in India and the Middle East and adapted to the local context of Afghanistan. In contrast to the secular magazines, namely Mujalla-i Kābul and Mujalla-i Āryānā which grounded Afghan identity in Aryan race and Pashtu as the national language, the writers in Hayya 'ala al-Falāh emphasized Islamic identity as a component of the Afghan nationhood. Thus, Hayya 'ala al-Falāh belonged to a somewhat different worldview and a public than other periodicals. It was a worldview that partly overlapped with the official state ideology of Afghan nationalism, but also differed to a large extent. Thus, a reading of Hayya 'ala al-Falāh will enrich our understanding of the Afghan publics and their transnational connections in the mid-twentieth century.

KEYWORDS Afghanistan, public (sphere), Islam, nationalism, transnationalism

MODERATOR

Anila Daulatzai, University of California, Santa Cruz

TIME

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EXPERIENCING NATIONHOOD BEYOND THE STATE: AFGHAN COMMUNITIES IN IRAN

Ameneh Eskandari

Politics Department, UC Santa Cruz

Existing scholarship often examines Afghan nationhood through the history of state formation and state-led nationalism in Afghanistan. However, the long-term displacement of millions beyond Afghanistan's borders raises different questions about how national belonging is experienced and sustained outside the nation-state borders. Focusing on Afghan communities in Iran, this paper asks: How do people experience and negotiate Afghan nationhood beyond the homeland? Iran is an important site for this research; Afghans have lived there for decades, and many were born there, yet identify as Afghan nationals, rather than members of Iranian society. Drawing on ongoing ethnographic research, this paper investigates how national identity is shaped in daily life, including work, education, family, mobility, as well as in interactions with Iran's social, legal, and symbolic boundaries. These everyday experiences shed light on how belonging is formed under long-term displacement and legal uncertainty. Put differently, instead of viewing Afghan nationhood as a fixed entity originating only from the homeland or mere reaction to the host country, this paper is interested in how it is continually negotiated through daily practices beyond borders. By highlighting the experiences of Afghan communities in Iran, this research aims to contribute to debates on nationalism and diaspora studies by exploring how the sense of nationhood is reproduced and upheld in prolonged displacement.

KEYWORDS Afghan communities, Iran, national belonging

MODERATOR

Anila Daulatzai, University of California, Santa Cruz

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BETWEEN HISTORY AND MYTH: ELITE NARRATIVES OF THE PAST AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF POLITICAL REALITY IN AFGHANISTAN

Sayed Reza Hussaini

University of Hertfordshire

Historical narratives occupy a central place in Afghanistan's political discourse. References to ancient origins, martial traditions, imperial achievements, and the country's reputation as the "graveyard of empires" are frequently invoked as sources of national honour, political legitimacy, and collective identity. While historical narratives can serve important symbolic and ideological functions, this article argues that their uncritical mobilisation by Afghanistan's political elites extends beyond these functions, often shaping perceptions of political reality and strategic choices.

Drawing on political speeches and memoirs produced by Afghanistan's post-2001 political elites, the article offers a Derridean deconstructive reading of contemporary elite historical discourse through the method of double reading. The first reading reconstructs the internal coherence of dominant narratives that portray Afghanistan as an ancient, heroic, and exceptional political community. The second reading exposes the silences, exclusions, and contradictions upon which these narratives depend. Together, these readings reveal how dominant representations of the past are discursively constructed and legitimised through the very tensions, exclusions, and contradictions they seek to conceal.

Afghanistan's political elites mobilise representations of the past not merely for symbolic purposes but also to interpret contemporary political reality and imagine future political possibilities. These understandings are informed less by critical historical inquiry than by historically constituted narratives whose authority rests on selective memory, myth, and exclusion. The analysis shows how such representations shape perceptions of power, political possibility, and strategic action. It further argues that when mythologised representations of history are treated as authoritative guides to political judgment, they can foster unrealistic understandings of political reality and encourage politically dangerous strategic choices.

MODERATOR

Anila Daulatzai, University of California, Santa Cruz

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THE UZBEKS OF AFGHAN TURKISTAN FROM MEDIEVAL CONQUESTS TO DOSTUM “THE TALIBAN KILLER.” FIELDWORK WITH A WARLORD IN SHEBERGHAN AND MAZAR I SHARIF.

Brian Glyn Williams

University of Massachusetts–Dartmouth

This paper, which is based on the author’s book *The Last Warlord. The Life and Legend of Dostum, the Afghan Warrior who Led U.S. Special Forces to Topple the Taliban Regime* and two summers spent living with the Uzbek former vice president and marshal of the Afghan National Army, General Dostum, shares the untold story of the Uzbeks’ settlement in the plains of Afghan Turkistan in the 1500s. It also tells the story of their creation of several Uzbek khanates in the north that were eventually conquered by the Pashtuns. It then traces the role of the repressed Uzbeks in the Afghan kingdom and their rise to become pro-Soviet *gilamcan* (“carpet thief”) *Jowzjani* militiamen during the Soviet invasion. In the process, it tells the remarkable story of the rise of a backwater *buzkashi* player named Abdul Rashid Dostum to become the warlord who overthrew the Najibullah Afghan Communist, ruled over a mini-state based on Mazar i Sharif, and united with the Americans to lead cavalry charges and overthrow the Taliban in 2001.

The author befriended the larger-than-life warlord Dostum who appeared in the Hollywood blockbuster movie “12 Strong. The True Declassified Story of the Horsesoldiers,” which the author advised on. Dostum appeared in the movie after the author convinced the director to bring the Uzbek leader to life in the movie as an homage to the real character who played a key role in helping the Green Beret Special Forces topple the Taliban regime. For photos and videos taken in Dostum’s realm by the author and his articles and book *The Last Warlord* see his website at: www.brianglynwilliams.com

MODERATOR

Anila Daulatzai, University of California, Santa Cruz

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YOUTH EXPRESSION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN POST-AUGUST 2021 AFGHANISTAN

Wasal Faqiryar

Notre Dame University

The research describes how young people in Afghanistan are finding alternative channels to express their grievances, ideas, and dreams to counter the oppressive grip of the Taliban regime. The article identifies art and other creative forms of expression as fundamental avenues that remain possible, as they pass under the radar of the regime's control. The article also discusses social media as an important platform for the amplification and diffusion of the concerns, needs, and desires of young Afghans.

MODERATOR

Anila Daulatzai, University of California, Santa Cruz

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FROM SUBSISTENCE TO RESISTANCE: AFGHAN WOMEN'S ENTERPRISES AS SURVIVAL AND EVERYDAY ECONOMIC RESISTANCE

Shoaib Rahim

Zabuli Center

This study examines the characteristics, barriers, and adaptive strategies of women entrepreneurs in Afghanistan under the Taliban's de facto authorities (DFA). It draws on a structured survey of 337 women-owned enterprises, 20 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 105 key informant interviews (KIIs) across 10 provinces. Despite mobility restrictions, institutional exclusion and financial constraints, women-led micro and small enterprises continue to operate across a range of sectors, demonstrating resilience and economic agency.

The study argues that these enterprises also represent a low-visibility and non-confrontational form of everyday economic resistance, through which women maintain their economic roles, preserve a degree of public presence and exercise some autonomy within a highly restrictive social, economic and political environment. In doing so, women entrepreneurs are not only sustaining livelihoods but also maintaining professional identities, skills and networks at a time when their participation in formal economic life has become increasingly constrained.

MODERATOR

Omar Sadr, Princeton University's
Afghanistan Policy Lab

TIME

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GENDER APARTHEID: CULTURAL RELATIVISM AND THE TALIBAN'S POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION

Omar Sadr

Princeton University

This paper analyzes the Taliban gender apartheid regime through cultural relativism. It offers two main claims: first, that cultural relativism functions both as an ideological context and an authoritarian mechanism through which the Taliban regime legitimizes gender-based persecution, constructs a totalitarian moral policing governance apparatus, and forecloses accountability; and second, that the anti-gender apartheid struggle is rooted in women of Afghanistan's shared emancipatory struggle rather than abstract moral universalism. Combining legal and textual analysis with representational reading of the Taliban laws, interviews and speeches, and ideological texts, particularly Abdul Hakim Haqqani's *Islamic Emirate and Its System*, the paper demonstrates how the Taliban regime instrumentalizes archaic and fringe interpretations of Sharia and essentialized tribal customs to undermine Afghanistan's plurality.

The paper proceeds in four parts. It first sets out a critical interpretative epistemology to analyze how the Taliban represent culture, Islam, and women. It then traces the genealogy of gender apartheid as a political and legal category, from transnational feminist activism through contemporary legal scholarship. The paper subsequently critiques the universalism/relativism debate in human rights theory, arguing that Taliban cultural relativism should be read through three constitutive elements: culture as primordial, as natural and essential, and as absolutist, which together distinguish it from ordinary cultural defense arguments and from liberal relativism's tolerance of plurality. The concluding section refutes the Taliban's cultural relativism by juxtaposing it against Afghanistan's heterogeneous religious and cultural traditions, defending the universality of human rights without licensing interventionism or denying the plurality of moral truth.

MODERATOR

Metra Mehran, End Gender
Apartheid Campaign

TIME

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GENDER APARTHEID AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Nazeela Elmi

Afghanistan Accountability Collective

Many studies in recent years, since the Taliban takeover, have grappled with gender apartheid in Afghanistan and whether the Taliban's oppressive laws and policies, which continually target women, amount to it. While Afghan women have confronted this phenomenon since the 1990s, few research endeavors explore whether these measures are applied on any grounds other than just gender. Studies and discourses regarding Afghanistan follow an essentialist approach and a single-axis framework, often rendering certain groups invisible and failing to adequately capture their experiences of marginalization along multiple axes of power. Deeming women a universal, rigid category and privileging singular analysis has left out the violations experienced by specific groups. This framing not only limits a deeper understanding but also obscures the scope of human rights violations and their implications.

While a growing body of scholarship on Afghanistan has engaged intersectionality, it remains an evolving framework and often risks becoming a “buzzword”, rather than a tool to advance social and gender justice among different groups and explore all layers of identity. This paper argues that intersectionality must be applied meaningfully to center the experiences of communities and women at the greatest risk of marginalization under gender apartheid. The research furthermore highlights voices of Uzbek women, an ethnic minority in Afghanistan, who organize in think tanks, NGOs, and independently across Europe and the U.S., and seek recognition of their plight and advocate for further visibility.

MODERATOR

Metra Mehran, End Gender
Apartheid Campaign

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TRANSLATING FROM THE INTERMEDIARY: AFGHAN WOMEN'S LEGAL ADVOCACY, POST-2021

Aryana Mahmood

The Australian National University (ANU)

International law emphasises equal rights for women in all political decision-making processes, yet Afghan women's exclusion in the lead-up to and following Taliban 2.0's rise to power in August 2021 and ongoing gender-discriminatory policies reveal both conceptual and implementation gaps in ensuring such commitments are upheld. Since Taliban 2.0 reassumed power in August 2021, the rights and freedoms of girls and women have been systematically restricted. Local systems of justice have collapsed, and access to education and healthcare has been curtailed for women in both urban and rural areas, all amidst a worsening economic and humanitarian crisis. The international community has created openings for women's deliberation and inclusion regarding the conditions in Afghanistan and potential solutions under the Taliban regime; however, these openings are situated within a paradox of the normalisation of the Taliban and institutional silences in naming the structural form of oppression imposed on women: 'gender apartheid.'

