

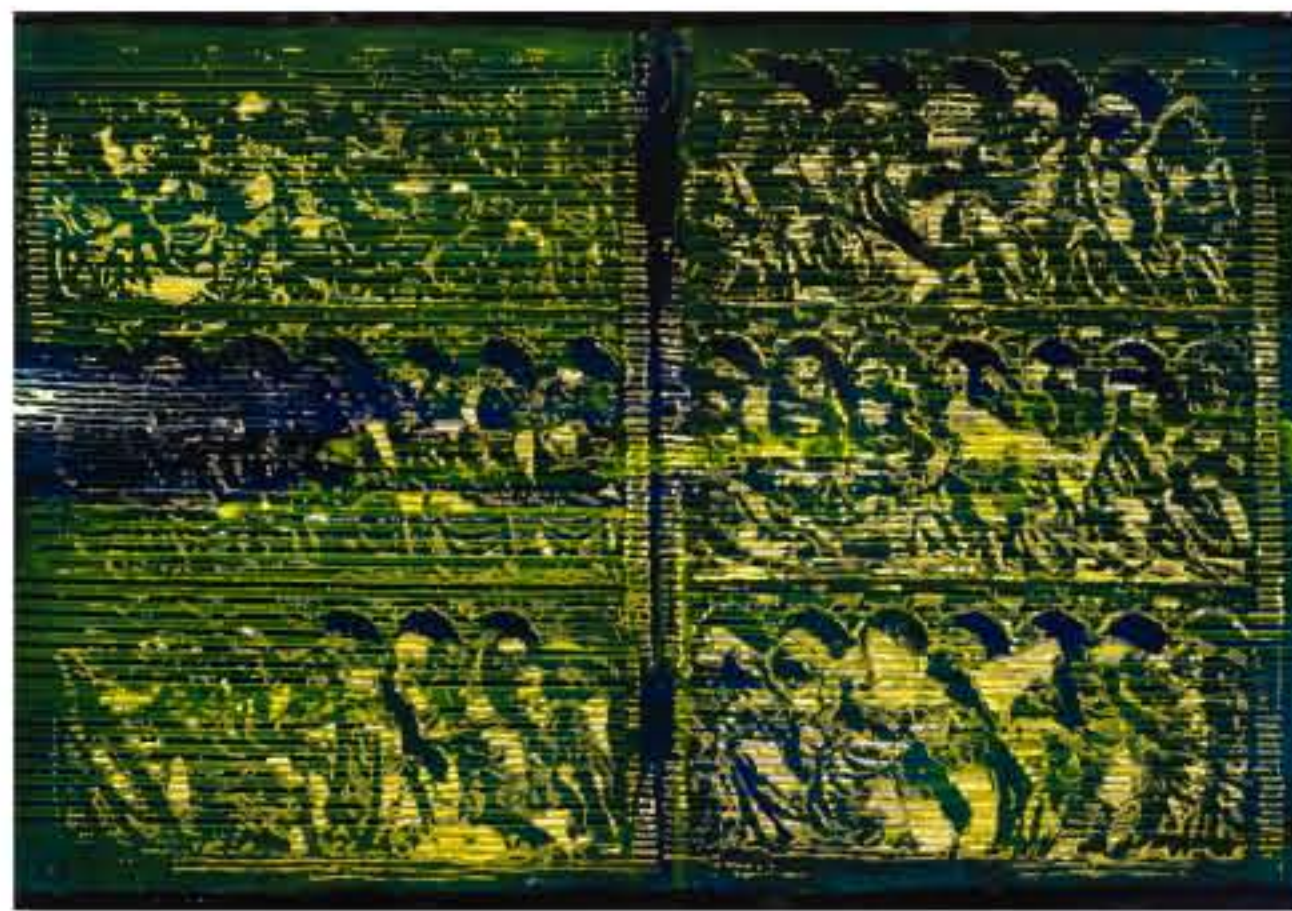


Trajectories of Lives and Knowledge



يونس بحري السائح العراقي
مؤلف هذا الكتاب

"Yunis Bahri, the Iraqi traveller, author of this book". Source: *Iraq today*, Beirut, 1936



Oren Eliav, not yet titled, oil on canvas, 270x200 cm, 2014



Aligarh Muslim University, Victoriya Gate.
Photo: Syed Atif Nazir, 2004

The Self, Time and the Political: Biographical Approaches to a Transregional History of Knowledge

Dr Nils Riecken

This research project addresses the lives and works of three individuals: the Moroccan historian, intellectual and novelist Abdallah Laroui (*1933), the Iraqi journalist, writer, and traveller Yūnis Baḥrī (1903-1979) and the Syrian intellectual and author ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawāḳibī (1855-1902). Laroui is a well known figure in contemporary debates on modernity, historical thought, Islam and reform in the Maghreb (North Africa) and the Mashreq (Middle East). Baḥrī is known as the "Iraqi traveller", whose journeys led him across the Mashreq, the Maghreb, North Africa, Western Europe and South East Asia, and as a speaker for National Socialist radio propaganda in Arabic during World War II. Al-Kawāḳibī was one of the major modern reformist thinkers in the Mashreq, concerned with the issue of reform and political rule in Arab countries. The overarching concern in all three case studies is the historical connection between ways of representing the self, time and the political. Methodologically, the project relies on the approaches of global history, the history of concepts and the history of knowledge by focusing on discursive logics, ways of arguing and processes of translation. By adopting a transregional perspective, this project seeks to produce new insights into the history of modernity and its translation at various historical sites in tension to the confines of Eurocentrism.

Edward Said: Intersecting Pathways, Knowledge and Biographical Inventories in a Geographical Register

PD Dr Norman Saadi Nikro

In the concluding, poetically charged paragraph of his memoir *Out of Place* Edward Said speaks about himself as an embodied range of "currents" whose "dissonance" and "contrapuntal" implications are significant to the extent that they remain unreconciled and disharmonised: "I occasionally experience myself as a cluster of flowing currents. I prefer this to the idea of a solid self, the identity to which so many attach so much significance." Adjacent to the tenor of his memoir, this dissonance suggests his abiding interest in the enabling entwinement of his life trajectory and his critical practice, foregrounding how his biographical impulses inform his critical engagement with power and knowledge. By addressing this aspect of Said's work and undertaking interviews with intellectuals and cultural producers who moved within his orbit, this project concerns the critical and creative purchase of what we can call Said's *biographical inventory* and *intersecting pathways*. The research focusses on Said's intellectual and existential trails through the postcolonial terrain, the material and imaginative residues of empires. More specifically, the research focusses on how these inventories and pathways situate and enable him in his own production of knowledge in respect to the dissonant entanglements of biography and geography.

Missionaries, Scholars, Politicians and Journalists: Life Trajectories and World Views of the Brothers Kheiri

Dr Heike Liebau

This research centres on the intertwined lives and changing world views of the South Asian Muslims Abdel Jabbar Kheiri (1880-1958) and Abdel Sattar Kheiri (1885-1953). Originating from Delhi, the brothers carried out political, religious, journalistic, pedagogical and scholarly activities in South Asia, the Middle East and Europe. By taking a comparative approach, the project focuses on their respective networks and explores the world views of the two brothers, both in their constant entwinement as well as individually. Their life trajectories will be placed into a global context of political changes, crises and wars during the first half of the 20th century and will be related to the growing national movement in India and the partition in 1947. A major question concerns how the Kheiris positioned themselves with regard to the British Empire, Europe and Germany, and how their views developed on the role of Islam as a religious and political category in Europe and South Asia. Another aim is to consider the reception of and reactions to their ideas, both during their life time as well as later.