International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage

Volume 11
Issue 5 *12th Annual IRTP Conference, Braga, 2021*

Article 3

20-9-2023

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© International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage
ISSN : 2009-7379
Available at: http://arrow.tudublin.ie/ijrtp/ Volume 11(v) 2023

Mapping Pilgrimage in the Marketplace: Social Contexts of *Bisnis Hajj dan Umroh* in Indonesia

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Since the 2000s, Indonesia's Muslim society has been keen on the development of religious tours, in which private commercial tour operators organise pilgrimages to Makkah (hajj and umrah). As a result, the development of these religious tour operators has formed a market, which is described as *bisnis hajj dan umroh* (pilgrimage business). Thus, this study examines social space and context in the commodification of Islam in Indonesia, by analysing the *bisnis hajj dan umroh*. In conclusion, the study shows that the development of the pilgrimage market in Indonesia has cultivated new social space among stakeholders, and creates social context based on individual piety, connecting economic development with personal spiritual commitment. The quality, popularity, and charisma of the *ustaz* (pilgrimage leader) in religious tours strongly impacts the level of customer commitment to the market, based on their spiritual preferences and emotions.

Key Words: Hajj, umrah, *ustaz*, Indonesia, Islamic tour operator

Introduction

Contemporary pilgrimages are impacted by various transformations and continuities, based on changing lifestyles and social environments. Developing mass tourism significantly impacts the transformation of traditional pilgrimages, into contemporary religious tourism. This strongly connects contemporary pilgrimages with the tourism industry, filling holy locations with various religious commodities and services, and activating market forces in the related sacred activities.

In the case of Islam, the development of market economies has strongly influenced the management of pilgrimage and sacred places. Pilgrimage to Makkah in Islam (hajj and umrah) has had a rich religious tradition throughout its history, which Muslims worldwide have inherited. Although this religious tradition is based on Islamic texts such as the Qur'an, hadith, shariah, and other writings of Islamic scholars, the narratives of pilgrimage and social experiences of Muslim individuals and societies have enriched it throughout Islamic history (Peters, 1996; Bianchi, 2004; Sardar, 2014). Moreover, the religious tradition of pilgrimage has constantly transformed, according to changes in lifestyles, and has reflected the social mentalities of Muslims. Currently, the contemporary hajj is a yearlong cycle of planning, financing, teaching, outfitting, transporting, lodging, doctoring, celebrating, mourning, blaming and correcting (Bianchi, 2004:4).

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in any country in the world, and more than 200,000 Indonesian Muslims participate in the annual hajj rituals. Additionally, millions of other Indonesian pilgrims participate in umrah tours annually (Utomo, Scott & Jin, 2017). Thus, they keep their rich religious tradition alive through religious practices, events, and knowledge related to pilgrimages provided by Indonesian local communities. Furthermore, the rise in the number of Indonesian pilgrims to Makkah underscores the significance of the religious importance of the pilgrimage to Makkah in Indonesian society.

Since the 2000s, Indonesia's Muslim society has been keen on the development of religious tours, in which private commercial tour operators organise pilgrimages to Makkah (hajj and umrah), named BPH (*biro perjalanan haji*). These private tour operators have actively promoted their religious tours and services in various public spaces, in both urban and rural contexts. As figure 1 shows, various promotional posters and leaflets can be seen in public spaces like mosques, public schools, and commercial areas in the country.

As a result, the development of these religious tour operators has formed a market, which is described as

Figure 1: Leaflets Advertising Religious Tours on the Public Board at a Local Mosque

(Photo taken by Author, 9th September 2019, Yogyakarta, Indonesia)

bisnis hajj dan umroh (pilgrimage business). While the number of religious tour operators has risen in the country, their customers have also dramatically increased, and this market gain has had a clear impact on Indonesian society (Hooker, 2008). The advertisements of these religious tour operators are prominent in several social locations in Indonesia, and their activities have become part of the current Islamic lifestyle in the country. With the rise in popularity of religious tour operators and the development of the pilgrimage market, Indonesia's religious traditions in terms of pilgrimage are now commodified in the market and facilitate a new form of individual religious piety.

