

HALAL MATTERS

In today's globalized world, halal (meaning 'permissible' or 'lawful') is about more than food. Politics, power and ethics all play a role in the halal industry in setting new standards for production, trade, consumption and regulation. The question of how modern halal markets are constituted is increasingly important and complex. Written from a unique interdisciplinary global perspective, this book demonstrates that as the market for halal products and services is expanding and standardizing, it is also fraught with political, social and economic contestation and difference. The discussion is illustrated by rich ethnographic case studies from a range of contexts, and consideration is given to both Muslim majority and minority societies. *Halal Matters* will be of interest to students and scholars working across the humanities and social sciences, including anthropology, sociology and religious studies.

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HALAL MATTERS

Islam, politics and markets in global
perspective

*Edited by
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CONTENTS

<i>List of figures</i>	vii
<i>List of contributors</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
1 Introduction: Studying the politics of global halal markets <i>Florence Bergeaud-Blackler, Johan Fischer and John Lever</i>	1
2 Re-imagining Malaysia: a postliberal halal strategy? <i>John Lever</i>	19
3 From an implicit to an explicit understanding: new definitions of halal in Turkey <i>John Lever and Haluk Anil</i>	38
4 Remembering the spirit of halal: an Iranian perspective <i>Maryam Attar, Khalil Lohi and John Lever</i>	55
5 Beldi matters: negotiating proper food in urban Moroccan food consumption and preparation <i>Katharina Graf</i>	72
6 Islamizing food: the encounter of market and diasporic dynamics <i>Florence Bergeaud-Blackler</i>	91

vi Contents

7	The halal certification market in Europe and the world: a first panorama <i>Florence Bergeaud-Blackler</i>	105
8	Green halal: how does halal production face animal suffering? <i>Manon Istasse</i>	127
9	Halal, diaspora and the secular in London <i>Johan Fischer</i>	143
10	Muslim food consumption in China: between qingzhen and halal <i>Yukari Sai and Johan Fischer</i>	160
11	Halal training in Singapore <i>Johan Fischer</i>	175
12	Who owns halal? Five international initiatives of halal food regulations <i>Florence Bergeaud-Blackler</i>	192
	<i>Index</i>	198

LIST OF FIGURES

2.1	Islamic schools of jurisprudence (or Madh'hab)	28
2.2	Micrograph of a heterogeneous stem cell colony isolated from human corneal cells at different stages of differentiation	33
3.1	Traditional slaughter during Kurban Bayrami	47
5.1	Vegetable and fruit shop display in Marrakech's medina	79
5.2	White meat shop in Marrakech's medina	80
5.3	Sorting beldi lentils in a Marrakchi home	83
10.1	A qingzhen sign with "traditional" motifs at a Muslim shop in Beijing in the 1990s	161
12.1	International standards: the quest for a unique halal standard	193

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1

INTRODUCTION

Studying the politics of global halal markets

Florence Bergeaud-Blackler, Johan Fischer and John Lever

This book argues that answering the question *how are modern halal markets constituted?* is increasingly important and complex in a globalized world. In Arabic halal literally means “permissible” or “lawful”. Traditionally it has several significations such as “pure” or “wholesome” with regard to meat in particular in proper Islamic practice, for example ritual slaughter and pork avoidance. Yet in the modern and globalized industry, halal is not only about food; it is also about biotechnology, tourism and care products. A number of Muslim requirements have already been met in the international arena, including an injunction to avoid any substances that may be contaminated with porcine residues or alcohol, gelatine, glycerine, emulsifiers, enzymes, flavours and flavourings. In a globalized market these requirements are setting new standards for halal production, preparation, handling, storage and certification. Optimistically, market players have estimated the value of the halal food market to be around \$632 billion annually (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2011).

Drawing on studies from around the world, this book explores how global halal production, trade, consumption and regulation are taking place. In spite of these global transformations in halal, this topic has only attracted sporadic academic attention. The research question answered is: *How and by whom, for whom, and for what reasons are objects, discourses and practices actually called “halal” or “haram”* (literally, “unlawful” or “prohibited”)? Hence, in this book readers will learn that even if the global market for halal products and services such as certification is expanding and standardizing, this market is still fraught with contestation in terms of politics and power/knowledge.

There exists no edited book from an interdisciplinary perspective that explores how modern forms of halal production, consumption, trade and regulation take place in diverse contexts. This research moves beyond previous works on halal consumption in the everyday lives of Muslims in a globalized market (Bergeaud-Blackler, 2004,

2 F. Bergeaud-Blackler, J. Fischer and J. Lever

2005, 2007; Bergeaud-Blackler and Bernard, 2010; Fischer 2008, 2011; Lever, 2013; Lever and Miele, 2012).

