

**THE HAJJ IN THE MALAY WORLD 1850-1950:
ITS HISTORICAL DIMENSION AND IMPACT**

BY

SHARIFAH BINTI ISMAIL

**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
MALAYSIA**

DECEMBER 2005

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الجامعة الإسلامية العالمية ماليزيا
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF HUMAN
SCIENCES IN HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION**

**KULLIYAH OF ISLAMIC REVEALED
KNOWLEDGE AND HUMAN SCIENCES
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
MALAYSIA**

DECEMBER 2005

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to give a descriptive analysis of the hajj practice in the Malay world and examines the historical experiences of the Malay hajjis during the period that extends from 1850 to 1950. The study also discusses the patterns of intellectual interactions between the Hijaz and the Malay World, and highlights the civilizational features of the hajj practices and its influence in the Malay society. The researcher adopted an inductive and textual analysis method to examine the archival materials and secondary sources (i.e. books, journals, dissertations) that deal with the historical experiences and civilizational dimensions of the hajj in the Malay world. The combination of the textual analysis and oral sources provided the study with a unique source of information that revealed various aspects of the hajj mechanism and its impact on the Malay society. Finally, the study came to a conclusion that the hajj had a profound influence in shaping the socio-political and intellectual structure of the Malay society in the later half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. It was also one of the effective channels that linked the Malay region with the Muslim world, and consolidated its contact with the Hijaz in particular.

ملخص البحث

. 1950-1850

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APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is full adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in History and Civilization.

Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk
Supervisor
Date

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standard of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in History and Civilization.

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This thesis was submitted to the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences and is accepted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in History and Civilization.

Hazizan Md Noon
Dean, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed
Knowledge and Human Sciences
Date

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references and a bibliography is appended.

Name: SHARIFAH BINTI ISMAIL

Signature.....

Date.....

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The Hajj in the Malay World 1850-1950: Its Historical Dimension and Impact

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**To my grandmother, Bashah Binti Awang
who fulfilled her dream to become one of the ÌiyËf al-RaÁman
year 1426H**

**To my mother, Fatimah Binti Ismail
who made her dream come true**

**To the big happy family of the late Ustaz Ismail bin Shafie
Kampung Sungai Kerang, Teluk Intan Perak**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract (English).....	ii
Abstract (Arabic).....	iii
Approval Page.....	iv
Declaration.....	v
Dedication.....	vii
Acknowledgements.....	viii

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY AND METHODOLOGY.....	1
1.1. Background.....	1
1.2. Purpose of the Study.....	3
1.3. Significance of the Study.....	4
1.4. Sources of the Study.....	5
1.5. Literature Review.....	7
1.6. Research Methodology.....	13
1.7. The Scope of the Study.....	13

CHAPTER TWO:

EARLY INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE MALAY WORLD AND THE HIJAZ.....	15
2.1. The Commercial Activity.....	15
2.2. The Advent of Islam in the Archipelago.....	19
2.3. The Early Malay Conduct of the Hajj.....	26
2.4. The Islamic Intellectual Centre and Literature in the Malay World.....	29
2.5. The Hijaz and its Intellectual Centrality in the Muslim World.....	33
2.6. The Religio-Political Interaction and Diplomatic Relations.....	35

CHAPTER THREE:

THE HAJJ MANAGEMENT 1850-1950	39
3.1. The European Colonialism and the Hajj Institutions.....	39
3.1.1. The Dutch East Indies and the Hajj Policies.....	42
3.1.2. The British Malaya and the Hajj Policies.....	46
3.1.3. The Malay Pilgrimage Officers.....	50
3.2. The Shipping Companies.....	55
3.2.1. The Al-Sagoff Company and Herklots Firm.....	55
3.2.2. The European Shipping Companies.....	58
3.3. The Pilgrims' Guides Institution.....	62
3.3.1. The Arab Pilgrim Brokers.....	64
3.3.2. The Muqâmmîn.....	68

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE HAJJ: HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE 1850-1950	72
4.1. The Preparation for the Hajj.....	72
4.2. The Pilgrimage Centres.....	77
4.3. The Holy Journey to the Hijaz.....	81
4.4. The Malays in the Hijaz.....	86
4.5. The Hajj: the Aftermath.....	93

