

Tamara Surani Fernando

EMPLOYMENT

- 2023-present Assistant Professor in the History of the Global South, History Faculty, Stony Brook University, New York.
Associated Faculty, Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, SBU
Affiliated Faculty, Africana Studies, SBU
- 2021-2023 Past & Present Postdoctoral Scholar, Institute for Historical Research, UK.

EDUCATION

- 2022 University of Cambridge, Ph.D., History: *Molluscs and Men: Pearling Labour and Environments in the Indian Ocean 1880-1925*.
- 2017 University of Cambridge, MPhil., Early Modern History, First Class
- 2016 Harvard University, B.A., History and Literature, *magna cum laude* with highest honors

TEACHING

University of SUNY Stony Brook

- 2023-2024 History/Asian Studies 340 "Animals & Imperialism in Asia" History 301, "How did Science become Western?" History 340, "Flows of History: Rivers in South Asian & Middle Eastern History" History 516 Graduate Theme Seminar, "Global Labour History."

University of Cambridge, UK

- 2019-2022 Lecturer, "The History of Bahrain," "History of Sri Lanka," "Science," and "Slavery" for *Islands and Beaches: The Pacific and Indian Oceans in the long 19th century*.
Supervisor, *Empires and World History from the 15th C. to World War One*.
Seminar Leader, "Oceans in World History," Theory and Practice Course.

PUBLICATIONS

"Environments" in Sujit Sivasundaram and Nira Wickramasinghe eds. *Handbook of Modern Sri Lankan History* (Tambapanni Academic Press: forthcoming)

[with Brooke Penaloza-Patzak], "Making Science of Things" Special Issue, *History of Science* (forthcoming), Guest Editors Introduction."

[with Brooke Penaloza-Patzak], "Archiving Mollusks, Articulating Difference: Mollusks as Scientific Objects in Studies of Human Difference," *History of Science* (in progress).

[with Sarah Qidwai], "Debating Evolution and Religion in Nineteenth-Century South Asia" in *Evolutionary Theories and Religious Traditions: National, Transnational, and Global Perspectives, 1800-1920*, edited by Bernard Lightman and Sarah Qidwai (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2023)

[with Alexis Rider and Felice Physioc] "Flows of History: Water in the Past and Present Archive", *Past & Present* 261:1 (August 2023): 1-31.

"Mapping Oysters and Making Oceans Across the Northern Indian Ocean 1880-1925", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 65:1 (January 2023): 53-80.

“Seeing like the Sea: A Multispecies History of the Ceylon Pearl Fishery”, *Past & Present* 254:1 (February 2022): 127-160.

“පර්සියානු බොක්කෙහි සිට ලංකාව වෙත මුතු කිමිදෙන්නන්ගේ සංක්‍රමණ, 1881-1925” [The Migration of Persian Gulf Pearl Divers to Ceylon, 1881-1925], *ප්‍රවාද* 35 [*Pravada*, Journal of the Social Scientists Association, Sri Lanka] (August 2020)

REVIEWS

Animal History; H-net; Historical Sciences in the Natural Sciences. Journal of Early Modern History. History: Journal of the Historical Association. South Asian History and Culture; History Australia; History of the Family.

FELLOWSHIPS

2022-2023	Rachel Carson Center Landhaus Fellow
2022	Visiting Fellow, Doha Institute, Qatar
2022	Scholar-in-Residence, Georgetown University, Qatar
2021-2023	<i>Past & Present</i> fellow, Institute of Historical Research, London, UK
2018-2021	Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust Scholarship
2019	Ira Unamboowe Graduate Student Travel Grant, American Institute for Lankan Studies
2019	Smuts Memorial Fund, University of Cambridge
2019	Faculty Fieldwork Fund, University of Cambridge
2019	Mary Euphrasia Mosley, Sir Bartle Frere and Worts Travelling Scholars Funds, University of Cambridge
2019	AISLS Language Fund
2018	Jesus College Graduate Research Fund
2016	John Eliot Scholarship, Harvard-Cambridge Fellow

AWARDS

- 2023 [joint winner] Prince Consort & Thirwall Prize and Seeley Medal (2023) for best PhD dissertation involving original historical research, University of Cambridge
- 2022 Alexander Prize for Best Article, Royal Historical Society (RHS), UK.
- 2022 Alice Hamilton Prize, best article published outside of *Environmental History*, American Society for Environmental History (ASEH).
- 2016 Reuben A. Brower Memorial Prize in the Humanities, Harvard University
- 2015 Oliver Dabney Junior Award for Excellence in History and Literature, Harvard University

TALKS

- 2024 October 7, Comments, Kalyani Ramnath book talk, *Boats in a Storm*, American Institute for Sri Lanka Studies (AISLS), New Books series.
- 2024 April 26, “Reading *Ilm al-Bahr* in the Twentieth Century,” University of Minnesota, History of Science, Technology and Medicine colloquium series, Minnesota.
- 2024 April 3-7, “Changing Climates: Environmental Histories of Extraction and Speculation” Panel, ASEH, Denver, USA.
- 2024 March 14, “Shallow Blue Empire,” Annual Howell Lecture, Department of History, University of Virginia.