Existing studies of halal and Islamic consumption in general explore microsocial aspects. For example, from an interdisciplinary perspective the edited volume *Muslim Societies in the Age of Mass Consumption* (Pink, 2009) argues that in spite of the intensifying globalization of markets and consumption, these processes have received modest scholarly attention. More specifically, this volume explores issues such as the changing spaces of consumption, branding and the marketing of religious music as well as the consumption patterns of Muslim minority groups. Another important study looks at urban Muslims in China, where the Hui's halal food and eating habits stood out as the most important identity marker in contradistinction to the surrounding Han majority. Besides nutritional and economic functions, food and eating practices expressed values and traits that they regarded as fundamentally Hui (Gillette, 2000). Lastly, in Turkey the politics of identity among Islamists and secularists has been deeply influenced by an expanding consumer market, a "market for identities", in the context of the globalization of the 1980s and 1990s (Navaro-Yashin, 2002). Many of the chapters in the present book explore halal from microsocial or everyday perspectives, but they do so by taking into consideration the "bigger institutional picture" that frames the everyday consumption of halal products.

We are inspired by practice theory that is used as a general framework for the project's analyses. A "practice" can be defined as "a routinized way in which bodies are moved, objects handled, subjects are treated, things are described" (Reckwitz, 2002, 250). Such a practice-theoretical perspective involves assumptions about "performativity of social practices" as in Bourdieu's classic study *The Logic of Practice* (1990). Reflexive and strategic practices also evoke the question of ideas/intentionality versus practice in public/private domains (Goffman, 1971). Hence, a central issue in the chapters that follow is the extent to which ideas, ideals, policies, discourses and intentions about what halal is or ought to be are translated into actual practices at different levels of the social scale in everyday life and by halal certifying bodies. Theoretically, we also draw on recent scholarship on the interfaces between markets and regulation such as Ong and Collier's *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems* (2005).

What is modern halal understanding and practice?

Industrial players, merchants and some Muslim scholars involved in halal trade and standardization have based their halal food rulings on statements from selected verses from the Qur'an such as: "Allah makes good things lawful to them and bad things unlawful" (7: 157) and:

You who believe, eat the good things We have provided for you and be grateful to God, if it is Him that you worship. He has only forbidden you carrion, blood, pig's meat, and animals over which any name other than God's has been invoked. But if anyone is forced to eat such things

by hunger, rather than desire or excess, he commits no sin: God is Most Merciful and Forgiving.

(*Abdel Haleem, 2008, 2: 172–73*)

It is repeated that

You are forbidden to eat carrion; blood; pig's meat; any animal over which any name other than God's has been invoked; any animal strangled, or victim of a violent blow or fall, or gored or savaged by a beast of prey, unless you still slaughter it [in the correct manner]; or anything sacrificed on idolatrous altars.

(*Abdel Haleem 2008, 5: 3*)

Halal is that which is beneficial and not detrimental to Muslims. A number of conditions and prohibitions must be observed. Muslims are expressly forbidden from consuming carrion, spurring blood, pork and foods that have been consecrated to any being other than God himself: these substances are called haram ("unlawful" or "forbidden"). The lawfulness of meat depends on how it is obtained. During ritual slaughter, *dhabh*, animals should be killed in God's name by making a fatal incision across the throat, with the blood being drained as fully as possible. Among Muslim groups and individuals, the question of the stunning of animals prior to slaughter is highly contested. While some Muslims only consider meat from unstunned animals halal, others accept that stunning is part of modern and ethical food production.

Sea creatures and locusts are considered halal by most Sunni groups. Because the sea is seen to be pure in essence, all marine animals, even if they have died spontaneously, are halal. Despite the fact that they are not mentioned in the Qur'an, land creatures such as predators, dogs, and, in the eyes of some jurists, donkeys are haram. What is more, crocodiles, weasels, pelicans, otters, foxes, elephants, ravens and insects have been condemned by the *ulama* (literally, 'those who know the law' or 'religious scholars'). Another significant Islamic prohibition relates to wine and any other alcoholic drink or substance, all of which are haram whatever the quantity or substance (Denny, 2006, 279). As we shall see, alcohol has become a highly controversial issue.

With the advent of Islam, ancient negative attitudes towards pigs and pork were reinforced (Benkheira, 1996). Inspired by Jewish law, the Prophet Mohammad banned the flesh of pigs and in the Qur'an the prohibition is repeated several times (Simoons, 1994, 32). In effect, Muslims were distinguished from their Christian adversaries (Simoons, 1994, 33). Some Muslim groups came to abhor pigs and pork to such an extent that everything touched by them was regarded as contaminated and worthless (Simoons, 1994). Under Western colonialism, pig abhorrence declined in many parts of the world, only to increase again at the end of European colonial rule and the advent of Islamic revivalism (Simoons, 1994).