CHAPTER FIVE:

THE IMPACTS OF THE HAJJ ON THE MALAY WORLD	104
5.1. The Jêwâ Muqâmmîn.....	104
5.2. The Spread of ØfÊsm and Islamic Mode of Life.....	110
5.3. The Educational and Intellectual Impact.....	113
5.4. The Reformist and Modernist Ideas.....	117
5.5. The Press and Publication.....	122
5.6. The Nationalism on the Malay world.....	127
5.7. The Social Impact.....	130
5.8. The Economic Impact.....	133

CONCLUSION	138
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY AND ITS METHODOLOGY

1.1. Background

The term “Malay world” or “Malay Archipelago” is commonly used to denote the area that includes Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Southern Thailand and Southern Philippines. The gradual spread of Islam in this region has resulted in a series of religious and socio-political changes that contributed to the Islamization of the indigenous society and the strengthening of its religious and cultural ties with the cradle of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. The annual journey of the Malay hajjis¹ to the holy places in Arabia to perform the hajj had become the most important cause of voluntary and personal mobility before the age of European discoveries, and led western scholars such as Bernard Lewis to highlight the profound effects of this journey “on all communities from which the pilgrims came, through which they travelled and to which they returned.”²

The journey also paved the way for a large group of the Malay hajjis to pursue their Islamic studies or establish their commercial careers in Makkah and Madinah. The members of this group, through the course of time, formed the so-called *JÉwÊ muqÊmÊn* in the Hijaz, and the Hijaz emerged as an important learning centre of Malay scholarship with the presence of a considerable number of prominent Malay

¹ Hajji, (plural, hajjis) Muslim who had made pilgrimage to Makkah. See, *The Little Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, ed. Maurice Waite, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 7th edn., 1994) p. 285.

² B. Lewis, “Hadjj” *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. B. Lewis vol. 3, (Leidin: E.J. Brill, 1986), p. 38.

'*ulamÉ*' who studied at the *Masjid al- ×arÉm* and produced a wide range of religious books and *fatwÉs* that exercised a great influence in the Malay world and Muslim countries that followed the *al-ShÉfiÑÉ* School of Law.³

During the late ninetieth and early twentieth centuries, the number of the Malay hajjis increased rapidly due to the opening of the Suez Canal, introduction of steamboats, wide spread of Islamic knowledge in the region, and growing interest of young Malay students in pursuing their Islamic studies in the Hijaz. While staying in the holy cities the Malay hajjis and students interacted with other hajjis who came from different parts of the Muslim world, and also got acquainted with the emergence and development of Islamic revivalist movements that led to political struggle against European colonialism in the Muslim world. They then contributed to the transmission of revivalist ideas to their home countries, and gradually organised themselves in a wide network of reformist movements in different parts of the Malay Archipelago.

In this sense the hajj influenced the religious, socio-political and economic discourse in the Malay world, and functioned as an active connecting link between the two regions, enhancing the awareness of the Malay hajjis of their belonging to the larger Muslim *ummah* and strengthening their sense of Muslim solidarity.

³ The Malay community in Makkah, commonly known as the *muqÉmÉn* or '*aÍÉb al-JÉwiyyÉn*' was made up of the Malay hajjis who stayed behind in Makkah for various purposes. Many were determined to spend their old age and die in Makkah, others were attracted to join scholarly community there and few became leading scholars in the great mosque. See C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, (Leiden : E. J Brill, 1970), pp. 215-292.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to give a descriptive analysis of the hajj practice in the Malay world and examine the historical experiences of the Malay hajjis during the period that extends from 1850 to 1950. The study will also address the following questions:

1. Did the Malay hajjis have strong religious and sincere commitment to go to the holy places to perform the hajj or did they go there for economic and social interest?
2. Did the title of hajji give its holder a special social and religious status in the Malay world?
3. Did the Malay hajjis contribute to the shaping of religious and political thought in their home countries?
4. To what extent have the hajjis succeeded in spreading a wide sense of Muslim solidarity in their local communities' *vis-à-vis* the hostile attitude of the colonial forces towards Islam at large and the hajj institution in particular?

