

ECHO

of Islam

The 2023 Hajj Motto:
Hajj; Qur'anic Transformation,
Islamic Convergence, and Support to
Honorable Quds



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واعتصموا بحبل الله

همگی به ریسمان الهی چنگ زنید و پراکنده نشوید
And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah (i.e. this Qur'an)





In Collaboration with
the International Com-
munications Department
of the Supreme Leader's
Representative in Hajj and
Pilgrimage Affairs



Hajj; An Evolutionary Programs of Islam

4

The Importance of Hajj from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini (RA)

6

Excerpts from Supreme Leader's Message to Hajj Pilgrims and Speech for the Hajj Authorities of I. R. Iran

7

Abrahamic Hajj Rituals and the Elevation of the Position of Muslims in the World

10

Abrahamic Hajj; A Global Congregation for Practicing Ethics and Tolerance

14

The Various Dimensions of Hajj

16

Abrahamic Hajj and Its Role in New Islamic Civilization

22

Abrahamic Hajj from the Viewpoint of Contemporary Islamic Scholars

25

The Importance of Hajj from the Viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an, the Messenger of Allah, and the Infallible Imams (AS)

32

HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF HAJJ

36

The Role of Hajj in Objectifying Proximity Among Islamic Schools of Thought

38

Hajj and Islamic Awakening

42

Hajj from the Viewpoint of Non-Muslim Elites

45

The Abrahamic Haj and the Global Future Paradigm

49



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Editorial

Hajj; An Evolutionary Program of Islam

■ Hojjat al-Islam Mohammad Asadi Movahed

The history of Hajj can be linked with the history of human life. According to the Holy Qur'an, the first house that was built for people is the Ka'ba in Mecca, which from the very beginning of man's life was among the rituals of monotheists and prophets of God from Adam, peace be upon him, to the last of the prophets, who have always traveled to that land for circumambulation and performing Hajj rituals.

Hajj is one of the evolutionary programs of Islam, in which a single person, by stepping into it and fulfilling it sincerely, reaches the position of closeness to God. Hajj is so important that it is one of the five pillars of Islam.

Hajj plays an important role in the personal and social life of Muslims, which can have important effects. Hajj is a special covenant of God among His servants and it is the full crystallization of the truths and values of the school and thoughts of Islam.

If we want to express the purpose of Hajj in one sentence, we should say that the purpose of Hajj is to reach God and to move according to God's will throughout life, and according to the interpretation of the narration, to achieve the good and prosperity of this world and the hereafter.

But to put it a bit more extensively, the fruit and result of Hajj in the individual sphere is being forgiven, becoming heavenly, and spiritual and moral transformation, when a Haji consciously goes to the

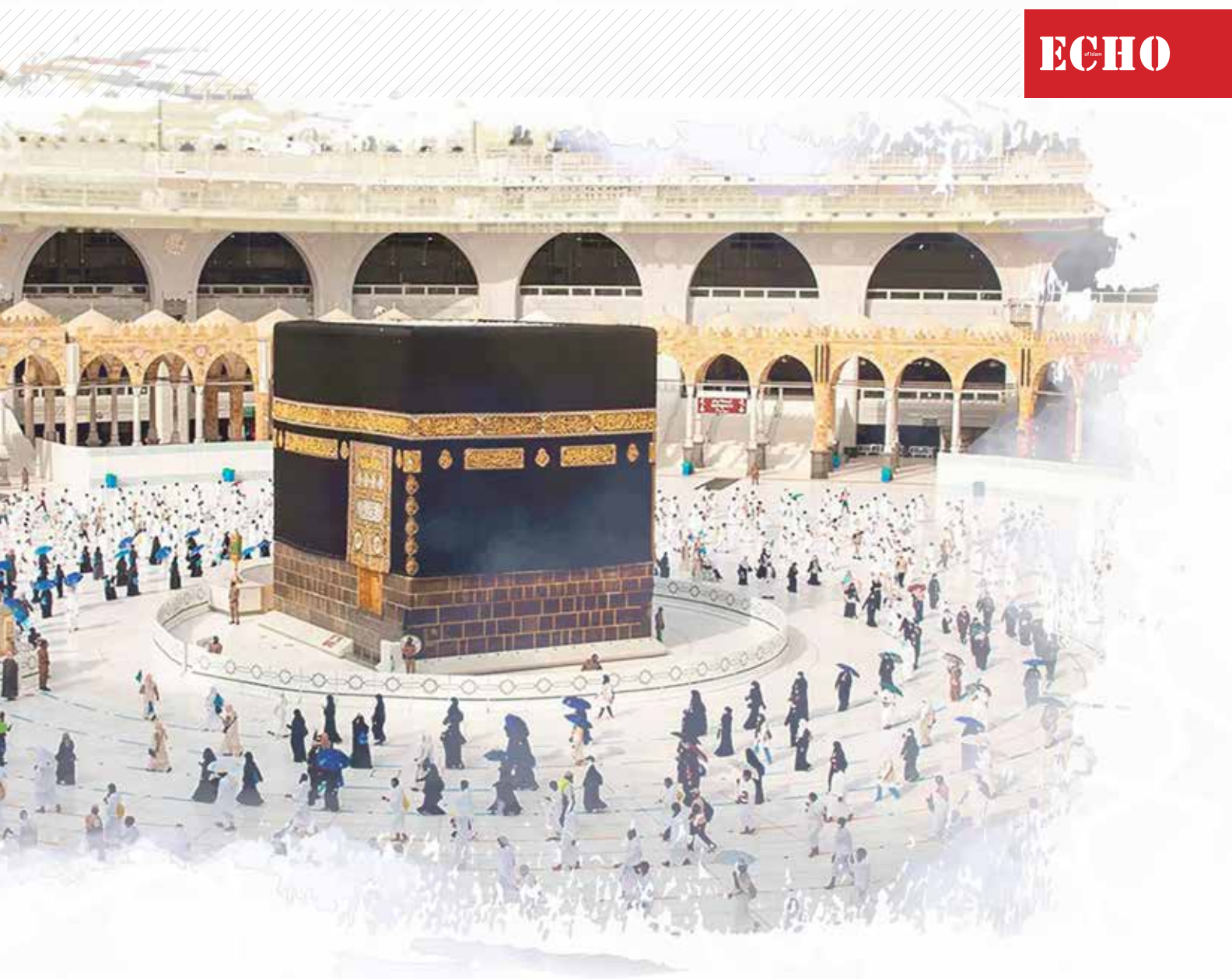
Land of Revelation, with the purity of his soul from human vices and bad morals, with a new look and view to life, by the inspiration of individuals such as Ibrahim Khalil (AS), prophet Mohammad the Messenger of God (PBUH.), Imams of the Baqi' (AS) and Hazrat Fatima (SA) will find a fresh and new life, and as a result, he/she transfers this spiritual and moral Evolution to others.

Hajj has many blessings and benefits for the Islamic Ummah in political and social aspects, it shows the solidarity of Muslims and their authority, if the Hajj is used and benefited properly, the rulers, scholars, and intellectuals of Muslim countries can sit together every year and make decisions to solve the problems and progress of Islamic societies. If this happens, it is no longer necessary for Muslims to look to Western societies and ask centers and organizations such as the United Nations, which is dependent on the West and is arrogant, to decide about their fate and problems.

Therefore, when the Qur'an calls upon us in verse 27 of Surah Al-Hajj:

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ

In this verse, Allah is talking about benefits, not a single benefit, that is, if the Hajj rituals are per-



formed correctly, there are many benefits for the Islamic Ummah in personal, moral, social, economic, political, and military fields.

Since Hajj is a comprehensive act of worship and entails changes in all moral, behavioral, and social aspects of the pilgrims and considering that the Kaaba and Hajj are "the guidance of the worlds" and the light ray of Islam spreads from there to the whole world, therefore, it is possible for us to understand the quote of the supreme leader of the revolution very well, that if Muslims get to know the true Islam and the Abrahamic Hajj next to the House of God, they can well establish the new Islamic civilization and take steps to realize it.

The progressive laws of the Qur'an, strengthening faith, science, and Islamic ethics, confronting

oppression and corruption and the creation of religious and popular governments, paying attention to the collective wisdom, unity, and solidarity, paying attention to rationality and wisdom, scientific development, flourishing economic, having strong and solid international relations are the characteristics of modern Islamic civilization And Haji in Mecca can become more familiar with the Qur'an and Islam, and strengthen the foundations of his ethics and faith and let the shout of acquittal be raised from the polytheists and the wrongdoers.

And by taking baggage from the Hajj collection for scientific development, flourishing economy, honor and greatness of Muslims and in a single word, to take effective steps to create a new Islamic civilization.



The Importance of Hajj from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini

Hajj provides the best rendezvous for Muslims, where they become acquainted with their brothers and sisters from all over the world, and while abstaining from disputes and discarding all hindrances, they demonstrate sincere Islamic brotherhood.

(Sahifeh-ye Imam, Vol. 20, P. 324)

Hajj is meant for seeking proximity to God Almighty and man's connection to the owner of the House. Hajj is not merely confined to certain rituals, movements, acts, and utterances. Man cannot get close to God through hollow and soulless words, utterances, and acts.

(Sahifeh-ye Imam, Vol. 21, P. 74)

Hajj is the center of all knowledge on God, from which the essence of the policy of Islam with regard to all aspects of life must be sought. Hajj is the manifestation of all the loving scenes of man's life and the perfect society in the world. All the rituals of Hajj are the rituals of life.

(Sahifeh-ye Imam, Vol. 21, P. 76)

All brothers and sisters in faith should bear in mind that one of the most important philosophies of Hajj is to foster understanding and to solidify brotherhood among Muslims.

(Sahifeh-ye Imam, Vol. 10, P. 43)

Hajj is the congregation that trains Muslims and teaches them the monotheistic way of life. Hajj is the mirror that reflects and demonstrates the tangible and intangible talents and capabilities of Muslims.

(Sahifeh-ye Imam, Vol. 21, P. 74)

Hajj is not a trade journey. It is a travel towards God Almighty. While you are going to God's House, whatever you do must be divine; just like the divine travelers toward God such as divine prophets and our religious leaders (the infallible Imams).

(Sahifeh-ye Imam, Vol. 10, P. 127)



Excerpts from Supreme Leader's Message to Hajj Pilgrims and Speech for the Hajj Authorities of I. R. Iran

Praise God, the Almighty and Wise, for once again having made the blessed month of Dhu al-Hijjah a meeting place for the Muslim nations and for having made this path of His grace and mercy available to them. The Islamic nation can once again observe its unity and harmony in this clear, timeless mirror, and [take this opportunity to] turn away from factors that lead to disunity and division.

One of the basic principles of Hajj that both Hajj pilgrims and those who serve them should

pay attention to is the importance of this congregation (Hajj) in the Islamic system and what is the importance of the acts of worship that the pilgrims perform. The importance of Hajj must be well perceived.

The unity of the Muslim Ummah is one of the two basic foundations of the Hajj Pilgrimage. When combined with spirituality and the remembrance of God (dhikr), which comprises the other basic foundation of this religious duty that is so full of secrets, they can lead the Islamic Um-



mah to the heights of honor and bliss.

Islamic awakening is the first reason that the elites and much of the general population in Islamic countries are now aware of the great wealth of their religious understanding and spiritual heritage, and its significance and value. Today, liberalism and communism, the most significant contributions of Western civilization, no longer have the same appeal they did 100 or 50 years ago. The credibility of capital-driven Western democracy is being seriously questioned, and Western thinkers admit they are at a theoretical and practical loss. By observing this situation, young people, intellectuals, scientists, and religious scholars within the world of Islam are able to gain new perspectives on the wealth and value of their own knowledge, as well as on the mainstream political currents in their own countries. This is the "Islamic Awakening" that we continually refer to.

There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an about Hajj, and each of them specifies a particular point. But there are two verses that refer to the benefits of Hajj. One of them is this noble verse of Surah Ma'ida, which says: **جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ** "الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَامًا لِلنَّاسِ" (Allah has made the Ka'bah, the Sacred House, a (means of) sustenance for

mankind; 5: 97) This means, if the absence of Hajj the Islamic Ummah would have collapsed.

The other verse says: **وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ** (And proclaim the Hajj to all the people: they will come to you on foot and on lean camels, coming from distant places, that they may witness the benefits for them...; Surah Al-Hajj: 27 and 28). (The verse specifies that the Islamic Ummah should come from all corners of the world for Hajj, to see their interests with their own eyes and to contemplate on them.

It has been narrated that Imam Sadiq (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was asked if these benefits mean the benefits of the hereafter, that is, divine reward and the like. And the Imam (AS) replied that it includes both worldly and otherworldly rewards.

The Islamic Ummah receives benefits in Hajj that cannot be compared with any other factor. That means such benefits cannot be achieved except through the congregation of Hajj. It is possible only with this universal get-together. Well, one of the worldly benefits of Hajj is the improvement of the level of civilization in the Islamic world, because of the existing understanding and coordination. There are some things that are very apparent, but there are also some things that remain hidden from human eyes and one of them is this case.

The afterlife benefits of Hajj are heart-related and include establishing closeness to and strengthening one's relationship with the Almighty God, instilling sincerity in action; cleansing the heart from everything that is contrary to the remembrance of God. These are the things that must happen in Hajj. This Ihram, this Tawaf, this prayer, this Sa'y, this Arafat, this Mash'ar, the rituals in Mina, etc.; all of them are enlightening gates towards the world of spirituality and the unseen world.

A fundamentally important point about Hajj is that Islam practically shows that it does not approve of these distinctions that exist in the world and in different countries; such as racial discrimination, geographic discrimination, and class discrimination. This is a very important



point to note.

Islamic self-awareness has created an astounding, miraculous phenomenon in the very heart of the Islamic world, and this poses serious problems for the Arrogant Powers. The name of this phenomenon is “Resistance,” and its reality is manifested in the power of faith, struggling on the path of God, and relying on Him.

The world is currently witness to a successful and proud model of power and political Islamic governance in Islamic Iran. The stability, independence, progress, and honor of the Islamic Republic is a great meaningful phenomenon that can attract the thoughts and feelings of every conscious Muslim. The inabilities and at times mistaken actions of the officials of this system — mistakes which have postponed the attainment of all the blessings of Islamic governance — have never been able to shake the solid foundations or to stop the firm steps that have been taken in the path of the material and spiritual progress [of the Islamic Republic], as these are inspired by the basic principles of this system.

The situation in Palestine is one of the mani-

festations of this amazing phenomenon that has been able to bring down the rebellious Zionist regime from its state of aggression and howling to a defensive, passive stance and impose on it the current, obvious array of political, security, and economic problems. Other brilliant examples of Islamic Resistance can be clearly seen in Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and some other places.

Our venerable Imam stressed, and following in his footsteps, I also emphasize that you should definitely participate in the prayers of Masjid al-Haram - the prayers of the Sunnis - participate in gatherings, talk to other pilgrims, and be in touch with them. Yes, there is opposition to such things, we know that. There are obstacles, but the person who obstructs is a human being, you are also human being and you can have conversations.

One of the honors of the Islamic Republic (of Iran) is to have these capacities recognized.

