

Centre for Afghanistan Studies

NEWSLETTER #1



INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Afghanistan Studies (CAS) through its research intends to provide a window into complex yet fascinating dynamics shaping socio-cultural, geo-political and economic landscape of Afghanistan. CAS would contribute to cutting edge, policy oriented research on Afghanistan and its implications for the region at large. It would also provide a platform for collaborative exchange programs and transmission of knowledge to students and scholars.

CAS TEAM

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FOOD STALL BY ILHAM - AN AFGHAN WOMEN REFUGEE'S INITIATIVE.

We've had an opportunity to experience the taste and grandeur of Afghanistan, here in JGU, a couple of weeks back, on the eve of women's day. This event was meant to celebrate Afghanistan's food heritage, women's livelihood and self-reliance and it managed to do so despite the fact that there was an apparent language barrier between the volunteers, customers and the women entrepreneurs who were preparing the food.



Fresh dough twirled into perfect circles, the sound of the oil heating and steadfast dicing of the vegetables looked aesthetically perfect with the sunset in the picture.

With mouthwatering dishes like Bolani, and Kabuli Pulao, the textual menu was enough to create a visual pleasure and attract people.



It was an evening of celebration. A perfectly chilly sunset, where authentic Afghani food was savored and appreciated. Moreover, it was an event that honored the refugee women of Afghanistan who have been practicing the fine art of cooking to stand on their own feet.

INTERNSHIP AT OSCAR

Two students from JSIA: Rohan Khattar Singh and Harshit Pai interned with a partner organization of the centre in Kabul by the name of OSCAR (Organization for Social, Cultural Awareness and Rehabilitation). The organization is run by Mr. Ahmadullah Archiwal who also served as the student mentor for the duration of the internship.

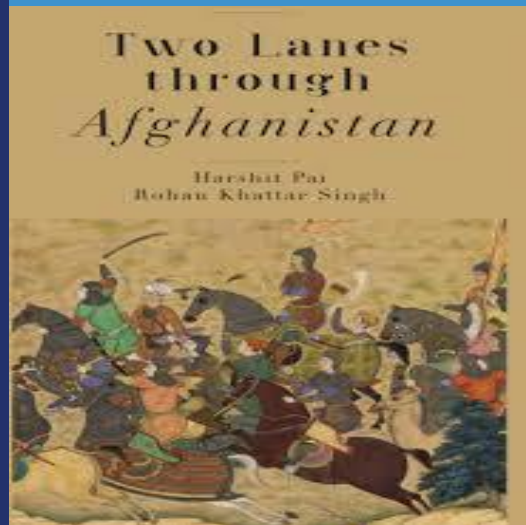
The internship involved the conduct of research on road connectivity of Afghanistan and its impact on relations with its neighboring countries. Government data and publications were the principal sources from which primary data was gathered along with qualitative interviews with government officials. The internship also provided interns an opportunity to interact with the natives of Kabul, hailing from different strata of society and to see how people from different socio-economic backgrounds are affected by road connectivity. The internship lasted around a month and it allowed the interns to familiarize themselves with efficient techniques of data mining and apply research skills acquired in class to conduct of field based research. The internship provided a unique window of opportunity into discourses in and about Afghan society, polity and economy independent of media reportage.



Book launch "Two Lanes Through Afghanistan" at Global Library

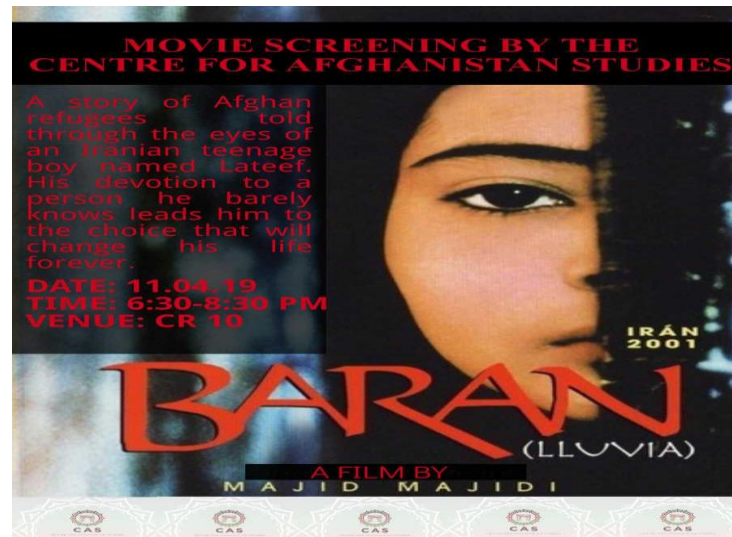
Two Lanes Through Afghanistan is a book that talks about the findings of two students who went to Afghanistan to study the road connectivity there. Using a personal narrative style, the book not only informs the readers about road connectivity in Afghanistan but also gives a personal account of the student's interaction with the people of this country. In conversations that ranged from the common people in Afghanistan to its elite, this book gives a first-hand account of how road connectivity has changed the people's lives.

