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JOHN SLIGHT. *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865–1956*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015. Pp. 456. $39.95 (cloth).
doi: 10.1017/jbr.2017.53

With the rise of global, transnational, and oceanic histories, the old boundaries of nation-states and area-studies regions have been under a sustained assault. A notable side effect of these trends has been the simultaneous revival of empire and colonialism as fruitful categories of analysis, but with critical alterations. Imperial histories are less confined to the longitudinal story of the imperial metropole's struggle with a single colony's resistance, nationalism, and decolonization. Instead, the global turn has provided a new outlet for scholars to think about the latitudinal linkages spanning multiple colonies, regions, or even the entire globe. As a result, a new generation of scholars has been freed to reassemble the British Empire as a global organism.

In many respects, something similar has been afoot in the history of the Islamic world. Recent studies of steamship-era mobility and globalization by scholars like Seema Alavi, Nile Green, Valeska Huber, and Eric Tagliacozzo have shown that steam power not only fueled European empires but also sparked a new era of Muslim mobility, cosmopolitanism, and even a pan-Islamic reimagination of the Muslim world as a whole. Thus, as it turns out, the making of the steam-powered British Empire and the remaking of the Islamic world were actually intertwined, even symbiotic processes.

As John Slight points out in *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865–1956*, "In global terms, the British empire's first religion was Islam. Britain ruled over the largest number of Muslims in the world during this period, and its empire contained more Muslims than any other religious group. Across British territories in Africa and Asia, Islam was a common thread" (2). With this deceptively simple point, Slight reveals his ambitious spatial reconfiguration of the British Empire. By connecting the British Empire's varied Muslim populations spread across West and East Africa, the Middle East, India, and Southeast Asia, Slight challenges the reader to think of this diverse, but interconnected space as the "inner empire." As he points out, this "Islamic inner empire" stands in stark contrast to white settler colonies and dominions, which some historians have tried to conceptualize as "the British World" (3). While this remapping of the empire is a fresh interpretation for most contemporary scholars, as Slight reminds us, for British colonial administrators, statesmen, journalists, and academics at the time, the idea that Britain was "the greatest Moslem power in the world" would not have been an unusual one (1). Indeed, the ubiquity of this rhetoric, employed extensively from the 1870s onward, was a matter-of-fact expression of a demographic reality. The British Empire and the Muslim world were increasingly the same place. But beyond rhetoric, how did this Anglo-Muslim encounter inform British colonial policy? And what were the material consequences of Britain's engagement with Islam?

In order to tackle this question, Slight takes British engagement with hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, as an ideal case study. By asking how and why Britain became so involved, even obsessed with the administration of the hajj, Slight focuses our attention on the sheer demographic weight of Islam and Muslims to the legitimacy of British rule. And on the other, he opens up new space for us to better understand the logic behind Britain's determined, but ultimately futile, attempt to construct itself as the ruler of a Muslim empire.

Britain's initial interest in the hajj was sparked by the comingling of fears surrounding the hajj's potential as a conduit for Islamic revivalism and anti-colonial resistance and the pilgrimage's implication as the principal vehicle for the spread of cholera in 1865–66. However, as Slight rightly points out, in previous studies of British engagement with the hajj, there has been an overwhelming tendency to view the colonial hajj exclusively through the Foucauldian lenses of sanitation, surveillance, and security (a trend for which this reviewer is partly to

https://doi.org/10.1017/jbr.2017.53 Published online by Cambridge University Press

blame). While Slight acknowledges that surveillance was one strategy, it was only part of a more varied imperial repertoire. In an attempt to capture this nuance, Slight methodically plots the slow thickening of the bureaucratic sinews binding the empire's pilgrimage administration to its Muslim subjects. As Britain attempted to address the administrative challenges of steamship regulation, passports, destitute pilgrims, quarantines, and even Islamic law, over time the empire was drawn deeper into the Muslim world. Thus, while there were certainly inherent tensions and paradoxes in the British administration of the hajj, as Slight cautions, the "desire to exercise varying degrees of control over pilgrims' movements" was constantly being weighed and calibrated against the "perceived need to appease Muslim religious sentiment through policies of noninterference" (14–15).

To be sure, Slight is careful not overplay his hand. As he makes clear, "Britain was not a benevolent 'protector of Islam'" (16). The desire to uphold imperial prestige and curry favor across the Muslim world was always a political calculation. And yet, even these calculations were not as simple as we might think. At the heart of the British administration of the hajj was the British Consulate in Jidda. Because non-Muslims are forbidden from entering the two holy cities, Mecca and Medina, British management of the pilgrimage was deeply dependent on the services of Muslim consular employees. The critical role played by these Muslim officials underscores the inherent problem of viewing "British" and "Muslim" as separate categories. As Slight argues, being paid employees of a Christian empire "appeared to be uncontroversial for them." Here, Slight argues that these men should not be pejoratively portrayed as "collaborators." Rather, their correspondence reveals that their "first allegiance and duty was to Islam and assisting Hajjis to the best of their ability" (17). Indeed, the opinions and real power wielded by these individuals ensured that there was a distinctly "Muslim element" incorporated in the "official mind" of British imperialism (225–26).

This is a wildly ambitious book, covering a mind-bogglingly complex array of geographies and periods, requiring deep familiarity with African, Middle Eastern, Indian, and Southeast Asian histories. Slight balances all of this with tremendous ease and an engaging style. He is among the very few scholars with the skill set needed to speak to scholars of the British Empire, the Islamic world, and global history with virtually equal authority. The result is the most wide-ranging and significant book on the colonial-era hajj to date.

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K. D. M. Snell. *Spirits of Community: English Senses of Belonging and Loss, 1750–2000*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. Pp. 341. $122.00 (cloth).
doi: 10.1017/jbr.2017.54

Though research on loneliness and loss often centers on the individual, K. D. M. Snell connects these feelings to the decline of community and asks what implications this diminution may have for the future. In many ways a natural progression of his earlier work *Parish and Belonging: Community, Identity and Welfare in England and Wales 1700–1950* (2006), with its focus on rural communities, *Spirits of Community: English Senses of Belonging and Loss, 1750–2000* makes an argument for the ongoing importance of community as a concept through analysis of past relics, such as parish church community newspapers, magazines, letters, art, and literature. In particular, Snell contends that the nature of past generations' interactions with community is often grossly misunderstood, leading to a misdirection of nostalgia, which in turn affects feelings of loss and loneliness. Using an impressive range of sources, Snell creates a compelling case for reevaluating how community is defined and interpreted and what changes in these definitions mean to the future of community.

https://doi.org/10.1017/jbr.2017.53 Published online by Cambridge University Press