

CURRICULUM VITAE
SUNIL SHARMA
sharma@bu.edu
September 2024

EDUCATION

Ph.D. with honors (Persian Language and Literature), 1999, *University of Chicago, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations*
M.A. (Classics), 1990; B.A. (Humanities), 1987; *New York University*

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS, AWARDS, SERVICE AND TEACHING

Faculty Positions

Boston University, Department of Modern Languages & Comparative Literature
Professor of Persianate & Comparative Literature, 2015-present
Associate Professor of Persianate & Comparative Literature, 2010-15
Assistant Professor of Persianate & Comparative Literature, 2009-10
Senior Lecturer in Persian, 2004-09

Administrative positions at BU

-Director, Global Medieval Studies Program, 2022-24
-Department Chair, 2013-15; Acting Chair, 2017-18; Associate Chair, 2010-11, 2021-23
-Convener: Persian, 2009-18, 21-24; Hindi-Urdu, 2011-18, 21-24
-Board Member, BU Center for the Study of Asia, 2012-18; Associate Director, 2015-16
-Executive Committee, BU Center for the Humanities, 2010-13

Visiting Appointments, etc.

-*BU Faculty Exchange University of Padua*, May-June 2024
-*École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section des Sciences Historiques et Philologiques*, Paris, Visiting Professor, May 2014
-*Harvard University, Department of South Asian Studies* (formerly *Sanskrit & Indian Studies*), Visiting Lecturer, academic years 2000-03; 2004-05; 2006-09; Visiting Associate Professor, Fall 2012
-*MIT*, Visiting Associate Professor, January IAP terms 2012, 2013
-*University of London, SOAS*, Research Associate, March 2013; Summers 2008 and 2009
-*Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung*, History of Emotions Group, Berlin, Visiting Scholar, May 2010
-*Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Advanced Study, New Delhi, India*, Fellow, January-April 2010
-*Harvard University, History of Art and Architecture Department*, Aga Khan Fellow, 2008-09
-*Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (Institute of Advanced Study)*, Berlin, Germany, Junior Fellow (Working Group on Islam and Modernity), 2003-04
-*Harvard University, School of Continuing Education*, Instructor for Persian, 2002-03

Students mentored

-*PhD dissertation committees of BU students, all in History of Art & Architecture:*

- Margaret Shortle (2018)
- Alison Terndrup (2021)
- Hyunjin Cho (2022)

- Ikbal Dursunoglu (ongoing)

-*PhD dissertation committees of non-BU students:*

- Blain Auer (Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, 2009)
- Sarah Waheed (Tufts University, Department of History, 2010)
- Supriya Gandhi (Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, 2011)
- Mana Kia, Department of History (Harvard University, 2011)
- Daniel Sheffield (Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, 2012)
- Daniel Majchrowicz (Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, 2015)
- Michal Hasson (Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, 2018)
- Shayan Rajani (Tufts University, Department of History, 2018)
- Nicolas Roth (Harvard University, Department of South Asian Studies, 2020)
- Seton Uhlhorn (Harvard University, Department of South Asian Studies, ongoing)
- Hallie Swanson (University of Pennsylvania, Department of Religion, ongoing)

-*MFA in Literary Translation at BU:*

- Wesley Lewis (2023)

-*BA honors theses, all at BU:*

- Kelli Brown (Department of World Languages & Literatures, 2008)
- Anna Wallenberg (Department of Religion, 2012)
- Faraz Rana (Core Curriculum, 2016)
- Ata Sunucu (Department of World Languages & Literatures, 2019)
- Andrea Wetzler (Department of World Languages & Literatures, 2023)
- Katie Harmon (Pardee School, 2025)

-*Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP):* Emily Yoder (Summer 2023)

PUBLICATIONS

Books (monographs and co-authored books):

Mughal Arcadia: Persian Poetry in an Indian Court (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017).

In the Bazaar of Love: The Selected Poetry of Amir Khusrau, co-authored with Paul Losensky (New Delhi: Penguin Global, 2011). Penguin Classics series

Atiya's Journeys: A Muslim Woman from Colonial Bombay to Edwardian Britain, co-authored with Siobhan Lambert-Hurley (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Amir Khusraw: Poet of Sultans and Sufis (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2005), in the series edited by Patricia Crone, "Makers of the Muslim World." (Persian translation published in Iran).

Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier: Mas'ûd Sa'd Salmân of Lahore. Delhi: Permanent Black, 2000. (Persian translation: *Shi'r-i Farsi dar marz-i Hind*, Tehran, 2008).

