

## Chapter Fourteen: The Business of Hajj

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### Abstract

*Hajj* is the pilgrimage to Makkah and it is one of the five pillars in Islam, compulsory for all Muslims who are financially and physically capable. In the past, transportation was by foot, camel and steamship and could take months and years. *Hajj* was expensive, therefore, pilgrims traded merchandises to pay for their travel expenses. The modern *Hajj* is different; today most of pilgrims travel by air and some stay in five-star hotels. This chapter examines the business of *Hajj* and its recent development in three periods: prior to European involvement; *Hajj* business under the Europeans; and *Hajj* in the twentieth century. The chapter highlights the effect of these changes on the quality of the religious experience, a topic not previously discussed. **Keywords:** *Hajj* pilgrimage; experience

### Introduction

*Hajj* is an annual pilgrimage to Makkah, Saudi Arabia, and is one of the five pillars in Islam, compulsory for all Muslims who are financially and physically capable. Prophet Muhammad was asked by Allah to announce to Muslims everywhere in the world that they should perform *Hajj* to Makkah (Ambroz & Ovsenik, 2011; Qur'an, 22:27-30). *Hajj* is held over five particular days (8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>) in the month of *Zul-Hijja*, the last month of the Islamic lunar calendar. Because of this, the precise *Hajj* period will vary each year as measured on the Gregorian calendar (Gatrad & Sheikh, 2005). During these five days, those taking part in *Hajj* have to follow certain rituals which re-enact the physical and spiritual journey performed by Abraham and later by the prophet Muhammad in 631 A.D. in the three areas of Arafat, Mina and Muzdalifa in Makkah, Saudi Arabia (Robinson, 1999; Schneider et al., 2011). Non-Muslims are not allowed in the *haramayn* (sacred areas) of Makkah and in other cities including Madina.

While a pilgrimage to Makkah is expected of every Muslim if they are able, the numbers of people who actually are able to attend *Hajj* is limited. The first written records of the *Hajj* were written in the 1700s and describe a risky and difficult journey. Travelling overland to Makkah walking or riding camels could take a year from central Asia, eight months from Istanbul and up to two years

from Morocco (Coskun, 2012; El Moudden, 1990; Pearson, 1995). Travel to Makkah by sea could take up to six months. Pilgrims had to prepare themselves physically for this difficult journey; they would say good bye to their family not knowing whether they would return home or die during the trip (Metcalf, 1990). Clearly, at this time the journey to Makkah for *Hajj* required tremendous dedication and sacrifice, earning its reputation as the journey of a lifetime (Coskun, 2012).

*Hajj* pilgrimage has always had a commercial component; pilgrimage sites have often been venues for trading and pilgrims travelling in caravans often traded along the way in order to finance their journey. Because this journey could take months or even years, people going to Makkah for pilgrimage would also undertake trading to fulfil their needs for the journey. Further transporting pilgrims across large distances is also a significant business in its own right, and accommodation and catering in Makkah provide other business opportunities.

Today, *Hajj* has been modernised and is quite a different experience from that of even 50 years ago. The majority of pilgrims arrive by air transport. Not only is the transit time dramatically shorter but as well the length of stay in Makkah is now reduced to between 6 and 39 days. This allows pilgrims to gather before the 5-days Hajj ritual. Nowadays, there are many high rise hotels and apartment buildings in Makkah including the Abraj Al-Bait Towers, (colloquially named the Makkah Royal Clock Tower Hotel or Clock Tower). This is a government-owned building complex in the central area of Makkah containing shopping malls, and number of luxury hotels that provides pilgrims comfort and luxury stay. The Clock Tower is located next to the Grand Mosque of Masjidil Haram. This is a convenience for wealthy people staying in this complex in attending daily prayers and other rituals.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the history of the business of *Hajj* and its recent development. *Hajj* pilgrimage has always had a business component which contrasts and may possibly conflict with the need for *Hajjis* to be purified and leave all worldly goods behind. Here we discuss the evolution of *Hajj* business through three periods: prior to European involvement; *Hajj* business under the Europeans; and *Hajj* in the twentieth century. Today, Hajj provides business for companies around the world and undoubtedly the physical quality of *Hajj* pilgrimage has improved due to the modernisation of Makkah. The paper highlights that the quality of the religious experience due to this modernisation has not been previously discussed.