4 F. Bergeaud-Blackler, J. Fischer and J. Lever

The reasons for the ban on pork within Islam follow the five main types of explanation advanced to analyse the origin of the Hebrew food laws. One is that these are arbitrary and make no sense to humans and can only be understood by God. Another is that injunctions were based on sanitary concerns (Simoons, 1994). A symbolic explanation proposed by Mary Douglas (2004) argues that acceptable animals represented proper human behaviour versus the sinful behaviour of banned animals. Yet another explanation is that Hebrew food laws originated in their rejections of cultic practices of alien peoples and the worship of deities other than Jehovah. Involved in both the third and fourth hypotheses is the notion that the Hebrews wanted to set themselves apart from other peoples. Some anthropologists, most famously Marvin Harris, have argued for a fifth and recent explanation, according to which the prohibitions are grounded in economic, environmental, and/or ecological reasons (Simoons, 1994, 64–65). According to Harris (1977, 1998), the Israelite taboo on pigs was reconceptualized with the rise of Islam as a new set of sanctioned dietary laws “ecological” in essence, that is, religious ideas traced to the cost–benefit analysis of ecological processes.

The proliferation of halal can be seen as distinct sets of invocations of haram or taboo. Taboo can protect distinctive categories of the universe, consensus and certainty about the organization of the cosmos, thus reducing intellectual and social disorder (Douglas, 2004, xi). However, certainty and order can easily mirror feelings of uncertainty and disorder. These doubts mostly surface in everyday strategies about how to practise the ever-intensifying demands of proper Islamic consumption. Elsewhere, Douglas (1975, 275) argues that when people become aware of encroachment and danger, dietary rules that control what goes into the body function as an analogy of the corpus of their cultural categories at risk.

The debate over the origins of the ban on pork in Judaism and Islam is far from resolved. One central reason for this is that there is not sufficient historical evidence in existence. The prohibition of pork is one of the rare food taboos that lives on in Islam, but the true reason for its prohibition is unknown. Our brief discussion of the arguments of Douglas and Harris provides the reader with key arguments in a debate that has spanned decades, and which still seems to inform scholarly and popular controversy over the prohibition of pork and the nature of taboo itself. Taboos distinguish between groups and individuals within their own society. Moreover, they operate in terms of the production, preparation and distribution of food (Manderson, 1986).

The understanding and practice of halal requirements vary among import countries and companies producing halal food. This is the point made in the book *Halal Food Production* (Riaz and Chaudry, 2004, vii). This book by two US scholars is a popularized guide to producing and marketing halal (foods) for professionals in an expanding global food market. Chaudry is President of the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA), a leading halal certifier based in the US, and Riaz is a Senior Auditor in the same organization. Riaz is also Texas A&M University’s Director of Food and Protein R&D Center; the Islamic Food Council of Europe is a kind of subsidiary of IFANCA. To our knowledge, this is the only

book of its kind and it is widely used by companies worldwide to understand and comply with the current transformation of halal and it is a unique piece of empirical material. It is the guide to modern and global halal.

In classical *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), there are five qualifications: obligatory, recommended, indifferent, reprehensible and forbidden. Therefore, in addition to halal and haram, doubtful things may be avoided; that is, there is a grey area between the clearly lawful and the unlawful. The doubtful or questionable is expressed in the word *mashbooh*, which can be evoked by divergences in religious scholars' opinions or the suspicion of undetermined or prohibited ingredients in a commodity (Schacht, 2014). Hence, individual and fuzzy aspects of context and handling are involved in determining the halalness of a product. The problem in certifying food and other products with regard to these substances is that they are extremely difficult to discover. The interpretation of these *mashbooh* areas is left open depending on the nature of the food product and how/where it is obtained/processed.

Knowledge of the above requirements is, of course, essential to innovative companies seeking to establish themselves in an expanding global halal market. The increased demand for halal products by conscious and educated Muslim consumers has encouraged developed countries to export halal products. Moreover, the proliferation of Western franchised food has changed the international food market and subjected it to new standards of halal certification (Riaz and Chaudry, 2004, 29–30).

In countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia even paper/plastic labels and printing on food are seen as problematic. Glue used for labels as well as edible printing and dyes used directly on food may contain non-permissible ingredients. Some halal certifying bodies in importing countries feel that such seepage or cross-contamination may violate the halal status of food (Riaz and Chaudry, 2004, 134). What is more, packaging food in a halal environment is essential (Riaz and Chaudry, 2004, 134–35).

Divergences between jurists of the different schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Hanafi, Maliki, Hanbali and Shafi'i) exist on halal understanding and practice (see Chapter 2). This point is of particular relevance in relation to Ong and Collier's (2005) notion of a global assemblage (see p. 10) in which theology, politics and regulation diverge and overlap across different countries and contexts. The book *Issues on Halal Products* (2007) is a fatwa (opinion concerning Islamic law issued by an Islamic scholar) published by the State Mufti's Office in the Prime Minister's Office, Brunei Darussalam. In Brunei and other Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia and Singapore (as we shall see in subsequent chapters) the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence within the Sunni division of Islam is dominant. For a number of reasons halal has taken on a special meaning in these Southeast Asian countries in the interfaces between revivalist Islam, state and market. The State Mufti's fatwa, for example, goes to great lengths to define and "standardize" halal understanding and practice among consumers and companies involved in the market for halal products and services. The book offers its opinions on issues such as monosodium glutamate in prawn crackers and emulsifiers and sausages wrapped in pigs' intestines (food);

