

NAJNIN ISLAM

Assistant Professor of English
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

Assistant Professor of English, University of Connecticut, (2023-current)
Assistant Professor of English, Colorado College, 2018-2023.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in English, University of Pennsylvania, 2018.
Certificate in College and University Teaching, Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Pennsylvania, 2016.
M.A. in English, University of Pennsylvania, 2014.
M.Phil. in Social Sciences, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, India, 2011.
M.A. in English, First Class, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India, 2009.
B.A. in English, First Class, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India, 2007.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING AREAS

Caribbean Literature, Postcolonial Studies, Archival Studies, South Asian and South Asian Diasporic Literature.

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

The University of Connecticut Humanities Institute Faculty Fellowship, 2025-2026.
Provost's Common Curriculum Grant, University of Connecticut, January 2024.
National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend, 2023. Accepted in Summer 2024.
Work Period: May 1-June 30, 2024.
Dean of the Faculty Teaching Excellence Award, Colorado College, 2023.
Mellon Foundation Humanities for All Times Grant for "Plantation Afterlives," Colorado College, 2022.
Grant-in-aid. Faculty of Color Working Group Symposium. New England Humanities Consortium, May 2022.
Humanities Executive Council Research and Development Grant, Colorado College, 2022.

Faculty Student Collaborative Research Grant, Colorado College, 2021.
 Faculty Student Collaborative Research Grant, Colorado College, 2020.
 Norman B. Smith Curricular Development Grant, Colorado College, 2020.
 Faculty Gaylord Research Prize, Colorado College, 2018-2019.
 Humanities Executive Council Faculty Conference Grant, Colorado College.
 SAS Dissertation Completion Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania, 2017-2018.
 Center for Teaching and Learning Graduate Fellow for Teaching Excellence, 2016-2017.
 SAS Dean's Travel Subvention, University of Pennsylvania, 2016.
 SASGov Travel Grant, University of Pennsylvania, 2015.
 Steinberg Graduate Fellow in English, University of Pennsylvania, 2012-2013.
 Benjamin Franklin Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania, 2012-2017.
 Jayoti Gupta Memorial Prize for M.Phil. Thesis, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, 2011.
 Navajbai Ratan Tata Trust Fellowship (NRTT) for M.Phil. in Social Sciences, Center for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, 2009-2010.

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

““Odd but recognizable”: Indigenous Epistemologies and Indo-Creole Belonging in Cyril Dabydeen’s *Dark Swirl*.” *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* 55, no.2 (2024): 31-58.

“Indenture, Iteration: Race and the Aesthetics of Contract Labor” (co-authored with Kaneesha Cherelle Parsard and Neelofer Qadir). *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* 10, no.1 (2024): 1-24.

“Life Unadministered: Colonial Care and the Indian Coolie.” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 70, no.3 (2023): pp.1-18.

“Creolization.” *Global South Studies: A Collective Publication with The Global South*, January 2023.

“Racial Capitalism and Racial Intimacies: Post-Emancipation British Guiana in David Dabydeen’s *The Counting House*.” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 24, no. 4 (2022): 603-620.

“Negotiating Borders: Community and the Dynamics of Punjabi and Bihari-Sikh Relations in Kolkata,” in “Anthropology in South Asia,” ed. Nasir Uddin, special issue, *Man in India*, 92, no. 1 (2012): 55-78.

ESSAYS IN EDITED COLLECTIONS

“Creole Diet: Food, Race and Creolization in the Caribbean,” in *MLA Options for Teaching: Food in Literature*, edited by Jeff Birkenstein. New York: The Modern Language Association of America. (Forthcoming)

“Racial Capitalism and Racial Intimacies: Post-Emancipation British Guiana in David Dabydeen’s *The Counting House*,” in *Like Diamonds from Dust*, edited by Lynne Macedo. Hertford: Hansib Publications, 2024.

(Editor-solicited reprint of *Interventions* article)

“‘The two worlds collided/In anger and fear’: Reading Inter-Racial Conflict and the Question of Belonging in Australian fiction,” in *Musings Post Colonies*, edited by Maswood Akhter, 153-170. Rajshahi: Chinno Publications, 2012.

OTHER ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

“Indian Women and Indentured Servitude: A Brief Overview.” Adam Matthew Digital, October 2023. Commissioned scholarly essay that introduces nineteenth-century archival documents on Indian indentureship. <https://www.colonialcaribbean.amdigital.co.uk/research-tools/essays/indian-women-and-indentured-servitude>

“An Alternative Account,” Invited Contribution to a Virtual Roundtable on Samia Khatun, *Australianama: The South Asian Odyssey in Australia. Chapati Mystery*, December 2019. <https://www.chapatimystery.com/archives/Australianama-RT.html>

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *Contradictory Indianness: Indenture, Creolization, and Literary Imaginary*, by Atreyee Phukan. *Comparative Literature Studies* 62 no. 2 (Forthcoming, Spring 2025).

Review of *Precarious Crossings: Immigration, Neoliberalism, and the Atlantic*, by Alexandra Perisic. *Contemporary Literature* 62 no. 1 (2021): 130-137.