## **The History of the Business of *Hajj***

### *Prior to European Involvement*

Business and the *Hajj* have been intertwined since the earliest days. Indeed, this region was a pilgrimage and trade location before the time of Prophet Muhammad, although the exact pilgrimage location could have been in either Arafat or Mina, rather than Makkah (McDonnell, 1986; Pearson, 1995). During their journey overland, some pilgrims might sell goods to other pilgrims in the same caravan. Others carried trade goods to sell in order to support their travel to Makkah and return home. The early modern *Hajj* was important to Gujarati trade in the Arabian Sea (Gupta, 1994), when pilgrims from the Indian coast carried textiles for sale in Red Sea markets. Persian pilgrims traded fruit, wine and silk, Turkish pilgrims sold carpets and Angora shawls, Yemeni traded snakes and sandals (Pearson, 1995). Pilgrims would also conduct business in Makkah in order to pay their way home. *Hajj* pilgrimage was also important for the people of Makkah who, to a large extent, depended on income generated from the *Hajj*. Indeed until the exploration and development of oil after the Second World War, *Hajj* was Saudi Arabia's main source of revenue (Peters, 1994). This income came from provision of goods and services within Makkah.

### *Hajj Transport*

In addition, transportation of pilgrims to Makkah was a significant business in its own right. Some Syrian caravan commanders acquired thousands of camels, raised and sold to pilgrims for transport. People who organise *Hajj* travel are called *mutawwif* (or *muallim*, as they were known in India) (Miller, 2006). These businesses usually run within families from generation to generation, and women *mutawwif* have been known (Miller, 2006). *Mutawwif* were found in every country with a significant *Hajj* pilgrimage volume. They may be based in Makkah but will travel to India, Persia, Malaysia or Indonesia for recruitment missions. These *mutawwif* are crucial as guides who can understand Arabic and can explain how to do *Hajj* rituals and prayers properly. As guides, they also arranged foods and accommodation, transportation and places to stay in Arafat and Medina, and also arrange the purchase of sheep for sacrifice. In essence they act like a tour operator.

In early 1900s, Egypt's Bank Misr developed the first air service from Egypt to Jeddah for pilgrims to Makkah. However, most of them were using special chartered flights, only 5 per cent arrived on regular flights in the middle of 1900s *Hajj* season (Bushnak, 1979). The air fare was very expensive and it was not affordable by most pilgrims and was not an option for ordinary people. Most pilgrims still travelled by cars, buses and even camels. Some countries such as Persia, India and Egypt established pilgrimage shipping services, such as Shustari Line, the Nemazee Line (registered in Hong Kong), and the Bank Misr Steam Navigation Line.

### *During the European Involvement*

From the 15<sup>th</sup> century European and later British expansion into East, South East and Southern Asia brought these colonial powers into contact with Muslim populations. Islam was spread by Arabs when they were trading in Asia with Chinese, Indians, Malaysians, and Indonesians along the southern Silk Road. Later, this route was used to transport pilgrims to perform *Hajj* (Ladjal et al., 2013). European imperialism brought *Hajj* business transportation under the control of European shipping enterprises with Southeast Asian *Hajj* pilgrims transported from Malaysia and Indonesia by British companies using steam ships. These two countries provided the majority of customers as they had the largest Muslim populations.

The success of mass transportation of *Hajjis* by these British organisations was due to the involvement of *mutawwif* which provided contacts and information, and overcame cultural and language barriers (Miller, 2006). Even before the opening of the Suez Canal, these companies had been transporting pilgrims from the Persian Gulf to Jeddah. Later, after the opening of the Suez Canal, Europeans became the main player in transporting and organising *Hajj*. British, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Norwegian, Italian and Russian ships were registered to transport pilgrims to Jeddah and return. There were two largest main pilgrim routes – from India and from South East Asia (Miller, 2006).

### *Suez Canal Opening*

The opening of the Suez Canal created more shipping capacity to and from Asia and the introduction of modern steamships reduced the cost of transport and the length of passage making the *Hajj* affordable to the ordinary Muslims not just the wealthy people and the religious elites and scholars (Bayly, 2004). With the Suez Canal Britain secured its access to India, and expanded its

business to South-Western Arabia, the Red Sea, and the Gulf of Aden. Eventually, there were ships of British, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Norwegian, Italian and Russian registered to transport pilgrims to Jeddah. The largest company was the Mogul Line, managed by the British company Turner Morrison. Mogul Line ships transported approximately 20,000 pilgrims in 1927 and in the late 1930s more than 70 per cent of pilgrims from Indian ports travelled on Mogul Line vessels.

