Channelling Mobilities

The history of globalisation is usually told as a history of shortening distances and acceleration of the flows of people, goods and ideas. *Channelling Mobilities* refines this picture by looking at a wide variety of mobile people passing through the region of the Suez Canal, a global short cut opened in 1869. As an empirical contribution to global history, the book asks how the passage between Europe and Asia and Africa was perceived, staged and controlled from the opening of the Canal to the First World War, arguing that this period was neither an era of unhindered acceleration, nor one of hardening borders and increasing controls. Instead, it was characterised by the channelling of mobilities through the differentiation, regulation and bureaucratisation of movement. Telling the stories of tourists, troops, workers, pilgrims, stowaways, caravans, dhow skippers and others, the book reveals the complicated entanglements of empires, internationalist initiatives and private companies.

**Valeska Huber** is a Research Fellow at the German Historical Institute London.
Channelling Mobilities

*Migration and Globalisation in the Suez Canal Region and Beyond, 1869–1914*

Valeska Huber
Contents

List of figures and maps  vii
Acknowledgements  x
Transliteration and translation  xii
List of abbreviations  xiii

Introduction: mobility and its limits  1

I  Imperial relay station: global space, new thresholds  1870s–1890s  35
1  Rites de passage and perceptions of global space  37
2  Regimes of passage and troops in the Canal Zone  72
3  Companies and workers  105

II  Frontier of the civilising mission: mobility regulation east of Suez 1880s–1900s  139
4  Bedouin and caravans  141
5  Dhows and slave trading in the Red Sea  172
6  Mecca pilgrims under imperial surveillance  204

III  Checkpoint: tracking microbes and tracing travellers 1890s–1914  239
7  Contagious mobility and the filtering of disease  241
8  Rights of passage and the identification of individuals  272
Contents

Conclusion: rites de passage and rights of passage in the Suez Canal Region and beyond 306

Bibliography 322
Index 355
Figures and maps

1 ‘The Suez Canal – Passage through the Highest Cut’, postcard published by the Oriental Commercial Bureau Port Said (Egypt), no date. Collection of the author. page 2


5 Postcards of Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig of Hesse on his trip to India 1902–03. Courtesy of the Staatsarchiv Darmstadt. 67–8

6 Isaac Behar, Souvenir de Port-Said: 24 vues, booklet of postcards. FAL, PortP1.001–024. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University. 69


8 ‘Soudanese Soldiers in the Canal’, no photographer, no date. FAL, Harvard Film Study Collection, HFSC.1B.003. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University. 98

9 ‘Dredger Derocheuse’, photograph by the Zangaki Brothers. FAL, Egypt Photoalbum II, EgA2.0029. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University. 112
viii List of figures and maps

10 ‘SS Caledonia Coaling at Port Said 1912’, photograph by Kathleen Davidson travelling to India. Courtesy of Wendy Pratt. 121

11 Map and photographs by Hippolyte Arnoux. FAL, Harvard Film Study Collection, HPSC.6D.004. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University. 148


15 ‘Building Site Bracalis, Fresh Water Canal’, photograph by Hippolyte Arnoux. FAL, Egypt Photographs XV, EgPXV.001. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University. 166


18 ‘Al-Qantara Kilometre 44: Steamship Passing in Front of the Station’, photograph by Hippolyte Arnoux. ANMT 19995060/1492. Courtesy of the Association du Souvenir de Ferdinand de Lesseps et du Canal de Suez. 177

19 ‘Pilgrims on Board the América’, photograph in the report of M. Gillotte, Administrateur de la Commune mixte d’Ain-Témouchent, on the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1905. ANOM, GGA 16H/86. Courtesy of the Archives Nationales d’Outre-mer. 213
List of figures and maps ix

20 Map of the Quarantine Station at Moses’ Wells, Supplément au Journal officiel, 1 January 1894. ANMT 1995060/1422. Courtesy of the Association du Souvenir de Ferdinand de Lesseps et du Canal de Suez. 255

21 Warrant for arrest of Louis Marie Caignan, 1906. CADN, Port Said 260. Courtesy of the Centre des Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes. 297


23 Armenian refugee camp in Port Fouad, opposite Port Said, next to the Shell Oil Company headquarters, no photographer, no date. FAL, NERC.469/Wirt & Carrier 330. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University. 310

24 Armenian Refugee Camp in Port Fouad, opposite Port Said, next to the Shell Oil Company Headquarters, no photographer, no date. FAL, NERC.469/Wirt & Carrier 350. Courtesy of Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University. 311

World map with principal steamship routes. Inset: Suez Canal and Red Sea. 4
Acknowledgements

This book not only deals with mobilities of various sorts, but has itself moved between a number of institutions and countries over the last few years, accumulating many debts on the way. It originated as a doctoral dissertation, examined at the University of Konstanz on 25 May 2009. My first and deepest words of thanks belong to my supervisor, Jürgen Osterhammel, who has guided this research from its very beginnings until completion. I am grateful for his constant support and unceasing encouragement as a supervisor, and for his prodigious example as a global historian.

