Fig. 19
Bahjat al-manazzil (The Joy of stages), by Mehmed Fehri (fol. 219b)
Dated 31 August 1790
Opaque watercolour, ink and gold on paper
19.9 x 13 cm
Chester Beatty Library, Dublin

This topographical illustration of Jerusalem accompanies the text of Mehmed Edhi al-Hajj Muhammad Adil Abru ‘l-Muhammad Davi’diz, an Ottoman judge from Baghdad in Iraq who travelled from Istanbul to Mecca in 1778 and wrote an extensive description of his journey and the places where he stopped. The painting, a somewhat fanciful representation, accompanies a section at the end of the book which describes Jerusalem and its sanctuaries. Before the revolution came striking them to pray towards Mecca, Muslims had prayed towards Jerusalem, the third most sacred city for Muslims after Mecca and Medina. The view is looking east. At the centre of the painting is the Dome of the Rock from where the Prophet Muhammad is believed to have made his “nightly Ascension” (mi’raj), with the Masjid al-Aqsa to the right.

Fig. 20
Drawing of al-Masjid al-Haram and the Ka’ba
Chao Jen Tu Li, the travelogue of Ma Fuchu, China, dated 1861
Woodblock on rice paper
15 x 26.3 cm
Aga Khan Collection, Geneva

Ma Fuchu (fl. 1860) was an eminent scholar of Islam and Sino-Musulm philosophy and the author of some thirty-five books written in Arabic and Chinese ranging from metaphysics to history. He also translated the Qur’an. This simply drawn illustration is from the account of his journey from China to Mecca. Originally from Yunnan, he travelled with a group of Muslim merchants and began his long journey first overland, then by riverboat to Kangeen and then by steamship to Jeddah, performing the Hajj in 1841.
Fig. 21
The panel depicting the Meccan sanctuary
Ottoman Turkey, mid-17th century
Stonepaste, underglaze painted
73 x 49.5 cm
Benaki Museum, Athens

The sanctuary at Mecca is shown over a panel of six polychrome tiles. This is one of a series of such renditions in tilework made in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which were placed in mosques or in houses or palaces, perhaps to commemorate an individual’s hajj. The most important centre of Turkish tile production was at Iznik, but such depictions, both single tiles and large tile panels, were also made at other ceramic centres such as Kutahya and later in the eighteenth century in Istanbul at the workshops of Tekfur Saray. This example shows the monuments in a more three-dimensional manner than the Victoria and Albert Museum tile (fig. 16). The Karbala is realistically cut-out shaped and the four schools of Islamic law are domed structures on the edge of the sanctuary circle, with the pulpit of the Prophet on the right and the well of Zamzam on the left. There are hanging lamps in the arcades and the tall minarets have almost tulip-shaped crescents. At the top of the panel is a verse by the Ottoman poet Sultanhat Hadsi (d. 1735): "Whoever has the fortune to visit the Karba, God forgives him and whoever is invited to the House is for certain the beloved.”
(Translated by Charlotte Mouyer)
Fig. 22
The sanctuary at Mecca
Aceh, Indonesia, late 19th century
Coloured inks and pen on paper
42.5 x 32.5 cm
Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam

This unusual depiction of the sanctuary at Mecca was made by an artist in Aceh, Sumatra, and its decorative features, the shape of the arches and other details are Indonesian in style.

It is likely to have been made as a guide for the Hajj, as each location is clearly marked in Malay and Arabic indicating which rite is to be performed at each place. There are three elegantly drawn lamps, each described as the 'stand for the golden light', as well as the usual features including the Maqam Ibrahim, the well of Zamzam, the arcades with their hanging lamps and the four corner minarets. Instructions are provided for the specific prayers to be recited when passing in tawaf (circumambulation) the three corners of the Ka'bah, known as the Tayyar, Syrian and Hijji corners, which represent the parts of the Ka'bah that Muslims living in those respective lands face when praying.

A text on the back states that it was made for Tsengkak Iman Benda and was brought back from Aceh by C.J.A. Haselman, a Dutch seaman stationed there.

Fig. 23
The sanctuary at Mecca
Probably Mecca, 17th–18th century
Opaque watercolour, ink, silver and gold on paper
64.7 x 47.5 cm
Hassan D. Khozami Collection of Islamic Art

Schematized depictions of the sanctuary at Mecca are based on prototypes that go back at least to the thirteenth century. They first appear on illustrated documents known as Hajj certificates. These were often made in the late sixteenth century (see fig. 24) and include depictions of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. They attest that a believer has undertaken the pilgrimage and that it has been performed for them by someone else. This colourful and beautifully composed painting is a variation from such a certificate, probably made by Indian craftsmen residing in Mecca who may have made certificates and other pilgrim guide books as souvenirs items for pilgrims. Features such as the shapes of the domes clearly betray Indian influence.
Fig. 24
Kiswa for a mahmal
Cairo, c. 1867–76
Red silk, with green and dark
cream silk appliqué, embroidered
with silver and silver-gilt wire,
on a wooden frame
400 cm high (including finial
and fringe)
Nasori D. Khalili Collection of
Islamic Art

