

**Merin Shobhana Xavier · Curriculum Vitae** (July 2023)

| shobhana.xavier@queensu.ca

**ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS**

- July 2023- Associate Professor (Religion and Diaspora), School of Religion, Queen's University. Kingston, ON, Canada. (Cross-affiliation with Cultural Studies Program and Department of Gender Studies).
- July 2018-June 2023 Assistant Professor (Religion and Diaspora), School of Religion, Queen's University. Kingston, ON, Canada. (Cross-affiliation with Cultural Studies Program and Department of Gender Studies).
- July 2017-June 2018 Assistant Professor (Religious Studies) Philosophy and Religion Department, Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York.
- October 2017-June 2018 Visiting Scholar, South Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.
- July 2015-June 2017 Visiting Assistant Professor (Religious Studies and History), Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

**EDUCATION**

- Sept. 2011-July 2015 Wilfrid Laurier University. Waterloo, ON, Canada. Doctor of Philosophy, Religion and Culture. Dissertation title: *Masjids, Ashrams, and Mazars: Transnational Sufism and the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship*. Supervisor: Dr. Meena Sharify-Funk.
- Sept. 2009-Aug. 2010 York University. Toronto, ON, Canada. Master of Arts, Humanities. Major Research Paper: *Women in Contemporary South Asian Sufism: Gender, Embodiment, and Ritual Performance*. Supervisor: Dr. Amila Buturovic.
- Sept. 2004-May 2009 York University. Toronto, ON, Canada. Honours Bachelor of Arts, Religious Studies
- Sept. 2005-May 2009 York University. Toronto, ON, Canada. Bachelor of Education, (Religious studies teachable, primary/junior).

**RESEARCH**

**Books**

- 2023 *The Dervishes of the North: Rumi, Whirling, and the Making of Sufism in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- 2018 *Sacred Spaces and Transnational Networks in American Sufism: Bawa Muhaiyaddeen and Contemporary Shrine Cultures*. London: Bloomsbury Press.
- 2017 Meena Sharify-Funk, William Rory Dickson, and **Merin Shobhana Xavier**. *Contemporary Sufism: Piety, Politics and Popular Culture*. New York: Routledge.

## Edited Volume

In progress Co-edited with Geneviève Mercier-Dalphon. *Sufism in Canada: Past and Praxis* (Under review with University of British Columbia Press).

## Edited Special Journal Issues

In progress co-edited with Feyza Burak-Adli and Francesco Piraino. *Gender, Sufism, and Contemporary Politics. Culture and Religion* (Forthcoming May 2023).

## Refereed Journal Articles

- 2023 McKinley, A., and **Xavier, M. S.** “The Deconstruction of Dafther Jailani: Muslim and Buddhist Contests of Original History in Sri Lanka” in *History of Religions*. Vol. 62. No. 3. Pp. 254-283. <https://doi.org/10.1086/723307>
- 2021 Lee, Mikyung, Lim, Heejun, **Xavier, M. S.**, and Eun-Young Lee. “A Divine Infection”: A Systematic Review on the Roles of Religious Communities During the Early Stage of Covid-19.” *Journal of Religion and Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-021-01364-w>
- 2020 (Invited) **Xavier, M. S.**, and Dickson, W. R. “Between Islam and the New Age: The Jerrahi Order and Categorical Ambiguities in the study of Sufism North America.” *Religion Compass*. Pp. 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12383>
- 2018 Xavier, M. S. “Lighting Incense and Oil Lamps during *Jum ‘ah*: Hindu-Sufi Devotions in Contemporary Northern Sri Lanka” in Special Edition: “Hindus and Others: A Sri Lankan Perspective” *The South Asianist: The Journal of South Asian Studies*. Vol. 6. No. 1. 2018. Pp. 46-75.
- 2017 McKinley, A. and **Xavier, M. S.** “The Mysteries of the Universe: The Tamil Muslim Intellectualism of M. C. Siddi Lebbe.” *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*. Pp. 1-18.
- 2016 **Xavier, M. S.** and Amarasingam, A. “Caught Between Rebels and Armies: Competing Nationalisms and Anti-Muslim Violence in Sri Lanka.” Special Issue: *Islamophobia Studies Journal*. Vol. 7. Pp. 22-43.
- 2015 Dickson, W. R. and **Xavier, M. S.** “Négociation du sacré à Philadelphie: soufismes concurrents au sanctuaire de Bawa Muhaiyaddeen.” *Social Compass*. 62(4), pp. 584-597.
- 2013 Xavier, M. S. “The *Insan Kamil* of Bawa: Metaphysics of a Tamil Sufi Sheikh.” *The Sri Lanka Journal of Humanities*. Vol. 39, pp. 51-66.