South East Asian pilgrims from Malaysia, the Straits Settlements and the Dutch East Indies, travelled on the vessels of the Holts Company, a cooperative venture between the British and Dutch, as well as other two main shipping companies shipping companies. These were Amsterdam's Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' (SMN) and the Rotterdamsche Lloyd (RL) (Miller, 2006). Later, these three companies called their operation "Kongsi Tiga". They used specially designed boat to carry pilgrims and cargo during Hajj season and traded as freighters outside of the season. The Hajj business was very profitable during this period; Holts carried 13,695 pilgrims from Singapore and Penang in the 1913-14 season, increasing to 20,590 in 1920 and rose to 30,175 in 1926-27 (Miller, 2006).

### *Modern Steamships*

Despite the new steamship technology, the journey was not easy for the pilgrims. Travel to Makkah by sea could take up to six months and pilgrims had to prepare themselves physically for this difficult journey. They would say good bye to their family not knowing whether they would return home or die during the trip (Metcalf, 1990). Clearly, at this time the journey to Makkah for *Hajj* required tremendous dedication and sacrifice, earning its reputation as the journey of a lifetime (Coskun, 2012). Some pilgrims died on the boat or during the pilgrimage and pilgrims who made it to Makkah would stay to rest and recuperate before returning. As these companies grew they bought more advance steamships which were bigger, better and faster than the ordinary sailing vessels. Thus, the operational cost was less expensive and provided better punctuality and speed. This allowed European shipping to dominate the *Hajj* business by offering cheaper transportation especially for pilgrims from South-East Asia (Pearson, 1995).

Scheduling of this *Hajj* steamship transportation was a crucial issue during that period of time and co-ordination with feeder services from secondary airports was important. Pilgrims needed to ensure they arrived at the right time, and once the *Hajj* season ended, pilgrims crowded into Jeddah

in a rush to go home. This created considerable problems for pilgrims in order to ensure that they had a ship available to accommodate them. Other problems include baggage handling, paperwork, and visas. The loss of baggage was a common problem as well.

### *The importance of Brokers*

The *Hajj* transport systems were built on and incorporated Muslim pilgrim business networks, using their existing operational base to obtain clients and cargoes. In West Africa, as an example, French companies were utilising African intermediaries with commercial traditions in order to build chains of trading stations. This practice was applied in transporting *Hajjis*. European shipping companies therefore folded existing Muslim businesses into the wider networks they were assembling. Kongsu Tiga Shipping used existing brokers to recruit pilgrims for their ships (Miller, 2006). These brokers were mostly *mutawwif* or their associates.

The availability of brokers made sure all paperwork and ticketing for entering Saudi Arabia has been done properly, and co-ordinated operations locally as well as supervising pilgrims' arrival and departure. They usually had good contacts with mosque officials and religious teachers in the origin countries. The information they provided was very important for Kongsu Tiga shipping, especially about pilgrims who lived in outlying regions who had to be transported by a feeder ship to a collection port where they would join the larger pilgrim groups. Overall during this time, *Hajj* travel improved and became more standardised but still remained an uncomfortable and somewhat unpredictable adventure.

### *Hajj in Twentieth Century*

In the third period beginning in the early twentieth century of decolonisation era, the format of *Hajj* travel was transformed. Miller (2006) claimed there were four factors that led to this transformation: Firstly, decolonisation affected the balance of power in business dealings significantly and led to fewer colonial companies trading. Second, there was a change of trade flows with more from one developed economy to another, rather than with the home country of the colonial power. Third, these two factors led to more competition from non-European businesses. Fourth, the further development of air transport using jet engines led to a reduction in use of the sea route (Miller, 2006). Thus, the business of *Hajj* radically transformed. Later, the oil discovery in Saudi Arabia also made tourism businesses beyond *Hajj* less attractive to develop.

After World War II, oil was the main source of income for Saudi Arabia (Peters, 1994). Thus, the tourism sector was not growing except *Hajj* as it is compulsory. However, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia did not manage *Hajj* seriously. During those periods, many problems occurred such as: health, accommodation and transportation. In order to manage those issues, the Ministry of *Hajj* was founded (Henderson, 2011). This government body responsible to manage all aspects regarding *Hajj*, and it also has some co-operations with private businesses not limited to only European shipping companies especially after the World War II.

