

The Historical Development of Hajj: From Pre-Islamic Rituals to a Global Islamic Institution

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Abstract

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam and represents a central religious obligation for Muslims worldwide. Beyond its ritual dimension, Hajj has evolved into a complex historical, social, political, legal, and economic institution. This article provides a comprehensive historical analysis of the development of Hajj from its pre-Islamic origins, its reformation during the Prophetic era, its institutionalization under classical Islamic governance, its transformation under Ottoman and colonial administrations, and its contemporary management within the framework of the modern nation-state. Employing a qualitative historical-analytical approach based on classical Islamic sources and modern academic literature, this study demonstrates that Hajj is not a static ritual but a dynamic institution continuously shaped by changing historical contexts, political authority, technological advancements, and global mobility. The article argues that understanding the historical evolution of Hajj is essential for addressing contemporary challenges related to governance, legal regulation, public health, sustainability, and international cooperation in the administration of the pilgrimage.



Introduction

Hajj occupies a unique and unparalleled position within Islamic religious life (Dedi & Yuniarti, 2023). As one of the five pillars of Islam, it constitutes a mandatory act of worship (*‘ibādah*) for every Muslim who possesses both physical ability and financial capacity to undertake the journey to Mecca at least once in a lifetime (Wani, 2018). The obligation of Hajj is explicitly enshrined in the Qur’an, which frames pilgrimage not merely as an individual spiritual endeavor but as a collective manifestation of Islamic faith and submission to God. Through Hajj, Islam articulates a powerful vision of unity, equality, and moral discipline, as millions of Muslims—regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or social class—assemble annually in the sacred precincts of Mecca to perform the same rites within the same temporal framework (Mirzal & Ninglasari, 2021).

Beyond its theological significance, Hajj represents one of the largest and most complex recurring human mobilities in the contemporary world (Qurashi, 2017). Each year, millions of pilgrims travel across continents to participate in a highly regulated religious event that involves intricate coordination of transportation, accommodation, health services, security, and ritual supervision. This global dimension makes Hajj not only a central religious obligation but also a phenomenon of considerable historical, social, political, and economic importance (Ibrahim, 2016). As such, Hajj provides a unique lens through which to examine the interaction between religion and power, spirituality and governance, as well as tradition and modernity within Islamic civilization.

Despite its centrality in Islam, scholarly discussions on Hajj have often been dominated by ritualistic and jurisprudential perspectives. Classical and contemporary Islamic legal scholarship has extensively examined the pillars (*arkān*), obligations (*wājibāt*), and legal conditions governing the validity of Hajj (Pabbajah, 2021). While these discussions are indispensable for ensuring correct ritual performance, they tend to marginalize the broader historical processes that have shaped Hajj as an institution over more than fourteen centuries. Such a narrow focus risks presenting Hajj as a static and ahistorical ritual, detached from the socio-political realities in which it has always been embedded.

Historically, Hajj has never existed in a vacuum. From its earliest manifestations, the pilgrimage has been closely intertwined with systems of authority, economic exchange, and social organization (Purkon, 2021). The facilitation and protection of pilgrims have consistently required political power, material resources, and administrative structures (Nuraeni & Kurniasih, 2021). Consequently, Hajj has functioned as a site of negotiation between religious ideals and political realities, where rulers, scholars, merchants, and local communities intersect. The ability of political authorities to organize and safeguard Hajj has often served as a marker of legitimacy, while

disruptions to the pilgrimage—whether due to conflict, disease, or administrative failure—have reflected broader crises within the Muslim world.

The organization and management of Hajj have also mirrored major historical transformations in Islamic societies. During the classical period, pilgrimage routes were shaped by imperial expansion and the consolidation of Islamic rule across vast territories. In the medieval era, Hajj caravans facilitated not only religious travel but also intellectual exchange and commercial activity, contributing to the circulation of knowledge and goods across regions. The introduction of steamships and railways in the modern period dramatically altered the scale and speed of pilgrimage, while colonial interventions imposed new forms of surveillance, regulation, and restriction on Muslim mobility. In the contemporary era, air travel, digital registration systems, and biometric technologies have further transformed the experience of Hajj, embedding it within global regimes of governance and control.

