1 Pilgrim Passages

"Revolution" – *inqilāb* – in their attempts to fathom the political changes rippling through India and the Indian Ocean, many hajjis and contemporary actors fell back on that keyword.

In 1787, for example, a pilgrim who had reached the Arabian Hijaz from the trans-Gangetic tracts of the Doab found himself pondering the historical progress of empires. Summarizing what the "lords of history" had written regarding the early Islamic caliphates, Rafiʿ-ud-Din Ahmad Faruqi Muradabadi (d. 1810) reoriented his thoughts to the historical present. On Ottoman rule over Mecca, he privileged that state's oversight of the hajj. It was by dint of patronizing the pilgrimage, Rafiʿ-ud-Din insisted, that sultans like the current emperor ʿAbdul Hamid Khan (ʿAbdülhamid I, r. 1774–1789) managed to maintain their sovereign dignity. In contrast to the Mughals, whose rule had been rocked by "revolution," Rum (the Ottoman empire) had thus yet to reveal any cracks of vulnerability in its "pillars of sultanate." Truly, it was "felicitous that of all the emperors (padishahs) of the world, God has kept the Haramain with the Turkish sultan."[1] Rafiʿ-ud-Din was an *ʿālim*, an Islamic scholar. Within a generation of his death, a biographical compendium of South Asia's ʿulama even recalled him as "among the most learned authorities of India."[2] His emphasis on the pious obligations of rulers as a key criterion of kingship, as indeed his buoyant encomium to an empire then struggling to keep fissiparous forces in check in Arabia, certainly owed to his specific cast of mind as a theologian. But, there were also others besides him.

Scribes, bureaucrats, poets, royals – the views of pilgrims from surprisingly different backgrounds now began to refract the myriad consequences of "a world turned upside down." In turn, their firsthand

[1] Rafiʿ-ud-Din Sahib Faruqi Muradabadi, "Sawānih al-Haramain: Hindūstān kā sab se pahlā Safarnāmaʾ-yi Hijāz," trans. (Persian to Urdu) Nasim Ahmad Sahib Faridi Ahmadi, *al-Furqān* 28:10–11 (1961), pp. 45–46, 49.

[2] Nawab Walajah Saiyid Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan, *Ithāf al-Nubalaʾ: al-Muttaqīn bi-ihyāʾ Maʾāsir al-Fuqahāʾ al-Muhaddisīn* (Kanpur, 1872), p. 251.

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accounts of hajj travel also began resonating with what historians, with increasing alacrity, are calling a "global age of revolutions." Starting in the eighteenth century, trends that led to the breakup of old regimes and the formation of new powers worldwide were vividly evident in both South Asia and the Islamic world. Combined with developments in economies of long-distance shipping, which significantly added to the scale and complexity of interregional interactions, Mughal India and the Ottoman Middle East alike saw dissident provincial elites and brazen European conquests intensify their drift toward decentralization. But if historians have mainly studied these interregional developments through modular (or thematic) and comparative (or etic) perspectives, contemporary Indian pilgrims were both literally and figuratively connecting the Indian Ocean to weigh in on the most pressing problem of the era, namely, regime change, or "empire-making and empire-breaking."[3] In the process, they were also supplying distinct intellectual vindications to the historians' "converging," "world," "Eurasian," and "oceanic" "age of revolutions,"[4] albeit in a vernacular idiom.[5]

Muslim Pilgrims from Empire to Revolution

The perspectives that pilgrims brought to empire were unique. The ideas and moods they mobilized were not. It has been argued, after all, that "the 'age of revolutions' arrived early in India."[6] Eighteenth-century men of letters looking to conceptualize the rapid decentralization of the Mughal world quite consistently landed on the Indo-Persian term *inqilāb*, meaning the inversion of order, or the reversal of fortune.[7] As

[3] David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Introduction: The Age of Revolutions, *c.* 1760–1840 – Global Causation, Connection, and Comparison," in Armitage and Subrahmanyam, *Age of Revolutions*, p. xix.

[4] See, respectively, Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, chs. 3–4; Armitage and Subrahmanyam, *Age of Revolutions*; John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire since 1405* (London, 2007), ch. 4; Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Patrick Camiller (Princeton, NJ, 2009), chs. 2, 10; Clare Anderson, "The Age of Revolution in the Indian Ocean, Bay of Bengal, and South China Sea: A Maritime Perspective," *International Review of Social History* 58:S21 (2013), pp. 229–251; and Sivasundaram, *Waves across the South*. For a wide-ranging review essay, see also John E. Wills Jr., "What's New? Studies of Revolutions and Divergences, 1770–1840," *Journal of World History* 25:1 (2014), pp. 127–186.

[5] Nile Green, "The Waves of Heterotopia: Toward a Vernacular Intellectual History of the Indian Ocean," *AHR* 123:3 (2018), pp. 846–874.

[6] Travers, *Ideology and Empire*, p. 31.

[7] For discussions, see Rajat Kanta Ray, "Indian Society and the Establishment of British Supremacy, 1765–1818," in P. J. Marshall, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 2, *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 509–529; and Rajat Kanta Ray, *The Felt*

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early as the 1730s, vicious aristocratic infighting and the violent dethronement of multiple emperors in Delhi were being described as "the revolutions of this time of wonders."[8] Frequency of use speeded up thereafter, and under the sign of *inqilāb* fell matters as disparate as Afghan warrior invasions around the Himalayan rims of the Punjab and the localization of nawabi proconsular power in the deltaic floodplains of Bengal.[9] With their historic victory at the Battle of Plassey in 1757, the British also began adding to the chorus. Rafiʿ-ud-Din's oblique critique of the Mughals makes sense, moreover, when we consider the proliferation of new literary genres in this period, whether dynastic chronicles that gave "warning" (*ʿibrat-nāma*) or poetry whose focal tenet was sociocultural "tumult" (*shahr-āshob*).[10] Still, hajjis stood apart in that they understood that the gathering crises in the material and normative foundations of empire were of a piece with transformations coursing around the Indian Ocean. For them, *inqilāb* or revolution was unrestricted to India.

This chapter serves two purposes. It first clarifies the objective contexts for why the thought-worlds of pilgrims were implicated in imperium. It then examines the ways in which the first-person accounts of individual hajjis reckoned with imperial change in both South Asia and the Indian Ocean.

Community: Commonalty and Mentality before the Emergence of Indian Nationalism (New Delhi, 2003), pp. 322–328. For *fitna* ("dissension"/"revolt") as a terminology for state-formation in post-Mughal South Asia, see Wink, *Land and Sovereignty in India*, pp. 21–51. Like its Latinate counterpart, *inqilāb* implied both dynastic and celestial "revolutions," for which, see Saïd Amir Arjomand, "The Conception of Revolution in Persianate Political Thought," *Journal of Persianate Studies* 5 (2012), pp. 1–14; which updated the arguments, centering on the Arabic *thawra*, in Bernard Lewis, "Islamic Concepts of Revolution," in P. J. Vatikiotis, ed., *Revolution in the Middle East and Other Case Studies* (London, 1972), pp. 30–40. It has been conjectured that the end of the eighteenth century saw a shift in meaning globally, from "cyclical movement" to "a definite teleology"; Armitage and Subrahmanyam, "Introduction," in Armitage and Subrahmanyam, *Age of Revolutions*, p. xvi. Compare Reinhart Koselleck, "Historical Criteria of the Modern Concept of Revolution," in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York, 2004), pp. 43–57. Finally, on debates about decline among Ottoman intellectuals, see Cemal Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 4:1–2 (1997–1998), pp. 30–75.

[8] Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab al-Lubāb: dar Ahwāl-i Salātīn-i Tīmūriya ki dar Hindūstān Saltanat kardand*, vol. 2, ed. Kabir-ud-Din Ahmad (Calcutta, 1873), p. 815.

[9] Tahmas Beg Khan Rumi, *Tāhmas-nāma*, ed. Muhammad Aslam (Lahore, n.d.), p. 94; and Ghulam Husain Salim, *Riyāz al-Salātīn: Tārīkh-i Bangāla*, ed. ʿAbdulhaq ʿAbid (Calcutta, 1890), p. 268.

[10] Frances Pritchett, "'The World Turned Upside Down': *Šahr-Āšōb* as a Genre," *Annual of Urdu Studies* 4 (1984), pp. 37–41.

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Instead of simply assuming that the relationship between power and pilgrimage was natural or self-evident, together with Chapter 2, my focus here falls on surveying the making, and remaking, of imperial cultures of hajj over the long *durée*. To this end, I reveal how the Mughals paved the passages of Indian hajj pilgrims through state support, and how patronage regimes fared as imperial authority broke down.

Scholars have typically turned to the institutional investments made by states in the hajj to highlight how kings and empires legitimated their rule. I argue that they had deeper ramifications still, as evidenced by the voices of those who took advantage of a Mughal infrastructure of buildings, ships, stipends, and texts meant for the hajj. As recent scholarship has stressed, states not only appropriated specific practices like pilgrimage to generate empire-wide traditions of religiosity. As subjects, hajjis laid their own expectations at the feet of mammoth empires.[11] Nir Shafir has persuasively demonstrated, thus, that "mobility and materiality" came together at the main Middle Eastern pilgrimage route through Damascus in Syria to produce a uniquely "Ottoman hajj," one that touched that "empire's subjects at the community or individual level."[12] What follows contends that the Mughals similarly defined imperial identities through official patronage. This in turn made up the "institutional latticework," to quote Jeremy Adelman's thesis on "an age of imperial revolutions," that informed the "embedded politics" of how pilgrims grasped the later unraveling of empire.[13] And where the Ottomans had Damascus, the Mughals had the Indian Ocean port city of Surat. To examine the birth of an imperial tradition, and the ruptures and continuities it experienced from the mid-eighteenth century onward, the first part of this chapter is mainly anchored at that Gujarati emporium.[14] From there, I move to survey the paradox of how, imperial decline notwithstanding, the hajj continued and even expanded after the Mughals.

Subsequent sections of the chapter scrutinize the written passages of individual South Asian pilgrims. Through the narrative accounts of a wide array of Indians who traveled to Arabia and the Middle East between 1739 and 1857, I explain how they each responded to, but were themselves also transformed by, transregional "revolutions."

[11] Can, *Spiritual Subjects*.
[12] Nir Shafir, "In an Ottoman Holy Land: The Hajj and the Road from Damascus, 1500–1800," *History of Religions* 60:1 (2020), pp. 3–4.
[13] Jeremy Adelman, "An Age of Imperial Revolutions," *AHR* 113:2 (2008), pp. 319, 329.
[14] For some historical precedents to themes explored in this chapter, see Samira Sheikh, *Forging a Region: Sultans, Traders, and Pilgrims in Gujarat, 1200–1500* (New Delhi, 2010).

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To begin, I foreground the interregional connections of pilgrims by noting that it was the hajj that afforded many contemporaries discrete views of the "world." Thus, what was once primarily an artifice for elite ideologies of universal kingship in Mughal India[15] now plumbed additional depths of meaning.[16] Against this broader framing, I note that the narratives of pilgrims can help us appreciate how historical actors themselves grappled with "the massive transnational transformations of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries."[17] Specifically, it is argued here that pilgrimage circulations – combined with imperial revolutions – produced new visions of agency and community among Muslims.[18] To extend the analytical meanings of the "age of revolutions" beyond Europe and the Atlantic, historians have elaborated thoughtful suggestions. Most will doubtless now shrink from advancing any progressivist history of democracy or industrialization. As C. A. Bayly and Jürgen Osterhammel have instead noted, in its "global" iteration, the epoch's most prominent hallmarks were: (1) changes in cultural realms like religion, which witnessed greater external homogenization but also additional internal fragmentations; (2) upheavals of social hierarchy in ways that did not necessarily translate to social equity; and (3) on top of it all, the first truly worldwide wave of European – but really, British – colonial expansion.[19]

How can hajjis help us develop these schematic propositions? Broadly, but respectively, I suggest that pilgrims who were witnesses to revolutions voiced revivalist opinions on religiosity, revanchist attitudes toward social status, and increasingly, transimperial understandings of political subjecthood. Befitting a revolutionary age, some became involved in actual acts of revolt too.[20] But before pilgrims themselves, I turn to the making of a Mughal hajj before *inqilāb*.

[15] Sumathi Ramaswamy, "Conceit of the Globe in Mughal Visual Practice," *CSSH* 49:4 (2007), pp. 751–782.

[16] On how "around the world" many now began to envision an "abstract 'world,'" see Sebastian Conrad, "Enlightenment in Global History: A Historiographical Critique," *AHR* 117:4 (2012), pp. 999–1027.

[17] Sarah Knott, "Narrating the Age of Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly* 73:1 (2016), p. 4. Compare Lynn Hunt, "The Experience of Revolution," *French Historical Studies* 32:4 (2009), p. 672, for how "new approaches to the question of individual experience might help recast the global."

[18] Bjørn Thomassen, "Notes towards an Anthropology of Political Revolutions," *CSSH* 54:3 (2012), pp. 679–706.

[19] Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, pp. 12–19, 86–100; Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, pp. 59–63.

[20] For an overview, see Nikki R. Keddie, "The Revolt of Islam, 1700 to 1993: Comparative Considerations and Relations to Imperialism," *CSSH* 36:3 (1994), pp. 463–487.

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Mughals and Mecca: Before *Inqilāb*

The hajj from South Asia was patronized by the medieval Delhi Sultanate and its satellite polities. A lively traffic also existed from coastal Indian regions like Malabar.[21] Even so, it was with the Mughals, and especially with Emperor Akbar (r. 1542–1605), that organized administrative efforts began ensuring pilgrimage movements from north India. Not long after the Mughals annexed Gujarat and made it into an imperial province, the first imperial pilgrim *qāfila* or "caravan" was dispatched to Surat in 1576 from the then-capital of Agra. With only occasional interruptions, that imperial tradition continued down to Aurangzeb, during whose reign the empire reached its maximum territorial extents.[22] While substantial imperial investments were made in the hajj throughout, the precedents were ultimately set by Akbar. One chronicler at his court observed that the maiden Mughal hajj caravan had led to the establishment of pious endowments for the Holy Places (*wuqūf-i Haramain*), the creation of an office for the Commander of Pilgrims (*imārat-i hujjāj*), the organization of imperial ships to secure passage across the Arabian Sea (*darya-yi ʿUmān*), and the allocation of alms and offerings for pilgrims and notables in the Hijaz. As eulogy to the emperor, the chronicler added: "If the Kaʿba is the destination for the community of Islam/His Majesty, the King of Kings, is the benefactor to the community of the Kaʿba."[23] To be sure, practical and political problems alike sometimes unsettled Mughal efforts to transport hajjis through the Indian Ocean. On the whole, however, it was the success of the early modern hajj that remains remarkable.