The book showed Afghanistan with a positive lens which included opinions and perspectives of the common people, scholars, intellectuals and politicians. According to the authors the war will never end- but hopes of aspirations of people can help survive and bring in prosperity in the country.

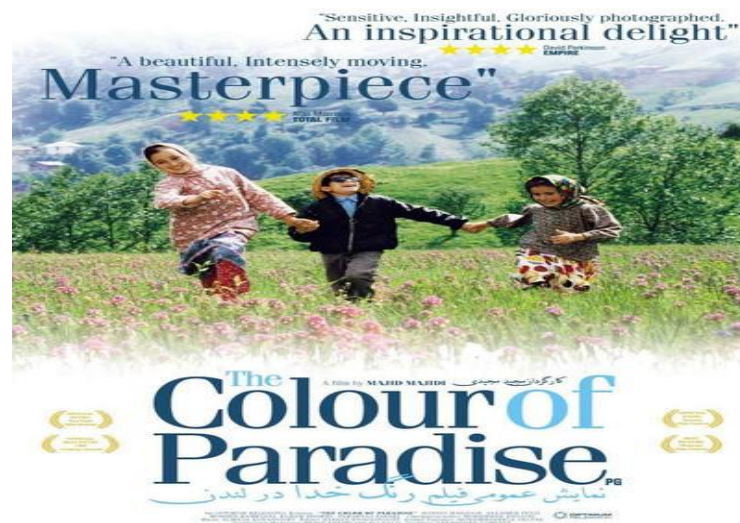


Movie Screenings: Baran and Colors of Paradise

MARCH 2019



Baran, is a story of Afghan refugees told through the eyes of an Iranian teenage boy named Lateef, his devotion to a person he barely knows leads him to the choice that will change his life forever. Baran won a number of awards both nationally and internationally for the director and writer Majid Majidi. Here are many surprises along the way, one of the best involving a man Lateef meets during a long journey--an itinerant shoemaker, who has thoughtful observations about life. "Baran" is the latest in a flowering of good films from Iran, and gives voice to the moderates there. It shows people existing and growing in the cracks of their society's inflexible walls.



The story of Mohammed, a blind Iranian boy and his father, Hashem, who is always oscillating between accepting his son as he is and abandoning him, as he represents a burden for him, after the loss of his wife. In this film Majidi again demonstrates his ability to express in cinematic terms some of the deep stirrings we have about life. In The Color of Paradise, however, Majidi goes even further beyond the immediacy of our ordinary circumstances and turns our eyes toward the transcendent. Of course we cannot see the transcendent with our eyes, and this is metaphorically reflected in the plight of the blind boy in the film.

FACULTY TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR AFGHAN UNIVERSITY FACULTY IN COLLABORATION WITH IIHED AND BALL STATE UNIVERSITY.

JGU- BSU Training workshop done jointly by IIHED and CAS. We hosted 10 Faculty from Public Policy and Law from public universities across Afghanistan for a period of 10 weeks. The project was funded by U.S Department of State.

Objectives and Expected Outcomes: The Recipient agrees to perform the program and meet the specific objectives below:

- Equip Afghan faculty with the knowledge and tools needed to continue developing the capacities of Afghan universities and to advance the education of future generations of Afghans.
- Ensure program participants gain skills in pedagogy, including curriculum and course development, student engagement, teaching methodologies, and effective teaching with and without access to electronic technology.

Ball State University SAF-200 -18-CA-0041

- Develop leadership and administrative skills modeled after U.S. higher education standards and norms, while gaining familiarity with the dynamics among academic departments and the broader academic community.
- Learn best practices in U.S. higher education and how to apply them in the Afghan context.
- Develop leadership and team-building skills.
- Gain skills in working with different demographic groups in an academic setting. Increase English language proficiency.
- Build computer skills to support academic programs and instruction.
- Engage with academics in their disciplines.
- Gain exposure to academic research resources.
- Develop relationships to foster lasting collaboration and mentorship.



Link to CAS Website - <http://www.jsia.edu.in/centre-afghanistan-studies/>.