Pilgrimage Centres from Mecca and Medina to Jerusalem.

This book takes us on an imaginary journey to sites considered sacred by the Islamic, Christian, and Jewish faiths. The pioneers of photography in the Arabian world are presented here for the very first time, and their work includes the first-ever photographic images of the holy cities of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem.

Of the three surviving portfolios of Sadiq Bey’s photographs, only one is currently accessible to the public, and this is presented in the exhibition, To The Holy Lands, as well as in this book.

The publication of the photographs of the portfolio, Jerusalem and its Surroundings, by Jakob August Lorent is a world premiere. Indeed, this is the only copy known to be still in existence.

Presenting a range of rare nineteenth-century photographs, the present volume gathers together fascinating historical documents of three great monotheistic religions and may thus make a contribution to the ongoing dialogue of cultures.
The honorary patrons of the present exhibition are
H.H. Sheikh Majid bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum,
Chairman of the Dubai Culture & Arts Authority,
and Dr. Peter Kurz, Lord Mayor of the City of Mannheim.
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Photographs of the 19th Century from the Collections of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums, Mannheim

To the Holy Lands

Pilgrimage Centres from Mecca and Medina to Jerusalem

Published by Alfred Wieczorek, Michael Tellenbach and Claude W. Sul

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Reiss-Engelhorn Museums

Dubai Culture & Arts Authority

PRESTEL
Munich - Berlin - London - New York
Mecca: Pilgrims and Their Ceremonial Procession (Tawaf) Around the Kaaba. Sadiq Bey. 1880-81 (Tawaf)
and Their Ceremonial Procession (Towaf) Around the Kaaba - Sadiq Bey - 1880/81 (Towaf)
Words of Greeting

Art has often served as a medium to communicate profound philosophical ideas and raise social and cultural issues. Art resonates with our core human values and draws attention to questions and perspectives that are common to us all. Art thus creates a basis for encounters between different cultures by providing a common language. In the Holy Lands, an exhibition of the works of the pioneering figures of photography in the Arab world, demonstrates this function of art.

The Dubai Culture and Arts Authority (DCAA) is pleased to support artistic events like this exhibition that create a greater awareness of our region’s cultural heritage while at the same time encouraging interaction between cultures. Established by His Highness, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the DCAA is working to achieve several important cultural objectives. The organization’s key mission is to establish Dubai as a dynamic center for culture. By blending art and culture into the social life of Dubai, we seek to build on the vibrancy and multicultural character of the city. The Holy Lands is an example of the kind of event that contributes to the success of this mission.

The exhibition takes us back to the encounter during the nineteenth century between the newly discovered medium of photography and the Arab-Muslim world, which gave rise to some extraordinary works of art. The pioneering figures of photography in the Arab world, Mohammed Radi Bey and Jacob August Lores, Al-Sayyid Abd al-Qiafar and Christian Ewischjen, to name but the most important, were engineers and scientists by profession. Nonetheless, their interest was not directed towards subjects reflecting the latest developments in technology and architecture to be found in the Arab world at that time, for example, in cities like Cairo, Baghdad and Damascus, but rather they were drawn to the Holy Lands, the places of pilgrimage.

These first photographers in the Orient, both Arabs and Europeans, shared a fascination with and a love of these holy places. They regarded photography as a wonderful opportunity to document these sites accurately and objectively: they wanted to show things as they really were, to present a true record of the world as they saw it.

The photographic procedure of that time required exceptional efforts and sacrifices: in the heat of the Arabian sun, photographers had to transport heavy equipment and chemicals. The products of such efforts are not merely historical documents but works of art marked by a subtle delicacy and beauty. It would appear that art may result when so much trouble is taken in the search for a true record.

In this exhibition it has been possible, for the first time, to present the pioneers of photography in the Arab world in a manner appropriate to their achievement. We would like to extend our thanks to the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums in Mannheim, Germany, for preserving in their库存 those works that record our shared heritage from the early days of photography. It is a pleasure for us to be able to co-present these outstanding works at the Dubai International Financial Centre.

H.E. Dr. Omar Bin Sulaiman
Governor of the Dubai International Financial Centre
Managing Director of the Dubai Culture and Arts Authority

The Emirates of Dubai is currently developing and refining concepts whose aim is to transform Dubai into a cultural interface between East and West. Already an International hub of transport logistics, the Emirates is now aspiring to become a cultural anchor, too. This process involves drawing together impulses and ideas from every continent and then condensing and honing them into new contemporary forms. It is a source of particular pleasure to me that Germans are involved in this ambitious project.

For some time now, there has been a marked increase in the intensity of exchange and collaboration between German and Emirati museums. This goes far beyond those co-operative undertakings of the museums of three major German cities (Berlin, Dresden and Munich) with Dubai, as many other such projects have been and are being realised. Thus, it was in 2007 that initial signs of Dubai’s interest in a co-operative project first became evident. In August of that year, Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, the wife of the Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, as well as the ruler of Dubai, was in Mannheim on the occasion of the European Show Jumping Championships. Along with Michael Tellenbach, the executive deputy director of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums, I was able to take the opportunity of presenting her with a catalogue of the exhibition, Hanspaw (a contribution to the history of the symbiotic relationship between horses and humans), Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein had been kind enough to provide a few words of welcome for this exhibition. This contact then gave rise to an exchange of thoughts and ideas between the newly directed cultural affairs of the Emirates of Dubai, Michael Schindhelm, and the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums. First plans regarding collaboration for an exhibition were drawn up.