The Mughal hajj was eminently oceanic. Mention of an overland route through Afghanistan was occasionally made in imperial records. Yet, as a royal letter from Akbar to the Sharif of Mecca itself made known, the empire's Central Asian frontiers constituted troublesome terrain, bristling with hostile and obstreperous groups.[24] In the mid-seventeenth century, a Mughal prince near Kabul was likewise told that pilgrims taking these "long hilly routes" to Mecca often fell victim to plunder,

[21] For recent statements, see Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "A View from Mecca: Notes on Gujarat, the Red Sea, and the Ottomans, 1517–39/923–946 H." *MAS* 51:2 (2017), pp. 268–318; and Sebastian Prange, *Monsoon Islam: Trade and Faith on the Medieval Malabar Coast* (Cambridge, 2018).

[22] Farooqi, *Mughal–Ottoman Relations*, pp. 113–119.

[23] Muhammad ʿArif Qandahari, *Tārīkh-i Akbarī, maʿrūf ba Tārīkh-i Qandahārī*, eds. Muʾin-ud-Din Nadwi, Azhar ʿAli Dihlawi, and Imtiyaz ʿAli Khan ʿArshi (Rampur, 1942), pp. 242–243.

[24] Abul Fazl ibn Mubarak, "Nāmaʾ-yi Hazrat Shāhanshāhī ba-Shurafāʾ-yi Kirām-i Makkaʾ-yi Muʿazzama," in *Har Sih Daftar-i Abūl Fazl* (Lucknow, 1882), pp. 29–30.

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or worse.[25] With the collapse of the neighboring Safavid empire in Iran in 1722, and the ensuing tribal revolts that led to the rise of the Afsharid and Durrani regimes, the situation likely only worsened in the eighteenth century. Though remaining vague on particulars, soon after Nadir Shah's invasion of his hometown, the celebrated Mughal scribe Anand Ram Mukhlis (d. 1750) noted that there were "two routes to reach Mecca the Great" – maritime and terrestrial. He cautioned, though, that "it is said that in comparison to the sea route (*rāh-i daryā*), the dry route (*rāh-i khushk*) is more onerous."[26]

The "overland" route to the Hijaz usually also had a maritime leg.[27] Typically, this entailed an initial seaborne journey from India through the Persian Gulf. As one pilgrim, himself on his way to India from Najaf and Karbala, discovered in the early nineteenth century, Basra was especially favored as a port of call by Shiʿa hajjis, who were usually there to detour at the shrine cities of Iraq for "Visitations to the Threshold" (*ziyārat-i ʿatabat*).[28] Illustrative of how it was through pilgrimage circulations that many from this part of the world engaged in narratives of "world-making," this particular account by a traveler was titled *Mirror of the Events of the World* (*Mirʾāt al-Ahwal-i Jahān-nāma*). Certainly, there were the inevitable trips made by foot, mule, or bullock-cart from South Asia's hinterlands to its different coasts, where pilgrims often spent weeks or months while awaiting the sailing winds of the monsoons.[29] Hajjis remaining at the mercy of the *mawsim*, with ships becalmed or sailing seasons just missed, were consequently common refrains, from the Akbari era to the very ends of the age of sail.[30]

[25] Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maʾāsir al-Umarā*, vol. 1, ed. Maulawi ʿAbdurrahim (Calcutta, 1888), p. 801.

[26] Here Anand Ram could not resist an ironic couplet:
So long as the wine tavern is open, I shall not go to the mosque,
I shall take the dry route when the sea (sc., "wet") route shuts.
APAC, OMS Or. 1813, Anand Ram Mukhlis, "Mirʾāt al-Istilāh," fo. 268

[27] Pearson, *Pious Passengers*, 131–142.

[28] NAI, MS. Acc. No. 386, Aqa Ahmad Bahbahani, "Mirʾāt al-Ahwal-i Jahān-nāma," fo. 84.

[29] Subhash Parihar, *Land Transport in Mughal India: Mughal Highways and Architectural Remains* (New Delhi, 2008), pp. 37–45.

[30] Bayazid Bayat, *Tazkiraʾ-yi Humāyūn wa Akbar*, ed., Muhammad Hidayat Husain (Calcutta, 1941), p. 355; Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," pp. 14, 32; NAI, MS. Acc. No. 386, Ahmad Bahbahani, "Mirʾāt al-Ahwal," fo. 86; and Mustafa Khan Muhammad Nawab Bahadur, *Sirāj-i Munīr*, trans. (Persian to Urdu), Saiyid Zain-ul-ʿAbidin (Farrukhabad, 1910), pp. 21–25. It has been argued that because the hajj and monsoon seasons did not always coincide – governed as they respectively were by the lunar and solar calendars – the discrepancy likely caused problems for traffic. Pearson, *Pious Passengers*, pp. 148–150. But hajjis often referred to contingency plans. At ports like Surat, they were also regularly updated on travel timelines. See, Ahsan Jan Qaisar,

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Over that long time span, the empire's main commercial port was also its primary springboard for the hajj. Though experiencing economic downturns from the 1720s due to political turmoil in the hinterland, Surat's resilience was reflected in the fact that colonial Bombay, Calcutta, or Madras only fully began to overtake the Mughal entrepot's status as India's "Gate of Mecca" in the nineteenth century.[31] Surat's catchment area also extended beyond north India proper. As late as the 1820s, a Bengali pilgrim, who ended up voyaging back home via Chittagong in the Bay of Bengal, averred that "anyone wishing to go on hajj from India boards ships from Surat."[32] Much of this owed to the investments the Mughals had made in Gujarat's infrastructures of hajj travel. To this end, the Mughals added to the built environment of the city, even as they inherited parts of it, as for example Surat's fortress, which had in fact been constructed by an Ottoman nobleman at the Gujarati Sultanate.

Apart from funding inns, ships, and soup-kitchens (*langar*), the Mughals also sought to defray the expenses of hajj travel by establishing perpetual tax-exempt endowments meant for Mecca (*waqf*, pl. *auqāf*), some of which were sufficiently important to require their own supervising officers (*dārogha*).[33] Pilgrims congregating in Surat had several options for lodging, and much here depended on their personal or professional networks. An *ʿālim* or a Sufi might have bided their time at a shrine or a madrasa,[34] whereas travelers to Arabia lucky enough to be on a state stipendiary (*zād-i rāhila*) could choose to rent their own lodgings.[35] But as one hajji from late imperial Delhi noted, Surat and

"From Port to Port: Life on Indian Ships in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in Ashin Das Gupta and M. N. Pearson, eds., *India and the Indian Ocean, 1500–1800* (Calcutta, 1987), pp. 331–350.

31 For the classic account of Surat's decline, see Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c. 1700–1750* (Wiesbaden, 1979). For recent studies that have stressed its continued significance into the late eighteenth century, see Machado, *Ocean of Trade*, esp. pp. 69–72; and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "The Hidden Face of Surat: Reflections on a Cosmopolitan Indian Ocean Centre, 1540–1850," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61:1–2 (2018), pp. 205–255.

32 Dhaka University Library (Dhaka, Bangladesh), HR-29/41, "Risālaʾ-yi Hajj," fo. 146[a], "*har ki irādaʾ-yi hajj az Hindūstān kanad ba-rāh-i Sūrat dar jihāz nishast*."

33 ʿAli Muhammad Khan Bahadur, *Khātima-yi Mirʾāt-i Ahmadī*, ed. Saiyid Nawab ʿAli (Calcutta, 1927), pp. 222–224.

34 Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," pp. 11–13.

35 Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi (Topkapı Palace Museum Archive, Istanbul, Turkey), H. 1128, Persian Epistolary (Untitled MS), "Naql-i ʿArzī ba Nawāb Nizām-ud-Daula Bahādur," June 1, 1748, fo. 13[a], "Farz-i ʿArzī ba Wazīr-ul-Mamālik Nawishta Shuda," May 21, 1748, fo. 26[b]. On this manuscript, containing the letters of an Ottoman ambassador in Mughal India, see Riazul Islam, *A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian Relations (1500–1750)*, vol. 2 (Tehran, 1982), pp. 366–368.

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the roads leading to it from upper India were studded with rest-houses, built by the Mughals, their regional satraps, or wealthy merchants.[36] Imperial passports, ordering officials to exempt road tolls or provide safe passage to overseas travelers with connections to the state, were also sometimes issued from Delhi.[37]

For Mughal buildings meant for hajjis specifically, pride of place went to Surat's caravanserai (see Figure 1.1). Constructed in the large "imperial" style, it could very likely accommodate about a thousand guests, not to mention barbers, tailors, blacksmiths, and other ancillary attendants.[38] Completed in 1644, the structure dated from the time of the great imperial building spree that saw "the crystallization of Mughal style" under Emperor Shah Jahan (r. 1628–1658), patron-constructor of the Red Fort in Delhi, and the Taj Mahal in Agra.[39] The serai's foundational stela defined its purpose narrowly. Worth quoting in its entirety, it also provided a richly condensed portrait of the concrete complexities that were involved in organizing long-distance hajj travel from Mughal India, and how the material planning of pilgrimage could even implicate the more rarefied ideologies of empire:

In the name of the Illuminator of the Sun and the Moon/In the age of Shah Jahan Padishah,
This was built by the sincere Haqiqat Khan/Outwardly a serai, but really, a Paradise,
From the celestial orbits, its year has been given/The imperial serai of Haqiqat. 1054 H. [1644 CE]

For God Almighty and the holy, and for His Highness the Second Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction, Shadow of the Divine, Emperor Shah Jahan Ghazi, his loyal servant Ishaq Beg Yazid Haqiqat Khan built this *Kārwān-sarā*. For the sake of God Almighty, its endowment (*waqf*) has been established with the following conditions. That, the ʿulama, the pious, the Sufis (*fuqrāʾ*), and the pilgrims of the Noble Sanctuary of God are not charged for any reason. And that, with the rents collected from other travelers, after paying for the costs of the repair of the serai, and after paying for the porters (*darbān*), water-bearers (*āb-kash*), sweepers (*khāk-rob*), cooks (*khwurāk*) and other servants needed to keep the serai

[36] Mustafa Khan, *Sirāj-i Munīr*, pp. 27–29.
[37] For examples of maritime travel passports from Aurangzeb's reign, see APAC, OMS Or. 1735, Munshi Malikzada, "Nigār-nāmaʾ-yi Munshī," fos. 183[b]–184[a], 189[a]–189[b].
[38] Chaturman Saksina Kayasth, *Akhbār al-Nawādir, maʿrūf ba Chahār Gulshan*, ed. Chander Shekhar (Delhi, 2011), pp. 244–249, outlines a typology of Mughal serais. Dating to the 1750s, the text differentiates between imperial (*pādshāhī*), permanent (*pukhta*), "half" (*nīm*), and other structural forms. Compare, Stephen P. Blake, *Shahjahanabad: The Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639–1739* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 65–66.
[39] Catherine B. Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*, NCHI, 1.4 (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 5.

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Figure 1.1 At the Gate of Mecca: Mughal hajj caravanserai, Surat, Gujarat, built in 1644. Built by the Mughal nobleman Ishaq Beg Yazid Haqiqat Khan (d. 1663–1664).
Source: Photograph by author.

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inhabited and clean, the remaining [money] should be given to the pilgrims of Mecca and Medina (*zāʾirān-i Haramain Sharīfain*). And that, this site should certainly not be given to the soldiers of the cavalry or infantry. For the serai is meant for the sojourn and rest and comfort of its guests.[40]

State sponsorship of pilgrimage was thus clearly aimed at inspiring affective bonds of subjection and loyalty to the cult of the Timurid dynasty. As Akbar's influential courtier-ideologue Abul Fazl affirmed, monuments like serais were "conducive to that dignity which is so necessary for worldly power."[41] A chronicler in the early seventeenth century likewise remarked that building serais, making roads, and organizing hajj vessels were all exercises of "royal will" that were sure to leave an impression on travelers.[42] Significantly, the pastoral care of pilgrims was not just performed in the name of Mughal emperors. Appropriately for a "patrimonial-bureaucratic state," which in its classical phase saw its subjects as members of a rambling household, the hajj also drew the patronage of lesser nobility and royal women.[43] Among the latter, the hajj in fact had some of its most dynamic patrons and participants from early modern India.[44] The builder of Surat's serai, Yazid Khan (d. 1663–1664), was himself well-connected to the Mughal domestic world, having made his career first as a majordomo (*khān-sāmān*) and then as a palace steward (*kat-khūda*) under two noblewomen, including Shah Jahan's queen-consort.[45] The importance of imperial sponsorship can also be appreciated by how the Mughals continued to aspire to supporting maritime movements from Gujarat even after Delhi was convulsed by chaotic conflicts. Quixotically, thus, Farrukhsiyar (r. 1713–1719), eventual victim of regicide and "revolution," persisted in promising his subject "flock" or *raʿīyat* in Surat new imperial buildings (never actually constructed) and security both "on sea and land" (arguably never achieved).[46]

The Mughals moreover financed corpuses of prescriptive didactic texts meant for the hajj. These explained the specifics of ritual (*manāsik-i hajj*) and provided information regarding pilgrimage itineraries (*rāh-i hajj*).

[40] "Plate VIa," in C. R. Singhal, "Two Persian Inscriptions from Surat," in G. Yazdani, ed., *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica* (Calcutta, 1925–1926), pp. 11–12. I have modified Singhal's translation, as given in ibid., p. 12.
[41] Parihar, *Land Transport in Mughal India*, quote p. 84.
[42] Khwaja Niʿmatullah, *Tārīkh-i Khān Jahānī wa Makhzan-i Afghānī*, vol. 1, ed. S. M. Imam-ud-Din (Dhaka, 1960), p. 337.
[43] On the Mughal empire as a "patrimonial-bureaucratic state," see Blake, *Shahjahanabad*.
[44] Ellison B. Findly, "The Capture of Maryam-uz-Zamānī's Ship: Mughal Women and European Traders," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 108:2 (1988), pp. 227–238.
[45] Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maʾāsir al-Umarā*, vol. 1, p. 590.
[46] "Plate VIb," in Singhal, "Two Persian Inscriptions," p. 13.

