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### War, Trade and Migration in the making of Maritime Transport in Arabian Peninsula

In this lecture, I will reflect on the echoes and traces of colonial practices that still arise when we consider the making of maritime transport in the Arabian Peninsula. These echoes and traces are most visible in the emergence and decline of ports, in the massive movement of capital, people and coercive organisations that support maritime and mercantile enterprise, and in the language that celebrates these vast movements. Today's megaships, supply chain logistics, and the electronic and industrial apparatuses and processes that animate them, may seem like a far cry from the commodity and indentured labourers' ships of old. Yet, something about the synchronicity of neo-mercantilist practice, "free-trade" bromides, and neoliberal celebrations of entrepreneurialism and enterprise disturbs the clear periodisations of colonial and post-colonial



eras. Whether it is route-making and enduring trans-oceanic connections of labour and trade and war, or it is the geography of ports and inland transportation crossroads and hubs, today's transportation sector bears echoes and traces of these colonial pasts.

*Laleh Khalili is a Professor in Middle Eastern Politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London. She received her PhD from Columbia University. Her primary research areas are policing and incarceration, gender, nationalism, political and social movements, refugees, and diasporas in the Middle East. Professor Khalili's most recent research project engages the politics and political economy of war and militaries as it intersects with infrastructure, logistics*

*and transport with specific focus on the Middle East. Laleh Khalili's first book, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration* (Cambridge 2007) drew on ethnographic research in the Palestinian refugee camp of Burj al-Barajna in Lebanon, while her most recent book, *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies* (Stanford 2013), drew on interviews with former detainees of Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, and various Israeli detention camps and prisons – as well as military officers, guards, and interrogators. *Time in the Shadows* was the winner of the Susan Strange Best Book Prize of the British International Studies Association and the 2014 best book award of the International Political Sociology section of the ISA.*