May God Almighty accept the Hajj of all pilgrims from all over the world and grant them success, honor, and respect.



Abrahamic Hajj Rituals and the Elevation of the Position of Muslims in the World

By: Hojjat al-Islam Abdul Fattah Navvab

Representative of the Supreme Leader in Hajj and Pilgrimage Affairs

Hajj rituals are one of the biggest acts of worship in the world. In this great congregation, Muslims from all over the world gather and perform certain rituals and practices. This is done by the order of God, who says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ «اسْتَطَاعَ اِلَيْهِ سَبِيْلًا» (And it is the duty of mankind toward Allah to make pilgrimage to the House—for those who can afford the journey to it..., 3:97)

The presence of Muslims from all over the Islamic states in the Land of Revelation and the performance of the Abrahamic Hajj rites, along with worshipping and gaining enlightenment and spirituality and the hereafter reward, has many worldly benefits for Muslims.

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ،

لِّيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ (And proclaim the Hajj to all the people: they will come to you on foot and on lean camels, coming from distant places..., 22:27-28)

One of the various benefits of Hajj, which is vitally important for Muslims, is its political dimension. In today's world, Muslims are present as one of the largest human groups consisting of dozens of countries with more than one billion people. It is natural that Muslims, with this huge population and having many natural facilities, along with benefiting from the life-giving teachings of Islam, seek to gain a worthy place in today's world. Elevating the position of Muslims in today's world is very necessary and it is necessary to use the many levers available in it. And Hajj is one of these levers. And Hajj is one of these levers. Hajj rites can improve the

position of Muslims in the world in various ways. Here are some of the most important ones.

1. Hajj and strengthening social solidarity

Social solidarity and cohesion are the feeling of community members' integration, friendly and affectionate social relations, and group interactions based on common and coherent values (Niyazi, 2007, P. 6). It is obvious that the consistency of any society and its movement towards excellence depends on this factor. Among other things, the Islamic nation is naturally exposed to divisions and separations due to the existence of ethnicities, races, geographical regions, cultures, habits, and tastes. The growth of these differences breaks the greatness of the Islamic nation. Meanwhile, Hajj rituals can play a prominent role in strengthening the cohe-



sion of Islamic society.

Religious rituals make a community the center of unity, and it can extend its jurisdiction to other communities and become a wider and more powerful territory. Based on this, Hajj can heal natural, artificial, and imposed separations by creating moral agreements and requirements with a sense of harmony and trust. Imam Ali (AS) in his words, while expressing the philosophy of some of the Islamic regulations, says about Hajj: «فَرَضَ اللَّهُ: تَعَالَى... وَ الْحَجَّ تَقْوِيَةً لِلدِّينِ», which means the philosophy of Hajj is to strengthen religion. It means that with the gathering of Hajj,

the relations of Muslims become stronger and the faith of Muslims becomes stronger, and by this means, Islam becomes stronger. (Motahhari, 2012, Vol. 25, P. 48). The main purpose of the enactment of Hajj is that Muslims gather under the banner of the Kaaba as a single people and a single nation with the same determination (Ibid., P. 49).

The crowd present at the Hajj ceremony, not only may not have the same thoughts and tastes, they even have different beliefs in some cases, but paying attention to the transcendental essence and moving in the path of divine worship, they move on a single

path and towards a single goal.

2-Hajj and strengthening social dynamics

Human societies can be divided into two separate categories: static society and dynamic society. It is a dynamic society that is constantly changing and evolving; Social mobility and class mobility are relatively easily realized in it; Critical thinking, innovation, and even deviation from social norms are abundant; New ideas and young people are considered the center of social activity, and the ever-changing life of society makes everyone struggle (Ogburn and Nimkoff, 1978). Dynamic societies have

good growth and development compared to static societies. In Islamic societies, Hajj can play a positive role in the social dynamics of Islamic society in various ways:

A. From the moment people register for Hajj to the time they return home after performing Hajj, there is a wave of activity and effort. It is not only the pilgrims who are involved in this pilgrimage but a large part of the society is involved in it. In Iran, the Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization, pilgrimage and tourism companies, caravan managers, ground and air transport companies, airports and passenger terminals, and many others deal with Hajj. Also, markets, hotels, clothing manufacturers, etc., family members and relatives, and friends of pilgrims are involved in this spiritual journey. It can be seen that the annual Hajj entails the dynamism and effort of a large part of Islamic society.

B. The government organizing Hajj and Hajj organizations of Islamic countries are always trying to organize Hajj better than in the past and in the best way. Therefore, every year, they formulate new plans and implement new programs. Anyone who revisits Hajj after a few years will see the change and improvement in the quality of its management and implementation.

C. Hajj practices and rituals are full of effort and activ-

ity. From the beginning of the journey to the land of revelation to the presence in the Miqat for Ihram, moving to Mecca and Masjid al-Haram, Tawaf, Sa'y, Wuquf, Rami, sacrifice, etc., all are associated with activity and dynamics. Dynamics and movement are mixed with the spirit of Hajj and there is no meaning in standing still. In addition, each of the Hajj rites contains secrets and concepts, the accuracy of which causes the dynamics of the minds and souls of the pilgrims.

D. Hajj makes people move and dynamic. People's understanding of servitude, efforts for the hereafter, and efforts to enrich the world for the happiness of people in this world and the hereafter, are all affected by performing Hajj.

3-Hajj and the representation and confirmation of the collective identity of the people

In sociological terms, identity is a set of important social, cultural, psychological, biological, and historical features and characteristics, which applies to the members of a group in a similar way and talks about their unity or similarity, and distinguishes them from other groups and it differentiates the people belonging to them (Altaei, 2017, P. 139). As individuals have their own identities, groups, and communities also have their

own identity, which is interpreted as "collective identity".

In Islamic society, common religious beliefs and practices have given Muslims a special identity and distinguished them from other identities. Hajj can be mentioned among those common religious practices. One of the favorite issues of sociologists of religion about Hajj is: How do people under the influence of Hajj renew their identity and personality? (Haidari, 2014, P. 33).

According to experts, when people with different characteristics but with common feelings come together, this gathering preserves and stabilizes their collective identity. Religious rituals that create a collective identity can maintain, expand and strengthen this identity (Hamilton, 2009).

4-Hajj and strengthening self-confidence and self-esteem of Muslims

Hajj is an extract and example of Islamic society all over the world, and in a way, it is the crystallization of Islamic society in one location. Hajj is the manifestation of the greatness of Islam and the manifestation of the power and capability of Muslims on the path of achieving honor in the world. The presence of millions of Muslims from all corners of the earth in the Hajj rituals and their huge gatherings in Mecca, Masjid al-Haram, and Mawaqif, along

with the awareness of the global view of Islam, has the capacity to make them aware of their power and status; To give them self-confidence in overcoming every demonic power and to give them the self-belief that they are able to achieve the honor and pride that God has promised them in the shadow of unity and solidarity and using the talents and facilities of Islamic countries and societies. to obtain in this way, God also helps them because:

فَإِنَّ يَدَ اللَّهِ مَعَ الْجَمَاعَةِ (Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 127) Indeed, God's [helping] hand is with (on) the congregation [of believers].

In fact, when pilgrims of different nationalities, white and black, and with different languages, and social customs, gather in one place and at the same time and with a single dress, and they all perform customs together in a certain way. They do it every year, this can raise the morale of the Ummah to realize the lofty ideals of Islam and face oppression, disbelief, colonialism, and tyranny. The fact that the Almighty God has ordered the gathering of all Muslims at this point, in a set of certain days is so that Muslim people can find themselves next to each other; And in a wider dimension, as a result of the gathering of Muslim nations, the feeling of honor and greatness will prevail over everyone (Jami of the Authors, 1393, p. 74). With the increase in the self-esteem of Muslims in the shadow of the great rituals of Hajj, their position in the world is also improved.



Abrahamic Hajj; A Global Congregation for Practicing Ethics and Tolerance

Dr. Mohammad Mahdi Imanipour, research scholar on international cultural issues



Peace and tranquility within the context of ethical coexistence is the most outstanding issue that has always been man's concern. The formation of the United Nations Organization and the extraterritorial international institutions affiliated with it, has been one of the measures adopted by the modern world to break and transcend geographical, religious, class, etc. boundaries so that humanity can achieve peace and tranquility and a world free from violence. However, after the passage of years and despite the formation of numerous extra-territorial international institutions, we continue to witness the outbreak of conflicts and fierce wars in different geographical regions. It, thus, seems that today's man, more than anything else, is in need of the restora-

tion of spirituality and the growth of religiosity in order to reach a certain level of peace and tranquility on planet Earth.

When we take a close look at the cultural, social, religious, and historical customs of the nations, we can confidently say that the gigantic Abrahamic Hajj Congregation - which is several thousand years old and the religion of Islam considers it an obligation and duty for Muslims with physical, financial and territorial capabilities - has a special superiority with regard to promoting peace and tolerance, avoiding violence, and a collective practice for faithful living with the aim of achieving tangible and intangible peace and tranquility in the human world.

Every year, this civilizational model provides a field of maneuver for the Muslims of the world, in which paying attention to the rights of fellow human beings and all surrounding living beings is one of its basic and very important principles, and committing any act - by the pilgrim - that violates the right of a human being or an animal involves fine and compensation.

In fact, during this experience of faithful living, people learn that irrespective of skin color, ethnicity,

land, level of knowledge, wealth, social status, gender, etc., they must be virtuous, moral-oriented, and adhere to the principles of servitude and that the violation of these principles and standards will result in a kind of (financial) punishment that must be paid willingly over a certain time period so that they can remain a pilgrim and finally get a passing grade.

What distinguishes the Abrahamic Hajj of Muslims from other national-religious rituals and ceremonies is the focus of this rite on training ethics-oriented and responsible people who have a sense of responsibility towards their fellow human beings and other living beings. In fact, in addition to paying special attention to respecting the rights of other individuals, one of the most outstanding features of the Abrahamic Hajj is the important issue of protecting the rights of other creatures and living beings.

The fact that every year and at a specific time the people who can afford it must travel to the land of divine revelation from all over the world and perform a set of rituals around a sacred axis is a means to remind them of the necessity of

implementing the two principles of ethics and tolerance towards other beings in all social atmospheres. This is the reason that all those who have had the experience of being present in this sacred ceremony talk about having the feeling of lightness, calmness, and peace, and like a newly born person their conscience is clear for being free from any sort of obligation towards others.

All that has been described about the essence of the Abrahamic Hajj is a reminder for thinkers, scholars, statesmen, and influential people in Islamic societies to take more effective steps toward the globalization and introduction of this precious heritage of the Prophet of mercy and compassion, Muhammad (PBUH). Because, unfortunately, the Islamic world has not made the necessary efforts in introducing this great human heritage and its great capacities for promoting peace and peaceful coexistence, and has not defined a mechanism to introduce it to other nations, religions, and communities.

Hajj is the arena for abiding by the real Islamic lifestyle and submission and attention to the origin of existence. All the reformers of the contemporary world, at least in the past century, have continuously emphasized peace and tolerance as a necessity to achieve salvation.

The emphasis of all dimensions and rituals of this enormous congregation is on the negation of servitude to other than God Almighty and attention to the rights of all living beings, especially fellow human beings. To put it in other words, after going through hundreds of years of war, bloodshed, and violence this



is what today's world emphasizes. Abrahamic religions and all divine prophets, especially Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), have notified this important issue throughout human history. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) considered the main philosophy of his religion to be the perfection of ethical and moral values.

Of course, what has been emphasized in the words of the two imams of the Islamic Revolution regarding Hajj is the development of the "social" and "political" dimensions of these rituals along with their "mystical" and "spiritual" dimensions. Imam Khomeini's emphasis on the "Abrahamic" Hajj and the introduction of the term "Abrahamic-Mohammedan Hajj" was an attempt to explain the importance of making a return to the true essence of Hajj. Struggle against the enemies of humanity and those who trample on the rights of nations and having

compassion and empathy towards the oppressed people are the characteristics of the Abrahamic Hajj. Therefore, Hajj must become the center of unity and awakening of the Islamic world against global arrogance.

To conclude, it seems that designing and implementing a mechanism for presenting a correct image of Hajj and the benefits and advantages of this gigantic congregation at the world level is very necessary and one of the important responsibilities of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). It is also incumbent upon independent activists, government institutions, and non-governmental organizations of Islamic countries to put in all their efforts to globalize the model of a faithful life derived from the rituals of the Abrahamic Hajj and make the implementation of this global mission possible.



The Various Dimensions of Hajj

There are four dimensions associated with this great act of worship all of which are of great importance and benefit.



The Ethical Dimension

The most important philosophy of Hajj is the ethical transformation, which it induces within man. The ritual of ihram entirely removes man from material ostentations, external distinctions, extravagant clothing, and ornaments. By prohibiting pleasures and engaging him in self-rectification - one of the duties of a muhrim (one who is in the state of ihram) - it distances him from the material world and engrosses him in a world of light, purity, and spirituality. Consequently, it causes those

who, in ordinary circumstances, find themselves weighed down by the burden of make-believe distinctions, ranks, and honors, to suddenly feel light, easy, and relaxed.

Subsequently, the performance of the other rituals of Hajj, one after the other, continually brings man closer to his Lord, strengthens his spiritual connection with Him, distances him from his gloomy and sinful past, and guides him towards a bright, luminous, and pure future.

Every step of the Hajj rituals is reminiscent of the events associated with Ibrahim (AS), Isma'il (AS), and his mother Hajar, and personifies before man their self-sacrifice, altruism, and struggle (in the path of Allah). The city of Makkah in general, and the Masjid al-Haram, the Ka'ba, and the place of circumambulation, in particular, bring to mind the memories of the Noble Prophet (PBUH), the holy Imams (AS), and the struggle of the Muslims during the period of early Islam. As a result, this ethical transformation tends to be deeper and more profound such that in every corner of Masjid al-Haram and the city of Makkah, man visualizes the faces of the Noble Prophet (PBUH), Ali (AS), and the other holy Imams, and hears the enthusiastic slogans of their mission.

Indeed, all these together pave the way for an ethical revolution within hearts that are receptive and in a manner that is indescribable, and causes man to turn over a new leaf and

opens up a new chapter in his life. It is not without reason that we read in our traditions that one, who performs Hajj, completely and perfectly becomes free of sins just as he was on the day when his mother gave him birth.” (يَخْرُجُ مِنْ ذُنُوبِهِ كَهَيْئَتِهِ يَوْمَ) وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ - Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 99, P. 26

Truly, Hajj is a second birth for Muslims - a birth, which is the beginning of a new human life.

It is needless to mention that these effects and benefits, and those that we shall mention later, are neither for those who only content themselves with its exterior leaving aside its core nor for those, who only view it as a means for recreation, tourism, pretension, dissemblance and acquiring personal material items – never acquainting themselves with its spirit and essence. Their share would only be that which they had set out to achieve!

The Political Dimension

As has been stated by one of the renowned Islamic jurists, the Hajj rituals, apart from putting on display the most sincere and profound acts of worship, are also the most effective means for advancing the political objectives of Islam.

The essence of worship is attention towards Allah, while the essence of politics is attention towards the creation of Allah - and these two aspects are observed to be as closely intertwined in Hajj as the yarns in a fabric!