I am also grateful to the examination committee of the University of Konstanz consisting of Aleida Assmann, Bernhard Kleeberg (both acting as oral examiners) and Clemens Wischermann (third referee). My colleagues at the Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Globale und Internationale Geschichte provided a most stimulating and friendly academic home where to discuss research, academic travels and teaching.

I profited immensely from a year as a Visiting Fellow at the History Department of Harvard University. The comments of the second referee of the dissertation, Roger Owen, have greatly improved this study. To participate and discuss parts of this work in graduate seminars of Sven Beckert, Sugata Bose, Engseng Ho and Roger Owen and with various graduate students opened up many new avenues of thought. Sven Beckert has also given valuable advice for the transformation from dissertation to book.

My return to London in many senses brought the project full circle, with the very first ideas concerning this book and its final completion many years later both taking place in the UK. Some first steps towards the present study were already taken in my MPhil dissertation, supervised by Richard Evans (University of Cambridge). The manuscript was completed after leaving Konstanz for the German Historical Institute London. I would particularly like to thank the director of the institute, Andreas Gestrich, for granting me the time to finish the manuscript.
It is the nature of long and longwinded projects that one accrues many debts towards readers and audiences that cannot be named individually. I have been fortunate to present parts of this work at conferences and colloquia in different countries and continents. I have been even more fortunate that many people have read and commented on parts of this book at various stages, among them On Barak, Felix Brahms, Johann Büsson, Fred Cooper, Angela Davies, Ben Fergusson, Will Hanley, Jan C. Jansen, Bernhard Malkmus, Emran Mian, Niels P. Petersson, Tom Poole, Penny Sinanoglou, Suzanne Smith and two anonymous reviewers. All remaining shortcomings are of course to be blamed entirely on the author. In archives and libraries in five countries, I have been assisted by many people, again too numerous to list here, who have gone beyond their duty to locate relevant material. Particular thanks are due to the staff of The National Archives of Egypt, Dar al-Wathā‘iq, in Cairo and to Riham Salem who helped me with the sources there. The Association du Souvenir de Ferdinand de Lesseps has courteously granted access to its collections. Every effort has been made to trace copyright holders and to obtain their permission for the use of copyright material. The author apologises for any errors or omissions and would be grateful if notified of any corrections that should be incorporated in future reprints or editions of this book.

The research and writing of the dissertation could not have materialised without help from a number of bodies: the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes, the Exzellenzcluster ‘Kulturelle Grundlagen von Integration’ in Konstanz and the German Historical Institutes in London and Paris. I am very happy that the book that emerged out of the dissertation has found its home at Cambridge University Press and would like to thank Michael Watson and his team, especially Chloe Dawson, Sarah Payne and Cheryl Prophett, for their guidance and meticulous help with production. Finally, I could not have completed this book without the continuous support of friends and family who provided a stable base despite the various translocations of the author. My parents have read the manuscript in different incarnations and have always accompanied me with their advice and encouragement. My partner has shared the lowest and highest points of this effort and has persistently and patiently put things into perspective convincing me when it was time to move on. Our two daughters joined us in the interval between the completion of the dissertation and the appearance of the book and begin their own journeys as this project comes to an end.
Transliteration and Translation

The transliterations are based on the system used by the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. Where there is a standard English spelling, names and terms appear without diacritics (Port Said instead of Būr Saʿīd etc.). Less commonly used place names and names of people are rendered with the 'ayn and hamza but without further diacritical signs. Names of people, places, ships and companies appearing in the sources have been spelt according to their appearance in these documents rather than according to the transcription currently in use. All foreign language quotations are translated by the author.
**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFL</td>
<td>Association French Lines, Le Havre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANMT</td>
<td>Archives Nationales du Monde du Travail, Roubaix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANOM</td>
<td>Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CADN</td>
<td>Centre des Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCIMP</td>
<td>Chambre de Commerce et d’Industrie Marseille-Provence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DWQ</td>
<td>Dār al-Wathā’iḍ al-Qawmiyya, Cairo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAL</td>
<td>Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, Cambridge/MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GehStA PK</td>
<td>Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIOC</td>
<td>Oriental and India Office Collections, British Library, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quai d’Orsay</td>
<td>Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHD</td>
<td>Service Historique de la Défense, Château de Vincennes, Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNA</td>
<td>The National Archives, London</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>