In Indonesia, the development of the pilgrimage market is concomitant with the development of an emerging middle-class, and their religious preferences point to a new form of piety and religious identity in society in terms of morals, knowledge, and sensibility (Fealy & White, 2008; Hooker, 2008; Mzakki, 2008; Rudnyckyj, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Hefner, 2010; Weintraub, 2011; Hoesterey, 2015; Kurasawa & Horton, 2015; Gauthier, 2020). Such prominence of religious commodities promotes the personalisation of individual religious piety, and creates individual identity according to degrees of consumption, making the plural characteristics of the market more evident. As Araki (2018) indicates, the development of a pilgrimage market in Indonesia is strongly connected with private and social prestige, and reputation, developing from the concept of *gengsi* (pride) in Indonesia society. He described that the pilgrimage market became a significant social tool to demonstrate one's righteousness in one's social environment. Indonesian society connects this individual righteousness with religious consumption in the market. In this sense, Araki summarised that the development of the Indonesian pilgrimage market is based on mundane desires, as well as religious significance in the Islamic context (Araki, 2018: 93).

Although the relevant literature stresses the personalisation of individual piety based on consumption of religious commodities, studies also emphasise the emergence of a

new form of community, based on the mass consumption of religious commodities (Fealy, 2008; Mzakki, 2008). In this sense, the development of *bisnis hajj dan umroh* in Indonesian society has transformed the social space and context of Islamic traditions in the country, through social interactions and negotiations in the market economy.

This study, therefore, examines social space and context in the commodification of Islam in Indonesia, by analysing the pilgrimage business (*bisnis hajj dan umroh*). Its focal points include the market structure, promotional activities and management strategies of religious tour operators, all within the social context of this emerging market.

This study employs an empirical case study based on a qualitative approach (Neuendorf, 2002; Krippendorff, 2004). The contents of marketing and promotional activities of BPH are mainly analysed based on the promotional activities of religious tour operators on websites, social network services, and other communication channels such as leaflets, posters, and banners. Some of the main data in the paper were collected through the official websites and social network systems of BPHs, and others were collected during the author's short field research visits to the Indonesian cities of Jakarta, Surabaya and Yogyakarta, in August 2017, February 2018 and August 2019. Related articles in Indonesian newspapers and magazines and previous literature are also utilised as data sources.

Literature Review: Commodification, De-contextualisation, and Re-contextualisation of Islam

Modern pilgrimages are connected with the market forces of transforming religious landscapes in sacred spaces, and the spread of religious commodities and services in the field. Some studies focus on the impacts of market forces on pilgrimages, by analysing the development of religious tourism in sacred places. Some studies emphasise the individualisation of piety, and emerging contested arenas, in religious places where there is seen to be tensions between traditional pilgrims and modern tourists (Eade & Sallnow, 2000 [1992]; Coleman & Eade, 2004). Yet others focus on the conjunctions between traditional pilgrimage and contemporary market economies (Shackley, 2001; Reader, 2015; Gale, Maddrell & Terry, 2016). Ian Reader indicates that, pilgrimages are embedded in a context of markets, consumer activity, publicity and promotion, emphasising their operation not just in the marketplace, but through it (Reader, 2015:8). This leads to an 'intrusion of market forces' (Reader, 2015:11). Based on this, certain recent religious tourism and pilgrimage studies have concentrated on pilgrimage market forces, and clarified the field's market economy principles and management strategies (Gale, Maddrell & Terry, 2016; Gauthier, 2020).