Hajj is an effective factor in establishing unity among the ranks of Muslims.

Hajj is an instrument to combat nationalistic and racial fanaticism and oppose confinement (of the Muslims) within their geographical boundaries.

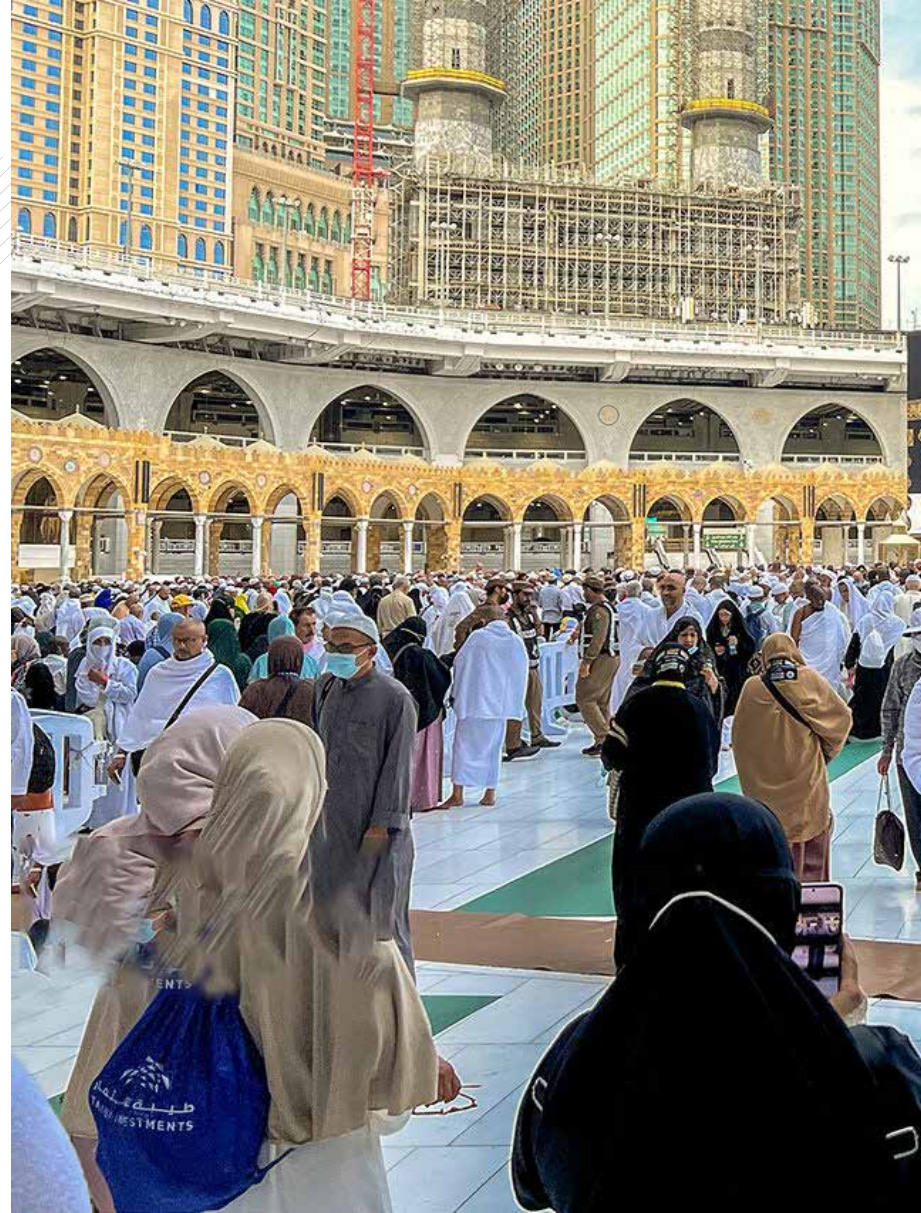
Hajj is a means for eliminating the shackles of censorship and breaking the stranglehold of the oppressive leaderships prevalent in Islamic nations.

Hajj is a tool for transferring news of political affairs of the Islamic nations from one corner of the globe to another, and finally, it is an effective means for breaking the fetters of captivity and colonialism and liberating the Muslims.

Consequently, during the period when oppressive tyrants like those belonging to the Umayyad and the Abbasid dynasties ruled over the Islamic regions and kept every kind of interaction between the various segments of the Muslims under close scrutiny in order to crush any kind of liberty-seeking uprising, the advent of the season of Hajj was an opening towards freedom, interaction between various segments of the great Islamic society and discussion of various political issues.

One can see why the Commander of the Faithful (AS), expounding the philosophy that lay behind every act of worship in connection with Hajj, states: "Allah has ordained (the rituals of) Hajj for the purpose of strengthening the religion." (الْحَجَّ تَقْوِيَةً لِلدِّينِ) - Nahj al-Balaghah, Saying 252

Again, it is not without rea-



son that an eminent non-Muslim statesman has stated: Woe unto the Muslims if they do not perceive the meaning (and significance) of Hajj and woe unto their enemies if they (the Muslims) ever happen to perceive it.

Even in Islamic traditions, Hajj has been regarded as the Jihad of the feeble ones. It is a Jihad in which even the old and weak men and women can join and make a contribution to exhibiting the greatness and grandeur of the Islamic Ummah. By standing in circles around the holy Ka'ba and attesting to Allah's unity and greatness, they cause the hearts of the enemies of Islam to palpitate in trepidation.

The Cultural Dimension

The interaction between the various segments of Islamic society during the season of Hajj can turn out to be the most effective factor for cultural exchanges and the transfer of thoughts and ideas. This is especially so because the grand gathering of Hajj is in reality, a true and natural representation of all the segments of the Muslims of the world (as there is no forced, forged, or artificial factor involved in the selection of those proceeding for Hajj. The pilgrims are individuals who come from all segments, races, and languages associated with the Muslims all over the world, who have gathered under one roof). Thus we read in the traditions: One of the benefits of Hajj is the spread of the



traditions of the Noble Prophet (PBUH) throughout the entire Islamic world.

Hisham ibn Hakam, one of the learned companions of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS) says: I questioned the Imam (AS) about the philosophy that lay behind the performance of Hajj and the circumambulation of the Ka'ba whereupon he replied: "Allah created the servants ... and for the welfare of their worldly and religious affairs, He sent down His commandments for them – one of them being the congregation of the people from the East and the West (for the Hajj rituals). This is, in order to make Muslims get acquainted with one another, become aware of the states of each other, and (so

that) every group transfers its business investments from one city to another ... and so that the memories and traditions of the Noble Prophet (PBUH) become known, and the people bring them to mind and do not forget them." - Wasa'il al-Shia, Vol. 8, P. 9.

It was on this basis that the Muslims, during the suffocating eras in which the tyrannical caliphs and rulers had prohibited them from spreading these rulings, made use of this opportunity (of Hajj) to interact with the Imams G and eminent religious scholars for solving their problems, understanding the rulings of Islam and comprehending the traditions and customs of the Noble Prophet (PBUH).

On the other hand, Hajj possesses the ability to be transformed into a gigantic cultural assembly in which scholars and intellectuals of the Islamic world, come together for a few days in Makkah, propounding their thoughts and exhibiting their creativity before others.

Essentially, one of the great catastrophes is that the boundaries between the Islamic nations become the cause for them to separate from each other, culturally. As a consequence, Muslims of each nation only reflect upon their own selves and their own state of affairs, and this is something that effectively works towards dismembering and dissecting the single Islamic society; indeed, Hajj has the ability to stem this evil outcome.

How beautifully has Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS) stated in that tradition of Hisham ibn Hakam when he said: "If all the people were to be concerned only about their respective countries and the problems existing therein, all of them would suffer destruction, their countries would face ruination, their benefits and welfare would be lost, and realities would become obscured and concealed."

The Financial Dimension

Contrary to what some people imagine, utilizing the great assembly of Hajj for strengthening the financial foundations of the Islamic nations is not inconsistent with the spirit of Hajj. Instead, according to Islamic traditions, it constitutes one of the philosophies for it.

What harm is there if the Muslims in that great gathering, were to lay the foundations of a common and associated Islamic market, and pave the way for commercial transactions amongst themselves in a manner in which neither do their profits enter the pockets of their enemies nor does their economy become dependent upon the others? An act of this type would not be called craving for the world but rather, it would constitute an act of worship and Jihad (in the way of Allah).

In that tradition of Hisham quotes an express reference by Imam Sadiq (AS) made towards this aspect that one of the objectives of Hajj is strengthening the commercial status of the Muslims and facilitating economic association and cooperation among them.

Interpreting the verse "There is no blame on you in seeking bounty from your Lord (يَسْأَلُكَ رَبُّكَ عَنْ بَيْتِ رَبِّكَ) - Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 198 - the Imam (AS) said: The meaning of this verse is seeking livelihood. And when a person comes out of his ihram and completes the Hajj, he should conduct business transactions during the season of Hajj (for instead of being a sin it carries rewards.)"

This meaning is also witnessed in a tradition from Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Reza (AS), which explicitly enumerates the philosophies and objectives underlying the rites of Hajj; in the tradition, the Imam (AS) recites the following verse of the Noble Qur'an: "That they may witness

advantages for them" (لِيَشْهَدُوا لَكُمْ مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ), - Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 28 - a reference to the fact that the verse alludes to the spiritual benefits as well as the material ones - although both of them, from one perspective, can be looked upon as being spiritual in essence.

In short, if this great worship were to be utilized correctly and perfectly, and the pilgrims of the House of Allah, at a time when they are active and their hearts are emotionally ready in that holy land, were to make use of this great opportunity for solving the various problems that plague the Islamic society by establishing various political, cultural and mercantile assemblies, it would surely serve to untie. Perhaps this is why Imam Sadiq (AS) has said: "The religion shall continue to stand as long as the Ka'ba continues to do so." (لَا يَزَالُ (الدِّينُ قَائِمًا مَا قَامَتِ الْكَعْبَةُ - Wasa'il al-Shia, Vol. 8, P. 14.

Imam Ali (AS) too has said: "Fear Allah in the matter of His House (Ka'ba)! Do not desert it for if it is deserted, divine re-prieve shall be taken away from you." (اللَّهُ فِي بَيْتِ رَبِّكَ فَلَا يَخْلُو) (مِنْكُمْ مَا بَقِيْتُمْ فَإِنَّهُ إِن تَرَكْتُمْ لَمْ تَنْظُرُوا) - Nahj al-Balaghah, Letter 47.

Because of the immense significance of the above issue, in the Islamic sources of traditions a separate chapter has been devoted to the ruling that if it were to ever happen that in a particular year, the Muslims decide to refrain from going for Hajj, it would become obligatory upon the Islamic government to send

them to Makkah by means of force!

Hajj, An Important Act of Worship for Human Development

The journey for Hajj is a divine one and, in reality, a great migration; an expansive field for self-development, self-rectification, and the Greater Jihad (Jihad al-Akbar).

The Hajj rituals collectively are an act of worship profoundly associated with the struggle of Ibrahim (AS) his son Isma'il (AS) and his wife Hajar and if we were to remain heedless of this aspect while studying the secrets and objectives of Hajj, many of its rites and rituals would only float before us as enigmas; the solution to this lies in keeping this deep association within our sights during the course of the study.

When we come to the sacrificial grounds in Mina, the innumerable sacrifices performed there leave us amazed and perplexed; basically, is it possible for animal sacrifice to be a part of the rituals associated with an act of worship?

But when we bring to mind the incident of Ibrahim (AS) when he sincerely endeavored to sacrifice his nearest and dearest one in the path of Allah after which the sacrifice at Mina came into existence in the form of a custom, we comprehend the philosophy lying behind it.

Offering sacrifice, in reality, implies one's total disregard for everything else when striving in the way of Allah and is a demonstration of cleansing one's heart

from everything other than Allah. The reformative and educative effects of these rites can be derived in sufficient measure only when the entire scenario of the sacrifice of Isma'il (AS) and the spiritual state of the father and the son leading up to the sacrifice is incarnated before man's eyes and this spiritual state casts its influence upon him.

When we proceed towards Jamarat (three stone pillars, which the pilgrims strike with pebbles – each one to be struck with seven pebbles – in a special ritual of Hajj), the rituals there appear enigmatic and inexplicable to us and we are given to wonder as to what could be the idea behind stoning a lifeless stone pillar and what problem could such an act possibly solve?

However, when we bring to mind the struggle of Ibrahim (AS) – the champion of monotheism – against the whisperings of Satan, who appeared before him on three occasions – each time seeking to weaken his resolve and distract him from the Jihad al-Akbar (The Greater Jihad) – and on each occasion Ibrahim (AS) repelled him by means of stones, these rites appear more meaningful and comprehensible to us.

These rituals convey the meaning that: Throughout your lives, all of you too, are in confrontation with the whisperings of Satan during the Jihad-e-Akbar (Greatest Battle), and until you do not stone them and drive them away, you shall never be victorious. If you desire that Al-

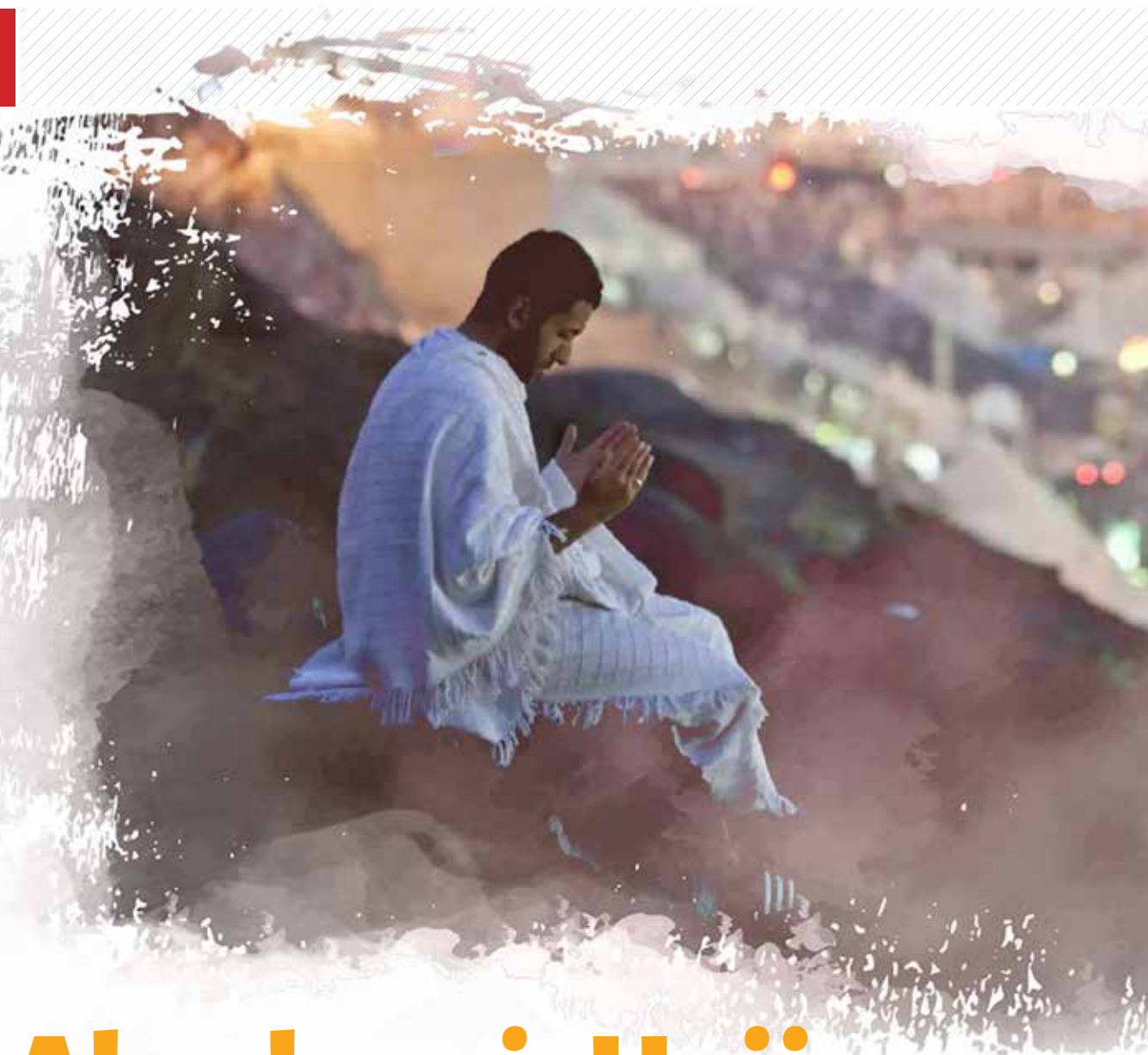
lah, just as He had sent His salutations upon Ibrahim (AS) and made his name and doctrine eternal, should also cast His look of grace and favor upon you, then you must follow his (AS) path too.