Importantly, these historical transformations have not altered the core spiritual meaning of Hajj. The essential rituals—such as ihram, tawaf, sa'y, and wuquf at 'Arafah—have remained remarkably consistent since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Pabbajah, 2020). However, the ways in which these rituals are organized, regulated, and experienced have been profoundly influenced by changing political authorities, technological innovations, and global circumstances. This tension between ritual continuity and institutional change highlights the dynamic nature of Hajj as both a sacred tradition and a socio-historical institution.

Against this background, this article aims to provide a comprehensive historical account of the development of Hajj from pre-Islamic Arabia to the present day. By situating Hajj within its broader historical contexts, the study seeks to demonstrate that pilgrimage is not merely a religious obligation but also a living institution shaped by power relations, administrative practices, and global transformations. Such an approach contributes to contemporary academic debates on Islamic governance, religious authority, and the negotiation between tradition and modernity in Muslim societies. Moreover, understanding the historical evolution of Hajj is essential for addressing present-day challenges related to governance, public health, sustainability, and international cooperation in the administration of one of the world's most significant religious gatherings.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative historical-analytical methodology based on a critical examination of both primary and secondary sources related to the history of Hajj. Primary sources include the Qur'an, canonical hadith collections, early Islamic historiographical works, and classical legal texts addressing pilgrimage rituals and their

administration, which provide insight into the normative foundations and early historical practices of Hajj. These materials are complemented by secondary sources consisting of contemporary academic studies in Islamic history, pilgrimage studies, political authority in Islam, and the sociology of religion, which serve to contextualize Hajj within broader historical and global developments. The analysis is conducted chronologically to identify patterns of continuity and transformation across different historical periods. Adopting an interdisciplinary perspective that integrates historical, political, and institutional analysis, this study moves beyond a purely ritual-legal focus to examine how Hajj has been shaped by governance structures, technological innovations, and global interactions while maintaining its core religious significance.

Results and Discussion

Hajj in Pre-Islamic Arabia

Before the advent of Islam, Mecca already occupied a central and enduring position in the religious, economic, and cultural landscape of the Arabian Peninsula. Long before the rise of Islam in the seventh century, Mecca functioned as a sacred sanctuary (ḥaram) that attracted tribes from across Arabia. According to Islamic tradition, the Kaaba was originally constructed by Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son Ismail as a monotheistic house of worship dedicated solely to God (Madyan et al., 2025). This Abrahamic foundation positioned Mecca as a locus of divine memory and religious continuity, even as its original theological meaning gradually eroded over time. The Qur'an itself refers to Mecca as the "first house established for humanity," emphasizing its primordial sanctity and universal significance.

Over the centuries, however, the monotheistic legacy of Ibrahim was increasingly obscured by the religious transformations of Arabian society. Polytheism (shirk) came to dominate religious life, and the Kaaba was eventually surrounded by numerous idols representing the deities of various tribes. Classical Islamic sources commonly mention that up to 360 idols were placed in and around the Kaaba, symbolizing the fragmentation of religious authority and belief in pre-Islamic Arabia. Despite this theological deviation, the Kaaba retained its status as the most sacred site in the region, and pilgrimage to Mecca continued to be widely practiced.

Pre-Islamic pilgrimage was not a single, uniform ritual but rather a complex set of practices shaped by tribal customs, local traditions, and inherited religious elements. Tribes from across the Arabian Peninsula traveled to Mecca during designated sacred months (al-ashhur al-ḥurum), during which warfare was prohibited. These months facilitated relatively safe passage for pilgrims and traders alike, reinforcing Mecca's role as both a religious and commercial hub. Pilgrimage during this period thus combined

devotional activities with economic exchange, social interaction, and political negotiation among tribes.

Several core elements of the later Islamic Hajj were already present in pre-Islamic pilgrimage practices. Circumambulation (ṭawāf) of the Kaaba, reverence for specific sacred sites, and ritual visits to surrounding locations formed part of the established pilgrimage tradition. These practices demonstrate that Mecca's sanctity was deeply embedded in Arabian consciousness, even if the theological framework surrounding it had become distorted. Importantly, the persistence of these ritual forms enabled Islam to reform Hajj by correcting its theological orientation rather than inventing an entirely new ritual system.