Southern and South-Eastern Asia experienced decolonisation. European shipping companies tried to maintain their commercial advantage but it was impossible and increasingly non-Western competitors entered the market. *Hajj* pilgrimage transportation remained an important business especially with the increasing number of pilgrims and increasing involvement of locals into the *Hajj* business, with new corporations formed joining *mutawwif* with state-sponsored organisations. Air transport was introduced, but initially could not replace steam ships shipping as the primary means of transport overseas as tickets were very expensive. Despite this, the journey to Makkah for *Hajj* pilgrimage progressively became easier and more people were able to travel to Makkah such that it began to resemble mass tourism. Many countries formed an organisation to handle *Hajj* for pilgrims to make their trip easier.

In Malaysia, the government company *Lembaga Urusan dan Tabung Haji* (LUTH) was established at the end of 1960s. LUTH has its own travel infrastructure for *Hajj* including transport and accommodation. It also duplicated the broker system from the earlier colonial era. Brokers were dispersed along the east coast of the country. An organisation which managed savings by pilgrims towards the cost of their travel called Muslim Pilgrims' Savings Corporation (MMPSC) was established. This organisation invested pilgrims' savings in a variety of companies, include palm oil, rubber estates in order to finance its operating costs. By the late 1990s, LUTH had become an enterprise which managed *Hajj* funds for Malaysian pilgrims to Makkah without involving conventional banks (McDonnell, 1986).

After independence in Indonesia, European businessmen tried to reconstruct their previous networks but experienced difficulty with some being forced out. *Hajj* travel reduced during that period due to the unstable political conditions. In 1955, the *Hajj* candidate listed over good 100,000 people (Noer, 1978). European companies continued to transport pilgrims but only until the 1950s.

However, in general the business of *Hajj* remained open to Europeans as local businessmen were unable to handle it themselves. The Indonesian government unsuccessfully tried to replace the Kongsu Tiga system with Indonesian shipping and the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, who had prime responsibility for organising *Hajj* was forced to turn to Kongsu Tiga. The Indonesian government, aware that *Hajj* required safe and careful preparation, realised the national shipping companies who handled this business were not ready. However a decade later, Indonesian companies had replaced the Europeans.

In Southern Asia after WWII in 1950s, the Mogul Line was one of the successful European companies and had the biggest share of the Pakistani *Hajj*. However, these companies realised they had no future in the *Hajj* business after decolonisation, and by 1962 the Government of India acquired Mogul. Furthermore, Pakistan also bought most of the vessels owned by Mogul and cooperated with India in transporting pilgrims to Makkah.

#### *Changes in the Mode of Transportation*

By the middle of the 1980s, only about 20 per cent pilgrims arrived in Jeddah by steamship, with more than 50 per cent travelling by air and the remainder overland (Bushnak, 1979; Miller, 2006). It was African pilgrims, travelling by land to Port Sudan and then by ship to Jeddah who contributed the bulk of the sea travel (Miller, 2006). Air transport proved much more convenient than sea travel and carrying pilgrims by air was more profitable. Many airlines began transporting people to Makkah via Jeddah during the *Hajj* pilgrimage. By the 2000s there were numerous air/accommodation travel packages to Makkah for *Hajj* ranging from modest to luxurious in quality. The air transport offering ranged from economy class to the business class. The difference between pilgrimage and leisure travel had become less clear.

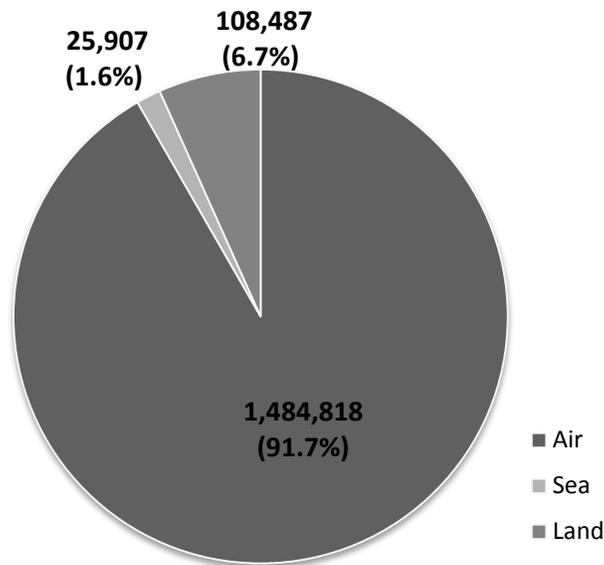
Nowadays, most *Hajj* pilgrims travel by air to Jeddah with some 91.7 percent using this airport to enter Saudi Arabia in 2009 as indicated on Figure 1 (Memish, 2010). Only 1.6 percent arrived by sea and the remainder (6.7 percent) came by land. As shown in Table 1, the number of pilgrims increased significantly between 2009 and 2012, and then decreased by 20 percent due to construction and improvement of the Grand Mosque and other facilities used to perform *Hajj* rituals. Table 1 shows the number of pilgrims over the five years from 2009 to 2014. In 2012, the

number of pilgrims reached more than 3 million. The decrease in numbers of pilgrims shown in 2013 and 2014 is only temporary due to renovations that are expected to be completed by 2016.

