

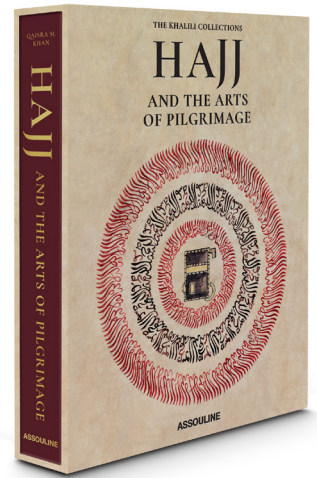
ASSOULINE **SPRING 2022** LEGENDS COLLECTION

HAJJ AND THE ARTS OF PILGRIMAGE

Text by Qaisra M. Khan, foreword by Professor Sir Nasser David Khalili

“The first House [of worship] to be established for people was the one at Mecca. It is a blessed place; a source of guidance for all people.”

— The Qur'an, Surah Al 'Imran, verse 96



Since the advent of Islam, Hajj has been one of the most remarkable religious gatherings in the world. A compulsory act for Muslims, if they are able, the annual observance of Hajj has always had a great impact on the Muslim world, and for centuries pilgrims and rulers alike have held a deep love for the Holy Sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina. Yet until recently this ritual has remained largely unfamiliar to the Western world.

The Khalili Collection of Hajj and the Arts of Pilgrimage comprises some 5,000 objects covering all aspects of Hajj, from the eighth to the twenty-first centuries and geographically from China to India and around the globe to Morocco and the United Kingdom. It includes Qur'ans, illustrated manuscripts, rare books, scientific instruments, textiles, coins, paintings and prints, as well as unique archival documents and examples of the work of some of the earliest photographers of the Hajj. It is one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of its kind.

Featuring insightful chapters on the Islamic principles of Hajj, travel, rituals, sacred manuscripts, textiles, souvenirs and Western perspectives, this wonderfully illustrated volume narrates and reveals the broad spiritual, cultural and artistic aspects of the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. Told exclusively through the Khalili Collection of Hajj and the Arts of Pilgrimage by Qaisra M. Khan, formerly at the British Museum and now a curator for the Khalili Collections, who for more than fifteen years has specialized in the Arts of Pilgrimage, this book will significantly enrich all people's understanding of this important practice.

Professor Sir Nasser David Khalili is a world-renowned Iranian-born British scholar, collector, philanthropist and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador. Over the course of five decades, Sir David has assembled eight of the world's finest art collections comprising some 35,000 works, many of which have been exhibited at prestigious museums and institutions worldwide. Each work has been meticulously conserved, researched, catalogued, and published as part of what is considered to be one of the most ambitious art scholarship projects in modern history. His many honours and awards include Knighthoods from Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI for his work in the pursuit of peace, education, and culture among nations. He was also awarded the Rank of Officier in the National Order of the Legion of Honour – the highest French order of merits by the French president François Hollande at the Elysée Palace. He received a knighthood in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours for “services to interfaith relations and charity”.

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