The mahmal, a ceremonial
punainen carried on a camel,
was the centerpiece of the pilgrim
caravan. It symbolized the authority
of the sultan over the holy places
and was sent sent by the Mamluk
sultan of Egypt, Baybars (1260–77).
Carried with it were the textiles
made for the Ka'bah, which were also
produced in Egypt. Even after the
conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans
in 1517, a mahmal continued to be
sent from Cairo along with another
from Damascus. This magnificent
carpet, described in the inscription
as a kiswa (robe) for a mahmal,
was made in Egypt and bears the
embroidered monogram, the tughras,
of Sultan Abd al-Aziz (1861–76). On
the sides is the name of I mam A, the
Khedive or ruler of Egypt (1863–79),
who received his title from Sultan
Abd al-Aziz in 1867 and presented
this mahmal to be taken on Hajj.
The "Pharaoh's Verse" from the Qur'an
(2:255) is inscribed in sections all
the way around. The tradition of
singing the mahmal from Egypt
continued until 1926.
Fig. 25
'The Egyptian and Syrian Mahmals and Mohammedan Pilgrims at Arafat'

Popular print (painted photographs). The Cairo Punch, Cairo, early 20th century
48.8 x 69.5 cm
British Museum, London

This print and the one on the opposite page were produced for The Cairo Punch (al-Šuyūa al-musawwarah), which published between 1910 and 1912 a series of prints representing major events in the Middle East. Mecca and the holy cities were popular subjects for illustration. Here the Egyptian and Syrian mahmals, having arrived from Cairo and Damascus, are standing on the slopes of Jabal al-Rahmah ('The Mount of Mercy') on the plain of Arafat, surrounded by pilgrims from all over the world. Standing at Arafat is the central ritual of Hajj. It was here that the Prophet Muhammad gave the Farewell Sermon in 622, during the only Hajj that circumstances allowed him to perform. Every pilgrim must be standing at this place on the ninth of the month of Dhu al-Ḥijja or their Hajj will be deemed invalid.

Fig. 26
'The Egyptian Mahmal at Monte Arifat'

Popular print (painted photographs). The Cairo Punch, Cairo, early 20th century
48.8 x 69.5 cm
British Museum, London

In this scene a group of hajjis in ihram stand in front of the mahmal at Arifat. On the left in front of the flag stands the Amir al-Hajj, with other named officials and doctors standing on other side of the mahmal. It is similar in style to the one shown in fig. 24. This print may be based on a photograph by one of the photographers of Hajj such as Abdalat Sa'ud, who performed Hajj in 1904 and 1908. Sa'ud describes how the mahmal was put on a train from Cairo as far as Suez, where it was placed on a boat and taken down to Jeddah.
Chapter 4

Ritual and prayer

The rituals of Hajj take place in and around Mecca over a period of five days between the eighth and the twelfth days of Dhul-Hijjah — the twelfth month of the Muslim calendar. In sa‘i, the first of the rituals of Hajj, pilgrims walk anti-clockwise around the Ka‘ba seven times, as can be seen in fig. 27. This tradition goes back to the time of Abraham. Once he and his son Ishmael had finished rebuilding the Ka‘ba, they circled it seven times. The next ritual is known as sa‘i or ‘running’. This commemorates Hagar’s search for water after her husband, the Prophet Abraham, at God’s command left her in the desert as a test of faith. Having exhausted their provisions, Hagar desperately ran seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwa searching for water. Returning to her son Ishmael, she found that a spring of water had miraculously gushed out of the ground. This is known as the well of Zamzam. The other rituals of Hajj take place outside Mecca, at Mina, Arafat and Muzdalifah. The third day of Hajj (the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah) is the day of Eid al-Adha — the festival of the Sacrifice. A sheep, goat, camel or cow is sacrificed and its meat distributed to the poor. Celebrated by Muslims around the world, Eid al-Adha commemorates Abraham’s offering of his son Ishmael as a sacrifice to God. After pilgrims have cut or shaved their hair and performed umrah again, they may change out of their ihram clothes. In the following pages, paintings from a variety of sources, including Hajj certificates and pilgrimage guides, depict pilgrims performing some of the rituals of Hajj and the locations where they take place. A modern photograph indicates the scale of Hajj today.
Fig. 28
In God’s Eye
by Shadia Alm, 2010

Shadia Alm was born in Mecca and her family have been involved with the care of the sanctuary and the Hajj for generations. She herself inherited the title of mudallal, one who hosts and guides the pilgrims on Hajj. She is a painter, installation artist and photographer, and with her sister Raja represented Saudi Arabia at the Venice Biennale in 2011. She describes this photograph of the Haram taken at night as follows: ‘A look taken above shows Mecca as a whirling molecule of the universal energy, manifesting in this circle or eye of the holy mosque which expands to involve the whole city and the whole planet in its eye.’
A manual for pilgrims, the Futuh al-Haramayn (Revelations of the Two Sanctuaries)

