

## Halal Matters: Islam, Politics and Markets in Global Perspective

IN the last five years, literature on the halal food industry has become fashionable again among sociologists and anthropologists, encouraged by the accelerated expansion of the economic role of halal products. This expansion, both on a global scale and in various local settings, especially in the West, provides ample data for analysis and comparison, leading to the emergence of social science specialists in halal. An important share of current published research on halal has been conducted by the editors of this volume, Florence Bergeaud-Blackler, Johan Fischer and John Lever, three leading authorities on the subject in Europe, who also authored or co-authored 10 of the 12 chapters in the book. In particular, Florence Bergeaud-Blackler, probably the most established scholar on halal in France, authored alone three chapters and co-authored one. The work comes as a collective effort to explain some of the complex realities of the halal food industry in the West and in the Muslim world. It brings together some of the proceedings of a conference organized by Florence Bergeaud-Blackler on 7–8 November 2013 under the title ‘Did you mean halal? Islamic normativities, globalization and secularization’ at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (École des hautes études en sciences sociales) in Paris. Although the title emphasizes the importance of halal, the papers themselves demonstrate the variety and complexity of halal processes in the world economy as well in local economies.

In their introduction to the book, the editors explain clearly their objectives and focus. Their main aim is to answer the question of how modern halal markets emerge, through a study of global halal production, trade, consumption and regulation processes.

### Judul Buku

HalalMatters: Islam, Politics and Markets in Global Perspective

### Penulis

Florence Bergeaud-Blackler, Johan Fischer and John Lever

### Penerbit

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### Jumlah Halaman

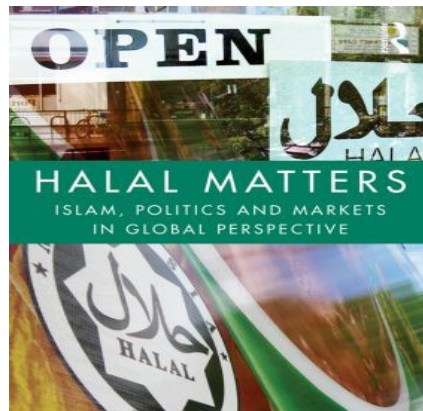
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### Peresensi

Abdessamad Belhaj



They review the important recent literature on halal extensively and critically, insisting that their own focus is on ‘the bigger institutional picture’ that covers the everyday behaviour of halal producers and consumers, rather than on microsocial aspects of halal. The editors highlight the global politics of halal and the relationship between knowledge and power in what they call ‘the assemblage of global halal’. The book’s approach therefore addresses the halal economy at the intersection of different levels of politics involving

various actors and organizations, everyday politics and micropolitics. John Lever, who authored the second chapter, argues that the halal sector has made it possible for Malaysia to maintain an internal Islamic legitimacy to further the process of national reimagining of a Malaysian Muslim state as well as deploying a transnational Islamic strategy that fosters state-building in a post-liberal and globalized world of opposing identities and interests. Chapter Three, by John Lever and Haluk Anil, maintains that, in Turkey, explicit awareness and debates about halal have emerged in recent years. Several factors explain this new phenomenon, such as agricultural modernization and the spread of neoliberal technologies, in addition to the rise of a global halal discourse. Chapter Four, a normative and prescriptive chapter that stands apart in the book and is written by Maryam Attar, Khalil Lohi and John Lever, mixes a description of a poultry producer in Iran with norms of ‘the spirit of halal’ in modern Shii ideology and advice to producers about the costs of production. Then, Katharina Graf, studies the preference of Moroccan local cooks for local and familiar products known as ‘beldi’, which they consider to be better than the products of modern industrial processes (rumi). In Chapter Six, Florence Bergeaud-Blackler maintains that the global emergence of the halal industry is a phenomenon negotiated between the dynamics of the market and the dynamics of the diaspora within the world market. She believes that scholars of the Islamic tradition initially played only a marginal role in this process. However, religious authorities and Islamists are now actively trying to control the market and use it in their projects on Islamic normativities and governance.

Chapter Seven, also authored by Florence Bergeaud-Blackler, shows that, with the exception of the stunning of animals before slaughter, mechanization and the range of controls, the competing agencies of halal and Islamic schools of thought agree on halal standards. She also draws attention to the battle for halal certification, in which various actors use the ideological and symbolic resources of religion in what is, in fact, an ordinary trade war between halal producers. Next, Manon Istasse explores the association called Green Halal, in Brussels, which promotes a new ethics of consumption, mainly an awareness of animal suffering in ritual slaughter and a commitment to reducing the animals' stress. Johan Fischer investigates in the following chapter the attitudes of Malay immigrants in London towards halal. He argues that these agents negotiate a space of identity and trade between the halal practices of the Malay state and the lack of experience of halal certification by the British state. In the tenth chapter, Yukari Sai and Johan Fischer explore the consumption in China among Muslims and non-Muslims of qingzhen food, a symbol of Hui Muslim identity. Johan Fischer wrote the next chapter, on halal training in Singapore, concluding that it plays an important role there in the context of transforming settings of halal legality and regulation, shaping a common managerial model that emphasizes standardization. Finally, Florence Bergeaud-Blackler returns in Chapter Twelve with a brief account of the international initiatives on halal food regulations in Asia, the United States, the Gulf countries, Turkey and Austria, stating that the differences between the major agencies for halal certification lie not in the Islamic legal norms, but in the logic of marketing.

The book is densely packed, offering a multitude of cases, contexts and discussions, while it is equally rich in its theoretical arsenal, framing and concepts. Above all, most authors

mobilize the specific notion of 'global assemblage', a process of multiple and emergent determinations that are not reducible to a single logic (10), borrowed from the anthropologists Aihwa Ong and Stephen J. Collier who theorized this concept in their *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems* (2004). The notion is used by the authors of *Halal Matters* in the description of alternative food networks, ethical halal, the role of fatwas, the proliferation of halal mar-

kets, and the movement from local to global markets, etc. The book succeeds in shedding light on the major social and cultural dynamics of halal, while keeping the big political picture on stage, producing a comprehensive, yet succinct political economy of global halal. It is highly recommended for students and scholars of anthropology as well as sociologists, political scientists, Islamicists and economists.

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