By addressing these questions, the study attempts to highlight the influence of the hajj institution in the Malay world, and investigate its role in shaping the socio-political and religious structures of the Malay society. The intellectual and religious discourses between the Hijaz and the Malay world will be highlighted in this study and its consequences in the Malay world will be critically assessed.

1.3. Significance of the Study

It is agreed that there is a number of studies which has been done on Islam in the Malay world but not much attention has been paid to the issue of the hajj and its importance. This can be attributed to the poor documentation of primary sources and oral tradition on the hajj, and to the misleading approach of the colonial officers and post-colonial western scholars who dealt with the issue of Islam and the hajj in the Malay world.

The present study, therefore, attempts to fill this gap by utilizing both western and Islamic sources on the hajj, and addressing the topic from an Islamic perspective based on the Malay Muslims' perception and understanding of the hajj institution. To overcome the shortcomings of the available works on the hajj, the study will pay special attention to the religious dimensions of the fifth pillar of Islam and its impact on the socio-economic, political and intellectual fabric of the Malay society. Thus the historical experience of the Malay hajjis and the civilizational dimensions of the hajj and its impacts in the Malay world during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century (1850-1950) will be the focal point of this study. It is hoped that this study will give a detailed account of the history of the hajj in the Malay world, and pave the way for further studies to address the topic from other perspectives.

1.4. Sources of the Study

This thesis is based on a variety of primary sources collected from archival centres and libraries in Malaysia and Indonesia, and on a series of interviews conducted with a few hajjis in Malaysia.

The written primary sources fall into two major categories. The first category includes the archival materials collected from Malaysian and Indonesian archival centres and public libraries, dealing with a variety of laws, ordinances, regulations, reports, minutes, gazettes and correspondences issued by colonial government officials to organize and supervise the hajj business. These materials are available in their original forms and microfilms in various libraries and archival institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia.

The second category consists of the published sources such as the *Records of the Hajj*⁴ that cover the first part of the twentieth century and give a statistical survey of the hajj population and the situation of the hajjis in the holy places. The reports on the population of the Malay hajjis, their transportation from their homeland to the holy places and back, the challenges which they experienced in their historical journey and in the holy places provided this study with very useful information on the hajj business. They also discuss the policies designed by colonial forces for controlling the flow of the Malay hajjis in the holy places. The archival material collected from the Indonesian National Archives gave relevant information on the Netherlands East

⁴ Public Records Office and British Library, (Oriental and India Office Collections), *Records of the Hajj, Archive Editions*, vol. 3 (The Ottoman Period, 1814-1887), vol. 4 (The Ottoman Period, 1888-1915), vol. 5 (The Hashimite Period, 1916-1925), vol. 6 (The Saudi Period, 1926-1935), vol. 7 (Saudi Period, 1935-1951) (Britain: Author,1993).

Indies hajj during the colonial period,⁵ and a series of reports and correspondence written by Dutch colonial officials on two hajj agents in the Netherlands East Indies and Singapore.

The study also relies on three oral sources. The first includes a series of interviews conducted with Malay hajjis in the Malay Peninsula with special focus on the hajjis' background and preparations for hajj, means of transportation, observations and activities throughout the journey to and from the Hijaz. Combined together with the written sources, the oral material gives a complete picture of the historical experience of the Malay hajjis and provides the study with a first hand information on the socio-political and economic impacts of the hajj on the Malay hajjis and the *JÉwÊ muqÊmÊn* in the Hijaz.

The second oral source is based on hearsay information collected from relatives and friends of some hajjis who addressed the historical experience of the hajj, contribution of the hajjis to the development of their own societies, and the degree of their success in encouraging their relatives and town/village people to perform the hajj.

