

# The cross-cultural differences

*by* Kamaruzzaman Bustamam Ahmad

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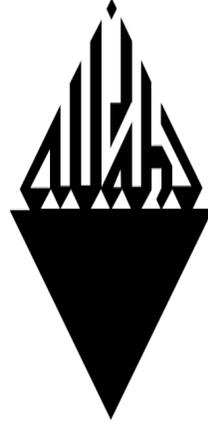
STUDIA ISLAMIKA

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RITUAL, *BID'AH*, AND THE NEGOTIATION OF  
THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA

Jajang Jahroni

HISTORICIZING ISLAM: ON THE AGENCY OF  
SITI MARYAM IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF  
BIMA'S HISTORY OF ISLAMIZATION

Muhammad Adlin Sila

CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES EXPERIENCED  
DURING HAJJ: A CASE STUDY OF ACEHNESE HAJJ

Kamaruzzaman Bustaman-Ahmad & Rahmi Zakaria

ZAKAT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN A SECULAR STATE:  
THE CASE OF MUSLIM MINORITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

Alizaman D. Gamon & Mariam Saidona Tagoranao

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Jl. Kertamukti No. 5, Pisangan Barat, Cirendeu,  
Ciputat 15419, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Phone: (62-21) 7423543, 7499272, Fax: (62-21) 7408633;  
E-mail: [studia.islamika@uinjkt.ac.id](mailto:studia.islamika@uinjkt.ac.id)  
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## Table of Contents

### Articles

- 1 *Jajang Jahroni*  
Ritual, *Bid'ah*, and the Negotiation of  
the Public Sphere in Contemporary Indonesia
- 37 *Muhammad Adlin Sila*  
Historicizing Islam: On the Agency of  
Siti Maryam in the Construction of  
Bima's History of Islamization
- 67 *Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad & Rahmi Zakaria*  
Cross-cultural Differences Experienced  
during Ḥajj: A Case Study of Acehese Ḥajj
- 97 *Alizaman D. Gamon & Mariam Saidona Tagoranao*  
Zakat and Poverty Alleviation in a Secular State:  
The Case of Muslim Minorities in the Philippines
- 135 *Hermansyah*  
Khalfiyat wa taḥaddiyāt al-aqaliyah  
al-muslimah al-Ṣinīyah fi Pontianak

**Book Review**

177 *Dadi Darmadi*  
Rindu Kembali Ke Baitullah:  
Sejarah Haji Asia Tenggara

**Document**

199 *Dita Kirana*  
Enhancing Religious Education: An Attempt  
to Counter Violent Extremism in Indonesia

*Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad & Rahmi Zakaria*

Cross-cultural Differences Experienced  
during *Hajj*: A Case Study of Acehnese *Hajj*

**Abstract:** *The cross-cultural differences experienced by pilgrims during the world's largest religious ritual, hajj, have yet to be explored. It is worthwhile to investigate this issue from an Indonesian perspective. This study uses a phenomenological approach to examine cross-cultural differences experienced by Acehnese pilgrims during hajj. The perceptions of Acehnese who have never been to Mecca ('villagers') and Acehnese who stayed in Saudi Arabia and its neighbouring countries ('stayers') were also probed. The findings show that the pilgrims experienced cross-cultural differences in verbal communication, body movement, physical appearance and dress, the use of space, time, touch, voice, and smell. Cross-culturally, the pilgrims have a different perspective to villagers and stayers. The pilgrims expressed culture shock, while the villagers' perceptions were primarily shaped by imagined and unverified stories, and the stayers understood their pilgrimage through their long experiences of residing in Arab countries.*

**Keywords:** *Hajj, Aceh, Cross-Cultural Communication, Ritual, Experience.*

**Abstrak:** *Kajian tentang pengalaman lintas budaya yang dialami oleh jamaah haji sebagai ritual belum begitu banyak dikaji. Studi ini sangat menarik untuk ditelaah dari perspektif orang Indonesia. Melalui pendekatan fenomenologi, kajian ini berusaha untuk meneroka pengalaman lintas-budaya yang dialami oleh jamaah Aceh ketika berhaji. Pemahaman dan pengalaman yang ditampilkan dalam studi ini adalah persepsi orang Aceh yang tidak pernah ke Mekkah (orang kampung) dan orang Aceh yang sudah lama tinggal di Saudi Arabia (penduduk) dan negara-negara sekitarnya. Adapun temuan yang didapatkan adalah jamaah haji mengalami pengalaman-pengalaman lintas budaya di dalam komunikasi verbal, gerak tubuh, fisik dan pakaian, penggunaan tempat, waktu, sentuhan, suara dan bau. Secara lintas-budaya, jamaah haji memiliki perbedaan cara pandang dengan orang kampung dan yang sudah lama tinggal di Arab Saudi. Jamaah haji mengekspresikan bagaimana pengalaman perubahan budaya. Orang kampung memberikan pandangan mereka lebih banyak berdasarkan imajinasi dan cerita-cerita yang tidak dapat dibuktikan. Sementara mereka yang sudah lama menetap memberikan pemahaman mereka dan justifikasi berdasarkan pengalaman mereka tinggal di bebenpa negara Arab.*

**Kata kunci:** Haji, Komunikasi Lintas Budaya, Ritual, Pengalaman.

**ملخص:** الدراسة حول التجربة عبر الثقافات التي شهدها الحجاج كطقوس لم تكن محل اهتمام كاف من قبل الدارسين. إن هذه الدراسة جديرة بتناولها من منظور الإندونيسيين. فمن خلال مقارنة ظاهرانية، حاولت هذه الدراسة فتح مجالات جديدة في التجربة عبر الثقافات التي شهدها الحجاج الآتشيهيون أثناء أدائهم فريضة الحج. إن الفهم والتجربة اللذين تقدمهما هذه الدراسة تصور الآتشيهيون الذين لم يزورا مكة والآتشيهيون الذين أقاموا فترة طويلة في السعودية والحجاج الذين قدموا من الدول الأخرى. أما الاكتشافات التي توصلت إليها الدراسة فهي أن الحجاج دخلوا في التجارب عبر الثقافات من خلال اتصالاتهم الشفوية وحرركاتهم الجسمية ومظاهرهم الجسدية وملابسهم واستخدامهم الأمكنة والأوقات ولمساتهم وأصواتهم ورائحتهم. فالحجاج من منظور عبر الثقافات يملكون اختلافات في النظر إلى القرويين والمقيمين لفترة طويلة في السعودية. وعبر الحجاج عن تجارب التغيير الثقافي. فالقرويون يميلون إلى تقديم وجهات نظرهم معتمدين على خيالهم والقصص التي لا يمكن إثبات صحتها. أما المقيمون لفترة طويلة في السعودية فقدموا فهمهم ومبرراتهم بالاستناد إلى تجارب إقامتهم في عدد من الدول العربية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الحج، اتصالات عبر الثقافات، الطقوس، التجربة.

Cross-cultural communication is an issue that has attracted considerable academic interest. As stated by Ferraro (2006), with the rapid development of technology and the growth of the communication and transportation industries, it is very important to understand cultural differences, which become an unavoidable global phenomenon (Xia 2009, 97). The development of information, communication and technology has facilitated the rapid and easy movement of people between countries. As a result, contact and communication between different cultures inevitably occur. It is very crucial to understand cross-cultural communication in order to enhance one's own quality of life and avoid any misunderstandings.

