

The Hajj

Every year hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all over the world converge on Mecca and its precincts to perform the rituals associated with the Hajj, which Muslims have been doing since the seventh century. In this volume, scholars from a range of fields – including history, religion, anthropology, and literature – together tell the story of the Hajj and explain its significance as one of the key events in the Muslim religious calendar. By outlining the parameters of the Hajj from its beginnings to the present day, the contributors have produced a global study that takes in the vast geographies of belief in the world of Islam. This volume pays attention to the diverse aspects of the Hajj, as lived every year by hundreds of millions of Muslims, touching on its rituals, its regional forms, the role of gender, its representation in art, and its organization on a global scale.

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Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-107-61280-8 — The Hajj
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FIGURE 1 Pilgrims Camped on the outskirts of Mecca, 1880s

Call people to the pilgrimage! They will come to you on foot, on every lean camel, and by every distant pass, and will see its benefits for themselves. (Q̣Hajj 22: 27–28)

The Hajj
Pilgrimage in Islam

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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CAMBRIDGE
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

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 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107612808

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First published 2016

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data

Tagliacozzo, Eric, editor. | Toorawa, Shawkat M., editor.

The Hajj : pilgrimage in Islam / edited by Eric Tagliacozzo, Shawkat Toorawa.
 New York : Cambridge University Press, 2015. | Includes bibliographical references
 and index.

LCCN 2015040729 | ISBN 9781107030510 (hardback)

LCSH: Muslim pilgrims and pilgrimages – Saudi Arabia – Mecca.

LCC BP187.3 .H2433 2015 | DDC 297.3/524-dc23

LC record available at <http://lccn.loc.gov/2015040729>

ISBN 978-1-107-03051-0 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-61280-8 Paperback

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Preface

We both arrived at Cornell in 2000 in the departments of History and Near Eastern Studies, respectively. Over the years, the Hajj came up again and again as a topic of common interest, discussed over countless coffees and teas. Finally, at some point forgotten by us both, we endeavored to turn this shared interest into something more concrete and discussed getting a small group of scholars together to explore different aspects of the pilgrimage to Mecca. We approached Marigold Acland at Cambridge University Press with our idea, and she was very supportive. It has taken us a few years to bring the volume into the form it is in now, but slowly and surely the manuscript has taken shape. We owe Marigold and her generosity of spirit a great debt. We are grateful also to Will Hammell, Sarika Narula, Maria Marsh, Joshua Penney, Emma Collison, Mary Bongiovi, Sarah Green, Suzette Costello, Sathish Kumar, Holly Johnson, and especially Kate Gavino, who was a wonderful steward of the project.

We wish to thank our contributors, who all worked hard to meet the various deadlines we set them; Joe Lowry for vetting the glossary; Nij Tontisirin for designing the map of the world Muslim population; and Juan Campo, Faheem Moheed, and Saud al-Sarhan for making available photographs from personal and private collections. Most importantly, we wish to thank our families, who put up with literally years of the two of us disappearing haphazardly to the Ithaca Bakery, where we would sit and work on this volume. The spirit of all of these people – near and far – is in this book.

Abbreviations

Ar.	Arabic
BCE	before Common Era
ca.	approximately (<i>circa</i>)
CE	Common Era
d.	died
EI ₂	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , New [2nd] ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1954–2009)
EI ₃	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam Three</i> , 3rd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2007–)
lit.	literally
pl.	plural
Q	Qur'ān
r.	ruled
s.v.	see entry under the word (<i>sub verbo</i>)

Note on Dates and Transliteration

DATES

Dates are typically CE unless otherwise noted. Where appropriate or informative, the Gregorian date is separated from the Islamic date by a slash (e.g., 204/820).

TRANSLITERATION

We have endeavored to standardize transliteration of Arabic, and followed as transparent a system as possible for the benefit of non-specialists. We retain the ‘ayn (‘), and the hamza (’) where appropriate. As there is no standard regarding the final (often silent) feminine marker in Arabic, readers may encounter, for example, both Jedda and Jeddah. As for the recurring words “Hajj” and “Umra,” which appear in English dictionaries, we have treated them as English words and capitalized them.