

Paper Presentation

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Presenter:

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Paper Title:

Vakīl, Mukhtār, Hājī: Patronage, exchange, and the microeconomics of the Hajj, c. 1880–1940

Abstract:

Nineteenth-century accounts of the Hajj paint a grim picture of disease and destitution in the Hijaz, yet despite these descriptions, the Hajj continued to expand throughout the century. As new modes of transportation, corporate operations, and novel forms of patronage emerged, the economics of the Hajj also shifted from royal to individual patronage, and with this shift, the economics of the Hajj became a more pressing concern for individuals, as well as governments. Using vernacular and colonial sources, this paper examines the micro- economics of the pilgrimage using two types of legal decisions surrounding the Hajj. In the first part of the paper, I examine the responses of South Asian ‘ulama to questions of personal circumstance and status vis-à-vis one's duty (*farz*) to perform the Hajj. In the second half of the paper, I examine court cases surrounding the establishment of charitable endowments (*waqf*; *auqāf*) to support the activities of pilgrims. Though many pilgrims relied on charity to complete the trip, relatives of *waqf* trustees often questioned the legality and philanthropic intent of their charitable efforts. Whereas the first half of the paper discusses efforts to understand the economics of the hajj from a religious perspective, the second half contemplates the legality of hajj funding from the perspective of colonial law. Bringing together these two forms of legal response sheds light on the small-scale economics of the Hajj and the role of increased mobility on the expansion of trans-regional religious charity.