



ENTANGLED HISTORIES,
SHARED FUTURES:

SOUTH ASIA AND AFRICA

**ZANZIBAR,
TANZANIA**

June 4th-5th 2026

CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

Yale MACMILLAN CENTER
Council on African Studies

Cajetan Iheka
Cristin Siebert
Rita Offiaeli

Yale MACMILLAN CENTER
South Asian Studies Council

Kasturi Gupta
Rohit De



scan for conference website

Conference Location: Turaco Spice Tree Hotel, Stone Town, Zanzibar

PARTICIPANTS

Amrita Pande, *University of Cape Town*

Professor at the department of Sociology at University of Cape Town, South Africa. Her research lies at the intersection of globalization and the intimate, with a focus on reproductive mobility, repro-genetic justice, and mobile ethnography. Her most recent books include *Epistemic Justice and the Postcolonial University* (With Chaturvedi and Daya, Wits and NYU Press, 2023) and *Birth Controlled: Selective Reproduction and Neo Eugenics in India and South Africa* (Manchester Univ Press, 2022). Her award winning book *Wombs in Labor: Transnational Surrogacy in India* (Columbia University Press 2014) has been made into a multimedia performance, *Made in India*: (Global Studies Production, Denmark), which she performs across the world. She leads the Women Walk at Midnight in South Africa, to normalize the presence of women in public spaces at night.



Annachiara Raia, *Lieden Univeristy*

Assistant Professor in African literature at Leiden University. Her research interests focus on Swahili Ajami literatures, grassroot literacies and Afro-Asian literary connections amid coastal and insular communities of the Indian Ocean. Her recent research projects – UMADA and Portable Islam – have been supported by the UCLA’s Modern Endangered Archive Programme and the Dutch Research Council. At the African Studies Centre Leiden, she co-chairs the Collaborative Research Group African Language Archives: Unpacking Local Epistemologies. In partnership with radio broadcasters, publishers and poets from East Africa, she runs the TiaSauti@Lab (“GiveVoice@Lab”), a digital heritage atelier to bring Swahili pocket literature to life again.



Babere Kerata Chacha, *Laikipia Unvierstiy*

Associate Professor of African History and Dean, School of Humanities and Development Studies at Laikipia University, Kenya. He is the founder and coordinator of the university’s Centre for Human Rights. Chacha has held prestigious fellowships at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London; St. Antony’s College, University of Oxford; Wolfson College, University of Cambridge; and the University of New South Wales, Australia. In 2022, he was awarded the Sarah Bartmann Fellowship at the Khoisan Centre, University of Cape Town. Chacha has also taught as an adjunct lecturer at the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, and Egerton University. His research interests span political assassinations, human rights, truth and reconciliation processes, religion, and sexuality.

Bani Gill, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology/ University of Tübingen

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology and Junior Professor at the Institute for Sociology, University of Tübingen, Germany. She is a qualitative sociologist grounded in ethnographic sensibilities and a regional focus on South Asia and contemporary Africa- India encounters. Her research on migration from the African continent to India has examined the racialised logics underpinning mobility, security, and belonging, while her current project, Infrastructures of Expulsion, ethnographically traces deportation related policing practices directed at differently racialised bodies in contemporary urban India. Her research interests include urbanisms, migration, race and racialization, gender, and the sociology of law, bureaucracy, and the state. Dr Gill received her PhD from the University of Copenhagen. She is also a Research Affiliate at the Centre on Migration, Policy, and Society, University of Oxford.



Bedito Machava, Yale University

Benedito Machava is originally from Mozambique. Since 2020, he has been an Assistant Professor of African History at Yale University. He received his PhD from the University of Michigan in 2018 and was a postdoctoral fellow at Princeton University between 2018 and 2019. His research focuses on liberation struggles, decolonization, nation-building, socialism, and socialist experiments in Africa, as well as China-Africa relations. He is the author of *The Morality of Revolution: Reeducation Camps and the Politics of Punishment in Socialist Mozambique, 1968-1990* (Ohio University Press, 2025).