Books (edited collections):

Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women, co-edited with Siobhan Lambert-Hurley and Daniel Majchrowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2022).

Firdawsii Millennium Indicum: Proceedings of the Shahnama Millenary Seminar, co-edited with Burzine Waghmar (Mumbai: K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, 2016).

On the Wonders of Land and Sea: Persianate Travel Writing, co-edited with Roberta Micallef. (Boston: Ilex; distributed by Harvard University Press, 2013).

The Necklace of the Pleiades: Studies in Persian Literature Presented to Heshmat Moayyad on his 80th Birthday, co-edited with Franklin Lewis (Amsterdam: Rozenberg; West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2007; reprinted, Leiden University Press; distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Book Chapters

Crafty Crones in Disguise: Two Examples from Premodern Literature. *Mobility and Masks: Cultural Identity in Travel Literature*. Ed. Elizabeth Goldsmith (Boston: Ilex Foundation; Distributed by Harvard University Press. 2024), 29-42.

Speaking Without Language: Nineteenth-Century British Women Travelers in Iran and India. *Worlds of Knowledge in Women's Travel Writing*. Ed. James Uden (Boston: Ilex Foundation; Distributed by Harvard University Press. 2022), 99-116.

Wine and the Pleasures of Delhi in Urdu Court Poetry. “Passed around by a Crescent”: *Wine Poetry in the Literary Traditions of the Islamic World*. Ed. Kirill Dimitriev and Christine van Ruymbeke (Beirut: Ergon, 2022), 209-22.

The Persian Maṣnavī Tradition and Bombay Cinema. In *Bombay Cinema's Islamicate Histories*. Ed. Ira Bhaskar and Richard Allen (Bristol: Intellect Books. 2022), 64-82.

The Indian Woman in a Persianate World: Comparisons Across Mughal, Safavid and Ottoman Literary and Visual Cultures. *Reflections on Mughal Art and Culture*. Ed. R. Ahluwalia (New Delhi, India: Niyogi K.R. Cama Institute of Oriental Studies. 2021), 308-22.

‘Not a Tale, but a Lesson’: Persian Translations of Kālīdāsa’s ‘AbhijñānaŚākuntalam’. *Memory, Metaphor and Mysticism in Kalidasa's AbhijñānaŚākuntalam*. Ed. N. Chaturvedi (London: Anthem Press. 2020), 155-67.

Forging a Canon of Dakhni Literature: Translations and Retellings from Persian. *Iran and the Deccan Persianate Art, Culture, and Talent in Circulation, 1400-1700*. Ed. Keelan Overton (Bloomington: Indian University Press. 2020), 401-20.

Shahrashub. In E. Yarshater (Ed.), *Persian Lyric Poetry in the Classical Era, 800-1500: Ghazals, Panegyrics and Quatrains A History of Persian Literature Vol. II* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020). 569-78.

Heroes, Hunters, and Rhino Hunters: Sekander and Bahram Gur in the *Shahnameh*. *The Layered Heart: Essays on Persian Poetry, A Celebration in Honor of Dick Davis*. Ed. A.A. Seyed-Ghorab (Washington, DC: Mage, 2019), 283-94.

Approaching Jami through Visual Culture: The Popularization of *Yusuf-Zulaikha* in Persianate Societies. *Jami in Regional Contexts: The Reception of ‘Abd al-Rahman Jami’s Works in the Islamicate World*. Ed. Thibaut d’Hubert and Alexandre Papas (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 42-62.

The Chameleonic Identities of Mohan Lal Kashmiri and His Travels in Persianate Lands. *Illusion and Disillusionment: Travel Writing in the Modern Age*. Ed. Roberta Micallef (Boston: Ilex; distributed by Harvard University Press, 2018), 80-97.

‘The Spring of Hindustan’: Love and War in the Monsoon in Indo-Persian Poetry. *Monsoon Feelings: A History of Emotions in the Rain*. Ed. Imke Rajamani, Margrit Pernau, Katherine Schofield (New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2018), 45-69.

Fa’iz Dihlavi’s Female-Centered Poems and Representation of Public Life in Late Mughal Society. *Affect, Emotion, and Subjectivity in Early Modern Muslim Empires: New Studies in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Art and Culture*. Ed. Kishwar Rizvi (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 168-84.

Reading the Acts and Lives of Performers in Mughal Persian Texts. *Tellings and Texts: Music, Literature and Performance in North India*. Ed. Francesca Orsini (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2015), 283-302.

Hasan Sijzi and Amir Khusrau: Friends, Poets, and Devotees. *Jashn-e-Khusrau 2013, Celebrating the Genius of Khusrau*. Ed. Shakeel Hossain (Ahmedabad: Aga Khan Trust for Culture/Mapin, 2014), 76-87.

