



Boston University Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies
Institute on Culture, Religion & World Affairs: CURA

CURA Fellows 2021-2022



Mehrdad Babadi, PhD Candidate, Anthropology, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Mehrdad Babadi is a PhD candidate in sociocultural anthropology at Boston University. His research lies at the intersection of marriage, waithood (marriage delay), youth and culture, and generational change in Iran. His dissertation "The Transformation of Intimacy among University-Educated Youth in Contemporary Iran" examines the emerging premarital practices and lifestyles of Iranian youth as well as their attitudes, plans, and doubts toward marriage, as expressed in their life narratives.



Christopher Boyd Brown, Associate Professor, School of Theology

Christopher Boyd Brown holds the Ph.D. in History from Harvard and is Associate Professor of Church History in the Boston University School of Theology. He is General Editor of the American Edition of *Luther's Works*, volumes 56-75 and author of *Singing the Gospel: Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation* (Harvard 2005). His current monograph project is a study of early modern wedding-preaching.



Nicole Correr, PhD Student, Graduate Program in Religion, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Nicole Correr is a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the Islamic Studies specialization under the direction of Professor Kecia Ali. Her areas of interest include Shi'a Islam, Gender Studies, Feminist Theory, Digital Religion, and Ritual Studies. Her particular focus area is on gender construction in contemporary online English language Shi'a religious discourse. Nicole is also a research assistant for the Database of Africana Religious Experiences in the US under the direction of Professor Margarita Guillory. She has also completed her Graduate Certificate in

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies through BU. In the Summer of 2019, she completed

the Islamic Studies and Arabic Summer Institute at the American University in Cairo, as well as served as a Fellow in the Communities Engaging with Difference and Religion program in Indonesia. Nicole received her M.A. in Islamic Studies from Hartford Seminary in 2018.



Amirah Fadhlina, PhD Student, Anthropology, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Amirah Fadhlina is a second-year PhD student studying Sociocultural Anthropology at Boston University. She received her BA in Human Development and Women's Studies from Earlham College, and an MA in Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School. Originally from Indonesia, Amirah's research focuses on the religious activism upheld by *waria*, a gender non-conforming community native to Indonesia. Focusing broadly on *waria*'s praxis of combining Islam with queer liberation narratives, Amirah is interested in exploring the interactions

between localized discourses on Islamic morality and the globalized discourse of LGBTQ rights.



Nilakshi Goswami, Research Associate, Anthropology

Nilakshi Goswami is a Fulbright Nehru-Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Boston University. She holds a PhD in English Literature from The English and Foreign Languages University, India. During her PhD, she worked on memory, subjectivity, and the intersection of trauma narratives and graphic memoirs. As a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Department of Anthropology, she is currently working on religion and the role of popular culture in the construction of gendered identities in contemporary Southeast Asia. Her research interest broadly

centers on gender and sexuality studies, popular culture, and comics and graphic novels.



Seigen Johnson, Masters Student, School of Theology

Seigen Johnson is currently a Master of Divinity graduate student at Boston University School of Theology. Her main research interests include explorations of the connection between womanist and liberation theologies in the Christian and Buddhist faith traditions, recognizing and repairing moral injury in faith communities, and interfaith spiritual formation. She lived at San Francisco Zen Center for several years. She is currently a priest ordination candidate in the Soto Zen lineage of Shunryu Suzuki under the guidance of Steve Weintraub.



Kathryn Lamontagne, Lecturer, College of General Studies

Kathryn Lamontagne is a lecturer in the Division of Social Sciences at BU's College of General Studies. She completed her PhD in History at Boston University in 2020. Her interdisciplinary work focuses on notions of womanhood, sexuality, marginalization, conversion, and the power of economic privilege in the English Catholic community of late Victorian and Edwardian Britain. Her submission for CURA will look more closely at the lives of queer Catholic women in Southern England over the early 20th century.



Luis Menéndez-Antuña, Assistant Professor, School of Theology

Luis Menéndez-Antuña is Assistant Professor of New Testament at Boston University School of Theology. He is interested in liberation theologies, cultural studies, and critical theory. His current research explores the queer and postcolonial afterlives of the biblical texts. He has published his research in journals such as *Estudios Eclesiásticos*, *Ilu. Revista de Ciencias de las Religiones*, *Biblical Interpretation*, *Journal of Religious Ethics*, *Early Christianity*, *Critical Research on Religion*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, and *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (forthcoming). Previously to completing his doctoral studies at Vanderbilt University, Menéndez-Antuña received a Master in Biblical Studies from the Universidad Pontificia Comillas (Madrid), and a Master of Theology from the Universidad Pontificia in Salamanca.



Gana Ndiaye, PhD Candidate, Anthropology, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Gana Ndiaye is Ph.D. candidate in socio-cultural anthropology. His dissertation examines the public expressions of Muslim identity of Senegalese migrants in Brazil. Gana's previous graduate training and academic interests include intercultural mediation, Francophone studies, transnational Islam, African languages, and Ajami literary traditions of Muslim Africa.



Magda Mohamed, PhD Student, Graduate Program in Religion, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Magda Mohamed is a Ph.D. Student in the Islamic Studies area of specialization. Her research interests include the cultivation of piety and negotiations of religious authority in American Islam, especially among gender and sexual minorities, and the role of media and the academy in these processes of Muslim self-fashioning. Magda received her MDiv from Harvard Divinity School and BA from Loyola University Chicago.



Mónica Isabel Rey, PhD Candidate, Graduate Program in Religion, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences

Rey is a doctoral candidate in Religion in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Boston University. Her interdisciplinary work focuses on gender, warfare, genocide, and sexual enslavement in the Hebrew Bible. Her dissertation is a continuation of research on foreign female captives and warfare from her 2016 JFSR article, “Reexamination of the Foreign Female Captive: Deuteronomy 21:10–14 as a Case of Genocidal Rape.” Her paper for this colloquium focuses on the connection between slavery and sexuality in the Hebrew Bible looking to Hortense Spillers’ conception of pornotroping. Rey received an STM in Hebrew Bible at the Boston University School of Theology and a BA in Religious Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University. Rey also holds a graduate certificate in Women and Gender Studies from BU and received the Spring 2018 BU WGS Senior Teaching Fellowship where she taught, “Sexuality, Race, and the Bible,” a course of her own creation in the College of Arts and Sciences at BU.



Joshua S. Smith, PhD Student, Graduate Program in Religion, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Josh is a second-year Ph.D. student in the Graduate Program in Religion under the direction of Dr. Anthony Petro. His research interests include American religious history, queer theory, Mormonism, and religious identity. Josh is currently working on a project studying the history of Affirmation: LGBTQ Mormons, Families, and Friends and the relationship between religious and queer identities.



Evan Stewart, Assistant Professor, Sociology, University of Massachusetts Boston

Evan Stewart, PhD, is an assistant professor of sociology at University of Massachusetts Boston. His research focuses on how people lose trust in institutions, why they choose to leave them, and the political impacts of opting out. This includes research on religious disaffiliation, changes in the public sphere, religion in public life, and attitudes about contentious political issues. His work has appeared in *Social Forces*, *Sociological Theory*, *Social Currents*, *The Sociological Quarterly*, *Secularism*

and Nonreligion, and *The Annual Review in the Sociology of Religion*.



Stephen Waldron, PhD Student, School of Theology

Stephen Waldron is a third-year doctoral student in Constructive Theology at BU's School of Theology. His research interests include theological method, theology and psychology, and theological dimensions of political conflicts. His work is interdisciplinary, engaging with 20th century U.S. religious history, moral and political psychology, and cognitive science of religion.