When we arrive at Safa and Marwah where we observe the people repeatedly moving to and fro between one small mountain and another even smaller one without getting anything – at times walking and at times running – we are surely overtaken by astonishment as to what kind of ritual this is and what could it possibly mean and signify.

But then, when we bring to mind the efforts of Hajar for saving the life of her suckling child in that hot and scorching desert, and how Allah, after her sincere efforts, granted her wish by making the water of Zamzam flow from beneath the foot of her new-born child, the clock suddenly turns back for us, the curtains tend to get lifted and we find ourselves near Hajar, accompanying her in her quest and efforts. In the path of Allah, one cannot hope to attain any rank and status without exertion and effort!

From what we have presented above, it can be easily concluded that Hajj should be taught in this manner; the memories of Ibrahim (AS) his son and his wife should be personified step by step so that not only is the philosophy of Hajj perceived and comprehended but also its profound ethical effects illuminate and influence the souls of the pilgrims – for without these effects the entire Hajj is nothing but a mere façade.





Abrahamic Hajj and Its Role in New Islamic Civilization

By: Mojtaba Heidari

The concept of “New Islamic civilization”, which has been raised in recent decades is considered one of the central issues in the intellectual system of Grand Ayatollah Khamenei. Although some written works have been published about the essence, nature, dimensions, elements, and characteristics of this concept, many of its dimensions and aspects have not yet been analyzed and there is room for many research works on this subject. Similarly, there are certain factors that can contribute to the establishment and expansion of the New Islamic Civilization and it deserves the need to be pondered upon and analyzed.

an objective image of it. From this point of view, civilization is basically an objective phenomenon that manifests itself in such forms as art and architecture, techniques and industries, and administrative and political organizations. However, the two-dimensional approach takes into consideration both material and non-material dimensions to be necessary for civilization. From this point of view, the main foundation of civilization is based on non-material elements, especially religion, ethics, and culture, and material progress are considered the manifestations of civilization. This approach prevails mostly among Muslim thinkers. Thus, it can be said that civilization is a platform for mankind to progress both materially and spiritually and achieve his desired divine goals (See Mahdinejad, Seyyed Reza, "An Analysis of the Relationship between Hajj and New Islamic Civilization from the Viewpoint of Grand Ayatollah Khamenei, Periodical on Researches on the Civilizational Discourse of the Islamic Revolution, Vol. 2, No.3, PP. 181-182)

The Concept of New Islamic Civilization

The idea of the New Islamic Civilization put forward by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, is, on the one hand, rooted in the ancient Islamic civilization and, on the other hand, it is somehow in confrontation with the new Western civilization. Grand Ayatollah Khamenei considers the ancient Islamic civilization to be a source of pride and honor for Muslims and believes in the pos-

sibility of such a civilization in the contemporary era to be more than in the past. (August 1, 2016) In his words: "

The Islamic Ummah can, through meticulous and diligent efforts, design and lay the foundation of an Islamic Civilization suitable for this era and present it to mankind." (December 29, 2015) Based on such a view, the position of a comprehensive religious rite like Hajj will be very prominent in the realization of the New Islamic Civilization.

The Effects that Hajj Can Have on New Islamic Civilization

Keeping in view the importance of Hajj in Islam, there arises the question "In what ways can Hajj have an effect on the realization of New Islamic civilization?". Some of these ways are discussed hereunder.

1. Hajj is a manifestation of both spiritual and material aspects of human life

It may be appropriate to consider the most important characteristic of the New Islamic Civilization to be its comprehensiveness from the viewpoint of spirituality and materiality. Of course, the two-dimensionality of the New Islamic Civilization does not mean that there is no priority between the two. Rather, spirituality is the main pivot of this civilization. In other words, although there is material progress in the New Islamic Civilization, this progress is spirituality-oriented and is in pursuit of the ultimate goals of spirituality and not just the creation of unlimited

On the other hand, Hajj is of an outstandingly privileged position in Islam. Hajj is one of God's eternal reserves, the center of Islamic awareness, and an exceptional duty that comprises a set of Islamic values that cannot be collectively found in any other duty. A civilizational approach to Hajj can depict a new manifestation of this obligatory act of worship for Muslims and increase its influence on the Islamic Ummah. As regards the definition of civilization, two approaches can be taken into consideration; a material approach and a two-dimensional approach.

The material approach considers civilization to be more or less a material phenomenon and highlights

material prosperity and hedonism.

On the other hand, Hajj is the source of spirituality that continuously pours out its blessings on the Islamic world and Muslims so that everyone and every group can benefit from it to the extent of their capacity and capability. When people are attracted to the center of performing the divine duty of Hajj, they leave the boundaries of material life and enter a completely spiritual space where man can get truly purified and return. Hajj begins by responding positively to the Divine invitation. In the words of the Supreme Leader: "All the rites and rituals of Hajj, such as the state of Ihram, clothing, and prohibitions of Ihram, Tawaf, Sa'y, Salat, and Wuqufain (staying in Arafat, staying in Mash'ar al-Haram) somehow attract a part of our being to spirituality and getting close to God Almighty (April 5, 1995).

2. Unification of the Ummah in Hajj; A fundamental step in the realization of New Islamic Civilization

Civilization is the product of the collective and coherent efforts of a group of people. Therefore, the formation of civilization is impossible without coherence and solidarity among human beings. The most important precondition for the realization of the New Islamic Civilization in the world is, in the first step, to create bond and unity among its constituents, that is, Muslims and the realization of such solidarity and cohesion can

take place in various ways. Hajj is one of the most important and unique platforms for creating social association and solidarity among the Islamic Ummah. This association can create a large and unified Islamic society in the form of the Islamic Ummah, which will, in turn, be the basis for the realization of the New Islamic civilization. Hajj is a unique opportunity to resolve differences and wrong perceptions and mindsets and create greater understanding and cognition between Muslims by resorting to common principles. The solidarity of the great Islamic society is one of the social goals of Islam, which can be objectively learned during Hajj. It is as if they all practice and experience unity by wearing similar outfits, performing the same acts, uttering the same words, and pursuing the same goal. By relying on the common elements of Muslim identity such as one God, one Qibla, one prophet, and one book, practicing common social life within a specific time frame, and performing the same rituals, Hajj serves as a platform for the greater unity of the Islamic society. It provides room and space for the elimination of sectarian, cultural, and political differences and this social unity can become the basis for the creation of a New Islamic civilization.

In fact, the strengthening of the religious identity of Muslims in the form of the Islamic Ummah can lead to the creation of a common religious identity and the realization of the new Islamic civilization in the next step.

3. Determining identity and otherness of civilization in Hajj

Determining one's identity is a two-way issue, i.e., defining one's own self and defining the other and the existing difference. This point is also applicable to the issue of civilization in the sense that a part of civilizational identity is the outcome of determining civilizational otherness. One of the characteristics of Hajj, which is considered to be a determining factor of unity among Muslims and in a way determines the boundaries between Islamic and non-Islamic society is the issue of repudiation of the common enemy, namely infidels. Islamic civilization is inherently incompatible with a civilization that is based on infidelity. It is not easy to talk about Islamic civilization in its true sense, but do not believe in the distinction between it and the civilization that is fundamentally in conflict with religion and spirituality in general and Islam in particular. The civilizational interpretation of the repudiation of infidels means distinguishing between Islamic civilization and non-Islamic civilization.

Abrahamic, Muhammadan, Alawi, and Hosseini Hajj is the one in which paying attention to God and taking refuge in His authority and power is accompanied by turning one's back against the power of tyrants and oppressors. This means in the absence of repudiating infidels Hajj is incomplete and it will not be approved by the Prophet (PBUH) and his Ahl al-Bayt (AS).

Abrahamic Hajj from the Viewpoint of Contemporary Islamic Scholars

By: Reza Taghizadeh Naini

The late Imam Khomeini (RA) who regarded Hajj as an extremely important issue had in one of his speeches said: "Masji al-Haram, the Holy Ka'ba, embraces the dear pilgrims who do away with political isolation and fundamental deviation of Hajj towards the Abrahamic and Muhammadan Hajj, revive its life, break the idols of the East and the West, and demonstrate the truth of the repudiation of infidels.

Similarly, in the opinion of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Grand Ayatollah Khamenei, "Abrahamic Hajj is the one during which Muslims depart from disunity to unity and circumambulate Ka'ba, which is the House of Monotheism and repudiation of infidelity, consciously, perceive the essence of the rite of Hajj, and benefit from it for their own life and the life of the Islamic Ummah."

Hajj from the Viewpoint of Muslim Elites

The Muslim elites who have paid serious attention to the issue of Hajj and its tremendous effects on Muslims have expressed their thoughts and ideas on it; some of which are quoted hereunder:

Sheikh Mahmud Shaltut, the former president of the Al-Azhar University

Commenting on the Qur'anic verse "that they may witness the benefits for them" he said:

"The benefits, where Hajj is the perceptive and acquirable channel for that and which has been set forth as the foremost philosophy of Hajj, is having a wide and comprehensive meaning which cannot be concluded in any special forms. Rather, this sentence, with all the universality and commonness it possesses, contains all personal and social benefits. If purification of the soul and seeking proximity to Allah are benefits, then seeking advice, too, is a benefit. If these two are reckoned to be benefits then, inviting the Muslims for centralizing their forces for the spread of Islam too is a benefit. Therefore, according to the necessities of time and the conditions of the Muslims, these benefits differ in every era.

"It is worthy that people from all walks of life make haste towards this divine House. It is worthy that people of knowledge, insight, ijtihad, and faith and the ones possessing lofty aims gather over there so that it is seen as to how Mecca spreads its wings of mercy over them and how it collects their slogan of tawhid in and around the House and (so that) they finally engage in seeking recognition, advice and help from each other and then they leave for their respective countries as one nation and with a single heart and united goals and outlook."

Malcolm X

The late American Muslim leader has expressed his Hajj experience in these words:

"Never have I witnessed such sincere hospitality and overwhelming spirit of true brotherhood as is practiced by people of all colors and races here in this ancient Holy Land, the home of Abraham, Muhammad, and all the other Prophets of the Holy Scriptures. For the past week, I have been utterly speechless and spellbound by the graciousness I see

displayed all around me by people of all colors.

I have been blessed to visit the Holy City of Mecca. I have made my seven circuits around the Ka'ba, led by a young Mutawaf named Muhammad. I drank water from the well of the Zam Zam. I ran seven times back and forth between the hills of Mt. Al-Safa and Al-Marwah. I have prayed in the ancient city of Mina, and I have prayed on Mt. Arafat.

There were tens of thousands of pilgrims, from all over the world. They were of all colors, from blue-eyed blonds to black-skinned Africans. But we were all participating in the same ritual, displaying a spirit of unity and brotherhood that my experiences in America had led me to believe never could exist between the white and non-white.

America needs to understand Islam because this is the one religion that erases from its society the race problem. Throughout my travels in the Muslim world, I have met, talked to, and even eaten with people who in America would have been considered 'white'—but the 'white' attitude was removed from their minds by the religion of Islam. I have never before seen sincere and true brotherhood practiced by all colors together, irrespective of their color.

You may be shocked by these words coming from me. But on this pilgrimage, what I have seen, and experienced, has forced me to re-arrange much of my thought-patterns previously held, and to toss aside some of my previous conclusions. This was not too difficult for me. Despite my firm convictions, I have always been a man who tries to face facts, and to accept the reality of life as new experience and new knowledge unfolds it. I have always kept an open mind, which is necessary for the flexibility that must go hand in hand with every form of intelligent search for truth.

During the past eleven days here in the Muslim world, I have eaten from the same plate, drunk from the same glass, and slept in the same bed (or on the same rug)—while praying to the same God—with fellow Muslims, whose eyes were the bluest of blue, whose hair was the blondest of blond, and whose skin was the whitest of white. And in the words and in the actions in the deeds of the 'white' Muslims, I felt the same sincerity that I felt among the black African Muslims of Nigeria, Sudan, and Ghana.

We were truly all the same (brothers)—because

their belief in one God had removed the white from their minds, the white from their behavior, and the white from their attitude. could see from this, that perhaps if white Americans could accept the Oneness of God, then perhaps, too, they could accept in reality the Oneness of Man—and cease to measure, hinder, and harm others in terms of their ‘differences’ in color.

With racism plaguing America like an incurable cancer, the so-called ‘Christian’ white American heart should be more receptive to a proven solution to such a destructive problem. Perhaps it could be in time to save America from imminent disaster—the same destruction brought upon Germany by racism that eventually destroyed the Germans themselves.

Each hour here in the Holy Land enables me to have greater spiritual insights into what is happening in America between black and white. Racism leads America up the suicide path, turn to the spiritual path of truth—the only way left for America to ward off the disaster that racism inevitably must lead to.

Yahya Christian Bonaud

French Islamologist, philosopher, writer, translator, and commentator of the Qur’an in French describes Abrahamic Hajj as follows:

“Imam Khomeini (RA) was the first person who revived the Abrahamic Hajj and repudiation of infidels. Unfortunately, some Muslims consider politics to be separate from religion and do not consider the issue of repudiation to be a part of Hajj. It is true that Hajj is dhikr; the dhikr of God and Prophets came for establishing monotheism and not government, but repudiation is also a part of Hajj and like other obligatory elements of Hajj, it is obligatory for Muslims. Those who say that repudiation was merely for the time of the Prophet and it is not an obligation when revelations from God have stopped are making a mistake. All Abrahamic qualities must be displayed and no one is closer to Abraham than the Prophet of Islam. He is the Messenger of God and the one who dealt with the infidels with severity and with the friends of God with mercy...”