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The social context of its production is examined in detail in Chapter 3, but an imperial compilation of juridical opinions from 1679, the *Fatāwa al-ʿĀlamgīrīya* hence dedicated an entire section to the hajj. In ways at once formal and formative, it assembled legal judgments from a large body of authoritative texts from the Middle East (e.g., *Fath al-Qadīr*) and Central Asia (e.g., *Fatāwa-yi Qāzi Khān*) to elaborate for an Indian audience the canon law particulars of the hajj as per Hanafi jurisprudence.[47] Texts like these were complemented, by the late seventeenth century, with more approachable (meaning less scholastic) Mughal hajj manuals, the most well-known of which was perhaps Safi ibn Wali's *Companion of Pilgrims* (*Anīs al-Hujjāj*).[48]

By far the most popular hajj guide, however, was Muhyi-ud-Din Lari's *Futūh al-Haramain* (*Gifts of the Holy Places*). Written in sultanate-era Gujarat and dedicated to its pre-Mughal ruler Muzaffar Shah II (r. 1511–1526), manuscripts of this text were widely copied and circulated in South, Central, and West Asia, including Mecca itself, over the next two centuries.[49] Popular manuscripts such as these were not unaffordable, and when unilluminated, could sell at Indian book bazaars for as low as a rupee, or the weekly pay of an unskilled worker in Surat in 1700.[50] *Futūh al-Haramain*'s popularity perhaps owed to the spread of Persian as an early modern Eurasian lingua franca, a process in which the Mughals of course played a lead role.[51] Or perhaps, its versified text proved a good mnemonic, both for hajj guides and for pilgrims constantly on the move. Whatever the case, into the late eighteenth century, the text continued to attract commentary in major Mughal metaliterary treatises.[52]

A fuller discussion of the maritime dimensions of the hajj will be taken up in the next chapter, which sheds light on state-owned and merchant ships that trafficked pilgrim passengers, as well as the material economies

47 *Fatāwa-yi Hindīya, al-maʿrūf ba Fatāwa-yi ʿĀlamgīrīya*, vol. 1, trans. (Arabic to Urdu) Saiyid Amir ʿAli, ed. Abu ʿUbaildullah (1st ed., 1932–1948, repr., Lahore, n.d.), pp. 41–48.

48 For a synoptic study of this text, see Qaisar, "Port to Port."

49 Guy Burak, "Between Istanbul and Gujarat: Descriptions of Mecca in the Sixteenth-Century Indian Ocean," *Muqarnas* 34:1 (2017), pp. 287–320.

50 Irfan Habib, "Persian Book Writing and Book Use in the Pre-printing Age," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 66 (2005–2006), p. 529 (for book prices); Irfan Habib, "Monetary System and Prices," in Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. 1, *1200–1750* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 378–379 (for Surat salaries).

51 Muzaffar Alam, "The Pursuit of Persian: Language in Mughal Politics," *MAS* 32:2 (1998), pp. 317–349.

52 Ghulam ʿAli Azad Bilgrami, *Khizānaʾ-yi ʿĀmira* (Kanpur, 1871), p. 404. See also, ʿAli Muhaddis, "Guftār-i Kitāb Shināsān," in Muhyi-ud-Din Lari, *Futūh al-Haramain*, ed. ʿAli Muhaddis (Tehran, 1987), pp. 6–7.

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of South Asian exchanges with the bazaars of the Hijaz. Here it may be added that many from beyond Mughal courtly circles often drew attention to the empire's support of the hajj pilgrimage, thereby revealing how the culture around it underwent a definite "Mughalization." As Jorge Flores has recently defined it, Mughalization was the process through which the empire's involvements in regionally specific cultures had a transformative effect on how contemporaries perceived and practiced those traditions. The hajj from South Asia was similarly absorbed into Mughal imperial culture. In this regard, contemporaries thus also often highlighted conflicts between the Mughals and rival early modern states. As imperial patronage of the hajj was often practiced with a competitive eye fixed at other empires, pilgrimage understandably also became a flashpoint for tense exchanges at the Subcontinent's wider, "liquid frontiers."[53]

In the 1570s, for example, a large *qāfila* of Mughal noblewomen and their almsgiving projects in Mecca provoked intense jealousy from the Ottomans, loath as they were to share with another dynasty the role of "Servitor of the Holy Places" (Ar., *Khādim al-Haramain*). From Istanbul, a flurry of decrees (Tr., *ferman*; Pers., *firmān*) were issued arguing that the altruism of the Mughal women was causing difficulties for the distribution of grain in Arabia, that the royal visitors were running afoul of Shariʿa norms, and that they should forthwith return home to India.[54] As a result of this episode, an indignant Akbar momentarily even suspended the hajj from South Asia.[55] Still, one of his subjects, who happened to be in Arabia at the time, only had fulsome praise for the ruler, without whose largesse "the felicity of hajj could not have been attained."[56] As it did a century later, frictions at times also flared between the Mughals and the political subordinates of the Ottomans in Arabia, the quasi-autonomous Sharifian rulers of Mecca. "Having heard of the great wealth of Hindustan, each year the Sharif of Noble Mecca sends here an envoy for his personal gain," Aurangzeb noted testily in 1694.[57] But for their part, even annals that were not directly commissioned by the Mughal

[53] Jorge Flores, *Unwanted Neighbours: The Mughals, the Portuguese, and Their Frontier Zones* (New Delhi, 2018), pp. 76–77.
[54] Naimur Rahman Farooqi, "Six Ottoman Documents on Mughal–Ottoman Relations during the Reign of Akbar," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 7:1 (1996), p. 39.
[55] Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 152–160.
[56] Bayazid Bayat, *Tazkiraʾ-yi Humāyūn*, p. 356. For more on this text, see Simon Digby, "Bāyazīd Beg Turkmān's Pilgrimage to Makka and Return to Gujarat: A Sixteenth Century Narrative," *Iran* 42 (2004), pp. 159–177.
[57] *Ruqaʿāt-i ʿĀlamgīrī* (Kanpur, 1876), p. 165.

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court continued lavishing praise on that emperor for his support of both pilgrims and the pilgrimage.[58]

Pilgrims and Polities between Old and New

How, then, did the Mughal hajj change in the eighteenth century? Two features are here conspicuous. It is evident, first of all, that imperial decline equaled in a rather rapid fraying of patronage networks. Simultaneously, though, new states, both Indian and European, and for very different reasons, began to fill the vacuum left by the Timurids. In time, their efforts thus also began to expand the webs of the South Asian hajj.

"Previously the Mogul emperors maintained three or four vessels only for this destination," reported a perceptive European observer in north India regarding pilgrim traffic to Jeddah. "It was in their principles very meritorious work and the most dignified use of their power." By the 1770s, it was clear, however, that "the deterioration of their affairs of state has made it impossible to support this pious establishment." Growing numbers of pilgrims were paying out-of-pocket fares to regional or European merchant ships to reach Arabia.[59] Hajjis were themselves alive to these vicissitudes. By Rafiʿ-ud-Din's count, exactly three ships once comprised the Mughal hajj fleet. Despite "state neglect," even Emperor Muhammad Shah (r. 1719–1748) continued sending charity to the Haramain. Times had changed. No Mughal ruler had since reaped the "bounty of this service."[60] In this section, I offer a summary of how the politics of hajj patronage evolved after the 1750s. Despite Mughal decentralization – owing both to internal problems and the advent of new polities in India – I show that the hajj from South Asia ultimately mirrored what has been described as "the outstanding paradox of the eighteenth century." Like other precolonial traditions nurtured by the Mughals, pilgrimage therefore also persisted despite "political turbulence." It, too, grew despite pockets of "economic decline" across late Mughal India.[61]

[58] Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab al-Lubāb*, vol. 2, pp. 441–442. For additional examples of such praise directed at the Great Mughals for their hajj patronage, see Muʿtamad Khan, *Iqbāl-nāma-yi Jahāngīrī*, eds. ʿAbdul Hay and Ahmad ʿAli (Calcutta, 1865), p. 31; and Muhammad Salih Kambu Lahori, *ʿAmal-i Sālih, al-mausūm ba Shāhjahān Nāma*, vol. 3, ed. Ghulam Yazdani (Calcutta, 1939), pp. 20–21.

[59] Comte de Modave, *Voyage en Inde du Comte de Modave, 1773–1776: Nouveaux Mémoires sur l'état actuel du Bengale et de l'Indoustan*, ed. Jean Deloche (Paris, 1971), p. 344.

[60] Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," pp. 46–47.

[61] Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, p. 198.

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However impressionistically, this was reflected in the numbers that journeyed to Mecca. As noted, an unprecedented 15,000 Indians traveled annually to Arabia in this period. M. N. Pearson calculated this figure from European accounts, but in this case, the restricted source-base cannot really be gainsaid. South Asians themselves did not venture any accurate statements on the matter.[62] So, as in the mid-eighteenth century, they might have simply referred to the "deep crush of people" in Medina;[63] or as in the early nineteenth, they might have suggested, implausibly if proverbially, that "at the season of hajj close to ten *lak* [1 million] congregate at the mosque" in Mecca.[64] Basing his estimate on seemingly extensive research, one scholar arrived at an annual total of 200,000 pilgrims from different parts of the world for the late eighteenth century.[65] The same figure was cited by a contemporary commentator in India.[66] That said, from the early 1800s, numbers did begin to drop due to disturbances and revolts in Arabia itself (on which more later). European adventurers traveling incognito as hajjis, like the Anglo-Swiss John Burckhardt (d. 1817) and the Spanish "Ali Bey" (d. 1818), noticed totals diminish by as much as a third in the opening decades of the nineteenth century.

Travel picked up again after the Ottomans restored order in Arabia in 1818, the same year the British defeated the Marathas to begin consolidating power in India. While much has been made of the impact of steam travel on hajj, it was evidently rather slow to leave an impression. The voyage of a lone East India Company steamer in 1829 – the first to putter across the Indian Ocean, from Bombay to Suez – therefore had little apparent effect on the pilgrimage in the face of a decade-long economic depression in South Asia on the one hand, and civil war across the Levant between the Sublime Porte and its Egyptian vassal on the other.[67] Pilgrim numbers rose to consistently maintain six-figure totals thereafter, with 140,000 reported to be in Mecca when the 1857 Rebellion shook

[62] Ottomans did not record numbers either. Compare Faroqhi, *Pilgrims & Sultans*, p. 46, wherein pilgrimage statistics are accordingly taken from nineteenth-century European accounts.

[63] ʿAbdul Karim ibn Khwaja ʿAkibat Mahmud Kashmiri, *Bayān-i Wāqiʿ: Sarguzasht-i Ahwāl-i Nādir Shāh wa Safarhā-yi Musannaf*, ed. K. B. Nasim (Lahore, 1970), p. 153.

[64] Hafiz Muhammad ʿAbdul Husain Karbalaʾyi Karnataki Hindi, *Tazkirat al-Tarīq fī Masāʾib Hujjāj Baitullah al-ʿAtīq*, eds. Rasul Jaʿfarian and Esra Doğan (Qom, 2007–2008), p. 196. The author cited a more tenable figure of 5,000 hajjis for the caravan that took him to Mecca from Iraq, ibid., p. 34.

[65] Russell King, "The Pilgrimage to Mecca: Some Geographical and Historical Aspects," *Erdkunde* 26:1 (1972), p. 66.

[66] James Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs: A Narrative of Seventeen Years Residence in India*, vol. 2 (1st ed., 1813, repr. London, 1834), p. 204.

[67] For the depression, see Chapter 2.

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India.[68] Fluctuations aside, Indian pilgrims remained prominent throughout, and at one in five fractionally dominated well into the late nineteenth century.[69] Astonishingly, aggregate figures of pilgrims would not equal eighteenth-century levels until after the Suez Canal was cut and steamers came to conclusively conquer Indian Ocean highways, and by the end of the nineteenth century the hajj was once more "the largest single movement" on Earth.[70]

For our purposes, perhaps the best point of departure from which to examine these trends of attrition and expansion is eighteenth-century Surat. The port captured in microcosm some of the contradictory dynamics that stamped the passing of the old regime in India. It thus experienced its own imperial "revolution." Two years after the Plassey "revolution," which carried the British to dominion status at their imperial bridgehead of Bengal, infighting among the Mughal nobility of Gujarat also led the East India Company to assume authority over Surat's fortress, an event that contemporaries dubbed the "Castle Revolution."[71] Meanwhile, the slow but certain flight of capital and commercial shipping from Surat to the colonial port of Bombay also began in earnest. As "troubles in the country" deepened in the ensuing decades – most proximately due to the stunning expansion of Maratha armies from the Deccan – Company servants responsible for levying Mughal imperial taxes from around Surat indicated that extensive stretches of the port's immediate vicinities had been left "destroyed and devastated."[72]

[68] Reported total numbers also include: 83,000 (1807), 70,000 (1814), 112,000 (1831), 60,000 (1854), 80,000 (1855), and 160,000 (1858); Adolphe d'Avril, *L'Arabie Contemporaine. Avec la description du pèlerinage de la Mecque* (Paris, 1869), p. 188; King, "Pilgrimage to Mecca"; and David E. Long, *The Hajj Today: A Survey of the Contemporary Makkah Pilgrimage* (Albany, NY, 1979), Appendix A, pp. 248–250.
[69] King, "Pilgrimage to Mecca," p. 69.
[70] Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, p. 164.
[71] For a balanced treatment, see Jistke Kuiper and Jos Gommans, "The Surat Castle Revolutions: Myths of an Anglo-Bania Order and Dutch Neutrality, C. 1740–1760," *Journal of Early Modern History* 10:4 (2006), pp. 361–390. For the "revolutions" in Bengal, see Travers, *Ideology and Empire*, pp. 31–66.
[72] MSA, Surat Factory Records, no. 22, pt. 1, Account of the Produce, Manufactures, Trade & Cultivation, May 19, 1781, fos. 97–99. Maratha raids into Surat began under the polity's founder Shivaji (r. 1674–1680) and were once even regarded as a central cause for Mughal decline; M. N. Pearson, "Shivaji and the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *Journal of Asian Studies* 35:2 (1976), pp. 221–235. Monocausal explanations like these are no longer viable. But Maratha authority did firmly ensconce itself in Surat by the 1770s, when it was alloted a share of the Mughal revenue; MSA, Surat Factory Records vol. 21, pt. 2, Jummabandy Settled for the Present Year 1779/80, March 31, 1780, fos. 274–276.