Review of *The Captive Sea: Slavery, Communication and Commerce in Early Modern Spain and the Mediterranean*, by Daniel Hershenzon. *Spenser Review*. 49, no. 3.12 (2019). <http://www.english.cam.ac.uk/spenseronline/review/item/49.3.12>.

Review of *We Mark Your Memory: writing from the descendants of indenture*, ed. David Dabydeen, Maria del Pilar Kaladeen, Tina K. Ramnarine, *Journal of West Indian Literature* 27 no. 2 (2019): 76-80.

WORKS IN-PROGRESS

Recasting the Coolie: Racial Capitalism, Caste, and Indian Indentureship in the Caribbean. Book manuscript in progress.

PRESENTATIONS

INVITED TALKS

“Afro-Asian Relations Across Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds.” Global Dialogues Series, Stanford University, February 2025.

“Indenture, Antirelationality, and the Afterlife of Slavery.” Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, Universität Bonn, January 2023.

“Life Unadministered: The Voyage of the *Salsette* from Calcutta to Trinidad,” Department of Communication Arts, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 2020.

“One of the best schemes possible: Comparative Racialization and Indian Indentureship,” Department of

English, University of Southern California, October 2019.

PANELS ORGANIZED/CHAired

Co-organizer, “Comparative Indenture” American Comparative Literature Association, May 2025 (Forthcoming)

Co-organizer and President, “Keywords, Questions, Concepts: Postcolonial Genres and Strategies.” Modern Language Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, January 2025.

Co-organizer and President, “Postcoloniality and Conditions of Dispossession.” Modern Language Association Annual Convention, Philadelphia, January 2024.

Co-organizer and Chair, “Archival Limits, Literary Repair: Writing Gender, Labor, and Race.” Caribbean Studies Association, June 2021, Online.

Co-organizer, “Geographies of Racial Capitalism: Labor, Caste, Dispossession.” American Comparative Literature Association, April 2021, Online.

Chair, “On the Fringes.” 38th West Indian Literature Conference, University of Guyana, October 2019.

Co-organizer, A2|P2, 2016, Pennsylvania State University and University of Pennsylvania, September 2016.

PAPERS PRESENTED

““One of the best schemes possible”: Comparative Racialization, Caste, and the Indian Coolie,” American Comparative Literature Association, May 2025 (Forthcoming)

“Comparative Racialization, Caste, and the Indian Coolie.” The Association for Asian American Studies, Seattle, April 2024.

“Indian, Madras, Creole: Lexicons of Race, Caste, and Anticolonialism in Post-Emancipation British Guiana.” Anticolonialism as Theory Symposium, University of California, Berkeley, September 2022.

“Madras, Dravidian, Creole: Lexicons of Race and Caste in Post-emancipation British Guiana.” The Many Worlds of Mainland “British Latin America” Symposium, Rutgers University, May 2022.

“Life Unadministered: Colonial Care and the Indian Coolie” at *Exodus and Exile: Migrants, Refugees, Asylum Seeker and the Problem of Slavery in Pacific and Atlantic Worlds, 1759-1850*, University of Chicago, December 2021.

“Racial Capitalism and Racial Intimacies: Post-Emancipation British Guiana in David Dabydeen’s *The Counting House*.” American Comparative Literature Association, April 2021, Online.

“Theorizing Creole Belonging: Postcolonial Caribbean Fiction and the Question of Indigeneity.” Panel on “Postcolonialism and Indigeneity,” Modern Language Association, January 2021, Online.

Panel on “Racializing English and Anglophone Studies Today.” Modern Language Association, January 2021,

Online.

“Recasting the Caribbean Hinterland: Racialization, Indigeneity and West Indian Literature.” 38th Annual West Indian Literature Conference, University of Guyana, October 2019.

“Life Unadministered: Race, Caste, and the Transoceanic Voyage of the *Salsette*.” Tepotzlán Institute for the Transnational History of the Americas, Tepotzlán, Mexico, July 2019.

“Connected Histories: Race and Caste in *Sea of Poppies*.” American Comparative Literature Association, Washington D.C., March 2019.

“Connection, Articulation: Atlantic and Indian Ocean histories in *Sea of Poppies*.” Roundtable on “Anglophone Literature at Sea”, Modern Language Association, Chicago, January 2019.

“Intimate Histories: Race, Caste and Asian Indenture.” Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, January 2017.

“‘How shall we account for such mortality’: Captain Swinton’s journal and transoceanic recordkeeping.” A2|P2, 2016, Pennsylvania State University-UPenn, September 2016.

“Transoceanic voyage and the coolie as cargo: Shipboard experiences and the realm of the quotidian.” After Slavery? Labor and Migration in the Post-Emancipation World, University of Leeds, June 2016.

“Race, Indenture and Intimacy: Reading Indo and Sino-Caribbean Literature.” Critical Approaches to South Asian Studies Workshop, York University, February 2015.

“(Re)membering the past: History and Memory in Shauna Singh Baldwin’s Narratives.” Sikhi(sm), Literature and Film Conference, Hofstra University, October 2012.