## Book Chapters

- 2023 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “Consuming Sufism: Rumi and the Making of a Cultural Icon.” In Hussein Rashid and Kristian Petersen, (Eds.,) *Bloomsbury Handbook of Muslims and Popular Culture*. London: Bloomsbury Press. Pp. 293-306

- 2023 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “Western Sufi Institutions and Practices.” In Marcia Hermansen and Saeed Zarrabi-Zadeh, (Eds.), *Handbook of Sufi Studies*. Leiden: Brill. Pp. 116-138.
- 2022 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “Diasporic Sacred Spaces: The Case of Boundary Marking at an American Sufi Shrine.” In Jeanne Kilde, (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Religious Space*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 478-492.  
10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190874988.013.27
- 2021 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “Sacred Spaces and the Making of Sufism in Sri Lanka: Between Violence and Piety.” In Chiara Formichi, (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook on Islam in Asia*, pp. 225-240. New York: Routledge
- 2020 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “Gendering the Divine: Women, Femininity, and Queer Identities on the Sufi Path.” In Justine Howe, (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Islam and Gender*, pp. 163-179. New York: Routledge.
- 2020 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “The Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship: Diverse Identities and Negotiated Spaces.” In Marcia Hermansen and Elliott Bazzano, (Eds.), *Varieties of Sufism in America: Islam, Sufi Orders and Authority in a Time of Transition*. pp. 55-84. New York: State University of New York Press.
- 2019 (Invited) Dickson, W. R. and **Xavier, M. S.** “Disordering and Reordering Sufism: North American Sufi Teachers and the *Tariqa* Model.” In Francesco Piraino and Mark Sedgwick, (Eds.), *Global Sufism: Boundaries, Narratives, and Politics*. pp. 137-156. London: Hurst Publishers.

## Reference and Teaching Tools

- 2023 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen.” Kate Fleet et al, (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam*. Leiden: Brill Third Edition. Pp. 87-91.
- 2021 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “North American Muslim Geography.” In Hussein Rashid, Huma Mohibullah and Vincent Biondo, (Eds.), *Bloomsbury Religion in North America* (BRINA). <http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350970632.002>

## Other Publications

- 2022 (Invited) Xavier, M. Shobhana. “Politics and Heresies of Spatial Publics of Sufi Shrines in Contemporary Sri Lanka.” *Canopy Forum*, March 11, <https://canopyforum.org/2022/03/11/politics-and-heresies-of-spatial-publics-of-sufi-shrines-in-contemporary-sri-lanka/>.
- 2018 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “[Sacred Spaces and Transnational Networks in American Sufism: Bawa Muhaiyaddeen and Contemporary Shrine Cultures](#)” in *The Maydan*.
- 2016 (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “[An American Sufi Shrine, Bawa’s Mazar in Coatesville, Pennsylvania](#)” and “[From Illuminated Rumi to the Green Barn: The Art of Sufism in America](#)” Object Narrative, in *Conversations: An Online Journal of the Center for the Study of Material and Visual Cultures of Religion*: Yale University.

## Book Reviews

- 2023 Xavier, M, S. Review of *Stealing my Religion: Not Just Any Cultural Appropriation* by Liz Bucar in *Reading Religion*. March 21, <https://readingreligion.org/9780674987036/stealing-my-religion/>
- 2020 Xavier, M, S. Review of *Gendered Morality: Classical Islamic Ethics of the Self, Family and Society* by Zahra Ayubi in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. August, Volume. 52. Pp. 592-594.
- 2020 Xavier, M, S. Review of *Peaceful Families: American Muslim Efforts Against Domestic Violence* by Juliane Hammer in *American Religion*. Indiana University Press. 1, no 2. Pp. 157-160.

## Manuscripts Currently in Preparation

- Accepted (Invited) Sharify-Funk, M., and **Xavier, M. S.** “Overview: Sufi Orders and Movements North America” edited by Elora Shehabuddin. *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*.
- Under review (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “What do Muslims do when they visit shrines?” In Edith Szanto, (Eds.), *Islam in 5 Minutes*.
- Under review (Invited) Xavier, M. S. “Muslim Futurism meets Contemporary Sufism: Avoiding Ellisions in Popular Expressions of Gendered Whirling” edited by Amila Buturovic and Sara Kuhen in BRILL.

