

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE C.V.

A. **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

1. **PERSONAL**

Karen G. Ruffle 153 North Building
3359 Mississauga Road North
Mississauga, ON L5L 1C6
(905) 569-4543

2. **DEGREES**

PhD	2007	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
M.A.	2001	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
B.A.	1996	Middlebury College

“A Bride of One Night, a Widow Forever: Gender and Vernacularization in South Asian Shi‘i Hagiography,” Carl W. Ernst (advisor)

3. **EMPLOYMENT**

Department of Historical Studies and Department of Religion
Assistant Professor Appointed July 1, 2010-present
Date of appointment to graduate school: July 1, 2010

Department of Religious Studies, Assistant Professor, University of Miami, May 2007-May 2010

M.Th. Programme in Islamic Studies, Henry Martyn Institute (Hyderabad, India), July-August 2006

Department of Religion, Visiting Lecturer, Middlebury College, January-February 2006

4. **HONOURS**

Cultural Research of the Year (Second Award), *Islamic Culture and Guidance Ministry of Iran*. Award for M.A. thesis, “Verses Dripping Blood’: A Study of the Religious Elements of Muhtasham Kashani’s *Karbala-nameh*” (2002).

5. **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

Professional memberships:
American Academy of Religion
International Society for Iranian Studies
Association for the Study of Persianate Societies

B. **ACADEMIC HISTORY**

6. A. **RESEARCH ENDEAVOURS**

I am currently working on a book project provisionally titled, “Somatic Shi‘ism: The Body in Deccani Shi‘i Material Religion and Ritual Practice.” I frame my research around six body parts of different members of the Ahl-e Bait, which shape Shi‘i ritual practice and ethics, as well as a rich material culture that serve a powerful metonymic function in shaping the

Deccan's sacred landscape and religious imaginaire. *Somatic Shi'ism* includes an introduction, six chapters, and a conclusion:

Introduction: Discerning Shi'i Bodies

Chapter 1: Bodily Traces: Mapping the Body in Deccani Shi'ism

Chapter 2: Presence in Absence: The Traces of Shi'i Bodies in Hyderabad Relic Traditions

Chapter 3: Imam 'Ali's Feet: The Absent Present and the Building of Shi'i Monuments in the Deccan

Chapter 4: 'Ali Asghar's Throat: Food Rituals and the Hospitality of Devotion

Chapter 5: 'Abbas' Hands and the Wounds of Devotion: *Matam* and the Ethic of Caring in Hyderabad Shi'i Practice

Chapter 6: Fatimah's Eyes and Zainab's Tongue: Feminine Power and Potency in Shaping Shi'i Material and Ritual Practice

Conclusion: The Bodily Present: Recognizing the Centrality of the Body in Shi'ism

I am also in the early stages of a research project tentatively titled, "In the Shadow of Adam's Footprint: Arabs and Arabic in the Making of South India as a Sacred Islamic Land." I am preparing to apply for a SSHRC Insight Grant in Fall 2014 that will be forward looking to the next five years post-tenure as I complete the write-up of *Somatic Shi'ism* (spring 2016) and co-lead the Sawyer Seminar on "Religious Materiality in the Indian Ocean World, 1300-1800" between the 2014-2016 academic years. My new project will focus more broadly on the question of the role of materiality in shaping South India as a sacred Islamic land.

B. **RESEARCH AWARDS** (grants, contracts, fellowships) during preceding 5 years including:

John E. Sawyer Seminars in Comparative Study of Cultures, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 1/7/14 – 30/6/16, \$175,000 USD (Ajay Rao, Nhung Tuyet Tran, and Walid Saleh co-PIs)

Association for the Study of Persianate Societies and Maulana Azad Urdu National University Visiting Scholar Fellowship, 1/12/14 – 31/5/15, \$5,000 USD

Jackman Humanities Institute Program for the Arts Grant 1/7/14-1/12/14, \$5,310

Jackman Humanities Institute Program for the Arts Grant 1/7/13 – 30/4/14, \$4,000 + \$6000 additional matching funds raised (Ajay Rao co-PI)

SSHRC Insight Development Grant, 12/6/12 – 31/5/15, \$52,430

SSHRC Institutional Grant (SIG), 19/3/12, \$500

SSHRC Standard Research Grant, 30/3/11 – 31/5/13, \$11,655

Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) Multi-Country Fellowship, 15/4/10 (3 months), \$10,000 USD

General Research Support Award, University of Miami, 23/4/09 \$2000 USD

C. **SCHOLARLY AND PROFESSIONAL WORK***

7. **Refereed publications (list published work or work accepted for publication in chronological order).**

A. **Articles**

"Wounds of Devotion: Re-Conceiving *Mātam* in Shi'i Islam." *History of Religions* (revisions submitted 8/4/14).