Ahmed Shalaby

This Egyptian thinker and historian points out the following about his experience in performing Hajj:

Hajj is a congregation in which no one represents and has superiority over other pilgrims. One of the effects of Hajj is the creation of closeness among the people who perform it from different parts of the world and who share the problems of the world of Islam.”

Mohammad Farid Wajdi

He describes Hajj in the Encyclopedia Islamica in the following words:

“If the heads of the Islamic states take advantage of this rite to create Islamic unity among the Muslim nations, they will achieve full result because the congregation of tens of thousands from different parts of the world in a particular place and their concentration on a single objective cause convergence and empathy among them and on their return to their homelands they can spread the message of Hajj.”

Yusuf al-Qaradawi

In his book “Al-‘Ibadah fi al-Islam” he writes:

“Hajj can be the most important factor for Islamic awakening and for this reason, some of the puppet governments or occupiers of Islamic lands prevent Muslims from going to the House of God. Because they know that if a movement starts among Muslims, no factor can stop it from advancing.” Elsewhere he writes: “Hajj is a means of getting to know Muslims with each other and the reason for the emergence of interest and connection between them.”

Allamah Husain al-Mustafa

This Shiite scholar from the Qatif region of Arabia defines Hajj as under:

“The most important philosophy of the Hajj is creating unity, empathy, and humility before the Oneness of God Almighty, and it is appropriate that Muslims who perform the rites of the Abrahamic Hajj should be heralds of the call to brotherhood, friendship, and peaceful coexistence in the world. Hajj is a great opportunity for the Islamic world and should not be used as a means of division. This is because Hajj is not a place to discuss ethnic issues, but is an opportunity for strengthening relations between countries. Hajj provides the best opportunity to spread divine knowledge and convey the message

of the Qur'an to the people of the world. It was for this very reason, the Holy Prophet of Islam and the infallible Imams (peace be upon them) also took advantage of this opportunity to propagate the teachings of Islam.

Sheikh Abdul Salam Muhammad of Al-Azhar University

In his interview with Al-Kawthar TV Sheikh Abdul Salam Muhammad stated: "Prophet Ibrahim supplicated to God Almighty and said: "Our Lord! I have settled part of my descendants in a barren valley, by Your sacred House, our Lord, that they may maintain the prayer. So make the hearts of a part of the people fond of them, and provide them with fruits, so that they may give thanks." (Surah Ibrahim, Verse, 37.) It is due to this supplication of Prophet Ibrahim that God has placed the desire of visiting His house in our hearts. Adhering to the principles of Hajj and being careful and focusing on its rituals create peace in the heart of the believers and adorns them with good morals."

Syed Salman Chishti, the Head of the Chishti Sufi Foundation of India

"Hajj is considered as a manifestation of unity among Muslims, and today unity is an important necessity of the Islamic society for which all sections of the Islamic Ummah, especially thinkers, and scholars, should take steps. By resorting to the morals and noble character of the great Prophet of Islam, empathy and love can be created among all Muslims, and by serving and helping fellow human beings selflessly, this unity can be created among all Muslim groups throughout the world.

Parvez Shabbir Mandiwala, Representative of the Indian Institute of Islamic Studies and Member of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Maharashtra Branch

"Hajj is the manifestation of unity and empathy among all Islamic schools of thought. In Hajj, all Muslims, rich and poor and black and white, sit next to each other and prostrate before the Almighty God. This is the manifestation of unity and solidarity among Muslims."

Hojjat al-Islam Azhar Husain Abedi, Member of



the Board of Trustees of Waqf Committee of Karnataka, India

"The house of Ka'ba is the house of blessings and a safe house. In the religion of Islam, there is a law even for the smallest of issues. Islam is a universal religion, and Hajj is a congregation in which Muslims from all countries must participate in Ihram clothing and perform its special rituals."

Dr. Salim Khan, Deputy of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Maharashtra Branch

"God Almighty invites all Muslims to participate in it without any discrimination and everyone, regardless of the color of their skin or the amount of their wealth, stand next to each other in a white dress and pray and supplicate to their God and Lord to purify



their hearts from sins and bad qualities.”

Sheikh Ezzedin Abdel Aziz; President of Jam’iat al-Ulama of Addis Ababa

“At the time of Hajj, a large part of the world’s Muslims, from different ethnicities, nations, and races and with different colors, move with great enthusiasm towards the center of revelation and regardless of differences in appearance, ethnicity, and race, wear similar white clothing and start a unique congregation.”

Prof. Elias Gitti Tarai, Thailand

“God’s House is a safe place that even non-Muslims feel at ease when they enter this holy place. Every year, more than three million pilgrims perform

this divine duty in Mecca during the Hajj days, which reflects upon the greatness of God Almighty.”

Seydina Oumar Sy, the former Foreign Minister of Senegal

God Almighty says: Do not create differences because you will become weak. Isn’t the separation and irrational divisions of the Islamic Ummah a reason for the weakening of the Islamic Ummah? Hajj is a call to regain all our strength and unite with each other again. We must form a strong Islamic Ummah, and only when this Ummah is united, it will regain its strength. Islam is the religion of God and goodness, brotherhood, and peace for all, and Muslims can have an important role in the world, provided they are united.







The Importance of Hajj from the Viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an, the Messenger of Allah, and the Infallible Imams ^(AS)

By: Davoud Hosseini, Head Department of Ethics of the Academy of Hajj and Pilgrimage

The aim of this article is to examine and analyze the importance of Hajj from the viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an and hadiths.

A) The Holy Qur'an and Hajj

There are a number of verses in the Holy Qur'an, which reflect upon the loft status of Hajj that need to be taken into consideration,

1- The Role of Hajj in Communicating the Divine Message

Unlike other divine obligations for which Almighty

God directly addresses His servant, in the case of Hajj, Allah had commanded Prophet Ibrahim (AS) to convey the message to people and invite them to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. In the words of the Holy Qur'an: "And proclaim the Hajj to all the people: they will come to you on foot and on lean camels (vehicles), coming from distant places" (Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 27).

2- Hajj and Muslims in General

One of the differences of Hajj with other religious duties is the way it is expressed in the Qur'an. In the case of other acts of worship, the Holy Quran has addressed the believers in the form of an imperative sentence. For instance: "And maintain the prayer/ Salat" (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 43). Or it has been expressed in the form of a blessing "for the prayer is indeed a timed prescription for the faithful" (Surah Al-Nisa', Verse 103). Similarly, as regards the obligation of fasting the Holy Qur'an has addressed Muslims with the quality of faith "O you who have faith! Prescribed for you is fasting as it was prescribed for those who were before you, so that you may be God-wary" (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 183). However, in the case of Hajj Muslims have been addressed in General "And it is the duty of mankind toward Allah to make pilgrimage to the House/Ka'ba" (Surah Aal-e Imran, Verse 97). The reason for these different ways of addressing Muslims indicates the secret that exists in Hajj. In the case of every other act of worship, if a person performs his/her duty with the same quality that he/she has been invited to do, he/she has fulfilled the duty. However, in the case of Hajj all people (believers) are invited to perform it. Such a characteristic cannot be found in the case of other obligations than Hajj. And it is for this reason that Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS) has said: "A dead person who is in the grave wishes that he had performed Hajj by foregoing the whole world and whatever was in it for him" (See Man la Yahduruh al-Faqih, Vol. 2, P. 226).

3- Hajj and History

The Holy Qur'an has also referred to Hajj as a means for measuring the length of years, the appointment. In narrating the story of the interaction between Prophet Moses and Prophet Shu'ayb (AS) the Qur'an has stated: "He (Shu'ayb) said, Indeed I desire to marry you to one of these two daughters of mine, on condition that you hire yourself to me for eight Hajj (years) but if you complete ten, it will be out of your own free will." (Surah I-Qasas, Verse, 27).

4- Hajj and Determination of the Level of Faith

As a divine duty performing Hajj has been made

obligatory and those who purposefully abandon it have been referred to as infidels. In the words of the Holy Qur'an: "pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds" (Surah Aal-e Imran, Verse 97)

5- Hajj and Its Material and Spiritual Effects

Hajj is an opportunity to witness and realize the material and spiritual benefits of Islam. The Holy Qur'an has elaborated on this aspect of Hajj in these words: "that they may witness the benefits for them, and mention Allah's Name during the known days over the livestock He has provided them." (Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 28). In the narrations quoted from the infallible Imams about this verse, it has been said that the verse refers to the material and spiritual benefits of Hajj.

B) Hajj from the Viewpoint of the Messenger of Allah, and the Infallible Imams (AS)

Hajj has been the focus of attention of the Messenger of Allah and the infallible Imams from his household from several aspects'

1- Performing of Hajj

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and the infallible Imams from his household were very particular about Hajj and had performed it several times. The Messenger of Allah had performed 20 Hajj pilgrimage before he migrated to Median, and on pilgrimage after that (See Al-Kafi, Vol. 4, P. 252). Imam Ali, Imam Hasan, and Imam Husain (AS), too, performed Hajj a number of times. In some narrations, more than 25 Hajj pilgrimages have been mentioned for Imam Hasan and Imam Hussain (Ibn Shahrashub, Manaqib Aal-e Ali, Vol. 4, P. 69; Also Ibn al-Maghazili, Al-Manaqib, P. 71). They also encouraged people to perform Hajj pilgrimage. It has been quoted that the Messenger of Allah told a person who had missed the Farewell Pilgrimage of the Prophet: If you had gold equal to the weight of Mount Abu Qubais and you would distribute it in the way of God, even then you would not achieve what (reward) a pilgrim of this Hajj has



achieved (Tusi, Tahdhib al-Ahkam, Vol. 5, P. 19). Imam had also written in his will that “(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of your Lord’s House (Ka’ba). Do not forsake it so long as you live, because if it is abandoned you will not be spared” (See Al-Kafi, Vol. 5, P. 51).

2- Teaching Hajj Rituals

The Messenger of God and the infallible Imams gave a lot of importance to teaching the rules concerning the rituals of Hajj. The Messenger of God

recited a sermon in the afternoon of the 7th day of his Farewell Hajj and elaborated on the rituals of Hajj and after completing ‘Sa’y’ he climbed a hill in Marvah, addressed the pilgrims and delivered Allah’s command on the performance of Hajj and Umrah. It has been recorded that someone by the name of Su-raqa ibn Malik asked the Messenger of Allah if what the Prophet Had said only applied to that year’s Hajj or if it was forever. And the Prophet confirmed that was an everlasting command (Al-Kafi, Vol. 4, P. 246.

Nu’mān ibn Thabit, commonly known as Abu

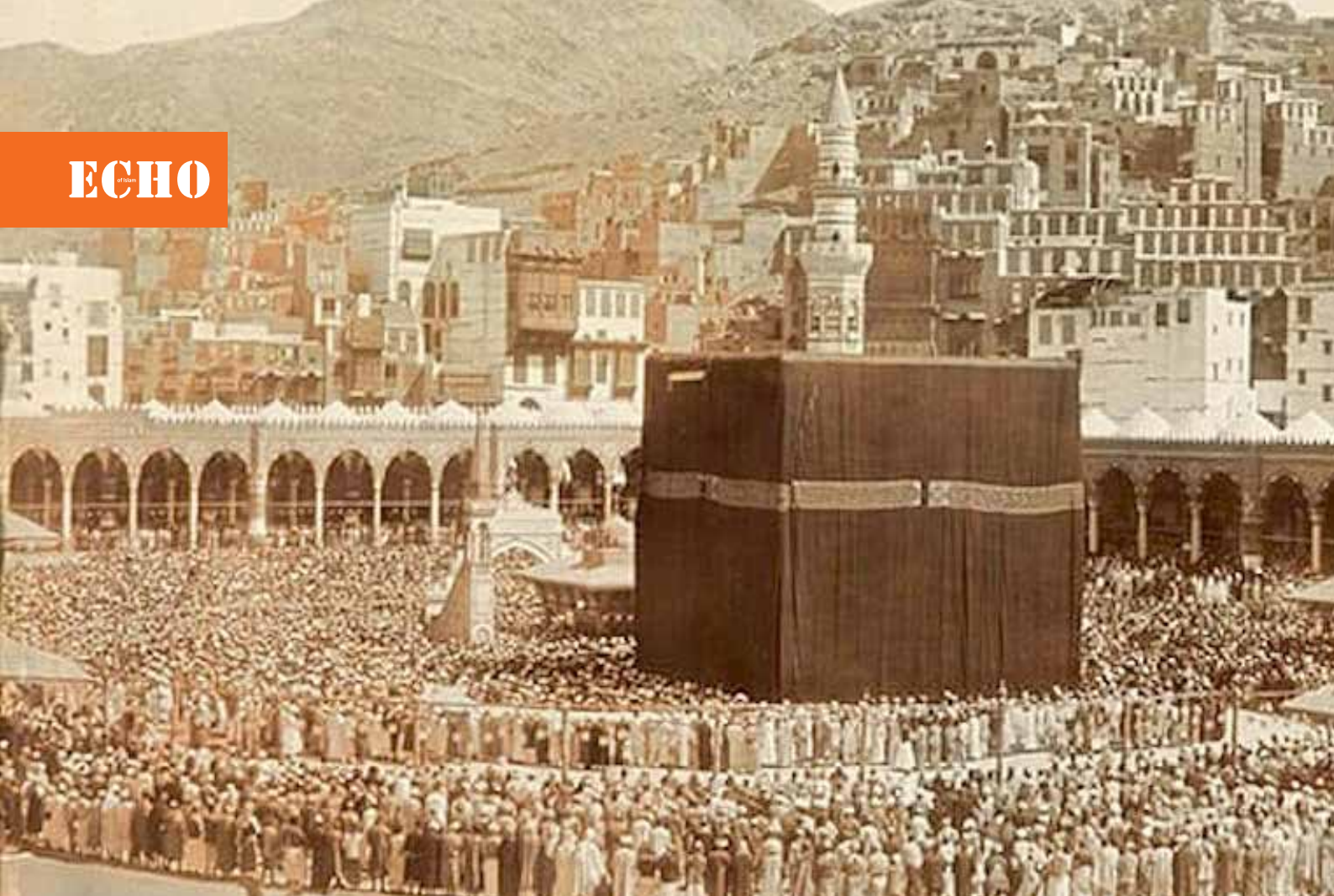


Ḥanifa has been quoted stating: “Had it not been for Ja’far ibn Muhammad (i.e., Imam Ja’far Sadiq) people would not have understood the Hajj rituals (See *Man la Yahduruh al-Faqih*, Vol. 2, P. 519).

3- Explaining the Secrets and Philosophy of Hajj

One of the most important aspects of Hajj is the reason behind the obligation of Hajj pilgrimage, which can only be explained by the Messenger of God (PBUH) and the infallible Imams who are in

connection with the source of divine revelation. The Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS) has in some of his sermons pointed to the philosophy of Ka’ba being located in a dry land and has referred to it as a means of measuring the level of people’s faith (See *Nahj al-Balagha*, Sermons 1 and 192). Imam Sajjad and Imam Sadiq, too, had elaborated on the secrets of Hajj from the time of Ihram to the end for some of their companions (See *Mustadrak al-Wasa’il*, Vol. 10, P. 166 and *Misbah al-Shari’ah*, P. 47).



HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF HAJJ

By: Sheykh Abbas (Damiano) Di Palma, President of Islamic Association Almahdi, Rome, Italy

All Muslims from all ages, classes, and races gather in the same place to profess their belief and commitment to religious truths. This is not a mere acceptance professed by the tongue for the Hajj involves several types of hardship and difficulties in terms of finance, physical endeavors, and testing devotional acts, both obligatory and supererogatory.

It is a religious duty that should be accomplished by the believing person at least once in a lifetime if he/she is financially and physically able. Actually, as soon as the believer becomes 'able', he/she should aim for it without any procrastination: this is because Hajj is one of the pillars of Islam and Islam has a priority over our own

comforts.

At the beginning of the month of Dhul Hijja, during the Hajj rituals, the believers gather in the Holy Mosque in Makkah, "the first house founded for humankind" (Qur'an 3:97). Here men wear the simplest of the dress: two pieces of white cotton material to remind themselves of the shroud that will

be worn when they depart this world. It is not wrong therefore to assume that this kind of dress may be named 'the divine attire' worn in the presence of the Lord of mankind.

Simplicity should be a key attitude if we are going to meet our Lord. The Holy Ka'ba itself is a very simple cubic building. It was rebuilt by the Prophet Ibra-



him (as) and his son Isma'il (as) and still today remains a symbol of pure faith in God. This is one of the holiest places of all. It is not surprising that Muslims turn their bodies, faces, and their whole beings towards it at least five times a day, and many other times while supplicating or reciting the Holy Book.

Ibrahim (as) and Isma'il (as) rebuilt the Ka'ba and restored its original public role as a place of worship since the time of the Prophet Adam (as). Its outward state was abandoned after the great flood during the era of the Prophet Nuh (as). The foundations of the House were raised again through them, and the Black Stone was sent from the sky as a sign of God's covenant. Ibrahim (as) was ordered to call the people to Hajj: "And proclaim the Hajj to people: they shall come to you on foot and

on lean camels coming from distant places" (Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 27).

As history tells us, in those days Ibrahim (as) himself was tested. Mecca was a desert area and God asked Ibrahim to abandon his wife Hajar and his son Ismael there. And so he did in an act of obedience. Pilgrims still today commemorate the hectic run of Hajar between the two mounts of Safa and Marwa in a desperate attempt to look for water for the little Ismael(a) who was weakened by thirst. The narratives tell us that suddenly the thirsty Isma'il (as) scraped the sand with his feet where water sprang out. This place still exists and is known nowadays as the spring of Zamzam.

Later on, Ibrahim (as) returned to Mecca to be tested once more. In fact, God ordered him to sacrifice his son Isma'il (as). Ibrahim (as) again did not hesitate to obey and such obedience was exactly what was being tested. Eventually, God stopped Ibrahim. The Qur'an says: "Then We ransomed him with a great sacrifice" (37:107). In the end, Isma'il (as) would not be sacrificed. Another great sacrifice was the ransom with which Isma'il (as) was redeemed, and both father and son were given the task to reconstruct the Holy Ka'ba for future generations.

Every year the pilgrims in Mecca revive this Abrahamic test of faith. They also commemorate and revive their faith on the ninth day of Dhul Hajj on the plane of Arafah, rekindling God's light within themselves. It has been said that

if the stay at Arafah is performed with utmost sincerity, no sin will remain unforgiven and that the greatest sin for someone present at Arafah is thinking that God has not forgiven him/her after sincere repentance. The following day, after God's overwhelming forgiveness, the pilgrims are admitted to the holy land of Muzdalifa.

Another important aspect of the Hajj is the stoning of the walls, an act that symbolizes detachment and disassociation from the evil of any 'evil whisperer.' It is true that God is All-forgiving and All-Merciful, but a person should always be vigilant as bad thoughts can always find their way into the hearts of individuals, molding and changing their intentions and inclinations. Attachment to loved ones should, therefore, be accompanied by disassociation from evil ones. If Islam discourages us from taking part in promiscuous gatherings or being present where intoxicants are served (even if the person is confident he/she won't directly fall into evident sins) it is because attachment to what is good without dissociation from what is bad does not guarantee the impossibility of leaning towards wrongful actions or wrongdoers.

These are just some aspects of the Hajj – many others have been mentioned in religious books and by pious personalities. What can be said in a few words is that the Hajj is certainly a journey worth experiencing once in one's life, a duty for the Muslim person, and, last but not the least, a spiritual appointment that has the power to produce a change in people's hearts.



The Role of Hajj in Objectifying Proximity Among Islamic Schools of Thought

By: Mohammad Hadi Fallahzadeh
Research Scholar and University Professor



Today, the main weapon used against Islam and Muslim nations is to create differences between Muslims and Islamic societies. Meanwhile, sectarianism is the best vehicle for ill-wishers of Islamic societies through which they can spread disputes and enmity among Muslim nations. Keeping this in view, creating proximity and unity among Muslims has been and is the biggest concern of Muslim reformers. As the greatest congregation of Muslim nations, in the form of the Islamic Ummah, Hajj can play a very colorful role in creating solidarity and proximity among Muslims. The simultaneous presence of Muslims with racial, religious, cultural, and appearance differences under the banner of Islam and Hajj and based on authentic Islamic values has made Hajj be regarded as the manifestation of a real opportunity to practice Islamic unity and form the Islamic Ummah.



Concepts:

- **Unity:** the state of being in agreement and working together; the state of being joined together to achieve a common purpose.

- **Convergence:** In political science, convergence is said to be a process in which societies give up their will and power to independently guide their major and fundamental policies and try to reach common decisions. (Smit, Peter H, 1992)

- **Proximity:** This means to bring closer and it is a means for creating closeness among Shiites and Sunnis while preserving the integrity of both sides and focusing on knowledge and wisdom instead of fleeting emotions and feelings. (Biazar Shirazi, Abdul Karim, "Islam, the Religion of Solidarity, 1975) The aim of proximity is to revive the Qur'anic principle of

brotherhood and remove the artificial mental barriers between Shiites and Sunnis, which are mentioned in various forms in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah: "Mankind were a single community..." (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 213); "He ordained affection and mercy between you..." (Al-Rum:21); "The faithful are indeed brothers" (Al-Hujuraat:10); and "Hold fast, all together, to Allah's cord, and do not be divided..." (Aal-e Imran:103).

It seems that from among the three concepts of Islamic unity, Islamic convergence, and Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought, the concept of proximity is closer to the objective of peaceful coexistence in the form of the formation of the Islamic Ummah. In this regard, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution has stated: By Islamic unity, we do not mean that all beliefs and Islamic denominations should become identical. The clash of Islamic denominations and beliefs, the clash of philosophical and fiqhi beliefs is an arena for scholarly work, an arena for fiqhi debates, and an arena for philosophical debates. After all, each sect will have its own set of beliefs, but it is possible to keep philosophical and fiqhi differences away from the arena of daily life and politics. What we mean by unity of the world of Islam is that we should avoid disputes. If we say that Shiites and Sunnis should be together, it means that Shia will remain Shia and Sunni will remain Sunni. When did we tell the Sunni world that what we mean by Islamic unity is that you become a Shiite? We have not said

such a thing... We are not saying you should change your school of thought. What we are saying is that Shia and Sunni should always be reasonable; something that was, by the grace of God, observed during the Islamic Revolution in our country." (International Conference on Islamic Unity, 2006)

Hajj Represents the Islamic Ummah (The Platform for the Transformation of Muslim Nations into the Islamic Ummah)

As emphasized in the Holy Qur'an, Islam, is a comprehensive and complete religion that has not neglected any important issue and has provided guidance and wisdom in all areas of human life. However, among all religious duties and orders, there are few duties that have been emphasized by the Holy Qur'an, the Prophet, and the infallible Imams as in the case of Hajj. This is because, in addition to having religious, social, political, and cultural functions, Hajj is the manifestation of unity in all aspects of human life. In this regard, the late Imam Khomeini had stated: "Hajj is the best meeting place for Muslims to get to know their religious brothers and sisters from all over the world. The congregation in the House that belongs to all the Islamic communities and followers of Prophet Ibrahim by putting aside their personality, color, nationality, and race and by observing Islamic ethical values and avoiding controversies they demonstrate the purity of Islamic brotherhood and the perspective of the formation of the unified

Ummah all over the world.” (Saifeye Noor, Vol. 20, P. 13) As regards the importance of Hajj, Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS) has been quoted saying: “If people do not have the money for Hajj, their travel expenses will be paid from the Muslim treasury.” (Furu’ al-Kafi, Vol. 4, P. 268)

The Key Components of Objectification of Objectifying Proximity Among Islamic Schools of Thought

1. Hajj is the manifestation of the Islamic brotherhood

In Hajj, people connect with God because of their human nature and not because of their ethnic, tribal, and sectarian identity. In other words, all human beings are the creation of the same Creator and are actually brothers and sisters of each other, and Hajj is the headquarters of the presence of these brothers and sisters in the presence of God. As stated by Imam Khomeini (RA): “This (Ka’ba) is the house of all people. No person or persons or group or certain clan has priority over others with regard to the House of God. All people, those who are all over the world, in the east and west of the earth, are obliged to become Muslim and to congregate in this house that has been made a sacred place for pilgrimage of people.” (Saifeye Noor, Vol. 8, P. 172)

2. Hajj is the venue for getting to know about Muslims’ affairs

One of the fundamental functions of this congregation is get-

ting to know religious brothers and sisters in faith. In such an atmosphere, it is possible to share the opportunities, threats, potentials, and weaknesses of Muslim nations and promote sympathy, cooperation, and unity among Muslim nations with the context of the three elements of recognition, commitment, and understanding. Reaching a common understanding based on recognition and common interests, in addition to having common values, is not an impossible expectation. In this regard, Imam Khomeini (RA) had said: “Given that the hypothesis of Hajj is one of the biggest religious-political duties in Islam and the Hajj congregation is one of the biggest congresses in the Islamic world, the respected pilgrims of the world should be gathered to exchange opinions on the interests of Islam and the problems of Muslims, to make the necessary decisions for solving problems, to reach the sacred goal of Islam. The ways and means of creating unity between all Islamic schools of thought should be explored, find solutions for common political problems that have been created for the Muslims of the world by the enemies of Islam, the most important of which is discord between the ranks of Muslims.” (Saifeye Noor, Vol. 19, P. 191)

By the same token, Ayatollah Khamenei has stated” “What is important is to know that Hajj is one of the strengths of the holy religion of Islam. Although the strengths of the Islamic Sharia are not one or two, Hajj has certain prominent qualities - which we are more or

less familiar with. In fact, it can be said that Hajj is the source of the authority of the Islamic society, it is the source of the authority of the Islamic Ummah. The day when we Muslims from different countries and different schools of thought, from the far east of the world to the far west of the Islamic world, succeed and attain the intellectual maturity - which has not, unfortunately, happened so far - to actually form the ‘Islamic Ummah’ in the true sense of the word - even though under different governments - on that day, we will understand how Hajj is a source of authority, strength, elevation, and dignity of this Ummah.” (Meeting with Hajj authorities, 2013)

3. Common enemy

One of the serious issues regarding the non-realization of proximity among Islamic schools of thought is the existence of a common division-creating enemy. In order to exploit the resources and position of Islamic countries, the colonial states have adopted the strategy of divide and rule. This is the reason that many Western countries do not approve of the reestablishment of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia and have overtly and covertly expressed their disapproval. Imam Khomeini had rightly said: “The entire Islamic Ummah are the followers of the Prophet and the followers of the Holy Qur’an and have common treacherous enemies who by creating differences through their wretched agents, mass media, and divisive propaganda, throughout history, and especially in the recent centuries and present era, have kept

all the Islamic states and nations in captivity. They have looted the rich resources of Muslim countries and oppressed their people. They intend to make the governments blindly serve them, spread the culture of consumerism, and prevent the human development and industrial innovation of the oppressed countries with evil tricks and conspiracies. Thus, now that

to be benevolent is exaggerating about ethnic and sectarian differences. Repudiation of infidels during the Hajj congregation is a move for identifying the enemy and if actualized its impact can be witnessed among all Muslim nations. It must be noted that repudiation of the common enemy must follow the identification of the enemy. And this important issue can

pretation and perception of Islamic unity and the role of effective actors in the field has been one of the causes of non-fulfillment of this important. For unity to be actualized among Muslims the concepts of convergence and proximity must be resorted to by Islamic scholars and the Islamic government so that the basis for a better understanding of Islam and Muslims to-



the pilgrims from every nation and sect have gathered in the center of life-giving Islam at the command of God and His Messenger, they should think of a solution for this deadly cancer. They should know that the basic solution is the unity of all Muslims in cutting off the hand of superpowers from Islamic countries.” (Saifeye Noor, Vol. 20, P. 16)

Proximity and compassion among Muslims is of great value in recognizing the common enemy. Because one of the issues that the enemy invests in and pretends

be realized through the accumulation of experiences and thoughts of Islamic elites and rulers during Hajj. Therefore, Hajj is also an important platform for identifying and defining the common enemy of Islamic society, and this highlights the necessity of proximity of thoughts.

Concluding Remarks

Unity among Muslims has been one of the topics of discussion among the fair elites of Islamic societies since ancient times, but it seems that differences in the inter-

wards each other is provided for and the ground for brotherhood between Muslims is paved. Therefore, if Hajj is performed within the framework of authentic Islamic values, it will definitely be the basis for consolidating the three main aspects of the formation of the Islamic Ummah, namely, brotherhood, mutual understanding, and identification of common enemy, and it can be a platform for the realization of unity, the proximity of Islamic schools of thought, and the orientation of Muslim nations towards the Islamic Ummah.



Hajj and Islamic Awakening

By: Special Correspondent

The movements that have developed in the Middle East and North Africa during the past decade or so, undoubtedly, reflect upon the rise of awakening among the Muslim nations as well as their disapproval of the presence of the arrogant powers in the region. These movements, all of which share the three elements of being Islamic, anti-American and anti-Zionism, are aimed at a return to the noble Islamic identity of these nations and regaining the honor and dignity of the people of the countries involved. These popular uprisings are also indicative of the accumulated and suppressed anger of the people who are disgusted with the oppressions, injustices, and corruptions of their rulers and their relations with the imperialistic powers and believing that the main cause of the lack of development on the part of their societies is their tyrannical governments and they have set forth to confront the existing despotic regimes ruling over them. Their youths have overcome the fear of the intelligence-oriented ruling regimes and by conceiving the concept of “We Can” these youths have been able to play a significant role in the awakening of their nations through the modern means of communications and the internet and, thus, they may be regarded as the pioneers of Islamic awakening in the region.

