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**Annual International Conference –
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September 4, 2015**

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**The global assemblage of halal:
proliferating understandings
and tensions**

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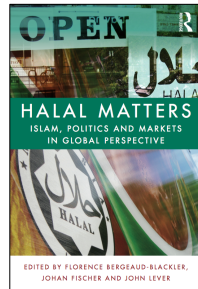
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Introduction
Outline of talk

- We start off with a discussion of assemblage, rules, standards and certification

- We then briefly discuss the origins of halal, Islamic schools of thought/ jurisprudence and the emergence of international halal standards

- This is followed by a brief case study of halal standards & certification in Turkey

- Methodologically we follow people, halal things and discourses, between Islam, states and markets across divergent settings – in this case Turkey!

- We contest the notion that rules/ standards are *immutable objects* by examining the contested processes involved within the global halal assemblage, and by offering some theoretical insights to understand the territorialization of halal

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Global
Assemblage

- As a composite concept, the term "*global* assemblage" suggests inherent tensions (Ong and Collier 2005)

- *Global* implies broadly encompassing, seamless and mobile

- *Assemblage* implies heterogeneous, contingent, unstable, partial and situated

- We argue that the global halal assemblage is a product of multiple and emergent determinations not reducible to a single logic

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Rules and standards
Assemblage & certification

- Rules and standards underpin assemblages of certifiers, producers, consumers and investors in many diverse contexts

- As Europe has expanded eastwards over recent decades, ISO rules in the meat industry have been used to improve food safety across the EU

- Dunne (2008) argues that standards for beef production were implemented to produce functionally comparable results across multiple sites, thus giving the EU the chance to sanction actors that did not conform

- She argues that rules/ standards can therefore be viewed as *'immutable mobiles'* – objects that have transformative effects without apparently being transformed themselves (Latour 1987)

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Rules and standards
Certification

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- On this account, rules have have enduring authority as *apolitical scientific* or *technical artifacts* (Busch 2000) – a surprising claim given Ong and Collier's (2005) focus on multiple and emergent determinations!

- We challenge this argument by examining how actors engage in rule making to redefine certification standards within the *global halal assemblage* (Bergeaud-Blackler, Fischer and Lever 2015)

- As we demonstrate, the economic and social relations underpinning this *assemblage are* dynamic and unstable (Ong and Collier 2005)

- Following on from this, we offer some theoretical insights to understand the complexity of halal in particular places!

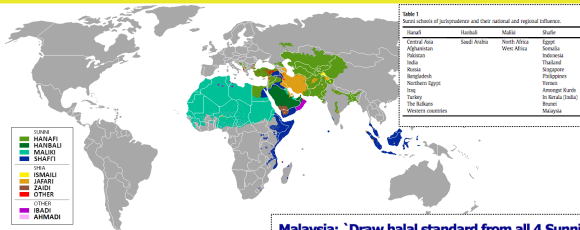Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

Halal rules
"Allah makes good things lawful to them and bad things unlawful"
(7, 157)

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- In Arabic, *'halal'* literally means 'permissible' or 'lawful' – as opposed to *'haram'*, which indicates that something is 'forbidden' or 'unlawful'

- Traditionally this signifies 'pure' or 'wholesome' food – meat in particular – produced in accordance with proper Islamic practices, for example, ritual slaughter & pork avoidance.

- Halal thus implies that meat is produced according to specific Islamic rules.

- In reality these rules are few, but they vary with animal type, method of killing, regional schools of Islamic thought/ jurisprudence (jurists and scholars), international halal standards, and market demands and opportunities

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Islam by schools of thought/jurisprudence
Influence of Madhhab (Lever and Miele 2012)

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Table 1
Sunni schools of jurisprudence and their national and regional influence.