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Even under such apparently strained circumstances, however, the Red Sea run stubbornly persevered. In part, this was driven by small but important developments in techniques of shipbuilding and navigation in western India, the most notable consequence of which was likely the general transition that carried South Asian seafaring away from large to medium-sized deep-sea vessels.[73] The precarities produced by intensifying military conflicts across north India notwithstanding, as late as 1781, the picture of seagoing commerce from Surat was therefore still summed up as one of "considerable trade."[74] Hajjis sojourning at the port continued besides to evoke the image of a cosmopolitan city, bustling with foreign traders and émigré clans of Persians, Turks, and Arabs.[75] This, despite the fact many of these latter, "original" families – which had once served "different Mogul kings" as salaried officials and administrators, and whose religious men were often regarded as the *éminences grises* of Surat's political worlds – were now "being extinct" or absorbed into the expanding colonial order.[76]

Colonial engagements with the hajj did not occur willy-nilly, however. Always conscious of the bottom line, the East India Company remained reluctant to foot the bill for Indian pilgrims even after it became a conquering power. But when adopting a longitudinal perspective, as we are here, it becomes apparent that hajj circulations did play an important role in dictating the rhythms of European interactions with, and eventually, European expansion along, India's western coastlines. For even when Mughal power had remained unchallenged on land, the hajj often led to fraught exchanges between the Timurid empire and its seaborne rivals. On balance, however, these tensions seldom descended into open hostilities, but were rather emblematic of what Sanjay Subrahmanyam has described as "an age of contained conflict" in India and the Indian

[73] Machado, *Ocean of Trade*, pp. 72–93. For a hajji's highly idiosyncratic take on shipbuilding and navigation technologies at Surat, see also, Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," pp. 19–24.

[74] MSA, Surat Factory Records, no. 22, pt. 1, Account of Produce, May 19, 1781, fo. 98.

[75] Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," p. 13; Mustafa Khan, *Sirāj-i Munīr*, p. 19.

[76] MSA, Surat Factory Diary, no. 21, pt. 1, Consultations, November 27, 1780, fo. 392. For details of one such Gujarati family of Arab extraction, which transitioned from Mughal to Company tax-collecting servants in the eighteenth century, see Husain ʿAbbasi, "Mutarjam ke Qalam se," in Razi-ud-Din Ahmad Baksh, *Haqīqat al-Sūrat: Guldastaʾ-yi Sulahāʾ-yi Sūrat*, trans. (Persian to Urdu), Mahbub Husain Ahmad Husain ʿAbbasi (Ahmedabad, 2005), pp. 18–34. For the political powers of Surat's Sufi-ʿulama, see Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants*, p. 267; Subrahmanyam, "Hidden Face of Surat," pp. 232–233; and Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, CA, 2006), pp. 110–115.

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Ocean.[77] For example, Portuguese efforts to impose their notorious regime of naval passes (*cartazes*) on Mughal hajj ships were neither ever truly consistent nor entirely successful, but they did incite angry responses from Delhi. "Freeing Muslims from the Franks" at times even became a galvanizing call among Mughal pilgrims.[78]

At the turn of the eighteenth century, the blockade and capture of Mughal hajj ships by European vessels also led to heated confrontations.[79] Between 1690 and 1710, a rash of European piracy dovetailed explosively with a reckless war that the Company had declared on the Mughals, and the security of hajjis again became an issue. The Mughals responded by bringing intense pressure on the English and Dutch companies in India, successfully demanding that the Europeans curb the predatory activities of their compatriots at sea. Suitably chastened, the latter even agreed to supply protective convoys for outbound Indian vessels, including hajj ships.[80] While the convoys stabilized a maritime frontier for the Mughals, in one interpretation, they ironically also endorsed early ideologies of European jurisdictional authority in Asian waters.[81] By the 1730s, these interimperial arrangements took additional turns toward colonial ascendency. Pummeled by Maratha warships, the Afro-Indian Sidis, whose fleet once served as the Mughal empire's navy, were rendered "no longer in a consideration of protecting the trade of this coast." The British accordingly sought remuneration from a Mughal prebendal fief or *jāgīr* to take on that responsibility.[82] This would be capped off with the Company being officially granted the Mughal title of Admiral of the Imperial Fleet (*Dārogha-yi Ārmad-i Bādshāhī*) following the "revolution" at Surat (Figure 1.2).[83]

If European, or rather British, involvements in the hajj were born of unintended consequences, the expansion of pilgrimage ultimately owed more to the deliberate investments of post-Mughal polities. Even so, a crucial contradiction may be discerned here. For, in the end, the

[77] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: Mughals and Franks* (New Delhi, 2011).
[78] Bayazid Bayat, *Tazkiraʾ-yi Humāyūn*, p. 355.
[79] See, variously, Findly, "Capture of Maryum-uz-Zamānī"; Naimur Rahman Farooqi, "Moguls, Ottomans, and Pilgrims: Protecting the Routes to Mecca in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *The International History Review* 10:2 (1988), pp. 198–220; Pearson, *Pious Passengers*, pp. 102–106; and Flores, *Unwanted Neighbours*, pp. 82–88.
[80] Stern, *Company-State*, pp. 135–139; Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants*, pp. 113–116, 129–133.
[81] Lauren Benton, "Legal Spaces of Empire: Piracy and the Origins of Ocean Regionalism," *CSSH* 47:4 (2005), pp. 713–716.
[82] MSA, Public Department Diary, vol. 6, Consultation, June 7, 1733, fos. 9–10.
[83] Kuiper and Gommans, "Surat Castle Revolutions," p. 361.

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Figure 1.2 Locus of "revolution": Rampart, Surat Fortress. Built in the mid-sixteenth century by an Ottoman Turkish grandee at the Gujarat Sultanate, the fort was taken by the Mughals during Akbar's reign (1556–1604). The East India Company captured it with the Castle Revolution of 1759.
Source: Photograph by author.

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continuation and indeed reinvigoration of one Mughal tradition led nevertheless to the gradual relegation if not irrelevance of another. The Mughals may have shored up a robust imperial culture of hajj along their oceanic frontiers. However, it would still be cavalier to contend that the forms of religiosity they promoted were entirely Meccan in orientation. To the contrary, we know that the Timurids devoted greater energy and resources to Sufi shrine cults within the Subcontinent, which in turn reinforced their quintessentially thaumaturgical views of kingship.[84] Yet, with imperial decentralization, new rulers anxious for legitimacy began turning in greater numbers to the sacred sites of the Middle East. Indians and Europeans alike noticed how regional kingdoms were stepping into the breach left by the old regime when it came to funding the hajj. This in turn not only led to reconfigurations in the institutional and symbolic pathways of pilgrimage. It also revealed how Mughal successor crowns – many of which otherwise continued to draw their nominal titles, investitures, and privileges as provincial rulers from Delhi – were now looking elsewhere for political sustenance.

Consider here the making of entirely new eighteenth-century pilgrimage avenues between the Subcontinent and the Middle East, the significant ramifications they had on Indo-Muslim political culture at the regional level, and the lasting institutional forms they consolidated across the Indian Ocean. The rise of Shiʿa nawabi kingdoms in provinces like Awadh and Bengal led to intensive investments into Muslim sacred sites beyond Arabia. Into Ottoman Iraq, millions of rupees were poured to sponsor clerical learning, subsidize Indian pilgrimage circulations, and even finance large-scale infrastructural projects like the aptly named Hindiya (or Asafiya) canal near Karbala, dug in 1775 with funds from Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah of Awadh.[85] As in the Mughal era, such state efforts were obviously not meant to go unnoticed, and Awadh's benefaction toward Iraq soon became a talking point in pilgrim travelogues,[86] hajj manuals,[87] and more predictably, courtly chronicles. As a testament to their durability, Awadh's endowments in Iraq's sacred sites continued well after the British annexed that kingdom in 1856.[88]

[84] Richards, *Mughal Empire*, pp. 44–47; Moin, *Millennial Sovereign*, pp. 145–182.

[85] Juan Cole, "'Indian Money' and the Shiʿi Shrine Cities of Iraq, 1786–1850," *Middle Eastern Studies* 22:4 (1986), pp. 461–480; Meir Litvak, *Shiʿi Scholars of Nineteenth-Century Iraq: The ʿUlamaʾ of Najaf and Karbalaʾ* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 128.

[86] NAI, MS Acc. No. 386, Ahmad Bahbahani, "Mirʾāt al-Ahwal," fo. 88; Mirza Abu Talib Khan, *Masīr-i Tālibī yā Safar-nāmaʾ-yi Mīrza Abū Tālib Khān*, ed. Husain Khidev Jam (Tehran, 1974), pp. 214–215.

[87] APAC, OMS Add. 16741, Band ʿAli bin Mirza Khairat ʿAli, "Manāzil al-Hajj," fos. 19[a]–19[b].

[88] APAC, IOR/L/PS/12/2847, Coll. 17/3, Iraq: Oudh Bequest (1931–1935).

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Indeed, as Meir Litvak and Juan Cole have shown, if the birth of a modern "Shiʿa international" centered in Iraq stood in hock to Indian money, Awadh too benefited from the in-migration of Middle Eastern Shiʿa legists and savants who went on to build the clerical corps of the provincial kingdom.[89] Meanwhile, Hyderabad and Arcot in peninsular India, and Bengal, Sind, and various Indo-Afghan polities up north, continued steering redistributive investments toward Mecca.[90] Besides paying for Meccan ships and alms, they also funded the construction of a dense network of lodges or *ribāt*s meant for Indians in Arabia itself. A British consular survey later discovered thirteen to fifteen such buildings, all either owned or endowed by states that had emerged from under the Mughal carapace in the eighteenth century, such as Bhawalpur, Bhopal, Hyderabad, and Rampur. The structures ranged from smaller, four-room buildings to complexes that could house up to eighty pilgrims, complete with their own reservoirs, mosques, and staff of retainers.[91] Some welcome Indian pilgrims to this day.[92]

Into the eighteenth century, as well, Indian nobility continued "to order the issuance of counsel and advice," meaning manuals, for hajjis.[93] Moreover, pilgrims themselves perpetuated a culture of providing instruction to aspiring hajjis. The contents of individual pilgrimage narratives will be examined presently. These texts ranged from travelogues to diaries, and from mystical dream discourses to oral recollections of the hajj recorded by amanuenses. Their generic heterogeneity aside, many of these accounts contained details that were clearly meant for the edification of aspiring pilgrims. Son and successor to the founder of the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Sufi order, Muhammad Maʿsum (d. 1668–1669) had precisely that aim in mind when he had a book of his hajj travels compiled in the 1650s, "bid that copies be made for perusal," and even gifted a manuscript to Aurangzeb.[94] Parts of the text focused on themes meant to express the supernatural ambience of the hajj (Maʿsum's dead father comforting him with a shawl over a rough sea

[89] Litvak, *Shiʿi Scholars*, pp. 30–31, 170; Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shīʿism*.

[90] Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," p. 47; Modave, *Voyage en Inde*, p. 344; Ghulam Husain, *Riyaz al-Salātīn*, p. 28; and Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs*, p. 205.

[91] APAC, IOR/L/PS/12/7, Arabia: Wakf Properties for the Use of Indian Pilgrims, May 15, 1933–July 26, 1934, fos. 51^{r}, 78^{r}–79^{r}.

[92] "Prince of Arcot to Help Haj Pilgrims from Tamil Nadu with Stay," *Times of India*, June 17, 2012; "Rubat Keeps Memories of Nizam Kings Still Alive in Makkah," *Telangana Today*, August 29, 2017.

[93] APAC, OMS Add. 16741, Band ʿAli, "Manāzil al-Hajj," fo. 9^{b}.

[94] Muhammad Iqbal Mujaddidi, "Muqaddama," in Muhammad ʿUbaidullah, *Hasnat al-Haramain*, ed. Muhammad Iqbal Mujaddidi (Dera Ismail Khan, 1981), quote pp. 20, 48.

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journey; sightings of houris and angels in Mecca). Other details were far more functional (exact dates of arrival and departure; listings of locations of pilgrim assembly or *mīqāt* in Arabia).[95]

Later, in the 1740s, ʿAbdul Karim, a Mughal scribe-accountant, graphed his itinerary from Iraq to Arabia via Syria in tabular form, deliberately translating into Indic idioms metrics of space-time that were "customary in the lands of Rum."[96] In the 1780s, the *ʿālim* Rafiʿ-ud-Din listed for an audience of "friends and dear ones" what he deemed were the premier seminaries and libraries of Medina.[97] And, in the early nineteenth century, an eastern Indian hajji concentrated on orthopraxy, quoting *in extenso* the Qurʾanic invocations that were meant to be recited at successive stages of the hajj.[98] Such, indeed, were the abiding tropes of South Asian hajj narratives, which continued to combine "enchanted" and "disenchanted" themes well into the modern industrial era.[99]

Ebb of Empire: Hajj and Revolution across the Indian Ocean

If some motifs endured in the writings of hajjis, on closer examination, we also find specific transformations that came with imperial change. The remainder of this chapter will offer dense descriptions of these transformations by turning to individual first-person hajj narratives, the "global" views they brought to relief, and the impact "revolution" had on individual pilgrim-authors. It will focus on three discrete periods: the immediate aftermath of Mughal decline (1739–1790), the period of intensified British expansion in India (1790–1820), and, finally, the decades leading up to the 1857 Rebellion. Though evincing immense internal diversity, themes that ultimately leap out from the pages of Indian hajj narratives are, for one, a sustained focus on Mughal crisis and the arrival of new powers, and two, a strong subjective undercurrent reflecting new visions of community – religious, political, and social.

The first set of changes may be attributed to Mughal success in creating corporate identities through imperial institutions, such that the "imperial revolutions" of the eighteenth century remained, in the final analysis, "imperial in nature."[100] Causal factors for shifts in individual

95 ʿUbaidullah, *Hasnat al-Haramain*, pp. 168–169, 172.
96 ʿAbdul Karim Kashmiri, *Bayān-i Wāqiʿ*, p. 134.
97 Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," pp. 8, 54, 71.
98 Dhaka University Library, HR-29/41, "Risālaʾ-yi Hajj," fos. 146b –147b.
99 Nile Green, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840–1915* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 90–117.
100 Adelman, "Age of Imperial Revolutions," p. 320.

