Mecca: Pilgrims' Camp by Mount Arafat - Mohammed

Sadiq Bey - 1880
Mecca - Tombs Among Which Are Those of the Parents of the Prophet Mohammed - Mohammed Sadiq Bey - 1880

From the summit of Arafat, I counted about 3000 tents scattered over the plain, of which two-thirds belonged to the two hadj-caravans (caravans of pilgrims) and the retinue and soldiers of Muhammad Ali. Strewn in various places, the plain contained 20 to 25,000 camels...

I estimated the number of people gathered here to be about 70,000 persons. The camp was three to four miles long, and one to two wide. There may well be no other spot in the world where, in so small an area, so many different languages are heard. I counted over forty and have no doubt that there were a good many more. It seemed to me as though I had found myself here in a holy temple composed entirely of travelers...

(Travels in Arabia, Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, 1829)
Medina lies at the edge of the great Arabian Desert, close to the chain of mountains that runs through this country from north to south and is a continuation of the Lebanon...

Medina is divided into the inner city and its outer suburbs... The Castle is built on this summit on a small, rocky elevation, and the whole is enclosed by a thick stone wall thirty-five to forty feet high, which is protected by about thirty towers and which is surrounded by a defensive ditch that has, however, been almost filled up in many places. The wall is in perfectly good condition and, in Arabia, comprises a very respectable means of defense, so that Medina has always been considered the main fortress of Hejaz (the north-western region of modern Saudi Arabia situated on the coast of the Red Sea).

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February 12, 1861. When the highly esteemed place became visible, I took up position at a point on the roof of the Arsenal, from which I had a view over the city such that I was permitted to photograph a part of the residential district as well. With regard to the view of the greatly revered Dome (over the tomb of the prophet), though, I also took it using the mentioned [photographic] apparatus from the inside of the Haram. I was the very first person to produce such pictures using this apparatus.

It was my good fortune that I had to draw up a precise ground-plan of the mosque as well as to take a photograph of its south façade, along with an all-encompassing view from the Topshâne, the Arsenal located to the right of the entrance gateway, Bab-el-Gami, [Torch of the Adorned Camel Litter, Mohammed Sadiq Bey, 1881]
Mecca - Pilgrims' Camp by Mount Arafat Shortly Before
the Animal Sacrifice - Mohammed Sadiq Bey - 1880
When the stone-throwing ceremony is over, the pilgrims slaughter those animals that they have brought along for sacrifice, and at this time, all Mohammedans, wherever in the world they might be living, are obliged to perform the very same ceremony. Six to eight thousand sheep and goats are kept at the ready for this occasion by Bedouins (who demand a high price for them). The deed of sacrifice itself is not governed by any other ceremonial obligations except that the face of the sacrificial animal has to be turned toward the Ka'ba or Kaaba, and while its throat is being slit open, the words "In the Name of the Most Merciful God! O Most High God" ("Bi-ismillah ir-Rahman ir-Rahim, Allahou aqbal!") have to be spoken.

(Travels in Arabia, Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, 1829)