Development of the Islamic pilgrimage market has dramatically changed its landscapes. The spread of the pilgrimage market, or *bisnis hajj dan umroh,* in Indonesia is generally recognised as a part of the 'commodification of Islam' in the country (Fealy & White, 2008; Hooker, 2008; Mzakki, 2008; Rudnyckyj, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Hefner, 2010; Weintraub, 2011; Hoesterey, 2015; Kurasawa & Horton, 2015; Araki, 2018; Gauthier, 2020). Previous studies from Indonesia indicate that religious commodities are actively consumed by the emerging Indonesian middle-class, whose religious preferences point to a new form of piety and religious identity in society, in terms of morals, knowledge, and sensibility (Hooker, 2008; Hoesterey, 2015). Further, there are new religious practices among people and a close relationship with market principles. As a result, the consumption of religious commodities promotes the personalisation of individual religious piety, and creates individual identity according to the degree of consumption, making the pluralistic characteristics of the market more evident.

The concept of commodification of Islam is heavily related to the discussion of marketing of religion in tourism studies, religious studies, and other related disciplines (Beckford, 1989, 2003; Olsen, 2003, Kitiarsa, 2010; Reader, 2015; Schedneck, 2015). Most previous studies have focused on the expansion of religious commodities, the embodiment of religious values in the market economy, and the spread of specific principles and practices of religious consumption in the market. As Kitiarsa (2010) indicates the highly dynamic market economy and religion convergence is created through market mechanism, technological advancement, and global flows of people, capitals, and information, including religious symbols and institutions (Kitiarsa, 2010:564). Furthermore taking religion as consumer

goods has enabled individuals to personalise their piety and religious sensibility (Kitiarsa, 2010:570).

Some studies on the commodification of religion, therefore, focus on the de-contextualisation of the traditional meanings and values of religious objects because of material culture (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; Featherstone, 2007). With the expansion of commodities in the market economy, people who do not share the same religious and cultural values are beginning to consume these goods, and contextualise them according to their own cultural frameworks. As a result, the traditional context embedded in these objects is de-contextualised, or removed from value systems, and the commitment to commodities is diversified and personalised. As Featherstone (2007) indicates, consumer culture negatively changes one's relationship with religious beliefs and practices through its emphasis on hedonism and worldly pleasures.

Brooke Schedneck notes, however, the market is a common term scholars use to explain the process of how people choose which practices and beliefs are best for them at various moments of their lives (Aupers & Houtmann, 2010; Schedneck, 2015:130). Hence, this market is connected to the sacralisation of the self, which advocates people to follow personalised paths that do not rely on any established external models or hierarchies of authority (Aupers & Houtmann, 2010; Schedneck, 2015:130).

In this sense, the commodification process promotes personal subjectivity and existential space, which personalises the meaning of objects, practices, and experiences, and diminishes the social context of religion that is firmly shared in a certain society (Kitiarsa, 2010). Some studies on secularisation in the sociology of religion also stress the loss of social context in the discussion of Peter L. Berger's thesis on the loss of the 'sacred canopy' (Berger, 1967).

Discussions on the commodification of religion strongly emphasise the personalisation and pluralisation of piety in terms of the loss of social context and meaning embedded in religious objects, and practices. However, some studies indicate that the commodification process also promotes a new social context, and enhances the significance of religious piety in a society through the market economy and its principles (Kitiarsa, 2010; Shinde, 2010; Reader, 2015; Schedneck, 2015). As Brooke Schedneck also indicates, the commodification of religion promotes a 'reconfiguration in its relationship with the market and leads to new social spaces' (Schedneck, 2015: 12). The development of subjectivity in the market controversially promotes intersubjectivity, or social meanings among people, through bodily and sensual experiences in personal consumption practices in a specific market, as indicated by David Croach (2002) and other researchers engaged in tourism studies.

The concept of commodification of Islam also focuses on the rapid spread of Islamic moral values in society, through the rise of tangible and intangible religious commodities in society (Starrett, 1995; Haenni, 2005; Fealy, 2008; Gauthier, 2020). As Greg Fealy indicates, the commodification of Islam has promoted further Islamisation through the growing consumption and prominence of Islamic products in the market, as well as the personalisation and pluralisation of individual pieties (Fealy, 2008). He also points out that religious commodities can be used as signifiers of class mobility (Fealy, 2008). He mentions that it is generally acknowledged that marketisation leads to the simplification of religious messages as those doing the selling seek the broadest possible appeal (Fealy, 2008:36).