In response imposed by the 'apartheid' state, Afghan women in intermediary positions have created their own openings by way of independent mechanisms, advancing intersectional understandings of gender justice and state accountability. Two initiatives that embody this shift are the People's Tribunal for the Women of Afghanistan (PTWA) and the End Gender Apartheid (EGA) campaign. This study uses a grounded feminist methodology to examine the experiences of diverse Afghan women undertaking legal advocacy and their conceptions of justice, power and accountability, as well as to understand the gaps within international law in addressing violence against women in Afghanistan post-2021.

I argue there is a necessity to centre the leadership and full, safe, equal, and meaningful participation of diverse Afghan women in all decision-making processes concerning the future of Afghanistan. This study finds that while women's translation processes both make international mechanisms locally effective, but also can be co-opted, the dynamic translation enacted by intermediary actors connecting the local to the global remains critical under an authoritarian context instead of top-down enforcement dynamics. Afghan women's knowledge and expertise of local gender dynamics translating local women's experiences and ensuring international legal mechanisms continue remain responsive and relevant within diverse socio-political contexts including under authoritarian regimes. Thus, the resistance embodied by the women of Afghanistan extends beyond political participation to transforming the socio-political and international roots of violence that has created the conditions facing Afghan women and girls today. International law's promise for Afghanistan is inseparable from Afghan women's leadership and participation in reshaping its mechanisms and meaning.

MODERATOR

Metra Mehran, End Gender Apartheid Campaign

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GENDER APARTHEID IN AFGHANISTAN: BEYOND SYMBOLIC RECOGNITION TOWARDS GENUINE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST SOLIDARITY

Tahmina Sobat

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

This project critically examines rising advocacy efforts to codify gender apartheid as a crime against humanity through the lens of feminist legal critique. While the Taliban's regime has imposed a system of gendered domination that is both comprehensive and cruel, this study contends that legal recognition, however urgent and morally compelling, cannot alone ensure justice. Without structural accountability and epistemic inclusion, codification risks functioning primarily as a symbolic intervention rather than a transformative one.

Drawing on qualitative interviews with Afghan feminists and legal experts both within Afghanistan and in diaspora, alongside a critical feminist analysis of advocacy campaigns, legal frameworks, and policy statements, the research interrogates how international law and institutions simultaneously enable and constrain feminist aspirations for justice.

My research situates gender apartheid as a contested terrain where law, institutions, power, and feminist praxis intersect. It calls for a radical re-imagining of accountability and justice, one that transcends the act of naming and centers the enduring resistance of Afghan women groups. It asks what forms of accountability might emerge when law is stripped of its certainty, and when justice is reimagined not as compliance or codification, but as a feminist practice of listening, reckoning, and continuous engagement.

MODERATOR

Metra Mehran, End Gender
Apartheid Campaign

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07

CONTRIBUTORS' BIOS

SECTION 07



Abdul Saboor Matin

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Abdul Saboor Matin is a PhD researcher at the University of Lancashire and a Fellow of Advance HE, recognised for his contributions to higher education teaching and practice. He holds a Master of Laws (LLM) in Global Business Law from the University of Washington and is also a qualified mediator. With extensive academic and professional experience, he previously served as Associate Dean and Law Lecturer at Herat University, where he contributed to legal education and academic leadership. In addition to his academic career, he is a member of the Afghanistan Bar Association and a law practitioner, combining scholarly insight with practical legal expertise.

Abumoslem Khorasani

p.85

Abumoslem Khorasani was a researcher in the programme Media System and Public Sphere in Afghanistan at Leipzig University from 2023 to 2026. His research focuses on online extremism, radical communication and conflict-related media practices. His current work examines ISKP's intermediated digital communication, propaganda circulation and its role in fragmented public sphere(s).

Aftab Hussain

p.37

Aftab is a final-year PhD candidate in International Relations at Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia. His doctoral research focuses on informal political networks, security governance, and external intervention effects in fragile states, with particular expertise in Afghanistan and South Asian regional security dynamics.

His research examines how structural conditions - constitutional design, financial dependency structures, and institutional capacity deficits - systematically predetermined the boundaries of local agency in Afghanistan's post-2001 Security Sector Reform. He employs innovative network analysis methodologies (Epistemic Network Analysis) combined with qualitative process tracing to understand how these structural constraints shaped political network formation, competition, and behaviour across security sector reform processes.

Aftab has conducted extensive research involving over 30 semi-structured interviews with Afghan stakeholders in exile, including government officials, security sector leaders, international actors, and civil society representatives involved in post-2001 statebuilding efforts. His research spans the period 2001-2021, examining how external interventions by multiple state and international actors shaped Afghan political networks and security governance outcomes.

His work contributes to theoretical debates on external intervention effectiveness, local agency in security governance, and the evolution of regional security orders under conditions of great power competition.

Aftab Hussain CONTINUED

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He is particularly interested in how informal networks function as primary governance actors in contexts of institutional weakness, and how these dynamics affect regional security cooperation and conflict prevention mechanisms.

Aftab is currently finalising his thesis examining the intersection of external intervention, network politics, and regional security dynamics in post-2001 Afghanistan. His research has implications for understanding contemporary Afghan governance challenges, particularly following the 2021 Taliban takeover and the evolving regional geopolitical landscape. He is committed to contributing to Afghanistan studies scholarship that bridges academic research with policy-relevant insights for regional security cooperation and effective external engagement with fragile states.

Ahmad Mohammadi

p.62

My name is Ahmad Mohammadi, and I am a PhD researcher in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick. My doctoral research is supervised by Dr Oz Hassan and Dr Mouzayian Khalil. My PhD project is titled *The Political Economy of Fragility: Why Economic Development Failed in Afghanistan, 2001–2021*. I hold two master's degrees in Development Economics, one from the University of Tehran and another from the University of York. Before beginning my PhD, I worked at Kateb University from 2018 to 2021, where I served as a lecturer and Head of the Department of Business Economics. My research focuses on Afghanistan's political economy and economic development.

Ahmad Tariq Noorzadeh

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Ahmad Tariq Noorzadeh is the President and CEO of the Afghanistan Center for Peace and International Studies (ACPIS). He brings over 17 years of professional experience in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, including diplomatic assignments at the Embassies of Afghanistan in China and Turkmenistan.

Mr. Noorzadeh has specialized in the fields of China and Central Asian affairs, which constitute his primary areas of research and expertise. He has authored and published numerous articles and analytical papers on regional politics, international relations, security, and geopolitical developments affecting Afghanistan and the region.

He holds a Master's degree in International Relations and has completed professional training programs in leadership, diplomacy, and foreign policy in Spain, Italy, Egypt, and China. His work focuses on regional cooperation, foreign policy, peacebuilding, and international affairs, with a particular emphasis on Afghanistan's relations with China and Central Asia.

Ali Ahmadi

p.39

Ali Ahmadi is a PhD Researcher at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU), where his research focuses on the intersection of forced migration and higher education. Particularly, his study explores the access, progression, and success of displaced students in higher education in England, with focus on the structural and institutional barriers they face.

Alongside his doctoral work, Ali is a Research Assistant at the University of Cambridge, where he studies the legal geography (i.e., how law and place interacts) of asylum support provision in the East of England.

Ali has the experience of working with refugee-led and refugee-support organisations, including the Refugee Council (UK), World Jewish Relief, and City of Sanctuary (CoS) UK.

Ameneh Eskandari

p.93

Ameneh Eskandari is a PhD candidate in the Politics Department at UC Santa Cruz. Her doctoral research examines nation-state building in Iran and Afghanistan, with a focus on the experiences of Hazara communities in Iran and Afghanistan. Her work explores the intersections of nationalism, race, mobility, and borders, and how modern Islamic states respond to questions of citizenship, belonging, and exclusion. Her broader research interests include Islamic philosophy, political thought, postcolonial and anti-colonial theory, nationalism, migration and border studies, critical race theory, and the political history of South Asia and Middle East.

Amin Saikal

p.74

Amin Saikal AM, FASSA is Emeritus Professor of Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies and Founding Director of the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies at the Australian National University (ANU), Adjunct Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Western Australia, and Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He is the recipient of the Order of Australia (AM) 'for service to the international community and education through the development of the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies and as an author and adviser' and the ANU's Peter Baume Award recognising 'eminent achievement and merit of the highest order', and an elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (FASSA).

His latest books include *How to Lose a War: The Story of America's Intervention in Afghanistan* (Yale University Press, June 2024); *Iran Rising: The Survival and Future of the Islamic Republic* (Princeton University Press, 2021); *Islam Beyond Borders: The Umma in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), co-author; and *The Spectre of Afghanistan: The Security of Central Asia* (London: Bloomsbury/I.B. Tauris, 2021), co-author.

Amin Saikal CONTINUED

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He has published in major dailies, including The New York Times, The New York Times International Edition (previously International Herald Tribune), The Wall Street Journal, and The Guardian, and has been a frequent commentator on national and international TV and radio networks on issues pertinent to his field of speciality.

Annie Pforzheimer

p.35

A retired U.S. Department of State senior career diplomat, Annie Pforzheimer was the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Afghanistan and Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy in Kabul from 2017-2019. She served previously at the US Embassy in Afghanistan from 2009-2010 as the Counselor for Political Affairs, and as director of security assistance at the US Embassy in Mexico (2012-2014).

After leaving government service in 2019, Ms. Pforzheimer now resides in New York City. She is a non-resident adjunct senior fellow at the Washington, DC-based Center for a New American Security, an adjunct professor of international relations at Pace University and the City University of New York's Craig Newmark School of Journalism, a human rights advocate, and a foreign and security policy commentator. In a volunteer capacity, she is Chair of the Board of Directors for Women for Afghan Women, a non-profit organization with activity in Virginia, New York, and Afghanistan, and a member of the board of the Friends of the American University in Afghanistan. She also serves on the Advisory Board of the Borough of Manhattan's Center for Diplomatic Engagement and Training.

Ms. Pforzheimer holds a Master of Science degree in National Security Studies from the National Defense University. She is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Aref Dostyar

Aref Dostyar is an Advisor and Program Leader for the Afghanistan Program for Peace and Development (AfPAD) at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame. He leads initiatives that amplify Afghan voices and promote an inclusive, peaceful future for Afghanistan.

Previously, he served as Afghanistan's Consul General in Los Angeles and held senior roles in the Office of the National Security Council, where he provided policy advice, engaged with global leaders, and co-authored key strategies such as the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism.

