

DEC 13TH - 15TH 2024

COMPARATIVE POLITICAL THEOLOGY

ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13TH

Schedule

07:00pm

Dinner: Goa Curry (Westernmauer 86, Paderborn)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

08:00am

Breakfast

08:45am

Conference Introduction

(Idris Nassery, Paderborn University)

09:00am - 10:00am

Panel A The Search for an Object: Islamic Comparative Political Theology (Chair: Stephan Kokew, Paderborn University)

Salman Sayyid (University of Leeds)

Aisha Ghani (University of Minnesota Twin Cities)

Tanzeen Doha (University of Pittsburgh)

10:00am - 10:20am

Open Discussion with Response:

Domenik Ackermann (Paderborn University)

10:20am - 10:45am

Coffee break

10:45am - 11:45am

Panel B The Body-(Politic) in Islamic Political Theology (Chair: Idris Nassery, Paderborn University)

Amina Easat-Daas (University of Leeds)

Ali Altaf Mian (University of Florida)

Johanna Looock (University of Leeds)

11:45am - 12:05pm

Open Discussion with Response:

Sarah Lebock (Paderborn University)

12:30pm - 01:30pm

Lunch

Schedule

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

02:00pm - 03:00pm

Panel C Trans-physical yet Political: Sex and Gender in Islamic Comparative Theology (Chair: Stephan Kokew, Paderborn University)

Juliane Hammer (The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

Amina Shareef (Goldsmiths, University of London)

Abdul Rahman Mustafa (Paderborn University)

03:00pm - 03:20pm

Open Discussion with Response:

Nasrin Bani Assadi (University of Bonn)

03:20pm - 03:40pm

Coffee break

06:00pm

Dinner Trattoria Il Postino (Jühenplatz 1-3, Paderborn)

Schedule

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH

09:30am - 10:30am

Panel D Sovereignty, Subjectivation, Subjection

(Chair: Abdul Rahman Mustafa, Paderborn University)

Asma Afsaruddin (Indiana University)

Zishan Ghaffar (Paderborn University)

10:30am - 11:00am

Open Discussion with Response:

Yael Attia (Paderborn University)

11:00am - 11:10am

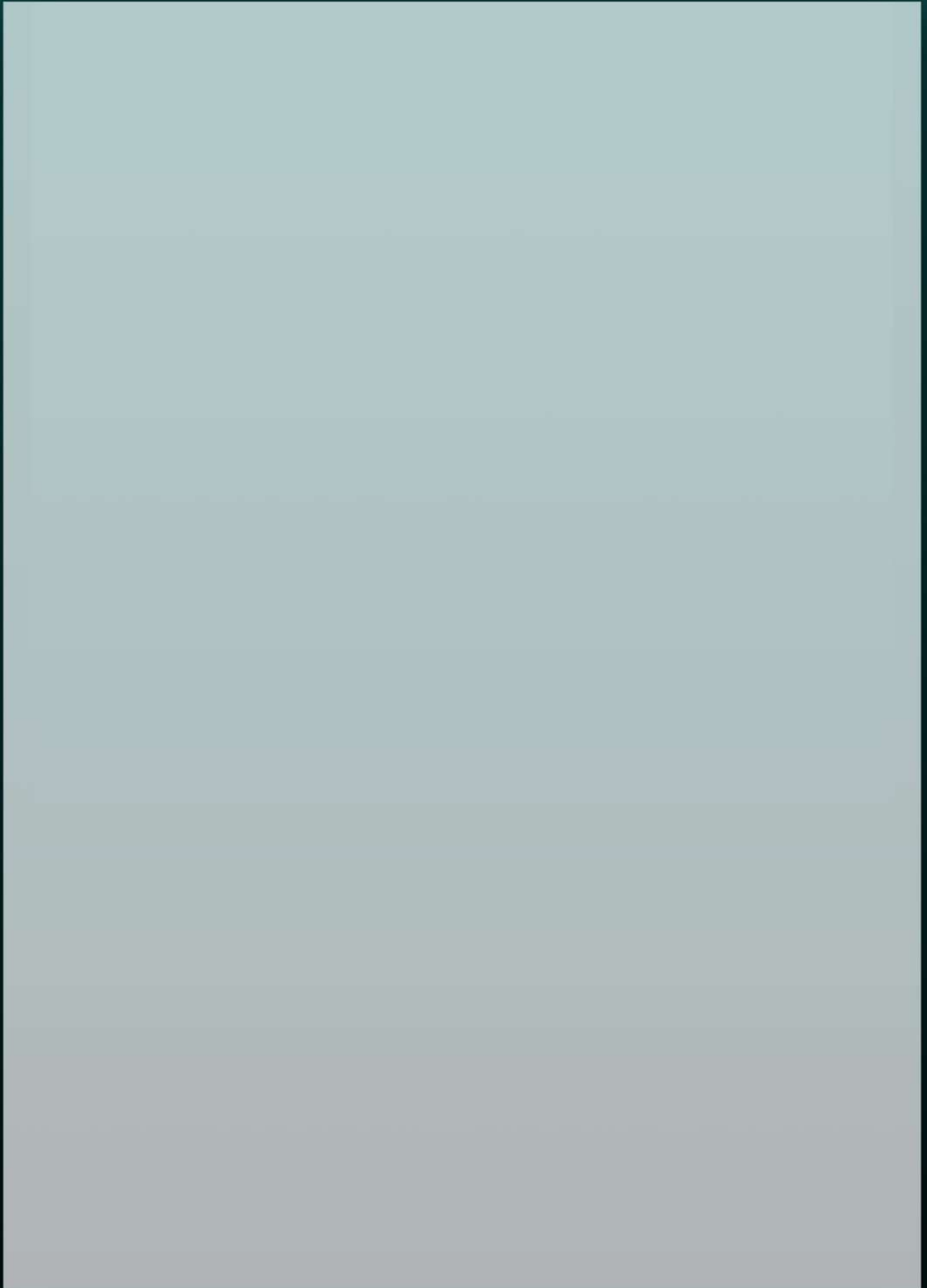
Closing remarks:

Idris Nassery (Paderborn University)

12:00am

Lunch

Notes

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Speaker

ASMA AFSARUDDIN



Sovereignty, Subjectivation, Subjection

Dr. Asma Afsaruddin is an American scholar of Islamic studies and a Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Indiana University in Bloomington. Her academic focus includes Islamic thought, the concept of jihad, martyrdom, and the roles of Muslim women in religious, legal, and political contexts. Her recent book, "Jihad: What Everyone Needs to Know" (Oxford University Press, 2022), provides a comprehensive and accessible examination of jihad from the early Islamic period to the present. Dr. Afsaruddin's previous works include "Contemporary Issues in Islam" (2015) and "Striving in the Path of God: Jihad and Martyrdom in Islamic Thought and Praxis" (2013), both of which have had significant impact in the field.

She is currently editing the "Oxford Handbook on Islam and Women" (2023) and has held editorial roles with several prominent academic publications. Dr. Afsaruddin frequently gives lectures and consultations to organizations such as the US State Department and the US Institute of Peace.

Speaker

ALI ALTAF MIAN

The Body-(Politic) in Islamic Political Theology

Dr. Ali Altaf Mian is a scholar specializing in Islam in South Asia, Sufism, Islamic law and ethics, gender and sexuality in contemporary Islam, and the impact of colonialism on religious traditions. He holds a B.A. in Philosophy and an M.A. in English from the University of Louisville, and a Ph.D. from Duke University's Graduate Program in Religion.

Dr. Mian's research spans classical Islamic theology, mysticism, Hanafi jurisprudence, Qur'anic and Hadith studies, and the application of psychoanalytic theory to the interpretation of religious ideas and practices. His work also explores how colonialism reshaped Islamic traditions and modern Muslim self-making.

He is currently authoring two manuscripts: "Muslims in South Asia" (Edinburgh University Press) and "Surviving Modernity: Ashraf 'Ali Thanvi and the Genres of Muslim Self-Making in Colonial India". Dr. Mian has served on the editorial board of the "Journal of the American Academy of Religion" since 2017.