In the Islamic world, the pilgrimage to the holy land of Mecca is a mandatory religious duty. Each Muslim, wherever he or she is, is obliged to undertake *hajj* at least once in their lifetime, as long as he or she is financially and physically able to do so. As Ali-Agan (2013) states:

It has been long recognized that Islam is based on five canonical pillars, one of which is the pilgrimage to the holy land in Mecca, technically called *hajj*. It involves financial expenses and physical movement from different locations of the globe to the house of Allah (*ka'bah*) in the Arabian Peninsula, presently known as Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Ali-Agan 2013, 2).

With the betterment of the world economy, more Muslims are able to visit Mecca for *hajj*. In particular, many Indonesians have registered for *hajj* through the Ministry of Religious Affairs. However, they often have to wait for more than 10 years to go to Mecca after registering due to a long waiting list. *Hajj* is a complex ritual and Muslims are expected to prepare well before they perform it. *Hajj* consists of rituals such as *ihrām*, *tawaf*, *sa'ī*, staying in Mina, staying in Muzdalifah, *wuqūf* in Arafah, and the stoning of *Jamarāt*. Able-bodied Muslims who perform *hajj* have to adequately prepare themselves with a lot of information, rules, tasks, and *du'ās* (Al-Aidaros, Zulkifli, and Mat 2013, 27). Preparation for *hajj* should be completed a few months before departure. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Religious Affairs is responsible for handling issues relating to *hajj*. The department facilitates training for those who want to successfully perform *hajj* and its rituals.

The writer observed during her own visit to Mecca that the Indonesian pilgrims she came in contact with were very well prepared for *hajj* rituals. They could do all the rituals and they memorized *du'ās*

without any complaints. However, the writer observed many cultural problems that deterred visitors from a comfortable pilgrimage. During *hajj* or *'umrah*, Muslims from across the globe will come to Mecca. As a result, cross-cultural contact inevitably occurs. From the writer's observation, many of the pilgrims who accompanied her experienced a lot of cultural misunderstandings. For example, there is a prevalent stereotype from their hometown about Arabian Bedouins who kidnap women in Saudi Arabia. Consequently, they were very reluctant to visit the grand mosque "Masjid Al-Haram", which was only a few blocks away from their hotel, without going in a big group. Another common stereotype amongst the pilgrims was that an Arab was able to eat one goat by themselves for a meal. They also thought that Arabs were exceptionally strong, with a bad attitude that motivated them to kidnap, rape, and kill women who were alone in elevators or hotel rooms. As a result, many of the pilgrims were too afraid to be in an elevator or hotel room alone, even when they were sick. In addition to that, they did not understand common informative signs, such as the meaning of "exit", "female toilet", "to *ṣafā*", "enter", and other signs that would direct them to particular places. They depended on people who understood the signs. Due to the crowd in the mosque, the pilgrims often lost their friends. When one of them could not find their friends, they got frustrated and almost fainted, while another one cried and did not know how to leave and return to their hotel. Another example is that when the pilgrims used the hotel stairwell to go down, they did not understand the meaning of 'exit' and they descended all the way to the basement. The pilgrims also complained about other cultures that they considered different from them. They also thought that some foreign cultures were rude.

Mulyana proposes two examples of how cultural misunderstandings can happen due to cultural differences. The first pertains to how some Indonesian pilgrims navigated Mecca. Then they wanted to go to grand mosque and took the bus that was waiting for passengers. When they were about on the bus, suddenly the driver yelled "*ḥaram, ḥaram, ḥaram!*" Because they believed during *hajj* ritual they had to avoid *ḥaram* actions, they decided to leave the bus and walked on foot to the grand mosque. When they arrived at the mosque, a friend told them that that the driver who yelled "*ḥaram*" meant "*Masjid Al-Haram*", which is the name of the grand mosque that they wanted to go to. Another example

was when some Arab men who were in an elevator said “*haram*” to an Indonesian woman. In this context, “*haram*” meant that the Arab men did not want to be in the same elevator as the Indonesian woman (Mulyana 2011, 93). These examples show how cultural differences can cause misunderstandings between people.

Therefore, it is crucial for Muslim scholars to help Muslims performing *hajj* to understand its rituals, and investigate hidden phenomena related to cross-cultural communication. In order to ascertain Acehnese people’s perception of other cultures prior to performing *hajj*, this study investigated their knowledge and understanding of other cultures. The perceptions and experiences of Acehnese people who had stayed in Saudi Arabia and its neighboring countries were also studied in order to examine the similarities and differences between the perceptions of the stayers (people who had resided in Arab countries and were familiar with other cultures), the villagers (people who never came in contact with other cultures or performed *hajj* before), and the pilgrims (people who had performed *hajj* and had come in contact with other cultures).

#### **Cross-Cultural Issues during Hajj**

There are many studies that have been conducted about the issue of cross-cultural difference. This section will discuss some of them. Cross-cultural differences can be found in translation activities. According to Sun, cultural differences can occur during translation. Cultural differences can impair effective translation. Because translation is considered to be a form of cross-cultural communication, foreignizing and domesticating methods are required to solve cultural differences (Sun 2011, 160–63). The differences can also happen during tourist activities. Reisinger and Turner conducted research about cross-cultural differences that could be observed between Indonesian tourists and Australians in Australia (Reisinger and Turner 1997, 139–47). People who come in contact with a new culture will often experience culture shock. Xia (2009) used a psychological perspective to investigate the causes of culture shock and their negative impact, and offered some solutions to deal with them.

Cross-cultural differences that appear in the working environment have also become the concern of some researchers. Eylon and Au showed that the management empowerment that had been given to the employees that came from high power distance culture and low power distance

culture did not cause significant effects for the participants who consisted of 135 MBAs . They did not perform well after the empowerment. However, they were more satisfied with the empowerment condition and less satisfied with disempowerment condition (Eylon and Au 1999, 373–85). Another study investigated the feeling of being part of a group (identification) of employees who worked in multicultural organizations. The results show that when the intercultural climate was strong in a group setting, individuals were much more involved in teamwork and the organization itself, and the identification level was also high (Luijters, Zee, and Otten 2008, 154–63). In order to see the relationship between international experiences and cross-cultural adaptability in organizations, a study was conducted by taking a sample of Taiwanese employees. The results show that the factors that affected adaptability include types of experiences that were experienced internationally, not the frequency of the experiences. Furthermore, the social involvement of the employees gave significant effect to cross-cultural adaptability (Chang, Yuan, and Chuang 2013, 268–73). Mensah and Boohene undertook a literature review of the marketing implications of the cultural differences among people who come from different countries. It is reviewed by discussing some theories of culture, variations in cultural values and the marketing implications of cross-cultural variations (Boachie-Mensah and Boohene 2012, 122–29).