The historic photographs which will be made accessible to interested visitors in Dubai during September and October 2008 are unique examples of their genre. It is (im)possible to overestimate the value and importance of these pictures, in terms of both their photographic and historical significance. Indeed, they are of a quality that remains unsurpassed right up to the present day.

The fact that this exhibition will be shown during Ramadan in the Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC) underlines the importance accorded to culture in Dubai. This extension is an event that— even in Dubai, a city of superlatives—does not merely open up new perspectives of cultural communication, but is also a genuine ‘first’.

The present catalogue will contribute to a dialogue between different cultures, and it lends a note of permanence to this event in Dubai. It also offers those who are unable to attend the show in person a means of enjoying and participating in this dialogue.

It only remains for me to wish all the readers of this book as well as all exhibition visitors a great deal of enjoyment and ‘food for thought’ while considering these images and the accompanying texts.

H.E. Dr. Johann-Adolf Colauz
German Consul-General in Dubai, UAE
Publisher's Foreword

This presentation of photographs from the collection of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums, Mannheim, in Dubai may well contribute to a revival of that much-needed collaboration between East and West which was such a feature of the nineteenth century. The call of the Orient gave rise to an insatiable urge to travel among Europeans, with the result that the holy sites of the Middle East were traversed by a new type of visitor: the tourist. For centuries, these places had been sought by pilgrims, who approached them with reverence and devotion in the hope of receiving help or redemption, experiencing proximity to their holy hearths or attaining purification through repentance.

Today—just as then—Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem are the most important holy places of Islam. To The Holy Lands is an invitation to see and discover these cities through the eyes of the pilgrims and travelers of past times. It is thanks to the development of photographic techniques during the nineteenth century that such an undertaking is possible.

In this field, too, there was a dialogue between East and West that can be traced in these images. Thus, in this exhibition, the pioneering works of Arabian photography have been subjected to systematic consideration for the very first time. A particular highlight comprises the very first photographs of the sites visited by Arabian pilgrims in Mecca and Medina, which were taken by Mohammed Sadig Bey in about 1881. Only three original portfolios of these images have survived, of which one is inaccessible to the public, while another was purchased at auction in 1969 by the royal family of Saudi Arabia and is only shown to interested guests during private visits. The third portfolio is in the possession of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums.

The first portraits of pilgrims from various countries were taken by the German expert on Arabian culture, Christian Snouck Hurgronje. He was the first European visitor to the Middle East to document the different social groupings of the time: his photographs include sheikhs, sheikhas, and scholars living in Mecca. The pictures taken by al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar showing various pilgrims with Muslim faces of this eastern region are fascinating in themselves as well as being important historical documents.

These priceless historic photographs may also be regarded as a product of East-West co-operation. Mohammed Sadig Bey studied in Paris, which is where he became acquainted with photographic techniques. Christian Snouck Hurgronje and al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar were friends and worked together.

These photographs from the nineteenth century to be seen in the present exhibition comprise documents of this period relating to three world religions. Thus, the show represents a contribution to the dialogue between cultures—a contribution that it is an honor for us to be able to present in the Dubai International Financial Center in Dubai City. The opportunity for us to do so was provided by H.E. Dr. Omar Sulaiman. We extend our thanks to the Dubai Culture & Arts Authority for permitting us to participate in the impressive undertaking of establishing in the Middle East a center of international standing devoted to culture and the arts. We also wish to thank the Culture Director of Dubai, Michael Schindhelm, for his initiative in setting in motion the intensive collaboration relating to the presentation of cultural exhibitions. The German Consul-General in Dubai, H.E. Johann-Adolf Coahaus, has been generous with his help and support for our undertaking in Dubai right from the very beginning.

Many thanks for his intensive collaboration are also due to the exhibition's assistant curator, Dr. Franz Waller, a specialist on historic photography, who is especially renowned for his study of the life and works of the photographer, Jakob August Lorenz. Selected album prints of Jerusalem taken by Lorenz are presented here for the first time, while only a single copy of his photographic portfolio, Jerusalem and seine Umgebung (Jerusalem and its Surroundings) has survived.

For their collaboration and assistance with respect to Arabic sources, we would like to express our particular thanks to the University of Leiden (The Netherlands), Prof. Jan Jozef Winkler, Faculty of Letters and Arts, Paleography of the Islamic World, and Dr. Arnaud Vrljik, the head of the archive of Christian Snouck Hurgronje. It is to Prof. Winkler's support that we owe a great deal of information about Christian Snouck Hurgronje as well as about the journals of Mohammed Sadig Bey. Further thanks are due to Johannes Zeller, M.A., Institute for Languages and Cultures of the Middle East at the University of Heidelberg, who was very helpful in many areas of research.

Prof. Dr. Alfred Wilkens
Head of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museum, Mannheim

Dr. Claude W. Sui
Head of the Forum of International Photography of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museum, Mannheim

Dr. Michael Schindhelm
Assistant Director of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museum, Mannheim

ten served as a medium to communicate pro-