Hanafi	Hanbali	Maliki	Shafii
Central Asia	Saudi Arabia	North Africa	Egypt
Afghanistan		West Africa	Somalia
Pakistan			Indonesia
India			Thailand
Russia			Singapore
Bangladesh			Philippines
Northern Egypt			Yemen
Iraq			Amongst Kurds
Turkey			In Kerala (India)
The Balkans			Brunei
Western countries			Malaysia

SUNNI
HANAFI
HANBALI
MALIKI
SHAFI'I

SHIA
ISMAILI
JAFARI
ZAIDI
OTHER

OTHER
IBADI
AHMADI

Malaysia: `Draw halal standard from all 4 Sunni schools'
salama | 20/04/2010 | Reply

IF Malaysia wants MS 1500: 2009 to be a truly global halal standard, it should be based on all of the Sunni schools of law, advised the mufti of Poland.

Tomasz Miskiewicz was in Malaysia recently to apply for recognition of Polish halal certification and discuss cooperation with the Halal Development Corp.

"One thing that surprised me was that all the standards set by the Islamic Development Department (Jakim) and Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC) are based on the Shafie school," he said.

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More recently
International halal standards

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- Numerous new international halal standards, ostensibly to fight fraud, unofficially to get ahead of the game (Bergeaud-Blackler, Fischer and Lever 2015)

- The pioneer of this approach was Malaysia!

- Committed to halal standardization as an internal policy mechanism since the early 1980s, Malaysia inspired the drafting of the very first global (Codex Alimentarius) halal guidelines

- This approach remains a reference point for the WTO and has opened up new horizons for international standardization initiatives (Bergeaud-Blackler, Fischer and Lever 2015)

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Slide 9

International halal standards
Assemblage

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International standards : the quest for a unique halal standard

1. The World Halal Food Council (WHFC): "the liberal option" – *backed by Indonesian Ulama and the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA)*

2. The International Halal Integrity Alliance/World Halal Forum: "the experts" – *initiated by Malaysia, focused on technical expertise and accreditation*

3. The Gulf Organization for Standardization: "the Landlord" – *Seen to have religious legitimacy, financial backing but little expertise*

4. The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC), "the Community" – *led by Turkey but Turkey's leadership opposed by Saudi Arabia*
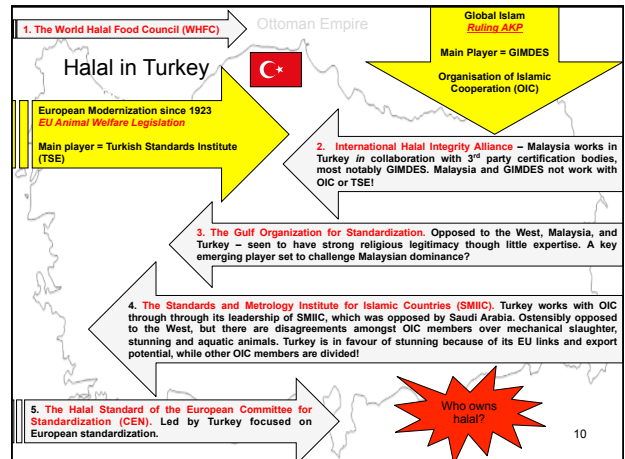
5. The Halal Standard of the European Committee for Standardization (CEN): "the legal option" – *initiated by Austria, also led by Turkey, attempts to bring together a diverse range of European standards*

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Slide 10

1. The World Halal Food Council (WHFC)

Ottoman Empire

Global Islam
Ruling AKP

Main Player = GIMDES

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

Halal in Turkey

European Modernization since 1923
EU Animal Welfare Legislation

Main player = Turkish Standards Institute (TSE)

2. International Halal Integrity Alliance – Malaysia works in Turkey *in* collaboration with 3rd party certification bodies, most notably GIMDES. Malaysia and GIMDES not work with OIC or TSE!

3. The Gulf Organization for Standardization. Opposed to the West, Malaysia, and Turkey – seen to have strong religious legitimacy though little expertise. A key emerging player set to challenge Malaysian dominance?

4. The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC). Turkey works with OIC through through its leadership of SMIIC, which was opposed by Saudi Arabia. Ostensibly opposed to the West, but there are disagreements amongst OIC members over mechanical slaughter, stunning and aquatic animals. Turkey is in favour of stunning because of its EU links and export potential, while other OIC members are divided!