"Presence in Absence: Relics and Their Role in Ḥaidarābādī Shī'ism." Special issue on Indo-Persian Islam in the Deccan. *Iran Nameh* (forthcoming 2014). 7,621 words.

- "An Even Better Creation: The Role of Adam and Eve in Shi'i Narratives about Fatimah al-Zahra." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 81:3 (September 2013): 791-813.
- "Women's Religious Celebrations." *Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women*, edited by Natana DeLong-Bas. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
<<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t355/e0401>>
- "Women and Gender Themes in Shiite Devotional Literature." *Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women*, edited by Natana DeLong-Bas. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
<<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t355/e0011>>
- "Muharram." *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Islamic Studies*. Edited by Tamara Sonn. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
<http://www.oxfordbibliographiesonline.com>
- "Mut'a." *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Islamic Studies*. Edited by Tamara Sonn. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
<http://www.oxfordbibliographiesonline.com>
- "May You Learn from Their Model: The Exemplary Father-Daughter Relationship of Mohammad and Fatima in South Asian Shi'ism." *Journal of Persianate Studies* 4:1 (2011): 12-29.
- "May Fatimah Gather Our Tears: The Mystical and Intercessory Powers of Fatimah al-Zahra in Indo-Persian, Shi'i Devotional Literature and Performance." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 30:3 (November 2010): 386-397.
- "Who Could Marry at a Time Like This? Debating the *Mehndi ki Majlis* in Hyderabad." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 29:3 (November 2009): 502-514.
- "'Discovering' the Gendered Dimensions of Shi'ism: Recent Scholarship on Gender in Shi'i Ritual." *Contemporary Islam* 3 (2009): 167-176.
- "Curing Iranian Occidentosis: Jalal Al-e Ahmad's Poly-Methodic Prescription." *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* 8:1 (Spring 2001), pp. 59-66.

B. Books and/or Chapters

- Gender, Sainthood, and Everyday Practice in South Asian Shi'ism*. Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks Series. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. Xvi + 222pp.
Paperback reprint: University of North Carolina Press (February 2014)
Indian Reprint: New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers (September 2013)

8. Non-Refereed Publications (list as in 7 above).

- Review of Shahzad Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), *History of Religions* (forthcoming August 2014), 1,442 words.
- "Shi'i Diasporas." In *The Shi'a World*. Edited by Farhad Daftary, Shainool Jiwa and Aryn Sajoo. Muslim Heritage Series. London: I.B. Tauris. Co-authored with Zulfikar Hirji. 10,000 words [I wrote 5,000 words of the chapter]. (forthcoming 2014).
- Review of Najam Haider, *The Origins of the Shī'a: Identity, Ritual and Sacred Space in Eighth-Century Kūfa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (invited review, accepted for publication), 2,130 words.
- "We Are all Pilgrims: Exploring Spirits and Selves with Iranian Women in a Damascus Shrine." In *Love and Pomegranates: Artists and Wayfarers on Iran*. Meghan Nutall Sayres, ed., 176-178. Santa Ana, CA: Nortia Press, 2013.
- "Islam: Beliefs and Practices." *South Asian Religions: Tradition and Today*. Karen Pechilis and Selva Raj, eds., 193-221. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Review of Anna Bigelow, *Sharing the Sacred: Practicing Pluralism in Muslim North India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). *Religion* 41:2 (2011): 285-288.
- "Karbala in the Indo-Persian Imaginaire: The Marriage of Qasem and Fatimah Kubra in Mir 'Alam's *Dah Majlis*." *Islam in the Indo-Iranian World during the Modern Epoch, 1500-1900*. Fabrizio Speziale and Denis Hermann, eds., 181-200. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Publishers, 2010.