## Scholarship on Teaching and Learning

- 2021 Thashika Pillay, Setareh Ghahari, **Merin Shobhana Xavier**, Halima Wali, Suchetan James, Muhammad Sani, and Libby Alexander “The Necessity of Community Collaborations in Supporting Newcomer Student learning: Lessons Learned from the Covid-19 Pandemic” for Special Issue: Global Perspectives on Education Improvement in Times of (Post)-Covid-19 in *Beijing International Review of Education*. 3: pp. 131-155.

## Research Funding and Fellowships

- 2022-2024 with Dr. Courtney Szto (School of Kinesiology and Health Studies), “Just Eats: Stories of Food, Identity and Resistance” SSHRC Insight Development Grant. \$54, 234. (June 2022 to May 2024).
- 2021/22 Fondazione Giorgio Cini Foundation Residential Fellowship, “Between Contestation and Accommodation: Sufi Shrines in Contemporary Sri Lanka”, Venice, Italy (December 2021 and June 2022).
- 2021 American Academy of Religion Individual Research Grant “The Dervishes of the North: Rumi, Sufism, and the Making of Popular Spirituality in Canada” (\$1973.68).
- 2020 (with Dr. Setareh Ghahari (Faculty of Health Sciences/School of Rehabilitation Therapy, Dr. Thashika Pillay, Faculty of Education, Dr. Derya Gungor, Sociology)

“Identifying and Mitigating Educational Challenges that Refugee School-age Children Face During Covid-19 Pandemic” SARS CoV-2/COVID-19 Research Funding, Queen’s University. (\$20, 000).

2019 “Contentious Sufi Bodies: Shrines and their Detractors in Post-War Sri Lanka” Center for Islam in Contemporary World Grant, Shenandoah University. (\$1550).  
<https://www.contemporaryislam.org/2019-grant-recipients.html>

2018 “Contemporary Expressions of Sufism in the North: The Making of a Canadian Islam” SSHRC Institutional Grant Application. Queen’s University. (\$2500).

2018 “Between Religious Contestations and Accommodations: Sufi Shrines in Post-War Sri Lanka” Summer Grants for Faculty, Ithaca College (\$3000).

2014 “The Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship in North America and Beyond” Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion Doctoral Travel Scholarship (\$1500).

### **Research Assistantships**

2012 Research Assistant for Dr. Meena Sharify-Funk, Religion and Culture, Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario.

2009-10 Research Assistant for Dr. Priscilla Uppal, English, York University, Toronto, Ontario

### **Awards and Honours**

2019-20 School of Graduate and Postgraduate Studies John G. Freeman Faculty Excellence Award

2019 Nominated for W.J Barnes Teaching Award, Queen’s University

2015 Award for Outstanding Work at the Graduate Level, Wilfrid Laurier University

2015 Nominated for a Medal of Academic Excellence in Doctoral Dissertation, Wilfrid Laurier University

2015 The Larry Toombs Award for Outstanding Teaching Assistant, Wilfrid Laurier University

2014 Fall Researcher Award, Wilfrid Laurier University

2014-15 Ontario Graduate Scholarship, \$15 000

2013-14 Ontario Graduate Scholarship, \$15 000

2012-13 Ontario Graduate Scholarship, \$15 000

2013 Travel and Research Award Wilfrid Laurier, \$1250

2012 Travel and Research Award Wilfrid Laurier, \$1000

2011 Graduate Fellowship, Faculty of Graduate Studies \$ 12 000

2009 Graduate Scholarship York Graduate Studies \$14 000

2009 Vanier Vingt-Deux Honour Roll Award, York University

2009 Dean’s Honour Roll, York University

### **Conferences and Events**

2023 Panelist for “Poetry and Mysticism” Massey College and Aga Khan Museum: The Global Legacy of Rumi. Aga Khan Museum. May 28.

2023 (Co-organized with Chris Miller) Eastern International Region of the American Academy of Religion conference at Queen’s University. May 5-7.