Many studies of cross-cultural differences have been conducted in the educational field, particularly in relation to the teaching and learning process. Hofstede analyzed these interaction differences and connected them with his 4-D model of cultural differences (Hofstede 1986, 301, 320). The decision making of Chinese and adolescent Anglo students was examined to examine the cultural differences in terms of collectivism and individualism. Collectivistic tendencies in the decision making of Chinese students was much more apparent (Brew, Hesketh, and Taylor 2001, 1–19). Another study investigated the six types of cultural differences related to the learning style that was theorized by Kolb. The results showed that the specific cultures that were the focus of the study were related to learning styles and abilities (Yamazaki 2005, 521–48). The study was conducted whether or not cultural differences affected the learning style. It was shown that the students who came from high group collectivism, institutional collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, future orientation, and gender egalitarianism

had a more abstract way of learning (Joy and Kolb 2009, 69–85). Reinties and Tempelaar examined the same group of international students who studied in higher institutes in the Netherlands, and who had experienced significant personal-emotional and social adjustment issues, and a group that did not experience it.

Hofstede's theory was also used to assess the academic and social adjustment of the students (Reinties and Tempelaar 2013, 188–201). The aspects of intercultural learning amongst pre-service teachers from Japan and the United States in a short course were examined. The findings discuss various sources of cultural disequilibrium between these countries. The study attempted to prove that the short term cross-cultural experiences of the teacher could assist other teachers develop intercultural competence (Hamel et al. 2010, 600–614). Intercultural training was held as part of a university course in order to explore its effect on the essentialist cultural beliefs and cultural intelligence (CQ) of the students. It shows that after the training was held, the cultural essentialism of the students increased and it was positively related to both open-minded and cognitive CQ over time (Fischer 2011, 767–75). Furthermore, in order to investigate the cultural understanding of the students, teaching cultural differences was considered to be necessary. Cultural psychology was applied in a classroom setting. The results showed that some problematic effects had occurred when cultural differences were taught using cultural psychology. However, this approach also increased the cultural competence of the students (Buchtel 2014, 40–52). Dong conducted a study about cultural differences between China and the West by using Hofstede and Bond's theory of cultural dimensions. The setting of the research was Foreign Language Teaching (FLT). The result of the research shows that the competence of cross-cultural communication is very important to be successful in communicating cross-culturally. The study proposed some recommendations with regard to the objectives of foreign culture acquisition and the cultural training methods (Dong 2009).

Cultural differences, behavior and expression in particular, have also attracted academic interest. Albert and Ha studied how Latino and Anglo Americans made attribution differently in terms of intercultural situations involving touch and silence. The analysis was done by using six etic theoretical dimensions of cultural differences (contact, collectivism, power distance, context, uncertainty avoidance,

masculinity, and polychronicity) and one emic theoretical concept—Latinos' overarching interpersonal orientation (Albert and Ha 2004, 253–80). Research about cultural differences in how lying and truth-telling tendencies were described between Americans and Koreans was conducted. The study was examined through attitudinal and normative reasons. The findings show that neither Koreans nor Americans used one kind of reason consistently. Attitudinal and normative components were affected primarily by the type of behavior (Park, Oh, and Choi 2011, 749–66). Individual and cultural differences in direct communication style were also investigated. The focus was individualism and interaction of individuals from some countries. In relation to the preferences for direct communication, the findings showed that cultural variations played a smaller role than individual variations (Park, Oh, and Choi 2011, 179–87). The emotional expression “I love you” was also examined cross-culturally. The study showed that the “I love you” expression was used differently across different cultures. Additionally, “I love you” was used by non-native speakers more in English than in their native languages (Wilkins and Gareis 2006, 51–75).

*Hajj* consists of several rituals. The first one is *ihrām*. *Ihrām* can be understood as the intention to perform *hajj*. It should be performed within a fixed time and place in order to make the pilgrimage valid. There are etiquette guidelines and some restrictions that should be followed during *ihrām*. The second ritual is *ṭawaf*, which involves the circumambulation around *ka'bah* seven times. The third ritual is *sa'ī*, which involves walking, jogging or riding from Safa to Marwah seven times. The fourth ritual involves staying in Mina for one night. The fifth ritual is staying in Arafah. It is done on the ninth of *Zulhijjah*, which is the twelfth and final month of the Islamic calendar. The pilgrims spend the day in Arafah and stay there until sunset. The sixth ritual is staying in Muzdalifah. Pilgrims must spend a night in this area. The seventh ritual involves throwing pebbles. This can be done either three or four days from the tenth of *Zulhijjah* to the thirteen of *Zulhijjah* (Sābiq 1992). Because *hajj* is performed during a fixed time frame and in specific places, it can get very crowded as all the pilgrims gather in the same areas at the same time. People who perform *hajj* come from many different parts of the world and cross-cultural contact cannot be avoided.

There are a number of studies that have been conducted about *hajj* (Vredenburg 1962, 91–154). Robert R. Bianchi, for example,

undertook *hajj* for his study on the growth of politics in Islamic world (Bianchi 2004). Eric Tagliacozzo also presented a brief history of *hajj* pilgrims from Southeast Asia from the early modern period, when the first records about the ritual appeared, to the present day (Tagliacozzo 2013). Tagliacozzo and Toorawa edited a book about *hajj* from a multidisciplinary perspective, describing it as a cohesive and important religious, cultural, and sociopolitical phenomenon. Moïss and Buitelaar (2015) also published an edited volume about how *hajj* practices, the representation of Mecca and the exchange of Hajj related objects have changed overtime. The most comprehensive ethnographic report on the situation of Muslims from Nusantara in Mecca can be found in study conducted by C. Snouck Hurgronje. This report is a classic anthropological study about the impact of pilgrimage in Southeast Asia, especially in Aceh during the colonial period (Hurgronje 2007). There is also a three-volume book on the history of Muslims from Nusantara performing *hajj* between 1482 to 1964 (Chambert-Loir 2013).

The necessity of English as the lingua franca was reevaluated in the *hajj* context. Abdellah and Ibrahim have conducted research about the assessment of English language needs for *hajj* guides in Medinah, Saudi Arabia. The study was conducted because a lot of visitors and pilgrim resorts use English while the guides seemed to be less able to communicate in English. It was found that the *hajj* guides need to be trained in a systematic ESP course (Abdellah and Ibrahim 2013). The use of mobile phone technology in performing *hajj* was also considered to be an important aspect to be examined, given the considerable increase in the use of mobile phones. Al-Aidaros et al conducted research about the development of mobile *du'ā'* and *dhikr* for *hajj*. Therefore, to fulfill the need of *hajj* pilgrims to recite *du'ā'* and *dhikr* during *hajj*, *umrah* and *ziarah* rituals, this study developed an Android application by collating the *du'ā'* and *dhikr* that are needed to perform *hajj*. The prototype was very useful in aiding *hajj* pilgrims in reciting *du'ā'* and *dhikr* (Al-Aidaros, Zulkifli, and Mat 2013, 2723–30). The impact of *hajj* was also studied in the context of Pakistani people. In this case, the impact of religious practice and tolerance of the Pakistani pilgrims after finishing *hajj* in Mecca were investigated (Clingsmith, Khwaja, and Kremer 2009, 1133–70).