Nevertheless, pre-Islamic pilgrimage was also marked by practices that Islam would later strongly condemn. Idol worship constituted the most prominent deviation from monotheism, fundamentally contradicting the Abrahamic foundation of the Kaaba. In addition to polytheistic rituals, pre-Islamic pilgrimage was characterized by various superstitious practices and ritual innovations that lacked ethical or spiritual coherence. Some pilgrims performed ṭawāf in a state of nudity, justifying the practice through tribal customs and distorted notions of purity. Such practices reflected broader moral and social imbalances within pre-Islamic society.

Social inequality was another defining feature of pre-Islamic pilgrimage. Certain tribes, particularly those with strong political or economic influence, claimed exclusive privileges in the performance of pilgrimage rites. These privileges reinforced hierarchical distinctions among pilgrims, contradicting the later Islamic emphasis on equality before God. The Quraysh tribe, as custodians of the Kaaba, occupied a particularly dominant position, exercising control over pilgrimage rituals, trade, and access to sacred spaces. This concentration of authority transformed pilgrimage into a mechanism for maintaining tribal power and prestige.

Despite these distortions, the pre-Islamic pilgrimage tradition played a crucial role in preparing the ground for Islamic reform. The existence of an established pilgrimage network, complete with sacred geography, ritual practices, and seasonal rhythms, meant that Hajj was already embedded in Arabian social life. Islam did not seek to abolish pilgrimage but to restore it to its original monotheistic purpose and ethical orientation. This reformative approach reflects a broader Islamic pattern of engaging with existing cultural practices by purifying and redirecting them rather than rejecting them outright.

The Qur'anic discourse on Hajj reflects this reformist strategy. Rather than denying the legitimacy of pilgrimage itself, the Qur'an emphasizes the Abrahamic origins of the Kaaba and calls for the elimination of idolatry and injustice. By re-centering Hajj on tawḥīd (monotheism), Islam transformed pilgrimage into a universal act of worship that transcended tribal divisions and social hierarchies. The rituals were redefined to

emphasize humility, moral discipline, and equality, laying the foundation for Hajj as a unifying institution of the Muslim community (ummah).

From a historical perspective, the pre-Islamic context of Hajj demonstrates that pilgrimage was already a deeply rooted institution before the rise of Islam. Its religious, economic, and political dimensions were intricately interconnected, making it a powerful mechanism of social organization in Arabian society. Understanding this pre-Islamic background is essential for appreciating the significance of the Islamic reformation of Hajj. Rather than representing a radical rupture with the past, Islamic Hajj emerged through a process of continuity and transformation, preserving the sacred geography and ritual structure of pilgrimage while redefining its theological meaning and ethical purpose.

In sum, Hajj in pre-Islamic Arabia was characterized by a paradoxical combination of sacred continuity and theological distortion. While the Kaaba remained a focal point of sanctity and pilgrimage, its original monotheistic message had been compromised by polytheistic practices, social inequality, and tribal domination. These conditions provided both the challenge and the opportunity for Islam to redefine Hajj as a central pillar of faith. The Islamic reform of pilgrimage thus represents one of the most significant examples of how Islam engaged with existing religious traditions, transforming them into vehicles of spiritual renewal and social justice.

The Prophetic Reformation of Hajj

The emergence of Islam in the seventh century marked a decisive and transformative turning point in the history of Hajj. Through Qur'anic revelation and the practical guidance of the Prophet Muhammad, pilgrimage was redefined as an exclusively monotheistic act of worship ('ibādah) dedicated solely to Allah. This reform was not merely ritualistic but deeply theological and ethical, aiming to restore the original Abrahamic foundations of Hajj while purifying it from polytheistic practices and social distortions that had characterized pre-Islamic pilgrimage. The Qur'an reaffirmed Hajj as a divine obligation for those who possess both physical and financial ability, framing it as a form of devotion that integrates spiritual submission, moral discipline, and social responsibility.

The Qur'anic discourse on Hajj emphasizes its continuity with the Abrahamic tradition, repeatedly linking the rituals of pilgrimage to the legacy of Prophet Ibrahim. By invoking Ibrahim as the original builder of the Kaaba and the initiator of pilgrimage, the Qur'an positioned Islam not as a rupture from the past but as a restoration of primordial monotheism. This theological reorientation was crucial in delegitimizing pre-Islamic idol worship while preserving the sacred geography and ritual structure of pilgrimage. The Kaaba, once surrounded by idols, was reestablished as a symbol of tawhīd, and pilgrimage was redirected toward the worship of one God without intermediaries (Luz, 2023).

