

*Rituals as Symbols: A Case study of Shi'a Sect*



*By*

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*2019*

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## ABSTRACT

*Religious rituals and their symbolism is an important and interesting study. It not only concerns to knowledge but is also essential for the better understanding of a religion and history of the Muslim people. Religion Islam began 1450 years ago in the Saudi Arab and later, reached all over the world. This thesis argues that Shi'a rituals as symbols in a native culture are sources of strengthening faith by intensifying religious events, unifying spiritual awakening and empowering the Shi'a Muslim identity in Arab countries, later on South Asia and then Pakistan.*

*The researcher has conducted archive research and also has quoted the sayings of Quran-e-pak by Allah Subhan o Tahala, Hadith by Holy Prophet pbuh, "Al-Fiqh-al-Akbar" and "Kitab-al-Athar", jurisprudence followed by Sunni, Sunni Sufi thinker, Bareilvi, Deobandi, Zaidiah Shi'a and originally Fatimid Imam Abu Hanifa (699-767 AD), "Tafsir Imam Jaffar al-Sadiq" wrote by Imam Jaffar Sadiq (702-765), "Al-Risala" jurisprudence followed for Sunni wrote by Imam Shafi (767-820), Shi'a Muslim hadith books wrote by Muslim Ibne-al-Hajjaj (815-875), Risalah al-Haqq attributed to Imam Ali, "History of the Prophets, kings and tafsir al-Tabari" wrote by Muhammad Ibne-Jarir-al-Tabari (838-923), "Daim al-Islam (974) written by al-Qadi al-Nauman Ismaili Shi'a, "Man-la-Yahduruhu al-Faqih jurisprudence" followed by twelver Shi'a wrote by Ibne-Babawayh (923-991), "Nahj-al-Balagha by Imam Ali" followed by Shi'a, a collection of sermons, letters and quotes of first Imam janab Ali translated by Sharif Razi (970-1015), Jurisprudence books followed by Ismaili and twelver Shi'a wrote by Nasir al-Din-al-Tusi (1201-1274).*

*Researcher has studied many western and oriental scholars like Sagaster (1993) who worked on the month of Muharram in Baltistan. Schuble (1991, 1993) has worked on Muharram majales and Hegland (1995, 1997, 1998, 2003) has worked Shi'a women and majales rituals in Pakistan. Pinault (1992, 2001, 2003) has worked Shi'a ritual and popular piety in Muslim community, celebration of Muharram in Hyderabad, India, horse of Karbala and Muslim devotional life in India. Ahmad (1987) has worked the lives of Shi'a in Pakistan. Keddie (1993, 1995) has worked Shi'a religion and politics in Iran. Haque (2005) has worked majales of Shi'a and Aghaie (2004, 2005) has worked martyrs of Karbala, Shi'a symbols and rituals in modern Iran. Abou Zahab (2007) has worked Muharram processions in Pakistani jhang Punjab.*

*The present study is conducted in district Chakwal, Punjab which is the best place for the research on Shi'a rituals as symbols because this area is densely populated by Shi'a and the present research probes the rituals as symbols of Shi'a especially in the month of ashura and all the year of Islamic calendar. The present study plans the understanding of mournful ritual performances performed at community level in Chakwal. It also discusses those Shi'a rituals as symbols are not merely rituals of lamentation or a source of*

*redemption but are source for the attainment of worldly desires.*

*This research reveals not only relationship between ethnic-history and symbolic representation in Shi'a faith but also explores the personalities of the Imam (ehl-e-bait) and their enemies. It also probes Shi'a religious processions and the majales in comparison to selected rituals and symbols of other International religions. It explores the origin and development of Shi'a sect in Islamic history which presents brief account of the Karbala and highlights the previous and later events. This research applies the model derived from Turner's symbols; as symbolism of African religion theory to compare and show the importance of Shi'a symbols in group cohesion and solidarity. It explain how ashura rituals and symbols are constructed, embraced, and evolved as well as how these are practiced by Shi'a as a way to reunite and to reconfirm common values shared between members of Shi'a societies. This research also uses a model derived from Max Weber's charismatic personality theory that explains how five characteristics of the charismatic leader relate with the Shi'a Imam and masoomeen. The research concludes by discussing the connection of spirituality with Shi'a rituals as symbols.*



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**Faiza Iqbal**

## *Student Declaration*

*I hereby declare that it is my original work.*

*Faiza Iqbal*

## INTRODUCTION

Religion is a fundamental element in the cultural life of human beings, which is based on the system of ethics and code of conduct. It is an expression of belief, which tells us how to spend life in equilibrium. There are sacred and profane systems in every religion. Sometimes a human being intermingles his/her ideas and performs non-religious actions which are not socially and religiously acceptable, however, we, as members of the society, practice them in our lives. Generally, everyone has his/her own justification about religious activities, which is called cognition of people, to make use of rituals as symbols in daily religious life.

As we all believe that sacred rituals are the main ingredient of any belief system. People perform rituals in order to celebrate and memorize religious events in daily life. Wilkinson describes; there are various religious rituals in any organized religion and cult. The most common subject matter: practices of rituals in all the world religions, are part of regular system of human life, which give their believers chance to get attached with the absolute power at particular points of progress, period of the year, or usual worship (Wilkinson 2008: 30).

Religious symbols are found in all world religions. Groups of people perform rituals year after year traditionally and they utilize the concerned symbols in religious rituals. Durkheim considers symbols as collective consciousness. Individuals of the society communicate by way of secret languages which convey their emotions and sentiments. It explains that folks are in harmony and make them conscious of their moral unison. It is a matter of collective representation. Individuals assume action and reaction with each other through material intermediaries. Human minds come in contact through activities. The homogeneity of these activities gives a collective consciousness. When people develop harmony through collective consciousness, stereotyped movements are formed and then they symbolize them (Durkheim 1947:157-158).

The above lines describe the rituals and symbols which are very important concepts in religions. This also explains importance of rituals and symbols which are correlated in religious performance. Both concepts define shared perception in particular

time among members of the society. People not only memorize but also attribute Holy personalities through ritual performances and use Holy symbols which are combination of latent and manifest meanings of sacred past events.

There are two major sects in Islam, the Sunni and the Shi'a. The Sunni are the orthodox who follow *sunnah*<sup>1</sup>-the path or tradition recording practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)<sup>2</sup>. Sunni believe the four Caliphs as rightly guided and Ali (A.S) is regarded by them as the last of their legitimate Caliphs (Morrish 2007: 260).