Politics and the local and foreign policies of some countries and their relations with *hajj* issues were also examined by researchers. Ichwan

investigated the politics of Islamic pilgrimage services in Indonesia before the Reformasi Era. The finding shows that the Indonesian government had monopolized *hajj* services since 1969, despite the end of the New Order regime in 1998 (Ichwan 2008). Ali-Agan studied the concept of *al-istiṭā'ah* from many well-known Islamic scholars. It was done because the Nigerian government gave funds to some of the sponsored pilgrims. The result of this study showed that, in accordance with concepts of *al-istiṭā'ah*, the government should sponsor medical workers and Islamic scholars who can guide pilgrims in Mecca only (Ali-Agan 2013, 1–17). *Hajj* issues were also investigated in the study of Iran's foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia. The impact of the Iranian Islamic regime's foreign policy on *hajj*, particularly regarding bilateral relations between the Iranian and Saudi Governments, were discussed. The study examined these governmental relations from the establishment of the Iranian Islamic regime in 1979 to 2010 (Amiri, Samsu, and Fereidouni 2011).

It is important to firstly understand the sociological concept of culture. Culture can be defined as:

...A pattern of learned, group-related perception-including both verbal and nonverbal language attitudes, values, belief system, disbelief system, and behavior (Martin and Nakayama 2010, 87).

Novinger defines culture as the:

...Knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, religions, concepts of self, the universe and self-universe, relationships, hierarchies of status, role expectations, spatial relations and time concepts accumulated by a large group of people over generations through individual and group efforts (Novinger 2001, 14).

Additionally, Hofstede et al. as stated in Mulyana defines culture as:

...The collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others (Mulyana 2011, 11).

It can be concluded that culture includes the patterns that have been programmed in the minds of groups of people and influences how groups think and behave.

Hofstede developed five concepts to explain the dimensions of country-level cultural variations. Individualism refers to loose ties between individuals who give priority to their own needs and preferences, while collectivism refers to strong ties within cohesive in-

groups who give priority to the goals and needs of the group. High Power Distance and Low Power Distance refer to the extent to which less powerful members of a cultural groups expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. Masculinity and Femininity refer to clearly differentiated social gender roles). High Uncertainty Avoidance and Low Uncertainty Avoidance refer to the extent to of-long-term – short-term Orientation; that is, whether the focus of people's efforts is on the future or the present (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin 2009, 18).

Hofstede classifies people based on cultural variations. Regarding individualism and collectivism, Hofstede asserted that:

Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty (McLaren 1998, 67).

In an individualistic society, people do not pay attention to the concerns of others, they primarily focus on their own and family matters. However, in a collectivist society, group solidarity and togetherness are tied so that they take care of each other more.

Secondly, power distance can be understood as the way by which subordinate members of organizations depend on their bosses, who have more power. In a country which has small distance power, subordinates do not depend much on their chairpersons, while in a country that has a large power distance, subordinates are much more dependent on their bosses (Jansen-Verbeke 1996, 545). Thirdly, in relation to masculinity and femininity, Hofstede asserts that there are significant differences in roles between men and women in masculine cultures, whereas in feminine cultures, the differences are not as apparent (Jansen-Verbeke 1996, 545). Lastly, uncertainty avoidance means that members of one culture feel insecure when the situations around them are not known or certain. It explains why members in a high uncertainty avoidance country have a lot of regulations and procedures within their organizations, to ensure that they feel secure (Jansen-Verbeke 1996, 545).

According to Edward Hall (1976), there are three dimensions of cultural difference: Monochronic time (M-time) and Polychronic time (P-time); Low-context Communication and High-context

Communication; and Use of Personal Space, which consists of intimate distance, personal distance, social distance, and public distance (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin 2009, 23). Culture also determines the use of time and how communication occurs. The orientation of a culture's time can be categorized into either monochronic or polychronic. Monochronic refers to the use of time that is most prevalent in western culture, whereby time is seen as linear, having a start and finishing point. It is essential to see clock time because time can be bought, saved, spent, wasted, lost, or made up. Conversely, in polychronic cultures, time is viewed cyclically, and ideas or projects can operate simultaneously (Liu, Voli, and Gallois 2011, 147). Cultural variations can also be seen through low-context and high-context communication. In low-context communication, people express explicit codes which are direct verbal and overt nonverbal cues to deliver the messages intended. In contrast, high-context communication relies on implicit and shared meaning when communicating, whereby indirect speech expression, subtle nonverbal cues, and setting are used to convey messages to someone (DeCapua and Wintergerst 2007, 257). Furthermore, the use of personal space is classified into four zones. Firstly, the intimate zone (0-1.5 feet) which involves communicating intimately, in a way that is comforting and protective. Secondly, the personal zone (18 inches-4 feet that is used generally in dyadic encounters. Thirdly, social distance (4-12 feet) which is used as normative distance during social interactions, in working settings, and during business transactions. Fourthly, public distance (12 feet and above) is used in formal communication settings, such as public speaking. "Comfortable" distances between speakers may vary across different cultures (Liu, Voli, and Gallois 2011, 146).

### **Cross-Cultural Differences Experienced by Pilgrims during *Hajj***

Two expressions that are very common during *hajj* are *halāl* and *haram*. The villagers thought that *halāl* should only be used to refer to food that is permissible to eat, while *haram* refers to food that is not permitted to be eaten (interview Aziz 2014). The pilgrims thought that, besides being used to declare the permissibility of deeds and food in accordance with Islamic law, *halal* and *haram* could also be used during transaction processes. If the sellers agree with the price that is bargained by the buyers, they will say "*halāl*". But if they do not agree, they will say "*haram*" (interview Hindun, 2014). The stayers agreed

with the above opinion. However, the stayer added that *halāl* could also be used in Medina's famous date garden. There are many kinds of dates that are sold from the garden and the visitors are allowed to taste the dates without paying any money. The sellers will say "*halāl*", allowing the visitors to taste any date that they want. Visitors can buy dates that they like. The term *haram* can also be used when public bus drivers heading towards Masjid al-Haram call passengers to enter the bus. *Haram* here refers to Masjid al-Haram. It is also the same in Acehnese context. In Banda Aceh city, the drivers or conductors of *labi-labi* or DAMRI (local minibus and bus) will say "*salām*" when they announce the destination of Darussalam. In that context, "*salām*" is a short form of Darussalam, which is the location of two big universities. *Haram* is a term that is also used in hotels. Arabic men will usually say *haram* to women who want to enter the lift in their presence. They do not want to be in the same lift with women because it is considered improper (interview Mukhlis, 2014).

A pilgrim was surprised when she was stopped for drinking zamzam water by a man of Arabic appearance for using her left hand. Although she did not understand him well, she understood from his body language that he wanted her to use her right hand because using your left hand during Islamic rituals is disliked (interview Rahmah, 2014). The same experience was also related by another pilgrim who was asked to use her right hand instead of her left to eat an apple (interview Maisarah, 2014). A stayer explained that the right hand is used when Arabic people eat or drink. It is based on Prophet Mohammed's teachings which recommended the use of the right hand to eat. Because Arab culture is very closely related to Islam, Arab people tend to pay attention to which hand is used when eating or drinking. Besides eating with the right hand, some of the Prophet's other teachings that are followed in Arab culture are *ṣalāt al-jamā'ah*, or praying 5 times in a congregation, saying *salām* and saying *ṣalāwah*, which refers to asking for a blessing for the prophet (interview Yunus, 2014). Additionally, in Arab culture, to eat and to accept something with your left hand are regarded as bad manners due to long-established rules relating to hygiene considerations, which designated the use of the right hand for clean deeds and the left hand for dirty deeds (Al-Omari 2008, 102). A pilgrim considered Africans to be rude because they knocked on the toilets very loudly when it was in use (interview Hindun, 2014). In

Acehnese culture, people knock on doors softly to show politeness and respect to the people who are inside a house, room or toilet. The stayer said that the door was knocked hard by Africans because many of them are from poor countries and are not highly educated; they are used to working as laborers and may think that there is nothing wrong with knocking on the door loudly (interview Maimun, 2014).