Bettina Ng'weno, University of California, Davis

Professor and award-winning teacher in African American and African Studies at the UC, Davis. Trained as an anthropologist at Stanford and Johns Hopkins University and with foundation in agricultural science and management at UC Davis her research and teaching interests include space, property, social justice, citizenship, cities, states, race and ethnicity within Latin America, Africa and the Indian Ocean region. She was previously co-director of the Mellon Research Initiative "Reimagining Indian Ocean Worlds" at the University of California, Davis. Her books include: "No Place Like Home in a New City: Anti-urbanism and Life in Nairobi" and "Turf Wars, Citizenship and Territory in the Contemporary State;" and the edited volumes "Reimagining Indian Ocean Worlds" and "Developing Global Leaders: Insights from African Case Studies".



Caio de Araujo, University of the Witwatersrand

Research Fellow at the Wits Centre for Diversity Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. He was previously a postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre for Indian Studies in Africa, Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, and Centre for Humanities Research. His research interests includes histories of race and anti-racism, histories of Afro-Asian decolonization, histories of gender and sexuality, and environmental histories of Southern Africa. With a career grounded in both research and activism, he also serves as Research Officer at the Other Foundation, Southern Africa's LGBTI community foundation. He is the editor, with Pamila Gupta, of the book *Regional Drift: Remapping Africa's Southern Oceans*.

Cajetan Iheka, Yale University

Professor of English at Yale University, where he chairs the Council on African Studies and specializes in African and Caribbean literatures, ecocriticism, ecomedia, postcolonial literatures, and world literatures. He is the author or editor of seven books, including *African Ecomedia: Network Forms, Planetary Politics* (Duke UP 2021) and *Horizontal Comparison: Africa, the Caribbean, and the Making of Black World Literature* (U of Chicago P, 2026).



Dilip Menon, University of the Witwatersrand

Primarily a historian of South Asia engaged with questions of social and cultural history with a focus on caste. Over the last decade, my work has engaged with epistemologies of the Global South and maritime histories. This has resulted in edited volumes such as *Changing Theory: Concepts from the Global South* (Routledge: 2021) and *Oceans as Method* (Routledge 2022). This work was recognised by the Falling Walls Foundation Prize for the Social Sciences and Humanities in 2022.



Issa Shivji, University of Dar es Salaam

Professor Emeritus of Law at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. He taught law at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) for thirty-six years (1970-2006). He is the advocate of the High Court of Tanzania and also the High Court of Zanzibar. He has been an active legal practitioner in Public Interest Litigation for over three decades. Shivji was the founding Mwalimu Nyerere Professorial Chair In Pan-African Studies at UDSM (2008-2013). He was the Director of the Nyerere Resource Centre at the Commission for Science and Technology (2014-2019). He chaired the Presidential Commission of Enquiry into Land Tenure Matters In Tanzania (1990-91). Issa Shivji has published over 20 books and numerous book chapters and articles. His latest book is a three-volume biography of Julius Nyerere called *Development as Rebellion* co-authored with other two colleagues. Shivji's monograph of essays in Kiswahili Barua Kwa Mpendwa Azimio (Letter to Dear Azimio) has just been published this year.



Mahmood Kooria, University of Edinburgh

Mahmood Kooria is Lecturer in the History of the Indian Ocean World before 1750 CE at the School of History, Classics and Archaeology, University of Edinburgh, and Director of the Edinburgh Centre for Global History. Earlier he held teaching and research positions at Leiden University (the Netherlands), University of Bergen (Norway), Ashoka University (India), National Islamic University Jakarta (Indonesia), International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) and African Studies Centre (ASC), Leiden (the Netherlands), Dutch Institute in Rabat (Morocco). He did his PhD in Global History at the Leiden University Institute for History in 2016, authored *Islamic Law in Circulation: Shāfiʿī Texts across the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), and co-edited *Malabar in the Indian Ocean World: Cosmopolitanism in a Maritime Historical Region* (Oxford University Press, 2018) and *Islamic Law in the Indian Ocean: Texts, Ideas and Practices* (Routledge, 2022).



Mary Mtumwa Khatib, State University of Zanzibar

The Head of TROCEN and a lecturer at the State University of Zanzibar. Her primary expertise lies in the intersection of climate change, gender issues, oceanography, and natural resource policy. She is currently the Co-PI for the major DANIDA project, "Himili Pamoja," dedicated to implementing gender-transformative climate change adaptation strategies in Tanzania to support sustainable livelihoods and promote justice.