Aghaie tries to get on the term Shi'a suggests the meaning of followers, party, group, partisans, or in a rather loose sense, supporters. The literal meaning of the Shi'a is follower and supporter (Aghaie 2005:4).

Like Sunni, Shi'a is the second most important sect of Islam. The Shi'a are the orthodox who follow and support Imams (*ehl-e-bait*). They believe that after the sad demise of Hazrat Muhammad, Imam Ali was the right person to become a leader of *ummah*. Therefore Shi'a perform rituals and venerate the Imams and these rituals cooperate a vital task in Shi'a own identity. Shi'a collectively memorize pain of Imam Hussain (son of Ali), his attendants, and his family. Through these rituals, Shi'a can also express their sufferings and protest representatively against existing inequality and cruelty, as they experience it around themselves.

As above mentioned and the researcher has observed, during the fieldwork, that these sacred rituals symbolically provide historical and religious information about the Shi'a of Pakistan, Chakwal in particular where Shi'a is the main religious group, who are powerful and influential. These rituals and symbols are source of building connection with the almighty Allah and *ehl-e-bait*<sup>3</sup>. In Chakwal, Shi'a perform rituals year after year as traditions and they apply relevant symbols in their rituals.

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<sup>1</sup>The path or traditions recording the practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad

<sup>2</sup> Being Muslims, we add (SAAW) to the names of Prophet Muhammad, (A.S) to the names of Holy Imams and (RA) to the names of rightful companions of the Holy Prophet. However, to avoid repetition, researcher is not using them in the preceding chapters.

<sup>3</sup> People of the House, all the people having sacred blood of Holy Prophet are called *ehl-e-bait* and other *Aaimah* (the plural of Imam) who came by the passage of time and were from the progeny *Aal-e-Rasool* (children of Holy Prophet are also included in *ehl-e-bait*).

Woodward defines valuable information; every object has purpose and laid some latent meanings. The representational and identifiable characteristics of objects call for their semiotic analysis. These objects perform their role and work as particular symbols, which always represent some aspect of a particular culture and are recognized by the people of that civilization. According to the semiotic study, tangible material culture is a signifier that speaks things to others, accomplishing some kind of social work (Woodward 2007: 28-58).

For understanding the idea of Woodward, Shi'a have their ideology and have different kinds of objects or symbols which are laid with latent meanings like *kara*<sup>4</sup>, *panjah*<sup>5</sup>, *jhoola*<sup>6</sup> and *'alam*<sup>7</sup>. If the representational and recognizable characteristics of these Shi'a objects call for their semiotic analysis these become as symbols. These symbols have complete philosophical background and are considered religious and sacred property of Shi'a ideology. The ideas are found in different religions too, such as flag or Shi'a *'alam* as a religious Islamic identity and *triratana* of Buddhism. These symbols work as signifier and they are not actually what these are but working for and according to Woodward their function/role is some sort of social work.

These rituals play an important role in reinforcing Shi'a distinct identity and collective memory. They allow the mourner not only to weep over the suffering of Imam Hussain, his companions, and his family but also to join the past with the present by linking Hussain's incident to that of the supporter's in his lifetime. Through these rituals, the believer can also protest emotionally against contemporary injustice and oppression as he experiences it around himself (Mahdi 1985:213).

This interpretational study focuses on religion, ritualistic activity, symbols and expressive customs and the performing arts of Shi'a sect of Islam in Chakwal, Pakistan.

## **Statement of the Problems**

There is a lot of research conceptual work on world religion's rituals, all over the world,

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<sup>4</sup> It is a silver or iron bangle.

<sup>5</sup> A symbol of claw or palm of the hand made on the flag of Shi'a

<sup>6</sup> Hammock

<sup>7</sup> Shi'a flag

but Shi'a rituals as symbols are rather neglected area of research in Muslim countries, particularly in Pakistan. This research focuses on rituals as symbols in Shi'a sect which need to be discussed at academic level in Pakistan.

To understand the symbolic process, it is essential to study representation as a behavioral activity. Representation requires something that is to be represented. So this study explores the relationships between ideas, things and concepts of rituals as symbols by examining these symbolic representations of rituals both in particular and in general, the contributors enable researcher to find out objects being used in symbolism of Shi'a.

The present study plans the understanding of not only mournful ritual but also actual ritual performances performed at community level in Chakwal; similarly ethno-history is a source to know the reality of an event and build connection of the sacred objects of Shi'a with the past which were also abandoned before and the researcher studies the Shi'a religious processions and different ideas being used in Shi'a rituals as traditions in Pakistan.

The present study not only explores the lives of historical charismatic personalities of Imams and *masomeen* but also discusses Yazid, who is a symbol of evil till the end of the world. The historical and negative dead character of Yazid as this is considered a taboo in our society to discuss or talk about him. The present research provides detailed account of the events prior to and after the events of Karbala, which is the baseline for Shi'a development in the history. Another interesting aspect of this research is to compare the selected rituals and symbols of Shi'a with selected symbolic representation in world religions, in order to explore an impact of religions on one another.

In this study, the researcher is finding on why Shi'a rituals are frequent, widespread among them. Firstly, I am exploring importance of the interpretation of Islamic history that is acceptable to all Muslim sects. Secondly, this research argues the Shi'a rituals as symbolic expressions, which are constructed in the light of historic tradition which were previously neglected. This study is focusing on the intellectual legacy of the Shi'a rituals as symbols with the help of literary accounts. These are verbal historic traditions which should be documented at an academic level. In Social sciences, there is a great delima for researchers that they don't have original sources of their area of

interest and local history which is creating problems for future research studies and researches in writings.

It is also important to note that the researcher studies Shi'a religion not to prove, disapprove or evaluate any religious point of view and also not interested in making a judgment, whether a Shi'a religion is right or wrong. The researcher is pointed out above concerns herself with symbols of non-empirical cultural knowledge and the symbols used in Shi'a rituals and symbolism of the different ritual performed. Understanding a ritual explores how ritual can be understood within the framework of contemporary knowledge either latent or manifest meaning of symbols.

### **Objectives and Significance of the Study**

The objectives of the study are targeted to achieve goals that will make significant contribution in the academia. This research is therefore of great value to all students/scholars and teachers of social science, especially to Cultural Studies and Anthropology of Religion/Comparative Religions. In doing so, it will help better understand Shi'a symbols. It focuses on the rituals as symbols of Shi'a sect of Islam.