Turkish people were considered to be friendly when they sat close to the pilgrims, while Arabs, Indians and Africans were thought to be unfriendly and arrogant because they did not smile when they sat or stood close to the pilgrim, and did not give the pilgrim space to sit or stand near them during praying time. They preferred talking and smiling with their own friends (interview Maisarah, 2014). The stayers concluded through their experiences that Arab people were not open to foreigners they do not know; most of them did not speak to foreigners or smile at them. They only smiled at and spoke to foreigners when they had to be close to each other (interview Mukhlis, 2014). This differs from Indonesians who like to smile and speak to foreigners, especially if they appear different to the local people. For example, it is common to see Acehnese people smiling and trying to speak English when they meet foreigners of Caucasian appearance in the markets. The pilgrims considered Arab people to be arrogant because they were not open to them.

Additionally, a female pilgrim thought that when she bargained the price of goods by smiling to show friendliness to male Arab traders, it was considered something special by them and they tried to flatter her and ask about her personal life. When she compared it to her experience with traders in her home town, her friendly approach was normal and meant nothing else (interview Rahmah, 2014). According to the stayer, Arab women in Saudi Arabia generally do not smile at male strangers. When Indonesian women smile while talking to Saudi men, they may regard this as an invitation for special conversation (interview Mukhlis, 2014).

The pilgrims considered African people to be impolite because they pushed them when they were in the crowd (interview Rahmah, 2014). Arab people were also considered rude. A pilgrim recalled an incident where someone of Arab descent passed a shop and caused some goods to fall. They did not apologize to the store owner or return the items to their place (interview Samsuar, 2014). It was also observed that Arabs in Saudi Arabia rarely waited in line; many of the locals seemed impatient

and in a hurry, and did not want to wait too long in queues. It was explained that this incident can be better explained as an individual characteristic, and not a part of Arab culture (interview Abdullah, 2014). It can be concluded that the Indonesian pilgrims, who have physically smaller bodies, were pushed unintentionally by Arab and African people in the crowd due to the absence of a queueing culture.

The pilgrims considered Arab people to be firm in terms of time-keeping. When a pilgrim bought something from shops run by Arabs, they were asked to leave during prayer time, even if they were in the middle of a transaction (interview Samsuar, 2014). Such judgment could be made because in Indonesia, traders are unlikely to ask patrons to leave during prayer time. A transaction will still occur despite the call for prayer or the obligation to pray at a certain time of day. Traders in Indonesia will usually close their shops for *maghrib* prayers (after sunset) and *jum'ah* (Friday prayers). They tend to close shop a few minutes before prayer times so that patrons are unable to access the shop.

In contrast, stayers perceived Arabs to not be as strict or firm with their time. For example, when a stayer asked a university administrator at a university about the turnover time for a letter, the administrator answered "*bukrah*" which in colloquial Arabic means tomorrow. However, when the stayer returned the next day, the letter was not finished yet. It was finished after one week. If the administrator had said "*ba'da usbu'*", which means after one week, this would have indicated that the letter would be finished after one month. However, they are usually strict with prayer time because they prioritize praying together, and praying five times a day (interview Abdullah, 2014). In line with that, another stayer observed that people in Saudi Arabia are very disciplined about prayer time. They tend to close their shops when the time for prayer is approaching. If they do not close their shops during this time, their license for operating a business can be revoked by Saudi authorities (interview Maimun, 2014).

The pilgrims thought that Arab people were rude because they tended to touch the heads of people who were sitting or praying in Masjid al-Haram or Masjid al-Nabawī (interview Khadijah, 2014). This was humiliating for the pilgrims because in their home country touching strangers without purpose is thought to be rude. In particular, the head is considered to be a noble part of the body. The head is only

allowed to be touched in certain circumstances, such as hairdressing. There is a common Indonesian expression which states that a barber has a noble job because he is able to touch many heads. According to a stayer, the head is not considered to be a noble thing in Arab culture; it is acceptable to touch a stranger's head, particularly in a crowd. The back, chin, and beard are regarded to be noble in the Saudi Arab culture, and depending on the context, touching those regions can show love and respect to someone. These interactions usually occur between people of the same sex (interview Abdullah, 2014).

The pilgrims felt shocked when they saw the different size of bodies of people from other countries. They thought that the bodies of these people were very big and tall (interview Maimunah, 2014). They felt discomfort about the larger size of people from Arab and African countries when they did *tawaf*, which involves circling the *ka'bah*. For example, their heads were parallel to the shoulders or chests of African and Arab people. Consequently, due to the density of the crowd, they had to move and walk very carefully to avoid being hit by larger bodied people (interview Khadijah, 2014). Furthermore, Arabs who had white skin and sharp noses were considered to be beautiful, but not attractive if they were tall and big (interview Hindun, 2014). The beauty of having sharp pointed nose was also described when Arabian women wore *niqāb* (a piece of cloth which hides their faces). The pilgrims were impressed when women wore the *niqāb*, which accentuated their noses (interview Laila, 2014). Pilgrims thought that people who have white skin, sharp pointed noses, and the average height of an Indonesian (155 to 165 cm) were beautiful. They thought that a flat nose, dark nose, and a height that was above the Indonesian average were not attractive features.

The pilgrims thought it was inappropriate for female pilgrims from other countries to wear black, particularly a short-sleeved black dress without any socks, during prayers. (interview Maisarah, 2014). White is regarded as the best color to wear at *hajj* because it symbolizes purity (interview Maimunah, 2014). In general, Indonesian women wear white long veils, called a *mukena*, when they pray. They purchase a special white dress when they go to perform *hajj* or *'umrah* in Saudi Arabia. Indonesian women argue that wearing a white dress will improve the quality of their worship. A stayer observed that women from some other countries wore short-sleeved dress and did not does not clothe their feet because they follow the edict of a certain Islamic scholar who opined that it is

permissible for the hands and feet to be seen during prayer. Indonesian women follow the edict of a scholar who argued that the hands and feet should not be seen during prayer (interview Maimun, 2014).

Furthermore, a pilgrim thought that wearing black or dark clothes was not appropriate for people with dark skin. She thought that clothes of a brighter color, such as white, yellow, or pink, would be much more appropriate for darker skinned people (interview Hindun, 2014). People who wear black clothes in Aceh are often joked about as being in mourning for someone who has died. It is not very well-known why this perception is prominent; however, Acehnese heroes and heroines - Teuku Umar, Cut Nyak Dien and Cut Meutia- were painted in pictures wearing black clothes. This indicates that it was common for Acehnese people to wear black clothes in the past.

