



AFGHAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Afghanistan Research Initiative

The University of Central Asia’s Afghanistan Research Initiative (ARI) aims to help sustain the research and capacity gains made over the last decade and continue producing knowledge critical to the country’s present and future. ARI, a programme of the University’s Graduate School of Development, is supported by a three-year grant from Canada’s International Development Research Centre and the Aga Khan Foundation of Canada. ARI is based at the University’s main office in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic.

University Preparatory Courses



ARI delivers online courses to prepare Afghan students for graduate studies. The first cohort of students completed the English for Academic Purposes component and is about to complete the Statistical Reasoning and Analysis course. The latter course is an introduction to intelligent data processing and statistical methods that equips students with the necessary tools to extract knowledge, analyze raw information, understand the limitations of data, and interpret data. Participants learn statistical theories, methods, and tools they can utilize in various fields they plan to pursue during their graduate studies through real-life examples and case studies. The participants were introduced to R programming and learned introductory skills to data manipulation using the program. The second cohort of the preparatory programme has started their studies.

ARI will eventually revise the courses to make them available online.

The courses will eventually be available online.

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The University of Central Asia is a private, not-for-profit, secular, regional university founded in 2000 through an International Treaty signed by the Presidents of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, and His Highness the Aga Khan, ratified by their respective parliaments and registered with the United Nations. The Graduate School of Development is the home for multi-disciplinary research on Central Asia’s social, economic, and cultural development conducted by five entities (www.ucentralasia.org).



To apply, write to ari@ucentralasia.org
(subject header: Courses).



Dr. Zohra Saed

Dr. Zohra Saed is a Distinguished Lecturer at Macaulay Honors College, City University of New York. She is co-editor of *One Story, Thirty Stories: An Anthology of Contemporary*

Afghan American Literature (University of Arkansas Press, 2010); the editor of *Langston Hughes in Turkestan 1932-1933: Notebooks, Photos, and Poems* (Lost & Found, 2015).

Zohra is preparing her manuscript on Langston Hughes' trip to Soviet Central Asia in the 1930s. Her poetry and essays have been published in numerous anthologies and journals. She has performed as part of the legendary theatre director Ping Chong's Undesirable Elements cast, where the ensemble performed at the first National Asian American Theater Festival. The full script was published in *New York Theater Review*, edited by Brook Stowe.

Zohra co-founded UpSet Press with poet Robert Booras, whom she met while pursuing their master's in fine arts in poetry at Brooklyn College. UpSet Press is a Brooklyn-based non-profit press based in Brooklyn.

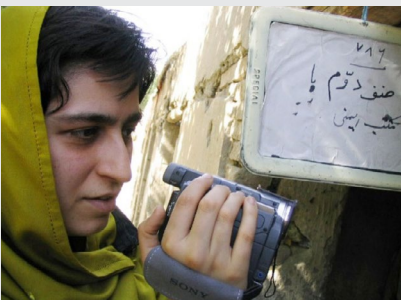


Benafsha Yaqoobi

Benafsha Yaqoobi, a human rights activist, founder of the Organization of Rahyab for Rehabilitation Services for the Blind in Afghanistan, an attorney for the elimination of violence against

women until 2019, and Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commissioner, was born in Kabul, Afghanistan. She has two master's degrees: one in Political Sciences, and another in International Relations. Before The Taliban takeover in 2021, she took up a Ph.D. research degree programme at Lovely Professional University, India, in Political Sciences.

Nowadays, she is taking a Ph.D Research Degree programme in sociology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicines (LSHTM). She participated in various national and international conferences regarding human rights and the rights of persons with disabilities and has published several articles on the mentioned subjects in national and international periodicals. She has been awarded by Human Rights Watch the 2022 Marca Bristo fellowship for her advocacy activities for persons with disabilities. She was also selected as one of the 100 influential women by BBC World in 2021.



Dr. Mejgan Massoumi

Dr. Wazmah Osman is an Afghan American academic and filmmaker. She is a Klein College of Media and Communication associate professor at Temple University. She is the author of *Television and the Afghan Culture Wars: Brought to You by Foreigners, Warlords, and Activists* (University of Illinois Press, 2020). She is also the co-director of *Postcards from Tora Bora* (Documentary Educational Resources, 2007) and the co-author of the forthcoming *Afghanistan: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University, forthcoming). She has appeared

as a commentator on Democracy Now, NPR, and Al Jazeera and has published Op-Eds in *the Washington Post* and *the Conversation*, among others. She also works with community and activist groups.

PUBLICATIONS

09 February 2023

The Politics of Survival in the Face of Exclusion: Hazara and Shia Actors under the Taleban

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16 February 2023

The Taliban's Increasing Restrictions on Civil Society and Aid Organizations

[LEARN MORE »](#)

26 February 2023

'Books they Love': A Kabul graveyard library for two schoolgirls

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UPCOMING EVENTS



Islamic Art & Material Culture Collaborative

ART ON THE STREETS

Human Rights, Feminism and South Asian Identity

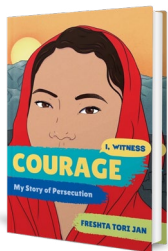
Shehzil Malik
Visual artist and activist,
Berlin, Germany

APRIL 15, 2023
11:00am to 12:30pm EST (Toronto)

[RESERVE A SPOT](#)

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO ROM AGA KHAN MUSEUM

NEW BOOKS



Courage: My Story of Persecution

By *Freshta Tori Jan*

As a girl and as part of an ethnic minority in Afghanistan, Freshta Tori Jan was persecuted relentlessly. Her family faced kidnappings and daily murder attempts on the bus, on the way to school, in the workplace, and beyond. Her journey through poverty, terrorism and other forms of injustice has enabled her to be a voice for those unable to share their stories. She believes in empowering youth to bring about change and be today's and tomorrow's leaders.

Published: 18 January 2022.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)



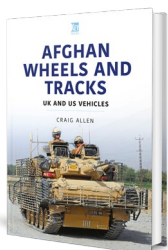
Zara

By *Hussain Etemadi*

Zara was born in Iran, grew up there, fell in love, worked, and went to university. But in Iranian society, she was considered and viewed as an Afghan refugee. So, her life couldn't go beyond the struggle to survive. All her doors were closed, and Iran would never be her homeland. She decided to move to Afghanistan and try a new life. Despite her good start, things went from bad to worse. She was stuck in a certain lifestyle in Kabul.

Published: January 2023.

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Afghan Wheels and Tracks

By *Craig Allen*

With over 140 images, this book covers the various designs of armored fighting vehicles and protected patrol vehicles employed in the war in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the specialized logistics vehicles used to supply the far-flung operating bases in the Sangin valley will be investigated.

Published: 28 February 2023.

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SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



Flinders
UNIVERSITY

Flinders International Postgraduate Research SCHOLARSHIP

Study Level: Masters & Ph.D.
Access Mode: In-person in Australia.
Coverage: \$33,000 per annum.
Deadline: 4 August 2023.

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Study in the UK

Edinburgh Global Online Distance Learning SCHOLARSHIPS

Study Level: Masters.
Access Mode: Online.
Availability: For international students.
Coverage: Full tuition fees.
Deadline: 5 June 2023.

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Aga Khan Foundation
International Scholarship Programme

Study Level: Masters & Ph.D.
Availability: Nationals of the following countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, France, India, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Madagascar, Uganda, Mozambique, Pakistan, Tanzania, Portugal, Tajikistan, Syria, & the USA.
Deadline: 17 March 2023.

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