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thought patterns are of course more difficult to explain. Scholars have certainly noticed a more robust agentive thrust in Meccan travelogues from the turn of the nineteenth century, when "the hajji and not the hajj" became prominent in firsthand accounts.[101] Barbara Metcalf credited this to the advent of print technologies and the market demands they generated, but surely there were other reasons. Persographic lithography did not really begin in India until the 1820s, and whatever *deus ex machina* effect it had on hajj narratives only really became apparent some three decades after that.[102]

Anthropological insights into ritual and revolution offer other possible paths of inquiry. Through Victor Turner's model of "liminal" rites like pilgrimage, it has been argued that the "in-between" nature of large-scale political changes could often generate "a sudden foregrounding of agency," and in turn an intense concern with *communitas*.[103] Uncoincidentally, thus, one historian has spoken of the creation of "felt communities" from amidst the turbulence of *inqilāb* in eighteenth-century India.[104] Additionally, scholars have argued that the writings of middling literate sorts in South Asia (among them I include an increasingly marginalized nobility) acquired greater social relevance in this period of imperial transitions.[105] When approaching pilgrims' texts with these theoretical and empirical points in mind, one keynote we immediately find is an insistence on greater confessional consistency, as well as a need to preserve what we might call the political morality of the old regime.

To be certain, individual social backgrounds continued to inform how pilgrims took stock of Mughal crisis and decline, even when they did so from beyond South Asia. Take ʿAbdul Karim Kashmiri (d. 1784), a Mughal bureaucrat who witnessed firsthand Nadir Shah's invasion of Delhi, an event that many in the Subcontinent, including the future advocate of an abortive French empire in India, Joseph François Dupleix, grasped as standing at the cusp of "a great revolution in this

[101] Barbara D. Metcalf, "Pilgrimage Remembered: South Asian Accounts of the Hajj," in Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, eds., *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination* (Berkeley, CA, 1990), p. 84.
[102] The majority of Metcalf's examples are thus from after 1850. For another take on the impact of print on hajj narratives, see Green, *Bombay Islam*.
[103] Thomassen, "Notes towards an Anthropology," pp. 687–688.
[104] Ray, *Felt Community*.
[105] Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Witnesses and Agents of Empire: Eighteenth-Century Historiography and the World of the Mughal *Munshī*," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53:1/2 (2010), pp. 393–423.

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empire."[106] When it withdrew from India, ʿAbdul Karim left with Nadir Shah's siege train as it slowly heaved its way back to Persia.[107] Having entered the service of the Persians as a salaried accountant, ʿAbdul Karim, however, continued to avow loyalty to the Mughal imperial crown. So, even as he repeatedly accused Nadir Shah of malice and misrule, he maintained that his reason for departing with the Iranian *Qizilbāsh* ("Redhats") was to fulfill a long-held desire to visit the Kaʿba in Mecca, "to attain the honor of hajj to the manifest House of God" (*sharf-i hajj-i baitullāh al-mubīn*).[108]

On the road to Mecca, which took him eventually into Ottoman imperial territory, the Mughal mandarin then found himself captivated by the workings of that empire's bureaucracy. After joining the imperial hajj caravan from Syria, ʿAbdul Karim wrote admiringly of the Damascene governor's role in organizing the logistical arrangements (*band-o-bast*) of the Meccan pilgrimage, which in turn reflected for him "the excellence of administration in the Ottoman empire" (*husni zawābit-i saltanat-i Rūm*).[109] Similarly, in Jeddah, ʿAbdul Karim approvingly observed that Ottoman officials successfully managed power equations with regional Europeans merchants while also maintaining the sanctity of Mecca. The Red Sea port had its share of Franks. They had been allowed a toehold at Jedda for commercial purposes. But, added ʿAbdul Karim, "'Truly the pagans are unclean; so let them not, after this year of theirs, approach the Sacred Mosque' (Qurʾan 9:27). They are [thus] never allowed into Mecca the Great."[110]

At some odds with these views were the shifting imperial seascapes ʿAbdul Karim encountered on the journey home to India in 1743. As the European vessel ferrying him skirted up the Bay of Bengal, his focus could not but switch to the merchant bodies that now lined the south-eastern littoral of India. Here, though, the presence of Europeans high-lighted for him a *roi fainéant* Emperor Muhammad Shah, and so, "imperial weakness" (*zaʿf-i saltanat*). Pondicherry (Pahlachari) had become the seat of French power, though it was a Mughal *firmān* (decree) that had first allowed for that settlement; Madras (Chinapatan) was also in European hands, in this case of the British; and, in lower Bengal, an even greater medley of outsiders, "whose names

[106] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "*Un Grand Dérangement:* Dreaming an Indo-Persian Empire in South Asia, 1740–1800," *Journal of Early Modern History* 4:3–4 (2000), quote p. 344.
[107] For biographical details, see Muhammad Shafīʿ, "ʿAbd al-Karīm Kas͟hmīrī," *EI*², http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_0100, accessed April 9, 2022.
[108] ʿAbdul Karim, *Bayān-i Wāqiʿ*, pp. 1–2.
[109] Ibid., pp. 147–148.
[110] Ibid., pp. 153–154.

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all end with *zā*," held sway – *Farānsīs*, *Angrez*, *Olandīz*, *Partagīz*. Everywhere, no less, Maratha troops swarmed like "ants and locusts."[111]

If they betrayed something like a latent antipathy toward the encroachments of non-Muslim polities into Mughal domains, pen-pushing secretary-pilgrims like ʿAbdul Karim nevertheless laid the accent on the executive or coercive capacities of states to gauge their power, or lack thereof. Robert Travers has accordingly noted that among late Mughal officials, even matter-of-fact discussions on statecraft could, in this period, give way to vigorous "rearguard actions" that sought ideologically to defend the ways of the crumbling Mughal regime.[112] That being said, other Indian hajjis ultimately emphasized themes that rang true with their own idiosyncrasies. Some forty years after ʿAbdul Karim, Rafiʿ-ud-Din also traveled to Arabia from the landlocked heartlands of Mughal north India.[113] Former student of Shah Waliullah, the most distinguished Islamic reformer of eighteenth-century India, Rafiʿ-ud-Din's reflections on empire were, however, couched in very different structures of meaning.[114] He, too, praised the Ottoman empire's management of the hajj, drew attention to recent Mughal shortcomings in this arena, and cast a beady eye toward the advancements of rival regimes.

All the same, it is clear that Rafiʿ-ud-Din's account was much more concerned in appealing for a need to rejuvenate the practices and precepts of Islam. So, where other pilgrims from India often ornamented their pilgrimage accounts with, say, poetic flourishes (ʿAbdul Karim loved his Jami), Rafiʿ-ud-Din larded his narrative more heavily with quotations from the Qurʾan, Prophetic traditions (*hadīth*), and Shariʿa.[115] This triad of textual traditions was coming to serve as the touchstone of a powerful revivalist call in Sunni Islam. With respect to piety, it aspired to a pure form purged of apparent "innovations." Politically, revivalism spoke of course directly to the existential problems that were buffeting Muslim empires. For the same reason, in Arabia itself

[111] Ibid., pp. 155–158, 161. [112] Travers, *Ideology and Empire*, pp. 83, 121.

[113] Rafiʿ-ud-Din evidently did not entitle his travelogue, and manuscript copies are now variously preserved as "Sawānih al-Haramain," "Hālāt al-Haramain," and "Ādāb al-Haramain"; Sahib Faridi Ahmadi, "Nigāh-i Awwalīn," in Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," p. 5; Abdul Muqtadir, *Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian Manuscripts in the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library*, vol. 7 (Patna, 1977), pp. 177–178; and *Fihrist-i Nuskhahā-yi Khattī-yi Fārsī Kitābkhānaʾ-yi Razā-Rāmpūr*, vol. 1 (Rampur, 1996), p. 657. The text was reportedly supplemented with a historical treatise on the Hijaz. Regrettably, my attempts to access a manuscript copy proved unsuccessful.

[114] On Shah Waliuallah's influence on Rafiʿ-ud-Din's religious thought, see Khan, *Ithāf al-Nubalāʾ*, p. 251; Faqir Muhammad Jhelum, *Hadāʾiq al-Hanafīya*, ed. Khwurshid Ahmad Khan (1st ed., n.d., repr. Lucknow, 1886), p. 481; and Rahman ʿAli, *Tazkiraʾ-yi ʿUlamāʾ-yi Hind*, vol. 2 (Lahore, 1914), p. 66.

[115] Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," pp. 7–8, 24, 33–36.

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Rafiʿ-ud-Din's attention was not taken up by the workings of statesmen-bureaucrats, but rather the activities of people of his own professional ilk, namely religious adepts like Sufis and the ʿulama. That focus was all the more remarkable given that Rafiʿ-ud-Din's endogamous caste (*jātī*) in India – the Shaikhs of Moradabad – maintained a storied tradition of claiming kinship links to the Mughal nobility.[116]

Rafiʿ-ud-Din did end up spilling quite a bit of ink on the receding writ of the Mughals. Crucially, however, the burden his narrative carried was to train attention to the attenuation of a specifically Muslim empire. Thus, he claimed that Mughal fiscal sources in Gujarat once meant for the hajj were now being relentlessly embezzled. Worse, huge sums of that money were ending up in non-Muslim hands, both Maratha and European.[117] On the outbound journey to Surat from his hometown of Moradabad, Rafiʿ-ud-Din moreover rued the rise of Hindu kingdoms around north India. West of Delhi, he traveled through polities that had successfully defied Mughal overrule, as for instance Bundi, now under an autonomous Rajput dynasty, or Ujjain, which had fallen to Maratha occupation. In Kota, a Rajasthani kingdom that was then busy grounding its post-Mughal sovereignty through patronage of a pilgrimage cult centered on Krishna, Rafiʿ-ud-Din reflected on how regime change bore on regional Muslim piety.[118] He noted that "the regime (*hikām*) here is non-Muslim, and the Sultanate of Islam here is weak." So much so, though, that Muslims living in these parts since "ancient times" had now ceased maintaining any outward "signs of Islam." Citing a local informant, he was further horrified to report that even Kota's Muslim magistrate (*qāzī*) had recently been sighted worshipping at the local Krishna temple, or "idol house."[119]

Interestingly, it was only after arriving in Surat that this mood of Muslim decline lifted from the pilgrim's account. Rafiʿ-ud-Din left unmentioned the colonial "revolution" at the city's fortress, though he did reflect on the cross-cultural commerce that persisted there among Franks, Arabs, and Bohras. But for him, Surat's main source of "blessings" was its "nearness" to the Holy Cities. "For this reason, Surat is called the Gate of Mecca" (*Bāb al-Makka*).[120] For this reason, too, he wrote at length of the local Sufis that maintained links with Arabia, and of the many Arab scholars employed at the city's madrasas. Nor did Rafiʿ-ud-Din fail to mention the ubiquitous groups of hajjis that sojourned at

[116] Sahib Faridi Ahmadi, "Nigāh-i Awwalīn," in ibid., pp. 3–4. [117] Ibid., pp. 46–47.

[118] On the royal patronage of Hindu pilgrimage in post-Mughal Kota, see Norbert Peabody, "In Whose Turban Does the Lord Reside? The Objectification of Charisma and the Fetishism of Objects in the Hindu Kingdom of Kota," *CSSH* 33:4 (1991), pp. 726–754.

[119] Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," pp. 9–10. [120] Ibid., p. 13.

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the city. "The honor and splendid integrity of Islam I have seen in Surat," he concluded, "perhaps do not exist in the entirety of Hindustan."[121] Consistent with the general discursive thrust of his narrative, which saw in men of religion the promise of a reversal of the degeneration of Islam, after reaching the Hijaz he once again sought out the company of fellow ʿulama.[122] On encountering a clique of Indian theologians in Medina, Rafiʿ-ud-Din could not however avoid relating a cautionary tale regarding empire. He noted that these people had left kith and kin, *yār u diyār*, to seek security here. Many of them had once held high official posts in Delhi, and so did not leave India without reason. Rather, they were pushed here following the recent "revolutions" at the Mughal capital.[123]

Transimperial Trajectories beyond the Mughals

Hajjis from the Subcontinent were far from an undifferentiated lot. Offering rhetorical resistance to Mughal decline was common enough in some of their narratives. But for those establishing ties to the Company Raj, the ken and content of "revolution" acquired additional insinuations. In fact, even as the new colonial regime increasingly distanced itself from its own initial attempts to preserve aspects of Mughal political culture,[124] and even as it more forcefully broke from precolonial practices to assume the abstract, rule-bound, and self-segregating norms of a "stranger-state" governing alien traditions,[125] mobile Muslims still continued to bring to it new ideas of political subjecthood. Some did so out of compulsion, others, willingly.

Mirza Abu Talib Khan (1753–1805/1806) took the latter course. An archetype of the itinerant service cultures that spawned across Eurasia at the time, here was another "transimperial subject," a go-between whose political affiliations lay across shifting state frontiers.[126] An ethnic Azeri Turk, Abu Talib was born in Lucknow in Awadh to an Isfahani father, who in turn had sought refuge in South Asia after Persia had again plunged into war following "the revolution of Nadir Shah's assassination

[121] Ibid., pp. 14–18, 21, 26. [122] Ibid., pp. 54, 67. [123] Ibid., pp. 75–76.

[124] On the Company's disavowal, after 1780, of what it earlier regarded as the "ancient constitution" of the Mughal empire, see Travers, *Ideology and Empire*, pp. 207–249.

[125] Jon E. Wilson, *The Domination of Strangers: Modern Governance in Eastern India, 1780–1835* (Basingstoke, 2008), esp. pp. 22–35, for how earlier, Eurasia-wide forms of statecraft had relied on religious patronage.

[126] Travers, "Connected Worlds of Haji."

