



35th
annual
British
Commonwealth
and
Postcolonial
Studies
Conference

February 20-21, 2026
The DeSoto Savannah

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

ESRA MIRZE SANTESSO

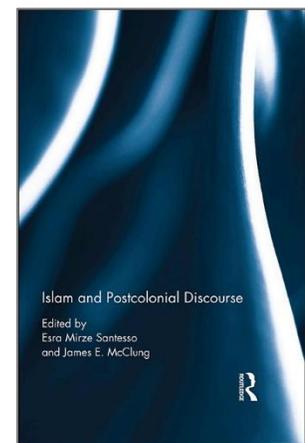
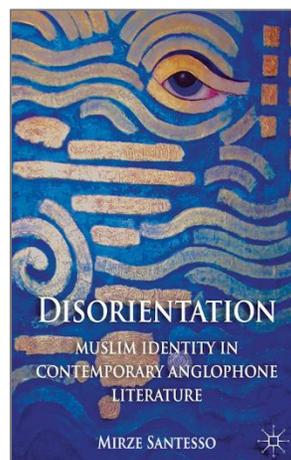
**Professor, Department of English
University of Georgia**



With a focus on the connections between gender, religion, and culture, Esra Santesso's career has always been one step ahead of the curve. Her work focuses on Muslim identity, diasporic and immigrant experiences, and human rights narratives.

Her first book, *Disorientation: Muslim Identity in Contemporary Anglophone Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), interrogates the complexities of displacement and the value of traditional postcolonial theorizing when considering Muslim subjects in the West. Her most recent book, *Muslim Comics and Warscape Witnessing* (Ohio State UP, 2023), is the first monograph to investigate Muslim portrayals in comics, and received an honorable mention for the 2024 MLA Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for Middle Eastern Studies.

She is the co-editor of *Islam and Postcolonial Discourse* (Routledge, 2017) and *Muslim Women's Popular Fiction* (Manchester UP, forthcoming). Her work has also appeared in *The Journal of Religion and Literature*, *Postcolonial Text*, *Postcolonial Intervention*, and *PMLA*.



PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Friday, February 20

(all sessions and panels are held in the Lafayette and Monterey Rooms, 2nd floor)

8:00 am Registration Desk opens (Chippewa Room, 2nd floor)

9:00 am Session A

10:15 am Break

10:30 am Session B

12:00 pm Break

12:15 pm Lunch (Harborview Room, 15th floor)

1:30 pm Session C

2:45 pm Break

3:00 pm Session D

4:15 pm Break

4:30 pm Keynote Address (Pulaski Room, 1st floor)

5:30 pm Reception (Pulaski Room, 1st floor)

Saturday, February 21

8:00 am Registration Desk opens (Chippewa Room, 2nd floor)

8:30 am Continental Breakfast (Chippewa Room, 2nd floor)

10:00 am Session E

11:30 am Lunch *(on your own; see inside back cover for restaurant recommendations)*

1:30 pm Session F

2:45 pm Break

3:00 pm Session G

4:30 pm Break

4:45 pm Reception (Pulaski Room, 1st floor)

THE DESOTO SAVANNAH

Floor Plans

The Conference will be using the first (ground), second, and fifteenth floors of the DeSoto.

When you enter the hotel through the main entrance on Liberty Street, you'll turn left to go through the lobby. The Front Desk will be on your left.

REGISTRATION / GATHERING

The Chippewa Room, 2nd floor

PRESENTATIONS:

The Lafayette and Monterey Rooms, 2nd floor

KEYNOTE ADDRESS / FRIDAY & SATURDAY RECEPTIONS:

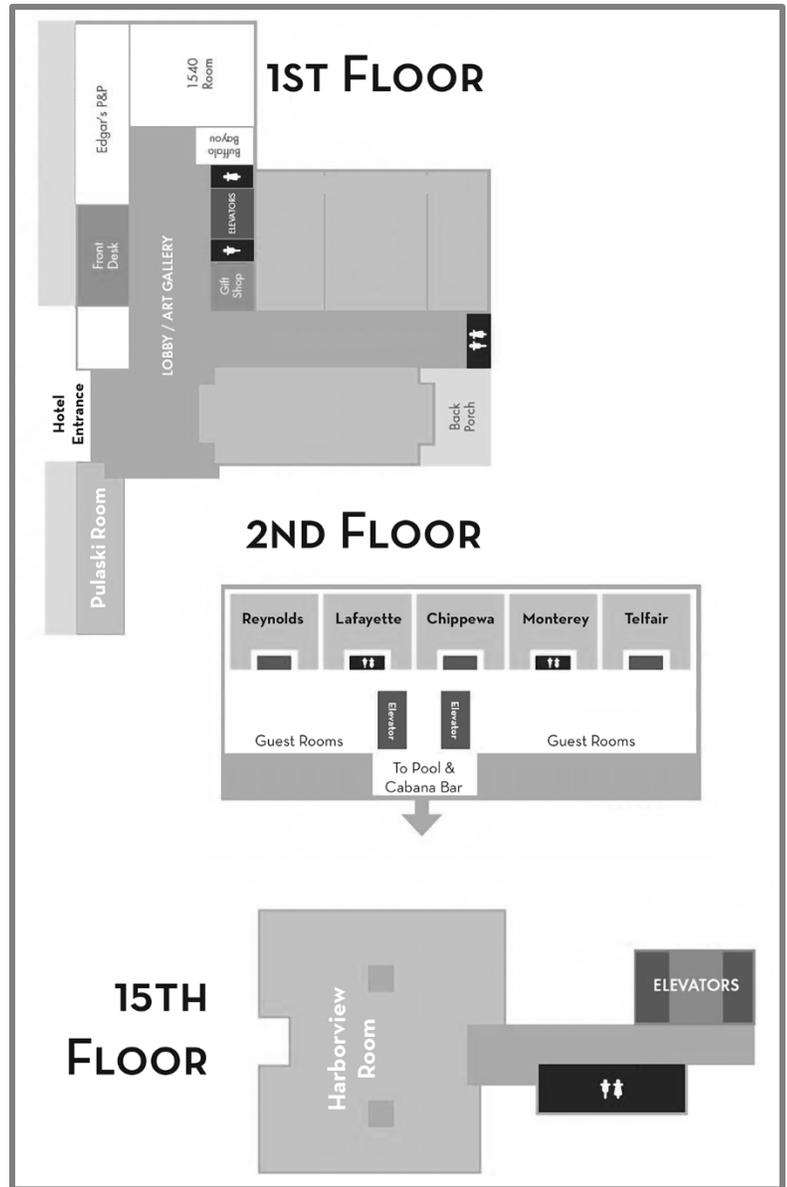
The Pulaski Room, 1st floor

FRIDAY LUNCH:

The Harborview Room, 15th floor

SATURDAY BREAKFAST:

The Chippewa Room, 2nd floor



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

8:00 am Registration Desk opens (Chippewa Room, 2nd floor)

All sessions and panels are held in the Lafayette and Monterey Rooms, 2nd floor

9:00 am Session A

PANEL A-1 THE AFRICAN ANGLE

Lafayette Room

Chair: Chandler Potter, Georgia Southern University

Contemporary African Writers in America

Simon Lewis, College of Charleston

Chronicling the Broken Heart: Women Abandoned in Novels by African-Born Authors

Thomas Jay Lynn, Pennsylvania State Berks

600,000 Dead, Millions to Follow: The Dismantling of U.S.A.I.D. in the Eyes of Physician-Writer Atul Gawande, and the Documentary *Rovina's Choice*

Laverne Nishihara, Indiana University East

PANEL A - 2 OPPRESSION AND RESISTANCE

Monterey Room

Chair: Cherly Duffus, Gardner-Webb University

Insurgency: Theorizing Resistance from the Border

Amanda Lagji, Pitzer College

Law's Afterlife: The Paradox of Colonial Rule and the Making of Hong Kong Civic Identity

Amanda Liang, University of Maryland, Baltimore

Landless 'Lunatics' and Cartography of Resistance in Manto and Mehta's *Toba Tek Singh*

Asra Nusrat, University of Georgia

10:15 am Break

10:30 am Session B

PANEL B - 3 ENERGY, POWER, AND DYSTOPIA

Lafayette Room

Chair: Stefanie Sevcik, Mercer University

America's Original Energy Fraud: Connections between Slavery, Reconstruction, and the Fossil Fuel Crisis

Madelyn Muschek, University of North Florida

Structures of Caste, Waste, and Power in Postcolonial Indian Science Fiction

Raina Bhagat, Hunter College, City University of New York

PANEL B - 4 **EMPIRE TALES**

Monterey Room

Chair: Grace Morrison, Georgia Southern University

Jane Austen, English Coloniality, and the Decolonial Potential of Adaptation

Iman Gareeboo, University of Miami

Empire and Absence: Collins' *The Woman in White*

Christian Cotten-Dixon, Georgia Southern University

Amos Tutuola's *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, and the Ending of Slavery in Yorubaland