- 2023 “Rumi, Whirling, and the Making of Sufism in Canada” Canadian Society for the Study of Religion online Webinar and book launch. March 4<sup>th</sup>.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNmKLf2joqE>
- 2022 “Gender, Space, and Time” Islam, Gender and Women Unit, American Academy of Religion. Denver, Colorado. November 21st.
- 2022 “Between Islamic Mysticism and Popular Spirituality: Mapping the Beginnings of Sufism in Canada” Canadian Association for the Study of Islam and Muslims. McMaster University. May 26 and 27.
- 2022 (Invited panelist) “‘Public as Space’: The Possibilities and Contestations of Sufi Shrines in Sri Lanka” Religion and its Publics in South Asia: Perspectives on Past and Present, online conference hosted by the Center for the Study of Law and Religion at Emory University. February 24-25.
- 2021 (Co-organizer of symposium) with Francesco Piraino and Feyza Burak-Adil “Gender and Sufism in Contemporary Societies” Cini Foundation, Venice, Italy December 3-4.
- 2021 (Panelist) “Podcasting is Pedagogy.” Teaching Religion Unit at American Academy of Religion. November 21 (Virtual).
- 2021 (Respondent) “Organizing Sufi Practice: Studies in Space, the City, and New Religious Movements.” Islamic Mysticism Unit at the American Academy of Religion. November 19 (Virtual).
- 2021 (Invited speaker) “Bawa Muhaiyaddeen and Transnational Sufism” University of Florida Center for Global Islamic Studies’ Bodies, Texts, Networks workshop. May 21 (Via Zoom).
- 2021 (Invited speaker) “Translating the Past: Reclaiming Traditions” for The College Program on Islam. January 5 (keynote via Zoom).
- 2020 (Invited panelist) “Decolonizing our Fields: Women of Color Scholars on Transforming the Guild”: for The Women of Colour Scholarship Teaching and Activism Unit. American Academy of Religion. December 3.
- 2020 (Cancelled due to Covid-19) “Selling Rumi: The Commodification of Sufism in Canada” in panel on *Capitalizing Identities: At the Crossroads of Religion, Economics and Social Movements*. Canadian Society for the Study of Religion, Congress June 2020.
- 2019 (Invited panelist) “Mentoring and Networking Session for Scholars Studying Muslims/Islam.” American Academy of Religion. San Diego, CA. November 26.
- 2019 “Contentious Sufi Bodies: Shrines and their Detractors in Post-War Sri Lanka.” Sufism and the Body Conference, Utrecht University, Netherlands, September 12-13.
- 2018 (Invited speaker) “From Sri Lanka to America: Bawa Muhaiyaddeen and Contemporary Transnational Sufism” for South Asia Program Lecture Series, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. April 9.

- 2018 (Invited speaker) “Sufi Shrines in Sri Lanka” Eastern University, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. June 21. (Talk given in English and Tamil).
- 2018 (Invited respondent) “Teaching about Islam, Gender and Women” Islam, Gender and Women Unit and Teaching Religion Unit (American Academy Religion), Denver, Colorado. November 19.
- 2018 “Between Religious Contestations and Accommodations: Sufi Shrines in Post-War Sri Lanka” Symposium on Tombs, Shrines, Samadhis and Relics at South Asia Conference, Madison Wisconsin, October 11.
- 2017 (With William Rory Dickson), “Disordering and Reordering Sufism: North American Sufi Teachers and the *Tariqa*” Transnational Sufism in Contemporary Societies, Giorgio Cini Foundation, Venice, Italy. November 9-11.
- 2017 “Piety and Religiosity at the Tomb of Sufi Saints: Sufi Shrines and the Public Sphere” Canadian Society for the Study of Religion. Toronto, Ontario. May 21<sup>st</sup>.
- 2016 “Transnational Pilgrimages: Bawa Muhaiyaddeen and Shrines” at Pilgrimage Symposium William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Virginia. September 30 to October 2.
- 2015 “Lighting Incense and Oil Lamps during *Jum‘ah*: Hindu-Sufi Practices in Contemporary Jaffna, Sri Lanka” Hindu and Others in South Asia and Overseas. Paris, France. February 17.
- 2015 (Invited speaker) “Sufism in North America” for the Middle Eastern Studies and Religion Program. Bard College, Annandale-On-Hudson, New York. April 21.
- 2015 (With William Rory Dickson) “Negotiating the Sacred in Philadelphia: Competing Sufisms at the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Shrine” Roundtable on Transnational Identity and Religious Practice in North America, Congress (Canadian Society for the Study of Religion). Ottawa, Ontario. June 1.
- 2015 (Invited speaker) “Maryam to Bawa: Pilgrimages and Shrines in the Fellowship Communities” for the Center for Global Islamic Studies, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. November 9.
- 2015 "From Jaffna to Pennsylvania: Piety and Practice at the Shrines of Bawa Muhaiyaddeen” Islamic Mysticism Group, American Academy of Religion (AAR). Atlanta, Georgia. November 22.
- 2015 (With Amarnath Amarasingam) "Caught Between Rebels and Armies: Competing Nationalisms and Anti-Muslim Violence in Sri Lanka” panel on Complicating Tamilness at Home and in the Diaspora. Tamil Studies Symposium, York University. Toronto, Ontario. May 1.
- 2014 “A Sufi Community in Philadelphia” Forum panelist at the Association for Asian Studies, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. March 28.