In order to obtain the largest share in the market, market dynamics dictate that religion is brought increasingly into popular culture, and is presented in an entertaining and easily digestible form (Fealy, 2008). Therefore, as Mzakki (2008) shows, the commodification of Islam in Indonesia reflects the social identity of the middle class and community traits (Fealy, 2008; Mzakki, 2008). In this sense, the commodification of Islam is recognised as the emergence of a new type of morality and community, based on the mass consumption of commodities.

In this situation, the recognition and meaning of individual piety is also transforming in communities. Although conventional narratives stress religious tradition as an ideal, the contemporary popularity of religious commodification shows that the transformation in religious tradition is a new expression of individual religious piety (i.e., a way of consumption of religious commodities). Market principles also reinforce individual

consumption practices through the contextualisation process (e.g., reference, imitation, and negotiation of consumption experiences with other consumers in the market and communication with market stakeholders). In this sense, consumption practices obtain their meaning and value through the contextualisation of each practice in terms of social space.

In this situation, Rudnyckyj (2010) describes that the development of a 'spiritual economy' in Indonesia, which has expanded religious commodities and consumption practices in citizens' daily lives, has formed a social context. Their reference points are commodified concepts of religion such as ideal lifestyles, working ethics, and national identity through personal piety and self-improvement based on market principles, rather than the decline of social context. The rapid expansion of Emotional and Spiritual Quotient (ESQ) training programmes, based on Islamic piety and values, has enlightened and reconfigured Indonesian Muslims' ways of thinking and social life, and produced a strong cooperation between economic success and high moral attitude. As a result, a firm social recognition that individual economic development is strongly connected to individuals' religious attitudes and vice versa, is widely accepted in society, and it is this spiritual economy that drives both the market economy and religious ethics based on Islamic heritage (Rudnyckyj, 2010).

Global Makkah Pilgrimage System and *Bisnis Hajj dan Umroh* in Indonesia

Although the pilgrimage to Makkah is described as the most important ritual in Islam, only very few Muslims could fulfil this religious duty in the past (Long, 1979; Peters, 1996; Bianchi, 2004; Miller, 2006). Robert Bianchi and other researchers note that the annual number of pilgrims to Makkah in the early 20th century was approximately 10,000, and the total number of pilgrims at that time was not comparable to the huge numbers at the start of the 21st century (Bianchi, 2004). With the development of international air transportation networks, Muslims throughout the world began to participate in the hajj and umrah rituals and this increased due to low travel costs (Miller, 2006). Also, going on pilgrimage became popular among middle- and lower-class Muslims (Bianchi, 2004). As a result, congestion during hajj and umrah caused deadly crushes and other incidents, which subsequently became a political issue in the Muslim world (Bianchi, 2004; Piscatori, 2005).

The Saudi government responded to the rapid growth of pilgrim numbers by expanding the infrastructure and human resources related to pilgrimage services, including the establishment of the Ministry of Hajj to manage and maintain operations. However, the growing demand overcame the supply possibilities. As a result, the Saudi government introduced a hajj quota system in 1987 that 'permits every country to send one thousand pilgrims for each one million people enumerated in its national census,' through the issuance of pilgrimage visas (Sardar, 2014). Since the establishment of the quota system, the mobility of pilgrims has been strongly controlled by Saudis, who control the country's management strategy. Consequently, most pilgrims have begun using group package tours provided by state-owned companies in their native countries, which exclusively guarantees pilgrimage operations. The development of operators, and improvements in services, have reduced the uncertainty of pilgrimage journeys to Makkah (Zamani-Farhani & Henderson, 2010; Henderson, 2011). As a result, the pilgrimage experience has become predictable for every Muslim in the world.

