



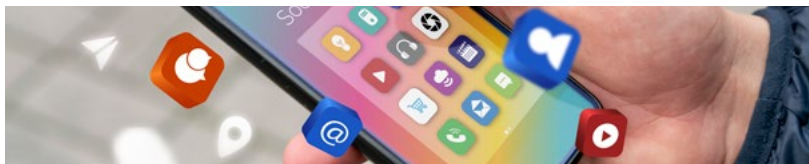
AFGHAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE

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 (ari@ucentralasia.org).

ARI UPDATE

Stay Connected with ARI



- Stay updated on developments in Afghanistan studies by joining [ARI's LinkedIn page](#).
- ARI's Public Lectures are available on ARI's dedicated [YouTube playlist](#).
- Visit [ARI's webpage](#) to access previous ARI newsletters.

Doctoral Grant Holder Graduates

Mujib Rahman Ahmadzai, PhD, Faculty of Forestry and Environment, Universiti Putra Malaysia, December 2024.

Publications by ARI Grant Holders



25 October 2024: Farmers' Socioeconomic Characteristics and Perception of Land Use Change: Defining Optimal Agroforestry Practices in Khost Province, Afghanistan. Forests.
Authors: Mujib R. Ahmadzai, et al. [LEARN MORE »](#)

October 2024: Wartime Political Memory in Afghanistan's Visual Culture. Afghanistan. University of Edinburgh Press.
Author: Munazza Ebtikar. [LEARN MORE »](#)

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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).



Dr. Sayed Mahdi Mosawi

Sayed Mahdi Mosawi is a Research Fellow at the Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World at the University of Edinburgh, UK. Holding a PhD in Sociology from Hacettepe University,

Turkey, he specialises in gender studies, masculinities, migration, transnationalism, refugees, and the Muslim diaspora. Through extensive fieldwork in Afghanistan, Iran, Germany, and the UK, Dr. Mosawi offers profound insights into the complexities of masculinities and forced migration. He has contributed to several scholarly publications, most recently a research article in *Religions* titled “Everyday Lived Islam among Hazara Migrants in Scotland: Intersectionality, Agency, and Individualisation” (2024). He also authored a book chapter on honour, masculinity, and violence in Afghanistan (Routledge, 2020) and co-authored *The Other Side of Gender Inequality: Men and Masculinities in Afghanistan*, published in English, Dari, and Pashto. As a dedicated educator, Dr. Mosawi has designed and delivered several courses, including “Unfolding Afghanistan in a Globalised Context” at the University of Edinburgh, for which he was nominated for the Teaching Awards 2024.



Dr. Naim Asas

Dr. Naim Asas serves as the Director of the Groupement d’Études et de Réflexions Internationales en Sciences Sociales (GERISS), where he oversees research initiatives and intellectual dialogues on

critical social science issues. A distinguished researcher and international speaker, Dr. Asas has authored four notable books on Afghanistan: *La Représentation Afghane*, *Les Enjeux Stratégiques de l’Afghanistan*, *Neuf Fois Rescapé de la Mort*, and *L’Odyssée Afghane: Entre les Histoires Conflictuelles et Espoirs de Paix*. These works offer deep insights into Afghanistan’s complex socio-political landscape, historical conflicts, and aspirations for peace.

In addition to his focus on Afghanistan, Dr. Asas’s research spans Azerbaijan, Armenia, and neighbouring countries, addressing broader geopolitical and international relations issues. His academic contributions, including numerous articles, reflect his commitment to exploring regional dynamics, strategic challenges, and pathways toward stability.



Dr. Masooma Torfa

Masooma Torfa is a consultant and a co-founding member of Female Fellows, currently based in Germany. Masooma has a PhD degree in refugee

migration and labour market integration of refugees in Germany, from the University of Hohenheim in Stuttgart, Germany.

Dr. Torfa has a master’s degree in economics, a diploma in development management from Germany, and a bachelor’s degree in economics from Kabul University in Afghanistan.

Dr. Torfa has professional work experience in development projects with the United Nations Kabul Office and USAID in Afghanistan. Related to international migration, she has worked on policy advocacy, labour market integration and empowerment of migrant women with numerous institutions including the European Commission, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), the European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM), Advocate Europe, Maltese, AGDW, and Female Fellows. Masoom’s recent publications focused on private companies’ engagement in the labour market integration of refugees in Germany. She has also written on Afghan and Syrian refugees’ integration opportunities and challenges as well as the role of influential actors/factors in migration and integration processes.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

6 August 2024: Everyday Lived Islam among Hazara Migrants in Scotland: Intersectionality, Agency, and Individualisation. *Religions* No 15(8): 950.
Author: Sayed Mahdi Mosawi. [LEARN MORE >>](#)

24 November 2024: No Climate Change Deniers: The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan goes to COP29, as an observer. *Afghan Network Analysis*.
Author: Thomas Rutting. [LEARN MORE >>](#)

November 2024: Afghanistan's Qoshtepa Canal and Water Security in Central Asia. *Center for the National Interest*.
Author: Andrew C. Kuchins, et al. [LEARN MORE >>](#)

November 2024: Female Madrasas and Islamic Agency of Afghan Girls and Women: How Religious Education is Being Used by Afghan Women and Girls under the Taliban Regime. *Electronic Publications*.
Authors: Haroun Rahimi, Faiza M. Din. [LEARN MORE >>](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS



'It Hurts My Heart': Afghan Women in London

Organizer: **London Metropolitan University**.