- 2014 “At the Grave of Bawa: Sufism, Shrines and the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship in North America” Global Conference on Sacred Journeys, Oxford, England. July 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>.
- 2013 “Tracing the Sufi Metaphysics and Cosmology of a Tamil Sufi Sheikh: Encountering the *Insan Kamil* of Bawa in North America” panel on Embodiment and Transformation for the Islamic Studies McGill Graduate Symposium, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec. May 4.
- 2013 “Praying in Arabic and Singing in Tamil: A Sufi *Urs* in Toronto” panel on Modern Islam, Congress, Canadian Study for the Society of Religion (CSSR) University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia. June 2.
- 2013 “Tracing the Metaphysics and Cosmology of a Tamil Sufi Sheikh: Encounter the *Insan Kamil* of Bawa” “Global Sufism” Islamic Mysticism Panel, American Academy of Religion (AAR), Baltimore, Maryland. November 24.
- 2013 “Praying in Arabic and Singing in Tamil: A Sufi *Urs* in Toronto” panel on South Asian Diaspora, South Asian Studies Conference, Madison, Wisconsin, October 19.
- 2012 “Talking about Religious Presences Instead: Understanding Religious Identities of Students for Meaningful Pedagogical Practices” Religion and Education Panel at the Eastern Regional American Academy of Religion, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo. May 5.
- 2012 “Talking about Religious Presences Instead” “Education and Religion” panel at the Annual Religion and Public Life Conference, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo.
- 2012 “Being Tamil in Philadelphia: The Influence of Sri Lanka on the Development of North American Sufism” Center for Islamic Studies at the National Association of African American Studies, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. February 14.
- 2011 “At the Grave of Bawa: Sufi Spaces and the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship in North America” Outside the Box: Reimagining Sufism in North America at Congress, Canadian Society for the Study of Religion (CSSR), Brock University, St. Catherine’s, Ontario. May 25.
- 2010 “Sufism on my Ipad: The Globalization of Modern Sufis, Trends in Contemporary Film and Musical Culture” Humanities Conference, York University, Toronto. May 4.
- 2010 “Sufism on my Ipad: The Globalization of Modern Sufism, Trends in Contemporary Film and Musical Culture” International Conference on Media, Religion, and Culture. University of Toronto, Toronto. August 11.

### **Professional Memberships**

Canadian Society for the Study of Religion  
 American Academy of Religion  
 American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies  
 Canadian Association for the Study of Islam and Muslims



## Languages

Tamil (native speaker).  
Arabic (primary reading)

## TEACHING

### Courses Taught at Queen's University

Winter 2023	RELS 296: Islam
Fall 2022	RELS 888: Critical Ethnographies in the Study of Religion (QSR).
Fall 2022	RELS 163: Religion and Popular Culture (QSR).
Winter 2022	RELS 163: Religion and Popular Culture (QSR).
Winter 2022	RELS 332/807: Race, Ethnicity and Religion (QSR).
Fall 2021	RELS 888: Critical Ethnographies in the Study of Religion (QSR).
Fall 2021	RELS 296: Islam in Canada (QSR).
Winter 2021	RELS 301: Special Topics, Gender, Sexuality and Religion (QSR).
Fall 2020	RELS 163: Religion and Popular Culture, (QSR).
Fall 2020	RELS 888: Critical Ethnographies in the Study of Religion, (QSR).
Fall 2020	DEVS 502: Directed Reading in Development Studies (Religion and Development)
Winter 2020	RELS 163: Religion and Popular Culture, (QSR).
Winter 2020	RELS 332: Race, Ethnicity and Religion, (QSR).
Fall 2019	RELS 296: Muslim Expressions in Canada, (QSR).
Fall 2019	RELS 888: Critical Ethnographies in the Study of Religion, (QSR).
Winter 2019	RELS 809: Readings in Religion II Perspective on Religion, Identity, Politics and Social Issues, (QSR).
Winter 2019	RELS 163: Religion and Popular Culture, (QSR).
Fall 2018	RELS 301: Topics in Religion, Race, Ethnicity and Religion, (QSR).

### Teaching Grants

2019 “Navigating the Taboos of Race, Ethnicity and Religion in the Classroom” Fellowship for 2018-19 Early Career Religion Faculty at Colleges and Universities, Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion (\$5000).

- 2019 “Muslims in Canada” Queen’s University Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity Fund (\$3000).
- 2019-20 Visiting Scholars Program, Principal’s Development Fund, to host Dr. Biko Mandela Gray (\$3505.55).