Major research aims are:

- To study different rituals of Shi'a sect in general and particularly in Chakwal.
- To trace Shi'a symbolism of rituals in general, and in Chakwal, in particular.
- To conduct comprehensive study of rituals as symbols in the region of Chakwal.
- To explain the world religions, the selected data of Shi'a rituals as symbols, their perspective and compare them with and study their inter-religious impact.

This study is by nature “exploratory” and “basic research” (a form of research) which can be considered major contribution to the Social Sciences on three basis.

1. Theoretical.
2. Cultural.
3. Comparative religions.

Such a comprehensive study some knowledge and understanding of History, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Philosophy and Comparative analytical

disciplines are considerably useful in this study of Religions, not less than a multidisciplinary studies. It is necessary to study the subject with reference to various approaches and disciplines that ultimately contribute to it.

The present qualitative research is useful for the people who are curious to know/understand the philosophy of Shi'a symbolism, practices of Shi'a rituals and religious significance in a native's point of view. In doing so, it contributes to the study of Religious symbolism in general and a specific form of Shi'a symbolism in particular; making significant contribution to Comparative Religions and Symbolic and Cognitive studies.

Today Shi'a have complete system of faith which usually, Sunni and other Muslim sects are not familiar with. Their communication gap brings sectarianism among the Muslim sects all over the world. The present study is an attempt to make the Muslims more cohesive and integrated. For this purpose, it is essential to know the Shi'a faith first and then Shi'a rituals as symbols in a respectful manner which brings harmony and social solidarity among the Muslim sects. The primary aim of the research is to understand Shi'a rituals and symbols in the context of Pakistani culture. In researcher's view, understanding the nature of Shi'a Muharram rituals and Shi'a sect may not only bring harmony in the social setup of Pakistan region but also where Sunni-Shi'a sectarian violence is prevalent. Two major sects Sunni and Shi'a have complete and detailed history of doctrines and writings. Here the researcher is focusing on Shi'a rituals of the daily life to bring harmony in the Muslim society.

There is a growing body of evidence that comparative religions can benefit a wide range of social issues. This systematic study elaborates how rituals are performed in a symbolic way in Shi'a lives which involves all the community members randomly.

It is understood that rituals are always transmitted from the old generation or members of any society to its new generation/members. So it is the true way in which they observe and understand the world in which they live and shape their life by using the symbolic system that makes up their faith.

This research focuses on covert and apparent meaning of the symbols of Shi'a sect of Islam which are attributed to the sacred religious belief system. The researcher has also compared the Shi'a symbolic representation of the faith of Islam with Hinduism,



Buddhism and Christianity. The present study, thus, aims at understanding the rituals performances performed by Shi'a at community level in Chakwal.

### **Chakwal as Locale of the Study**

Pakistan is an ancient land and cradle of several civilizations. Its history goes back into several millennia as is evidenced by Stone Age discoveries (Khan 1969:11-12).

Its cultural heritage is preserved in the form of a large number of sites of pre-historic, proto-historic, historic and Muslim periods. They provide special source material for the study of history, ancient customs, beliefs and cultures of this region.

The present study is conducted in district Chakwal near salt range in Pakistan and the area is predominantly populated by Shi'a and where the researcher has studied the rituals as symbols of Shi'a, especially, in the month of *ashura*<sup>8</sup> and all the year of Islamic calendar.

Findings of this research are based on the native point of view of Shi'a of district Chakwal.

Why researcher has preferred district Chakwal for conducting research?

- ✓ Shi'a are 30 % of total population of district Chakwal.
- ✓ This area is the best for the research on Shi'a rituals and its symbolism and the researcher has mentioned earlier that this area is densely populated by Shi'a and sectarianism is at its peak. This researcher wants to resolve this issue or atleast contribute for minimizing the gulf between the sects.
- ✓ The locale was familiar for the researcher and instigates to probe more and more to know about the community.
- ✓ As this is researcher's home town and language formalities have facilitated researcher's work as the language spoken is Punjabi. Being fluent in Punjabi the researcher had no communication problem.

As noted in district gazetteer, the former name of Chakwal is Tauluka Dhan Chaurasi which is located 90 kilometers south west of Islamabad. The city is

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<sup>8</sup> The 10<sup>th</sup> day of Muharram is observed by Shi'a sect is called *ashura*.

named after Chaudhry Chaku Khan, once chief of the Mair Minhas, Rajput tribe of the area. Chaku Khan along with his followers had settled at the village with his name in the sixteenth century. During the era of Mughal emperor, Zaheer uddin Babar, his brothers Mureed and Karhan also settled villages. The district Chakwal was created as self-governing district of the Rawalpindi Division in 1985, by combining the subdivision Chakwal of Jhelum, the subdivision Talagang of Attock and Choa Saidan Shah, carved out of subdivision Pind Dadan Khan, Jhelum, and joining it with subdivision Chakwal. Choa Saidan Shah was upgraded as subdivision in 1993 (1981: 4-10)

The map of Chakwal indicates that Chakwal borders with the districts of Rawalpindi and Attock in the North, district Jhelum in the East, district Khushab in the South and district Mianwali in the West, lying at the entrance of the Potohar Plateau and the Salt range.

District census report of Chakwal states the district lies between 71- 48 to 73 – 16 East longitude and 32 – 33 to 33 – 12 North latitude. The total area of district Chakwal is 6,609 square kilometers, which is equivalent to 1,652,443 acres. As enumerated in the 1998 census, the total population is 1,083,725 of which 12.01 percent only were urban making Chakwal the most rural district in Punjab (1981: 2).

## **Religion**

According to union council of Chakwal, the entire district comprises of Muslims and Christians. The Muslims population consists of Sunni and Shi'a in Chakwal. Sunni call themselves as *ehl-e-sunnat*. They have divided themselves on the basis of their beliefs into two separate *masalik* (sects).

- *Deo-Bandi*
- *Barelvi*

The researcher has found that *deo-Bandi* believes that there is no need of mediator for contact with God and they seem to be rigid in their ideas. According to them man can have direct relationship with God. However, *barelvi* Sunni and Shi'a sects believe that *pir*

and *faqeer*<sup>9</sup> are the source of link with God.

