Book Review

Mona Hassan, *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016. Pp. xv, 390, with index. $45.00 (hardback). ISBN: 9780691166780. ISBN: 9781400883714 (eBook).

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Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History by Mona Hassan explores the idea of the caliphate—a means through which people could assume leadership after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad in 11/632—particularly its manifestations and valences under the Abbasids and the Ottomans through wide-ranging evidence, including poetry and juridical texts (5). Chronologically, the work spans two specified time periods, namely the first/seventh into the tenth/sixteenth centuries and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The study demonstrates strong grounding in theoretical approaches to collective memory and memory studies. It stands out overall as a work that contributes to and encourages important conversations among scholars of Islam and also between them and those working in other fields.

The work consists of six main chapters, along with an Introduction and Epilogue. Chapter 1, "Visions of a Lost Caliphal Capital: Baghdad, 1258 CE," is centered on the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 656/1258 and how the loss of this city was felt and conceptualized by Muslims in a multitude of sources, including written, visual, and aural texts. For example, Hassan explores how the scholar Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370) wrote about this loss in his history, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyyah al-Kubrā*, focusing on how the work evokes and interprets the loss of Baghdad for Muslims collectively. Aside from such discussions of specific scholars and their works, the chapter also emphasizes a broader "cultural discourse" that they created and participated in, the contours of which begin to emerge if we assess such figures and their writings in light of one another (22).

The first chapter situates the destruction and loss of Baghdad as a central, defining event in Muslim collective memory, particularly in terms of subsequent conceptualizations of the caliphate, which is the topic of Chapter 2, "Recapturing Lost Glory and Legitimacy."

This chapter also examines various texts like Chapter 1, but it delves into the years following the seventh/thirteenth century Mongol conquest of Baghdad. In this vein, it explores how the conquest was conceived of, particularly in terms of reclaiming the past prestige, power, and authority of the caliphate. Hassan accentuates these ideas with historical examples of rulers, dynasties, and others in the political domain who sought to assume the power and position once held by the Abbasid Caliphate.

Chapter 3, "Conceptualizing the Caliphate, 632–1517 CE," expands the intellectual frame established by the first two chapters to demonstrate how an interest in the caliphate extended chronologically long before and well after the Mongol conquest of Baghdad. As such, the idea of the caliphate must be explored in light of the years surrounding the foundation of Islam itself, including early Abbasid articulations. On this note, Chapter 3 looks at how caliphates were conceptualized in juridical texts from the first/seventh into the tenth/sixteenth centuries, paying particular attention to the work of Mamluk-era intellectuals such as Ibn Khaldūn (d. 784/1406) and al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418).

While Chapters 1, 2, and 3 focus on the premodern, Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are situated in the modern period. Chapter 4, "Manifold Meanings of Loss: Ottoman Defeat, Early 1920s," relies on various types of texts to show how the notion of a caliphate at that time can be understood through a consideration of these texts, but in a contextually distinct moment—post-WWI and on the eve of the shattering of the Ottoman Caliphate and the launching of the Turkish Republic—than that of the first three chapters. In terms of sources, this chapter centers on historical documents to examine attitudes towards the caliphate, which ought to be contrasted with the emphasis on texts such as juridical in earlier chapters. This is notable because it suggests that discourse about the caliphate was not limited to a particular discursive domain, but rather pervaded multiple ones. Chapter 5, "In International Pursuit of a Caliphate," reviews conceptions of the caliphate on a global scale, particularly orchestrated efforts to imagine the caliphate beyond nation-state borders. As the title suggests, this chapter truly sheds light on the international character of such efforts, spanning discussions raging in Istanbul and Cairo to Indonesian and Chinese viewpoints on the composition of a caliphal council. Finally, Chapter 6, "Debating a Modern Caliphate," looks at specific figures in the Ottoman context with ideas, often differing ones, regarding the caliphate, including Mustafa Sabri (d. 1954) and Said Nursi (d. 1960).

Overall *Lost Caliphate* makes numerous noteworthy contributions to scholarship. First, it considers a variety of sources rather than remain confined to a single body of texts. In addition to written materials, the work features visuals, including reproductions of paintings, maps, and more, demonstrating the multidimensional pull of the idea of the caliphate. Because the work delves into numerous texts and forms of evidence, more studies on the topic in the future will be beneficial to move along this area of academic interest in memory studies and Islamicate pasts by exploring in greater detail some subset of what has been discussed here. Additionally, the work builds upon foundational studies on

memory and history, including those by Émile Durkheim, Maurice Halbwachs, and others, and it aptly considers their ideas in light of particular Islamicate contexts. Furthermore, it is highly useful in terms of advancing the study of Islamicate intellectual history, and ought to be put into conversation with other works that are also exploring the history of ideas in global and Islamicate contexts, including recent ones such as Cemil Aydin's *The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History* (Harvard UP, 2017).

Scholars and students alike, particularly those with an interest in the history of ideas and memory studies, will find this work intellectually engaging and highly informative. It can be assigned in classroom settings, especially at advanced undergraduate and graduate levels, across a range of departments, including history, religious studies, and literature. At its core, *Longing for the Lost Caliphate* is a timely and noteworthy book about the development and pull of the notion of the caliphate on Muslim communities and Islamicate contexts over time, and is as relevant to the twenty-first century world stage as ever.