The *burqah*, a black dresses worn by many Saudi women that covers their figure from head to toe, has been reported to have been used by men as a disguise to enter the women's toilets. This information was reported by villagers who visited the pilgrims prior to their departure. As a result, many pilgrims were reluctant to go to the toilet alone (interview Laila, 2014). A stayer clarified that he had never come across these reports for as long as he has resided in Mecca. It was just a rumor that developed among villagers who were not familiar with Saudi Arabia (interview Maimun, 2014).

Furthermore, a pilgrim was surprised to see Arab women wearing several pieces of clothing at the same time. When they were outside, the pilgrim observed that they wore the *abaya*, a traditional black dress. When they entered the mosque or toilet areas that are designated for women, it became clear that they wore casual clothing such as jeans and a short-sleeved t-shirt underneath their *abaya* (interview Maisrah, 2014). A pilgrim also praised the shape of the traditional male Arab costume, which is known as *thawb*. It was described as tidy and different to the dress of Indonesian men (interview Syamaun, 2014). Indonesian men who are members of *jama'ah tabligh* usually wear the same costume as the Arab men. The pilgrims tended to compare these costumes. When one of the pilgrims arrived in Mecca and Medina, a piece of cloth often used by Saudi men to cover their heads, known as *ghutrah* or *syimagh*, was also worn by him. This head cloth is beneficial in hot climates, where it is used to protect one's head and face from the desert sun (interview Abdul Rauf: 2014).

A stayee relayed some interesting facts about the *abaya*, *thawb*, and *ghutra*. The *abaya* is the long black dress and the *niqāb* is the garment of clothing that covers the face. Saudi women often wear casual clothing such as a t-shirt and trousers in their own homes. They wear *abaya* when they are outside the home, and when they go to gatherings. They can remove the *abaya* during gender segregated events and are able to wear any article of clothing amongst other women. Saudi men wear the *thawb*, a long traditional garment, when they go out. At home or at work, for example at factories where they need to move around a lot, they typically wear jeans and a t-shirt. When they go out to special gatherings, such as a wedding party, they wear *thawb* and *ghutra* (or *syimagh*). The *ghutra* is the traditional cloth that is worn on the head. The *ghutra* is completely white in color while the *syimagh* is a patterned white and red. The head garments are worn by firstly placing the *kufiyah*, which is rounded cap that is used to support the *ghutra* or *syimagh*. The *'iqāl*, a black head bracelet is also used to keep the *ghutra* or *syimagh* in place. In the cities, *ghutra* or *syimagh* are typically used for styling purposes because most people work inside buildings and get around in cars. In villages however, where most people work on farms, the garments are used to protect the head and face from the sun. (interview Maimun, 2014).

The villagers believed that Arabs speak hoarsely. They likened this manner of speech to people from Latin America, and compared them to Europeans, who they thought had softer voices (interview Abdul Azis, 2014). Pilgrims considered Arabs to be impolite or rude because they spoke fast and loudly (interview Syamaun, 2014). One pilgrim also argued that Acehnese people rarely raise their voice, unless they are angry. Acehnese people were considered to be polite because they spoke in a softer manner (interview Khadijah, 2014). A stayee asserted that it is common for Arabs to speak loudly, and that it does not imply rudeness. They explained that they speak loudly out of necessity, due to their residence in mountains and tall buildings, which required them to raise their voice to call someone. (interview Yunus, 2014). Another stayee said that Arab people also speak loudly when they joke with each other (interview Mukhlis, 2014). Acehnese pilgrim defined “loud voices” based on their own perspectives and points of reference. Other cultures may consider Arab people to be aggressive because they tend to be more expressive and emotional in everyday interactions. In Arab

cultures, speaking loudly implies strength and sincerity, while speaking softly could mean weakness and deceitfulness. However, the perceived or known status of others can mediate one's tone. For example, Saudi people show respect to *shaykhs* by lowering their voices.

The villagers thought that the perfume used by Arabs was derived from olive oil (interview Daud, 2014). Although olive does not grow in their area, they are familiar with the Arabic word for olive, *zaytūn*, because it is mentioned in the Quranic *Sūrah al-Tin*. Olives are believed to be a magic fruit that are very nutritionally beneficial. The villagers assumed that olives can be used as perfume. The villagers also assumed that Arab people are fragrant because they often use *minyeyuk jeumpa* or *minyeyuk seulanga*. *Minyeyuk jeumpa* is a type of oil that is mixed with *bungong jeumpa*, which is the Acehnese word use to express the flower of *magnolia champaca*. Due to its fragrance, this flower, which grows in abundance in Southeast Asia, is used as the source of natural perfume. Even in Aceh, *bungong jeumpa* has been long regarded as a special flower, particularly for natural perfume uses. The beauty and fragrance of this flower has been expressed in a very famous local Acehnese song. The lyric about the fragrance of the flower is as follows, “*Keubit that harom meunyoe ta tem com, Keubit that harom that harom si bungong jeumpa*”, which translates to: It is indeed fragrant if we want to smell, indeed it is fragrant *Magnolia champaca*. *Bungong seulanga* or *canangaodorata* is also the identity flower of Acehnese people. This flower is often mixed with coconut oil, which creates a special fragrance that is called *minyeyuk seulanga*. *Bungong seulanga* is often used in special ceremonies of Acehnese people. It is used on the body of the bridegroom during their wedding and on the body after death, before they are buried. *Bungong seulanga* is also celebrated in a popular Acehnese song entitled “*bungong seulanga*”. The following lyric shows the level of admiration for the fragrance of *bungong seulanga*, “*harom be bungong hai adoe leupah that mesra*”, which translates to: The fragrance of flower oh little brother or sister is indeed romantic. *Bungong seulanga* is described as having a very nice romantic fragrance. The cultural background of the villagers, who have never travelled abroad before, explains why they think that their own fragrances will be similar to those found in cultures they are not familiar with. They used their own cultural reference points to make sense of other cultures.

A pilgrim called the perfume that Arab people used “*meuhong*” (interview Khadijah, 2014). “*Meuhong*” is the expression that is used

in Acehnese language to describe a strong smell of, such as a fragrance or food, that can make someone uncomfortable. Another pilgrim also admitted that the smell of other cultures during their *hajj* journey was very diverse and strange. However, because they were advised by their *hajj* leaders to not express their opinions about the aroma of other people, such as the perfume used, the pilgrims usually did not talk about this experience, even when they arrived home (interview Syamaun, 2014).

A stayer suggested that Arab people enjoy strong aromas. They stated that Arab men like to wear strong perfumes, particularly during winter. Due to the cold weather, they tend to not shower for several days. They use perfume instead to freshen themselves up (interview Abdullah, 2014). Another stayer said that the perfume used in Saudi Arabia has a strong smell because of the level of humidity there. People are used to the dry and humid conditions, and do not sweat as much, and they expect, the perfume to last longer. In Indonesia however, people sweat easily. They tend to shower twice a day, and do not expect the perfume they use to last as long or smell as strong. The stayer said that he usually used the perfume that he bought in Saudi Arabia. The smell of the perfume did not feel as strong when he used it in Indonesia (interview Munir, 2014). In addition to that, there is a special tree in Saudi Arabia called *'ud*, the scented wood of which is used to make a special fragrance (interview Yunus, 2014).