His commentary and analysis have appeared in The New York Times, BBC, Foreign Policy Magazine, and other international outlets.

Arshpreet Kaur

p.68

Arshpreet Kaur is a Ph.D. Scholar in International Relations at the Centre for West Asian Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. She holds dual master's degrees in Political Science from IGNOU (2022) and Pashto Language & Literature from Jawaharlal Nehru University (2020), and a PG diploma in Journalism & Mass Communication (2023). Her doctoral research focuses on conflict-induced migration, with a particular emphasis on Afghan refugees in India and Iran and host-state policies. Her broader academic interests include migration, forced displacement, refugee policy, and the geopolitics of South and West Asia. She has presented her papers at national and international conferences and has conducted field-based research with Afghan refugee communities in India.

Aryana Mahmood

p.100

Aryana Mahmood is a PhD candidate at the College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP), The Australian National University, and an Afghan-Australian journalist and radio producer. Her research explores the interconnections between women's social and political resistance, repressive and authoritarian regimes, and media representations of Central and South Asia, with a particular focus on Afghanistan.

Before commencing her PhD in International, Political and Strategic Studies, Aryana worked as a journalist and producer across commercial and community media organisations. Her work has involved organising and reporting on a wide range of issues, from local community news to global political events, including women's resistance in Afghanistan, refugee and migrant issues in Australia, and Indigenous leadership and rights.

Alongside her journalism and research, Aryana has hosted and moderated academic and public panels, including an ISA Global panel on Religion, Identity, and the Politics of Exclusion in Comparative Perspective in 2026. She has also served as MC for a range of community, cultural and academic events, including Flames of Hope and Art: The Third 8AM Annual Awards. As a panellist and guest lecturer at events and universities across Australia, her work and public engagement have focused on women's rights and resistance in Afghanistan, humanitarian intervention, Afghan civil society, feminist and decolonial research methods, as well as gender and security issues.

Atefa Hussaini

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Atefa Hussaini is an economist and researcher specializing in development economics, financial economics, and socio-economic issues in developing countries. She holds a Master's degree in Development Economics from the University of Tehran and a Bachelor's degree in Financial Economics from Balkh University. Her academic interests focus on economic development, labor markets, women's economic participation, financial management, and the relationship between macroeconomic conditions and social well-being.

Atefa Hussaini CONTINUED

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She has over ten years of experience in higher education, academic research, and professional training programs in Afghanistan. She has worked as a lecturer at several higher education institutions, where she taught courses related to macroeconomics, microeconomics, development planning, and financial management. She has also contributed to research projects focusing on economic development challenges, gender equality, employment, and inclusive growth in Afghanistan.

Beyond her academic activities, she has extensive experience in designing and delivering entrepreneurship and financial management training programs. As a Master Trainer in women entrepreneurship initiatives, she has supported participants in areas including business planning, budgeting, financial analysis, bookkeeping, and small business development. She has also had the privilege of being invited by ALPA University for academic collaboration and to contribute her expertise to educational and research-related activities.

Her current research interests include development economics, economic resilience, inclusive growth, and the impact of economic factors on human well-being. Through her academic research, teaching, and community engagement, she aims to contribute to evidence-based solutions for economic and social development challenges in Afghanistan.

Ateffa Jalali

p.41

Ateffa Jalali is a Ph.D. student in the International Education Development Program at the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hiroshima University, Japan. She holds a Master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from the University of St Andrews, Scotland.

Specializing in English for Academic Purposes (EAP), Ateffa currently serves as a part-time faculty member at Montgomery College, where she teaches Academic Writing in the English Language for Academic Purposes (ELAP) Department. In this role, she supports multilingual students from diverse linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds in developing the academic communication skills necessary for success in higher education.

As an Afghan scholar, Ateffa is deeply committed to advancing educational opportunities for girls in Afghanistan. Her doctoral research focuses on alternative education models for Afghan girls, with particular attention to online and technology-enabled learning in contexts affected by conflict and educational restrictions. Her broader research interests include girls' education, educational equity, technology-enhanced learning, and access to education in crisis and conflict-affected settings.

Bashir Mobasher

Keynote · Opening

Dr. Bashir Mobasher is a scholar of constitutional law and identity politics, specializing in governance and institutional design in democratic societies. He currently teaches at New York University–Washington, D.C., and in the Department of Sociology at American University. Dr. Mobasher serves as the President of the Afghanistan Law and Political Science Association (in Exile), a network of Afghan academics advancing research, publication, and women's education in Afghanistan despite the country's ongoing political crisis.

He earned his Ph.D. in Law from the University of Washington in 2017. His recent book is entitled *Constitutional Law and the Politics of Ethnic Accommodation*.

Benafsha Yaqoobi

p.55

Dr. Benafsha Yaqoobi, a civic society and human rights activist, founder of The Organization of Rahyab for Rehabilitation Services for the blind (ORRSB) in Afghanistan, an attorney for the elimination of violence against women until 2019, and also Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commissioner (before The Taliban's 2nd takeover), was born in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Nowadays, she is taking a PHD Research Degree program in sociology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicines (LSHTM). She is also the founder and director of The Rahyab Initiative, UK. Since the political changes in Afghanistan in 2021, she has consistently used every available platform to emphasize to international community the critical importance of including Afghan women in national peace-building processes.

Her latest achievements:

In 2025, honorary lecturer at Afghanistan's online University, registered in The Netherlands and Germany.

In 2025, prosecutor, member of a team of prosecutors for Afghanistan's case at The People's Permanent Tribunal (PPT).

In 2024, completion of a PH.D research degree from Lovely Professional University, India, in Political Sciences, with a thesis on democratic governance and its impacts on women's political rights in Afghanistan (2001-2021).

An awardee of The International Women of Courage (IWOC) for 2024 by U.S State Department, due to her advocacies for the rights of women, particularly the rights of women with disabilities in Afghanistan. Also awarded the 2022 Marca Bristo fellowship by Human Rights Watch.

A selectee of the 100 influential women by BBC World in 2021.

Received master's degree in political sciences in 2018, from Payam-e-Nour University, Kabul, Afghanistan.

Got another master's degree in international relations from Afghanistan Institute of Higher Education, Kabul, Afghanistan.

Brian Glyn Williams

p.95

Dr. Brian Glyn Williams earned his PhD in Central Asian history and formerly taught Mongol and Turkic history at the University of London SOAS. He has taught Central Asian history at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth where he is tenured full professor for 25 years. He is author of several books including *Predators*. The CIA's Drone War on Al Qaeda based on fieldwork in the tribal zones of Pakistan and Afghanistan Declassified. A Guide to America's Longest War based on a field manual he wrote for the US Army while working on NATO base in Afghanistan Regional Command East.

Fakhria Samandari

p.27

Fakhria Samandari is an Afghan educator, writer, and researcher from Kabul. She is the founder of Gohar Shad Begum Online School and has teaching experience at the Online Women's University and the University of Afghanistan. With an academic background in Islamic Studies and Law and Political Science, she is committed to advancing girls' education and expanding educational opportunities for Afghan women.

Farida Razaqi

Moderator · PLS 6

Farida Razaqi is a Fulbright Scholar and climate governance practitioner specializing in the intersection of climate policy, finance, and social equity. She currently serves as an Energy Finance and Climate Analyst at UNDP, supporting strategies for just energy transitions in developing countries.

Farida holds master's degrees from Harvard University (climate finance and policy) and Columbia University (climate and society), where she received the Campbell Award for leadership and service, as well as an LL.M. in Environmental and Natural Resources Law from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

A former faculty member at Herat University, she has led environmental justice initiatives, collaborated with UN Women Afghanistan, and contributed to strengthening women's roles in the legal system. Farida's work bridges global climate policy and grassroots realities, advancing climate action that is ambitious, inclusive, and just.

Fazulrahman Rahmani

p.48

Fazulrahman Rahmani is an MA candidate in Migration and Diaspora Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, where he also completed a Graduate Diploma in Migration and Diaspora Studies. He holds an LLM in Commercial Law from the University of Westminster, UK.

With more than a decade of international experience in diplomacy, refugee training and resettlement, and cross-cultural communication, he served as Communication Officer with the SAARC organization in Kathmandu, Nepal (2019–2022), and has supported newcomer communities as an interpreter with the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization. He works in English, Dari/Persian, Pashto, Urdu, Arabic and Uzbek.

Fiona Costello

p.39

Dr Fiona Costello is an Assistant Professor at the University of Birmingham Law School (BLS). Here she leads on the delivery of EU Law. She is the co-Director of the Institute of EU Law at BLS and an affiliated member of the IRIS Centre (Institute of Research into Migration and Superdiversity). Alongside this, Fiona is a Bye-Fellow of St Edmund's College, the University of Cambridge. Her 2024 co-authored monograph (with Catherine Barnard and Sarah Fraser Butlin), 'Low Paid EU Migrant Workers, the House, the Street, the Town' won the UACES Book Prize which recognises an outstanding book that makes the most substantial and original contribution to knowledge in contemporary European Studies.

Professor Catherine Barnard FBA, FLSW, FRSA is Professor of EU law and Employment Law and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. She is the author of EU Employment Law (Oxford, OUP, 2012, 5th ed.), The Substantive Law of the EU: The Four Freedoms, (Oxford, OUP, 2025, 8th ed), and (with Peers ed), European Union Law (Oxford, OUP, 2026, 5th ed). Her expertise covers EU law, trade law, WTO law and aspects of the post Brexit UK legislation.

Mr Ali Ahmadi is a Researcher and PhD candidate specialising on refugee education, integration, and policy. He is currently pursuing his PhD in Refugee Studies at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU), where his research explores the access to and success of forcibly displaced students (FDSs) in higher education in England, with a particular focus on the structural and institutional barriers they face. His broader research interests include refugee housing, social inclusion, and reintegration. Ali is also a Research Associate at the University of Cambridge where he works on a research project which is examining the Legal Geography of Asylum in the East of England.

Halima Kazem

Halima Kazem, Ph.D., is a scholar and historian of feminism, gender, and sexuality working at the intersection of human rights, conflict, media, and Islamic societies. She served as Associate Director of Stanford's Program in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and is now a Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institution, where she built a 450-hour oral history archive of the US-Afghan war. Her first book, A Feminist History of Afghanistan: Resisting the Erasure of Women, is forthcoming from Bloomsbury, and she is directing a documentary film on gender apartheid supported in part by the Malala Fund. Her scholarship draws on two decades of journalism and documentary filmmaking across Afghanistan, Turkey, New Zealand, and the United States, bringing the craft of storytelling to the study of war, memory, and women's resistance.

Hamid Obaidi

p.82

Hamid Obaidi was a researcher in the programme Media System and Public Sphere in Afghanistan at Leipzig University from 2023 to 2026. He is a journalist and media researcher whose work focuses on journalism, media culture and public communication related to Afghanistan after 2021. His current research examines journalism across borders and its role in transnational public communication.