Hajj, this grand and glorious congregation of believers, which is the symbol of the eternality of the religion

of the Grand Prophet of Islam (PBUH), who is also the Seal of Prophethood, can play a major role in raising the level of the awareness of Muslim nations and pave the path for greater Islamic awakening. By its very nature, Hajj can serve as a center for conceiving Islamic precepts and a source of enlightenment for Muslims. Abrahamic Hajj refers to the struggle against despotic powers, restoration of the lost honor and dignity of the believers, negation of satanic powers, and expressing disapproval of polytheists; for Prophet Abraham (AS) said “I repudiate the polytheists”. Even though Laat, Manaat, and Uzza (the three popular idols of the era of ignorance) do not exist in our times they have been replaced by far more dangerous idols like money and might of the arrogant powers and their ignorant proxy regimes, which dominate the fate and destiny of the Muslims of these countries. Scrutinizing the Abrahamic Hajj reflects upon the importance of repudiating infidels, dominating powers of the world and their stooges, and a factor contributing to the anti-arrogance struggles of the Muslims. By the same token, Hajj can prepare the required grounds for the exchange of information among the Muslim nations over the common problems faced by the world of Islam including the usurpation of Palestine by the Zionist regime, confrontation with satanic powers, and struggles

against the oppression inflicted on the people of certain Islamic countries.

Abrahamic Hajj has the potential of serving as a forum for the exchange of information and communication and expansion of awareness among Muslims as well as exposing and disclosing the dangerous ploys and devious plans of the imperialistic powers against Islam and Muslims. It provides the required incentive to withstand the psychological warfare of arrogant powers by strengthening the Muslims against such warfare initiated by their common enemy. This grand and glorious congregation has the power to forge closeness of hearts and unity among Muslims and unite them in confronting the deceitful strategy of divide and rule by the imperialists aimed at widening ethnic and sectarian divergence/differences. It is for this very reason that this Islamic gathering of the Muslim world can serve as a powerful means for reducing divergence and elevating Islamic convergence by emphasizing the existing commonalities that could eventually lead to the formation of a united Ummah; setting an example for all the nations of the world. The proposed unity, however, involves and recognizes the cultural identity of the nations and, as a matter of fact, is a perfect manifestation of unity in diversity and a new experience for the Muslim community to coexist and cooperate



with each other free from communal and racial prejudices; a life away from the walls artificially made around them by vested interests. Therefore, it is incumbent on all Muslims to endeavor towards perceiving the philosophy of Hajj and the esoteric truths hidden behind its rituals in order to understand the importance of the historical lessons of Islam attributes for the humanization of the world, which can ensure man's dignity, prosperity and salvation.

This year's Hajj should be the manifestation of the strengthening of the unity of the Muslim Ummah and the rapprochement of different Islamic schools of thought side by side with a wave of Islamic awakening, truth-seeking, freedom-seeking, regaining the self-esteem of the Muslim nation and a response to the violent and oppressive attitude adopted by the despotic rulers of the region.

It is, thus, the responsibility of all the Muslim intellectual, cultural, academic, and media elites throughout the world as well as all the religious scholars, reformist thinkers, and astute and well-wishing believers to make every endeavor to come forth with solutions for expanding the new wave of Islamic awakening as well as helping the oppressed and truth-seeking Muslims and devising new plans for putting an end to the oppression and cruelty faced by Muslim nations. The Hajj atmosphere, both in its actual sense and its communicational sense, provides a great opportunity for sharing thoughts and views on the various ways and means through which freedom-loving Muslims can attain their rightful demands, withstand Western domination and eliminate the degradation imposed on them by dictatorial rulers and imperialistic power.

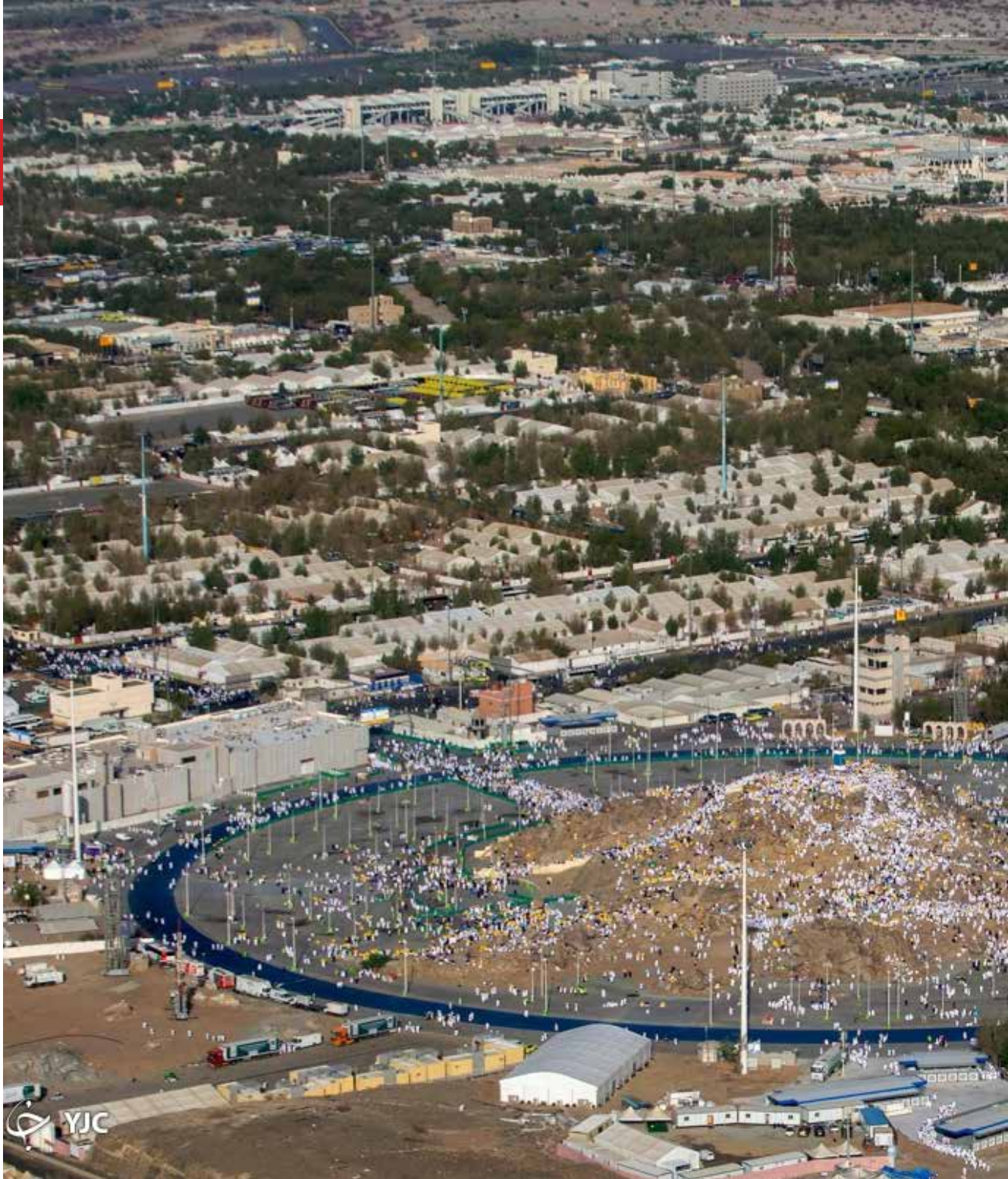


Hajj from the Viewpoint of Non-Muslim Elites

By: Sareh Amiryazdani, Researcher on Religious and Pilgrimage Studies

The glory and grandeur of Hajj and the presence of millions of Muslims from all over the world in the land of Hijaz has attracted the attention of some Western scholars and thinkers who have published the result of their research and studies on this issue.

At times, some Non-Muslim European orientalist have been able to travel to the city of Mecca, despite the restrictions, participate in the Hajj ceremony, and wrote their observations in the form of travelogues in European languages. What follows is a selection of some of the statements made by these Western thinkers and orientalist reflected in their writings containing certain subtle points about Hajj.



Ludovico di Varthema

The first European who managed to visit Mecca in the Middle Ages and put down his observations in the form of a travelogue was an Italian by the name of “Ludovico di Varthema”. He established a strong friendship with one of the officers of the Mamluk Sultanate in Damascus and decided to travel together

with him to Meccas during the time of Hajj and eventually left for Arabia on the eighth day of Nisan (April) while wearing uniform Mamluk soldiers.

In his travelogue, Ludovico has expressed his surprise at the large number of pilgrims and the diversity of their nationalities and genders and written he had never seen such a large congregation in

any part of the world. In a chapter of his travelogue dedicated to the Hajj ceremony, Ludovico has recorded: “There is a very beautiful place of worship in the heart of the city of Mecca, which is a building similar to the Colosseum in Rome, with the difference that it is made of baked bricks, and not stones, and this temple (Masjid al-Haram) has a hundred gates.”



He then points to the existence of a building in the middle of Masjid al-Haram, without mentioning the name Ka'ba, and says that when people walk around this place they seek forgiveness from God, and this building - which he refers to as the tower - has a silver door that is located at a height equal to the height of a human being.

Sir Richard Francis Burton
Being an employee of the East India Company and having worked in different departments of this company, Burton took a long leave and by receiving financial support from the Royal Geographical Society of Britain he decided to travel to the Arabian Peninsula and Hejaz and eventually began his trip under the name "Mirza Abdullah" of Bushehr and

headed for Alexandria from England from where he traveled to the Arabian Peninsula. Being surprised by what he saw in Meccas he wrote:

I confess to this fact that none of all those people who clinched onto the curtains of the Ka'ba and cried or pressed their chests on "Hajar al-Aswad" (the black stone) is filled with intense emotions and overflowed with sensations like me - who was one of the pilgrims from Northern Europe. I began to think that everything that Arab poets have composed about this place is absolute truth and that the breeze that blows and moves the curtains of the Ka'ba is the breeze from the wings of angels and not the pleasant morning breeze. I must, however, admit this truth that the passionate emotions of the pilgrims arose from the depth of their faith, while my emotion was caused by the pride and joy of victory.

Dr. Ms. Charles Wadi

Dr. Charles Wadi, the author of the book "Muslim Thought" - who was associated with Oxford University - wrote in the Times magazine as follows:

"I come from a distant land with many sins. Anyone who lives in any corner of the Islamic world knows about the magnetism of Mecca. From the coast of the Nile and parts of Nigeria to Sarandib (Sri Lanka) people say farewell to their friends and relatives and go to Mecca. Presently, most people go to Mecca by plane, and dozens of planes land at Jeddah airport every day. At the time when Islam, like other religions, is being attacked

by non-religious people, the Hajj pilgrims, whose number is on the rise, wear simple two-piece clothing of cotton, which means negating all kinds of racial and class superiority and is indicative of getting prepared for the day of renewing one's covenant.

Venetia Porter

In her preface to the book "Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam", she writes: "If we want to know the contemporary world, we must know Islam well, and nothing can represent the values and dynamism of Islam better than Hajj. For those who are of secular point of view, pilgrimage is an obsolete thing and even for some Protestants, it is not reliable from the religious point of view. Thus, how can Hajj take us to the heart of Islam?"

When we see a large number of Muslims performing these mysterious rites - even though it may be strange from the point of view of some outside observers and, like the opponents of Islam, it may occur to us that Islam is not compatible with modernity - by having a glance at the history of man's spirituality we can realize that Hajj is very special.

Hajj is the only pilgrimage that, being one of the five principles of Islam, is obligatory for all Muslims. Hajj pilgrimage is the only act of worship that, if done with attention, enables a person to enter a different and eternal dimension. Pilgrimage frees us from the mere façade of our lives. By abandoning our ordinary lives and by circumambulating our physical bodies around the center of the world,

by symbolically returning to the beginning, by surrendering ourselves to the difficult rites of Hajj, and by living with kindness and gentleness in the community of pilgrims, we can learn that there are other possibilities in life. The enthusiasm involved in the rituals takes us beyond our usual mental preoccupations and provides us with a different mentality so that if we were aware and skilled pilgrims, we would feel anything else. Therefore, by studying Hajj, we not only get information about Islam, but we also discover certain spaces within our being that we have not discovered so far.

Robert R. Bianchi

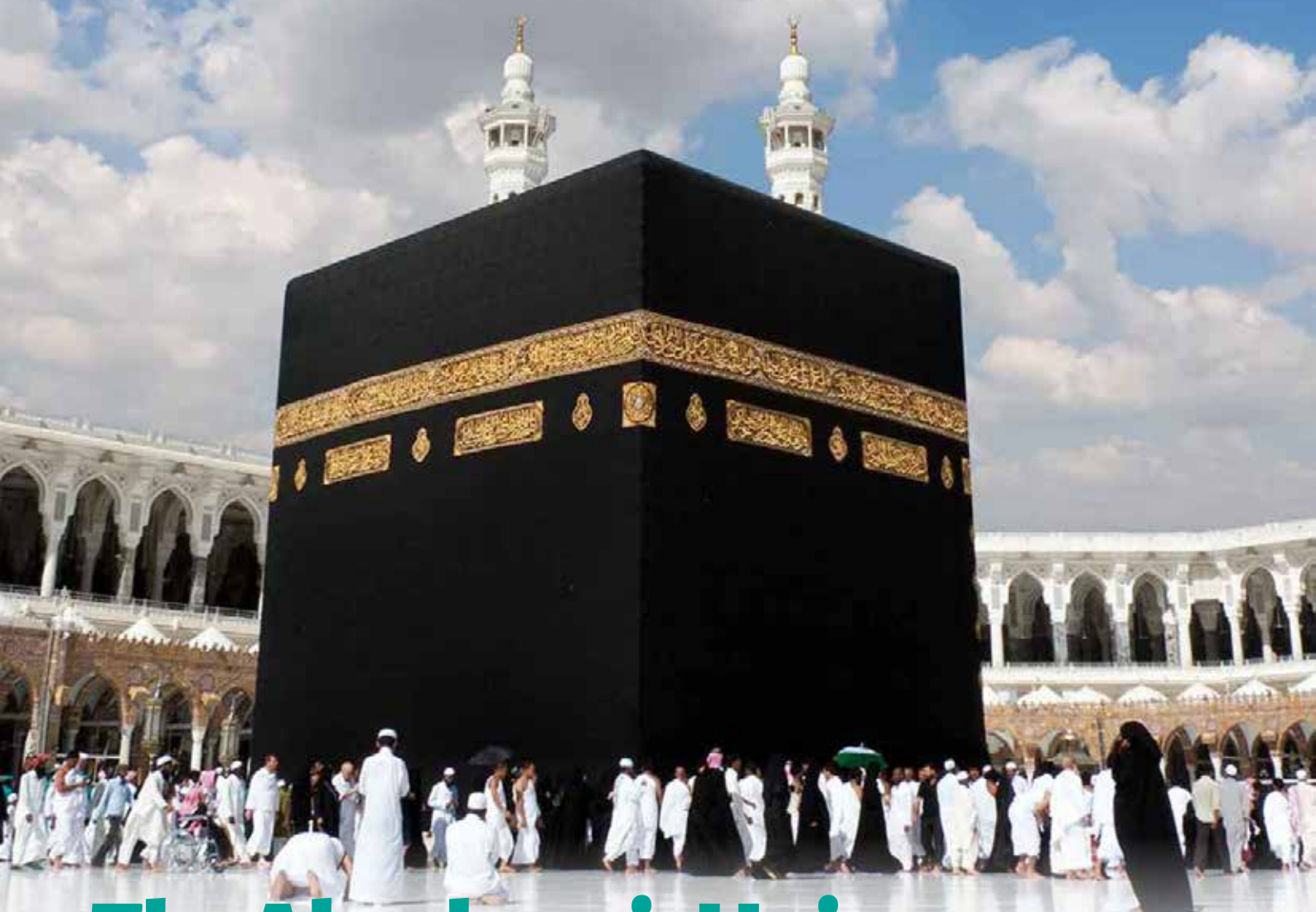
Robert R. Bianchi is a political scientist and international lawyer who has lived and worked in China and the Islamic world for nearly two decades. He earned his Ph.D. and law degree at the University of Chicago, and he has also been teaching at some universities in the US, China, Qatar, and the American University of Cairo.