### **Some Other Interesting Phenomena about *Hajj* and Saudi Arabia**

Most of pilgrims who performed *hajj* admitted that they did not know how to use elevators when they stayed in hotels. Using an elevator was frightening for them. One of the pilgrims waited for friends on the ground floor to go to their hotel room on the sixth floor; another went up with other Indonesian women from other provinces who understood how to use a lift. If their destination was on the fifth floor, the Acehnese pilgrims exited the lift with them and used the stairs to continue to the sixth floor (interview Khadijah, 2014). The pilgrims were also unfamiliar with the term "lift", which was often called "*lip*" by Acehnese. They learned the correct term after using the lift several times with friends who knew how to operate it. One of the pilgrims thought that 'lift' and 'escalator' had the same name, and she called both "*lip*" (interview Maimunah: 2014). Another pilgrim admitted that

he preferred to use the stairs rather than take the lift to the fourteenth floor. He added that he was strong enough to climb the stairs because he was used to walking long distances around his village farm. He felt more comfortable using the stairs, and he counted each passing floor to avoid getting lost (interview Muksalmina, 2014).

Furthermore, the pilgrims often got confused by the gates used to enter and exit Masjid al-Haram. They thought that they could use the same gate to enter and exit the mosque. They put their shoes in special places near the gate when they entered the mosque. When they left the mosque, they assumed that their shoes were stolen because they could not find them by the gate. They later realized that they exited through a different gate. The gates looked very similar to them and they did not know how to read the signs that informed them which gate they were using. The pilgrims also had difficulty understanding other informative signs (interview Muksalmina, 2014).

The stayers thought that the pilgrims did not understand the directional signs in Masjid al-Haram and in hotels because they were written in Arabic and English. Many of the pilgrims are older and not literate. In order to direct themselves, the pilgrims used certain buildings, key landmarks, and other natural sites as reference points. It became confusing if they thought that the gates appeared similar. Many of the pilgrims did not use lifts in their hometown either. Lifts are only present at big department stores, which were never visited by the pilgrims. Staircases are the most common means to go up a floor, and most buildings in Aceh consisted of only two floors at most. He added that many pilgrims were also unfamiliar with cold and hot taps. Many of the pilgrims panicked when they accidentally turned on a hot tap, and did not know how to turn it off. The means to adjust the temperature of water is not available in many households, and the pilgrims often just used the natural temperature of water (interview Munir, 2014).

One of the villagers thought that camels were used as the main means of transportation in Saudi villages, while cars were most commonly used in cities (interview Azis, 2014). Another villager assumed that camels were used to transport pilgrims around Mecca, and that buses were used to take pilgrims outside Mecca (interview Daud, 2014). Pilgrims who visited Mecca were surprised by the lack of motorbikes, and that luxury cars were common, although they observed that the cars were

not looked after well and often looked dirty, unkept or damaged by accidents (interview Salma, 2014). A stayer stated that in general cars are not considered a luxury in Saudi Arabia; the price of cars is relatively cheap and many owners were not concerned about the state of their cars. The cars were often dirty because they are used in the desert, and accumulated sand and dust (interview Munir, 2014).

A villager who had never travelled by plane, and had only seen planes in a small local airport (Sultan Iskandar Muda Airport Blang Bintang), thought the places at King Abdul Aziz airport were very big. (interview Azis, 2014). The aforementioned local airport is an international airport which is used by Acehnese pilgrims to travel to Saudi Arabia. A Boeing 777 plane operates at this airport for that purpose. The pilgrim recalled crying suddenly when her plane landed in Saudi Arabia; she saw and heard a lot of noisy planes with blinking lights. She described the lights as “*blet blot*” and she imitated the noise of the planes with ‘*a ‘u*’ sounds. She never thought she would experience this in her life (interview Salma, 2014). Although the airport was described to be amongst the worst in the world by online travel websites due to its lack of comfort, convenience, cleanliness, and customer service, the pilgrim thought it was one of the best places she had ever visited because of the large size of the planes.

Reports that some pilgrims had lost their belongings during *hajj* led them to assume that Arabs were dishonest thieves (interview Salwa, 2014). One pilgrim was reluctant to go outside alone, especially to shop, because she was afraid that thieves would steal her money and possessions. Going out with friends was thought to be safer, however due to their differing priorities, the pilgrims often needlessly accompanied friends to places they did not need to go (interview Hindun, 2014). A stayer asserted that thieves and pickpockets did operate in crowds of thousands around Masjid al-Haram. However, they were not local Saudis. Most of the thieves came from poor countries. Beggars also often took advantage of the mass gatherings during *hajj* and *‘umrah*, particularly on buses, where they asked pilgrims for money (interview Hindun, 2014).

Acehnese refer to Bedouins by the term “*badu*”, which is often used to talk about *hajj* and Arabs. A villager thought that *badu* is a porter or laborer who does hard work and is paid a low salary (interview Daud, 2014). Another villager thought that *badu* are not real, and was just

a term used to frighten people, such as *po'op* or *ma'op*, which is an Acehnese term that is similar to *badu* (interview Salwa, 2014). *Po'ob* or *ma'op* is an abstract noun which refers to ghosts in Acehnese, and is often used to frighten children and dissuade them from going to dangerous places, such as wells, roads, or dark roads. For example, “do not go to the well, there is *po'op* there” is a common phrase. Another villager defined *badu* as an Arab who speaks loudly and in a cruel manner, and is not friendly at all (interview Abdul Azis, 2014). Many pilgrims who hear negative reports about *badu* prior to departing to Saudi Arabia were reluctant to stay in a hotel room alone, or walk outside alone, because they were afraid of being sexually assaulted or raped by *badu* (interview Salma, 2014). Male pilgrims often got on the bus first because they were afraid that women could be kidnapped by *badu* drivers, who could potentially drive away before the men could get on the bus (interview Rahmah, 2014).

A stayer explained that “Bedouin” or “*badu*” is derived from the Arabic word “*baduwi*” which refers to a group of people who live in villages, as opposed to a city. The *baduwi* live as farmers or breeders, and are not not kidnappers or murderers (interview Yunus, 2014). A stayer who has worked for many years as a *hajj* officer, who accompanies Acehnese pilgrims to Saudi Arabia, has never heard of any incident of female pilgrims being kidnapped by Bedouins. The buses are usually full of many pilgrims from other countries, who are wearing a special *hajj* garment called *ihrām*. It is very unlikely for a female pilgrim to be kidnapped by a bus driver. However, it was acknowledged that everybody still has to be careful because crime can happen anytime and anywhere (interview Munir, 2014). Another stayer said that there may have been cases of rape of Indonesian pilgrims in hotels during *hajj*, but that could have been a usual incidence of crime that had no connection with Bedouins. A *hajj* officer stated that he sometimes saw Indonesian women from remote regions who often went to toilets outside their hotel wearing a towel only. This is an uncommon practice in Saudi Arabia. They may have been sexually assault when they were alone (interview Mukhlis, 2014). Women from remote villages in Indonesia often go to wells or rivers located outside their homes, wearing a towel only, to wash themselves. It is also culturally acceptable for some women, especially those who are less religious, to breastfeed their babies in public.