Pamila Gupta, *University of the Free State*

Research Professor at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa, affiliated with the Centre for Gender and Africa Studies (CGAS). She was formerly Full Professor based at WiSER at the University of the Witwatersrand (2008-2022). She holds a PhD in Anthropology from Columbia University. Her research and writing interests include Portuguese colonial and Jesuit missionary history in India; diasporas, islands, heritage and design in the Indian Ocean; decolonization, photography, tailoring and visual cultures in East Africa (Mozambique and Zanzibar); and architecture, infrastructure, and affect in South Africa. She is the author of three monographs and three edited volumes. Her latest book "Experiments in the Dark: Visualizing Capital Art Studio (Zanzibar)" is forthcoming with the University of Michigan Press (2026) where she is also a co-editor for its 'African Perspectives' Series.



Patrick Michael Ogeto, *Laikipia University*

Dual PhD candidate in History at Laikipia University (Kenya) and in African Studies at the University of Cape Town (South Africa). His research explores Indian Ocean cultural exchanges, heritage studies, and the historical entanglements that link East Africa with South Asia. He has published and presented widely on African cultural heritage, music history, colonial encounters, and the politics of restitution. His current work focuses on the restitution of African artefacts and human crania looted during colonialism, examining how these removals disrupted cultural memory and continue to shape debates on ethical return, historical justice, and postcolonial identity. He brings a deeply interdisciplinary perspective that bridges history, anthropology, and cultural studies.



Prita Meier, *New York University*

Associate Professor of African Art History at New York University. Her research centers Africa's Indian Ocean worlds and examines how images, objects, and architectures shape experiences of empire, mobility, and modernity. She is the author of *Swahili Port Cities: The Architecture of Elsewhere* (Indiana University Press, 2016) and *The Surface of Things: A History of Photography from the Swahili Coast* (Princeton University Press, 2024), shortlisted for the African Studies Association's Best Book Prize and the Bethwell A. Ogot Book Prize. She co-curated the international exhibition *World on the Horizon: Swahili Arts across the Indian Ocean* (2016-17) and co-edited the accompanying volume. She was also co-principal investigator of Indian Ocean Exchanges, a multi-sited research initiative funded by the Getty Foundation's Connecting Art Histories program (2021-24).



Renu Modi, *University of Pretoria*

Research Associate at the Centre for Asian Studies in Africa, and has previously served as Professor and Director of the Centre for African Studies at the University of Mumbai. Her teaching and research interests focus on India-Africa relations, Indian Ocean studies, and migration and diasporas. She has received several national and international research grants and fellowships from; the Research Council of Norway (University of Oslo), the Margaret Anstee Centre for Global Studies, (University of Cambridge, UK), the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute Fellowship (University of Victoria, Canada), South-South Exchange Programme on the History of Development (SEPHIS, Netherlands), DAAD Fellowship (Germany). She held visiting fellowships at the Nordic Africa Institute (Sweden) and the Centre for Refugee Studies (University of Oxford). She has also served as a consultant to the Inspection Panel (World Bank). Dr Modi has published several books, edited volumes, monographs, journal articles, and e-publications. She has also directed educational documentary films, including *Common Threads: Cloth Made in India for Africa*.

Meera Venkatachalam, *University of Mumbai; University of Pretoria*

Anthropologist and historian. Her work is focused on the circulation of ideas, capital, and people between Africa and South Asia. She is the co-author of 'Common Threads: Fabrics Made in India for Africa' (ASCL: 2020); and co-editor of 'India's Development Diplomacy and Soft Power in Africa' (Boydell & Brewer: 2021).



Muneer Aram Kuzhiyan, *Aligarh Muslim University*

Assistant Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University, India. His current research focuses on the cultural poetics of diverse Arabi Malayalam literary genres on the Malabar Coast against the larger backdrop of similar literary formations in the Indian Ocean World. His recent publications include "Amphibious Poetics on the Malabar Coast: Kappappattu and the Chronotope of the Ship in Mappila Literary Culture" in *The Routledge Companion to Literature and the Global South* (2024) and 'Toward a Vernacular Globalectics: "Minor" Illustrations from South India,' *South Asian Review* (2022). He is a recipient of the Meenakshi Mukherjee Memorial (MMM) Prize 2025, awarded by the Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (IACLALS) and the Fulbright Fellowship at the Department of Anthropology at UC Berkeley (2013-2014). He has also directed an ICSSR-funded Research Project on women and Arabi Malayalam song culture.