- Review of Robert Rozehnal, Islamic Sufism Unbound: Politics and Piety in Twenty-First Century Pakistan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), *Religion* 39:3 (September 2009): 306-307.
- Review of Anna Suvorova, Muslim Saints of South Asia: The Eleventh to Fifteenth Centuries (London: Routledge Curzon, [1999] 2004), *Journal of Asian Studies* 65:2 (May 2006): 450-452.
- Review of Azadeh Kian-Thiébaud, Les Femmes Irlandaises entre État et Famille (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2002), *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38:1 (February 2006): 144-146.
- Review of Shemeem Burney Abbas, The Female Voice in Sufi Ritual (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 1:3 (Fall 2005): 133-139.
- "Writing Muharram: The Influence of Mulla Husain Va'ez Kashefi and Mohtasham Kashani on the Development of Shi'i Devotionalism in the Medieval Deccan." *A Thousand Laurels—Dr. Sadiq Naqvi: Studies on Medieval India with Special Reference to Deccan*. Hyderabad: Osmania University, 2005. Pp. 334-345.
- "Ali b. Abi Talib." *Holy People of the World*. Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2004.
- "Fatima Ma'suma." *Holy People of the World*. Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2004.
- Review of Richard Foltz, Mughal India and Central Asia (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 5:2 (August 2001): 206-208.

9. Manuscripts/publications, etc. in preparation and submitted to publishers but not yet accepted.

10. Papers presented at meetings and symposia.

- "Purified by Blood: Bloody *Matam* and Salvific Purification in South Asian 'Azadari Ritual." World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES), Ankara, Turkey (August 2014). **Refereed**
- "A Death Never-ending: Theoretical Reflections on the Ritualized Recurrence of Imam Husain's Becoming and Death in Shi'ism." 10th International Society for Iranian Studies Biennial Conference, Montréal, PQ (August 2014). **Refereed**
- "Meditations on a Water-Skin: Lingāyat Influences on the Development of Somatic Ritual in Deccani Shi'ism." Conference on Genres of the Imagine: How Creativity Mediates Islam through Local Vernaculars. Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN (February 2014). **Refereed**
- Panel respondent, "Media of Muslim Public Morality." American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD (November 2013). **Refereed and Invited**
- "May the Margins Be the Center: Re-Centering Marginalized Practices in Islamic Studies." Presentation with Vernon Schubel for the pre-conference workshop on *Rethinking Islamic Studies: Performance and Practice in Islamic Experience*. American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (November 2012). **Invited**
- Panel Participant, "Everyday Islam and Ethnographic Methodologies." American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (November 2012). **Refereed**
- "Bodies of Pleasure: Re-Conceiving *Matam* in South Asian Shi'ism." Aesthetics in Contemporary Muslim Worlds, University of Bergen, Norway (October 2012). **Invited**
- Panel Respondent, "Islamic-Asian Dialogues." Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON (March 2012). **Refereed**
- Panel Respondent, "Islamic Marriage." Near and Middle Eastern Studies Graduate Student Association Symposium, University of Toronto (March 2012). **Invited**
- "Bodies of Pleasure: The Self-Sacrificing Body in Shi'i Islam." American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA (November 2011). **Refereed**
- "Bleeding the Tree in the Garden of Eden: The Construction of the Shi'i Body through Discourse of Exceptional Difference." Paper presented at the pre-conference workshop on *Rethinking Islamic Studies: Gender, Sexuality, and the Body in Islamic Texts*. American

- Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA (November 2011). **Invited**
- “On the Beauty of Religious Pain.” Centre for the Study of Religion *Annual Graduate Symposium on “The Beauty of Religion,”* University of Toronto (April 2011). **Invited**
- “The Radiant: The Intercessory-Mystical Light of Fatimah al-Zahra in Shi’i Traditions.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA (October 2010). **Refereed**
- “Umm Abiha: Fatimah al-Zahra as the Mother of Prophecy and the Imamate.” Middle East Studies Association, Boston, MA (November 2009). **Refereed**
- “Umm Abiha: The Pre-Eternal, Eschatological Roles of Fatimah as the Mother of Prophecy and the Imamate in Indo-Persian Shi’ism.” Fourth Biennial Convention, Association for the Study of Persianate Societies, Lahore, Pakistan (February 2009). **Refereed**
- “The Gatherer of Tears and Avenger at the Day of Judgment: Fatimah Zahra in Indo-Persian, Shi’i Devotional Literature and Performance.” Annual Conference on South Asia, Madison, WI (October 2008). **Refereed**
- “Imitable Exemplars: How Texts and Ritual Performance Commemorating the Ahl-e Bait Constructs Idealized South Asian Shi’i Selves.” North Carolina Center for South Asian Studies, *Material Objects and Performance Events Workshop*, Durham, NC (August 2008). **Invited**
- “May Fatimah Gather Our Tears: The Mystical and Intercessory Powers of Fatimah Zahra in Indo-Persian, Shi’i Devotional Literature and Performance.” *Symposium on Medieval Islamic Mysticism and History in Indo-Persian Cultures*, Seattle, WA (January 2008). **Invited**
- “The Saddest Story Ever Told: The Women of Karbala as Epic Heroines in South Asian Shi’i Devotional Literature and Performance.” Middle East Studies Association, Montréal, PQ (November 2007). **Refereed**
- “Karbala in the Indo-Persian Imaginaire: The Marriage of Qasem and Fatimah Kubra in Mir ‘Alam’s *Dah Majlis*,” *Intellectual Relations and the Renewal of Religious Thought in Iran and Muslim India in the Modern Period*, Tehran, Iran (June 2007). **Invited**
- “The Saddest Story Ever Told: Shi’ite Women’s Devotional Literature and Performance.” *Marketing Muslim Women Workshop*, Duke University, Durham, NC (April 2007). **Invited**
- “A ‘Good Woman’ Embodied: Constructing Fatima Kubra as an Idealized Indian Shi’a Muslim Bride/Widow.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Washington, DC (November 2006). **Refereed**
- “Who Could Marry at a Time Like This?: Debating the *Mehndi ki Majlis* in Hyderabad, India.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Washington, DC (November 2006). **Refereed**
- “A ‘Good Woman’ Embodied: Constructing Fatima Kubra as an Idealized Indian Shi’i Muslim Bride/Widow.” Annual Conference on South Asia, Madison, WI (October 2006). **Refereed**
- “Take Me to Karbala: Hazrat Zaynab bint ‘Ali and the Shi’i Community of Remembrance,” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA (November 2003). **Refereed**
- “Setting Fire to the World: Experiencing Hazrat Zaynab bint ‘Ali in Muhtasham Kashani’s *Karbala-nameh*.” Middle East History and Theory Conference, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL (May 2003). **Refereed**
- “Bringing the Message to the People: Zaynab’s Religious, Political, and Didactic Roles in Muhtasham Kashani’s Religious *Marthiya*.” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion (SECSOR), Atlanta, GA (March 2002). **Refereed**
- “Teaching World Religions Using a Polythetic Method: An Alternative Mode of Comparison.” North Carolina Religious Studies Association, Wilson, NC (October 2001). **Refereed**
- “Iranian Occidentosis and a Return to Shi’i Iranianness.” North Carolina Religious Studies Association (NCRSA), Chapel Hill, NC (October 2000). **Refereed**
- “Reconsidering the Persian Religious *Marthiya*.” Southeast Regional Middle East Studies Seminar (SERMEISS), Clemson, SC (March 2000). **Refereed**

11. Invited Lectures

D. **LIST OF COURSES** (in preceding 5 years)

12. **Please see attached syllabi for all courses marked with a *.**

A. Undergraduate courses taught

- RLG 314H5F Gender Issues in Religion (Fall 2010)
RLG449H5F Islamic Sexualities (Fall 2012; Winter 2014)
WGS450H5F Theories of Sexuality (Fall 2010)
WGS200Y Introduction to Theories of Women and Gender Studies (Winter 2011; Winter 2012; AY 2012-2013; Fall 2013)
WGS370H5F OnLove: Gender, Sexuality, and Identity (Fall 2013)
WGS410H5S Independent Study: Intersectional Analysis of Empowerment and Oppression of Massage Parlour Attendants and (Sex) Work (Winter 2014)

B. Graduate courses taught

- RLG2008HS Sex, Gender, Body in Religion (Winter 2011)
RLG3590HS Islamic Sexualities [also taught as RLG416] (Winter 2012)
RLG3720HS Sex and Gender in South Asian Religions (Winter 2013)
RLG1501HF Readings in South Asian Culture and Society (Fall 2012)
RLG1502HS Sex and Gender in Mughal India (Winter 2013)
RLG1501H5F Feminist and Gender Theory in Islamic Studies (Fall 2013)
RLG1501H5F Queer Theory and/in Religious Studies (Fall 2013)
RLG2073H5S Que(e)rying Religion (Winter 2014)

C. Graduate advising

Jairan Gahan, "Urbanity and Impiety: A History of Prostitution in Modern Iran," Department for the Study of Religion. Co-supervisor with Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi (September 2011 – present)

Usman Hamid, "Historical Imagination in Early Modern India: A Study of Abu Fazl 'Allami." Supervisory committee member. Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations (2013 – present)

Khalidah Ali, "Ideal Womanhood and Women's Activism in the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt." Supervisory committee member. Department for the Study of Religion. (April 2013 – present).