6 F. Bergeaud-Blackler, J. Fischer and J. Lever

soft drinks in beer bottles (drinks); displaying signs that particular locations are not suitable for Muslims at companies, restaurants and other eating places where the majority of employees or customers are not Muslims (restaurants); tranquilizers for slaughtered chickens (slaughter); medicines mixed with gelatine or alcohol (treatment); involvement of conventional banks in halal projects and the buying and selling of pork in supermarkets (trading); hair dye and praying using perfume that contains alcohol (cosmetics); the word “Carlsberg” on clothes (adornment); utilizing a building that was once a pig market (premises); and transport of pork (transportation). The limited space here does not permit us to go into detail with all these rulings, but it suffices to say that halal is subjected to strict and highly regulated understandings and practices in this fatwa originating in the heartland of Southeast Asian Sunni Islam.

Another example is *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam* (1995), published in Arabic by the Egyptian Islamic scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a leading figure in the Muslim Brotherhood, and translated into several languages for global distribution. The book explains that the Islamic view of halal and haram is simple and clear: it is a divine order and part of the total legal system of Islam (Sharia) whose primary objective is the good of mankind (al-Qaradawi, 1995, 6). The book covers a wide range of topics including the Islamic principles of halal and haram in relation to food and drink; clothing and adornment; working and earning a livelihood; physical appetites; marriage; the relationship between husband and wife; contraception; divorce; parents and children; beliefs and customs; business transactions; recreation and play; social relations; and the relations of Muslims and non-Muslims. The last example of a guide to proper halal understanding and practice is *The Islamic Laws of Animal Slaughter* (2006) by the Pakistani Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani of the Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Muslim World League.

This book is a guide to Islamic slaughter with regard to slaughtering methods, the religious status of the slaughterer and automated methods of slaughtering. The book accepts the stunning of animals prior to slaughter (Usmani, 2006, 81), which as we shall see is a highly controversial issue. While an increasing number of Muslims advocate slaughter without stunning – a practice that animal rights activists in some countries want to be banned – many Muslims consider meat from pre-stunned animals to be halal (Lever and Miele, 2012).

These rulings or guides raise some bigger questions that we develop to explain the relationship between knowledge and power in the assemblage of global halal. Many of the book's chapters explore how the (anthropological) knowledge of halal emerges in terms of politics of scientific authority and representation; the phenomenology of expertise; historicized and contextualized (halal) skills as abilities/capacities; and epistemic devices of anthropological analysis and representation. Running through many of these discussions are how ethnographic encounters generate particular types of knowledges (Boyer, 2005) of halal across diverse settings. From diverse perspectives authors explore the production of knowledge about halal in national/nationalist settings or complexes, that is, what Lomnitz (2001) has described as the role of intellectual production in shaping the national

idea. We draw on Foucauldian conceptualizations of power/knowledge as new sets of operations/procedures that Foucault calls technologies. Such technologies come together around the objectification of the body and are disciplinary technologies in institutional forms that aim at subjecting, transforming and improving bodies (Rabinow, 1984, 17). Fatwas and powerful discourses about proper halal understanding and practice are all examples of how the power/knowledge complex plays into the global assemblage of halal.

Muslim dietary rules assumed new significance in the twentieth century, as some Muslims began striving to demonstrate how such rules conform to modern reason and the findings of scientific research. Another common theme in the revival and renewal of these dietary rules seems to be the search for alternatives to what are seen to be Western values, ideologies and lifestyles and this is reflected in globalized halal.

Halal Matters between Islam, politics, markets

The title of this book signifies a point that runs through all chapters: that halal materiality matters on a global scale. We consider halal commodities to be things with a particular type of social potential (Appadurai, 1999, 6). Thus, in the following we examine how this social potential is translated into ambiguous halal conceptualizations and practices.

These discussions also evoke the relationship between Islam and politics in diverse settings. Soares and Osella (2010) critically reflect on the study of Islam based on a broad understanding of politics involving various actors and organizations, everyday politics and micropolitics. Our analysis of global halal is situated at the intersection of these different levels where the field of politics is constituted in practice (Soares and Osella, 2010, 1). Halal is an example of the way in which Islam and modernity are compatible. Arguably, it is publicly engaged Islam that generates “enchanted modernity” that at its core has a dual emphasis on both material and spiritual progress. Similar to Deeb’s (2006) analysis of gender and public piety in Lebanon, our take on halal is focused on how everyday public piety is performed in the interfaces between Islam and politics. The pious modern is an ethos or a way of being in the world and a self-representation (Deeb, 2006, 227).

Contrary to the commonly held notion that “Islamists” in general endeavour to transform the state/nation itself, the book’s chapters demonstrate that this idea is a simplification. As in Egypt, with regard to the cultural politics of a women’s grassroots piety movement, Islamic revivalism is much more focused on personal forms of piety, freedom and agency – and escaping nationalist politics altogether (Mahmood, 2004). This contention is supported by the argument that in Egypt the concerns, loyalties, sentiments and practices of Islamic revivalism has given rise to a form of community for which the nation is a contingent but not an essential component (Hirschkind, 2001, 26). Thus, the book’s contributors explore the everyday effects of politicized and commercialized halal.