## Research Methodology

The present study is an attempt to highlight the significance of rituals and symbols in Shi'a life. Most of this historical study is based on the scholarly accounts, primary source of data, review and analysis of religious texts, articles and books produced particularly on Shi'ism. For primary sources, the researcher has conducted fieldwork to interview relevant persons. This is a “systematic” and “qualitative research” which was conducted during 2011-2017.

Original source of data was also used by the researcher as many Shi'a scholars have studied and written the books on their Shi'a Ideology. Among them following are more famous for their work.

Imam Jaffar Sadiq (702-765) wrote Tafsir Imam Jaffar al-Sadiq, Tabari (838-923) wrote history of the Prophets, kings and tafsir al-Tabari. Daim al-Islam (974) written by al-Qadi al-Nauman (Ismaili Shi'a. Ibne-Babawayh (923-991) wrote Man-la-yahduruhu al-Faqih jurisprudence followed by twelver Shi'a. Sharif Razi (970-1015) translated Nahj-al-Balagha by Imam Ali followed by Shi'a, a collection of sermons, letters and quotes of first Imam janab Ali. Nasir al-Din-al-Tusi (1201-1274) wrote jurisprudence books followed by Ismaili and twelver Shi'a.

The present research is based on emic and etic views<sup>10</sup> and researcher has used

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<sup>9</sup> A *pir or faqeer* is the name given in Punjabi/Urdu language to a Muslim saint or Holy person.

<sup>10</sup> This study is focusing on the background of Shi'a rituals and symbols that present a case study aims to explore, using primarily an “emic approach” (An emic account describes how local people think (Kottak 2006: 47).) to document the objects used in Shi'a symbolism and behind its philosophy which has its mystical significance. The researcher has applied “direct participant observation”, “case study”, “interview guide” research methods for emic approach. It is important to note here that it is shown as cultural and traditional practice in Shi'a Muslims societies. The fact is that its roots are embedded in the society and culture which cannot be ignored.

The “etic approach” (etic account is description of the behavior of the human by social scientists or social analysts in terms that can be applied across cultures) of the literature review and theoretical framework is an effort to better understand the Shi'a symbolism in rituals which places the empirical research within theoretical framework.

direct participatory observation technique to collect the field data. The findings of the study are mainly based on the “empirical primary data”, however, the researcher has also conducted “archive research”<sup>11</sup> (secondary sources). The researcher has applied “direct participant observation”, “case study”, “interview guide” research methods for emic approach, both are view as forming empirical primary data. It is important to note here that it is shown as cultural and traditional practice in Shi'a Muslims societies. The fact is that its roots are embedded in the society and culture which cannot be ignored.

The “etic approach” (etic account is description of the behavior of the human by social scientists or social analysts in terms that can be applied across cultures) of the literature review and theoretical framework is an effort to better understand the Shi'a symbolism in rituals which places the empirical research within theoretical framework.

The researcher is deeply involved with cultural process and has planned “natural experimental design” for research (this is a research design in the field which is going on all the time through direct participant observation). In locale, the researcher has applied direct participant observation and has introduced herself as a researcher who is writing a book on the Shi'a rituals however rapport building has helped the researcher to build closer contacts with the Shi'a. The researcher has collected data from the Shi'a houses of Chakwal community and visited locale and houses with key informants who provided information of the native Shi'a. The researcher used to visit *Imam bargah* and Shi'a residences for data collection.

The researcher has collected first hand information about the rituals as symbols of Shi'a. The researcher has used social research method especially anthropological techniques of participant observation, case studies, in-depth interviews, discourse analysis and photography. It was not an easy task to apply all the above mentioned tools as the researcher has faced a number of problems. For example, in this research the issue of gender sensitivity was there as females are not allowed to observe the male section of rituals performance.

As the aim of this research is primarily to understand Shi'a rituals and symbolism, the researcher has employed research techniques, case study, ethnography, and various other methodological approaches. First of all the researcher defines her unit of data

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<sup>11</sup> Literature review

collection. This is the way researcher describes, who will provide primary source of data. Units of data collection are groups of people who provide information to relevant to this research topic.

The researcher defines the unit of data collection for the current research as:

1. Shi'a scholars (who have grip on their faith and traditions)
2. Functionaries of the office of local union council
3. Shi'a of the local Chakwal community
4. Popular discourse of Shi'a (both verbal and written)

The researcher has applied simple random sampling and eighty five interviews were conducted randomly of that total sample for data collection. The researcher has picked Shi'a experts.

## **Outline of the Study**

“**Introduction**” of this study is comprises the background of this study, objectives, scope of the research, locale Chakwal, methodology and theoretical framework.

**Chapter 1 “Previous Studies on Religious Symbol or Symbolism”** consists of literature review which defines the background of religious symbols of religions in general and Shi'a in particular.

**Chapter 2 “Historical Development of the Shi'a Sect”** is divided into two parts; the first part probes historical charismatic personalities of *masomeen* and discusses their lives. The second part explores the development of Shi'a sect in Islamic history which presents brief account of the Karbala and hilight before and later events.

**Chapter 3 “Shi'a Rituals throughout the Islamic Year”** is divided into four parts; the first part consists of Shi'a religious rituals throughout the Islamic year. The second part

discusses processions and the *majales*<sup>12</sup>. The third part discusses the different concepts of Shi'a traditions in Pakistan. The third part describes two historical foes who directly affected *ehl-e-bait* and especially Imam Hussain.

**Chapter 4 “Rituals as Sacred Symbols of Shi'a Faith”** consists of the comprehensive field data and popular discourse on Shi'a symbols which shows the *mannat*<sup>13</sup>, norms and traditions of their faith practiced in Holy rituals in daily life and especially during the month of Muharram and Safar. These comprise religious, political, social and cultural symbolism and enduring symbolism of the Karbala narratives continue today.

**Chapter 5 “Relationship between Ethnic-History of Symbolic Representation in Shi'a Faith”** argues the sacred objects of Shi'a in the light of the historical religious events and doctrine which is perceived, taught and learnt by the Shi'a.

**Chapter 6 “Comparison of Shi'a Rituals and Symbols with Selected Rituals as Symbols of World Religions”** defines the world religions, their background and contains data on comparison of selected symbolic representation in world religions with Shi'a symbols.

**Conclusions** Last but not the least, the researcher draws conclusions from the findings presented in chapters 1-6. It incorporates the emic perspective of the previous two chapters with the etic approach to the theoretical framework in an effort to better understand the Shi'a symbols in rituals, which places the empirical research within theoretical framework.