Edith Szanto, "Following Sayyida Zaynab: Twelver Shi'i Women's Piety in Modern Syria," Department of Religion. Supervisory committee member (January 2011-September 5, 2012)

D. Other teaching and lectures given (in preceding 5 years)

- "Lives of Relics in South Asian Shi'ism." Department for the Study of Religion Faculty Colloquium, University of Toronto (January 2014)
- "The Role of Ladies in Karbala from Lady Fatima Az-Zahra to Lady Zaynab." Invited public lecture at Payam-e Aman Shi'a Association for Imam Husain Day, Somerset, NJ (8 December 2013)
- "Islamic Heritage in the Deccan." Nordic Centre in India/Contemporary India Program, University of Hyderabad (22 July 2013)
- "The Intellectual Impact of Dr. Sadiq Naqvi on the Study of South Asian Shi'ism." Invited public lecture for Hyderabad Shi'a association, Bloomfield, IL (12 May 2013)

- “Presence in Absence: Relics and Their Role in Haidarabadi Shi‘ism.” Iranian Studies Seminar Series, Department of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Toronto (February 2013)
- “Wounds of Devotion: Re-Conceiving *Matam* in Shi‘i Islam.” Department of Historical Studies Research Roundtable, UTM (February 2013)
- “May You Learn from Their Model: The Exemplary Father-Daughter Relationship of Muhammad and Fatima in South Asian Shi‘ism.” Jackman Humanities Institute Islamic Studies Working Group, University of Toronto (March 2011)
- Department of Near and Middle Eastern Studies Crossing Boundaries Series, book launch and discussion of *Gender, Sainthood, and Everyday Practice in South Asian Shi‘ism* (9 March 2011)

E. ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

13. A. Department and University Service.

- Co-Leader, Jackman Humanities Institute Working Group, “Religious Materiality in the Indian Ocean World, 1300-1800,” (2014-2015)
- Jackman Humanities Institute Arts Program, “Gender in Wonderland: Zackary Drucker & Rhys Ernst on the Art and Play of Gender in “Relationship” and *She Gone Rogue*,” co-organized with Elspeth Brown (Artist lecture and Q&A at UTM and Workshop at UTSG with Rhys Ernst and Zackary Drucker, week of 3 November 2014)
- Jackman Humanities Institute Arts Series, “Exchanging Glances” Imag(in)ing Hindu-Muslim Visual Pieties in the Deccan,” co-organized with Ajay Rao (series of 4 lectures and workshops at UTM and UTSG during 2013-2014 academic year)
- Organized workshop on “The Materialities of South Asian Islamicate Manuscripts,” Department of Historical Studies and Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, co-organized with Ajay Rao (27 March 2014)
- Organized roundtable discussion, “Forced (Un)Veiling: Questioning Multiculturalism and Accommodation in Relation to the Quebec Charter of Values and the Legal Case of N.S.,” Department of Historical Studies (14 November 2013)
- Religion in the Public Sphere Public Forum and Community Research Workshop on “Religion, Sexual Diversity and South Asian Youth Culture in the GTA,” co-organized with Amanda Goodman (26-27 September 2013)
- Member, Student Experience Committee, Department of Historical Studies (2013 – 2014)
- Member, Elements Experiment Steering Committee (2014 – present)
- Evaluator, University of Toronto National Scholarship Program (Winter 2013)
- Member, Curriculum Committee, Department of Historical Studies (Winter 2013)
- Search Committee Member, Women and Gender Studies Search, Department of Historical Studies (2013)
- Member, Graduate Admissions and Awards Committee, Department of Religion (2012 – 2013)
- Member, Teaching Excellence Committee, Department of Historical Studies (2011 – 2012; 2013 – 2014)
- Member, *Prandium* journal advisory board (2012)
- Co-Leader, Jackman Humanities Institute Islamic Studies Working Group (March 2011 – 2013)
- Board Member, Women and Gender Studies Program (2010 – present)
- Member, Teaching Excellence and Student Experience Committee, Department of Historical Studies (2010 – 2011)
- Member, Intellectual Community Committee, Department of Historical Studies (2010 – 2011)
- Search Committee Member, History of Christianity Search, Department of Historical Studies (Fall 2010)

B. Positions held and service on committees and organizations outside the University of scholarly and academic significance.

- Doctoral Awards National Committee 2A, SSHRC (2012 – 2013; 2013 – 2014)
- Steering Committee member, Contemporary Islam Group, American Academy of Religion (2011 – 2013)
- Manuscript reviewer: State University of New York Press, McGill-Queen's University Press, Sean Kingston Publishers, *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*, *Contemporary Islam*, *Contemporary Islamic Studies*; *Asian Women*; *Contemporary South Asia*