Over time, the state-operated hajj systems became more bureaucratic, and could not satisfy the entire range of pilgrims who participated in the hajj and umrah rituals (Hammoudi, 2006). In particular, the huge number of upper-class and emerging middle-class pilgrims demanded greater comfort while on pilgrimage, which was not provided through the state-owned operations. Moreover, as the number of people interested in the pilgrimage experience had risen dramatically, the long waiting lists for state pilgrimage opportunities meant that it could take decades to perform the hajj and umrah rituals, frustrating Muslims who wanted to go sooner. To resolve their discontent, some countries delegated their hajj quota and umrah visa issues to private tour operators, in order to introduce market principles into the field. Thus, in many countries tour operators have actively organised religious tours to Makkah.

In the case of Indonesia, pilgrimages to Makkah were originally conducted by private religious guides in

Makkah called *mutawwif*, who had rich experiences in pilgrimages and a good command of Arabic (Long, 1979; Ichwan, 2008). However, the strong state control in Saudi Arabia, and the introduction of the hajj quota system, forced them to reduce their business as they could no longer engage in it freely (Long, 1979). In its hajj quota system, the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs became responsible for operating the country's quota system. This has encouraged the popularisation of pilgrimage journeys among lower-class Indonesians through the standardisation of hajj and umrah operations, and by reducing costs (Ichwan, 2008; Utomo, Scott & Jin, 2017).

In the 1980s, the Indonesian government introduced the hajj state bureaucracy to monopolise hajj and umrah management operations (Ichwan, 2008: 142). Moreover, the Indonesian government has issued various decrees to regulate hajj and umrah operations in the country, such as the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs' Decree No. 1/1984, which stipulates the requirements for opening a travel agency for umrah and the potential sanctions for violating the rules (Ichwan, 2008: 145). In the 1990s, the government improved pilgrimage state bureaucracy by issuing Presidential Decree No. 62/1995 on the Organization of Hajj Services (Ichwan, 2008: 142), law No. 17/1999, and Ministerial Decision No. 371/2002 on the Implementation of the Hajj (Hooker, 2008: 206-207). As a result, the Indonesian government established PPOH (*Panitia Pelaksanaan Operasonal Haji*) under the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Indonesian government and the Islamic Community Perpetual Fund (*Dana Abadi Umat*) to support state bureaucracy and management for these pilgrimages (Hooker, 2008: 206-209).

However, the standardisation of pilgrimage operations by the state bureaucracy raised various problems because of the huge demand from Muslims in the country. The long waits people were required to endure before they could embark on the pilgrimage became a social issue. Although the Indonesian government, and other national and international organisations have attempted to enhance the management of pilgrimage operations through huge bureaucracy, it currently takes more than ten years to participate in the hajj ritual using state pilgrimage operations (Hooker, 2008; Tagliacozzo, 2013; Utomo, Scott & Jin, 2017). The poor quality of travel services provided by the state has also triggered complaints from middle-class and upper-class pilgrims. Moreover, the growing costs of the hajj bureaucracy has strained the national budget and government financial portfolios in Indonesia (Hooker, 2008: 208).

To solve this problem and satisfy the middle- and upper-class pilgrims, the Indonesian government has delegated part of its operations to the private sector, creating private '*hajj* plus' operations that promote the improvement of services through competition among stakeholders in the service management and market principles (Hooker, 2008; Ichwan, 2008; Tagliacozzo, 2013). The Indonesian government introduced the 'ONH plus (*Ongkos Naik Haji* [cost of pilgrimage] plus)' system by Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 22/1987, which registered 'ordinary' pilgrims at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, who could later re-apply to the private hajj agencies for special treatment and facilities for extra costs (Ichwan, 2008:140). As the government has eased some regulations for hajj and umrah operations for private travel agencies, various private tour operators for operating hajj and umrah emerged in the various cities in the country (Hooker, 2008; Ichwan, 2008). For instance, the Minister of Religious Affairs issued Decree No. 280/1991 designating twenty-three private agencies to organize umrah travel, including the thirteen agencies involved in the 'ONH Plus' (Ichwan, 2008).