Hamidullah Hamidy

p.33

Hamidullah Hamidy is the Writing and Research Center Coordinator at the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF). He earned his MBA from AUAF in 2019 and a Bachelor of Arts from Kabul University in 2010. His expertise lies in academic and research writing, with research interests in customer satisfaction, consumer behavior, entrepreneurship, and the role of cultural factors in service evaluation. His recent work examines customer satisfaction in Kabul's restaurant industry and entrepreneurship in Afghanistan. Hamidy is the author of one book, two peer-reviewed journal articles, and a series of newsletters, and has edited numerous research papers. He is committed to producing research that informs practice and contributes to evidence-based policymaking and academic scholarship.

Hannah Hassani

p.73

Hannah Hassani is a Doctoral Candidate at the University of St Andrews (School of History), where she studies the formation of the modern Iranian state in the early twentieth century. She previously received an MPhil in Modern Middle Eastern Studies and an MPhil in Economic and Social History from the University of Cambridge.

Ibrahim Dawran

p.46

Mohammad Ibrahim Dawran is an Afghan researcher and Master's graduate in Sociology, Cooperation, and Development from the University of Calabria, Italy. His academic work focuses on gender, education, mental health and psychosocial support, forced migration, and the lived experiences of Afghan women and girls under conflict and political restriction. His master's thesis, Analyzing the Mental Health and Psychosocial Impact of the Taliban's Bans on Girls' Education in Afghanistan, uses qualitative phenomenological methods to examine educational deprivation, psychological distress, resilience, family support, and grassroots forms of resistance under Taliban rule.

Dawran also has professional experience in mental health and psychosocial support, refugee and immigrant services, housing support, and community-based social services. As an Afghan scholar in exile, he is committed to research that centers Afghan voices, protects lived experience from erasure, and contributes to advocacy for education, dignity, and human rights.

Javeed Ahwar

p.71

Dr. Javeed Ahwar is currently a Visiting Scholar at Nazarbayev University. He has been teaching and doing research at Nazarbayev University since August 2023. He has taught/teaches History of Kazakhstan, Early Modern History of Central Asia, Modern History of Afghanistan, World History, and Early Modern Middle Eastern History.

Javeed Ahwar CONTINUED

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Currently, he is working on his book project titled “Bukhara, Kabul and Beyond: A History of Intellectual and Political Transformation.”

Regarding his education background, he holds three master degrees; in Politics and Security in Central Asia from the OSCE Academy in Bishkek (2011), in European and International Human Rights Law from Leiden University (2015), and in Cultural Anthropology from Utrecht University (2018). He has Ph.D. degree with (Magna Cum Laude) in Eurasian Studies from Nazarbayev University majoring in early modern History of Mawara al-Nahr and Khurasan (later Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan). He has also participated in Gender Equality Studies Fellowship Program at Iceland University in 2012.

Dr. Ahwar’s research can be described as critical study of elitist politics and historiographies within the overall frame of postcolonial studies with geographic focus on Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan. His research so far has mostly focused on comparative study of early modern Uzbek, (Tajiki/Dari) Persian and Pashto literatures. Through his works, he has laid emphasis on the role of language ideology, elitist (dominant group) politics, educational policies and history-writing in transforming national vis-a-vis subnational identities. He has also done fieldwork among Afghanistani diaspora in Hamburg Germany in 2017.

Jawan Shir Rasikh

p.64

Jawan Shir Rasikh is an independent scholar with a focus on Afghanistan. He is a trained historian with a PhD in South Asian Studies from University of Pennsylvania. Most recently, Dr. Rasikh served as Director of the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), an independent research organization in Afghanistan. He is currently working on a book manuscript on the rise and fall of the Ghurid Sultanate in medieval Afghanistan.

Jena Karim

p.89

Jena Karim has been a civil society and democracy practitioner for 20 years, working on access to democratic processes, rule of law and non-state justice, national and sub-state governance in fragile and conflict affected states. These programs include access to justice for marginalized groups; anti-corruption and fraud mitigation strategies; civil society engagement in policy and legislative advocacy; electoral observation, administration, and reform; pluralism and social cohesion; constitutional and human rights law; indigenous dispute resolution; civic engagement and education. She has worked in and on Afghanistan, Armenia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar, Sudan, and Tajikistan. Jena holds an LL.M in Constitutional Law from York University, an M.A. in Islamic Studies from McGill University, and a B.A. in Politics from Oberlin College.

Jena Karim CONTINUED

p.89

She published a book on Islam and Pakistan, entitled Polarization of Political Culture: Islam and Pakistan 1958-1988 as well as articles on federalism, emergency powers, and executive authority. Jena is currently pursuing her PhD in Law at the University of London, with a focus on constitutional equality rights and non-state justice.

Kefayat Hamidi

p.81

Dr Kefajat Hamidi is a researcher at the Institute of Communication and Media Studies at Leipzig University and leads the research programme Media System and Public Sphere in Afghanistan. His research focuses on public spheres, journalism, diaspora, exile and digital communication related to Afghanistan. His current work examines the transnational reorganization of public communication after 2021 and the roles of media, civil society actors and diaspora networks.

Khushal Nabizada

p.38

Khushal Nabizada is a physician, public health specialist, and social policy researcher with more than 15 years of experience in health systems, public health governance, and humanitarian programming in Afghanistan. He earned his medical degree and a Master of Public Health (MPH) from Kabul University of Medical Sciences before receiving the Chevening Scholarship to pursue a second master's degree in Governance, Development, and Public Policy at the University of Sussex, United Kingdom.

Khushal is currently a PhD researcher in Global Health and Social Medicine at King's College London, funded through the London Interdisciplinary Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership (LISS-DTP). His doctoral research examines how World Bank loan conditionalities have shaped health system governance and reform in conflict-affected settings, using Afghanistan (2001–2024) as a case study. Drawing on political economy and health system governance perspectives, his research explores how international financing mechanisms influence institutional development, state capacity, service delivery, and donor–state relations in fragile contexts.

Throughout his career, Khushal has worked with the Government of Afghanistan, United Nations agencies, and international and national non-governmental organisations on health system strengthening, health governance, and public sector reform. Prior to the political transition in 2021, he served as Director of Public Health for Kabul Province, leading public health programmes across the province.

His broader research interests include global health governance, political economy of health, aid effectiveness, health system resilience, and the relationship between governance, conflict, and social justice in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

Laily Habib

p.83

Laily Habib was a researcher in the programme Media System and Public Sphere in Afghanistan at Leipzig University from 2023 to 2026. Her research focuses on digital platforms, online publics and Afghanistan-related communication after 2021. Her current work examines YouTube as a space of public communication, visibility and participation following Afghanistan's political rupture.

Lema Salah

p.69

Lema Salah is a historian and PhD candidate at the Department of Political Science, Radboud University Nijmegen, and a researcher at the Netherlands Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies (NIOD-KNAW). Her research examines the intersections of conflict, military intervention, governance, and international security, with a particular focus on Afghanistan and the Dutch contribution to the international mission (2001–2021). Her research focuses on Afghanistan, international intervention, military history, and conflict studies, examining how governance, legitimacy, infrastructure, civil-military cooperation, and gender shape the dynamics and legacies of contemporary armed conflict. In addition to her research on Afghanistan, she investigates leadership culture and personnel retention within the Dutch Armed Forces. Through her academic work, Salah seeks to bridge historical scholarship and policy analysis, contributing to debates on conflict, intervention, and international security.

Lutfurahman Saeed

p.60

Lutfurahman Saeed is a distinguished scholar in Islamic law and human rights. He formerly served as a faculty member at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (Sharia) at Kabul University (KU), where he taught for over 27 years. He completed his Ph.D. in Islamic Law and Human Rights from Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU), Germany, in 2019. His doctoral dissertation received the STAEDTLER Foundation's Award for Outstanding Dissertation in 2020. Dr. Saeed's research mainly focuses on Islamic law, Islamic studies, and the intersection of custom and human rights and gender studies, with an emphasis on Afghanistan. His scholarly work includes many articles as well as his 2022 monograph, *Islam, Custom, and Human Rights in Afghanistan*. He was also editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Afghan Legal Studies* from 2017 to 2022.

His research currently focuses on Islam and gender studies, Islam and Constitutionalism with focus on Afghanistan. His work advocates for a nuanced understanding of Islamic legal traditions and their contemporary implications, especially in contexts marked by authoritarianism and ideological control. Through scholarly analysis and engagement with current legal discourse, he aims to amplify critical perspectives on women's rights in Islam and Afghanistan today.

Lutfurahman Saeed CONTINUED

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In addition to his academic endeavors, he served as a member and vice president of the Independent Commission for Overseeing the Implementation of the Constitution (ICOIC) for four years. He was a visiting scholar at the International Center for Law and Religion Studies (ICLRS) at BYU Law School in Provo, Utah, where he was teaching Islamic Law. Currently, he is a research fellow at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI), Lund, Sweden.

M. Ayub Yusufzai

p.90

Mohammad Ayub Yusufzai (b. 1969, Afghanistan) is a lecturer of law with academic training in constitutional and comparative legal studies. He holds an LLB from Balkh University, an LLM in Comparative Law from the University of Washington, and a Ph.D. in Comparative Constitutional Law from Lovely Professional University (LPU).

He is currently based in the Netherlands and is engaged in teaching Comparative Constitutional Law at Afghan Online Education. In addition to teaching, he works as a human rights researcher with the human rights organization Net Impact. Over more than two decades, he has worked across academic, institutional, and advisory domains. His academic appointments have included positions at Balkh University and Kabul University. He has also served as a Commissioner at the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. Furthermore, he has contributed to legal capacity-building and rule-of-law programs in collaboration with international organizations, including the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the Asia Foundation, and GIZ.

His scholarly and professional work is primarily situated within constitutional law, with a particular focus on comparative constitutional analysis, constitutional adjudication, and the structural principles of separation of powers in constitutional systems.

Mahboobullah Afkhami

p.52

Mahboobullah Afkhami is a diplomat and researcher in international relations, working at the Embassy and Permanent Mission of Afghanistan in Vienna, Austria. He holds a Master's degree. His research interests include international relations, regional security studies, diplomacy, state-building, and political developments in Afghanistan. His research focuses on Afghanistan's security position in the regional environment and the role of regional power competitions and interactions in shaping the country's developments.

Manizha Wafeq

Manizha Wafeq is a policy practitioner, researcher, nonprofit leader, and social entrepreneur with more than 20 years of experience advancing women's economic empowerment, entrepreneurship, and inclusive economic development in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. She is the founder of the Afghanistan Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AWCCI), the Global Women's Trade Caravan (GWTC), and MadeByAfghanWomen.com, pioneering institutions and platforms that connect policy, digital trade, and women-led enterprises. Her research and writing have focused on women entrepreneurs, their contribution to economic growth, and the policies, ecosystems, and market solutions needed to support their sustainable development. She has led national research initiatives, authored policy papers and assessment reports, and contributed to international dialogue on women's economic participation and resilience. Following the Taliban's return to power, she developed innovative approaches to sustain women-owned businesses through e-commerce, market access, grants, mentorship, and global advocacy. She has trained and mentored more than 1,000 women entrepreneurs, currently serves as a U.S. Delegate to the G20 Women 20 (W20), and is a 2018 Asia Society Fellow.