**Table 1. Number of Pilgrims (2009 – 2014).**

Year	Local Pilgrims	Foreign Pilgrims	Total
2009	699,313	1,613,965	2,313,278
2010	989,798	1,799,601	2,789,399
2011	1,099,522	1,828,195	2,927,717
2012	1,400,000	1,700,000	3,161,573
2013	700,000	1,379,531	2,079,531
2014	700,000	1,389,053	2,089,053

Source: Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia (2013).



**Figure 1. Arrival of pilgrims in 2009 by mode of travel (Memish, 2010).**

### *Hajj Satisfaction*

Over the past few decades, pilgrims have become aware of and interested in receiving high levels of service during the Hajj and they are more likely to complain about late meals during the flight or if there were no movies on flight to Makkah (Long, 1979; McLoughlin, 2009). Today, excellent

service is required of airlines as it is in accommodation in Makkah and Madinah. Hotels need to provide services such as clean rooms and tasty food in their restaurants. The Hajj pilgrimage business has undertaken a number of improvements especially in providing excellent services to pilgrims.

#### *Expansion of Masjidil Haram*

It is likely that the numbers of people wishing to become Hajj pilgrim will increase in future due to an increasing Muslim population globally as well as economic growth in Islamic countries. As a result, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has undertaken a significant expansion of the Grand Mosque of Masjidil Haram in order to accommodate a growing number of pilgrims. The numbers of travellers to Hajj pilgrims is set through a quota system implemented by Saudi Arabia. Due to construction projects in Mecca, the 2014 visa quota was limited and some countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia received fewer visas (Bernama, 2014; Damayanti, 2013). This quota limitation is planned to remain in force until the Masjid Al Haram renovation is finished in 2016 (Damayanti, 2013). Figure 2 shows construction infrastructure surrounding the Grand Mosque during its renovation in 2014. The expansion of the Grand Mosque is projected to accommodate more pilgrims. The growing number of pilgrims has also attracted investors who have built hotels and shopping centres. The purpose of this new infrastructure is to make sure that pilgrims have access to all the amenities and facilities they require during their stay in Makkah (Hanif, 2014). It has been reported by the Daily Star that the developments valued at US\$120 billion are scheduled for Makkah and Medina over the next decade. The Abraj Al-Bait Tower completed in 2012 and popularly known as the Makkah Clock Tower now overshadows the Masjidil Haram.



**Figure 2. The construction of the Grand Mosque in Makkah courtesy by Bagus Prasetyo (with permission).**

### *Destructions of Historical Buildings*

Furthermore, it is estimated that the construction projects have resulted in 95 percent of original historical buildings in Makkah being torn down (Chehata, 2014; Johnson, 2014; Nasrawi, 2007). Historical buildings that have been demolished over the last 20 years include the house of the Prophet Muhammad's first wife Khadijah, historical mosques marking the battle of the Trench, a mosque that was linked to the Prophet's grandson and the Ajyad Fortress (Taylor, 2011). At issue is whether these constructions and changes have meant that the *Hajj* experience has lost its true spiritual meaning for some pilgrims and have reduced the heritage of Prophet Muhammad. The modern *Hajj* pilgrim may see Makkah as a commercial city with its skyline dominated by high-rise buildings that impose over the house of God, the Kaaba (Taylor, 2011).

### **Reflections on Modern Hajj**

Over the past hundred years, the Hajj pilgrimage has changed significantly. *Hajj* has always provided business opportunities for *mutawwif* and associated transportation companies as well as involving a component of trade by pilgrims to support the costs of their travel. Increasingly, modern air transportation has reduced the travel time and the uncertainty of *Hajj* but also meant that pilgrims have been unable to bring trade goods with them. Today, the business of the Hajj consists mainly of the commercial travel component of *Hajj* which consists of travel agents,

airlines, and hotel accommodations from one to five-star in order to support housing of millions of people each year. These recent developments have changed some of pilgrims' pure religious motivation to secular. Pilgrims often "share many of the physical infrastructures and service providers as secular travelers...pilgrimage trails and destinations have been given new life through modern, secular tourism" (Di Giovine, 2011, p. 249).