Delight and Disgust: Gendered Encounters in the Travelogues of the Fyzee Sisters. *On the Wonders of Land and Sea: Persianate Travel Writing*. Ed. Roberta Micallef and Sunil Sharma (Boston: Ilex; distributed by Harvard University Press, 2013), 119-31.

The Production of Mughal *Shāhnāmas*: Imperial, Sub-Imperial, and Provincial Manuscripts. *Ferdowsi’s Shāhnāma: Millennial Perspectives*. Ed. by Olga M. Davidson & Marianna Shreve Simpson. (Boston: Ilex; distributed by Harvard University Press, 2013), 86-107.

Redrawing the Boundaries of ‘Ajam in Early Modern Persian Literary Histories. *Iran Facing Others: Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective*. Ed. Abbas Amanat and Farzin Vejdani (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012). 49-62.

Literary Aspects of Amir Khusrau’s Poetry. *Jashn-e Khusrau: A Collection*. Ed. Shakeel Hossain. (New Delhi: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, 2012).70-95.

‘If There is a Paradise on Earth, It is Here’: Urban Ethnography in Indo-Persian Poetic and Historical Texts. *Forms of Knowledge in Early Modern Asia: Explorations in the Intellectual History of India and Tibet, 1500-1800*. Ed. Sheldon Pollock. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 240-56.

The Function of the Catalogue of Poets in Persian Poetry. *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry*. Ed. Ali Asghar Seyed Gohrab (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 231-47.

The Nizamshahi Persianate Garden in Zuhūrī’s *Sāqīnāma*. *Garden and Landscape Practices in Precolonial India: Histories from the Deccan*. Ed. Daud Ali and Emma Flatt (New Delhi and London: Routledge, 2011), 159-71.

Representation of Social Types in Mughal Art and Literature: Ethnography or Trope? *Indo-Muslim Cultures in Transition*. Ed. Alka Patel and Karen Leonard (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 17-36.

Celebrating Writing and Books in Safavid and Mughal Court Poetry. *Écrit et culture en Asie centrale et dans le monde turco-iranien, XIVe-XIXe siècles / Writing and Culture in Central Asia and the Turko-*

Iranian World, 14th-19th centuries. Ed. Francis Richard and Maria Szuppe. (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Etudes Iraniennes, 2009), 231-50.

Wandering Quatrains and Women Poets in the Khulāsāt al-ash‘ār fi al-rubā‘iyāt. *The Treasury of Tabriz: The Great Il-Khanid Compendium* (Leiden: Rozenberg, 2007), 153-69.

Novelty, Tradition and Mughal Politics in Nau‘i’s *Suz u Gudaz*. *The Necklace of the Pleiades: Studies in Persian Literature Presented to Heshmat Moayyad on his 80th Birthday*. Ed. Franklin Lewis & Sunil Sharma (Amsterdam: Rozenberg; West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2007), 251-65.

Generic Innovation in Sayfī Bukhārāī’s *Shahrāshūb Ghazals*. *Ghazal as a Genre of World Literature: The Ottoman Ghazal in Its Historical Context*. Ed. Angelika Neuwrith et al (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 2006), 141-49.

Atiya Begum and the Mystery of the Beloved’s Identity in Shibli Nomani’s Persian Ghazals. *Poetry's Voice, Society's Norms. Forms of Interaction between Middle Eastern Writers and Their Societies*. Ed. Andreas Pflitsch and Barbara Winckler (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2006), 105-19.

The Sufi-Poet-Lover as Martyr: ‘Attār and Hāfīz in Persian Poetic Traditions. Friederike Pannewick (Ed.), *Martyrdom in Literature. Visions of Death and Meaningful Suffering in Europe and the Middle East from Antiquity to Modernity*. Ed. Friederike Pannewick (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2004), 237-43.

Pakistani-American Literature. *New Immigrant Literatures in the United States: A Sourcebook to our Multicultural Literary Heritage* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996), 159-67.

Journal Articles

Making Room in the Premodern Persian Poetic Canon for Mahsaṭī and Rāb‘īah. *Middle Eastern Literatures* (2024). DOI: 10.1080/1475262X.2024.2394496

India as Theory: Allusion, Poetics, Storytelling, and Translation. *History of Humanities* 9 (2024): 143-61. (co-authored with Whitney Cox).

Amir Khusraw, Fayzi, and the Geography of Indo-Persian Literature (in Persian). *Irannamag* 1/3 (2016): 1-18.