This presentation contributes new insights into transnational care relationships by drawing on qualitative longitudinal data to explore the complexities and nuances of Afghan women's dynamic family relations across multiple countries and continents.

Date: **29 January 2025, 08:00 – 09:30 (GMT)**.

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Webinar

Syria and Struggle for Greater Middle East

Date: Friday, 20 December 2024.

Time: 11:00 – 12:45 am EST.

The webinar "Syria & the Struggle for a Greater Middle East" will bring together experts to discuss Syria's ongoing conflict and its impact on the region. The conversation will examine the internal and external forces driving the crisis, the role of regional powers, and the far-reaching consequences for the Middle East. With insights from scholars, journalists, and diplomats, the session will explore the realities of the conflict, its human cost, and the possibilities for the future.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)



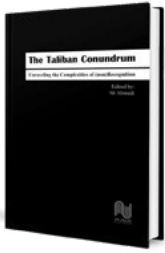
Afghan Cookery Class

You will learn to prepare different dishes and then enjoy them with people who, like you, fuel our mission of supporting refugee and migrant chefs on their journey to integration. It's a cookery class with a conscience, like they say! The class will be led by the wonderful Chef Najee from Afghanistan in Peckham, London, UK.

Date: **14 January 2025, 18:15 – 20:45 (GMT)**.

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NEW BOOKS



The Taliban Conundrum: Unraveling the Complexities of (non)Recognition

By *Ali Ahmadi*

This book examines the feasibility of recognizing the Taliban by exploring three perspectives: the Taliban's nature within their historical and cultural context, the legal framework for engagement, and an international relations viewpoint.

Published: 26 October 2024.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)



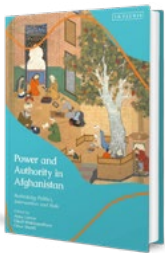
Afghanistan Collapse and Exodus

By *Zulfiqar Omid*

This book captures the emotional journey surrounding the fall of Afghanistan, tracing the emotional and human impact of political failures, resistance challenges, and the humanitarian crisis following Kabul's collapse.

Published: 23 November 2024.

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Power and Authority in Afghanistan

By *A. Larson, D. Mukhupadhaya, O. Sharifi*

This book brings together critical contributions from Afghan and international scholars who challenge Western-centered and ahistorical approaches to Afghanistan, focusing on novel perspectives about power and authority in the region.

Publication date: 20 February 2025.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)



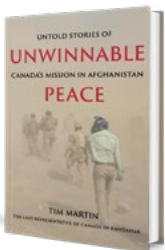
From the Diaspora to the Homeland

By *Rabia Latif Khan*

Historically marginalized in Afghanistan, Hazaras were often viewed as a 'laborer class' occupying the lowest social tier. However, post-2001, they have achieved notable advancements in education and civil society, transforming Hazara identity into one of positive ethnic consciousness and global political mobilization.

Published: 18 November 2024.

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Unwinnable Peace: Untold Stories of Canada's Mission in Afghanistan

By *Tim Martin*

Canada's longest war (2001-2014) pushed military, diplomatic, judicial and humanitarian organizations to their limits. Unwinnable Peace recounts the personal and professional challenges faced by individuals deeply committed to securing and rebuilding Kandahar province.

Published: 19 June 2024.

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SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

MARGARET
MCNAMARA
EDUCATION GRANTS

Women Scholarship

Deadline Approaching



Study Level: Unspecified.

Availability: Afghans and other nationalities.

Fund: Partially funded.

Deadline:
15 January 2025.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

iie Scholar
Rescue Fund
Fellowship

Doctoral

Availability: Afghans and other nationalities.

Fund: \$25,000.

Deadline:
20 January 2025.

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— FULLY FUNDED —

King's College London Scholarships

— Apply Now —

Study Level: Master's.

Fields: Conflict, Security, Development.

Availability: Afghans and other nationalities.

Deadline:
10 January 2025.

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WORLD BANK GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Masters Degree

FULLY FUNDED

Fields: Various.

Availability: Afghans and other nationalities.

Deadline: 23 May 2025.

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