

Unita Ahdifard

Department of English
Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Surrey, British Columbia
Email: unita_ahdifard@ucsb.edu
Phone: 778.837.2330

EDUCATION:

Doctor of Philosophy, English literature, University of California Santa Barbara, September 2022

Master of Arts, English Literature, University of Toronto, November 2016

Honours Bachelor of Arts, English Literature Specialization Degree, graduated with high distinction, May 2015

2011-2013: University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON; 2013-2015: Trinity College, University of Toronto

PUBLICATIONS:

“Grand Tours and Great Travails: Captivity, Leisure, and Orientalism in the Travel Narratives of Elizabeth Marsh.” *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*. 2025. Pending.

“The Scent of Faith: Olfactory Perception and Affect in Rumi’s “Tale of the Jewish King.”” *Iranian Studies*. Under submission.

“Diplomats, Company Wives, and Refugees: Islamicate Women’s Travels in Early Modern English Literature.” *Journal of Women’s History*. Under submission.

“Early Modern Women and Travel.” 6,000 word entry. *Palgrave Encyclopedia of Early Modern Women’s Writing*. 2022. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-01537-4_106-2

“‘Each Race in its Proper Sphere’: Understanding Ottoman Nation, Race, and Class in Demetra Vaka Brown’s *The Unveiled Ladies of Stanboul* and Leila Ahmed’s *A Border Passage*.” *Studies in Travel Writing*. 2021. DOI: 10.1080/13645145.2021.1975368

Review of *Iran’s Quiet Revolution: The Downfall of the Pahlavi State*, by Ali Mirsepassi. *The English Historical Review*, Volume 136, Issue 583, December 2021, Pages 1691–1693. 2021.

Review of *Hartly House Calcutta*, by Phebe Gibbes. *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Volume 14, Issue 2, 154-157. 2020.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

“Who Was Hathor?” *Getty News & Stories*. 2023. <https://www.getty.edu/news/who-was-hathor-egyptian-goddess-ancient-nubia/>

“Joseph: A Celebrated Haitian Model in 19th-Century Paris.” *Google Arts & Culture*. 2023. <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/YQVBQHR1FmMF-Q>

“Women Artists From Antiquity to Present.” *Google Arts & Culture*. 2023. <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/nwXxHHM6zQl3lQ>

“Here Comes the (Ancient Roman) Bride.” *Getty News & Stories*. 2023. <https://www.getty.edu/news/ancient-roman-wedding-traditions/>

“What Happened at an Ancient Roman Funeral?” *Getty News & Stories*. 2023. <https://www.getty.edu/news/what-happened-at-an-ancient-roman-funeral/>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

“Grand Tours and Great Travails: Captivity, Leisure, and Orientalism in the Travel Narratives of Elizabeth Marsh.” The East Coast American Association for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ECASECS), online, 2025

“Turkish Bath and Colonial Compounds: Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and *Hartly House, Calcutta*.” The American Association for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS), Baltimore, MD, April 2022

“Spectacle as Cultural Exploration: British Women Travelers and Theatrical Experience in Calcutta and Tehran in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries.” Pacific and Ancient Modern Languages Association (PAMLA), Las Vegas, NV, November 2021

“European Women’s Travel, Agency, and Sexual Slavery in the Persia of Elizabeth Boyd and Eliza Haywood’s Novels.” Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association (RMMLA), Boulder, CO, October 2021 (presenting and chair of panel, rescheduled due to COVID)

“‘The Pleasures Social Intercourse Gives’: Colonial Castration, Sexuality, and The Figure of the Eunuch in *Hartly House, Calcutta*’s Eighteenth-Century India.” Modern Language Association (MLA), Seattle, WA, 2019

“Snakes, Spirits, and Sex: Divine Love and Queer Domesticity in Alifa Rifaat’s ‘My World of the Unknown.’” UCSB, Envisioning LGBTQIA+ Wellbeing Graduate Student Conference, Santa Barbara, CA, 2018

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND HONOURS:

Kanner Fellowship in British Studies Postdoctoral Fellowship, UCLA, 2022-2023

Social Science and Research Humanities Council (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowship, Canada, 2018-2022

Chancellor’s Doctoral Fellowship, University of California Santa Barbara, September 2017-2022

Interdisciplinary Humanities Center Public Humanities Fellow, UCSB, 2020-2022

Early Modern Center Graduate Fellow, UCSB, 2018-2019

COURSES TAUGHT:

“ENGL 3360: Women Writers.” Summer 2025. Instructor of Record.

“ENGL 3325: Eighteenth-Century British Literature.” Fall 2024. Instructor of Record.

“ENGL 3370: Life-Writing: Travel Literature.” Summer 2024. Instructor of Record.

“ENGL 1100: Introduction to Academic Writing.” 2023-2025. Instructor of Record.

“ENGL 1202/1204: Introduction to Literary Themes.” 2023-2025. Instructor of Record.

“ENGL 165: Early Modern English Women, Travel Writing, and Orientalism.” As Early Modern Center Graduate Fellow, co-taught with Bernadette Andrea, Winter 2019. Instructor of Record

“ENGL 10: Introduction to Literary Study: Creatures and Creaturely Bodies.” Summer 2019. Instructor of record

ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE:

Faculty, Department of English, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Surrey, British Columbia, September 2023-

Graduate Intern, Department of Communications and Public Affairs, J. Paul Getty Museum, September 2022
August 2023

Graduate Research Assistant, Voces Nuevas, Global Latinidades Project, Department of English, University of California Santa Barbara, Summer 2018; July 2021-December 2021

Graduate Intern, Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, June 2020 -August 2020

Graduate Mentor and Program Assistant, Transfer Student Center, University of California Santa Barbara, September 2019 -September 2020

ACADEMIC SERVICE:

Events Committee (Chair), Department of English, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, 2025-

PR Committee; Research Committee, Department of English, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, 2024-

Advanced Graduate Student Mentor, Graduate Scholars Program, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2020-2021

Upper-Year Mentor, Department of English Graduate Student Mentorship Program, UCSB, 2019-2020

Founder, South West Asian and North African (SWANA) Support Group at Department of English, UCSB, 2019

Graduate Intern, Baha’i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE), UCSB, 2019

LANGUAGES:

English (native speaker)

French (written and spoken fluency)

Farsi (written and spoken fluency, heritage speaker)

Spanish (basic written and spoken, 3 years of independent study)

REFERENCES:

Bernadette Andrea, Professor of English
University of California, Santa Barbara
bernadette.andrea@english.ucsb.edu

Janet Afary, Professor of Religious Studies
University of California, Santa Barbara
jafary@ucsb.edu

Julie Carlson, Professor of English
University of California, Santa Barbara
jcarlson@english.ucsb.edu

John Giurini, Assistant Director of Museum
Communications & Public Affairs
J. Paul Getty Museum
jgiurini@getty.edu