The third oral source is based on a series of interviews conducted with some scholars and experts who dealt with the hajj from a professional or academic perspective, such

⁵ A list of correspondence between the colonial administrators and original documents from the pilgrim brokers or agents, Herklots and Alsegoff & Co dealing with the transportation of Malay pilgrims to the Hijaz from the Malay world during the colonial period located in the National Archives of Indonesia was published by the centre in 2001. The documents are divided into two parts: those relating to the agent Herklots and those emanating from the firm of Alsegoff & Co. The book subdivided into various stages or topics of the hajj. The title and number of the document are given, then either the full text of the document (usually in Dutch) was printed, or, an abstract of the document (in Indonesian) provided. There was an introductory essay on the administration of the haj during the Dutch period. See, Arsip National Republic Indonesia, *Biro Perjalanan Haji Di Indonesia Masa Kolonial, Agen Herklots dan Firma AlSegoff & Co*, (Jakarta: Author, 2001).

as Haji Mohd Rafidi Hj Ibrahim, Manager of Public and Media Relations, Malayan Pilgrims Corporation's Malaysia (LTH), and Prof. Khazin Mohd Tamrin from the Department of History, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). The main objective of these interviews was to familiarize the researcher with the available sources on the hajj affairs. These interviews are of great interest for this study, particularly in the field of research methodology and literature review.

1.5. Literature Review

The literature reviewed in this study can be classified into five major categories. The first consists of the general works that deal with the coming of Islam in the Malay world and the theories produced for understanding the Islamization process of the region. They also address the interaction between the Malay world and the Hijaz during the colonial era. The work of Syed Naquib Al Attas, for instance, provided this study with a framework of understanding the Islamization process and its influence in the region,⁶ and that of Fred R. Von Der Mehden⁷ addressed the changing pattern of interaction and dissemination of Islamic ideas and thoughts from the Middle East to the Malay world.

The second category includes travel accounts such as that of Richard Burton, J.F. Keane and Snouck Hurgronje.⁸ These accounts give a first-hand information, but they are affected by personal interest and understanding of their authors, to the mechanism of the hajj and the conditions of the Malay hajjis in the Hijaz.

⁶ Syed Mohd Naquib Al Attas, *Preliminary Statement on a General History of the Islamization of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago*, (Kuala Lumpur : Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1969).

⁷ Fred R. Von Der Mehden, *Two Worlds of Islam, Interaction between Southeast Asia and the Middle East*, (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1993).

⁸ Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*.

Other prominent works of colonial officials that address the issue of the hajj in the Malay Archipelago are that of William Marsden, Stamford Raffles and John Crawford,⁹ which perceived the hajj as an important device for transmitting anti-colonial sentiment in the Malay world, and the Malay hajjis as possessors of supernatural power and political agitation against colonial rule. They also painted Makkah as a source of threat to political existence of European colonial forces in the region.

However, this status of fear was gradually changed after the publication of the famous book of Snouck Hurgornje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*. Snouck criticized the prevalent terms in colonial literature that described the Malay hajjis as “priest” and arch enemies of colonial forces. He denied the claims that all Malay hajjis were active in mobilizing the masses against colonial rule and tried to give a better understanding of the hajj mechanism in the region.

The third category includes the periodicals, newspapers, magazines and journals issued in the first half of the twentieth century and kept in various archival centres and libraries in Malaysia and Indonesia. This category gives useful information on the historical experience of the Malay hajjis and their socio-political, economic and religious impacts in the Malay world. In its publications of 1930s *Saudara* magazine, for instance, criticized the hajj brokers, *Syeikh Haji*, who turned a “blind eye” towards the oppressions, exploitations and problems encountered by the Malay hajjis in their

⁹ John Crawford, *The History of Indian Archipelago: Containing an Account of the Manners, Arts, Languages, Religions, Institutions, and Commerce of Its Inhabitants*, vol. 3 (London: Frank Cass, 1967), William Marsden, *The History of Sumatera*, (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 3rd edn., 1983), Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java* vol. 1, (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988).

round trip journey to the Hijaz or during their stay in the holy places.¹⁰ Other periodicals such as *Genuine Islam* focused on the promotion of the hajj and steamship services in the Malay world. It also dealt with hajj concessions and conditions of the Malays in Makkah.¹¹ Journals such as *al-Ikhwān* and *Pilehan Timoer*,¹² directed their attention towards the development of national awareness and Malay education. The Malay students in Makkah subscribed to journals such as *Tunas Melayu* and *Idaran Zaman* and became very active in voicing their grievances and opinions on various matters that concerned their societies.¹³ The promotion of modernist and revivalist Islamic ideas in the Malay world were addressed by magazines such as *al-Imam* founded by Sayyid Syeikh al-Hādī in Singapore and *al-Munir* founded by Haji Abdullāh Aīmad in the Netherlands East Indies.¹⁴ All these magazines provided this study with an important reflection on the Malay world during the first half of the twentieth century.