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[in 1747]," as one Mughal author described that event.[127] Abu Talib first served the nawabs of Bengal, and then of Awadh, as a revenue official (ʿ*amaldār*). Later, he entered the employ of a British paymaster as the Company extended its influence into Awadh.[128] As the pace of colonial expansion dramatically shot up in the 1790s, and as the Company began to successfully outflank both its European and indigenous rivals, Abu Talib's professional ties to the British deepened further.[129]

So it was with his British patron that Abu Talib traveled to England between 1799 and 1803. By his own account, he left India due to a growing disillusionment with the morass of ineptitude that he felt was becoming the hallmark of governance at kingdoms like Awadh.[130] The travelogue he wrote of his tours has drawn the attention of many historians for its rare, reversed, and "re-Oriented" observations of the Georgian imperial metropole (for which the author even became known, in his own lifetime, as "*Landanī*").[131] Yet few have examined the connected views of revolution that the travelogue offered.[132] Fewer still have noted how, rather than going round the Cape again, Abu Talib chose to return home through the "overland" Eurasian route, mainly so that he could perform *ziyārat* in Iraq. If he did not end up going on hajj, it was only because of a major rebellion that coevally erupted in Arabia.

Through his travels, Abu Talib also gave a panoramic view of how the "age of revolutions," as Bayly memorably argued, "ricocheted around the globe."[133] Indeed, revolution appeared to follow revolution in his narrative, and each apparently added a new perspective to the root idea of *inqilāb*. In India, there were thus the volatile politics of states like Awadh, which were busy battling the British, who in turn were fighting the French.[134] In Europe, Abu Talib wrote of how a kingless state, a "*rīpablik*," had recently arisen from a "great revolution" (*inqilāb-i ʿazīmī*),

[127] Ghulam Husain Khan Tabatabaʾi, *Siyar al-Mutaʾkhkhirīn: Tārīkh-i Mamlakat-i Hind az Ibtidāʾ-yi sana 1118 Hijrī*, vol. 2 (Calcutta, 1833), p. 15.

[128] C. Collin Davies, "Abū Ṭālib Khān," *EI*², http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_0260, accessed April 9, 2022.

[129] Abu Talib was later also nominated as the chief candidate to teach Persian to Company servants-in-training in England, but he died just as the East India Company College opened in 1806; NAI, PC, Translations of Letters Received, Sl. No. 54, pt. I, Arzee from Meer Abool Cossum Khan, January 9, 1807, fos. 54–55.

[130] For his critique of Awadh in a treatise that also defended British activities in the kingdom, see Mirza Abu Talib Khan, *Tafzīh al-Ghāfilīn: Waqāʾi-yi Zamān-i Nawāb Āsaf-ud-Daula*, ed. Abid Reza Bedar (Rampur, 1965).

[131] Gulfishan Khan, *Indian Muslim Perceptions of the West in the Eighteenth Century* (Karachi, 1998), pp. 95–100; Humberto Garcia, *England Re-Oriented: How Central and South Asian Travelers Imagined the West, 1750–1857* (Cambridge, 2020), ch. 5.

[132] But for a recent exception, Sivasundaram, *Waves across the South*, pp. 27–33.

[133] Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, p. 86.

[134] Abu Talib, *Masīr-i Tālibī*, pp. 9–14.

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though during a brief stopover in Paris, he found aspects of French culture wanting relative to what he had discovered across the Channel.[135] Crossing the Mediterranean to reach Istanbul, he reflected on the waning powers of the Ottomans in the face of both internal rebellions and Napoleon's recent invasion of Egypt. Through the British ambassador to the Ottoman empire, he even acquired an audience with Sultan Selim III (r. 1780–1807),[136] whose military-administrative reforms were then bringing about a crucial transition away from the old empire and toward a "New Order" (*Nizam-ı Cedid*). While it did provoke conservative backlashes, and even led to the sultan's deposition in a revolt by the old Janissary corps, the New Order nevertheless laid the groundwork for the more rigorous restructurations of the Ottoman Tanzimat (1839). In a word, it ushered in that empire's own "age of revolutions."[137]

Finally, on arrival in Iraq, Abu Talib witnessed firsthand the repercussions of the rise of the Wahhabis, a collection of Arab Bedouin tribal bodies that had grouped together under the Saudi House of Najd to wage holy war against the perceived irreligiosities of Ottoman imperial rule in Arabia. In 1803, they had burst out of the peninsula itself to raid the Shiʿa shrine city of Karbala, where apart from carrying out a sectarian massacre, they also destroyed the tomb of Imam Husain as their strict interpretation of Islam held both Shiʿa religion and shrine veneration in contempt. Indeed, of all the "revolutions" Abu Talib witnessed, it was also this, the sight of the desecration of a sacred site, that cut Abu Talib most to the quick, and left the most profound impression on him as a Shiʿa pilgrim.[138]

Wahhabism would in time implicate Indians via hajj routes, a theme that will be taken up later in the book. But note here that it did briefly amount to a serious revolt against the Ottomans, who completely lost Mecca and Medina to Wahhabi insurgents between 1805 and 1813.[139] Struggle to regain control of Arabia would continue until 1818, when the "first" Saudi emirate was finally destroyed by the forces of the Ottoman Egyptian viceroy Mehmed ʿAli (r. 1805–1848). More pertinent for us, though, is that onlookers seeking to grasp the sudden ascendance of Wahhabism were quick to recruit that generation's watchword. What is more, they did so with unequivocal reference to its interregional

[135] Ibid., pp. 287–288. [136] Ibid., pp. 349–350.
[137] Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire*. [138] Abu Talib, *Masīr-i Tālibī*, pp. 208–214.
[139] Zekeriya Kurşun, *Necid ve Ahsa'da Osmanlı Hâkimiyeti: Vehhabî Hareketi ve Suud Devleti'nin Ortaya Çıkışı* (Ankara, 1998), pp. 28–44; Hamid Algar, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay* (Oneonta, NY, 2002), pp. 5–30.

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implications, to wit, as "the considerable revolutions in this part of the globe."[140] This "global" perspective on the Wahhabi revolution also dovetailed from observations on Indian hajj circulations.[141] Pilgrims themselves noticed what was becoming painfully clear to Ottoman statesmen, namely that their "Wahhabi problem" (*Vehhabi gaʾilesi*),[142] and the "disorder and dissent" (*fesad ü fitne*)[143] it was throwing up at their Indian Ocean frontiers, was triggering a rapid decline of hajj traffic.[144]

But in the interim, not everyone shied away from the Haramain. Between 1815 and 1816, a southern Indian hajji who braved the central Arabian desert tracts to reach the Hijaz left a rich account of his travels through "Wahhabi country" (*sarzamīn-i Wahhābī*). The value of what the pilgrim described as his "little day-to-day diary" (*rūz-nāmcha-yi yaum-ba-yaum*) does not end there. When studied alongside the life of its author, it adds to our understanding of how South Asian pilgrims were carving out new visions of imperial identity after the Mughal empire. As well, it offers empirical footing for an inquiry into how this transitional or "saddle" period in the history of empires was being defined by reconfigurations of social status and hierarchy.[145] For *inqilāb*, as Rajat Kanta Ray argued, was also "a revolution of the classes" in India, whose consequences were perhaps most keenly felt by the Subcontinent's Muslim nobility.[146]

In the exordium to his hajj diary, Hafiz Muhammad ʿAbdul Husain Karnataki (d. 1830) specified a proud royal pedigree connecting him to "one of the vast kingdoms of Hindustan."[147] The hajji was a prince from the nawabi state of Arcot. He had first left Madras in India in 1814 on a

[140] APAC, IOR/G/29/25, Account of a Puritan Sect of Arabs called Wahabis, with an Abstract of Advices from Bombay, December 1, 1798, fo. 438 [a].

[141] For how the Wahhabi "seed of revolution" (*germe de révolution*) might potentially also flower in India, see Modave, *Voyage en Inde*, p. 362; for how the "revolution" caused a contraction of the hajj from India, see Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs*, p. 204; finally, for its construal as a "deistic revolution" in broader Enlightenment thought, see Giovanni Bonacina, *The Wahhabis Seen through European Eyes (1772–1830): Deists and Puritans of Islam* (Leiden, 2015).

[142] OA, Hatt-ı Hümayun 396/20879, January 11, 1811.

[143] OA, Hatt-ı Hümayun 1403/56704, July 28, 1794.

[144] OA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, 344/19635 F, March 9, 1808; Hatt-ı Hümayun 345/19664, December 12, 1814.

[145] On the "saddle period" or *sattlezeit*, see Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, p. 58.

[146] Ray, *Felt Community*, p. 323.

[147] ʿAbdul Husain, *Tazkirat al-Tarīq*, pp. 34–36. The redaction is based on the only known manuscript, major portions of which were autographed. See Willhem Pertsch, *Verzeichniss der persischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1888), pp. 377–378.

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British vessel bound for Basra.[148] A kingdom located in the Karnatak (or Carnatic) region by the Coromandel Coast, Arcot had first risen in the context of Mughal decentralization but consolidated amidst Anglo-French conflicts in southern India during the global Seven Years War.[149] And, well before the publication of his *Reflections* bewailing the revolutions of Europe, it was also this Indian kingdom that had served as the subject of a British philosopher-statesman's cautionary remarks on another "grand revolution," this one spanning "one half of the globe." "The British empire in India," argued Edmund Burke, by invoking what was still a novel political idea in 1785, was being traduced by a rogue Company. Yet the "mystery of state" in which that body of merchant-cum-rulers had shrouded its government had failed to conceal its despotic subjugation of the "ancient" Indian aristocracy at native kingdoms like Arcot.[150]

In ways that more-or-less justified that critique of early colonial hubris, by the time ʿAbdul Husain departed for hajj, another Company-engineered "revolution," as it was called, had indeed reduced Arcot to the status of a colonized kingdom for some thirteen years.[151] But even as they were now constantly being reminded that when "proceeding on a pilgrimage," they cannot simply assume that "they can make these excursions in a style of comfort, and even splendour, at the Company's

[148] APAC, IOR Neg 4601, From Nabob Azeem-ul-Dowlah to Governor, January 12, 1814, n.p; ʿAbdul Husain went on pilgrimage with his mother, sister to the incumbent nawab, APAC, IOR/R/15/1/15, From Sultan-Oon-Nisa Beegum to His Highness the Nuwab, January 10, 1814, fo. 46^{v}. His year of death was recorded in APAC, Bd, F/4/1463/57506, Debts of the Raees-ool-Omrah, Grandson of the Nawab Wallajah, at Bagdad, December 18, 1833, fos. 1–2. Compare, Rasul Jaʿfarian and Esra Doğan, "Muqaddamaʾ-yi dar-bāraʾ-yi Muʾallif wa Kitāb," in ʿAbdul Husain, *Tazkirat al-Tarīq*, pp. 9–18, editorial remarks that profess much ignorance on biographical details.

[149] For the interimperial context, see P. J. Marshall, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, and America c. 1750–1783* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 136–146. Also see Chapter 6.

[150] Edmund Burke, "Speech on Nabob of Arcot's Debts, 28 February 1785," in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol. 5, *India: Madras and Bengal, 1774–1785*, eds. P. J. Marshall and William Todd (Oxford, 1981), pp. 491, 516, 550. For additional context, see Richard Bourke, *Empire & Revolution: The Political Life of Edmund Burke* (Princeton, NJ, 2015), pp. 516–572. Compare, for changing views of a "British empire" between the American Revolution and the Company's Indian conquests, P. J. Marshall, "Burke and Empire," in Stephen Taylor, Richard Connors, and Clyve Jones, eds., *Hanoverian Britain and Empire: Essays in Memory of Philip Lawson* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 289–291.

[151] "From Governor-General in Council of Fort St. George to the Secret Committee [3 August 1801]," in *The Asiatic Annual Register, or, A View of the History of Hindustan, and of the Politics, Commerce and Literature of Asia, for the Year 1802* (London, 1803), p. 157.

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expense," Indian royals like ʿAbdul Husain were still coming to regard the ascendant colonial state as the natural backer of the hajj.[152] For the same reason, they were also seeing themselves as expatriate colonial subjects in the Middle East, or as ʿAbdul Husain put it in a letter to colonial Bombay, pilgrims traveling "under the British protection."[153] Such discursive gestures highlighted not only how expectations of patronage persisted even as power changed hands. They additionally revealed the ways in which the Company's limited support of Indian hajjis prefigured the rise of the later Raj as a self-avowed "protector of pilgrims," an imperial posture that after 1857 would even lead the British to argue for extraterritorial rights over their South Asian Muslim subjects in Ottoman Arabia.[154]

In the more intimate narrative space of ʿAbdul Husain's hajj diary, however, it was the theme of how imperial change had consequences for his self-worth as an old regime grandee that stood out. For despite colonial subjugation, or likely because of it, members of the Indian aristocracy like ʿAbdul Husain still made it a point to stress social distinction, noble comportment, and royal largesse, although as pilgrims they did so against a transregional backdrop.[155] ʿAbdul Husain was hence extremely eager to proclaim his titular eminence as Arcot's "Chief of Nobility" (see Figure 1.3). He wrote extensively regarding how the hajj caravan (*qāfilaʾ-yi hujjāj*), transporting him from Karbala to Mecca, was no ordinary pilgrimage train, but rather one that allowed him to rub shoulders with fellow nobility (*aʿyān*) from the Qajar and Ottoman empires.[156] By the same token, in Arabia from 1815 to 1817, he kept up practices of "courtesy and reverence," delivering gift packages (shawls and sugar-loafs) to members of Mehmed ʿAli's dynasty, whose troops were then stationed in the Hijaz.[157] Besides, ʿAbdul Husain was also at some pains to talk up his own dynasty's persistence in patronizing the hajj pilgrimage from India, Mughal decline notwithstanding.[158]

Nevertheless, ʿAbdul Husain's doling out of gifts and charity in the Middle East was still regarded as excessive by his nominal protectors, the British in India. To his superiors in Bombay, the Company's agent in Iraq even described how locals thought of ʿAbdul Husain as a "person of

[152] APAC, IOR/E/4/736, Bengal Despatches, February 6, 1833, fos. 679–680.
[153] MSA, Political Department, vol. 36, pt. 2, From Nawaub Russool Omrah to Bombay, January 1, 1820, fo. 75.
[154] Slight, *British Empire and the Hajj*; Low, *Imperial Mecca*.
[155] Compare Margrit Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle Classes: Muslims in Nineteenth-Century Delhi* (Oxford, 2013).
[156] ʿAbdul Husain, *Tazkirat al-Tarīq*, pp. 39–42.
[157] Ibid., pp. 191–194.
[158] Ibid., p. 200.