In addition to reaffirming the obligation of Hajj, the Qur'an articulated its ethical dimensions. Pilgrims were instructed to avoid immoral behavior, disputes, and injustice during the pilgrimage, highlighting the moral discipline required of those undertaking this sacred journey. Hajj was thus framed not only as a physical journey to a sacred place but also as a transformative spiritual experience aimed at cultivating piety (taqwā). This ethical emphasis distinguished Islamic Hajj from its pre-Islamic counterpart, which had often been entangled with superstition, social inequality, and tribal privilege (Nurohman, 2022).

The practical implementation of these Qur'anic principles reached its culmination in the Prophet Muhammad's Farewell Pilgrimage (Ḥajjat al-Wadā') (Effendi et al., 2021), which represents the most significant moment in the standardization and institutionalization of Hajj rituals. Performed in the final year of the Prophet's life, this pilgrimage served as a comprehensive demonstration of how Hajj should be conducted according to Islamic teachings. The Prophet meticulously performed each ritual and instructed his companions to learn the rites from him, establishing a normative model that would be transmitted across generations.

During the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet also delivered a series of sermons that articulated the ethical and social vision underlying Islamic Hajj. These sermons addressed fundamental principles such as the sanctity of human life, property, and honor; the prohibition of injustice and exploitation; and the rejection of pre-Islamic practices rooted in tribal superiority. By declaring that no Arab held superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab over an Arab, except through piety, the Prophet explicitly linked the rituals of Hajj to Islam's broader commitment to social equality and moral accountability.

The symbolic dimension of equality was further reinforced through the ritual of ihram, which required pilgrims to don simple, unadorned garments regardless of their social or economic status. This practice dissolved visible markers of wealth, power, and hierarchy, creating a temporary but powerful experience of egalitarianism. From a historical perspective, ihram functioned as a radical ethical statement in a society deeply structured by tribal and class distinctions. It transformed pilgrimage into a lived embodiment of Islamic values, where unity and humility were not merely preached but enacted.

The Prophetic reformation of Hajj also involved the elimination of practices that contradicted Islamic ethics. Idol worship was decisively abolished, and the Kaaba was purified as a monotheistic sanctuary. Superstitious rites and exploitative customs were replaced with rituals grounded in clear theological meaning and moral purpose. This process of reform illustrates Islam's broader approach to religious transformation: rather than discarding existing institutions, Islam sought to correct their theological orientation and ethical function.

From an institutional perspective, the Prophetic era marked the transition of Hajj from a localized Arabian ritual into a universal Islamic obligation. While pre-Islamic pilgrimage had been largely confined to Arab tribes, Islamic Hajj was explicitly open to all believers, regardless of ethnic or geographical origin. The Qur'anic call to pilgrimage was universal in scope, anticipating the future expansion of Islam beyond Arabia. This universality laid the groundwork for Hajj to become a central mechanism of cohesion within the emerging Muslim community (ummah).

Historically, the Prophetic reformation of Hajj also had profound implications for authority and governance. By standardizing the rituals and embedding them within a clear ethical framework, the Prophet established a normative reference that would guide subsequent generations. Later Islamic rulers and scholars would draw upon this Prophetic model to regulate and administer Hajj, making it a shared point of reference across diverse political contexts. In this sense, the Farewell Pilgrimage functioned as both a religious and institutional foundation for the future governance of Hajj (Mirdad et al., 2022).

The transformation of Hajj under the Prophet Muhammad must also be understood within the broader process of Islamic community formation (Madyan et al., 2025). Hajj provided a powerful annual gathering that reinforced collective identity, transmitted religious knowledge, and fostered solidarity among believers. Even during the Prophet's lifetime, pilgrimage served as an opportunity for teaching, moral exhortation, and the consolidation of Islamic norms. This role would expand significantly in later periods, as Hajj became a forum for scholarly exchange and interregional interaction.

Importantly, the Prophetic reformation of Hajj did not merely standardize rituals; it redefined the meaning of pilgrimage itself. Hajj was presented as a journey of moral renewal, in which pilgrims symbolically reenacted key moments of the Abrahamic narrative while cultivating patience, humility, and self-discipline. The emphasis on repentance, forgiveness, and spiritual purification elevated Hajj beyond a ritual obligation, framing it as a transformative experience capable of reshaping individual and communal life.