The fourth category consists of the publications of western scholars such as A. H. Johns, William R. Roff, Matheson and Milner who addressed the issue of the hajj in the nineteenth century from a western perspective.¹⁵ The present writer does not deny the contribution of these western scholars in the documentation of the historical

¹⁰ Sayyid Syeikh al-Hadi, "Kapal Haji dan Kesengsaraan Penumpang-Penumpang Didalamnya, Terhadap Kepada Yang Berkuasa" *Saudara*, 11 November 1936, Pulau Pinang: The Jelutong Press.

¹¹ See for example, *Genuine Islam*, eds. M.A. A. Siddiqui, Syed Ibrahim Omar Al-Sagoff, vol.11, no.5, November 1937, Singapore: All-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society.

¹² See for example, *Pilehan Timoer*, vol.1, no.2, November 1927, pp. 23-24. Cited in M Sidin Ahmad Ishak, Mohammad Redzuan Othman, *The Malays in the Middle East*, (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 2000).

¹³ See for example, *Tunas Melayu*, no. 1, vol. 1, 12 February 1913, p. 15.

¹⁴ For further discussion on these reformist-based journals see the chapter five of this thesis, pp. 127-129.

¹⁵ A. H. Johns, "Sufism as a Category in Indonesian Literature and History" *Journal of Southeast Asia History*, vol.II, (1961):10-23, William R. Roff, *The Origin of Malay Nationalism*, (Kuala Lumpur:Oxford University Press, 2nd edn.,1994).

dimensions of the hajj in the Malay world, but rather argues that some parts of their research approaches may not be in harmony with actual situations.¹⁶

In his prominent work on the conduct of the hajj from Malaya,¹⁷ William R. Roff discusses the British policies toward the Malay hajjis and highlights the role played by Abdul Majid Zainuddin, the first Malay pilgrimage officer, while M. B. McDonnell investigates the pattern, politics, health and welfare of the modern hajj conduct in Malaysia.¹⁸ Various aspects of the Malay conduct of the hajj have also been studied by Vredenburg who focused on the relevant colonial policies on the hajj,¹⁹ and discussed its impact in the Netherlands East Indies.

The nineteenth century Dutch colonial policies were discussed by Steenbrink in his work on the contacts and conflicts between Christianity and Indonesian Muslim. He gave an inner sight to the role of Karrel Frederick Holle, C. Snouck Hurgronje and Godard Arent Hazeu who formulated the Dutch government policies on Islam and Muslim activities in the Netherlands East Indies. He showed how these figures

¹⁶ The work of Matheson and Milner, *Perceptions of the Hajj Five Malay Text* examines five Malay accounts of the hajj. Of the five texts three focused on hajj, Munshi Abdullah's *Pelayaran Ka-Judah*, Harun Aminurrashid's *Chatetan ka Tanah Suchi* and H. M. Jajuli's *Satu Perjalanan Pendek yang Mengesankan*. See, V. Matheson and A.C. Milner, *Perceptions of the Hajj Five Malay Texts*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies: 1984). The analysis of Matheson and Milner of the account of Munshi Abdullah on the hajj needs to be revisited and addressed from an Islamic perspective that will accommodate its spiritual and historical context. The writers commented that Munshi Abdullah's account lack description on rites of the hajj. In fact he never did the pilgrimage because the hajj season was still four months away. Abdullah arrived in Makkah around 11-14 Sha'nb'En 1270 A.H / 9-12 May 1854, and merely performed the *Numrah al mufrada* before his sudden death. In fact, his account of the hajj ended with his arrival in Makkah when he died there in 1854. See for instance, Raimy Che Ross, "Munshi Abdullah's Voyage to Mecca: a Preliminary Introduction and Annotated Translation" In *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 28. no. 80. (United Kingdom: Carfax Publishing, Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2000), p.182.