A villager thought that Arabs are able to eat one whole goat for a meal (interview Abdul Azis, 2014). Another villager said that Arabs eat a lot of meat and bread, and that they enjoy eating *Indomie*, a popular brand of Indonesian noodles (interview Daud, 2014). A pilgrim assumed that Arabs like to eat chicken because she saw someone of Arab descent eat chicken (interview Hindun, 2014). The pilgrim also complained that although she had a lot of money, she could not buy *boh limeng sunti*, which is used to preserve *averrhoabilimbi*, a fruit that is commonly used as a spice in Acehnese food (interview Hindun, 2014).

A stayer described some of the types of food that are eaten by Arab people. Goat is usually eaten by a group of people, not just one person. It is eaten as a main meal, with a bit of bread. This sounds strange to Acehnese people because they usually eat goat in curries, also known as “*kuah sie kameng*”, which is served with a lot of rice. Acehnese people say “*mangat that bu*”, which means “so delicious rice”. They add more rice than goat curry, and this is very filling as rice is high in carbohydrates. (interview Munir, 2014).

A common breakfast food that is eaten by Saudis is *fuul* (fava beans), which is served with a special bread called *tamees*. The fava beans are cooked with olive oil and some spices in a thick sauce. Fried or boiled eggs are also often eaten for breakfast. *Kabsa* is a very popular food at lunchtime. It is a mixed rice dish made with either meat or chicken. The food that Saudi people eat also depends on their particular lifestyle; many eat Western food such as pizza and sandwiches (interview Maimun: 2014).

Zamzam water is believed to have magical properties, based on an Islamic story about Hajar leaving Ismail thirsty near the *ka'bah*. It is thought that zamzam is nutritionally beneficial and is capable of curing diseases. The pilgrims try to drink it as much as they can when they arrive in Mecca and Medinah. A pilgrim said that she drank any drinking water that was available at Masjid al-Haram (interview Khadijah, 2014). She believed that all the drinking water available there was zamzam. She bottled it and drank it at her hotel. Another pilgrim also assumed that all the water available for drinking and washing in Saudi Arabia was zamzam. He drank water and washed his body as much as possible (interview Muksasmina, 2014). The researcher observed when she visited Masjid al-Haram that taps were signposted as either ‘drinking water’ or ‘zamzam water’. It was concluded that these different sources of water were different, with the former being general drinking water.

This implied that the supply of zamzam is limited, even for drinking purposes at the mosque, and is not intended for washing or for use in toilets. A stayer said that much of the general drinking water was sourced from desalination plants due to a lack of underground and surface water supplies in Saudi Arabia (interview Mukhlis, 2014).

One of the pilgrims admitted that she was reluctant to visit Bin Dawood, which a big mall near Masjid al-Haram, and the luxury Hilton Hotel. The goods sold there are expensive. She was disappointed to see luxury goods being sold so close to Mecca, and did not see anything similar in her hometown. Her main purpose in performing *hajj* was to worship Allah in a sacred and holy place. Ironically, Masjid al-Haram is surrounded by luxury malls and hotels (interview Laila, 2014). However, a stayer gave a different perspective. According to him, long before the malls and hotels were built, there were many irregular shops and markets around Masjid al-Haram and Masjid al-Nabāwī Madinah. They were all eventually replaced with luxury malls and hotels. He explained that they are meant to serve rich pilgrims. He also argued that the malls and hotels offer facilities that are not against Islamic law. For example, there are no bars or night clubs in these places. The Acehnese pilgrims experienced culture shock when they saw the malls because many of them are from small villages that only have traditional markets (interview Munir, 2014).

### Conclusion

Acehnese pilgrims experienced a lot of cultural difference when they visited Saudi Arabia to perform *hajj*, which resulted in culture shock and a number of misunderstandings. The cultural differences were experienced in terms of verbal communication, Kinesics (body movement), Proxemics (the use of space), chronemics (the use of time), haptics (the use of touch), physical appearance and dress, paralanguage (quality and characteristics of the voice), olfactics (the use of smell, scent and odour) and other specific phenomena. Due to their prior experiences, the villagers, the pilgrims and the stayers had different perceptions about other cultures. The villagers based most of their opinions based on gossip, reports, and their own imagination. The pilgrims used their own perspectives and cultural worldview to make sense of other cultures, and what is right or wrong. The stayers were able to understand other cultures based on their own perspectives and the perspective of other cultures.

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### *Interviews*

Interview with Abdul Azis, the villager from Gampong Kaye Kunyet, on September 12, 2014.

- Interview with Hindun, the Pilgrim from Gampong Cot Jambo, on September 15, 2014.
- Interview with Mukhlis, the Stayer from Aceh Besar, on September 17, 2014.
- Interview with Rahmah, the Pilgrims from Gampong Cot Nambak, on September 11, 2014.
- Interview with Maisarah, the Pilgrim from Gampong Cot Rumpun, on September 16, 2014.
- Interview with Yunus, the Stayer from Banda Aceh, on September, 19, 2014.
- Interview with Maimun, the Stayer from Aceh Besar, on September, 22, 2014.
- Interview with Samsuar, the Pilgrim from Gampong Cot Mancang, on September 13, 2014.
- Interview with Abdullah, the Stayer from Banda Aceh, on September, 20, 2014.
- Interview with Khadijah, the Pilgrims from Gampong Cot Nambak, on September 9, 2014.
- Interview with Maimunah, the Pilgrims from Gampong Cot Hoho, on September 10, 2014.
- Interview with Laila, the Pilgrim from Gampong Cot Mancang, on September 14, 2014.
- Interview with Syamaun, the Pilgrim from Gampong Cot Hoho, on September 10, 2014.
- Interview with Abdul Rauf, the Pilgrim from Gampong Cot Hoho, on September 10, 2014.
- Interview with Abdul Azis, the villager from Gampong Kaye Kunyet, on September 12, 2014.
- Interview with Syamaun, the Pilgrim from Gampong Cot Hoho, on September 10, 2014.
- Interview with Daud, the Villager from Gampong Eumpe Bata, on September 9, 2014.
- Interview with Munir, the Stayer from Aceh Besar, on September 19, 2014.
- Interview with Muksalmina, the Pilgrims from Gampong Cot Rumpun, on September 17, 2014.
- Interview with Muksalmina, the Pilgrims from Gampong Cot Rumpun, on September 17, 2014.
- Interview with Salma, the pilgrim from Gampong Cot Nambak, on September 8, 2014.

Interview with Salwa, the Pilgrim from Gampong Kaye Kuyet, on September 12, 2014.

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Kamaruzzaman Bustaman-Ahmad, *Ar-Raniry State Islamic University (UIN) of Banda Aceh, Indonesia*. Email: abah.shatilla@gmail.com.

Rahmi Zakaria, *Ar-Raniry State Islamic University (UIN) of Banda Aceh, Indonesia*. Email: rahmi\_zakaria@yahoo.com.

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6. Ms. *Undhang-Undhang Banten*, L.Or.5598, Leiden University.
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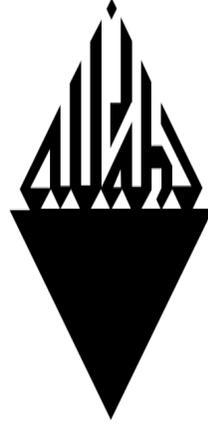
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