“Negotiating Borders: Community, Built Spaces and the dynamics of Punjabi and Bihari Sikh Relations in Kolkata.” Empire, Nation, Cosmopolitanism: Cultural Studies Workshop, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences in collaboration with South-South Exchange Programme for Research on the History of Development (SEPHIS), January 2011.

“‘The two worlds collided/In anger and fear’: Reading Interracial Conflict and the Question of Belonging in Australian fiction.” Representing Conflict, National Students Seminar, Department of English, University of Delhi, December 2010.

“‘[M]y longing is an echo/a re-occurring dream:’ Aboriginal populations negotiating change.” India Australia: Negotiating Change, International Conference, Indian Association for the Study of Australia, March 2010.

TEACHING

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Undergraduate Teaching

ENGL 2600: Introduction to Literary Studies
ENGL 2107: The British Empire, Slavery, and Resistance
ENGL 2635E: Literature and the Environment
ENGL 2301 & ENGL 2301W: Anglophone Literatures

Graduate Teaching

ENGL 6530: The Archive and the Novel

COLORADO COLLEGE (2018-2023)

EN480: Senior Seminar: Afterlives of Slavery
EN399: Junior Seminar: Narratives of Servitude
EN380: Caribbean Voices
EN380: Global Plantation Imaginaries
EN280: Introduction to Global Anglophone Fiction
EN280: Introduction to Postcolonial Studies
EN280: Introducing Caribbean Literature and Art
EN280: Tales of Travel
EN270: Postcolonial Literature: Race, Gender, and Labor
EN250: Introduction to Literary Theory
CC101: Critical Inquiry Seminar: Travel Narratives Across Time
EN499: Senior Thesis

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS ADVISING

First Reader. "Realigning the Past and Writing a Counterhistory in Fred D'Aguiar's *Feeding the Ghosts*," Annalise Groves, Department of English (2020-2021). Awarded the Krutzke Award for Best Undergraduate Thesis in the English Department, Critical Track, 2020-2021.

First Reader. "Injustice, Resistance, and Healing through the Eyes of Children in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*," Emma Olsen, Department of English (2020-2021).

First Reader. "Deconstructing the Hegemonic Perspective on Hawai'i's History," Kekai Wong Yuen, Department of English (2019-2020).

Second Reader. "ERROR/ist," Critical Essay and Performance, Isa Hussein, Independently Designed Major, 2021-2022.

Second Reader. "A Hungry Novel: The Discourse of Consumption in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*," Lindsey Aronson, Department of English, 2018-2019.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA (2012-2018)

The College of Liberal and Professional Studies

ENGL 103.910: The English Novel and the World (Instructor of Record)

Department of English

ENGL 200.302: Junior Research Seminar: Tales of Travel (Instructor of Record)
 ENGL 101.402: Jane Austen and Adaptation (Teaching Assistant)
 ENGL 065. 401: Colonial and Postcolonial Fiction (Teaching Assistant)

ACADEMIC SERVICE

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Appointed Member, Executive Committee, TC Postcolonial Studies Forum, Modern Language Association, 2023-2025.

Peer Reviewer, *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* (2021), *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* (2020, 2024), *South Asian Review* (2020, 2023), *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* (2024).

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE, UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT (2023-)

Member, Graduate Job Market Committee, 2023-2024; 2024-2025.

Member, MA Writing Project Committee; MA/PhD Second Year Review Committee, 2024-2025.

Member, Search Committee: Asian American Literary and Cultural Studies, 2023-24.

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE, COLORADO COLLEGE (2018-2023)

Member, Faculty Executive Committee, Personnel Policies Subcommittee, 2022-2023.

Member, Faculty and Staff Policy Training Taskforce, Fall 2022.

Member, English Literature Major and Senior Seminar Sequence Review Committee, 2022-2023.

Co-Organizer, English Department Faculty Seminar Coordinator, 2022-2023.

Member, General Education Assessment Working Group, Equity and Power, 2020-2021.

English Department Liaison for External Review, 2018-2021.

Faculty Advisor to Cutler Publications, 2019-2020.

Title IX Investigator, 2019-2021.

Member, Search Committee: Visiting Assistant Professor in Postcolonial Literatures, 2020-2021.

Member, Search Committee: TT Position in 20th and 21st Century Asian American Literature, 2019-2020.

Member, Faculty Reviewer for Student Gaylord Prize, Asian Studies Program, Fall 2018.

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA (2012-2018)

Organizer, Pedagogy Workshops, Department of English, 2016-17.

Residential Advisor, Harrison College House, University of Pennsylvania, 2016-18.

Panelist, Graduate English Association Workshop on Funding Opportunities for Graduate Students, Fall 2016.

Funding Librarian, Graduate English Association, University of Pennsylvania, 2014-2015.

Coordinator, Latitudes Reading Group, University of Pennsylvania, 2013-2014.

Graduate Lab Liaison, Graduate English Association, University of Pennsylvania, 2013-2014.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS

Modern Language Association

American Comparative Literature Association