- 2024 February 12, "Fishing for the Past: Histories of Maritime Archaeology and Anthropology in the Indian Ocean," Indian Ocean Seminar Series, Oxford University.
- 2024 January 18, "From Ilm al-bahr to Oceanography: Reading Scientific Practice in the Indian Ocean World in the early twentieth century", World History Seminar, University of Cambridge, UK
- 2024 January 10, "Commodity History and the History of Science: Reading Mathematical Practice, Navigation and Astronomy in the Natural Pearl Trade," Global History and Culture Centre seminar, University of Warwick, UK
- 2023 December 08-09, "New Ocean Literacies: Histories below the Water Line," BITS Goa, India.
- 2023 November 3, "Globalizing Pearl Labor: Race and Migration across the Indian Ocean's Pearl Fisheries", "Extraction, Industry, and Labor in the Global Nineteenth Century," Nineteenth Century Group, Rutgers University.
- 2023 September 29, "Vernacular Seascapes: Theory from below the Waves of the Indian Ocean", Keynote Lecture, Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference, Stonybrook University, New York.
- 2023 July 13-14, "New Ocean Literacies: Historicizing Biodiversity in Indian Ocean History," Histories of Biodiversity in Asia, National University of Singapore, Singapore.
- 2023 June 28, "Mollusks between Resource, Specimen, and Race, 1860-1920," "Making Science of Things: Objects and Knowledge between the Natural and Human Sciences" workshop, University of Vienna, Austrian Science Foundation, Vienna, Austria.
- 2023 June 20, "History below the Water Line: writing history across the Indian Ocean," Sijal Institute, Amman, Jordan.
- 2023 March 31, "The Pearl Bearing Reef in International Law and Territoriality at Sea," Program in Agrarian Studies, Yale University, NH, USA.
- 2023 March 24, "Resisting Nature: Imperial Projects and the Limits of Environmental Knowledge," [panel discussion], American Society for Environmental History, Boston, USA.
- 2023 March 3, "Seeing like the Sea," discussion, SSRC Group, "Archiving Environmental Change," Online.
- 2023 February 27, "Placing the *Khaliji* context in World History," Sijal Institute, Amman, Jordan.
- 2023 January 5, "Submarine History as Method," [Program Committee panel] American Historical Association, Philadelphia, USA.
- 2022, September 20, "Embodied Knowledge(s) in Ocean Science," Science and Technology in Asia seminar series, Harvard University, USA.
- 2022 June 2-4, "Science at Sea: Place-making and Scientific Research," at "Let's Get to Work," Gordon Cain Conference, Philadelphia, USA.
- 2022 May 5-6, "The Persistence of the Archaic? Diving for Pearls in the 20th Century," at "The Labour of Globalisation: Maritime Work and Technology, 1750-1950 Conference," University of Exeter, UK.
- 2022 March 21 [with Trish Kahle], "Energy In/Across Place: Thinking the Coal Mine and Pearl Reef together," Georgetown University, Doha, Qatar.

- 2022 March 16, “Reading *Tarikh al-Ghaus al-lu’lu’* from elsewhere?” Graduate Seminar, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies and Arab Center for Policy Research, Doha, Qatar.
- 2021 October 15, “Of Molluscs and Men: Pearl Diving Labour in the Indian Ocean” at Cambridge-Columbia Oceanic Histories Workshop, Cambridge, UK.
- 2021 October 1, “Historicizing Marine Science in Ceylon 1800-1925” at American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies New Research in History Series.
- 2021 June 18 “Venturing Underwater: Racialised Regimes of Labour in Indian Ocean Pearl Diving 1880-1925”, at The Sixth European Congress on World and Global History, Turku, Finland.
- 2021 June 17 [with Sarah Qidwai] “South Asia’s Place in the History of Science, Religion and Evolutionary in the Nineteenth Century,” at Global History of Evolution workshop, York University, Toronto, Canada.
- 2021 January 28-30 “Indian Ocean Mobilities: Labour, Animals and Science” and “Environmental Approaches to the Oceans” at The Indian Ocean World Conference: Taking Stock, Looking Ahead.
- 2020 November 17 “Marine Biology at the Pearl Fishery of Ceylon 1880-1925”, at History of Ocean Science Working Group, Consortium for History of Science, Technology and Medicine.
- 2020 February 27-28 “Cultivating the Seafloor: Colonial and Indigenous Knowledge-Making at the Pearl Fisheries in the Indian Ocean”, at Colonial Knowledges: Environment and Logistics in the Creation of Knowledge in the British Colonies, University of Manchester, UK
- 2020 February 16-18, “Reading Two Pearl Fisheries Together: *Mahar* Oysters and Migrant Divers in the Indian Ocean 1887-1925”, at Oceanic Circularities: The Indian Ocean in the Modern World, Georgetown University, Qatar
- 2020 January 27 “The Pearl Fishery of Ceylon as a Maritime Assemblage 1799-1925”, at Cabinet of Natural History Seminar, Cambridge, UK
- 2019 November 14 “Embodied Labour? Reading maritime work underwater”, Newnham History Society, Cambridge, UK
- 2019 November 09 “Pearl Fisheries as Alternative Oceanic Sites?”, Oxford Colonial Ports and Global History Network, Oxford University, UK
- 2019 October “The Deep Dive: The Labouring Body Underwater at the Pearl Fishery of Ceylon 1856-1925”, and “Mannar as a Labour Frontier: Recalibrating Island Space through an Environmental Approach to the Pearl Fishery”, Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA
- 2019 August 05-06 “Re-Considering Sri Lankan Collective Identities in the Context of Labour Migration: Situating Pearl Divers from the Persian Gulf in Ceylon 1881-1925”, ILS Conference, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2019 April “Globalizing Labour? The Migration of Pearl Divers from Kuwait to the Gulf of Mannar, 1880-1925”, Radboud University, Netherlands
- 2019 January “Terrains of Labour: Pearl Divers at the Pearl Fishery in the Gulf of Mannar 1880-1900”, Sri Lanka Day, Cambridge University, UK