John Rooks, Morris College

12:00 **Break**

12:15 pm **Lunch (Harborview Room, 15th floor)**

1:30 pm **Session C**

PANEL C - 5 **THE SUPERNATURAL: BELONGING AND RESISTANCE**

Lafayette Room

Chair: Christian Cotten-Dixon, Georgia Southern University

"Tools of Babylon": Postcolonial Governance and Embodied Memory

Tiffany Oharriz, University of Miami

Both/And: Postcolonial Haunting and the Supernatural in *The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny*

Cheryl Duffus, Gardner-Webb University

Myth, Memory, and the Sea: Decolonial Reimaginings in *The Mermaid of Black Conch*

Victoria Chang, University of the West Indies

PANEL C - 6 **READING RUSHDIE ROUNDTABLE**

Monterey Room

Chair: Hans-Georg Erney, Georgia Southern University

Respondents:

Amy Crutchfield, Georgia Southern University

Grace Morrison, Georgia Southern University

Rachel Whatley, Georgia Southern University

Kat Williams, Georgia Southern University

2:45 pm **Break**



3:00 pm Session D

PANEL D - 7 PRESERVATION: POLITICS AND ART

Lafayette Room

Chair: Simon Lewis, College of Charleston

Melodies and Memories: Cultural Resilience and Oral Tradition in Diasporic Families

Shreelina Ghosh, Gannon University

Politicizing Art, Aestheticizing Politics: Elif Shafak's Figure of the Nomad

Cameron Bushnell, Clemson University

Vernacular Intelligence Preserved along Ireland's National Famine Way

E. Moore Quinn, College of Charleston

PANEL D - 8 BLACK BATTLES: DEFINING AND COPING WITH A CHANGING WORLD

Monterey Room

Chair: Peggy Stevenson Ratliff, Claflin University

Leo Africanus's World

Alexander Fyfe, University of Georgia

Cohabiting with Tragedy: Slow Violence and Intergenerational Trauma in Kenyan Women's Climate Narratives

Stefanie Sevcik, Mercer University

The Renaissance of Resistance: Expressionism vs. Escapism in Music, Art, and Reality

Kandice Fowlkes, Clayton State University, and

Keeley Mitchell, Delaware County Community College

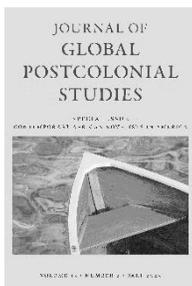
4:15 pm Break

4:30 pm Keynote Address (Pulaski Room, 1st floor)

GRAPHIC TESTIMONIES IN MUSLIM COMICS

Esra Mirze Santesso
University of Georgia

5:30 pm Reception (Pulaski Room, 1st floor)



The *Journal of Global Postcolonial Studies* publishes interdisciplinary and cross-cultural articles and interviews on literature, history, politics, and art whose focus, settings, or subjects involve colonialism and its aftermath, with an emphasis on the former British Empire. Its most recent issue focuses on Contemporary African Novelists in America. See more at <https://journals.upress.ufl.edu/jgps/index>

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

8:00 am Registration Desk opens (Chippewa Room, 2nd floor)

8:30 am Continental Breakfast (Chippewa Room, 2nd floor)

10:00 am Session E

PANEL E - 9 MEMORY, BODIES, ARCHIVES: RETHINKING POSTCOLONIAL FORM FROM NORTHEAST INDIA

Lafayette Room Chair: Tina Borah, University of Georgia

Women's Bodies as Sites of Violence: Arupa Patangia Kalita's *The Story of Felanee* and Temsula Ao's *These Hills Called Home*

Prapti Kakati, University of Georgia

Before: Autofiction, Memory, and Small-Town Assam

Priyadarshini Oshin Gogoi, University of Georgia

Archival Form and Experiment in Janice Pariat's *Everything the Light Touches*

Tina Borah, University of Georgia

PANEL E - 10 THE HOME AND THE WORLD

Monterey Room Chair: Mitali Wong, Claflin University

The Long Road Home: Covid Migrants and the Precarity of Home in Anubhav Sinha's *Bheed*

Lopamudra Basu, University of Wisconsin-Stout

Decentering the Avant-Garde: Exploring Arun Kolatkar's English Translations of Marathi Abhang