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<sup>12</sup> The plural of *majlis* is an Arabic term meaning “a place of sitting”.

<sup>13</sup> *Mannat* is a ritual which observed by some person who promised to himself if some desire is achieved.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **PREVIOUS STUDIES ON RELIGIOUS SYMBOL OR SYMBOLISM**

This chapter argues that religion is a universal phenomenon. Religion is the key aspect of social life which is one of the most influential, deeply rooted and significant forces in human society. Islam has formed and shaped mutual bonding among the followers, which controls their families and society, economic and political life. Shi'a religious beliefs, human actions, and religious groups and organizes their collective expressions.

#### **1.1 What is Religion and Faith?**

Social Scientists have worked on the phenomenon of faith and tried to identify, what is religion? They have come up with variety of answers. The simplest definition of religion is a belief system or faith. Faith is a conviction and devotion of a person, which can vary from person to person in a particular society. It is difficult for an ordinary person to measure the level of understanding of religion, but not impossible for a social scientist, however, it is the most difficult task, as religion is considered to be a very sensitive issue in human life.

Ahmed defines the word religion as a complex phenomenon and its fundamental characteristics lie behind the historical manifestations of a particular religion. Archaeologists and Anthropologists have done a lot to develop a deep understanding not just a historical manifestations but their interpretations, their relationship with the ultimate divine authority, their correlation with the spiritual and ethical aspects, all leading towards a distinct belief systems are important for religious phenomenon. Religious belief or expression is manifested in terms of sacred or the Holy, carrying with it the sense and realization of the absolute and ultimate reality, as against profane

expression. The Holy is experienced in religion as a super natural power, coming to human life and touching it from beyond itself (Ahmed 2005:3).

## **1.2 The Concept of God**

Morrish explains, Freud (1907) describes the concept of God which was developed within the individual unconscious, and used in psychological term as an illusion. According to him, man had a psychological need for the father type figure who offered a sense of security and protection against the hardships, disappointments and the miseries, which human beings experience in the world. This is in human psychology, until he learned to be independent and matured. God was the result of a wish completion (Morrish 2007:12-13).

Matthew Arnold (1875) describes religion as “morality touched with emotion”. A theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1799) calls it a sentiment or feeling of absolute dependence, another writer John Henry Newman (1833) found its essence in “authority and obedience”. Social and political theorist Karl Marx (1843) was uncertain about religion, called it “the opium for the people”, but he also observes something optimistic and describes it as “the heart of the heartless world”. An anthropologist Sir James Frazer (1922), defines as, “control the course of nature or of human life”. In many cultures, the spirit of religion is humanity and a belief in one or more gods, but not all of the belief systems that usually identify religions have gods. Many Buddhists do not worship a deity, and Jainism (an important and influential Indian religion) does not have a God (Wilkinson 2008:1-2).

Tilley states, individual always have a personal, social and cultural identity which has been objectified in our things around. Through these we understand ourselves and others, as reflecting something prior and more basic in our consciousness or social relations. These things are the very medium through which we make and know ourselves as member of the society (Tilley 2006:61).

Southwold offers the following attributes of religion.

1. Basic is relationship of men with godlike beings,
2. A complete sacred and profane system,



3. An orientation towards salvation from the ordinary conditions of worldly existence,
4. Ritual practices,
5. A complete system of beliefs on the basis of faiths,
6. A moral values system supported by such beliefs,
7. Supernatural sanctions or laws,
8. A mythology,
9. A book or complete oral traditions,
10. Specialist religious elite,
11. Association with a moral community, a church (in Durkheim's sense),
12. Finally association with an ethnic group (Southwold 1978:362-370)

Durkheim asserts that religion is a unified system of beliefs and chief bond of society. For him, religion is an expression of social solidarity and collective beliefs; man alone is nothing. He selects religious practices relative to sacred things which are symbolic. Religious symbols are not signs, which "signify states" as expressed through signs. He sees ritual participation as the true essence of religion (Durkheim 1947: 230-231).

According to Iqbal, religion moves from individual to society. In its attitude towards the ultimate reality, it is opposed to the limitations of man; it magnifies his claims and holds out the prospect of nothing less than a direct vision of reality. The essence of religion is faith, and faith like the bird, sees its "trackless way". Further he says, it cannot be denied that faith is more than mere feeling. It has something like a cognitive content (Iqbal 1977: 1).

Clifford Geertz formulates functional definition of religion as: A religion is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, meaningful and long lasting moods and motivations in men which seems uniquely rational and practical (Clifford 1966:4). In this definition the most important element is the provision of meaning because establishment of shared meanings (symbols) is an essentially social event.

Schleiermacher (1799) traced man's religious sentiments as a feeling of absolute dependence upon some external spiritual sources, while Sigmund Freud (1907) argued

that man felt his limitations and as a result, in order to avoid becoming neurotic about it, he projected his need upon some father figure or substitute whom he referred to as God (Morrish 2007:72).

### **1.3 Features of the World Religions**

Wilkinson states the common themes of world religions which are listed by theologian Ninian Smart in his book “The Religious Experience of Mankind” (1969).

1. The first feature is *doctrine*, basic principles and teachings.
2. The second, *mythology*, comprises the stories about the gods and the history of the religion.
3. The concept of *religious experience*, the way in which humans can encounter the divine, states of consciousness.
4. The next feature is the *religious institution* such as the Catholic Church or a small but organized body such as Buddhist monastery.
5. The fifth feature is the *ethical content* of the religion. It is set of practical instructions that tell followers how to lead their lives.
6. The sixth feature is *ritual*, the gamut of ceremony from solemn sacrifice to the joyous outpouring of religious festivals.
7. Finally the *sacred objects and places*, buildings or natural setting that have some spiritual significance (Wilkinson 2008: 16-17).

### **1.4 Religious Rituals**

James considers religious ritual as a source of emotions and activity. It is a desire to act discharge itself as energy and expresses through the effective symbol and the performance of the ritual know the importance of the ritual and symbol. Their identification lead them to behave the way as they learned or else. They wear objects charged with potency, and frequently take part in sacramental of some part of the sacred species, in the case of totemic rites (James 1938:79).

Similarly, human struggle for his own identity and society or group life, which offers a system of rites and rituals, to satisfy his requirement like Christians (who worship Merry), Jews (worship Moses) and Shi'a who collectively take part in rituals and

believe that symbols have power and rituals become the expression of their performer's emotions. As Shi'a, who express their liking and love for Imam Hussain, when they take part in their religious rituals.