PANELS AND WORKSHOPS

- 2023 June 24- 01 July, Panel Co-organizer [with Brooke Penaloza-Patzak], “Making Science of Things: Objects and Knowledge in and between the Natural and Human Sciences,” University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria.
- 2023 January, Panel Organiser [with Lisa Han], “Histories below the Water Line”, American Historical Association, Philadelphia, USA
- 2021 Panel Co-Organiser [with Taushif Kara], “Ideas and peoples across the waters of the Western Indian Ocean”, The Sixth European Congress on World and Global History, Turku, Finland
- 2020 Co-Convenor, November 11 [with Michael Edwards], “Axes of Difference in the study of Burma/Myanmar”, Online Workshop, Cambridge University
- 2019 Panel Co-Organiser [with Mark Balmforth], “Caste, Commodity, and Migration: Reappraising the History of Northern Sri Lanka through Labor” at Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA
- 2019 May 17-18 Conference Organiser, “Liminal Borders: Constructing and Deconstructing Borders in World History”, University of Cambridge
- 2019 January 30, Co-organiser, “Lanka: Anthropologies, Histories, Politics”, one-day interdisciplinary workshop, Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge
- 2018-2019 Convener, World History Workshop Series, University of Cambridge

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES

- 2024 Executive Committee Member, SUNY Stony Brook, History Department
- 2023 – 2024 Steering Committee, Stony Brook Initiative for the Historical Social Studies (IHSS)
- 2023 Undergraduate Education Committee, SUNY Stony Brook, History Department
- 2020 (ongoing) Host on “The Indian Ocean World”, *New Books Network* podcast series

PUBLIC HISTORY

- 2024 November [with Praveen Tilakaratne], “Settler Tourism” (forthcoming)
- 2023 October, “Mapping Oysters and Making Oceans” Indian Ocean World Podcast, Indian Ocean World Center, <https://podcasts.apple.com/at/podcast/tamara-fernando-mapping-oysters-and-making-oceans-in/id1632477554?i=1000627001107>
- 2021 April [with Kalyani Ramnath], “Histories of the Enslaved in the Indian Ocean World: In Conversation with Nira Wickramasinghe,” on *Borderlines, Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East (CSSAME)*, <https://www.borderlines-cssaame.org/posts/2021/4/2/histories-of-the-enslaved-in-the-indian-ocean-world-in-conversation-with-nira-wickramasinghe>
- 2021 April, “Ecology’s Ghosts” in *Hypocrite Reader*, Issue 97, <https://hypocritereader.com/97/ecologys-ghosts>
- 2021, “Urban and Littoral: Reading Coastal Labour” on *Alainagaram* [wave city] *Podcast*, LSE, hosted by Niranjana Ramesh, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/Geography-and-Environment/research/alainagaram>

- 2020 November 9, Podcast host, “Animal Trade Histories in the Indian Ocean World” for “New Books in Indian Ocean Studies” on *New Books Network*,
<https://newbooksnetwork.com/animal-trade-histories-in-the-indian-ocean-world>
- 2020 July, radio interview, “On disease, death and labour at the colonial pearl fishery” on *This is Hell!* Radio, Episode 1211, <https://soundcloud.com/this-is-hell/tih20200730>
- 2020 July, “Death at the Pearl Fishery” in *Hypocrite Reader*, Issue 95,
<https://hypocritereader.com/95/tamara-fernando-mannar-pearls-cholera>
- 2019 November, “Liquid Power: On the feats and failings of Southasia’s attempts at regulating water” *Himal Southasian*, <https://www.himalmag.com/liquid-power/>
- 2017 “[Lankanhistory](#)”, Instagram account.

LANGUAGES

Sinhala (Fluent)	Tamil (Beginner)
German (GCSE)	Arabic (Intermediate)
Mandarin Chinese (Intermediate OPIC)	

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies (AISLS), *Board Member*
International Council for the History of Oceanography (ICHO), *Council Member*
Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies (AGAPS)
American Society for Environmental History (ASEH)
American Historical Association (AHA)
History of Science Society (HSS)
International Association for the Study of Arabia (IASA)