

**Mahtab Sirdani**  
Curriculum Vitae

**Contact Information**

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**Education**

**Ph.D. in Anthropology**, January 2025

Dissertation: “Migration and Hope: Religious Iranians in North America”  
Boston University, 232 Bay State Rd, Boston, MA 02215

**M.A. in Theological Studies**, May 2017

Area of Concentration: Religion, Literature, and Cultures  
Harvard University, 45 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138

**M.A. in Linguistics**, May 2007

Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran  
Dissertation: “Morphophonology in Colloquial Persian (Optimality Theory)”

**Areas of Specialization**

**AOS:** Socio-Cultural Anthropology; Anthropology of Religion; Migration  
**AOC:** Islam in the West; Persian Language and Literature; Women and Gender Studies;

**Presentations**

**2024**

- “Food Rituals: Marginality and Hospitality of Religious Migrants” at UBC Migration Narratives Group at UBC Center for Migration Studies. University of British Columbia, February 29

## **2023**

- “Names as Seeds of Hope: Muslim Iranian Migrants and Their Coping Strategies in North America” at Religious Assemblages, Biennial Meeting of the Society for the Anthropology of Religion, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, May 12-14

## **2021**

- “Teaching Literacy through Collaborative Story-Listening” at the 3rd International Conference on Teaching Persian Language and Literature, University of Cambridge. In collaboration with Dr. Hessam Dehghani, December 14
- “Interactive Story-Telling” at NNELL Summer Summit 2021. In collaboration with Dr. Hessam Dehghani, July 23-24

## **2020**

- “Migrants’ Hope: The Case of Young Muslim Migrants in Massachusetts” at The Institute on Culture, Religion & World Affairs (CURA Colloquium), Boston University, MA, February 28

## **2019**

- “Redefinition of Identity of Iranian Women Immigrants in the US” at Interrogating Self-Care: Bodies, Personhood, and Movements in Tumultuous Times, Graduate Student Symposium, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, March 29

## **2012**

- “Iranian Women in the Light of Persian Literature” at Boston College, Boston, MA, November 27

## **Discussant**

## **2021**

- *Say What Your Longing Heart Desires: Women, Prayer, and Poetry in Iran*, by Niloofar Haeri, Alireza Ahmadian Lectures in Iranian and Persianate Studies, University of British Columbia. October 16

## **Invited Speaker**

### **2019**

- “Women and Religion”  
Interfaith Dialogue at First Baptist Church in Newton, in collaboration with Dr. Hessam Dehghani and Dr. Hans Harmakaputra. Newton, MA, January 27
- “Shari’a and Politics”  
Interfaith Dialogue at First Baptist Church in Newton, in collaboration with Dr. Hessam Dehghani and Dr. Hans Harmakaputra. Newton, MA, February 24

### **2018**

- “*How to Live with Others According to Scriptures*”  
Interfaith Dialogue at First Baptist Church in Newton, in collaboration with Dr. Hessam Dehghani and Dr. Hans Harmakaputra. Newton, MA, September 30
- “Spirituality and Devotion”  
Interfaith Dialogue at First Baptist Church in Newton, in collaboration with Dr. Hessam Dehghani and Dr. Hans Harmakaputra. Newton, MA, October 28, 2018

## **Grants and Awards**

- Graduate Student Prize, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran. May 2007
- Graduate Student Summer Research Grant, Boston University. June 2018
- CURA Colloquium Fellowship, Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University. 2019-2020
- Cora du Bois Dissertation Writing Fellowship, Harvard University. May 2023

## **Work in Progress**

- “Naming and Belonging: An Ethnographic Reflection on Shia Iranians’ Naming, Faith, and Sense of Belonging in Migration to North America”  
*Article manuscript in preparation.*

## **Teaching Experience**

### **Sessional Lecturer, University of British Columbia**

- Modern Islam (ASIA 328), Summer 2, 2024
- Diasporas and Belonging (ANTH 376), Fall 2024-25
- Persian for Upper Intermediate Speakers (PERS 300), Spring 2024-25
- Persian Short Story for Native and Heritage Speakers (PERS 400), Fall 2024-25
- Intermediate-High Persian II (PER 301), Spring 2024-25
- Persian Reading and Writing for Persian-Speaking Students (PERS104) Spring 2024-25
- Persian for Lower Intermediate Speakers (PERS 201), Spring 2023-24
- Persian for Beginners (PERS 101), Spring 2023-24
- Persian for Upper Intermediate Speakers (PERS 300), Fall 2023-24

**Part-time Instructr of Persian, Omid Islamic Center of Greater Boston**

- Persian for Heritage Students. Elementary and Intermediate levels, September 2019-present

**Teaching Assistant, Boston University**

- Linguistic Anthropology (Professor Eric Kelley), Fall 2021
- Women in the Muslim World (Professor Shahla Haeri), Spring 2021

**Instructor, Boston University**

- Modern Persian, World Languages and Literature Department, Spring 2020

**Teaching Fellow, Boston University**

- Archeology 100 (Professor Joshua Robinson), Fall 2019
- Anthropology 101 (Professor Ayse Parla), Fall 2018

**Teaching Assistant, Boston University**

- Urban Anthropology (Professor Ayse Parla), Spring 2019
- Turkey and the Middle East (Professor Ayse Parla), Spring 2019

**Part-time Instructor, Kar Higher Education Institute, Qazvin, Iran**

- Linguistics, Persian Language Structure, Translation, 2007-2009

## **Languages**

- **English:** Near Native
- **Persian:** Native
- **Classical Arabic:** Advanced
- **Azeri:** Advanced

## **References**

### **Shahla Haeri**

Professor Emerita of Anthropology, Boston University  
(617) 435-9986  
shaeri@bu.edu  
shaerih@gmail.com

### **Fallou Ngom**

Professor of Anthropology, Boston University  
232 Bay State Road #417, Boston, MA 02215  
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### **Robert Hefner**

Professor of Anthropology, Boston University, 232 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215  
Professor of Global Studies, Pardee School for Global Studies  
(617) 353-2194  
rhefner@bu.edu

### **Sunil Sharma**

Professor of Persianate & Comparative Literature, Boston University  
Convener of Comparative Literature, Hindi-Urdu, Persian  
Director, Global Medieval Studies Program  
745 Commonwealth Avenue, #639, Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 358-6253  
sharma@bu.edu

### **James W Morris**

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