Nidhi Surendranath, University of Notre Dame

Operation Sindoor Drops a Bomb on the Cricket Field: The Curious Case of the Imagined Trophy

Kaustav Mukherjee, Gannon University

11:30 am Lunch (on your own) see inside back cover for restaurant recommendations

1:30 pm Session F

PANEL F - 11 BLACK IDENTITY

Lafayette Room Chair: Morayo Akingbelue, Georgia Southern University

Hip Hop: The Modern-Day Slave Hymnal

Kandice Fowlkes, Clayton State University

The Invention of Self, the Invention of Black Female Modernism: Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack, Monkey*

Matthew Miller, University of South Carolina Aiken

Transcending Black Sisterhood: The Poetics of Solidarity in Chimamanda Adichie's *Dream Count*

Hapsatou Wane, Georgia Southern University

PANEL F - 12

MAGIC REALISM/MAGIC REALITY

Monterey Room

Chair: Chandler Hanton, Georgia Southern University

Cultural Declarations of Identity and Trauma through Magic Realism: Postcolonial Wounds in *Babu Bangladesh!*, *Shurjo's Clan*, and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

Sonia Sharmin, Augusta University

Recontextualizing and Reframing Juan Rulfo's *Pedro Paramo* Alongside Wilson Harris's *Palace of the Peacock*

Tiffany Tabora, University of Miami

Knifed and Shattered: A Postcolonial Portal Fantasy, Episode I

Hans-Georg Erney, Georgia Southern University

2:45 pm Break

3:00 pm Session G

PANEL G - 13

COLONIAL TROPES AND IDENTITY

Lafayette Room

Chair: Hapsatou Wane, Georgia Southern University

Postcolonial Existential Crises: How Masculinity and Colonial Status Affect Characters' Inner Turmoil

Angela Whitlow, Virginia Tech

White Hawaii: The Descendants, Aloha, and the Problematics of the Obama Era

Jerod Hollyfield, Middle Tennessee State University

Theatrical Responses to Language Loss in Ireland and Cajun Louisiana

Claire Cowart, Southeastern Louisiana University

Dancing with Destiny: Luck, Religion, and Gambling in Settler Mining Narratives

Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, Virginia Tech

PANEL G - 14

THE BILDUNGSROMAN'S POSTCOLONIAL TURN: LEGACIES, REINVENTIONS, AND IMAGINING JUST FUTURES

Monterey Room

Chair: Arnab Dutta Roy, Florida Gulf Coast University

Andor as Postcolonial Bildungsroman: Against Colonialist Assimilation and Towards Global South Solidarities