From a historical standpoint, this period laid the normative and ethical foundations that continue to govern the performance of Hajj in the contemporary world. Despite subsequent changes in political authority, administrative structures, and transportation technology, the core elements of Islamic Hajj remain rooted in the Prophetic model. The rituals demonstrated during the Farewell Pilgrimage, along with the ethical principles articulated in the Prophet's sermons, continue to serve as the primary reference for Islamic jurisprudence and practice.

Institutionalization of Hajj from the Classical Islamic Period to the Colonial Era

Following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the responsibility for organizing, regulating, and safeguarding Hajj gradually shifted to the emerging Islamic state (Syarif, 2012). While the Prophetic era provided the normative and ritual foundations of pilgrimage, the post-Prophetic period marked the beginning of Hajj's transformation into a fully institutionalized religious practice. This transformation was driven by the rapid expansion of the Muslim polity, the increasing number of pilgrims, and the growing complexity of administering a transregional religious obligation. As a result, Hajj evolved from a primarily community-based ritual into a state-supported institution embedded within systems of governance, administration, and political authority.

During the period of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (*al-khulafā' al-rāshidūn*), the organization of Hajj remained relatively simple yet symbolically significant. The caliphs assumed moral and political responsibility for ensuring the security of pilgrimage routes, maintaining order in the holy cities, and protecting the sanctity of the sacred sites. Although administrative structures were still limited, early efforts were made to guarantee safe passage for pilgrims, particularly in light of the expanding geographical reach of the Muslim community. This period established an important precedent: the facilitation of Hajj was understood as a core duty of Islamic leadership and a reflection of political legitimacy.

As the Islamic empire expanded under the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates, the scale and complexity of Hajj increased dramatically. Pilgrims began traveling from distant regions such as North Africa, al-Andalus, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent, transforming Hajj into a truly global phenomenon within the medieval world. This expansion necessitated more structured administrative arrangements and led to the gradual bureaucratization of pilgrimage management. The state assumed responsibility for securing major pilgrimage routes, constructing wells, rest stations, and caravanserais, and protecting pilgrims from banditry and tribal conflict. These measures reflected the growing institutional capacity of the Islamic state and its recognition of Hajj as both a religious obligation and a public responsibility.

Under the Abbasids in particular, Hajj administration reached a higher level of organization. Special officials were appointed to oversee various aspects of the pilgrimage, including route security, provisioning, and crowd management in the holy cities. Financial resources were allocated from the state treasury to support infrastructure and maintenance, highlighting the integration of Hajj into broader systems of public finance. This bureaucratic involvement did not alter the ritual essence of Hajj but significantly shaped the conditions under which it was performed. Pilgrimage thus became increasingly dependent on state stability and administrative competence.

Beyond its religious function, Hajj during the classical Islamic period served important political, cultural, and intellectual roles. Ensuring the safe conduct of pilgrimage became a visible marker of sovereign authority, and rulers frequently used their patronage of Hajj to reinforce claims to legitimacy. The ability to protect pilgrims and maintain order in Mecca and Medina symbolized the ruler's role as guardian of Islam's sacred spaces. Conversely, disruptions to Hajj—caused by political unrest, sectarian conflict, or economic decline—often signaled broader crises within the Muslim world.

Culturally and intellectually, Hajj functioned as one of the most important networks of exchange in the premodern Islamic world. Scholars from different regions met during pilgrimage seasons, sharing legal opinions, transmitting hadith, and debating theological issues. Many prominent scholars combined pilgrimage with study and teaching, transforming Hajj into a mobile institution of knowledge transmission. In this sense, Hajj contributed significantly to the intellectual cohesion of the Muslim world, facilitating the circulation of ideas across vast geographical distances.

The institutionalization of Hajj reached a new phase under Ottoman governance, which represents one of the most significant periods in the administrative history of pilgrimage. As custodians of Mecca and Medina from the sixteenth century onward, the Ottomans placed Hajj at the center of their religious and political identity. The Ottoman sultans styled themselves as protectors of the holy cities (*khādim al-ḥaramayn*), a title that emphasized service rather than domination and reinforced their legitimacy as leaders of the Muslim world.