Speaker

TANZEEN RASHED DOHA



The Search for an Object: Islamic Comparative Political Theology

Dr. Tanzeen Rashed Doha holds a PhD in Anthropology with a designated emphasis in Critical Theory from the University of California, and has graduate degrees in Philosophy and Humanities. From 2021 to 2023, he was a “Global Racial Justice” postdoctoral fellow at Cornell University’s Einaudi Center for International Studies.

His research examines the intersections of race, religion, and modern secularity, focusing on the post-9/11 security regimes and the affective and ethical lifeworld of Muslims. His first book project explores the Deobandi tradition's response to state sovereignty following the 2013 Shapla massacre in Bangladesh. His second project investigates the interactions between Rohingya migrants and Deobandi scholars during the 2016–17 migration crises, offering new perspectives on maps, borders, and sovereignty.

Dr. Doha is the founder and general editor of “Milestones: Commentary on the Islamic World” and the host of the podcast “Everything is Fire”.

Speaker

AMINA EESAT-DAAS

The Body-(Politic) in Islamic Political Theology

Dr. Amina Eesat-Daas is a Lecturer in Politics at De Montfort University. She is a member of the Centre for Urban Research on Austerity and is affiliated with the Stephen Lawrence Research Centre.

Dr. Eesat-Daas earned her PhD at Aston University, Birmingham, focusing on Muslim women's political participation in France and Belgium. She also holds an MA in Modern Languages and Humanities and a BA in Psychology and Modern Languages from the University of Leicester. Her research interests include Muslim women, youth, Islamophobia, gendered dimensions of Islamophobia, and "European Islam." Previously, she worked at the University of Leeds on the EU-funded “Counter-Islamophobia Kit” project within the Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies.

Dr. Eesat-Daas has presented her work to esteemed organizations such as the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the Carter Center (USA), and the OSCE-ODIHR. Her recent monograph, “Muslim Women's Political Participation in France and Belgium” (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), reflects her expertise in this area.





Speaker

AISHA GHANI

The Search for an Object: Islamic Comparative Political Theology

Dr. Aisha Ghani is an anthropologist specializing in the intersections of religion, law, and secular governance. Her research focuses on the management and regulation of Islam and Muslim communities within U.S. legal systems. Through her concept of "legal Islam," she examines how juridical processes and political contingencies shape Islam into a legally permissible American religion.

Dr. Ghani is currently working on two major projects: "Questioning Terrorism" is a courtroom ethnography investigating how terrorism trials delineate the boundaries of American Islam and secularism. Her second project, "The Science of Islamophobia," explores U.S. religious discrimination cases where scientific discourses are employed to challenge Islamic practices, framing them as unsafe or unsanitary. These cases highlight "scientific frontiers" in the evolution of Islamophobia, addressing issues such as Muslim cemeteries, wudu (ablution), and workplace safety.

Dr. Ghani's work provides critical insights into the dynamics of religion, law, and societal perceptions in the U.S. context.

Speaker

ZISHAN GHAFFAR

Sovereignty, Subjectivation, Subjection

Dr. Zishan Ghaffar is a Professor of Qur'anic Exegesis at the Paderborn Institute for Islamic Theology at the University of Paderborn (PIIT). He specializes in historical-critical Qur'anic exegesis, the early history of Islam and Comparative Theology. Previously, he served as a research fellow for the Corpus Coranicum project at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, where he was responsible for the historical-critical commentary.

Currently, Dr. Ghaffar he is the Chairman of the Centre for Comparative Theology and Cultural Studies (ZeKK) at Paderborn University and the speaker of the advisory board for the International Center for Comparative Theology and Social Issues (CTSI) at the Catholic Theological Faculty of Bonn University. He is leading a research group on Prophetology and a collaborative research initiative on the societal transfer of Comparative Theology.



Speaker

JULIANE HAMMER



Trans-physical yet Political: Sex and Gender in Islamic Comparative Theology

Dr. Juliane Hammer is Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is an expert in the study of Islam, gender, sexuality, and race, with a focus on Muslim communities in the United States. Trained in both Islamic studies and American religions, her research blends ethnographic and textual analysis to examine the intersections of gender, sexuality, and religious practice in contemporary Muslim contexts. She engages with women's and gender studies, critical race theory, and sexuality studies, conducting interdisciplinary research that values both lived experiences and textual traditions.