## **Graduate Supervision and Committees**

### *Supervisory roles*

- 2021 (Supervisor) Muhammad Ashraf Thachara Padhikkal. Master’s Major Research Project: Mobile Islam in the Arab-South Asian Regions of Western Indian Ocean: diaspora, commerce, and transregional religious circulations. MA Program in Religious Studies, Queen’s School of Religion. Completed August 2021.
- 2021 (Co-supervisor with Sylvat Aziz) Rawa’a Bakhsh. Project: Unsettling Notions of “Islamic Art” and the “Other”: Representations of Islamic Cultures. PhD Program in Cultural Studies, Queen’s University. Completed June 2, 2021.
- 2020- (Supervisor) Jacqueline Giesbrecht. PhD Thesis: Project: The Religious Participation Gap in Canada: Barriers to Full Participation of Disabled Persons in Religious Communities in Canada. Queen’s Cultural Studies Program (ABD).
- 2020 (Supervisor) Jacqueline Giesbrecht. Master’s Thesis: Project: Sacredness, Accessibility, and Inclusion: Disability Advocacy in the Christian Church. MA Program in Religious Studies, Queen’s School of Religion. Completed August 2020.
- 2020 (Co-Supervisor with Dr. Elizabeth Brule) Amal Haroon. Master’s Thesis. Project: Gender Inequality in the Muslim Community and its Relation to Violence against Muslim Women. MA Program in Gender Studies, Queen’s University. Completed October 2020.

### *Committee member and examiner ongoing*

- 2021- (Committee Member) Dairon Luis Morejon Perez. PhD Dissertation Committee. Project: Diasporic Negotiations of Everyday Life through Spiritual Practice: Cuban Place-making in Canada. PhD in Department of Geography and Planning, Queen's University. (ABD).
- 2020- (Committee Member) Saima Asghar. PhD Dissertation Committee. Project: Covid-19 and Girl’s Education in Pakistan: The Impacts of a Gender Digital Divide. PhD Program in Cultural Studies, Queen's University. (ABD).
- 2019- (Committee Member) Saira Chibbler. PhD Dissertation Committee. Project: Snake Women, Poison Damsels and Narratives of Revenge: Myth, Horror and the Social Construction of Gender in Hindi Media. PhD Program in Cultural Studies, Queen's University. (ABD).

*Committee member and examiner completed*

- 2022 (Second Reader) Lauren McLeod. Major Research Paper: “Religious Rights versus the Religious Right: The Christianization of America Abortion Politics and the Role of the Religious Right in Shaping the Satanic Temple’s Pro-Choice Activism. MA School of Religion, Queen's University. August 16.
- 2018-2022 (Committee Member) James Kwateng-Yeboah. PhD Dissertation Committee. Project: African Pentecostal Immigrants in Toronto: Assessing Migrants’ Aspirations and Identities. PhD Program in Cultural Studies, Queen's University. Defended June 30, 2022.
- 2021 (Internal examiner). Golam Rabbani Shihab. “Commodifying Baul Spirituality: Changing Baul Literature and Music in Bangladesh.” PhD Program in Cultural Studies School. Queen’s University. Defended October 22, 2021.
- 2021 (Internal examiner) Jennifer Wigglesworth. “A Feminist Embodied Ethnography of Indoor and Outdoor Sport Climbing and Bouldering.” PhD Program in School of Kinesiology and Health Studies. Queen’s University. Defended September 22, 2021.
- 2020 (Internal Examiner) Sanober Umar. PhD Dissertation Committee. Project: Racializing Subalternity: Space, Caste, and Gender in Muslim Mohallas of Lucknow (1947-1993). PhD Program in History, Queen’s University. Defended April 6, 2020.
- 2019 (Internal Examiner) Jennifer Lemche. PhD Dissertation Committee. Project: Is Daoism Green? Engaging Daoist Responses to Environmental Challenges in China. PhD Program in Cultural Studies, Queen’s University. Defended February 19, 2019.
- 2019 (Second Reader) Katrina Rosie. Major Research Paper: The Evolution of Christian Commemorative Meals: Conversations Between Ritual and Theology. MA Program in Religious Studies, Queen’s School of Religion.
- 2019-2020 (Committee Member) Craig Rogalsky. PhD Dissertation Committee. Project: Countering Violent Extremists- Islamic World Methodologies. PhD Program in Cultural Studies, Queen's University (Left the committee as the topic changed).

