In this talk, Dr. Marjan Wardaki unravels the story of how ordinary Afghan and Indian students drew on German sciences and technology to transform a peripheral British protectorate into the first Muslim independent state in the early twentieth century. Wardaki explores the role of migrants in the circulation and transformation of knowledge and knowledge-related practices in specific localities, from their inception at German universities to their transformation at new South Asian institutions. Through a close reading of the migrants’ artistic and literary oeuvre, this project illustrates processes in which students reinvented and reconfigured expertise, ideas, and practices both within local and global spaces.

Marjan Wardaki received her Ph.D. in European and South Asian History from UCLA in 2019. She completed her dissertation, entitled “Knowledge-Migrants between South Asia and Europe: The Production of Technical and Scientific Ideas among Students and Scientists, 1919-1945,” under the supervision of Professors Nile Green, David Sabean, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam. She is currently a Visiting Lecturer at California State Long Beach.