



Safe Havens - Freedom Talk #13 Freedom Talk@Buddha Nights - 2

Safe Havens Freedom Talks continues its series including important conversations and offers a panel titled “**Intersectionality Matters: Problematising the Mainstream Discourse on Gender Analysis in Afghanistan**”. In collaboration with **Teater DOS** and **Buddha Nights**, the event will be streamed on **Wednesday, 4 May 2022**, at **2.30 pm CEST** on

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1008274760066186/>

<https://howlround.com/series/safe-havens-freedom-talks>

<https://sh-ft.org>

Moderated by **Asad Buda** (Afghan writer), **Anis Rezaei** (MPhil candidate at the University of Oxford) and **Sitarah Mohammadi** (contributor to Guardian Australia and a legal researcher with the Afghanistan Human Rights Democracy Organisation) will discuss the importance of an intersectional approach to gender analysis in the Afghanistan context and how its absence has hindered our ability to understand gender power dynamics as part of the broader system of power that structures a society rather than an isolated power structure in this talk.

The mainstream discourse on gender in the Afghanistan context treats gender as a monolithic power structure that has shaped and perpetuated the domination of one homogenised group of people, men, over another homogenised group of people, women. Given the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity of Afghanistan – and the historical power imbalance between these different groups, treating gender as a monolithic power structure has produced two interconnected problems: 1: It has limited our understanding of the complex ways in which gender identity intersects with other forms of identities such as ethnic and religious identities to shape a distinct experience for women in Afghanistan society. 2: It has completely excluded women who uphold multiple subordinating identities - women from historically oppressed and marginalised ethnic and religious groups from the mainstream discourse on gender in Afghanistan.

About Buddha Nights

The destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha Statues in 2001 was beyond massacre. It was carried out in continuation of the ethnic cleansing, exclusively with the aim of destroying the history of the Hazara people. The purge even strongly has continued after the Taliban has returned on 15 August 2021.

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In collaboration with Safe Havens Freedom Talks and Teater DOS, Buddha Nights arranges three discussions for seeking an alternative narrative related to what is happening in Afghanistan with a special focus on destroying world cultural heritage in Bamiyan. The objective of the project is to explore the social injustice and political inequality at the narrative level from different dimensions: Destroying History; Urbicide and Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Bamiyan, Injustice in Narrative; The Absent of Hazara People in International Narrative, and Intersectionality; Gender Discrimination in Afghanistan.

About Freedom Talks

Safe Havens – Freedom Talks series is closely connected to the annual global Safe Havens conference. The Freedom Talks series is focused on issues regarding threats towards artistic freedom, free press and intangible heritage. Guests in the Freedom Talks series are highly knowledgeable and prolific actors in the global Arts Rights Justice sector – fighting for artistic freedom. The Freedom Talks aim to share space and broaden the narrative of who can take centre stage, by lending the brand to different organisations within the sector. The talks are presented in – or translated to – English. The talks can be watched through our [website](#), our [Facebook page](#) and through our partner [Howlround](#), where also previous events are archived.

The Participants @Buddha Nights



Anis Rezaei is an MPhil candidate at the University of Oxford. She holds a BA (Hons) in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics from the University of Essex. Anis has been closely working with Hazara community-based organisations in the UK to help facilitate the integration of Hazaras into UK society.



Asad Buda is a freelance writer from Bamiyan, Afghanistan. He studied sociology in Tehran and theology in Qom and he has worked as a University Lecturer in Kabul. He is the former ICORN guest writer in Karlstad. After his arrival in Sweden, a chapter of his personal memoir “Det återvändande Ögat” was published in Värmland Writers Anthology. As the project manager, He worked with Riksteatern on the Little History Project which resulted in publishing a book under the title of Hoppets Territorium. Besides writing, he works with visual art, focusing on the demonization of political enemies and aesthetic

aspects of extremists and political violence. He worked with Khadim Ali on different projects: The Evil Flower, Sharjah Biennial 2019, The Invisible Border, 2020, Future as An Unknown Enemy, Action Gallery – New York, 2020 - 2021, Sermon on The Mount, Institute of

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Modern art – Australia 2021. There Is No Other Home but This is under exhibit at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, from 26th February – 26th June 2022.



Monirah Hashemi co-founded Simorgh Film Association of Culture and Art in Herat, in 2005. In 2006 she established a theatre department within SFACA where she worked as playwright, director and actor. Her award-winning debut play, *Cry of History*, which was produced solely by women was the first play performed before a mixed audience after Taliban's collapse, at The Educational Theatre Festival in Herat, 2006. She has written and directed several plays with a focus on creating female-led and female-fronted productions, addressing a range of social justice issues, particularly related to women's rights. Monirah who has performed nationally and internationally participated at the 9th and 10th Women Playwright International Conference with *Masks Under the Burka* and *Sitaraha – The Stars* in Stockholm and Cape Town in 2012 and 2015. Monirah Hashemi is a co-founder of *A Night with Buddha Festival*. Her latest play, *Who Lights the Stars*, depict the structural silence on incest.



Sitarah Mohammadi is a contributor to Guardian Australia, and writes on Hazaras, Afghanistan, and refugee issues. She spent 2019 as a Provost Scholar at the University of Oxford, where she completed her dissertation on Australia's refugee policy. She has a BA in International Relations and Human Rights and is currently undertaking her Juris Doctorate at Monash University Law School in Melbourne, Australia. Sitarah is a legal researcher with the Afghanistan Human Rights Democracy Organisation.

**The event is organised by the independent international NGO Safe Havens Freedom Talks (SH|FT), through collaborations within the global Arts Rights Justice sector, and with Safemuse graciously supporting as its mentoring organisation in the start-up period. SH|FT is supported by The Swedish Arts Council under the Programme for Artistic Freedom funded by Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and The Freedom Talks are sponsored by the Swedish Institute. The exhibition and platform project is sponsored by the Swedish Postcode Foundation.*

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