Our understanding of the global market for halal products and services is inspired by studies that question what global markets in the wake of neoliberalism actually mean in practice (Caliskan, 2010). We take seriously the argument that following a commodity's growth and circulation is a way of mapping the multisited fields of a global market (Caliskan, 2010, 13). In this kind of understanding the market is characterized by calculative dynamics of power and it is made of multiple fields that produce its commodities and prices (Caliskan, 2010). Most importantly perhaps, the market can be studied as fields of power made and maintained by various human and nonhuman agents that confront each other on asymmetrical platforms (Caliskan, 2010, 188). This requires researchers to locate how different market participants engage in and understand the sustenance, production and market fields of power (Caliskan, 2010, 191).

Current studies on the entanglements of capitalism, Islam and the state in Southeast Asia explore, for example, how moderate Islamic "spiritual reform" movements in Indonesia combine business management principles and techniques from popular life-coaching seminars with Muslim practice. This form of "market Islam" and "spiritual economies" merge Muslim religious practice and capitalist ethics and effective self-management by attempting to make people "better from the inside" (Rudnycky, 2009, 2010). In the global and expanding market for halal capitalism, Islam and states fuse in a similar way and we situate our analysis of halal in the intersections of Islam, politics and markets in the making.

Emerging standards

Over the past three decades, Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia and Singapore have become world leaders in the global expansion of halal markets. This has come about in large part because the state governments of Malaysia and Singapore have taken on the role of halal-certifying authorities within those countries. In effect, they have certified, standardized and bureaucratized halal production, trade and consumption in a way that made it possible to extend these standards abroad. Attempts to regulate halal production, trade and consumption also characterize the global market for halal outside Southeast Asia and this is a question that runs through many of the book's chapters. Consequently, the global market for halal is currently characterized by a marked tension between emerging forms of regulation on the one hand and attempts at challenging these on the other.

We take halal standards and standardization to mean several things. First, they can refer to the design and qualities of products as well as proper conduct of companies, for example with regard to the production, preparation, handling and storage of halal, states, organizations and individuals. Standards and standardization can be seen as instruments of control and forms of regulation attempting to generate elements of global order (Brunsson and Jacobsson, 2000). Unlike non-state certifying bodies around the world, the Malaysian and Singaporean states can impose legal sanctions on companies that do not live up to the expectations standards impose.

What is more, standards can also refer to persons with certain qualifications, knowledge or skills. Hence, standards can generate and reinvigorate social norms and directives. At the same time, the meanings of standards may evoke ideas of similarity and uniformity – the standardized is that which supposedly is similar and follows rules. Such rules also specify what is proper behaviour, and ideas of appropriateness thus become associated with standardization; the standard way of doing things is often understood not only as the most usual, but also the generally accepted, normal and best way (Brunsson and Jacobsson, 2000, 15). Even powerful organizations like states and large corporations go by rules that others have provided about how to organize, what policies to pursue, what kind of services to offer, or how to design their products (Brunsson and Jacobsson, 2000, 1).

This process of standardization is apparent in halal certification, but standardization is also market driven. Halal extends between Islam, state certification and markets, and standards and standardization are important, but also highly contested, issues, as we shall see. An important theme that runs through this book is the emergence, consolidation and expansion of an audit culture around halal practice. Not only the state in Malaysia and Singapore, but also independent certifiers such as the Islamic Food Council of Europe (IFCE) regulate halal by performing “on site” audits and inspections in shops, restaurants and factories. There is a large body of literature on the rise of an “audit society” but there is need for further scholarship on the ways in which audits and inspections are understood and practised in locally specific contexts. The pervasiveness of an audit culture within and around halal practices is not well understood, but, as we will show, it links Islam, state and markets in novel ways.

Audit and inspection systems are a feature of modern societies. They exist to generate comfort and reassurance in a wide range of policy contexts (Power, 1999, xvii). To a large extent auditing is about cultural and economic authority granted to auditors (Power, 1999, xvii), based of course on the assumption that those auditors are competent and their practices effective. There are some basic conceptual ingredients of any audit practice. These include “independence from the matter being audited; technical work in the form of evidence gathering and the examination of documentation; the expression of a view based on this evidence: a clearly defined object of the audit process” (Power, 1999, 5). A central aspect of audit culture that is also highly relevant to the market for halal is the pushing of control and self-control further into organizations to satisfy the need to connect internal organizational arrangements to public ideals (Power, 1999, 10). The governments in Malaysia and Singapore have become increasingly and explicitly committed to an indirect supervisory role in halal and audit is both a solution to a technical problem as well as a way of redesigning the practice of government. Staff policies such as setting up a Halal Committee/Team to handle halal properly, as well as establishing sections in companies that specialize in halal compliance, are examples of the increasingly prominent role of internal control systems that can be audited.