Natasha Shivji, *University of Cape Town*

Dr. Natasha I. Shivji teaches in the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Cape Town. Her work focuses on questions of land, pre colonial thought and questions of state formation. She was previously the Director of the Institute for Research in Intellectual Histories of Africa in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. She has held teaching positions at the University of Dar es Salaam and the University of Dodoma in Tanzania and a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Cambridge. She is currently the Africa Book Review Editor for the *Journal of Asian and African Studies* and has previously served as co editor of the *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*.



Nishat Zaidi, *Jamia Millia Islamia*

Professor of English and Director of the Sarojini Naidu Centre for Women's Studies at Jamia Millia Islamia. Her work consistently probes vernacular spaces and articulations as exemplars of Euro-modern exteriority from where decolonial pathways can be forged. She has authored/ edited/ translated 20 books (by publishers such as Routledge and Oxford University Press) and her research papers and translations have appeared in national and international journals. She has supervised more than 20 doctoral research, and has been a recipient of several grants through which she has spearheaded international collaborations with institutes such as CISA, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, SAI, Heidelberg University, and Michigan State University. She is currently a coordinator of a Study Circle on decoloniality at Nordic Summer University.

Saada Wahab, *The State University of Zanzibar*

Lecturer and researcher in Historical, Social and Cultural Anthropology at the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) since 2011. She holds PhD (2023) in Social Science from the University of Göttingen, Germany; Master of Arts in History (2010) from the University of Dar-es- Salaam, Tanzania and Bachelor of Arts with Education (2007) from SUZA. Dr. Wahab has conducted archival research and ethnographic fieldwork in Zanzibar and authored and co-authored books and articles, including *Slavery Emancipation and Post-emancipation in Zanzibar* 2016; *Suria: Its Relevance to Slavery in Zanzibar in the Nineteenth Century* 2016; *Transition from Slavery in Zanzibar and Mauritius*, 2016; *The History of Indians in Zanzibar from the 1870s to 1963*, 2022; Forthcoming, 2025- *The Manumission in Zanzibar: The Role of Islamic Teachings and Cultural Practices*; *Women, slavery, and marriage in twentieth-century Tanganyika* (co-author with Liebst, 2025).



Shobana Shankar, *Stony Brook University*

Professor of History at Stony Brook, State University of New York. Her most recent book *An Uneasy Embrace: Africa, India and the Spectre of Race* (Hurst/Oxford, 2021), the first history of how race and racialization have brought Africans and Indians together yet also driven them apart, was a finalist for the P. Sterling Stuckey Prize of the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora and the International Studies Association's Global Development Section Book Award and longlisted by the International Convention of Asia Scholars. She has served as lead convener of the Afro-Asian interactions component of NYU's Global Asia program. Her co-edited special issue of the journal *Africa*, "Media and World Making between West Africa and India," includes her article "Touching Scenes: African-Indian Intimacy Imagined in the Contested Ahmadiyya Mission," which focuses on how black and white photography became part of a complex visual repertoire of Afro-Asian emotional registers



Rohit De, *Yale University*

Associate Professor of History and Chair of the South Asian Studies Council at Yale. Rohit is a lawyer and historian of modern South Asia and focuses on the legal history of the Indian subcontinent and the common law world. He is the author of *A People's Constitution: The Everyday Life of Law in the Indian Republic* (2018) and with Ornit Shani, *Assembling India's Constitution: A New Democratic History* (2025). Supported by a Carnegie Fellowship, his current research project follows the careers of lawyers who defended unpopular causes across borders and over time, to offer an alternate history of universal rights and civil liberties that arise out of Asia and Africa and is mediated through India, Chinese and Caribbean diasporas.



Ruchi Chaturvedi, *University of Cape Town*

Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Cape Town. She is the author of *Violence of Democracy: Interparty Conflict in South India* (Duke University Press and Orient Blackswan Press, 2023) and co-editor (with Shari Daya and Amrita Pande) of *Epistemic Justice and the Postcolonial University* (Wits University Press, 2023). Her research focuses on cultures of democracy, popular politics, and political violence in India and South Africa. The interface of race and caste, and the histories of transcontinental dialogues against racial thinking and caste are her other areas of inquiry. Together with Victoria Collis-Buthelezi, she has co-edited the recent special issue of *Critical Times* on 'Race and Caste: Hierarchy and Universality.'