Translating Gender: Āzād Bilgrāmī on the Poetics of the Love Lyric and Cultural Synthesis. *The Translator*, Special Issue *Nation and Translation in the Middle East* edited by Samah Selim, 15/1 (2009): 87-103.

From ‘Aesha to Nur Jahan: The Shaping of a Classical Persian Poetic Canon of Women. *Journal of Persianate Studies*, 2/2 (2009): 147-64.

Forbidden Love, Persianate Style: Re-reading Tales of Iranian Poets and Mughal Patrons. *Iranian Studies*, 42/5 (2009): 765-79.

Urdu and Persian Scholarly Publishing in Contemporary Gujarat (India). *Annual of Urdu Studies*, 20 (2005): 296-302.

The City of Beauties in the Indo-Persian Poetic Landscape. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*. XXIV, no. 2 (2004): 73-81.

Kashmir and the Mughal Fad of Persian Pastoral Poetry. *Eurasiatica: Quaderni di Studi su Balcani, Anatolia, Iran, Caucaso e Asia Centrale* 5 (2016): 183-202.

The Land of Darkness: Images of India in the Works of Some Safavid Poets. *Studies on Persianate Societies* 1 (2003): 97-110.

Hāfiz's Sāqīnāmah: The Genesis and Transformation of a Classical Poetic Genre. *Persica* (2003): 75-83.

Amir Khusraw and the Genre of Historical Narratives in Verse. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*. XXII, no. 1 (2003): 112-118.

Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān and the Topos of Exile in Ghaznavid Poetry." *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 5 (1999-2000): 40-57.

Translations

Eight extracts from Persian and Urdu in: *Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women*; see Books section above

Nihavandi on Rahim as Interpreter, Translator and Poet. *Celebrating Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan: Statesman, Courtier, Soldier, Poet, Linguist, Humanitarian, Patron*. Editors: Shakeel Hossain. New Delhi: Mapin, 2017. 88-99.

Translations of Persian and Hindi poems by Amir Khusraw (with Paul Losensky). *In the Bazaar of Love: The Selected Poetry of Amir Khusraw*; see Books section above

Urdu travelogue, *Zamana-i Tahsil*, by Atiya Fyzee (as an appendix in *From Colonial Bombay to Edwardian London*); see Books section above.

Hushang Gulshiri's Persian short story, "The Innocent 2" in *Black Parrot, Green Crow: A Collection of Short Fiction*, edited by Heshmat Moayyad (Mage Publishers, 2003).

Tajik poems, a short story and essay in *World Literature Today* (Summer 1996), special issue on Central Asia.

Blogs

-<https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2022/12/a-beloved-in-every-port-iskandars-encounters-with-women.html>

-<https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2022/10/five-centuries-of-copying-illustrating-and-reading-amir-khusraws-poetry.html>

-<https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2021/03/the-courtesan-and-the-preacher-the-romance-of-mahsati.html>

-<http://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2016/11/the-ottoman-turkish-zenaname-book-of-women.html>

-<http://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2017/12/the-flower-garden-phulban-an-illustrated-dakhni-romance.html>

-<http://www.mizanproject.org/the-history-of-akbar/>

-<https://trafo.hypotheses.org/14756>

Publications in Exhibition Catalogues

James Skinner and the Poetic Climate of Late Mughal Delhi. *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi, 1707-*

1857. Ed. William Dalrymple and Yuthika Sharma. (New York: Asia Society Museum, 2012). 32-39.

Safavid and Mughal Imperial Self-Representation in Two Album Pages. *Harmony: The Norma Jean Calderwood Collection of Islamic Art*. Ed. Mary McWilliams. (Cambridge: Harvard Art Museums, 2013). 146-55.

Contributed to an essay and wrote two entries for an exhibition catalogue, *Le gout de l'Orient: Collections & collectionneurs de Provence*, ed. Aurelie Bosc (2013). 194-201.

Co-curated Exhibitions and Art-Related Talks

“Proclamations of Immortality: Rumi’s Works in Modern Editions,” Houghton Library, Harvard University, 1 May-18 August 2007 (co-curator: Hope Mayo)

“On the Path of Madness: Representations of Majnun in Persian, Turkish, and Indian Painting,” Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, September 27, 2007-February 10, 2008 (co-curator: Mary McWilliams) (<http://www.artmuseums.harvard.edu/exhibitions/sackler/madness.html>)

“Sacred Spaces: The World of Dervishes, Fakirs, and Sufis.” Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, August 6, 2009–January 3, 2010 (co-curator: Kim Masteller)

“Celebrating the Millennium of Firdawsi’s *Shahnama*,” Sackler Museum and Houghton Library, Fall 2010 (co-curator: Mary McWilliams)

Radcliffe Institute Exploratory Seminar, *Fostering Religious Literacy through the Arts: The Case of Islam*, August, 20-22, 2014; gave a presentation on “Text and Image in Teaching About Premodern Persianate Women’s Literary Culture.”