¹⁷ William R. Roff, "The Conduct of the Hajj from Malaya, and the First Malay Pilgrimage Officer", *SARI*, Occasional Paper no. 1, (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Malay Language Literature and Culture, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1975).

¹⁸ M. B. McDonnell, "The Conduct of the Hajj from Malaysia and its Socio-Economic Impact on Malay Society: a Descriptive and Analytical Study, 1860-1981," (Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia University, 1986).

¹⁹ Jacob, Vredenburg, "The Hadjdj" *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land-en Volkendunde*, 1962.

influenced the government policies toward Islam and changed the attitude of their superiors toward Muslims.²⁰

The fifth category comprises a series of works done by Southeast Asian scholars on the hajj and its impact in the Malay world,²¹ such as the pioneer work of Deliar Noer on modernist Muslim movement in Indonesia in the first half of the twentieth century.²² In this work, Noer discusses the emergence of the modernist movements in Indonesia and highlights the role of the Malay Muslim activists who received their education in Makkah and Madinah, and how they mobilized the support of the local masses against Dutch colonial rule. Noer's work is important in the sense that it provides this study with the biographies of the key Malay hajjis who contributed to the dissemination of the reformist ideas, and the reshaping of the religious and political thought in the region such as, Haji A'ímad Da'ílÉn (1868-1923), the founder of *Muhammadiyah* organization in Indonesia.

Another important work is that of Mohammad Redzuan Othman studying the Middle Eastern influence on the development of religious and political thought in Malay society during the last half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth

²⁰ Karel Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950*, trans. Jan Steenbrink, Henry Jansen, (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Editions Rodopi B.V., 1993)

²¹ See for instance, Abdul Kadir Din, "Economic Implications of Moslem Pilgrimage from Malaysia", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 4 no. 1, June 1982, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1982), Abd Rahim Md Nor, "Economic Development and the Hajj: Preliminary Observation from Asia with Special Reference to Malaysia" In *Development and the Muslims*, ed. Kadir Hj Din, The Third International Islamic Geographical Conference, (Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1993), Zamakhsyari Dhoffier, "The Economic Effect on Indonesia of the Hajj" *PRISMA*. no. 3, (1985).

²² Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942*, (Singapore and Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973).

century.²³ It also paid special attention to the relationship between the Malay world and the Hijaz, and examined the contact between the two regions and its impact on various aspects of the Malay life. Some chapters of this Ph.D. work were developed and published in a book entitled *The Malays in the Middle East*.²⁴ Both the dissertation and the book focused on the political and intellectual impacts of the Middle East in the region and paid less attention to other aspects of the Malay life.

Azyumardi Azra's work on the transmission of Islamic reformism to Indonesia²⁵ deals with the complex network of the Malay 'ulamÉ' and their role in transmitting Islamic ideas and thoughts to the Malay society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It gives a background of the role of the hajj and the Malay hajjis in transmitting the ideas of *islÉh* and *tajdÉd* in the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of twentieth century Malay world.

The work of Mohd Salleh Awang²⁶ and Nabihah Hasan addresses the historical experience of the Malay hajjis and focused on the hajj preparation in Malaya such as the choice of *muġawwif*, mode of transportation to the Hijaz and all difficulties endured by the hajjis to perform the hajj as well as the historical development of the hajj institution in Malaysia. On the other hand, the joint work of Anizah Salbini deals with the history of the Malay pilgrimage brokers or *Sheikh Haji* in Malaysia with special reference to the role of some distinguished Arab family that was involved in

²³ Mohamad Redzuan Othman, "Middle Eastern Influence on the Development of Political and Social Thought in Malay Society, 1880-1940" (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1994).

²⁴ M Sidin Ahmad Ishak, Mohammad Redzuan Othman, *The Malays in the Middle East*.

²⁵ Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII*, (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Mizan, 1998).

²⁶ Mohd Salleh Awang, *Haji Di Semenanjung Malaysia Sejarah dan Perkembangannya Sejak Tahun 1300-1405H (1896-1985M)* (Kuala Terengganu: Syarikat Percetakan Islam Terengganu Sdn. Bhd., 1986).