Turner states rituals as prescribed behavior, rituals are advised behavior for occasions at different times in a religious calendar ultimately lead to beliefs in supernatural creatures or powers. The symbol is the smallest element of ritual which retains the specific properties of ritual behavior and it is the vital part of specific structure in a ritual context (Turner 1967: 19).

Similarly the present research has found that the Shi'a have a complete belief system and their socially acceptable rituals are practices through symbols, which are apparently ordinary things, but when they stand for a particular event, it become special in a ritual context, like wearing black dress is an ordinary practice and when Shi'a wear the black costume for their ritual occasions, it imparts them mystical power, significance and an affiliation to the group.

### **1.5 Rituals as Symbols**

Duncan (1969) explains objects as representation of social sentiments in the past, Similarly Woodward (2007), also focuses on semiotic analysis of objects as:

In religious ritual, social sentiments are truly represented in the shape of religious symbols. Religious symbols are not ordinary objects but also give strong feelings and society becomes conscious of itself which is called identification. Identification leads to continuation of human realization. Collective sentiments always remain among the members alive of the society and they need a formula or any kind of figurative representations. This is how they express and spread to others when they all collectively participate in a common social life (Duncan 1969: 158).

Religion is one of the five major institutions of human society. Khattar states religion in the social sciences perspective as: Each discipline of Social Science studies religion in different perspective. For example, Archaeology focuses on the prehistoric times of human life and evidences of religious rituals as an important sign to the ancient society, Anthropology and Sociology study the role of religion in societies, and

Psychology focuses on the impact of religion on the individual's behavior. Religion is a universal phenomenon that plays an important role in the life of any society. This role has been observed since the beginning of human life (Khattar 2003:15-20).

## **1.6 Sect as Subpart of the World Religion**

Sects are part of every religion of the world. It's about social aspect of people adherence or extreme devotion to a particular sect. According to Wilson, sects emerge when the level of stresses and tensions is differentially experienced by the members of the society (Wilson 1970:31).

Khan and Rehman states the term sect stands for a small religious or political group or cult that is offshoot from a large established group. All the sects have many beliefs and practices in common with the religion or party that have broken off from, but the members of the particular sect are differentiated by doctrinal differences. People of the party have a variety of views and interpretations but they highly focus on the basic principles as a condition for membership (Khan & Rehman 2011: 237-243).

Sects are in many ways, religious experiments, which offer the social scientist an opportunity to study religiosity in its purest forms, uncontaminated by the complexities of motive, organization and doctrine, which characterize the long-established churches and denominations. Sects also offer the opportunity to study, what are often radically new ideas and beliefs, styles of organization and life and the processes by which they emerge (Hamilton 2001:299).

Horton says our daily routine life is usually marked by religious action which directly links with objects that are believed to respond in different ways. In our own culture aspects of purpose, intelligence and emotion, which are also the distinctive categories for the description of human action come in action. The relationships between human beings and religious objects can be further defined as governed by certain ideas of patterning such as categorized relationships among human beings. Religion is a source of human's social ties (Horton 1973:211).

Religion Islam *began* 1450 years ago in the area that now constitutes the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and reached all over the world. Wilkinson describes that the

news of Islam was spread in the following centuries, after, Muhammad received the faith. Arab traders carried their religion along trade routes across Asia, to the areas such as India and Indonesia. They also travelled through Africa, preaching Islam across North Africa and southwards to the west of the continent. There were also Arab conquests, which brought Islam to Central Asia and Spain. Today, most people in North and West Africa, the Middle East and Indonesia are Muslims. There were many converts in the West too, where the voice of Islam has never been more widely heard (Wilkinson 2008: 125).

The term Shi'a conveys the meaning of followers, party, group, associates, partisans and supporters (Khan 2006:9).

### **1.7 Doctrine of Shi'a**

Before discussing the Shi'a rituals as symbols, it is important to know Shi'a doctrine which is based on five principles.

1. They believe in oneness of Allah.
2. Prophethood and divine scripture Quran is a system of an Islamic institution by which Allah sends Prophets to guide mankind. Shi'a religion is based on Quran-e-pak and Holy Prophet whose messages had already being discussed in hadith<sup>14</sup>.
3. Leadership is another divine institution, which succeeds the institution of Prophethood. Its appointees (Imams) are divinely selected and Hazrat Imam Ali is the first Imam of Shi'a.
4. Shi'a believe in Allah's final judgment for mankind.

Here the researcher can state that the Shi'a doctrine is similar to the doctrines of other Muslim sects and their participation in Holy rituals is to express Shi'a affiliation to *ehl-e-bait* and to satisfy the spiritual or emotional requirements of the practitioners. Ritual performances are the way to strengthen the social bonding of Shi'a, collective consciousness and an expression of respect or obedience for an absolute authority of Allah and his beloved Prophet and people of the house. It is also the way of obtaining social acceptance or approval for particular events. Shi'a arrange rituals for the sake of

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<sup>14</sup> The sayings of Holy Prophet Muhammad

their identity and express their deep love and loyalty for Muhammad and *aale-Muhammad*<sup>15</sup>. It is also observed that not only Shi'a but other Muslim sects and followers of the other religion also participate in Shi'a rituals. They not only participate but also observe the *mannat*.

When we discuss about the Shi'a rituals and symbols we cannot forget the battle of Imam Hussain on the battlefield of Karbala,

Iraq is a famous place, Karbala is a city in Iraq. The word Iraq was used by the Arabs to denote the land between the Tigris and Euphrates. It has been derived from *Iraqi ud dalu* and *Iraqi-ul-Qurbat* (Mas'udi 1965:2- 43).

The southern half of the great plain of Mesopotamia was called by the Arabs as al-Iraq meaning the cliff or shore but it is doubtful how this term came originally to be applied. The alluvial plain of southern half was known by the Arabs as al Sawad, the black ground which is frequently used as synonym to al-Iraq (LeStrange 1905: 24).

Karbala is a city in Iraq, located about 100 km southwest of Baghdad. A Shi'a scholar has described that the word "Karbala" is derived from "*karb*" in Arabic which means grief and "*bala*" is for trials so the meaning of Karbala is a place which gives grief for trials.