Benjamin and Barbara Zucker Lecture, Harvard Art Museums. December 9, 2015. Title: “At the Threshold of Paradise: Poetry and Painting in Mughal Kashmir.”

Academic committee member for the exhibition, “Wonders of Creation: Art, Science, and Innovation, in the Islamic World.” San Diego Museum of Art, September 7, 2024-January 5, 2025.

Essay in the exhibition catalogue: “Iskandar’s Quest for Wondrous Knowledge.”

Symposia and Workshops Organized at BU

-“Women and Poetry in Premodern India,” April 4, 2019

-“Comparative Persianate Aesthetics.” September 28-29, 2017 (co-organized with Emine Fetvaci)

-“Translating and Teaching Premodern Persian Literature,” April 24-25, 2014

-“On Wonders of Land and Sea: Travel Writing by Muslims in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century,” April 30, 2009 (co-organized with Roberta Micallef)

-“Travel Writing: Perspectives from North Africa, the Middle East and South Asia,” April 20, 2007

Recent Invited Lectures

“From Epic Hero to Sufi Master: Poetic Personae of the Mughal Emperor Akbar.” Pomona College, September 17, 2024.

“Skill, Sorcery, and Storytelling in the Poetry of Amir Khusraw,” Franklin Lewis Lecture Series, University of Chicago, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, October 26, 2023.

“Amir Khusrau’s Poetry as World Literature.” Keynote at a conference to be held at Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan, March 3, 2023.

“Anthologies of Persian(ate) Poetry by Women (Zoom).” University of Toronto, The Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute of Iranian Studies, April 30, 2021.

“Finding a Voice: Early Travel Writing by Women in the Middle East and India (Zoom).” University of Kashmir, Department of English, December 6, 2021.

“Retelling Stories: Translation and Imitation Across Literary Cultures (Zoom).” Conference on *Worlds Enough and Time: Towards a Comparative Global Humanities*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, November 12, 2021.

“The Early Transmission History of Amir Khusraw's Historical Masnavis (Zoom).” Symposium on *Prince Baysunghur, Before and After: Timurid Manuscripts in Context*. Princeton University, Institute of Advanced Studies, November 6, 2021.

“Worldly and Sufi Wisdom in Amir Khusrau's Poetry.” *Fourth Professor Abidi Memorial Lecture*. Iran Culture House, New Delhi, December 23, 2019.

GRANTS

-*The Leverhulme Trust (UK)*, co-investigator with Siobhan Lambert-Hurley and Daniel Majchrowicz, “Veiled Voyagers: Muslim Women Travellers from Asia and the Middle East,” 2015-18.

- *BU Center for the Humanities*, for workshop on comparative Persianate aesthetics (with Emine Fetvaci), September 2017

- *BU Center for the Humanities*, for workshop on translation and teaching classical Persian literature (with Sassan Tabatabai), March 2014

- *BU Center for the Humanities*, Comparative Premodern Studies Initiative (with Wiebke Denecke), 2011-14

- *Harvard University, South Asia Initiative Faculty Grant*, Summer 2008

- *Canadian Centre for Architecture*, support grant, November 2007

- *Boston University, Humanities Foundation*, for workshop on travel writing (with Roberta Micallef), 2006-07

- *American Institute of Iranian Studies*, dissertation writing fellowship, 1997-98; publication subvention grant, 2007

- *Whiting Foundation*, dissertation writing fellowship, 1997-98

- *University of Chicago, Committee on Southern Asian Studies*, fellowship for research in Iran, 1996-97

- *Mellon Foundation*, fellowship for summer study in Iran, 1993

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS & SERVICE TO THE FIELD

Membership:

- Association for the Study of Persianate Societies (Life member; President, 2019-21)

- Association for Iranian Studies (Life member)

- Fellow, Royal Asiatic Society (UK)

Editorial Board:

- *Journal of Persianate Studies*

- *I.B. Tauris Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Persian Literature series* (Bloomsbury)

- *Murty Classical Library of India* (Harvard University Press; 2009-21)

Advisory Board:

-*Roshan Initiative in Persian Digital Humanities* (University of Maryland)

-*Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran* (<http://www.qajarwomen.org/en/credits.html>)