**Supervision of Post-Doctoral Fellow**

- 2019-2022 Ryan Anningson (PhD), *Transnational Asian Religion*, (Flora Jane Baker Postdoctoral Fellow)

**Presentations and Guest Lectures at Queen’s University**

- 2021 “Between Popular Spirituality and Islamic Mysticism” for Kingston Islamic History Month. October 18 (with Dr. Adnan Hussain).
- 2020 “Migration and Diaspora: Research at the Intersection of Religion and Law” for Gender Matters Speaker Series, Gender Studies. November 18 (with Dr. Ashwini Vasanthakumar, School of Law).

- 2020 “A Divine Infection’: Religious Communities and the Epidemiology of Covid-19” for Queen’s Contagion Culture Lecture Series. November 17 (with Dr. Eun-Young Lee, School of Kinesiology and Health Studies).
- 2020 “Women of Colour in Academia” panel for Queen’s Women of Colour Collective. November 16.
- 2020 “Queen’s Women in Computing” panel for Queen’s University Hack-Her Conference. November 7.
- 2019 “Navigating Academia as a Person of Colour” panel for Ignite Conference by Queen’s Equity Conference. February 2.
- 2019 Guest Lecturer, RELS 301: Sufi Dress, March 12, 2018.
- 2020 Speaker, “Challenging Methodologies” Speaks: Cultural Studies Speakers’ Series. January 15. Queen’s University.
- 2019 Organizer, “Workshop on Sufi Whirling” with Farzad AttarJafari. March 18<sup>th</sup>. Queen’s University.
- 2019 Organizer, screening of *Wajd: Songs of Separation* with panel and music presentation with director Amar Chebib and Fahd Abou Zainedin. Queen’s School of Religion and Muslim Studies Global Perspectives. Queen’s University. October 29.
- 2019 Organizer, “Presentation of Sufi Whirling” with Farzad AttarJafari, Amir Koushkhani and Zohreh Shahbazy. Queen’s School of Religion and Muslim Studies Global Perspective. October 4.
- 2019 (Co-organized with Dr. Courtney Szto) “Muslim Femininities in Sports” panel featuring Shireen Ahmed, Sarah Abood, and Amina Mohamed. Queen’s University. November 14.

### **Professional Development and Workshops**

- 2022 (Invited faculty mentor) “Approaching the Archive.” *Workshop Tamil Studies Symposium* April 1<sup>st</sup> and April 2<sup>nd</sup>, via Zoom.
- 2018-2019 (Participant) Wabash Centre for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, Early Career Religion Faculty in Colleges and Universities Workshop. Crawfordsville, Indiana. <https://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/programs/workshops/2018-19-early-career-workshop/>
- 2018 (Invited faculty mentor) “*Borders: Real and Imagined 2018 Sri Lanka Graduate Conference*”, Pre-dissertation Development Workshop, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, November 9-10.
- 2016 (Participant) “Pre-Tenure Faculty Workshop” *International Institute of Islamic Thought*. Herndon, Virginia. May 25-26. <https://iiit.org/en/2016-iiit-islamic-studies-junior-scholars-biographies/>

- 2015 (Participant) “The Many Histories of the Present: Past and Possibilities in the Muslim World” Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. April 17-19.
- 2014 (Participant) “Modern South Asia Workshop” Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. April 5-6.
- 2013 “Whose Religion? Education about Religion in Public Schools” SSHRC Funded Workshop, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario. November 4-6.
- 2012 (Participant) “‘*Intersections*’ Sri Lanka Graduate Conference”, Pre-dissertation Development Workshop, Stanford University, November 8-9.