Audit culture has been explored from an anthropological perspective focusing on consensus endorsing government through economic efficiency and good practice.

In this form of modern accountability the financial and the moral converge to form a culture of what are deemed acceptable forms (Strathern, 2000, 1). Audits and audit practices are discussed as descriptors “applicable to all kinds of reckonings, evaluations and measurements” and as “distinct cultural artefacts” in the market that works as a platform for both individual interest and national politics (Strathern, 2000, 2). A key question we explore is to what extent audit culture is compatible with the point made above that the underlying principle behind halal remains a “divine order” and that the “halalness” of products is not easily verifiable: smell, texture or taste cannot fully determine whether a product is halal or not.

Global halal assemblages

We also explore halal as integral to globalized Islam. The spread of Islam around the globe has blurred the connection between religion, specific societies and territories. One-third of the world’s Muslims now live as members of a minority, as is the case in Buddhist Burma. In the wake of democratic reforms and openness transnational Islam strives to establish an imaginary *ummah*, or Muslim community, that is a product and an agent of the complex forces of globalization (Roy, 2002).

Modern halal is explored as part of “global assemblages”, that is, it is a product of multiple and emergent determinations that are not reducible to a single logic (Ong and Collier, 2005, 12). As a composite concept, the term “*global assemblage*” suggests inherent tensions: global implies broadly encompassing, seamless and mobile; assemblage implies heterogeneous, contingent, unstable, partial and situated (Ong and Collier, 2005, 12). In short, we analyse how Islam and regulation make up halal as a global assemblage. As we shall see, the proliferation of the halal market signifies broader global shifts in domains such as circuits of licit and illicit exchange; systems of administration of governance; and regimes of ethics or values. These phenomena are distinguished by a particular “global” quality. They are abstractable, mobile, dynamic, and move across and reconstitute “society”, “culture” and “economy”. Simultaneously, these phenomena are domains in which the forms and values of individual and collective existence are subject to technological (the problem of choosing the most appropriate means for achieving technoscientific, organizational or administrative ends); political (concerning the appropriate form and scope of juridico-legal institutions); and ethical reflection on questions of value and morality (Ong and Collier, 2005, 4). Hence, we shall combine several disciplines and methodologies to disassemble these multiple determinations, that is, Islamic studies, anthropology, sociology and marketing. This book moves beyond existing work on individualized halal understandings and practice as part of everyday consumption to also explore the “bigger picture” that frames modern and global halal consumption.

There is a large and growing body of literature on Islamic banking (Maurer, 2005; Kuran, 1995, 1997) and even accounting in Islamic banking and finance (Maurer, 2002), but very little on halal production, trade, consumption and regulation.

A central question in this literature on Islamic finance is regulation. However, the regulation of Islamic products, that is halal products, has not attracted the same level of attention. Halal certification in the form of logos has added a new layer of legal signification to production and marketing of these products, and at the same time two regimes of intellectual property are at play simultaneously, a commercial one and an Islamic one, making halal irreducible to one single logic or determination. Halal as a cultural or religious form has created new fields of potential economic value in new industries and has raised legal and ethical quandaries (Coombe, 1998). We explore how the law is at work in the case of halal shaping social worlds of meaning institutionally, that is, law in the everyday lives of Islamic organizations, states and companies. Both trademarks and halal logos represent legal and institutional forms that struggle to establish and legitimate authoritative meanings in public spheres. Consequently, the legal protection of halal forms creates new relations of power in contemporary cultural politics. In other words, as the law legitimizes new sources of cultural authority it also fixes social meanings.

What is more, a large number of statutes bestow upon “public authorities” such as government agencies, state-owned corporations and non-profit organizations rights to control particular signifiers such as national symbols. Unauthorized use of these can result in a fine or imprisonment (Coombe, 1998, 135). Trademarks play a central role in the visual culture of the nation and point to different politics of ownership and protest, domination and resistance. To sum up, we explore how halal is subjected to novel forms of intellectual property law with its specialized traditions, codes and practices.

This focus also entails broader questions such as the spectacle of attempts at directed control and planning, and publicly rationalized imperative decision-making (Moore, 1978, 8) as well as emphasis on legal transactions, disputes and rules seen in the dimension of time (Moore, 1978, 256). Hence, there is a clear aspect of economic anthropology in these analyses of halal production, trade, consumption and regulation as forms of economic life or activities. We situate halal in larger social and cultural frames in order to see how markets affect and are affected by the thoughts and beliefs of people and institutions.

Methodologically, this study endeavours to follow “the people” (consumers, bureaucrats, representatives from halal certifying bodies, activists and company representatives); “the thing” (the circulation of halal commodities as manifestly material objects of study) (Marcus, 1995, 106) as well as “the metaphor” (halal embedded in particular realms of discourse, modes of thought and practices) (Marcus, 1995, 108). Thus, the contributions in this book all follow people, halal things and metaphors between Islam, states, certifiers and markets on the one hand and inside and across divergent settings on the other. Despite the emergence of halal trade on a global scale, there have been no attempts to systematically disassemble halal as a global assemblage. To sum up, the chapters of this book are based on the following types of material: participant observation, in-depth interviews among Muslim producers, entrepreneurs, traders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Islamic organizations, food authorities, restaurant owners,

12 F. Bergeaud-Blackler, J. Fischer and J. Lever

imams (Muslim men who lead the prayers in a mosque) and Muslim consumers as well as the proliferation of halal in media such as magazines, newspapers, e-mails, websites, advertisements and pamphlets.