To develop the commitment of private travel agencies in the hajj and umrah management operations, the Indonesian government introduced the independent hajj tour operators (*biro perjalanan haji*: BPH) to handle some pilgrimage business by Law No. 17/1999 (Hooker, 2008). Nowadays, more than ten percent of the Indonesian national hajj quota is operated by these private tour operators, and their presence has become very strong in Indonesian society (Hooker, 2008; Utomo, Scott & Jin, 2017).

Religious Tour Operators in *Bisnis Hajj dan Umroh*

Religious tour operators, which are officially named BPH (*biro perjalanan haji*), in the pilgrimage business (*bisnis hajj dan umroh*) in Indonesia are generally known as

Figure 2: Religious Tour Operator at Jakarta

(Photo taken by Author, 9th February, 2018)

'Tour Travel Hajj & Umroh' or 'Hajj dan Umroh Service'. They are located in various areas throughout the country, and are licensed by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs to issue pilgrimage visas and organise religious tours to Makkah. Most operators are small and medium-sized private enterprises (SMEs). As Figure 2 shows, the offices of BPH are widely seen in urban and rural areas in the country and are frequently located in public spaces such as mosques, business areas, and commercial areas like traditional markets and shopping malls. The main services offered by these operators are pilgrimage tours to Makkah, called *Paket Hajj* or *Paket Umroh*, and they also organise religious visits (*ziyara*) to holy places in the Middle East like Madinah, Jerusalem, Turkey and Dubai (e.g., *Paket Ziyara*, Hajj + Turkey, and Umrah + Dubai) (Hooker, 2008). The prices of these religious tours range from 4,000 to 7,000 US dollars for hajj tours, and from 800 to 2,000 US dollars for umrah tours, with comfortable transportation and accommodation (Hooker, 2008).

The characteristics of religious tour operators and the pilgrimage market in the country include (1) a pluralistic, liberal, and strongly consumer-oriented market; (2) the popularisation of standardised services and entertainments; and (3) operations that are heavily dependent on the charismatic character of the *ustaz*, which can be roughly translated as 'religious guide' or 'preacher,' in this context.

The government and state administration do not actively regulate religious and local matters, the management of religious tour operators, or economic issues to create a consumer-oriented market. They limit their authority to the control of external issues such as pilgrimage visas and licensing of tour operators. This policy strongly promotes customer-oriented characteristics, as well as pluralistic and liberal traits for the market. Therefore, most Islamic tour operators in the country are private SMEs, with their customers and management mostly arising from the individual owners' preferences.

For the individual tour service owners, their management strategies mostly involve satisfying the large number of customers in the country by popularising and commodifying pilgrimages, through mass production and consumption of religious services (Fealy, 2008). As a result, most companies provide almost the same content and quality of service in their pilgrimage tours, with few strategies for differentiation (Fealy, 2008). The difference in service comes from the quality of hotels, transportation, and the number of staff members assigned to religious tours. Despite the small range of differentiation, these operators actively provide related religious entertainment during their tours, and widen the customers' travel experiences.

Islamic tour operators and the pilgrimage market are heavily dependent on the religious character of the religious guides. The owners are eager to differentiate their pilgrimage tours by promoting the religious traits of their specific tour guides. Some companies corroborate with religious teachers in Pesantren and Pondok Pesantren (traditional religious schools in Indonesia) to ensure the religious quality of their services, and others strongly exploit charismatic figures—usually called *ustaz*, *ustad*, or *ustadz*—by showing customers the compelling deeds of the guides and the pilgrimage or religious experience in the Islamic context. In the pilgrimage market, these *ustaz* are gaining significant popularity among customers; they have become the core 'commodity' in the market.