Mariam Alamyar

p.43

Mariam Alamyar is an educator who specializes in Applied Linguistics and English Education with a particular focus on Afghanistan. She holds graduate degree in English and has extensive experience teaching academic and professional English in higher education institutions. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, curriculum design, assessment, academic writing and writing in digital spaces.

Mariam Amiri

p.34

Mariam Amiri is an 18-year-old Afghan writer, youth leader, and global advocate for girls' education and empowerment. She has published over 360 essays and articles in four languages across 17 national and international media outlets, using her voice to amplify the strength, resilience, and untold stories of Afghan girls.

Her first book, *An Ending for Another Beginning*, published by Sheesha Media, tells the story of a girl deprived of education who refuses to surrender reflecting Mariam's deep commitment to storytelling as a form of resistance and transformation. Her second book is completed and awaiting publication, currently withheld due to security considerations.

Mariam serves as the Afghanistan Chapter Leader for the Young Writers Innovation Magazine (USA), where she established the first national branch and leads initiatives to empower young writers.

Mariam Amiri

CONTINUED

p.34

As the former Writing Section Manager at Cluster Education, she collaborated with girls across networks to co-found a Young Writers Association and partnered with WrightGirls USA to facilitate international writing workshops, strengthening girls' voices through literature.

Her leadership extends globally. She is a recipient of the Whetstone Legislative Advocacy Scholarship, collaborating with youth from 31 countries on human rights. She also interned in a Nobel-affiliated program, engaging with participants from 160 countries over six months. Mariam was recognized as a Changemaker Leader (2025, Thailand), hosted international writers during the Eleven Days of Global Unity, and is a nominee for the Leadership Academy in Poland.

She is a Distinguished Delegate for the 13th Asia World Model United Nations (AWMUN XIII), a guest speaker at PDEU Youth Parliament and HFF 2026, and a recipient of the Women's Empowerment Council of Hazara Great British Award.

For Mariam, these achievements are not endpoints—they are platforms to build a future where Afghan girls rise as leaders, creators, and changemakers.

Maryam Danesh

p.70

Maryam Danesh is an Afghan legal scholar and researcher whose work focuses on democracy, governance, human rights, and political transformation in Afghanistan. She earned her LL.M. degree from Ohio Northern University in the United States and has professional experience in legal practice, academic research, and advocacy related to rule of law and democratic development.

Maryam previously served as a Visiting Scholar affiliated with Washington and Lee University, where she engaged in academic and research-related activities concerning Afghanistan and broader questions of governance, justice, and institutional change. Her scholarly interests include corruption, democratic decline, political authority, conflict economies, natural resources, gender, and human rights in contemporary Afghanistan.

Her previous research examined corruption and its role in the collapse of democracy in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2021. Building on these themes, her current work explores the relationship between governance, resource politics, authoritarian structures, and the lived experiences of Afghan citizens under conditions of conflict and political instability. Through her research and writing, she seeks to contribute to international discussions on accountability, democracy, women's rights, and the protection of fundamental freedoms in fragile and conflict-affected societies.

In addition to her academic pursuits, Maryam has remained actively involved in legal and community-based initiatives in the United States while continuing her long-term commitment to scholarship and public advocacy. Her work reflects a strong commitment to justice, ethical governance, and the advancement of human dignity.

Maryam Sadr

p.57

Maryam Sadr is a Business and Finance Administrator at Morningside Heights Legal Services, Inc. at Columbia Law School. She is an alumna of the Education for Leadership in Crisis (ELC) program and holds a BA in Economics with a minor in Political Studies from the American University of Beirut (AUB), an MBA from the American University of Central Asia (AUCA). She also holds an MA in Global Thought from Columbia University, where she was a Weatherhead Foundation Fellow. Her research focused on multilateralism and global governance in the post-global era, with particular emphasis on institutional reform and the evolving role of international organizations.

Mehri Rezaee

p.54

Dr. Mehri Rezaee is an Afghan scholar, educator, and human rights specialist with extensive experience in international law, human rights, and women's rights. She holds a Ph.D. in International Law from Allameh Tabataba'i University, Iran.

Dr. Rezaee has more than eight years of experience teaching international law and human rights courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels at various universities in Afghanistan. She worked as a visiting Scholar at the University of Oklahoma, and currently she is serving as a teacher with Tulsa Public Schools in Oklahoma, United States.

In 2025, her book, 'The Interaction of International Law and Afghan Law in Combating Human Trafficking in Afghanistan', was published by the Shahr Danesh Legal Research Institute in Iran. She has also authored numerous scholarly articles on human rights and women's rights in Afghanistan, which have been published in both national and international journals and publications.

Dr. Rezaee has held several significant public service positions. During Afghanistan's 2018 parliamentary elections, she served as Commissioner and Chairwoman of the Ghor Provincial Electoral Complaints Commission. In the 2019 presidential elections, she served as Commissioner and Chairwoman of the Bamiyan Provincial Electoral Complaints Commission.

Before the Taliban's takeover of Kabul, Dr. Rezaee worked as a Human Rights, Women's Affairs, and Children's Rights Expert in the Office of the Vice President of Afghanistan. She has also been engaged as a researcher with the Afghanistan Institute for Legal Challenges of Afghan Women, contributing to research and advocacy on legal and human rights issues affecting Afghan women.

Her primary areas of expertise include international human rights law, women's rights, gender equality, and legal reform. Through her teaching, research, publications, and public service, Dr. Rezaee has made significant contributions to advancing human rights and promoting the rights of women in Afghanistan.

Metra Mehran

Moderator · PLS 17

Metra Mehran is a human rights activist from Afghanistan, recognized as a finalist for the 2021 European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. With a decade of experience in international development, peace, and gender equality, she has worked with prestigious organizations such as the United Nations, World Bank, and USAID. Co-founder of the Feminine Perspectives Movement, Metra has advocated for women's rights during Intra-Afghan peace negotiations and promoted sustainable peace through intergenerational dialogue. Now in exile due to the Taliban's resurgence, she continues to fight for gender equity by exposing the Taliban's oppressive decrees and calling for the recognition of Gender Apartheid, using her voice on global platforms like CNN and the New York Times.

Michael Sullivan

p.87

Michael Sullivan is an attorney and transitional justice practitioner with more than two decades of experience in conflict-affected settings. From 2010 to 2013, he founded the U.S. Rule of Law program in Kandahar and later served as Director of Rule of Law for the U.S. Department of State's Regional Platform South, leading legal teams supporting justice sector initiatives across southern Afghanistan during the surge period. He currently advises on international investigations and post-conflict institutional reform and has provided rule-of-law training to Myanmar's National Unity Government and civil society organizations. He previously directed monitoring operations in eastern Ukraine while seconded to the OSCE. Sullivan is an adjunct faculty member at American University and holds a master's degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Mirwais Alamdar

p.76

My name is Mirwais Alamdar, and I hold an academic background in bachelor and master of Master of Euroculture: Politics, Society and Culture at Strasbourg University of France and Gottingen University of Germany. I currently lecture in the political science department of Woman Online University (UK). My research interests lie at the intersection of nation-state building, governance, and European Union's relations. I am the co-author and author of four academic studies regarding Afghanistan, nation-state building, election, and the United States-European Union relations. Moreover, I presented one of my researches in the ALPA 2025 Conference. Currently, I am a member of Advisory Board and the Media and Culture Committee of the National Trust Movement, where I am organizing "National Identity and National Interests" discussions with political parties and movements of Afghanistan.

Mirwais Parsa

p.88

I'm Mirwais Parsa, Assistant Professor of Economics at the School of Business & Technology, Seton Hill University. My research interests lie at the intersection of Macroeconomics, Institutions, and Political Economy. I am also interested in questions related to decentralized finance (DeFi), fiscal decentralization, transformative AI (TAI), self-governance, and rent-seeking behaviors.

Mustafa Saqib

p.61

Mustafa Saqib is a Co/Adjunct and Visiting Scholar in the Department of Political Science at Rutgers University. He holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and an LL.M., and his research focuses on legal reform, civil society, local governance, and the intersection of religion and politics in South and Central Asia, particularly Afghanistan. He has taught courses on Middle Eastern and South Asian politics and written on moderate Islam, extremism, citizen engagement, and civil society under authoritarian regimes. His current work examines how Afghan civil society adapts under Taliban rule through qualitative research.

Saqib is a fellow of the MESA Global Academy (2022–2025) and actively mentors students while contributing to international discussions on education, peacebuilding, and philanthropy.

Najibullah Loodin

p.67

Najibullah Loodin presently serves as a researcher to the College of Arts and Sciences at Texas A&M University. He holds a PhD degree in Water Management and Hydrological Science from College of Arts and Sciences at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas. For the PhD dissertation, Mr. Loodin navigated the role of emotions and trust in decision-making processes over the use and allocation of the shared watercourse among riparians with a comparative study of the Helmand River (shared between Afghanistan and Iran) and the Rio Grande River (shared between US and Mexico). Prior to the Taliban's taking over of Afghanistan, Najib Loodin served as lecturer and researcher to the Research Center, Ghalib University navigating indigenous water management approach with special focus on the Middle East. To date, Mr. Loodin has published eighteen peer-reviewed articles spanning from transboundary water governance and management to urban water and urban informal settlements.

Naresh Naman Solanki

p.44

Naresh Naman Solanki is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Political Science from Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). He is an independent researcher with a strong interest in geopolitics and international relations, particularly international conflicts, strategic competition, foreign policy and evolving relations among states. His research interests also extend to the political and geopolitical dynamics of West Asia.

Naresh Naman Solanki CONTINUED

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He has presented his research on international academic platforms, including at The Rise of Asia, an international and interdisciplinary conference associated with Université Le Havre Normandie, France. His academic interests focus on contemporary geopolitical developments, regional conflicts and changing patterns of global and regional power relations.

Naseema Zeerak

p.91

Naseema Zeerak is a PhD candidate at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. Her dissertation project seeks to re-examine and re-narrate global political modernity and its discourses of subjecthood, order, and organization from the vantage point of Afghanistan. To do so, she reads a range of colonial and anti/de-colonial archives alongside theories of liberal political modernity. Her research has been supported by the ACLS/Mellon Foundation, Immigration History Research Center and International Center for Global Studies at the University of Minnesota, American Institute of Afghanistan Studies, and International Studies Association amongst others.

Nazeela Elmi

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Nazeela Elmi is a human rights scholar and an Intersectionality Advisor to the Afghanistan Accountability Collective, End Gender Apartheid Campaign. She previously served as a Research Fellow at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at Lund University, where she supported the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan, as well as a Professional Specialist and Resident Fellow at the Afghanistan Policy Lab, Princeton University. She has also worked as an OSINT Analyst with the Centre for Information Resilience and UN organs and bodies, contributing to research and documentation of human rights violations in Afghanistan. Nazeela holds an M.A. in Human Rights Studies from Columbia University and a B.A. in Political Science and International Relations from TED University.