The battle of Karbala is the most important symbolic event for all Shi'a. The battle serves as a religious model among Shi'a of the world. The vast majority of distinctly Shi'a rituals are derived from the events that took place in the battle of Karbala.

Pagadi describes Indian Muslims and Hindus both have great intimacy for the Holy Imams, the Shi'a and the Sunnis have different Holy days. However, festivals like the Muharram, the *Ramazan*<sup>16</sup> and the *bakr eid*<sup>17</sup> are common to both sects, another activity in the Muharram<sup>18</sup> festival is the preparing of signs and symbols like *ta'ziya* or *taboot*, bamboo or tinsel models of the shrine of the Imam at Karbala, some of them

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<sup>15</sup> The children of Prophet Muhammad

<sup>16</sup> The 9<sup>th</sup> month of Islamic calendar

<sup>17</sup> Islamic religious celebration referred as *bakr eid*

<sup>18</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> month of Islamic Calendar

are large and handsome costing a few hundred rupees. Poor Hindus and Muslims, men and women, in fulfillment of vows, throw themselves on the roadway and roll in front of the shrine (Pagadi 1969:204).

Muslims of all sects perform their rituals according to their respective faiths in all over the world. Chelkowski informs that the event of Karbala is the most symbolic event for the Shi'a and now they venerate their ceremonial rituals and symbols as:

All or some Shi'a rituals are performed among different Shi'a communities worldwide during the Karbala commemorations. In fact, there are some Shi'a communities that have elaborated these rituals and developed new ones altogether. Some examples of regional rituals not universal to all Shi'a are the use of the *zanjir* (swinging chains linked together at one end, used in Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, India and Pakistan), chest beating while holding razor blades between the fingers (practiced among the Shi'a of South Asia), and *tatbir* (striking the skull with a sword, found in Iraq and Lebanon) (Chelkowski 2005:156).

The researcher has found it meaningful during fieldwork, in the month of Muharram and Safar, Shi'a are required to keep their houses and clothes clean and their bodies pure, avoid economic work, stay at home and wear black dress. They do not sleep on a bed or if they do so it is turned upside down, as they consider it disrespectful to sleep on bed or cot while their Imam or leaders stand on the ground. They avoid social gathering but take part in *majales*, serve meal named *neyaz*<sup>19</sup>, refrain from union and other sensual pleasures, offer *namaz*<sup>20</sup> and narrate *nohey* and *mersiya*<sup>21</sup> to purify their souls and body as well. On the day of *ashura* most of the Shi'a and some Sunni perform fasting, give alms to the poor and needy people. They take bath especially on this day to purify their body and soul. Another reason is to get rid of impurities and different diseases.

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<sup>19</sup> Holy food

<sup>20</sup> Prayer

<sup>21</sup> Funeral elegy

## **1.8 Original Sources of Shi'a Ideology**

Many Islamic religious scholars have studied and written the books on Shi'a Ideology. Among them following are more famous for their work on Shi'a ideology:

Imam Abu Hanifa (699-767 AD <sup>22</sup>) wrote al-Fiqh-al-Akbar and Kitab-al-Athar, jurisprudence followed by Sunni, Sunni Sufi thinker, Barelvi, Deobandi, Zaidiah Shi'a and originally Fatimid. Imam Jaffar Sadiq (702-765) wrote Tafsir Imam Jaffar al-Sadiq, Imam Shafi (767-820) wrote al-Risala, jurisprudence followed by Sunni. Muslim Ibne-al-Hajjaj (815-875) wrote Shi'a Muslim hadith books. Muhammad Ibne-Yaqub al-Kulayni (864-941) wrote Kitab al-Kafi hadith book followed by Shi'a. Muhammad Ibne-Jarir-al-Tabari (838-923) wrote history of the Prophets, kings and tafsir al-Tabari. Daim al-Islam (974) written by al-Qadi al-Nauman (Ismaili Shi'a. Ibne-Babawayh (923-991) wrote Man-la-yahduruhu al-Faqih jurisprudence followed by twelver Shi'a. Sharif Razi (970-1015) translated Nahj-al-Balagha by Imam Ali followed by Shi'a, a collection of sermons, letters and quotes of first Imam janab Ali. Nasir al-Din-al-Tusi (1201-1274) wrote jurisprudence books followed by Ismaili and twelver Shi'a. Al-Ghazali (1058-1111) wrote the niche for lights, the incoherence of the philosophers, al-Chemy of happiness on Sufism. Rumi (1207-1273) wrote Masnavi Dewan-e-Shams Tabrizi on Sufism. Wasail al-Shi'a wrote by Shaikh Hur al-Aamili (1624-1693) and Kamil al-Ziarat by Ibne al-Qummi. A Shi'a Anthology (archived from the original on 2001 retrived 2006) wrote by William Chittick, Hussain Nasir and Muhammad Hussain Tabatabai, a brief introduction to exemplary hadith from the 12 Imams. "A Bundle of Flowers" collected by Ayatollah Syed Kamal Faghih Imani, a popular English language secondary collection of Shi'a hadith. It narrates traditions from Shi'a album as Kitab al-Kafi and Man-la-yahduruhu al-Faqih.

## **1.9 Previous Researches Conducted on Shi'ism**

Shi'a have been studied by many western and oriental scholars. Among them following are more famous for their work on Shi'ism:

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<sup>22</sup> Anno Domini is a Latin word stands for "in the year of the lord" refers specifically to the birth of Jesus Christ.



Sagaster (1993) has studied the month of Muharram in Baltistan. Schuble (1991, 1993) has studied Muharram *majales* and Hegland (1995, 1997, 1998, 2003) has studied Shi'a women and *majales* rituals in Pakistan. Pinault (1992, 2001, 2003) has studied Shi'a ritual and popular piety in Muslim community, celebration of Muharram in Hyderabad, India, horse of Karbala and Muslim devotional life in India. Ahmad (1987) has studied the lives of Shi'a in Pakistan. Keddie (1993, 1995) has studied Shi'a religion and politics in Iran. Haque (2005) has studied *majales* of Shi'a and Aghaie (2004, 2005) has studied martyrs of Karbala, Shi'a symbols and rituals in modern Iran. Abou Zahab (2007) has studied Muharram processions in Pakistani Punjab.

The present research got influenced by the “symbolic and cognitive studies” that the most of Shi'a rituals and symbols emerge from the incident of Karbala. The Shi'a Muslims memorialize the great sacrifice of Imam Hussain, his family members and his companions throughout the Islamic year especially in the months of Muharram<sup>23</sup> and Safar<sup>24</sup>.