Self-improvement and Religious Capital of *Ustaz* in *Bisnis Hajj dan Umroh*

Compared to religious tour operators and the pilgrimage market in other countries, the unique characteristic of the Indonesian pilgrimage business (*bisnis hajj dan umroh*) is the strong emphasis on charismatic *ustaz* in their package tours. As an Arabic loanword, *ustaz* means master or leader in the Indonesian language, and these figures ensure the religious authenticity and righteousness of pilgrimage services in the market, and find strong support among customers (Hoesterey, 2015; Araki, 2018). Their religious authenticity and righteousness are based on their economic success, as well as their rich spiritual experiences and relevant knowledge. For instance, MQ Travel in Jakarta coordinates with Aa Gym (Abdullah Gymnastiar - Figure 3) as the religious guide for some

Figure 3: Aa Gym and other Ustaz on SNS at MQ Travel Tour

(MQ Travel, 2022)

parts of their tour (MQ Travel, 2022). Daqu Tour & Travel corroborates with Yusuf Mansur, who is one of the most important Islamic figures in the country, to enhance their management (Daqu Tour & Travel, 2022), and Sahrul Gunawan, a famous actor in Indonesia, organises religious tours through AFI Tour (AFI Tour, 2022). Other religious tour operators collaborate with other charismatic *ustaz* to improve their religious services. Moreover, the religious tour operators actively promote their agents' religious righteousness, daily conduct, lifestyles, and pilgrimage experiences. They also emphasise the economic success of these agents and their familiar characteristics through various media, describing them as charismatic idols or stars (like TV actors). As figure 3 shows, most of the religious tour operators exploit hired *ustaz* in their promotional activities on their websites, in order to differentiate their religious tours.

Despite the widespread popularity and religious significance of the *ustaz*, their educational backgrounds are diverse, and most have not completed the traditional Islamic educational schooling (e.g. Pesantren or Pondok Pesantren), or engaged in overseas Islamic higher education at Azhar University in Cairo or other Islamic universities in Middle Eastern countries (Hoesterey,

2015). Some even exhibit a poor command of the Arabic language and *shariah* (Islamic law). Therefore, they do not act as traditional religious teachers, or *shaykh* (religious masters), who share their religious knowledge and experiences with others. Rather, these figures posit as businessmen and engineers who conduct social practices. In this sense, the religious authenticity and righteousness of these charismatic *ustaz* is different from those of religious figures who are rooted in Islamic knowledge.

During pilgrimage tours, the *ustaz* act as coordinators for participants' spiritual experiences by narrating personal spiritual experiences, and communicating with the participants during and after the pilgrimage. They are able to verbalise customers' emotions and sense of piety, thereby making certain connections and sharing experiences in the Islamic context. Religious tour operators in the market actively encourage situations where participants can discuss their pilgrimage experiences with each other, and with the *ustaz,* during the package tours. Additionally, they may hold special seminars before and after the tours for this purpose. Operators also promote a familiar atmosphere which these figures engender, rather than transcendental and mystical traits, as a way of sharing experiences and fostering continuous relationships with customers.

The narratives of the *ustaz* in pilgrimage business, strongly connect various social successes with individual religious experiences (Faysal & Yatman, 2014; Hamza, 2014). For instance, they emphasise that individual piety, as a Muslim, has led to the various social achievements for many people such as economic success, better family life, good social interactions, prestige and good reputation. These social successes have been achieved through participation in pilgrimage tours and pilgrimage business, as well as conducting mundane religious practices. In particular, the narratives of *ustaz* strongly connect their social success with their spiritual experiences in the pilgrimages, which enhanced their self-enlightenment and self-improvement. These socially successful experiences are connected to individual spiritual experiences and thus assure the religious authenticity and righteousness of the *ustaz* (Hoesterey, 2015).

Although the narratives of pilgrimage businesses emphasise on significance of individual piety, which leads to various social successes, they are somehow tautological - due to their customer base. Customers of religious tours in the pilgrimage business have already achieved social and economic successes in their lives, and they have enough time and physical work involved with the religious faith, as well as the personal investment in ideology, doctrine, and practice, [and can produce spiritual capital, or] the degree of mastery of and attachment to a particular religious culture (Stark & Finke, 2000:125).