This book is to a large extent based on the interdisciplinary conference ‘Did you say *halal*? Islamic normativities, globalization and secularization’ organized by Florence Bergeaud-Blackler at Collège de France in Paris on 7–8 November 2013. This conference was the first of its kind to explore global halal production, trade, consumption and regulation. The study of Islamic normative dynamics and halal qualification/disqualification processes was at the heart of the conference: how and by whom, for whom, for what reasons objects, discourses, practices can or are actually called “halal” or “haram”? What methods, institutions, arguments of Islamic legitimation/de-legitimation are used? What are the procedures for monitoring compliance with standards and how and by whom are they developed or institutionalized? The seven sessions of the conference covered different fields in the social sciences, humanities, history, law and philosophy based on wide spectrum of case studies.

Chapter overviews

The book’s 12 chapters are not organized into neat thematic sections. Instead, they are organized so that they move from discussions of Muslim-majority to Muslim-minority societies. Chapter 2 *Re-imagining Malaysia: a postliberal halal strategy?* by John Lever examines the emergence of Malaysia as a leading player in the global halal industry. Drawing on documentary research undertaken to augment findings from the EU-funded Dialrel project (www.dialrel.eu), it examines the ongoing attempt to position Malaysia as a leading player in the international halal market by building new economic and social alliances that cut across transnational space on the vertical plane. Moving beyond a concern with nation building through halal consumption and regulation to a position targeting halal consumers in selected global locations, the chapter argues that Malaysia is pursuing a “postliberal” halal strategy by inserting new hegemonic claims into transnational space – the overall aim being to reimagine Malaysia’s place in the world.

Chapter 3 by John Lever and Haluk Anil is entitled *From an implicit to an explicit understanding: new definitions of halal in Turkey*. For the majority of the Turkish population all meat is taken prima facie to be halal. The major concern in the market revolves around illegal slaughter, yet most production companies only need a letter from the local Mufti to operate. Although some meat arrives at supermarkets with a label saying “this is halal”, it is only recently that debates about halal standards and certification have emerged. These debates are reflected in tensions between reformist groups linked to the modernizing Turkish state and the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) backed by the electoral support of political Islam. However, Lever and Anil argue that the growth of greater halal awareness in Turkey is as much about agricultural modernization and the spread of neoliberal technologies as it is about global halal discourses and

internal political tensions. The chapter discusses these issues and the move from an implicit to an explicit understanding of halal through a case study of the Turkish meat industry.

Chapter 4 *Remembering the spirit of halal: an Iranian perspective* is by Maryam Attar, Khalil Lohi and John Lever. Research on halal supply and consumption is mainly focused on the physical rather than the spiritual realm. This chapter reverses this trend and explores the halal concept through the definition presented by Ali ibn Abi Taleb in his sermons based on verses from the Qur'an. The chapter explores an approach to the adoption of technological innovations in poultry farming through a case study of an award-winning egg producer in northeast Iran. It highlights a method of poultry production that challenges emergent notions of Iranian halal at the global level through a production process aligned with alternative food ethics within a spiritual economy. If the Iranian poultry industry is to become a producer of poultry products for external as well as for internal markets – a reoccurring theme in state policy – the chapter calls for greater leadership and innovation and better support for Iranian poultry producers.

In Chapter 5 Katharina Graf looks at *Domestic cooking in Marrakech's medina*. She examines how for most domestic cooks in the medina the halalness of food products is taken for granted and embodied in daily practice rather than questioned and explicit. For these cooks, who are predominantly women preparing daily meals for their families, religion frames their everyday practices of food preparation, and as such demands respect for all edible produce. However, in light of ongoing changes of cooking practices related to shifting aspirations of younger generations, halal/haram distinctions are interpreted flexibly. The chapter explores the complex linkages and changes between embodiment, consumption and the religious dimensions of food production and preparation in the medina as embedded in a larger economy of food. Graf aims to show how, apart from a rather taken-for-granted yet changing halal/haram distinction, the local concept of a *beldi* or *rumi* provenance of commodities is equally important to a cook's negotiation of food properties and determines to a large extent their tactics of consumption.

In Chapter 6 Florence Bergeaud-Blackler considers *Islamizing foods*. The conversion to mass distribution of halal meat has revealed the existence of an already well-structured market. By considering the "halal" concept as a "quality" in the conventional sense, this chapter moves beyond the pitfalls of a theological approach by illustrating how the concomitant normative dynamics of "a diasporic, religious market" interfere and combine to produce religious products. It describes the impact of production on the redefinition of religious norms and the relational modalities of those who produce and consume halal products. The more general aim of the chapter is to shed new light on the relationship between politics, religion and economics and examine theories of secularization through these dynamics.