In the early sixteenth century Muhyl al-Din Lari (d. 1526) composed in Persian verse a guidebook for making the pilgrimage to Mecca which became extremely popular. A good number of manuscripts have survived, at least twelve of which have calligraphic inscriptions indicating that they were produced in Mecca itself and could have been acquired by pilgrims as souvenirs of their Hajj. All the known copies contain colourful illustrations which present stylized rather than strictly accurate representations of places of interest in and around the holy cities of Arabia, including particular locations where rituals specific to Hajj take place. On the following pages are illustrations from three different manuscripts of the Futuh al-Haramayn accompanied by relevant extracts from the poem (translated for this book by Muhammad Isma’Il Waley).

Fig. 29
The sanctuary at Mecca and the rite of Arafat, from the Futuh al-Haramayn by Muhyl al-Din Lari (fol. 19b), copied by Ghulam Ali

Mecca, 1582
21.6 x 13.9 cm
Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art


What I have experienced from seeing that sight is a mystery that I am unable to divulge.

My heart became drowned in the Ocean of Meeting; I was lost to myself in the glory of Beauty.

It made me bewildered, amazed, stupefied; the house of my being parted from its foundations!

Crying out, I made for the place of Israa’
dancing, I came forward for my circumambulation.

His infinite generosity became manifest as I planted a kiss upon the Black Stone—

revolving, circling, and full of presence
I became a moth, and He a luminous candle.
THE WAY OF PERFORMING SA'I, AND ITS ETIQUETTE

You have gained your desire from the stage of tawaf.
Move on soon to the mas‘a to perform the sa‘i.

Turn away from the House to the Gate of Safa;
go to Safa and climb up the steps to the top.

See the arch of Safa, like the vault of the skies,
with troops of angels up above it in lines ...

Face towards the side holding its Black Stone,
back to the mount of his eternal generosity:
The mount of Safa its head raised up to the sky,
sit height that of the sun’s and moon’s rising-points ...

Descend quickly, then head towards the mas‘a;
come into the valley, without your head or feet.
The Mensa’s feet will do the walking for you.
How could the wings of the angels reach your dust?
Start shouting to and fro – such a coming and going
as gained for men that which angels never won ...

Marwa is to one side, Safa to another;
the performer of sa‘i must be true to his word.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MULTITUDE AND CROWDING
OF THE CARAVANS AT THE STOPPING-POINT OF THE
SACRED MUSTERING-PLACE (AL-MASJID AL-HARAM)

This is Muzdalifah, the same territory
you passed through on the ninth day [of the month].

But [this time] its noble splendour catches the eye,
and it shows itself now in a different light.

Caravans for which Arafah had no space
will stay for the night at this stopping-place.

Tonight it is the oyster-shell for its pearl;
tonight it is the distinction for its star.

Egyptians and Syrians, on all sides,
[camp] in lines around it in deepest respect.

The expanse of this plain is filled, all right,
with colourful tents as far as you can see.

Like roses and tulips, the candles and lamps
make up meadows and gardens, one after another.
A Imsakh, more or less, from Muzdalifa is an area empty as Nabi being itself.

Its expanse is greater than the pilgrims' hearts... each of whom is now absorbed in his own business.

Though it lies beyond the heaven boundaries, it is the gateway-place for all those caravans.

Enter this area, with full sincerity, making your supplications, and behold...

The mountain of which Arafat is the name is more lofty than all other mountains are.

Its skirts are filled with the Compassion of God; around it mankind and angels assemble.

Its shadow betokens the cool shade that God provides in the court-yards of Paradise.

Though smaller in form than other mountains, in meaning it is higher than all of them.

Fig. 32
The plain of Arafat, from the Futuh al-Haramayn by Muhayi al-Din Lari (fol. 27b)

Iran, 16th century
25 x 17 cm
British Library, London

The plain of Arafat, 14 km east of Mecca, is where the Hajj (standing) takes place from noon until dusk on 9th of Duwal Hijja. It is the central rite of Hajj.

Fig. 33
Mina and the Jamurat (pillars), from the Futuh al-Haramayn by Muhayi al-Din Lari (fol. 41a)

Mecca, 1595
22.7 x 14.2 cm
Chester Beatty Library, Dublin

The valley of Mina, 5 km east of Mecca, is where pilgrims camp during Hajj. The Jamurat or Sotas are located here. The stoning of these pillars is a rite of Hajj.

Best to leave Mina's market without delay, before all its colours and scents trap your heart.

Make for the jamur with utmost care; approach it with your bag (dhuruf) filled with stones.

Remember that line that is drawn up for battle with a stone in your raised hand, wage holy war [Jihad].

The people who wield swords to fight for Islam make the cabin their war cry, extinguishing will.

You likewise, after each stone that you cast, should raise a talith from your very soul.

Cast a stone at that jamur seven times, inflicting hard blows on Azza's [i.e., Satan's] face.