Arnab Dutta Roy, Florida Gulf Coast University

"Space is the Place": *Binti* and the Nomadic Posthuman Bildungsroman

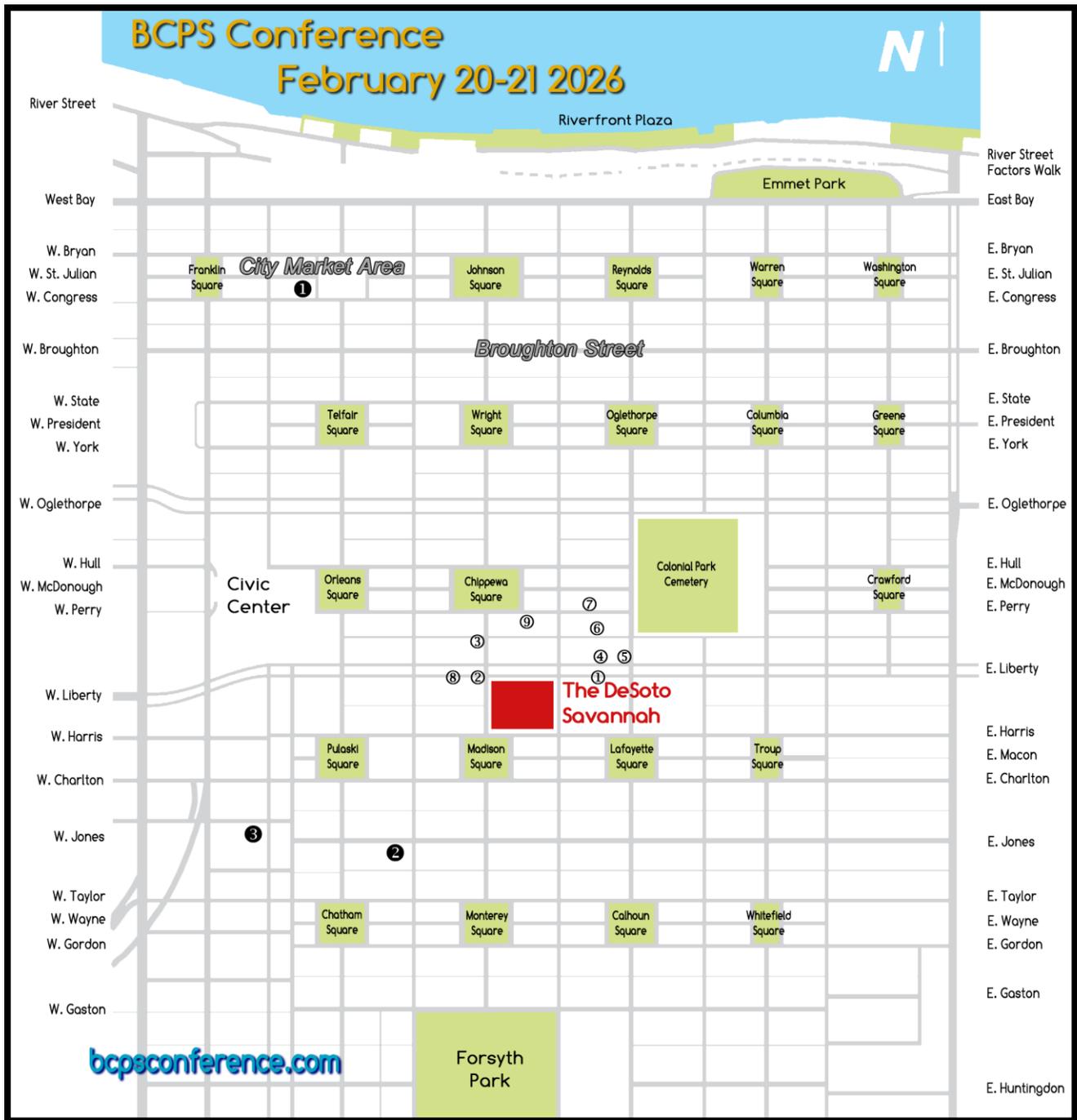
Ericka Hoagland, Stephen F. Austin State University

The Absurd Bildungsroman: *The World with Its Mouth Open*

Amrita Ghosh, University of Central Florida

4:30 pm Closing Reception (Pulaski Room, 1st floor)

Notes



DINING OPTIONS

Right outside the door:

- ① **Treyler Park Hitch.** Open 11 am-1 am. "Cozy/cool vibes reminiscent of a whisky library or a chic, modern Saloon."
- ② **The Public Kitchen & Bar.** Lunch: 11-3; Dinner: 4:30-10. "Elevated" casual farm-to-table dining.
- ③ **Six Pence Pub.** Open 11 am-11 pm. "The most authentic English pub in Georgia."
- ④ **Savoy Society.** Open 4-midnight. "Global dishes & cocktails offered in a late-night, comfy bar & restaurant."
- ⑤ **J. Christopher's.** Open 7 am-2 pm. Breakfast and Lunch. "Familiar Food . . . With Flair."
- ⑥ **Zunzi's.** Open 11 am-11 pm. "Globally inspired hearty meals at this offbeat counter-serve eatery."
- ⑦ **Emporium Kitchen & Wine Market.** Brunch: 7-3; Dinner: 5-10. "American brasserie located within the exquisite Perry Lane Hotel."
- ⑧ **Mellow Mushroom.** Open 11 am-11 pm. "Funky, art-filled chain pizzeria featuring craft beer, calzones & creative stone-baked pizzas."
- ⑨ **Fire Street Food.** Open 11 am-10 pm. "Colorful, contemporary counter-serve offering Thai plates, sushi, burgers, and more."

Worth the walk:

- ① **Wexford, Savannah's Irish Pub.** Open 11 am-10 pm. Named *USA Today's* "Best Restaurant in Georgia, 2025."
- ② **Mrs. Wilkes' Dining Room.** Lunch only, 11 am-2 pm. Home-cooked Southern food served boardinghouse style.
- ③ **Crystal Beer Parlor.** Open 11 am-9 pm. "Cozy American bistro & bar in a century-old former grocery store."



Support provided by
The Georgia Southern
Department of English

Graduate Coordinator
Amy Crutchfield

Conference Hosts
Lindsey Chappell
Hans-Georg Erney
Joe Pellegrino
Hapsatou Wane