In Chapter 7 *The halal certification market in Europe and the world: a first panorama* Florence Bergeaud-Blackler shows that halal standardization has developed differently

in Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Halal markets are instruments for economic development in Muslim countries in Southeast Asia, while they are not yet developed in Muslim majority countries where everything is deemed to be halal. The plurality of halal guarantees in the US and in the different European countries is more complex and cannot be explained only by economics. It is related to the structural characteristics of markets, as well as to the different status accorded by each country to religion and religious practices, the acceptability of religious visibility in general and Islam in particular, the level of Islamic organized activism and the population's sensitivity to animal welfare issues. The chapter proposes a first classification of halal certification, concluding that the distinction between certification agencies does not lie in ritual or cultural differences between Islamic schools of jurisprudence, but rather in the local economic and politico-religious issues at stake.

Chapter 8 *Green halal: how does halal production face animal suffering?* Manon Istasse explores an alternative ethical approach to halal in Belgium. In Brussels, members of the association Green Halal define themselves as “eco-Muslims”. To them, Islam invites Muslims to love and to take care of Creation. From this ethical stance, halal is “a Divine order and not simply about consumption”. Green Halal members demand a reduction in the consumption of meat, a healthy way of life, good eating practices and respect in animal farming and slaughtering. On the basis of ongoing research with Green Halal members, this chapter questions the qualification of food (and food practices) as halal and ethical, and explores how Green Halal consumers appropriate this qualification. Green Halal relies on a charter about ethical halal and on the confidence of consumers in Green Halal's products and activities. More generally, the chapter investigates the identifications and the investments of humans around “good food” in Belgium.

Chapter 9 *Halal, diaspora and the secular in London* by Johan Fischer examines how halal markets are expanding on a global scale in the wake of Islamic revivalism. London has emerged as a centre for halal production, trade and consumption at a time when the meaning and practices of halal are being transformed and contested. In this chapter, Fischer argues that in the eyes of many Muslims in Britain, this proliferation of halal calls attention to a form of impotent state secularism: the more the culture of Islamic consumption asserts itself, the more the state's incapacity to define what is legitimate in the community's life is felt. Discussing ethnographic material from fieldwork among Malay Muslim migrants living in London, the chapter illustrates how halal evokes a range of sensibilities, attitudes, assumptions and behaviours that may support or undermine secularism as a political doctrine and “the secular” as an epistemic category in everyday life.

Chapter 10 *Muslim food consumption in China: between qingzhen and halal* by Yukari Sai and Johan Fischer explores discourses and practices of halal consumption among Chinese Muslims in China. Based on ethnographic fieldwork, the chapter argues that halal availability and consumption are premised on the state's halal food policies and the sentiments of the surrounding Han majority. While the state and local governments have regulated “ethnic” foods since the 1950s it was not until

2009 that a general guideline for halal food certification was issued. Halal food has been redefined culturally and economically, particularly through the standardization of production. Besides nutritional and economic functions, food and eating practices express values and traits that Chinese Muslims regard as fundamental to ethnic and religious distinctions. “Halal” and the term *qingzhen* (the Mandarin translation for Islam) have been negotiated through the institutionalization of halal food regulation, but policies are also shaped by international connections and cooperation to ensure the reliability and authority of halal marks. The culinary image of *qingzhen*, constructed by religious, ethnic and local factors, influences the marketing of and access to halal food. Even if personal attitudes to halal understanding and practice vary, regulation and trust in the honesty of producers play essential roles in the everyday lives of Chinese Muslims.

Chapter 11 *Halal training in Singapore* by Johan Fischer investigates why and how halal production, trade and certification have become essential to state-regulated Islam and companies in contemporary Singapore. In the rapidly expanding global market for halal products Singapore holds a special position; it is one of the few countries in the world where a state body certifies halal products. Building on ethnographic material from Singapore, this chapter explores the workings of Islamic bureaucracies with particular focus on halal training arranged by Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS) – the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore. The everyday political economy of halal commodities and services such as certification and training by MUIS raises some broader questions about how the state and Islamic authorities in Singapore attempt to create and regulate new markets around halal products in a local context.

Chapter 12 by Florence Bergeaud-Blackler is entitled *Who owns halal? Five international initiatives of halal food regulations*. The chapter looks at the many different halal food certifications, standards and logos operating in the international arena. It argues that this plurality of definitions is problematic for economic operators and regulators, and that it is unclear how trade can flow smoothly and fairly in this market. Some international regulatory initiatives have recently emerged. This chapter describes these initiatives, their context and what is at stake for each. How were they born and at what level? In what and how are they different from other supranational regulations? What competitive advantages do they expect or confer? Who decides what standards international bodies use? In conclusion, the chapter suggests that the trend towards the convergence of halal norms may never reach its ultimate goal of creating a universal halal standard.

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18 F. Bergeaud-Blackler, J. Fischer and J. Lever

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