## News and Media

- 2021 (Interviewee). [Guest on Political Theology Network Season 4, Episode 1, “Crossing Borders” with Sher Tareen with Winnifred Fallers Sullivan.](#)
- 2021 (Interviewee). Nur Noor. “On Supporting BIPOC Faculty and Staff in the Present University Culture” for Vancouver’s CoopRadio. January 4. <http://www.coopradio.org/?fbclid=IwAR0DUoqYS9A9MSUv0gRKhTGOv3JkkhcDzkwPwq1ZuJaQ7dCEXWnYPfZirUw>
- 2020 (Interviewee). Carolyn Svonkin. “‘Teaching is activism’: Professors & TAs of colour discuss race in academia” *The Queen’s Journal*. October 2. <https://www.queensjournal.ca/story/2020-10-02/features/teaching-is-activism-professors-and-tas-of-colour-discuss-race-in-academia/>
- 2020 (Guest). Steph, Jacqueline and Rachel (co-hosts). “Down to Earth” *Nearly Numinous* Podcast. May 10. <https://podcast.cfr.ca/2020/10/down-to-earth-with-dr-m-shobhana-xavier/>
- 2019 (Interviewee). Calamur, Krishnadev. “The Sri Lanka Attacks: What’s Different” in *the Atlantic*. April 22. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/04/sri-lanka-hasnt-seen-kind-islamist-terrorism/587761/>
- 2019 (Interviewee). Miller, Lisa (Host). “History of anti-Muslim Sentiment in Sri Lanka could have influenced authorities: expert.” *The World Today*. ABC News. April 24. <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/worldtoday/shobhana-xavier-iv/11042086>
- 2019 (Interviewee). Ng, Melanie (Host). “Sri Lankan church Bombed on Easter Sunday?” *Breakfast Television*. April 22. <https://www.bttoronto.ca/videos/sri-lankan-church-bombed-on-easter-sunday/>
- 2019 (Interviewee). “Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka” *BBC News*. April 24. [https://archive.org/details/BBCNEWS\\_20190423\\_230000\\_Newsday/start/804/end/864?q=shobhana+xavier](https://archive.org/details/BBCNEWS_20190423_230000_Newsday/start/804/end/864?q=shobhana+xavier)
- 2018- (Co-host), *New Books in Islamic Studies*, Podcast Channel on *the New Books Network*. <https://newbooksnetwork.com/category/islamic-studies/>.

2018 (Interviewee), Vaishna Sathanathan, (host) “Meet Merin Shobhana Xavier, an expert on contemporary Sufism” profile feature for *Tamil Women Rising*.  
<https://www.tamilwomenrising.org/women-on-the-rise>

## SERVICE

### Major Departmental and University Service

2022 Member, Abridged Headship Search Committee.

2022- Graduate Chair, School of Religion.

2022-2023 Member, University Council on Anti-Racism and Equity (UCARE), Queen’s University.

2019-2021 Member, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Indigeneity Committee, Faculty of Arts and Science.

2019-2020 Member, Appointments Committee, QSR. (New faculty position; postdoctoral fellow; adjunct positions).

2018-2019 Member, Master’s Admissions Committee, QSR.

2018-2019 Member, Organizing committee member for BIPOC Staff and Faculty Reception, Queen’s University.

2019 Member, Headship Search Committee, Queen’s University.

2013 Member, PhD Representative for Religion and Culture Department Hiring Committee. Wilfrid Laurier University.

### Academic Association Service

2022- Advisory Board Member for *Beyond Rumi: Sufi Art and Practice* digital exhibit, Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art.

2022- Outreach Officer, Canadian Association for the Study of Islam and Muslims.

2021- Advisory Board Member, *Bloomsbury Religion in North America*

2021- Reviewer, Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS)

2021- Co-chair, “Islamic Mysticism” American Academy of Religion.

2018- Steering Committee Member, “Transnational Religious Expression: Between Asia and North America Seminar.” American Academy of Religion.

2018-2020 Steering Committee Member, “Islamic Mysticism” American Academy of Religion.

2018-2020 Elected Member of Board of Directors, American Institute for Sri Lanka Studies (AISLS).

## **Editorial and Journal Positions and Service**

- 2022 Reviewer, *Body and Religion*
- 2022 Reviewer, *Routledge Press*
- 2021 Reviewer, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism (SENA)*
- 2021 Reviewer, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*
- 2021 Reviewer, *Religions*
- 2021 Reviewer, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs.*
- 2020 Reviewer, *Journal of Indian Ocean World Studies.*
- 2020 Reviewer, *Canadian Ethnic Studies.*
- 2020 Reviewer, *ReOrient Journal.*
- 2019 Reviewer, *Poe Studies.*

## **Community and Volunteer Work**

- 2019- Member, Working Group with Kingston Immigration Services and Queen's University Faculty. Kingston, Ontario.
- 2019 Invited speaker, "Rumi's Birthday Commemoration" for Rumi Canada at the Ismaili Center during Nuit Blanche Toronto, Ontario. September 29.
- 2018 Invited speaker, "Rumi's Birthday Commemoration" for Rumi Canada at the Ismaili Center during Nuit Blanche Toronto, Ontario. September 29.
- 2015 (Invited), Master of Ceremonies, Inter-Cultural Dialogue Institute Friendship Dinner. Hosted by Inter-Cultural Dialogue Institute Kitchener-Waterloo. November 27.
- 2014 Facilitator, consultant and master of ceremonies, for "The Sufi Path: Encounters at the Caranvanesari, an Evening of Sufi Poetry and Music." Hosted by Sri Lanka without Borders, Toronto, Ontario.
- 2012 Invited speaker, "North American and South Asian Sufism" for Spiritual Heritage Education Network. Kitchener, Ontario. September 29.