5. The Halal Standard of the European Committee for Standardization (CEN). Led by Turkey focused on European standardization.

Who owns halal?

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Slide (bottom left)

Halal in Turkey

HALAL
GİMDES

➢ **Initially Turkey was interested in halal certification standards for export**

➢ **A number of new certification bodies focus now on the internal market**

➢**Some are of these are aligned with GIMDES, IHIA, and are TSE accredited**

➢**Some are aligned with GIMDES and Malaysia but are not TSE accredited**

➢**Others are accredited only by SMIIC and/or TSE**

➢**Such collaborations depend on rules & targeted markets and consumer groups**

HELAL
TS OIC/SMIIC

Slide (bottom right)

New economic and social relations
Global processes

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- We can see in the case of Turkey how theology, politics and regulation diverge and overlap through new economic and social alliances.

- Rules and standards are not *immutable objects – they* are highly contested even in distinct geographical territories!

- How do we understand these processes within the global halal assemblage?

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Turkey sees rise in halal tourism
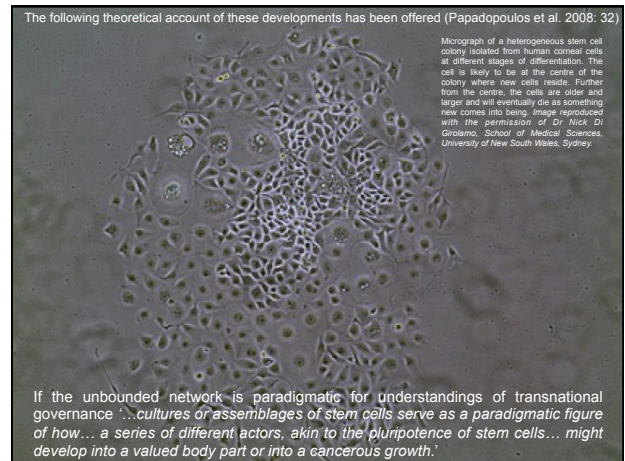
By Selin Girit
BBC News, Antalya, Turkey

26 August 2014   Europe

Adenya hotel in Antalya has five segregated swimming pools for women

"Muslims also like to enjoy the beach, make sandcastles and do all the things everyone wants to do," says Iqbal.

I have argued elsewhere that Malaysia targets and attempts to articulate the interests of competing social and economic actors in the global halal market through the *'strategic rearrangement'* of transnational, horizontal space (Lever 2013; 2015).

Most of the halal standard setting bodies outlined in this talk operate in this way across diverse geographical settings – establishing strategies that cut across horizontal space on the vertical plane (Papadopoulos et al. 2008).

The following theoretical account of these developments has been offered (Papadopoulos et al. 2008: 32)

Micrograph of a heterogeneous stem cell colony isolated from human corneal cells at different stages of differentiation. The cell is likely to be at the centre of the colony where new cells reside. Further from the centre, the cells are older and larger and will eventually die as something new comes into being. *Image reproduced with the permission of Dr Nick Di Girolamo, School of Medical Sciences, University of New South Wales, Sydney.*

If the unbounded network is paradigmatic for understandings of transnational governance *'…cultures or assemblages of stem cells serve as a paradigmatic figure of how… a series of different actors, akin to the pluripotence of stem cells… might develop into a valued body part or into a cancerous growth.'*

The future of the global halal market
Conclusions

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- I have argued that this situation underpins *the postliberal politics of halal* in European societies by bringing about change in urban spaces (Lever 2013; 2015)

- By 2030, the Muslim population is expected to increase from 1.6 billion to 2.2 billion – by 180% in Canada, 140% in the US and by more than 100% in a number of European countries (Miller 2009)

- This presents significant opportunities to target new segments of economy and society in these places

- Gulf Organisation for Standardization is starting to challenge Malaysia to increase the complexity of the global halal assemblage sill further!

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Thank you –
any questions?

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