Dr. Hammer's most recent book, "Peaceful Families: American Muslim Efforts against Domestic Violence" (Princeton University Press, 2019), examines religiously framed efforts in Muslim communities to raise awareness about domestic violence and provide support services.

Speaker

JOHANNA LOOCK

The Body-(Politic) in Islamic Political Theology

Johanna Loock is a doctoral student in the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds. She is working on paradoxes of citizenship in Germany investigated through an analysis of German integration politics, its entanglement with Islam politics, and its role for the reconstruction of the national identity.

Johanna Loock received her B.A. in Islamic Studies and Geography from the University of Bern. Her focus in Islamic Studies revolves around Muslims in Europe, colonialism, and Orientalism, recognizing Europe and its history as central subjects of Islamic Studies.

She pursued an M.A. in Islamic Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin, specializing in "Islam in Europe". A scholarship allowed her to study at New York University and Columbia University. Her academic journey reflects a commitment to interdisciplinary research that bridges Islamic Studies, sociology, and political theory.





Speaker

ABDUL RAHMAN MUSTAFA

Trans-physical yet Political: Sex and Gender in Islamic Comparative Theology

Dr. Abdul Rahman Mustafa is a postdoctoral fellow in comparative theology at the Faculty of Cultural Studies, University of Paderborn, affiliated with the Center for Comparative Theology and Cultural Studies (ZeKK).

Previously, he was a postdoctoral fellow with the Global Network for Christian Muslim Studies at the University of Edinburgh's School of Divinity.

He holds a Ph.D. in Arabic and Islamic Studies, awarded with distinction, from Georgetown University. His research interests include Islamic legal theory, theology, and interreligious dynamics. He has contributed to the AIWG Short-Term Project "Dynamics of Tradition" at the Paderborn Institute for Islamic Theology (PIIT), focusing on Islamic Norms.

Speaker

SALMAN SAYYID

The Search for an Object: Islamic Comparative Political Theology

Dr. Salman Sayyid is a Professor of Social Theory & Decolonial Thought at the University of Leeds. He is a renowned scholar specializing in world history and political theory. He served as Head of the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds from 2017 to 2023. Prior to his tenure at Leeds, he held academic positions at universities in London, Manchester, and Adelaide, Australia, where he was the inaugural director of a research center and a pioneer in the development of Critical Muslim Studies.

Professor Sayyid holds a first degree in International Relations, a Master's in Ideology and Discourse Analysis, and a doctorate in "continental" political theory. His interdisciplinary work bridges sociology, history, and political theory, reflecting a commitment to exploring global issues through diverse perspectives.

Professor Salman Sayyid is the founding editor of the academic journal "ReOrient" and author of influential works such as "Recalling the Caliphate" (2015) and "A Fundamental Fear," (2013), the latter critically acclaimed but controversially banned in Malaysia for its impact on debates about Islamism. He has briefed senior officials, authored reports, and appeared on major broadcasters including ABC, BBC, and CBC.



Speaker

AMINA SHAREEF



Trans-physical yet Political: Sex and Gender in Islamic Comparative Theology

Dr. Amina Shareef is an Assistant Professor in Education at Goldsmiths, University of London, with a research focus on anti-Muslim racism, subjection, Muslim women, and hijab politics. She is an alumnus of the University of Cambridge. Dr. Shareef's research examines the impact of anti-Muslim racism and counter-extremism policies on Muslim identities, exploring the transformation of Muslim individuals from tawhidic subjects—rooted in the oneness of God—into liberal subjects due to systemic pressures.

Her work also addresses the intersection of education, gender, and hijab politics, analyzing their role in the context of contemporary anti-Muslim racism. Dr. Shareef contributes to critical discourses on identity, inclusion, and resistance within education and broader society.

Response

Yael Attia

Sovereignty, Subjectivation, Subjection

Yael Attia is a Research Associate in Jewish Studies at the Center for Comparative Theology and Cultural Studies (ZeKK) at the University of Paderborn. She completed her Master's degree in Jewish Studies/Theology at Potsdam University with a thesis titled "Judaism, Philosophy and the Concept of Responsibility towards the Animal."