Negina Khalili

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Negina Khalili is the Director of the Women's Resource Center (WRC) and a Visiting Scholar. She is a human rights activist specializing in gender justice, women's rights, and judicial reform in Afghanistan. As the former Chief Prosecutor for Violence Against Women in Afghanistan's Attorney General's Office (AGO), she led groundbreaking efforts to enforce the Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) Law and prosecute gender-based crimes.

Negina Khalili CONTINUED

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Negina was also the first female prosecutor in Ghor Province—her home province—where she investigated gender-based violence cases, marking a historic milestone for women in Afghanistan's justice sector.

In addition to her prosecutorial work, Negina served as a law professor at Rana University and Fanoos University in Kabul, teaching courses in human rights, gender, and criminal law, and helping prepare the next generation of legal professionals committed to justice and equality.

She earned her law degree from Herat University and received her Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Rule of Law and Good Governance from Ohio Northern University and U.S Law (L.L.M) from Loyola University New Orleans in the United States. She has participated in numerous international legal training, conferences, and global programs.

Following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in 2021, Negina was forced to flee due to grave security threats against women legal professionals. She later joined Loyola University New Orleans, where she continues her advocacy for gender equality and human rights. A Loyola University New Orleans LL.M. graduate and Herat University alumna, she brings together academic expertise with frontline legal experience.

Negina currently serves as a Board Member of Rawi-e-Zan, a media platform dedicated to elevating women's voices. She also works closely as a board member of Home is Here with refugee communities, supporting the displaced people and advocating for their rights and safety. She has spoken on numerous national and international panels, including discussions featured by The Washington Post, Ms. Magazine, and other prominent platforms, where she continues to highlight issues of gender apartheid, legal reform, and women's leadership.

Her professional interests include women's rights, good governance, gender equality, the elimination of violence against women, women's leadership, peace and security, and legal reform in Afghanistan. Throughout her career, she has been recognized with multiple awards and honors for her unwavering commitment to justice, human rights, and empowering Afghan women. Despite the challenges of displacement, Negina remains a leading voice for judicial reform, human rights, and the advancement of Afghan women around the world.

Noria Mohammadi

p.31

Noria Mohammadi is an Afghan scholar, educator, and researcher specialising in gender studies, Afghan literature, and cultural analysis. She holds a Master's degree in Literature from Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia (CGPA 3.64/4.0), completed under the prestigious KNB Indonesian Government Scholarship. Her master's thesis examined silent resistance to gender stereotypes and religious hypocrisy in Homeira Qaderi's memoir *Dancing in the Mosque* (2020).

Noria Mohammadi CONTINUED

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Her research has been published in two peer-reviewed journals: *Metahumaniora* — Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Budaya (Universitas Padjadjaran, 2024) and *Adabiyat: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra* (2025), both engaging critically with gender representation and cultural norms in Afghan women's writing. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Persian Language and Literature from the University of Kabul and has over eight years of teaching experience in Afghan schools. Currently based in Kabul, she teaches at Ketab High School while continuing her scholarly work on Afghan women's voices, gender, and education.

Omar Sadr

p.98

Dr. Omar Sadr is a political scientist with over a decade of experience in academia and think tanks. He is also the founding editor and host of *Negotiating Ideas*, an online magazine and podcast on democracy and pluralism. He has held research positions at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights, the University of Pittsburgh, and Princeton University. He has also taught political science at the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF). His primary research interests include the political theory of pluralism, governance, human rights, civil resistance, and political Islam.

Ramin Kamangar

p.84

Ramin Kamangar is a social scientist who has taught and conducted research at various universities and research institutions in Afghanistan. He is the co-author of *The Street: Protest and Power* (Kabul, 2021) and has published two additional research papers. From 2018 to 2022, he was a Research Fellow at the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS). His research focuses on the impact of social media on integration and social cohesion.

Rashmi Dangol

p.53

Rashmi Dangol is a doctoral candidate in Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh and a Mellon Predoctoral Fellow for 2026-2027. Her doctoral research examines the transformation of women's resistance under Taliban rule, comparing women's movements in the 1990s with those that emerged after the 2021 takeover. Her research interests include women's movement and resistance practices, women's rights, violence and suffering, and women and popular media. Before her doctoral work, she spent five years at the Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University (ACKU). She holds graduate degrees in sociology and social anthropology from institutions in Nepal, India, and the United States, and her earlier scholarship on urban politics and violence in Kathmandu appeared in *Kathmandu: A Reader* (2025) and *Studies in Nepali History and Society* (2016).

Rashmi Dangol CONTINUED

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The paper she presents here draws on an original database of women-led protests, interviews with activists inside Afghanistan and in exile, and thematic analysis of hashtag activism to document the evolving forms of resistance women sustain under gender apartheid.

Salma Abid

p.56

Salma Abid is an emerging scholar in sociology whose research focuses on gender, international intervention, religion, and social change in Afghanistan. Her work examines the experiences of Afghan women in post-2001 Afghanistan, with particular attention to the intersections of liberal feminist frameworks, global governance, conflict, and the production of gendered harm within contexts of intervention and political transformation.

Having grown up in Afghanistan during the post-9/11 period and later resettled in Australia as a refugee, her academic interests are informed by both lived experience and critical sociological inquiry. Her research draws on feminist sociology, postcolonial theory, and the sociology of religion to analyse how international political projects and humanitarian discourses shape local social realities, as well as questions of identity, agency, and resistance among Afghan women.

She has experience in research and policy-related work focused on social issues, migration, and Afghanistan-related advocacy. She is also the founder of Bahaar (est. 2018), a platform dedicated to amplifying Afghan women's narratives through storytelling and critical social commentary.

Her academic contributions include publications in the field of gender and Afghanistan, including her recent article gendered insecurity and International Intervention in Afghanistan, which examines the intersection of gendered violence, insecurity, and international governance frameworks in conflict-affected contexts.

She is set to commence doctoral research in sociology, building on her sustained academic engagement with gender, conflict, and global intervention. This trajectory reflects a continued commitment to rigorous scholarly inquiry and to advancing more nuanced, empirically grounded, and locally informed understandings of Afghanistan beyond dominant geopolitical narratives.

Sanaa Talwasa

p.40

Sanaa Talwasa is a legal practitioner specializing in immigration and technology law. She holds a Juris Doctor (JD) from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law at Drexel University and an LL.M. in human rights, juvenile justice, and international law from Emory University, where she was a Fulbright Scholar.

Sanaa Talwasa CONTINUED

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Talwasa has collaborated with the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) to support Afghan immigrants through family reunification, humanitarian parole, and other legal pathways. She previously worked with the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Women's Affairs in Afghanistan on civil code reform and protections for women and children. Her research focuses on Afghan women's public participation, refugee conditions in Turkey, and gender-focused social welfare policy as a pathway to sustainable development and legal reform.

Sarajuddin Isar

p.59

Dr. Sarajuddin Isar is a political economy scholar specialising in conflict and development studies, with particular expertise in state and rebel taxation, foreign aid, and state-building. He was a Radboud Excellence Fellow at the Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management (CICAM) at Radboud University Nijmegen in the Netherlands and holds a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Prior to joining academia, Dr. Isar worked with several international development organisations in both the United Kingdom and Afghanistan and served as Chief of Staff at the Central Bank of Afghanistan. He is a published author and has contributed to numerous peer-reviewed journals, media outlets, and policy think tanks worldwide.

Sayed Reza Hussaini

p.94

I am Sayed Reza Hussaini, a PhD candidate and visiting lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire, UK. My current research focuses on institutional design in deeply divided societies, with a particular emphasis on Afghanistan's 2004 Constitution. I have published several papers on the topic in different peer-reviewed journals. From 2014 until the government's collapse in 2021, I served as a lecturer at the Faculty of Law and Political Science at Balkh University, Afghanistan. Since then, I have been engaged as a research fellow and visiting lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire. Currently, I am teaching "Constitutional Principles of the UK and EU".

Sayed Ziafatullah Saeedi

p.86

Sayed Ziafatullah Saeedi is a PhD candidate at the Bonn International Center for Conflict Studies (BICC) and Center for Development Research at the University of Bonn. His research focuses on ethnic conflict, rebel governance, power-sharing, state capture, and Afghanistan. He has co-translated three books on politics and history of Afghanistan from English to Persian and vice versa and is currently voluntarily running The World Literature Program, an initiative through which young Afghanistani girls read globally praised literary works, publish their own writings on literary platforms and engage in conversations with writers, novelists and translators.

Sediqa Zaki

p.58

Sediqa Zaki is a Research Analyst at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), where she conducts applied research on economic development, food security, and evidence-based policy analysis. Her work focuses on quantitative methods, socioeconomic data analysis, and translating research evidence into policy insights for developing and fragile contexts.

Sediqa holds a Master of Development Practice from the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley, with a focus on economic policy. She also holds a master's degree in economics from the University of Tehran.

Prior to joining IFPRI, Sediqa worked with the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), contributing to research and policy initiatives related to food security and social protection. She also served with Afghanistan's Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Finance, where she supported national development priorities, including gender-responsive budgeting initiative.

Sediqa is actively engaged in policy-oriented research and public scholarship on Afghanistan's economy and development. Through her work at IFPRI and as co-founder of the Afghanistan Economic Studies Center, she contributes to research and policy dialogue on Afghanistan's economic transformation, development prospects, and policy challenges. She has published research and policy analyses through IFPRI and Farsi outlets, examining economic and development issues related to Afghanistan.

She is also a frequent commentator on Afghanistan's economic and social issues, providing analysis and insights through media platforms including BBC Persian and Afghanistan International. Through her research, writing, and public engagement, she works to connect economic evidence with policy discussions on Afghanistan's development future.

Shabana Kamrani

p.30

Shabana Kamrani is an Afghan educator with a background in Economics (Banking) from Kabul University. She has taught at private schools in Kabul and worked as a private tutor, teaching a range of subjects and supporting students' academic development. Her experience in education informs her interest in the challenges Afghan girls face and their resilience in pursuing education and a better future.

Shabnam Ahmadi

p.90

Shabnam Ahmadi (b. 2006, Afghanistan) is an English Lecturer and student of Law and Political Science at Roshan Online University. Over the past 3 years, she has been teaching and contributing to several educational and social organizations, including HOVIAT Organization, established by the former deputy of AIBA, focused on women's education and language awareness, and The Book organization, GOC (Generation of Change Organization), Taib Organization, and AOEU (Afghan Online Education University).

Shabnam Ahmadi CONTINUED

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Through these initiatives, she has supported Afghan girls in the field of language and legal awareness. Additionally, she has also worked as a presenter in the live Broadcast Department and the Academic Discussions of WOU (Woman Online University). Besides, over the past four years, she has shared her views and narratives on women's rights issues through both printed and visual national and international media.