In the preface to his book "Guests of God: Pilgrimage and Politics in the Islamic World" he notes, "I have written several books, but this book has captivated me the most and, in fact, it is like an unmatched love for me. This project went far beyond my initial imagination and effort because the managers of the Great Hajj Congress gave me more information than I expected, and in the countries I traveled to, I came in contact with many people. Shortly after I performed Hajj, I started my practical research in

Pakistan and Turkey, the outcome of which was so astonishing that I decided to visit other countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Senegal. I have never engaged in such a great project, and at the same time, every step led to the next step, and I was only following in the footsteps. The simplest answer to the question that why I got so involved in Hajj and why many people who did not even know me were prepared to stop their personal work to help me is that everything about Hajj is magical. From many aspects, Hajj depicts the heart and soul of Islam, Islam in its best, the most universal and humanitarian, and the most diverse and egalitarian form of it."

Hajj is the largest human congregation. Every year, more than two million people, simultaneously, go to Mecca to visit the House of God and perform their pilgrimage according to the rituals that have been carried out for fourteen centuries. Hajj is the spiritual peak of life and the most powerful manifestation of unity in this world and the hereafter.

Hajj is the time of sublime thinking and contemplation, during which pilgrims critically examine the purity of their souls as well as the political and social conditions of their land, the Islamic Ummah, and the world. The explicit alliance of religion and politics (in Islam) has made Hajj a pilgrimage and at the same time an annual congregation of Islam; a spiritual and expansive society through which the Muslim community ponders upon its own reconstruction and progress throughout history.



The Abrahamic Hajj and the Global Future Paradigm

By: Dr. Mahmoud Vaezi (University of Tehran)

In the doctrine of Islam Hajj is one of the most comprehensive and the most profound rituals that has been designed and arranged very precisely. All acts and rituals during the Hajj period, and even before and after it, including the obligatory, recommended, prohibited, and reprehensible practices, are nothing but exalted ethical and human issues.



As the book of peace , the book of dialogue , the book of ethical and human virtues , and the book of rationality the Holy Qur'an is the only comprehensive text by adhering to the teachings of which all humans from any race or ethnic group can peacefully coexist and have mutual respect with each other.

Abrahamic Haj is not merely a simple ritual or an act of worship , but it is the most significant and comprehensive congregation that has the unique capacity to be generate the "fourth global wave" as an evolutionary program for humanity and a model for all intellect-oriented humans.

In his book "The Third Wave", Alvin Toffler names the first wave as the agricultural wave, the second global wave as the industrial wave, and the third one as the age of electronics. He believes the civilization of the new age will deconstruction and break down the regular and old values and traditions in all sectors of society, which encompass both the family and the governance .

However, reviewing different dimensions of global civilizations and the conditions of the age, the present futurist scholars draw a different future of the humanity and portray the fourth wave in another way. For instance, Dr. Sohail Inayatullah, one of the well-known researchers at world level has, in an article entitled, "Times Have Changed", writ-

ten: "Recently, The Westpac Bank has adopted a new approach toward traditional standards by way of which progress is measured by three standards: Welfare, Social justice, and Environment...Organizations now believe that apart from interests, there have other obligations, which include social justice and social measures. They also believe that they have responsibility towards the sustainable development of the earth. In other words, the environmental issues are not issues outside the organizations but they have a detrimental role in the success of an organization.

He further adds, "The triple bottom line movement has started, which is not due to the generosity of companies and institutions but it is due to the change in the beneficiaries. This means that the shareholders are not the only beneficiaries but the managers, staffs and area beyond the organization such as environment have effective roles and they need to be noticed as well.

"Concurrent with the move of countries towards the post-modern economy, the significance of other issues increase. One of these issues is spirituality, a spirituality that is not related to the spiritual affairs and feudal religions but is related to the meaning of life and full happiness or a fortune beyond pain and pleasure."

Furthermore, he puts forth the question: "Can the spirituality be basically the fourth wave? And in response, he refers to two important points:

Firstly, we should respond to this question: Is it possible to measure an unmeasurable issue? In a detailed discussion, he says: I remember the words of the master of spirituality, (P.R. Sarhur) on the nature of the Almighty God well and believe that it is not possible to express these vocabularies through language. That is to say, it is not possible to measure it .

The second point is put forth by him through this question: Has the issue of spirituality an attraction and can it attract the views towards itself? He then responds that there are some evidences for it.

For example, as a personal experience on holding various workshops in Croatia, Pakistan, Malaysia, Australia, Thailand and Germany, Taiwan, New Zea-

land and Hawaii, I have found out that the future of spirituality is ideal and attractive. (For further studies, please see: www.metafuture.org).

The general characteristics of this future in the view of Dr. Inayatullah are as follows:

1. Individual spirituality
2. General participation
3. Sustainable ecologic communities
4. Localized technology but not of the type of propellant
5. Economic substitutions from the viewpoint of capitalism
6. Global governance

This matter is observable in details in the article by Dr. Sohail Inayatullah "Spirituality as the Forth Bottom Line"

The noticeable point is that the perspective of spirituality confirms the researches made by Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson. They have documented a new phenomenon and that is the increase of cultural creators. They believe that these individuals will solve the problems of the day by modern changes and challenging the traditional viewpoints.

Anderson even moves further and says that at present about 25% of the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries have accepted the gender local spiritual contribution.

However, they reiterate that the cultural creators do not depend on a specific social or political movement or group but, in fact, they are the representative of a paradigm and a change in values.

There is some information which shows the materialism and objectivism do not lead to happiness. A study which has been made by Dr. Tim Kasser in Knox College shows that the middle aged individuals who focus on money and reputation are more depressed and have a less joy and motivation for life. They mostly display physical symptoms such as headache, and sore throat .

After analysis and review of the materials of Anderson, he refers to an important point that a part of the future challenge is a change in the life model. The existing model includes: being a student, housekeeping, serving to the society and monasticism. However, in a spiritual model, spirituality will be present in all of these stages pervasively. In ad-

dition, the studentship period will never have an end and the lifelong learning will continue in the life of individuals. In addition, the work will be constantly. Serving to the society will be on a daily basis and perpetual. Every day is a day to find a way to serve the others. Thus, taking into consideration the spirituality as the fourth wave, it means to make a change in the infrastructural model of our life.

Another point is that for those individuals who study the macro history of the big models of change, this change is not strange. However, this modernism, progress and dazzling technologies have merely brought about the surface civilization and it is amazing that spirituality, as an emotional and humane element is not seen in this civilization.

The alert is that the new wave of spirituality does not necessarily mean the establishment of a utopia. That is to say if its main indicators and components are not controlled and planned, and if the improper and strict prejudices and also the gender discriminations are not omitted, it will go back to the Middle Ages. The message of the history is important but there is no need to return to the cave dwelling ages.

The last very important point is that it is necessary to take the reminder of Dr. Ashis Nandy seriously who says, "The important point is that there are ways to escape from our perspective and conflicting viewpoints about this subject-matter is seen. Thus, in these areas, we are in need of rival views on spiritual issues, for the fear that the spiritual issues and spirituality do not become ceremonial and neutral .

Therefore, the global future paradigm or in a sense the global modern civilization will take shape upon the pivot of spirituality rather than materialism. What is important is that we should not ignore the rival and should not permit the spirituality to be presented to humanity inappropriately and inefficiently.

Hajj in Islam

The Hajj is an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, and a mandatory religious duty for Muslims that must be performed at least once in their lifetime by all adult Muslims who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey, and can support their family during their absence. It is one of the five pillars of Islam , alongside Shahadah, Salat,

Zakat, and Sawm etc. It is very important that the pilgrim should prepare his life Before Leaving for Hajj.

Hajj Preparations

In a Prophetic Hadith, it is narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) referred to pilgrims who go for Hajj or Umrah as the guests of Allah.

“He called them and they responded; they ask of Him and He will give them,” the Hadith further reads.

“As a guest of The Almighty, then, it is only proper that we come fully prepared to meet the Host in the best of our physical, mental and spiritual states.”

To get succeeded in accomplishing the fifth pillar of Islam and to make this one a lifetime experience for Muslims, it requires both spiritual and physical preparation.

‘Hajj’ is a Must for These Folks

The Muslims who by heart, soul and body can deliver utmost at performing the rites of pilgrimage should follow these thriving conditions.

- He must have control over his mental functioning and must be of sound, mind, and movement.
- Out of what he is doing, he must be mature enough to understand the purpose and significance.
- He must financially afford to bear all Hajj expenses and provide sufficiently to his dependents during his absence.

The Prophet Abraham (AS) in Islam

Muslims trust that the prophet Abraham PBUH was a renowned personality in Islamic history. His exemplary character, bravery, and pious deeds have given him due to fame.

Designated title of Khalilullah - the Arabic term for the friend of Allah. Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) was the forefather to a number of great prophets. This is the reason why he is held in the highest regard and great esteem by a number of revealed religions. All pilgrims during the ceremony of Hajj are struggling against their desires and lust to become the good follower of Khalilullah in monotheism, in worshipping omnipotent Allah, in social moralities and ethics towards others.

Abrahamic Hajj and Comprehensive Standards

Abrahamic Hajj provides a complete way of living through its ethical standards and values provided in the Holy Quran. It has described moral values and ethics in a proper way and has emphasized the Muslims to follow him in order to please the Almighty Allah. The Creator of this world and the eternal one has allowed human beings to choose their living style according to their will. The reason behind this freedom is that Allah has described this worldly life as a test in the Holy Quran to earn a reward on the Day of Judgment according to the deeds.

Islam has provided fundamental rights to all the living things in the world. Therefore, these rights of all living things must be well observed according to the ethical principle and values of Islam. In the Holy Quran Almighty Allah says:

“Piety is not to turn your faces to the east or the west; rather, piety is [personified by] those who have faith in Allah and the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets, and who give their wealth, for the love of Him, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler and the beggar, and for [the freeing of] the slaves, and maintain the prayer and give the zakat, and those who fulfill their covenants, when they pledge themselves, and those who are patient in stress and distress, and in the heat of battle. They are the ones who are true [to their covenant], and it is they who are the Godwary.” (Al-Baqarah:177)

The most glorifying example of practicing Islamic values and ethics as the Last Prophet of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) prides to be good follower of Abraham. He (SAW) set standards and provided guidelines to the followers to practice in life. He (SAW) ended the ill customs and traditions found in the Arabic world and other regions regarding racism, killing of daughters, alcohol, fraud, interest, adultery and brutal killings.

In the Holy Quran, Almighty Allah describes Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as, “And indeed, you are of a great moral character.” (68:4)

With contrast to other systems, the ethical system in Islam takes guidelines from the divine source of

teachings “The Noble Quran” and Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The ethical values set by Islam cannot be altered according to the will of human beings and the situation they are in. The system is working for thousands of years and it will do the same until the day of judgment. This system cannot be affected by the cultural norms, as Allah (SWT) is the one whose acceptance is most important when it comes to performing the deeds in this world.

In the Holy Quran, Almighty Allah has mentioned the following values that Muslims should practice in their lifetime.

- Almighty Allah is the only one to be worship.
- Parents must be dealt with kindness.
- Whenever a promise is made it, fulfill it.
- The poor and orphans are the responsibility of the society.
- Performing the religious duties set by Islam.
- Staying away from the deeds that are recommended as sin in Islam.
- Dear of Allah should be in the heart of everyone with the truth on the tongue.
- Killing a person is like killing the whole of humanity.
- Practice honesty in personal and professional life.

Characteristics of Abrahamic Hajj

1- The first step for Abrahamic Haji is nothing but intention, will, and awareness. Ignorance or not having clear decision makes it invalid.

2- Entering to the brightness, clearness and sincerity of oneness by state of white color of Ihram. This white dress code eliminates any sign of inferiority and superiority of one Muslim over another. All Muslims should take heed of the appropriate protocols of entering the state of ihram so that they may benefit undoubtedly.

3- The following list of deeds or actions term it to be void and hence must be avoided:

- Men wearing stitched clothing
- Women covering their face and men covering their heads
- The cutting of nails or the shaving of hair
- The hunting of animals
- The wearing of perfume
- The involvement in sexual relations with one's

spouse

4- Being aware of the enemy of inside and outside. As well as the holy Quran says: “those who are with him are hard against the faithless and merciful amongst themselves.” (48:29)

5- Being humble towards the other believers. By entering to the state of Ihram one ensures and serves as a constant reminder for the pilgrim to be humble. It makes no difference if a believer is rich or poor because, in the eyes of Allah, we are all equal. This sacred clothing eliminates any such thought, enjoining all Muslims in the bond of unity and brotherhood. It also reminds pilgrims to remain humble as we shall all taste death one day, clad in sheets of white cloth.

6- Fulfilling the Rights

Fulfilling the promises and rights is an important matter in Islam. Allah Orders in the holy Quran: “Complete the hajj and the ‘umrah for Allah’s sake, and if you are prevented, then [make] such [sacrificial] offering as is feasible. (Al-Baqrah:196)

Abdullah Ibn e Masood narrated that Prophet PBUH said: “keep on doing Hajj and Umrah, for they wipe out poverty and sin Just as the bawl eliminates defilement from iron and gold and silver”.

Paradigm of Spirituality and Full Spiritual Indexes of Hajj

If we accept the reasoning of Dr. Soheil Inayatollah and Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson, it seems that Hajj annual program and its preparations and its stability of advantages is one of the best grounds for renewal of spirituality, because:

- Hajj ritual is a universal program, no color, no ranking is acceptable except servicing to Allah and the society

- Hajj ritual is full of spirituality factors, from the first step of intention to returning to the family and society.

- Hajj is nothing but full of fraternity and brotherhood, in fact Hajj entirely makes Muslims realize that they are actually nothing but brothers to each other in the name of Islam. It eliminates all kinds of differences. It inaugurates a sincere brotherhood among the community and obviously manifests that Islam is a religion of unity and solidarity.

- Hajj ritual is an intellectual oriented program accompany with so much esoteric Symbols which have so many spiritual lessons for everyone, every time and everywhere.

- Hajj ritual is affirmed whatever the other religions clime about the rescue and salvation of humanity.

Now, it would be very appropriate to say that the Abrahamic Hajj ritual is a program, full of rationality, spirituality and culture, full of virtue, ethic and humanity. We hope the establishing of a civil society or utopia and achieving a pure life, reaching the sea-shore of peace, stability and salvation and toward a spiritual paradigm of the new world, as the Quran says: "Thus, we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you". (Al-Baqarah:143)

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