Prior to this, she studied Philosophy and Jewish Studies at Tel Aviv University. Since Fall 2019, Yael has been a Doctoral Fellow at the DFG-funded graduate research group "Minor Cosmopolitanisms." Her current projects are part of a collaborative research initiative on the societal transfer of Comparative Theology.



Response

DOMENIK ACKERMANN



The Search for an Object: Islamic Comparative Political Theology

Dr. Domenik Ackermann is a Research Associate at the Center for Comparative Theology and Cultural Studies (ZeKK) at the University of Paderborn. He studied Protestant Theology in Göttingen, Heidelberg, and Beirut (Lebanon), before earning his PhD in Jewish-Christian Comparative Theology at Boston College. His dissertation, "Prayer and Memory: What Christian Theology Can Learn from Jewish Practice," analyzes Jewish prayer experiences and engages them in dialogue with the prayer theories of Jean-Louis Chrétien and Johann Baptist Metz.

Dr. Ackermann's research focuses on Comparative Theology, the hermeneutics of interreligious dialogue with Judaism and Islam, as well as ecumenism.

Response

NASRIN BANI ASSADI

Trans-physical yet Political: Sex and Gender in Islamic Comparative Theology

Dr. Nasrin Bani Assadi is a postdoctoral researcher at the International Center for Comparative Theology and Social Issues (CTSI) at the University of Bonn. In her thesis, "Freedom Revisited – A Comparative Theological Approach to the Question of Free Will in Islam", she examined whether the Qur'anic notion of faith is reconcilable with modern philosophical notions of freedom.

Her research focuses on the intersection of theology, philosophy, and social issues, with a particular emphasis on Islamic thought.



Response

SARAH LEBOCK



The Body-(Politic) in Islamic Political Theology

Sarah Lebock is Executive Secretary at the Center for Comparative Theology and Cultural Studies (ZeKK) at the University of Paderborn and a Research Associate at the Paderborn Institute for Islamic Theology (PIIT).

Lebock received her B.A. in German linguistics and her M.A. in Philosophy and Theologies in Dialogue from the "Culture and Society" program at the University of Paderborn. She also pursues her master's degree in counseling at the Catholic University of Applied Sciences of North Rhine-Westphalia.

She is currently doing her PhD in a BMBF-funded graduate research group that deals with innovative approaches to Islamic comparative theology. In her dissertation, she explores hidden potentials and Muslim perspectives on Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics to derive impulses for comparative theology.

Chair

STEPHAN KOKEW

The Search for an Object: Islamic Comparative Political Theology

Dr. Stephan Kokew is a Research Associate at the Paderborn Institute for Islamic Theology (PIIT). He studied Islamic Studies, Arabic Studies, and Religious Studies in Freiburg and Leipzig.

His doctoral research, focused on contemporary discourses of tolerance in the Islamic world, was published as "Annäherung an Toleranz" by Ergon Verlag (Nomos, 2014).

Currently, his research explores the modern Arabic reception of a classical work in Islamic theology and intellectual history. He is also working on Islamic ethical concepts in the Qur'an and Islamic thought regarding the coexistence of Muslims and non-Muslims.

Dr. Kokew has also contributed an overview article to the upcoming volume "Islam II" in the series "Die Religionen der Menschheit" (Kohlhammer).





Chair

IDRIS NASSERY

The Body-(Politic) in Islamic Political Theology

Dr. Idris Nassery is Professor of Islamic Law at the Paderborn Institute for Islamic Theology (PIIT). He studied Law and Economics at Bielefeld University and completed his legal clerkship at the Higher Regional Court of Düsseldorf.

Dr. Nassery was a fellow in the Excellence Program of the Mercator Foundation and worked as a Research Associate at the University of Paderborn, where he completed his PhD on the relationship between law and ethics in the thought of Abu Hamid Muhammad Al-Ghazali in 2017. He also holds a master's degree in Islamic law (LL.M.) from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London and a certification in Islamic Banking and Finance from the London School of Economics. He further pursued studies in Islamic jurisprudence and Arabic at the University of Johannesburg as part of the "Master in classical Islam" program.

Dr. Nassery is a co-founder and chairman of the Institute for Law and Society in Afghanistan (ILSAF).

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