Shahla Farid

p.29

Shahla Farid is a Visiting Global Scholar at Rutgers University and was among the first women appointed to Afghanistan's High Peace Council, representing civil society in negotiations with the Taliban. A former lecturer at Kabul University for 20 years, she has been featured by BBC, Voice of America, and Al Jazeera, and recognized as a woman human rights defender by Frontline Defenders.

With over 17 years of experience in academia, law, and advocacy, Ms. Farid has written extensively on women's rights, gender and law, violence against women, and comparative Islamic legal studies. She has led workshops across Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, advised the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan, and previously directed the legal department at the Afghan Women's Network.

She holds a master's degree in criminal law and a bachelor's degree in political science from Kabul University.

Shoaib Rahim

p.97

Shoaib A. Rahim is the founder of the Majid Zabuli Center for Economic Research and Policy Analysis, a development practitioner and economic policy researcher whose work focuses on Afghanistan's economy, regional political economy, private-sector development, and women's economic participation. He has contributed regularly to public debate on Afghanistan's economy through media commentary, research papers, policy briefs, and op-eds.

Rahim previously served as Director General for Strengthening of the Financial Sector at Da Afghanistan Bank (Afghanistan's central bank), where he managed World Bank-funded banking-sector reform initiatives. He was also a member of Afghanistan's technical negotiating team during the 2021 negotiations on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement. He remains engaged in Afghanistan through consulting assignments, including initiatives supporting women-led micro, small, and medium enterprises.

His recent research examines women's entrepreneurship, economic agency, and everyday economic resistance in Afghanistan. He holds an MSc in Development Economics from the University of Sussex (England) and an MBA from the Institute of Management Sciences and is a Chevening alumnus.

Tahmina Sobat

p.101

Tahmina Sobat is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, where she is also a Fellow at the Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Global Change (ICGC). She earned her law degree from Herat University in 2015 and went on to complete an LLM in International Human Rights Law at the University of Notre Dame in 2020. As a Fulbright Scholar, she obtained her second master's degree in Gender and Women's Studies at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Tahmina's interdisciplinary research centers on transnational feminist theory, epistemic violence, and politics of representation. Her dissertation critically examines the complex intersections of gender and imperialism in the context of Afghanistan. Her scholarly contributions address issues such as gender apartheid, Afghan women's struggles for transnational feminist solidarities, and the structural inequalities embedded in global peacebuilding efforts.

Thomas Barfield

p.72

Thomas Barfield is Professor of Anthropology at Boston University and has served as President of the American Institute for Afghanistan Studies since 2005. He is the author of *The Central Asian Arabs of Afghanistan* (1981), *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China* (1989) and *Afghanistan: An Atlas of Indigenous Domestic Architecture* (1991). In 2006 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship that led to the publication of *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History* (2010), which was reissued in a revised second edition in 2022. His latest book is *Shadow Empires: An Alternative Imperial History* (2023).

Wasal Faqiryar

p.96

Wasal Naser Faqiryar is a PhD Candidate at Notre Dame University. He pursued his BA in Law and Political Science at Kabul University. He furthered his education by obtaining a diploma in Diplomacy and Political Science from the Institute of Diplomacy affiliated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan. Faqiryar also holds a master's degree in Politics and Security from the OSCE Academy, as well as another master's degree in Anthropology, Urbanism, and International Development from the American University of Central Asia. In addition to his academic achievements, Faqiryar co-founded the Rumi Organisation for Research, which serves as a platform for Afghan and international scholars to conduct academic research. Through this organisation, he has actively supported the educational and professional paths of numerous Afghan youth through various programmes.

Zahra Tawana

p.42

Zahra Tawana is a Ph.D. student in Education, specializing in Research, Statistics, and Evaluation, at the University of Virginia. She holds a Master of Public Administration from James Madison University and a B.A. in Political Science and Public Administration from the American University of Afghanistan. She also completed four years of medical education in Curative Medicine at Kabul Medical University.

Zahra serves as Director of the Publication Division at the Association of Law and Political Science of Afghanistan (ALPA) and Co-Editor-in-Chief of the ALPA Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies. She is also the Founder and Director of Local Voices: Untold Stories of Afghan Women, an initiative that provides a platform for Afghan women and girls to share their experiences and perspectives.

Her research interests include research-practice partnerships, culturally responsive and equitable research and evaluation, educational access for marginalized populations, and the responsible and equitable implementation of generative artificial intelligence in education. Her work is particularly interested in how research, evaluation, and policy can contribute to more equitable educational systems and opportunities.

Zohra Orokzai

p.65

Born in Afghanistan and raised in the diverse heart of the United States, Zohra Orokzai is an author, poet, advocate, and a voice for change.

A graduate of George Mason University with a degree in Communication and Public Relations, Zohra grew up in a family of artists, where the power of words and creativity shaped her identity. She has founded Ketaab Publishing Press and co-founded StrongerHer organization.

Through her work, Zohra has turned her experiences into action. Since 2021, she has championed immigrant voices, advocating on platforms that center education and empowerment as fuel for change. Her work in communities reflects her commitment to helping marginalized groups rise, find strength, dignity, and self-sufficiency through education.

Her groundbreaking book, *Heala: a story of an Afghan girl*, is both a story and a call to action. It fuses Zohra's passion for storytelling with the urgency of her humanitarian advocacy, spotlighting issues of women's rights. Her work reflects the belief that literacy and education are more than tools—they are lifelines.

Her upcoming book, an insta-poetry collection titled *Healing Through Breaking*, highlights the importance of transforming pain into healing.

Her mission is to inspire, educate, and empower individuals to rewrite their narratives and claim the dignity they deserve.

تمیم حیدری

p.50

تمیم حیدری دکترای روابط بین‌الملل از دانشگاه گیلان دارد و مدیر گروه علوم سیاسی و روابط بین‌الملل مرکز بین‌المللی مطالعات افغانستان و استاد دوره ماستری در دانشگاه بین‌المللی آنلاین افغانستان است. او بنیان‌گذار و رئیس مؤسسه مطالعات توسعه سیاسی و فرهنگی افغانستان و از بنیان‌گذاران انجمن استادان دانشگاه‌های خصوصی افغانستان است.

وی پیش‌تر مشاور حقوقی و سرپرست مشاوران حقوقی وزارت عدلیه (۲۰۱۶-۲۰۱۹) و آمر نشرات وزارت مالیه (۲۰۲۰-۲۰۲۱) بوده و در چند دانشگاه خصوصی کابل تدریس کرده است. او دارای دو درجه ماستری در روابط بین‌الملل (دانشگاه خاتم‌النبيين) و حقوق عمومی (دانشگاه بین‌المللی مذاهب اسلامی، تهران) است. از آثار او می‌توان به کتاب‌های «قانون‌گذاری بشر از دیدگاه مذاهب اسلامی» و «ایجاد دولت ملی در افغانستان: عوامل اثرگذار، چالش‌ها و راهکارها» و مقالاتی درباره دولت‌سازی، توسعه سیاسی و روابط منطقه‌ای افغانستان اشاره کرد.

تواب دانش

p.77

عبدالتواب دانش پژوهشگر حقوق، استاد دانشگاه و متخصص حقوق اساسی و حکمرانی است. وی دارای مدرک کارشناسی حقوق از دانشگاه البیرونی، کارشناسی ارشد علوم سیاسی و اداره عامه از دانشگاه پونه هند و کارشناسی ارشد حقوق (LL.M.) از دانشکده حقوق دانشگاه واشنگتن، ایالات متحده آمریکا، می‌باشد.

وی پیش‌تر به‌عنوان استاد، معاون و رئیس دانشکده حقوق و علوم سیاسی دانشگاه پروان و نیز مشاور ارشد امور بین‌الملل رئیس‌ولسی‌جرگه افغانستان ایفای وظیفه کرده است. همچنین، از سال ۲۰۲۲ تا ۲۰۲۵ به‌عنوان پژوهشگر مهمان در دانشکده حقوق دانشگاه کرنل فعالیت داشته است.

زمینه‌های پژوهشی وی شامل حقوق اساسی، دولت‌سازی، حکمرانی، حقوق بشر، تمرکززدایی، اصلاحات حقوقی و نظام سیاسی افغانستان است. آقای دانش همچنین بنیان‌گذار و رئیس عمومی لیسه عالی خصوصی بگرام باستان و رئیس انجمن مطالعات و پژوهش‌های حقوقی افغانستان می‌باشد.

خلیل الله افضلی

p.78

دکتر خلیل الله افضلی پژوهشگر ادبی، مدیر فرهنگی و ویراستار ساکن لس آنجلس است. تحصیلات خود را در رشته ادبیات فارسی در دانشگاه کابل و دانشگاه فردوسی مشهد به پایان رسانده است. تحقیقات او عمدتاً در حوزه‌های نسخه‌شناسی، سبک‌های هندی و مطالعات تصوف است. از سال ۲۰۱۵ او مؤسسه پژوهشی بایسنغر را در هرات بنیان گذاشت که به تحقیق در خصوص ادبیات، تاریخ و هنر خراسان کهن و افغانستان امروز می‌پردازد. او مدیر مسئول نشریه «نامه بایسنغر» و نویسنده سه کتاب و بیش از پنجاه مقاله در نشریات کشورهای مختلف عمدتاً در ایران و افغانستان است. افضلی از سال ۲۰۲۲ تا ۲۰۲۶ به عنوان استادیار مهمان و همچنین فهرست‌نویس نسخ خطی اسلامی در دانشگاه کالیفرنیا-لس آنجلس مشغول به کار بوده است.

شفیق الله شفق

p.47

شفیق‌الله شفیق پژوهشگر مقطع دکتری در دانشگاه علوم کاربردی فولدا در آلمان است و در حوزه‌های دموکراسی، حاکمیت قانون، حکومتمداری و دولت‌سازی پژوهش می‌کند. او پیش از این، از سال ۲۰۱۱ تا ۲۰۲۱، به عنوان استاد در دانشگاه بلخ افغانستان فعالیت داشت و در دانشکده اداره و پالیسی عمومی، مضمون‌های مرتبط با دولت‌سازی و حکومتمداری را تدریس می‌کرد.

وی مدرک کارشناسی ارشد خود را در سال ۲۰۱۷ از دانشگاه پونه هند دریافت کرده است. همچنین در سال‌های ۲۰۲۰ تا ۲۰۲۱ دانشجوی دوره دکتری در دانشگاه گجرات هند بود.

شفیق الله شفق

p.47

پس از فروپاشی جمهوری افغانستان، به آلمان مهاجرت کرد و فعالیت‌های علمی و پژوهشی خود را در زمینه دموکراسی، حاکمیت قانون و نهادهای حکمرانی ادامه داد.