Furthermore, the customers of *bisnis hajj dan umroh* are limited to the middle- and upper-class Indonesian Muslims, because of the high expenses of the services. On their side of the experience, the *ustaz* in the market have gained enough social achievements, as well as spiritual experiences, to conduct spiritual guidance in the religious tours. In this sense, the experiences of pilgrimage business do not lead to any social and economic success, rather the degree of social and economic successes ensure the degree of spiritual capital, based on market consumption.

Hence, the development of the pilgrimage business promotes a certain social context advocated by both the *ustaz* and the religious tour operators, which strongly connects social successes in the market with spiritual experiences based on self-improvement. As Daromir Rudnyckyj describes, the deepening of self-improvement and spiritual capital is achieved through an economic commitment to the spiritual economy, and its degree is easily calculated (Rudnyckyj, 2009a, 2009b, 2010). This market principle is widely accepted in Indonesian Muslim society, which displays a strong motivation for commitment to this field. In this sense, the pilgrimage business may be described as a social space that encourages strong connections between economic development and individual spiritual piety.

As a result, the pilgrimage market may be recognised as a new social space for Indonesian Muslims to contextualise their own spiritual commitment and righteousness in the context of social and economic development. In other words, they can re-contextualise their spiritual capital based on the terms of market economy and vice versa, and thereby visualise the hierarchy of religious capital in

market principles. In this sense, religious commodities related to the pilgrimage business are a result of the reflective references and interactions between the economic development of the pilgrimage business, individual piety, and spiritual experiences, or spiritual consumption as meaning-making practices in Indonesian Muslims' experiences and lifestyles. This continues to be a significant frame of reference for Muslims in Indonesian society, thus, producing new experiences and fostering socialisation.

Conclusion

This study examined social space and context in the commodification of Islam in Indonesia, by analysing the pilgrimage business (*bisnis hajj dan umroh*).

The market structure of the pilgrimage market is described as the development of the 'hajj plus' system in Indonesia, according to its use of the hajj quota system on the global level. The government has delegated part of its hajj quota to private tour operators, licensing them to organise pilgrimage tours to Makkah. Arising from this, various religious tour operators began to organise hajj and umrah tours to Makkah, and developed the pilgrimage business (*bisnis hajj dan umroh*) in the country.

In this market environment, religious tour operators have popularised and personalised the pilgrimage by promoting mass commercialization of their services to their customers in the country. However, tour operators strongly posit pilgrimage masters (*ustaz*), as a core management strategy, in order to differentiate their offering from that of other operators. Customers in the market recognise the quality of the *ustaz* as the main difference in services. The role of *ustaz* in the pilgrimage market is described as that of a coordinator, or an agent who promotes the contextualisation of customers' personal experiences, emotions and narratives into a social one. In particular, the *ustaz* strongly connects social success with personal spiritual experiences, by narrating their personal spiritual experiences. In this sense, they form a certain social space between pilgrims and stakeholders in the market by verbalising customers' emotions and sense of piety, making certain connections and sharing spiritual experiences in the Islamic context, which leads to personal social success as well as spiritual capital. In other words, individual pilgrimage experiences are socialised through the involvement of the *ustaz* in the market. The degree to which customers are committed to the market, therefore, directly reflects the quality and popularity of the *ustaz,* as well as the economic development of the market through the accumulation of relevant religious experiences.

In conclusion, development of the pilgrimage market in Indonesia cultivates new social space between stakeholders, and creates social context based on individual piety, connecting economic development with personal spiritual commitments. The quality, popularity, and charisma of *ustaz* in religious tours strongly reflects the level of customers' commitment to the market, based on their spiritual preferences and emotions. In this sense, the pilgrimage market in Indonesia provides a social space which promotes the re-making and re-contextualising of religious traditions to fit contemporary social lifestyle.

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Acknowledgement

This research was funded by Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research of JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science), grant number 18K18283 and 21H03719