In addition, the role of *mutawwif* has been reduced due to the development of government agencies responsible for centrally organising many aspects of the pilgrimage. Part of the reason for the reduction in the role of *mutawwif* has been due to them acquiring a reputation as dishonest and lying about the costs of travel (Miller, 2006). As a result, the Saudi Arabian government has sought to regulate these businesses. The modern *Hajj* has become a significant business in part due to the numbers of people travelling as well as because an increase in the per person cost of travel due to use of the convenient but expensive air transportation. However this increase in the cost of Hajj means that the pilgrimage is less affordable for ordinary people. There is also an increasing differentiation in the type of travel packages offered to *hajjis*. Luxury five star hotels available in Makkah are being packaged with premium air travel as well as opportunity to visit other countries and perhaps to engage in shopping. This contrasts with the more traditional Hajj experience of trading, travelling by sea or camel and being accommodated in tents in the desert heat. The tradition of *Hajj* lies in equality among all pilgrims demonstrated by wearing *Ihram* - two unstitched white pieces of cloth. This simple dress represents the elimination of social and economic inequality. Pilgrims must put aside the materialism of their daily lives before going to *Hajj* but it may be argued that the spirituality of Hajj is being countered by recent developments.

The capacity of Makkah to cater for the millions of Muslims who wish to go on Hajj means that some limitation on numbers is required. For this reason quota system has been established whereby each country is given a number of visas based on its population size. Each year, Muslims hoping to travel, apply for the visa and wait anxiously to see if they have been chosen. A number of factors are considered in making this allocation including age and previous Hajj travel. It has been reported that there is a "black market" selling visas for people who desperately want to go for the *Hajj* (Miller, 2006) although this practice is prohibited.

The costs of pilgrimage vary by country of origin and also by package chosen. To travel from United States, the cost is a minimum of US\$6500 (Darfoon, 2013) whereas Australian Muslims

need to pay at least US\$6,000 (Haq & Jackson, 2009). This package includes accommodation, air ticket and meals during their stay in Makkah and not including tour to anywhere else. The quality of the accommodation perhaps reflects differences in normal travel expectations for people from these countries. For the same reason, packages may include a trip to other countries such as Dubai, Egypt, Hong Kong at an additional cost. In Indonesia, two types of *Hajj* package are available: regular *Hajj* and *Hajj plus*. The regular *Hajj* provides shared accommodation, usually consists of five females or males in one room. *Hajj plus*, on the other hand, provides five-star hotels. The cost for the regular *Hajj* in 2014 was between USD 2,000 to 4,000 per person. *Hajj plus* was first made available in 1987 to accommodate wealthy people who did not want to wait to obtain a visa (Pusponegoro, 2008). The waiting period for the regular *Hajj* is 10-15 years whereas the *Hajj plus* is about 5 years in 2016. The minimum cost of the *Hajj plus* in 2014 was approximately USD 8,000 per person depending on the package chosen (Elisiva & Sule, 2015) with more expensive *Hajj plus* packages including extra trips to countries such as: Turkey, Egypt, Dubai, Singapore, or Hong Kong.

It appears that the business of *Hajj* has changed significantly and today focuses more on satisfaction with the services provided to the pilgrims. This may reflect changes in wider society where people want to get everything fast; they do not want to wait for a *Hajj* visa. However this is also leading to more inequality between pilgrims from different countries or income levels which is quite distinct from older times when all pilgrims stayed in tents. In olden times, people would travel on camels for months and ran a risk of death during the *Hajj* journey. Those who made it home would celebrate their return, and felt confident that their ability to perform the pilgrimage made them worthy in the eyes of God. At question today is whether the changes to *Hajj* which have made it more convenient and comfortable have also reduced the impact on *hajji*'s religious lives.

*Hajj* remains a journey for a lifetime for Muslims from every country around the world, with 'sinners' hoping to start over as newly born. Indeed wealthy parents may send their young adult children who have undertaken unlawful behaviour in the *Hajj* in hopes of heavenly intervention and a miraculous change of direction. Interestingly, prior academic research has focused on levels of service provided during the *Hajj* but not about the religious outcomes of it (Jabnoun, 2003). It is recommended that further research about the outcomes of *Hajj*, be undertaken to

determine to what extent people increase their religious commitment when they return home and if the standard service provided has an influence.

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