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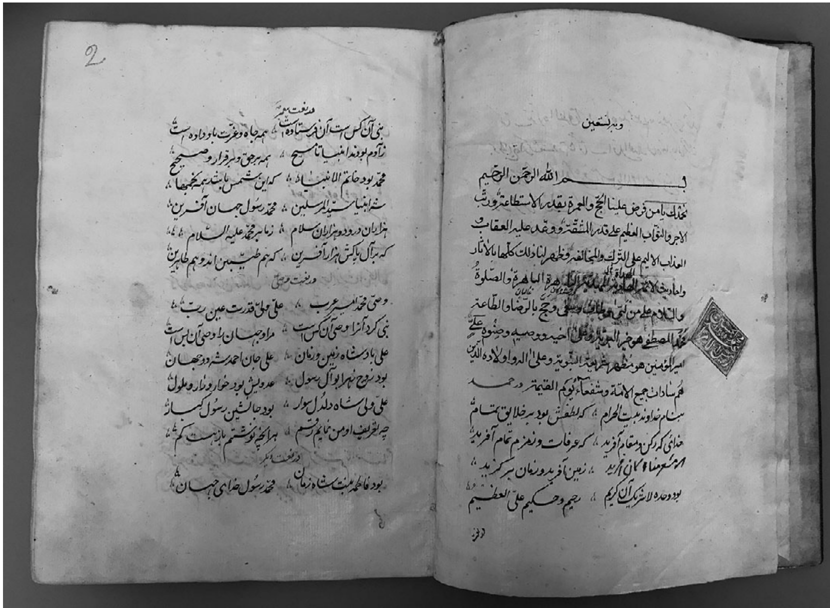

Figure 1.3 Stamping royal status: ʿAbdul Husain's autographed hajj diary, 1815–1816. *Ex libris* seal on righthand margin bears the author's aristocratic title, *Raʾis al-Umarā* (Chief of the Nobility). Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Nr. 359).
Source: Photograph by author.

greater wealth than understanding." He complained that while in Baghdad, "the Nuwaub showed a decided preference for the Turks over the English." The agent sarcastically added that for the "distinguished honour" of sipping coffee with an Ottoman Pasha, the prince had also "actually paid the sum of thirty thousand piastres!!!"[159] In fact, after his death in a plague outbreak in Iraq, British officials very swiftly distanced themselves from ʿAbdul Husain's apparently profligate, "improvident and discreditable conduct." The Company argued that it was no more responsible for extending money from his royal pension either to his creditors or legatees (two children from a "slave mother"). Unsentimentally, colonial authorities additionally observed that the prince had spent his final years shuttling between Qajar Tehran and

[159] MSA, Public Department, vol. 36, pt. 2, Political Agent in Turkish Arabia to Bombay, October 5, 1820, fos. 83, 86, 90.

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Ottoman Baghdad, "in pecuniary distress, having dissipated all his property."[160]

Needless to add, Company bureaucrats taking issue with the "excesses" of Indian nobility failed to grasp how power and prestige in Muslim political culture hinged crucially on munificence, as we saw was the case with the Mughals. But with the growing royal insolvency that came with colonial overrule, other attempts to reclaim noble dignity emerged, even when away from India.[161] Glimpses into ʿAbdul Husain's life immediately after his hajj thus revealed his apparent attempts to organize a royal court (*majlis*) around his person. In Baghdad, he had reportedly assembled a ragtag body of emigrant Indians (from the "bazaar"; of the "lowest description"), offered them titles, and styled them as his "'Members of Council.'"[162] In his hajj diary, he similarly maintained a self-consciously genteel air, and so cast an appropriately jaundiced eye on those arrivistes, the Wahhabis. They were but "thieves and criminals," "disbelievers fearing neither God nor His creatures," whose hordes of "zealous" and "savage" Bedouins fleeced and harassed "sinless, helpless, and faultless pilgrims."[163] Grudgingly, though, the prince conceded that the Wahhabi amir, ʿAbdallah bin Saʿud (r. 1814–1818), was not lacking in etiquette, the shibboleth of "manners" (*taʿāruf*) he took as the *sine qua non* of rank.[164]

In fact, almost exactly a year before the Wahhabi stronghold of Diriyah was besieged by Egyptian forces, ʿAbdul Husain even visited the site and had a courtly meeting with the Saudi amir. Their conversation centered on British India. "I gave him much information on the activities of the English," ʿAbdul Husain went onto record in his diary, for the Saudi amir was curious to know about "their wars, the quality of trust and security in their domains, and their pleasant conduct towards their subjects."[165] The amir had reasons to pry. Tensions between his emirate and the Company in India were coming to a head over the issue of "Wahabee piracy" in the Gulf. Two years after the meeting, in 1819, a seaborne expedition would be dispatched from Bombay to overwhelm the "pirates" of Ras al-Khaima (today's United Arab Emirates). The Company's act of military aggression in the Gulf would not only secure

[160] APAC, Bd, F/4/1463/57506, Debts of the Raees-ool-Omrah, December 18, 1833, fos. 8–9,

[161] On the increasing destitution of Mughal royalty under Company rule, see Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle Classes*, pp. 10–12.

[162] MSA, Public Department, vol. 36, pt. 2, Political Agent in Turkish Arabia to Bombay, October 5, 1820, fo. 82.

[163] ʿAbdul Husain, *Tazkirat al-Tarīq*, pp. 71–72, 90, 122, 216.

[164] Ibid., p. 48.

[165] Ibid., p. 222–223.

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for it an important maritime channel. As Sugata Bose noted, it would also bring about a more profound transition, a "sea change," from a precolonial to a colonial Indian Ocean world.[166]

Bringing Revolutionary Culture Home

Together with changes in notions of religious, political, and social belonging, there were also cultural changes that were evident in the writings of hajjis. Of some importance here was a protean transregional Muslim identity – as somewhat distinct from confessional formations – and how the hajj allowed it to undergo "a degree of worldwide synchronization."[167] More interestingly perhaps, though as a logical corollary to that first process, the Meccan pilgrimage also became a locus for expressions of cultural differences. Taken together, these trends certainly spoke to how South Asian Muslims became alive to the "newness of global newness" that defined the era.[168] But as Mughal imperial culture receded further into the past, and as the Company state matured into the "supreme government" of India, revolutionary tensions also began to scale new heights.

As early as the 1810s, improved European knowledge of hajj was thus already giving way to that enduring global idea: "the Musselman world."[169] Most historians have dated the concept to the age of "high" European imperialism half a century later, when the colonial idea was also cannibalized by anticolonial Pan-Islamists.[170] However, pilgrims from our period equally anticipated what has been described as the "heterotopias" of "ethnic," "religious," and "ideological" alterity that characterized late nineteenth-century hajj travelogues.[171] But again, they approached matters through peculiar intellectual penchants and preoccupations. The theologian Rafiʿ-ud-Din wrote of differing degrees of piety among Syrian, Rumi, Kurdish, and Maghrebi pilgrims. Querying Arabian locals like dromedary drivers, he described Hijazi customs of birth and marriage that struck him as very different from their counterparts in South Asia. Some regional rites, he argued, even contradicted

[166] Bose, *Hundred Horizons*, p. 71; compare also, Sivasundaram, *Waves across the South*, pp. 133–138.

[167] Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, p. 62. [168] Wills, "What's New?" p. 134.

[169] John Lewis Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia: Comprehending an Account of Those Territories in Hadjaz Which the Mohammedans Regard as Sacred*, vol. 1, ed. William Ouseley (1st ed., 1829, repr. Cambridge, 2012), vol. 2, p. 1.

[170] Aydin, *Idea of the Muslim World*; Nile Green, "Spacetime and the Muslim Journey West: Industrial Communications in the Making of the 'Muslim World,'" *AHR* 118: 2 (2013), pp. 401–429.

[171] Green, "Waves of Heterotopia."

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Shariʿa, like circumcision, which according to him was performed in Arabia and Yemen by cleaving off too much of the foreskin. Rafiʿ-ud-Din was surprised by the amount of meat consumed by west African (*Takrūrī*) hajjis – distinguishable by their "black skin" – though he reverted focus back to scholasticism by referring to their high standards of literacy.[172]

Some three decades later, in small oasis towns like Buraydah in the Arabian interior, the princely pilgrim ʿAbdul Husain brought a life of courtly refinement and repose to bear on his observations on the veiling practices of local women, "whether free or enslaved, black or white." More tendentiously, he compared the gendered norms of "desire" (*umnīyat*) that purportedly prevailed around Arabia, India, Persia, and Rum. At the sight of some Turks playing musical instruments within the sacred precincts of the Haramain, he even voiced the idea of an internally coherent "Muslimness," unmitigated by the spatial or cultural distance between South Asia and the Middle East. "In this place where music and such are haram," he complained, "such things are happening." Which then led him to wonder, if not to Mecca, "where can Muslimness go?" – *kujā mānad Musulmānī*?[173] Objective heteronomies of social-political change were also leading to assertions of autochthonous identity. So as not to be confused for a Shiʿa pilgrim in Wahhabi country, to an Abyssinian sentry ʿAbdul Husain felt obliged to indicate, "although you take us all to be Persian, I am [actually] Indian" (*magar shumā mā-rā ʿAjam mī-danastīd, man Hindī hastam*).[174]

The decline of the early modern Islamic empires – polities that were in the end grounded in ecumenical ideologies of universal rule and transregionally integrated through the Babel of a "Persianate cosmopolis" – therefore also resulted in a clear scattering of ascriptive cultural identities.[175] As in South Asia, where new communal, sectarian, and vernacular traditions were coming into formation,[176] in the Middle East and across the Indian Ocean, too, pilgrims were experiencing the patterns and pressures of changes in ideologies of identity, a theme we shall return to when examining the circulations of Indian or *Hindi* Sufi pilgrims in the

172 Rafiʿ-ud-Din, "Sawānih al-Haramain," pp. 33–36, 54–56.
173 ʿAbdul Husain, *Tazkirat al-Tarīq*, pp. 78–79, 171. 174 Ibid., p. 124.
175 Literature on the Persianate is now vast, but see the virtuoso synthesis in Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age*.
176 For the "hardening of boundaries" among religious communities in late Mughal Delhi, see Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle Classes*, pp. 30–56; for sectarianism in post-Mughal Awadh, see Sajjad Rizvi, "Faith Deployed for a New Shiʿi Polity in India: The Theology of Sayyid Dildar ʿAli Nasirabadi," in Justin Jones and Ali Usman Qasmi, eds., *The Shiʿa in Modern South Asia: Religion, History and Politics* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 12–35. For a more wide-ranging assessment, see Ray, *Felt Community*.

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Ottoman empire in Chapter 4.[177] Here, though, we can confine our analysis of first-person pilgrimage accounts to one last travelogue, arriving from the endpoint of the "age of revolutions," and authored by an Indian who was himself a noted impresario of "culture."

Poet and literary critic, Nawab Mustafa Khan (1809–1869) stood at the bleeding edge of an efflorescence in the arts in nineteenth-century Delhi. Like his penname Shefta ("Infatuated") might suggest, he composed mainly romantic verses in Persian and Urdu, and counted among his interlocutors masters of late Mughal literature like Mirza Ghalib (1797–1869).[178] Hailing from a family of warrior Bangash Afghans that served the Marathas when they ruled Delhi, the clan's star continued to rise even after the East India Company invaded and captured the Mughal capital in 1803, after which the British granted Mustafa's ancestors feudatory tracts in the suburbs of Palwal and Jahangirabad.[179] In short, here was a figure from the vanguard of a brief Mughal cultural "renaissance," elite litterateurs whose personal circumstances and professional achievements alike would be critically wounded by the 1857 Rebellion, as Frances Pritchett showed.[180] However, arguably more so than his fellow poets, it was Mustafa Khan who would experience the blow of that uprising as a "revolution," an event that again turned the Mughal "world upside down";[181] this time, conclusively.

Before that happened, between 1839 and 1841, Mustafa went to Mecca.[182] Now, in keeping with the spirit of Ghalib's celebrated quip of being "half-Muslim" – who shunned pork yet drank wine – it cannot be said that all the bards of late Mughal Delhi were in thrall to reactionary religious ideas. Mustafa's sense of personal piety was similarly ambivalent. One scholar has noted that he thus differed little from other *ashraf*

[177] But for analogous trends in Ottoman hajj travelogues from this period, see Hala Fattah, "Representations of Self and Other in Two Iraqi Travelogues of the Ottoman Period," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30:1 (1998), pp. 51–76.

[178] ʿAli Safdar Jaʿfari, *Nawāb Muhammad Mustafa Khān Shefta: Tahqīqī aur Tanqīdī Mutālaʿat* (Lahore, 1999), pp. 368–369, 375–379.

[179] Ibid., pp. 1–12.

[180] Frances W. Pritchett, *Nets of Awareness: Urdu Poetry and Its Critics* (Berkeley, CA, 1994).

[181] Ibid., p. 24. See also Saiyid Ihtisham Husain, "Urdū Adab aur Inqilāb 1857," in P. C. Joshi, ed., *Inqilāb 1857* (Delhi, 2007), pp. 92–99.

[182] Originally written in Persian, Mustafa Khan's hajj travelogue was reportedly published in his own lifetime as *Targhīb al-Sālik ilā Ahsan al-Masālik* (*The Traveler's Exhortation to the Excellent Path*), alias *Rah-Āward* (*The Traveler's Gift*). However, copies appear not to have survived: Jaʿfari, *Nawāb Muhammad Mustafa*, pp. 42, 300; C. A. Storey, *Persian Literature: A Bio-bibliographical Survey*, vol. 1, *Qurʾānic Literature; History and Biography*, pt. 2, *Biography: Additions and Corrections* (London, 1953), pp. 895–896. I have relied on the Urdu translation, *Sirāj-i Munīr* (*The Shining Sun*, 1910), itself now a rare text. The copy consulted is preserved at the British Library (VT 3932e).