شفیق‌الله شفیق مقالات و تحلیل‌های متعددی در زمینه دموکراسی، حکومتمداری و دولت‌سازی در رسانه‌های افغانستان منتشر کرده است. دیدگاه‌ها و تحلیل‌های او در رسانه‌های فارسی‌زبان درباره مسائل مرتبط با دولت‌سازی، حکمرانی و تحولات سیاسی نیز بازتاب یافته است. او به‌طور مستمر به عنوان تحلیلگر سیاسی در برنامه‌های رسانه‌ای فارسی‌زبان حضور دارد و درباره چالش‌های حکومتمداری، توسعه نهادهای دموکراتیک و تحولات سیاسی افغانستان و منطقه تحلیل ارائه می‌کند.

پژوهش‌های کنونی او بر تاب‌آوری دموکراسی، چالش‌های نهادهای دموکراتیک، نقش حاکمیت قانون و رابطه میان ساختارهای حکمرانی و ثبات سیاسی در جوامع در حال تحول تمرکز دارد.

منان دهزاد

p.49

عبدالمنان دهزاد، نویسنده و روزنامه‌نگار، در سال ۱۳۶۶ خورشیدی در استان بدخشان متولد شده است. وی دارای مدرک کارشناسی ارشد در رشته روابط بین‌الملل است. دهزاد در حوزه‌های سیاست، تاریخ افغانستان، مطالعاتی در باره بنیادگرایی مذهبی و تروریسم و عدالت اجتماعی دارد و تاکنون چندین کتاب از جمله «سرنوشت عدالت اجتماعی پس از طالبان»، «ریشه‌های جنگ افغانستان» و همچنان چند نوشته دیگر را با شماری از نویسندگان افغانستانی به صورت مشترک در کابل منتشر کرده است. همچنین آثاری چون «از بنیادگرایی تا تروریسم»، «مردم‌سالاری و دینداری/ تعامل یا تقابل» و «روایت از یک فروپاشی» را در دست چاپ دارد. دهزاد افزون بر این، سال‌ها در برخی دانشگاه‌های افغانستان مضامین، اصول روابط بین‌الملل، دموکراسی، حقوق بشر، تاریخ افغانستان و جامعه‌شناسی سیاسی افغانستان را تدریس کرده است.

افزون بر آن، مقالات پژوهشی متعددی در زمینه‌هایی «تروریسم نوین، بنیادگرایی، هویت مذهبی و قومی، زنان، مدرنیته و تحولات سیاسی و فرهنگی افغانستان» نوشته است. وی بیش از چهار ده سال در عرصه روزنامه‌نگاری در افغانستان به عنوان مدیرمسئول، سردبیر و نویسنده و پژوهشگر فعالیت داشته است.

پس از برگشت رژیم طالبان بر افغانستان، شماری از کتاب‌های ایشان از سوی رژیم طالبان در لیست کتاب‌های ممنوعه قرار گرفت و سرانجام کشور را ترک کرد و اینک در آلمان زندگی می‌کند.

پویا براتی

p.28

من یک دختر افغان هستم که در محیطی سنتی و محدودکننده به دنیا آمده‌ام؛ جایی که نگاه رایج نسبت به دختران بیشتر بر نقش‌های خانه‌داری و سکوت آنان تأکید داشت تا آموزش، رشد فردی و داشتن آرزوهای بزرگ. با وجود این شرایط، از کودکی علاقه شدید به یادگیری در من شکل گرفت و همواره باور داشتم که آموزش می‌تواند مسیر زندگی انسان را تغییر دهد و آینده‌ای روشن‌تر بسازد. به همین دلیل، هیچ‌گاه نپذیرفتم که دختر بودن مانعی برای پیشرفت و موفقیت باشد.

در دوران مکتب، با تلاش و پشتکار فراوان توانستم شاگرد ممتاز صف خود شوم و همواره برای رسیدن به اهداف آموزشی خود کوشش می‌کردم. اما در صف پنجم با چالشی جدی روبه‌رو شدم؛ خانواده‌ام تصمیم گرفتند که دیگر اجازه ادامه تحصیل به من ندهند. با وجود این محدودیت، علاقه شدید من به آموزش باعث شد به صورت پنهانی به مکتب ادامه دهم و از هر فرصت ممکن برای یادگیری استفاده کنم.

پس از مدتی، این موضوع آشکار شد و با واکنش سخت و محدودیت‌های شدید خانوادگی مواجه شدم که تأثیرات عمیقی بر وضعیت روحی و روانی من گذاشت.

در آن دوران دشوار، احساس ناامیدی و فشار روانی را تجربه کردم، اما در نهایت تصمیم گرفتم تسلیم نشوم و دوباره مسیر زندگی خود را بسازم.

در ادامه، آموزش‌های خود را از طریق صنف‌های آنلاین و آموزش‌های دینی ادامه دادم و تلاش کردم مهارت‌های جدید کسب کنم. برای تأمین هزینه اینترنت و ادامه آموزش، مهارت خیاطی را آموختم و از طریق آن درآمد کوچکی به دست آوردم. امروز همچنان در مسیر آموزش، رشد فردی و ساختن آینده‌ای بهتر قرار دارم. تجربه زندگی من نشان می‌دهد که دختر بودن نه ضعف، بلکه منبع قدرت، استقامت و امید است و می‌تواند الهام‌بخش تغییر در جامعه باشد.

08

PUBLICATION & ART EXHIBITION

SECTION 08



ALPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026

ALPA

SHOW YOUR WORK

Delegates are invited to exhibit books, papers, and artwork for the duration of the conference. There is no fee and no jury — tables are assigned on arrival.

ROOM

Founders Room

09

SIDE EVENTS

SECTION 09



Side events

FRIDAY, 16 OCTOBER • EVENING PROGRAM

Kabul Evenings



An evening of professional networking hosted by Kabul House, a networking platform for Afghan and American professionals in the Washington, DC area. Scholars, entrepreneurs and professionals from the DMV and beyond, Afghan and non-Afghan, are invited to meet across disciplines and introduce their work.

PROGRAM

Fireside conversation and Q&A on career decisions, business challenges and professional relationships, with Layma Murtaza (Aseel Technology), Dr. Nishank Motwani (Crosswalk Mentors), Lida Nadery Hedayat (Counterpart International) and Barna Karimi (SMART TRADE LLC). Hosted and moderated by Hurunnessa Fariad (Fariad, LLC).

Speed networking led by Said Hashemi (Aidbridge).

Buffet dinner in a standing, cocktail-style reception.

Music and art: Qais Essar on rubab with Abhay Kulkarni on tabla, Afghan art and indoor golf.

TICKETS

\$100 ALPA members and guests: 60% off • \$40

WHEN

Friday, 16 October
6:00–9:00 PM Eastern
Check-in 5:00–6:00 PM

WHERE

SevaSpaces Conference & Events
Center, 4th Floor
1604 Spring Hill Road
Vienna, VA 22182
Free parking

GOOD TO KNOW

Business professional attire •
Ages 21+



60% DISCOUNT FOR ALPA

ALPA members, conference participants and their guests receive 60% off any ticket. Scan the code to register at the ALPA rate.

events.humanitix.com/kabul-evenings-sham-hay-kabl • kabulhouse.org • info@kabulhouse.org

10

RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS NEARBY

SECTION 10



Nearby restaurants

PLACE	SERVES	ADDRESS
Chef Geoff's	American; weekend brunch	3201 New Mexico Ave NW
Shemali's	Middle Eastern café and market	New Mexico Ave NW
Wagshal's	Deli sandwiches and prepared food	4845 Massachusetts Ave NW
Millie's	Seafood, tacos; large patio	4866 Massachusetts Ave NW
Pizzeria Paradiso	Wood-fired pizza	4850 Massachusetts Ave NW
Bistro Aracosia	Afghan	5100 MacArthur Blvd NW
Guapo's	Mexican	4515 Wisconsin Ave NW
Crisp & Juicy	Peruvian charcoal chicken	4533 Wisconsin Ave NW
District Taco	Tacos, burritos, bowls	4600 Wisconsin Ave NW
SeoulSpice	Korean rice and noodle bowls	4600 Wisconsin Ave NW
Pete's New Haven Style Apizza	Coal-fired pizza	4940 Wisconsin Ave NW
Le Chat Noir	French bistro	4907 Wisconsin Ave NW
2 Amys	Neapolitan pizza	3715 Macomb St NW
Cactus Cantina	Tex-Mex	3300 Wisconsin Ave NW

Cafés and quick bites

PLACE	WHAT TO EXPECT	ADDRESS
Davenport Coffee Lounge	Student-run café, on campus	School of International Service
The Bridge Café	Student-run café, on campus	Butler Pavilion, 2nd floor
Compass Coffee	Closest independent coffee shop to campus	4850 Massachusetts Ave NW
Whole Foods Market	Groceries and hot food bar, beside the AU shuttle stop	4530 40th St NW
Bread Furst	Bakery; sandwiches and pastries	4434 Connecticut Ave NW
The Den at Politics and Prose	Coffee and wine bar inside the bookshop	5015 Connecticut Ave NW
Open City at the National Cathedral	Espresso café on the Cathedral grounds	3101 Wisconsin Ave NW

11

THINGS TO DO IN WASHINGTON, DC

SECTION 11



Things to do in Washington, DC

The National Mall and memorials	The Washington Monument, the Lincoln, World War II and Martin Luther King Jr. memorials, and the Capitol at the eastern end. OPEN AROUND THE CLOCK
Smithsonian museums	Natural History, American History, Air and Space, the Asian art galleries and more, all on or near the Mall. FREE ADMISSION
National Museum of African American History and Culture	The Smithsonian's most visited new museum; timed-entry passes are released online. FREE, TIMED PASSES
National Gallery of Art	European and American art from the Middle Ages to today, across two buildings and a sculpture garden. FREE ADMISSION
U.S. Capitol and Library of Congress	Guided Capitol tours and the Jefferson Building's Great Hall, linked by tunnel. FREE; BOOK TOURS AHEAD
Washington National Cathedral	Gothic cathedral on Wisconsin Avenue, a short ride from campus. CHECK HOURS AND TICKETS ONLINE
Smithsonian's National Zoo	On Connecticut Avenue in Woodley Park, one stop from the Red Line. FREE ENTRY PASSES
Georgetown and the waterfront	Historic streets, the C&O Canal towpath and the Potomac riverfront.
Kennedy Center	Performances most nights, including free Millennium Stage events. CHECK THE SCHEDULE

12

PARKING INFORMATION

SECTION 12



Venue & parking

CONFERENCE LOCATION

School of International Service (SIS Building)

American University
4400 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20016



SIS BUILDING ON GOOGLE
MAPS

PARKING

Participants attending sessions in the SIS Building may park in the **SIS Garage**, located directly beneath the building. Additional paid parking may be available near Constitution Hall and other campus parking areas.

Street parking near American University is limited and may be restricted, so please read all posted signs carefully.

PAYING FOR PARKING

Pay through the **PayByPhone** app. Use this code for parking on the AU campus:

4393



AU INTERACTIVE PARKING
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UNTIL 2027

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