The Ottomans invested substantial resources in the organization and protection of Hajj. Centralized bureaucratic mechanisms were established to coordinate pilgrimage caravans from different parts of the empire, particularly from Damascus and Cairo. These caravans were accompanied by military escorts to ensure security, reflecting the close relationship between pilgrimage and state power. The Ottoman administration also expanded infrastructure projects, including roads, forts, water systems, and public facilities, significantly improving the safety and accessibility of pilgrimage routes.

One of the most distinctive Ottoman contributions to Hajj administration was the annual dispatch of the *surre*, a ceremonial convoy carrying financial aid, gifts, and provisions to Mecca and Medina. The *surre* symbolized the sultan's responsibility toward the holy cities and their inhabitants, reinforcing the political and religious bond between the empire and Islam's sacred centers. This practice also underscored the economic dimensions of pilgrimage, as Hajj generated livelihoods for local populations and linked the holy cities to imperial financial networks.

Under Ottoman rule, Hajj reached a high level of institutional maturity, characterized by a balance between religious devotion and administrative sophistication.

However, this period also revealed the inherently political nature of pilgrimage management. Control over Hajj routes, resources, and access to the holy cities became intertwined with imperial authority, making pilgrimage vulnerable to broader political and military developments.

The decline of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of European colonialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries introduced new and unprecedented challenges to the administration of Hajj. Colonial powers often viewed pilgrimage with suspicion, perceiving it as a potential source of political mobilization, anti-colonial sentiment, and transnational Islamic solidarity. As a result, colonial authorities imposed various forms of regulation, surveillance, and restriction on pilgrims from colonized territories.

At the same time, technological innovations such as steamships and railways dramatically transformed the logistics of pilgrimage. Travel times were reduced, and the number of pilgrims increased significantly, intensifying concerns related to public health, crowd control, and disease transmission. Colonial administrations responded by introducing health regulations, quarantine measures, and documentation requirements, effectively bringing Hajj under the purview of modern bureaucratic governance. While these measures were often justified in the name of public safety, they also reflected broader colonial strategies of control over Muslim mobility.

The colonial period thus marked a critical transition in the institutional history of Hajj (Syatar, 2019). Pilgrimage became embedded within global systems of regulation shaped by imperial power, medical science, and international law. This shift fundamentally altered the relationship between pilgrims and authority, introducing new forms of oversight that extended beyond religious considerations. Yet despite these constraints, Hajj continued to function as a powerful symbol of Islamic unity and resistance, reinforcing a shared religious identity that transcended colonial boundaries.

In sum, the institutionalization of Hajj from the classical Islamic period through the Ottoman and colonial eras illustrates the dynamic interaction between religion, power, and history. While the ritual core of Hajj remained grounded in the Prophetic model, its administration evolved in response to changing political structures, technological developments, and global forces. This historical trajectory demonstrates that Hajj is not only a sacred act of worship but also a complex institution shaped by governance, legitimacy, and social transformation. Understanding this institutional evolution is essential for appreciating both the resilience of Hajj and the contemporary challenges surrounding its administration in the modern world.

Conclusion

The historical development of Hajj demonstrates that pilgrimage has always been more than a fixed set of religious rituals; it is a dynamic institution shaped by theological

reform, social structure, and political authority. In the pre-Islamic period, Mecca already functioned as a central sacred space supported by established pilgrimage practices, despite being marked by polytheistic beliefs, social inequality, and tribal dominance. These conditions created both continuity and distortion: while the sacred geography and ritual framework of pilgrimage were preserved, their theological orientation had deviated from monotheism. This historical foundation enabled Islam to engage in a process of reform rather than rejection, transforming existing practices by restoring their Abrahamic roots and ethical purpose.

The Prophetic reformation and subsequent institutionalization of Hajj solidified its role as a universal Islamic institution. Through Qur'anic revelation and the Prophet Muhammad's Farewell Pilgrimage, Hajj was redefined as a monotheistic act of worship grounded in equality, moral discipline, and communal unity. These normative foundations were later reinforced through state involvement during the classical Islamic, Ottoman, and colonial periods, as political authorities assumed responsibility for securing routes, administering infrastructure, and regulating pilgrim movement. While increasing bureaucratization and external control reshaped the management of pilgrimage, the core spiritual meaning of Hajj remained intact. This historical trajectory highlights Hajj as a site of continuous negotiation between religious continuity and institutional change, underscoring its resilience as both a sacred obligation and a historically evolving institution within Islamic civilization.

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