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or elite Delhiites in the kinds of social networks he maintained in his youth, and so "frequented circles of learning and literary discourse while maintaining connections with people of the bazaar."[183] It was the hajj, however, that induced a definite change of temperament:

> O Shefta, since returning from the Haram,
> I have neither craved the beloved nor desired wine.[184]

It is also clear that a number of his close literary acquaintances were becoming increasingly enamored of a millenarian Islamic call that was resounding through the Gangetic tracts as the Company became "paramount," a call that ultimately culminated in a militant movement whose impact would be most intensely felt at the northwest frontiers of British India. Led by the charismatic Saiyid Ahmad Barelwi (1786–1831), the group calling itself Tariqa-yi Muhammadiya (The Prophetic Way) might have waged an entirely unsuccessful jihad against the Sikh kingdom of the Punjab between 1826 and 1831. Nonetheless, the act left a lasting legacy.[185] From Delhi, quite a number of Muslim scholars from the eighteenth-century madrasa of Shah Waliullah served as intellectual backers of the movement. They included members of Waliuallah's own family, two of whom wrote the movement's manifesto *The Straight Path* (*Sirāt al-Mustaqīm*) in around 1823. Among poets, a particularly keen stalwart was Momin Khan Momin (1800–1852). "God most High has given him a different kind of talent and perfection," Mustafa wrote glowingly of Momin in an 1835 survey of India's *belletrists*.[186] While on hajj, Mustafa also maintained a steady correspondence with Momin, supplying the latter with updates of his travels around the Middle East.[187] For his part, Momin brooded over a poetry extolling holy war:

> Should Islam's army mobilize,
> It would bring a time of reckoning.[188]

[183] Shima Majid, "Shefta," in Shima Majid, ed., *Shefta: Ek Mutālaʿat* (Lahore, 2005), p. 8.

[184] *E Shefta ham jab se ke āʾī Haram se*
Shauq sanam o khwāhish sahbā nahīn rakhte.
Ibid., quote p. 8

[185] Ayesha Jalal, *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia* (Cambridge, MA, 2008), pp. 58–113.

[186] Mustafa Khan Muhammad Nawab Bahadur Shefta, *Gulshān-i bī-Khār* (1st ed., 1840, repr. Lucknow, 1874), p. 195.

[187] Jaʿfari, *Nawāb Muhammad Mustafa*, pp. 42–44.

[188] *Huʾā mujtameʿ lashkar-i Islām kā*
Agar ho sake waqt he kām kā.
Muhammad Momin Khan Momin, "Masnawī be Mazmūn Jihād," in *Kulliyāt-i Momīn*, vol. 2 (Lahore, 1964), p. 434.

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Ayesha Jalal has rightly argued that from at least the 1820s, the trope of jihad began to pervade the writings of Delhi's poets – including Shefta and Momin's – presaging thus the religious rhetoric that shot through the Rebellion.[189] But indeed, like it did for members of the Tariqa-yi Muhammadiya, who launched their jihad almost immediately after returning from a group pilgrimage to Mecca, for poets like Mustafa, too, the experience of hajj acted as a turning point of sorts.

Mustafa belonged to a proud imperial culture based in Delhi. Even with the fact of Company overrule, in his travelogue, he continued to refer to the city through an old Mughal moniker, the Abode of the Caliphate – *Dār al-Khilāfat*.[190] By how he described colonial gunboat diplomacy out in the Indian Ocean, it was also clear that he cared little for the British. Reaching southern Arabia, he wrote of how the Company had recently captured the port of Aden. The conquest of the Yemeni city in 1839 had resulted from bad faith, he contended. As the Company needed a provisioning port for ships moving between Britain and India, it had the ruler of Aden – a "simple" man – sign a treaty (*iqrār-nāma*). Realizing its unequal character, the sultan, however, reneged on the agreement, which then supplied the British with the excuse to coerce the port out of his hands. Invoking scripture, Mustafa concluded: "'Lord of Power, You give power to whom You please and You strip off power from whom You please," (Qurʾan 9:27).[191]

While in the Hijaz itself, and like other Indians before him, Mustafa marveled at the different dresses, languages, and manners of Javanese, Persian, Turkish, Egyptian, and Abyssinian hajj pilgrims. True to his literary leanings, the poet then grappled with that demographic diversity by relating a fictional parable. It told the story of a father who, wishing to fulfill his son's desire to see all the peoples and places of the world, took him to Mecca. What otherwise would have required them to traverse the entire "orbed world" was thus achieved through the hajj alone.[192] In the end, it was, however, the choices that Mustafa made after returning home that offer a better view of how his pilgrimage experiences intersected with the politics of revolution.

Referred to as the Sepoy Mutiny by the British, the Indian uprising of 1857 is often compared to major Eurasian revolts that tore through societies where ancient monarchies still clung to power in the mid-nineteenth century. But this was also an attempt at Mughal restoration and so a violent rejection of the new order – one that even directly inspired an uprising in Jeddah the next year, when locals there attacked

[189] Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, pp. 58–59. [190] Mustafa Khan, *Sirāj-i Munīr*, pp. 9–10.
[191] Ibid., pp. 34–35. [192] Ibid., pp. 48–49.

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Christians in retaliation against perceived European intrusions into Mecca.[193] Seen as such, the Indian uprising may be regarded as a fitting climax to the paradoxical lineaments of change that, as noted earlier, defined the revolutionary age in India and the Indian Ocean. Rapidly spreading through gentry and peasantry segments of the old Mughal domains after the first shots of mutiny were fired in the Company's barracks in the spring of 1857, the rebellion also quickly drew in Mustafa Khan's support.

What led to this? On the one hand, as a landlord (*taʿalluq-dār*), his hand was clearly forced once fellow feudatory elites began assembling militias. In this regard, a point of no return for the poet was when his home district fell under the rebel command of his relative, Walidad Khan.[194] On the other, it is also clear that Mustafa held a good deal of sympathy for the rebel call to rid South Asia of an infidel European power and reinstate the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar (r. 1837–1857) as rightful ruler. As order in the countryside disintegrated, Mustafa's own estate in Jahangirabad became the target of Gujar peasant jacqueries, which consigned his extensive library to a fire and ransacked the homes of his tenants.[195] Barely escaping with his life, Mustafa still continued acting as an intermediary between regional insurgents and the provisional rebel government in Delhi, personally seeing to it that letters and petitions streamed uninterrupted between Bulandshahr and the Mughal court.[196]

"Is this *inqilāb* or a minor Armageddon?" wondered another poet who was witness to the single-most violent anticolonial uprising of the nineteenth century.[197] In entering that fray, Mustafa had much to lose, and so he did. After the revolt was put down, the British sentenced Mustafa to seven years in prison. Only after the forced abdication of the last Mughal emperor, and with the transfer of colonial power from the Company to the British crown, was the poet ultimately pardoned and released as part of a general amnesty issued in Queen Victoria's name. Still, the Raj made sure that Mustafa's property was escheated as a reward for loyalists.[198] The personal risks he took in throwing his lot

[193] Juan Cole, "Of Crowds and Empires: Afro-Asian Riots and European Expansion, 1857–1882," *CSSH* 31:1 (1989), pp. 106–133.
[194] On this regional revolt, see Eric Stokes, "Nawab Walidad Khan and the 1857 Struggle in the Bulandshahr District," in *The Peasant and the Raj: Studies in Agrarian Society and Peasant Rebellion in Colonial India* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 140–158.
[195] Jaʿfari, *Nawāb Muhammad Mustafa*, p. 63.
[196] Stokes, "Nawab Walidad Khan," p. 155; Jaʿfari, *Nawāb Muhammad Mustafa*, p. 64.
[197] Salik Mirza ʿAli Qurban ʿAli Beg Khan, "Jahān men Shehr hain Jitne," in Nizami Badayuni, ed., *Faryād-i Dihlī, maʿrūf ba Inqilāb-i Dihlī* (Badayun, 1931), p. 31.
[198] Lachman Singh, *Kaifīyat-i Bulandshahr* (Agra, 1876), p. 87.

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behind the rebels, that too against a regime that had granted him a part of his patrimony, make more sense, however, when we consider the newborn piety that Mustafa brought back from Arabia.

Mustafa had earlier cultivated some personal ties with scholars from Shah Waliullah's madrasa. Historians of his life and work are in agreement, however, that he strengthened those religious commitments further after coming under the influence of an ʿulama group in the Hijaz.[199] That group included an Indian, Muhammad ʿAbid (d. 1842), a reformist scholar and Naqshbandi Sufi from Sind, who had earlier spent some time in Yemen but closed out his career writing and teaching in Medina. Admiringly detailing the scholar's breadth and depth of learning, Mustafa's poetic prose went further. "It is said that his essence and sincerity carry the perfume of rosewater."[200] In fact, that same teacher was involved in Hijazi scholarly circles that were actively contributing to a call (*daʿwa*) for religious revival and reform across the Muslim world, branches of which later also spilled over into violent anticolonial revolts.[201] Given his later commitments, it is very likely that Mustafa carried at least a part of that revivalist message back home to South Asia.

Conclusion

In applying a canonical historiographical category to global history, recent scholarship on the "age of revolution" has importantly expanded

[199] Nizami Badayuni, "Hazrat Shefta ke Mukhtasar Hālāt," in Nizami Badayuni, ed., *Kulliyāt-i Shefta wa Hasratī*, (Badayun, 1916), pp. 4–5. Wazirul Hasan ʿAbid, "Shefta Haramain Sharīfain Men," in Majid, *Shefta*, pp. 187–204; and Jaʿfari, *Nawāb Muhammad Mustafa*, p. 4.

[200] Mustafa Khan, *Sirāj-i Munīr*, p. 82.

[201] Mainly a *hadīth* scholar, Muhammad ʿAbid also wrote political tracts, including a treatise on the legal permissibility of adopting Western uniforms in the Ottoman military during the Tanzimat Reforms. He even served on one occasion as an ambassador from the Yemeni Zaidi state to Mehmed ʿAli's court in Cairo; ʿAli, *Tazkiraʾ-yi ʿUlamāʾ-yi Hind*, vol. 1, p. 202; İrfan İnce, "Muhammad Âbid Sindî," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 37 (Istanbul, 2009), pp. 246–247. The influence of ʿAbid's scholarly circles extended beyond India and the Middle East. One of his teachers in Medina, Salih al-Fulani (d. 1803), was a pedagogue behind radical jihadi movements that emerged from the Lake Chad basin (Sokoto Caliphate) to maritime Southeast Asia (Patan and Minangkabau); Chanfi Ahmed, *West African* ʿUlamāʾ *and Salafism in Mecca and Medina: Jawâb al-Ifrîqî, the Response of the African* (Leiden, 2015), pp. 92–96; Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern* ʿUlamāʾ *in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu, HI, 2004), pp. 18, 114–115, 125. I return to ʿulama networks in Chapter 3, but for regional studies under the framework of the "age of revolutions," see Paul Lovejoy, *Jihād in West Africa during the Age of Revolutions* (Athens, OH, 2016); and Christine Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy: Central Sumatra, 1784–1847* (Malmö, 1983).

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our understanding of how the early modern era transitioned into modernity. Against Eurocentric assumptions, it has revealed the conjunctural complexities that punctuated the passage from old to new empires. As a result, the rise of colonial hegemony in India or the Indian Ocean appears much less inexorable, given that we are now also compelled to consider what it provoked – "a surge of indigenous and non-European politics."[202] By the same token, the globalizing reach of British expansion appears much less exceptional when we account for how it was reliant "on connections forged in an earlier phase of globalization," and how "South Asian merchants, sailors, labourers, scholars, and pilgrims continued to make their own global networks under the surface of, or even in competition with, European globalism."[203]

As this chapter has argued with the case of hajjis from the revolutionary age, the premises and perspectives of global history may still require qualification in two critical ways. For one, I have suggested that it is by teasing out specific interregional connections that we can perhaps best appreciate how contemporaries perceived their "worlds." Said differently, when exploring circulatory regimes like the hajj, or any of the other "fragile threads that connected the globe," we ought also to try and understand how "*the globe came to be defined as such*."[204] Second, it is by adopting such contextualist approaches to the narratives of transregional travelers like pilgrims that we can best appreciate how individuals coped with large-scale political transformations. Because for all its world-spanning range and reach, there was ultimately nothing intrinsically universal about the idea of revolution, as Samuel Moyn has pointed out.[205] Even when they brought to bear the concept of *inqilāb* to parse the passing of old regimes beyond South Asia, many from the late Mughal world therefore continued drawing on older imperial, and transimperial, formulations. From Lucknow to Paris, Abu Talib made sense of a postrevolutionary Europe through neologisms like "*parlamant*" and "*rīpablik*," to be sure, but also through a Mughal vocabulary (*raʿīyat* for the Third Estate, as an instance). Based by the Bay of Bengal yet casting his mind's eye to the Atlantic, Ghulam Husain Tabatabaʾi concluded his great history of *inqilāb* in eighteenth-century India, perhaps not innocently, with the case of a recent revolution against the British in "a new land known as *Amrīga*," which he also identified

202 Sivasundaram, *Waves across the South*, p. 2.
203 Robert Travers, "Imperial Revolutions and Global Repercussions: South Asia and the World, c. 1750–1850," in Armitage and Subrahmanyam, *Age of Revolutions*, p. 161.
204 Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories," p. 762, my italics.
205 Samuel Moyn, "On the Nonglobalization of Ideas," in Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori, eds., *Global Intellectual History* (New York, 2013), pp. 187–204.

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through an old Ottoman moniker, *Yangī Dunyā* (after *Yeni Dünya*, "New World").[206]

But in the end, much did change of course, and by virtue of its long-standing position as one of the most important circulatory regimes that carried Indians into the Indian Ocean world, it was through hajj that many also came to recognize the interregional implications of revolution. As pilgrims, South Asians also fashioned specific responses to the unraveling of the Mughal empire. The *ʿālim* argued for the renewal of religious norms after visiting the holiest sites of Islam; scribal administrators held up an idealized Ottoman mirror to the predicaments of Mughal and post-Mughal governance; the royal was intransigent in his old-regime status even when away from home; quite a few hajjis voiced the idea of being transimperial subjects; and, of course, some returning pilgrims even became involved in the making of a global and indeed reactionary "Muslim" culture. The significance of these changes may also be appreciated by the remarkable relevance they had for modern Muslim political thought. As Javed Majeed has argued, even among late colonial Indians, it was thus pilgrimage, and the passages it paved beyond South Asia, that ultimately cut the grooves of a twentieth-century "planetary consciousness."[207] But again, none of these developments can be adequately understood without attention to the connections that were forged between empire and hajj in an earlier era. In the next chapter, I explore those connections further by turning to a unique sphere of material exchange between South Asia and the Arabian Hijaz – the hajj bazaar economy.

[206] Ghulam Husain Tabatabaʾi, *Siyar al-Mutaʾkhkhirīn*, vol. 2, p. 113.
[207] Javed Majeed, "Geographies of Subjectivity, Pan-Islam and Muslim Separatism: Muhammad Iqbal and Selfhood," *Modern Intellectual History* 4:1 (2007), pp. 141–161.

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