This research applies the model derived from Turner's symbols, as symbolism theory, to compare and show the importance of Shi'a symbols, in group cohesion and solidarity, by explaining how *ashura* rituals and symbols are constructed, embraced, and evolved as well as how these are practiced by Shi'a, as a way to reunite and to reconfirm common values shared among members of Shi'a societies.

Turner defines symbols as:

1. Symbols, which may be described as the molecules of ritual, have great semantic richness and depth and possess a specific structure (Turner 1966: 295). Similarly Shi'a have different symbols like '*alam*, *zul jinnah*<sup>25</sup>, *jhoola*, *ta'ziya*<sup>26</sup>'. These are part of Shi'a rituals, which have deep meaning and have own structure.
2. Symbols have three major dimensions of significance (a) the exegetic, (b) the operational, and (c) the positional (Ibid).

Similarly Shi'a symbols have also three dimensions.

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<sup>24</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> month of Islamic calendar

<sup>25</sup> Horse of Imam Hussain

<sup>26</sup> Replica of Holy shrines

- ✓ The exegetic dimension consists of the whole corpus of explanations for a particular symbol's meaning, offered by indigenous informants. The informants must of course be classified according to their social characteristics (age, sex, status, religious role, degree of esoteric knowledge, etc.) (Ibid).

For example, in Shi'a symbols, *khak-e-shifa*<sup>27</sup> is a significant source of treatment of many diseases. One of the key informants has informed the researcher that Shi'a have valued highly *khak-e-shifa* on the basis of the religious role, as this *khak* is taken from the Karbala's ground where Imam Hussain fought for the great moral cause. This relationship between the *khak-e-shifa* and Hazrat Imam Hussain imparts it distinct attributes which may be conveniently compared with those of *aab-e-zamzam*. This *khak* possesses spiritual as well as medicinal qualities.

- ✓ In the operational dimension, a symbol's meaning is equated with its use and interpretation. We observe what the ritual participants do with it and not just what they say about it. Here, too, we consider not only the symbol but also the structure and composition of the group which avails itself of it, or performs mimetic acts, with direct reference to it. We further note the effective qualities of these acts, whether they are aggressive, sad, joyful, penitent, derisive so on, and so on forth, in terms of the cultural interpretations of these expressive acts. We also inquire, why certain persons and groups are absent on given ritual occasions, and whether this absence represents deliberate exclusion (Ibid).

In Shi'aism, the operational dimension of *zul jinnah* symbol implies its ritual performance. *Zul jinnah* is a famed symbol of protection. This symbol is famous not only among the Sunni but also Hindus. People bring their children to *zul jinnah*, to gain security and protection. They also give edibles to the horse as an expression of their love.

- ✓ In the positional dimension we see the meaning of a symbol as derived from its relationship to other symbols in a specific cluster or gestalt of symbols whose elements acquire much of their significance from their position in its structure (Ibid).

In Shi'a ideology, thunderbolt is a symbol and the positional dimension of the symbol has been acquired from its relationship to Hazrat Abbas. Thunderbolt has

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<sup>27</sup> The dust or sand of the ground of Karbala

acquired much of its significance as Hazart Abbas went to the river and brought water bravely. It is associated with his bravery, sacrifice, selfless attitude, upright approach and compassion.

3. The nominal basis consists of the name assigned to the symbol in ritual/non-ritual contexts or in both sets of contexts (Ibid).

For example in Shi'a context, tying a black thread is a ritual which supposedly protects from evil although some Shi'a consider it a non-religious ritual.

4. The substance of objects used as symbols is inherent in their culturally selected natural and material properties (Ibid).

For example *jhoola jhulana*<sup>28</sup> is a ritual of Shi'a, which consists of their culturally selected natural and material properties too.

5. The artifactual aspect is exposed by the symbolic object, after it has been worked upon, fashioned or treated by purposive human activity; in short, when it becomes a cultural artifact (Ibid).

In Shi'ism, the symbol of *ta'ziya* is built to express an association with Imam's tomb as the original tomb which is its replica and Shi'a consider it as sacred as the original tomb. It becomes a cultural artifact. Here comes a very important question in the researcher's mind that why Shi'a make use of these symbols?

As history is concerned with uniqueness of these symbols of the Shi'a which are sacred and blessed because these have strong relationship with the People of the House, and the event of Karbala. These are a source of strength to their belief system interpretation of events and emotional association with the martyrs of Karbala. As Shi'a believe in the remembrance of the Prophet, martyrdom of the Imam Hussain and their progeny.

### **1.10 Who is True Charismatic leader?**

The researcher tries to explore Max Weber's charismatic personality theory of ritual from his book "The Theory of Social and Economic Organization" and relates the five characteristics of the charismatic leader to Imam and *masoomeen*.

The term charisma is applied to a certain quality of an Individual personality by

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<sup>28</sup> *jhoola jhulana* is a ritual practice in which people present new toys as thanks giving.

virtue of which he is considered to be over and above ordinary men and endowed with supernatural, superhuman or at least specifically exceptional power or qualities. In old times this peculiar kind of qualities were attributed to the Prophets, to the people with a reputation for therapeutic or legal wisdom, to the leaders in the hunt and heroes of the wars.

Further he says:

“The administrative staff does not consist of officials, at least its members are not technically trained. It is not chosen on the basis of social privilege or from the point of view of domestic or personal dependency. It is rather chosen in term of the charismatic qualities of its members. The Prophet has his disciples, the leaders has his followers. There is no such thing as appointment or dismissal, no career, no promotion”.

Here comes the questions in the mind of the researcher and the other novice, that why do people follow some personalities blindly as in the case of Shi'a sect. In reply, there comes a logical justification for the prosecution that there must be and are, some assessable qualities, in the Imam or leader or in other words, He possesses a charismatic personality, as this is the case with the Shi'a sect that even, after, the passing of fourteen hundred years, they are still under the influence of personality of Hazrat Imam Hussain and other *ehl-e-bait*.

Weber discusses the five characteristics of the charismatic authority, the researcher has studied this and applied to twelve Imams, which is discussed as under:

There are five characteristics of charismatic authority.

1. “There must be a recognition of validity part of the subjects to charismatic authority. This must be freely given and guaranteed by what is held to be a sign of proof” (Weber 1947:359).

Further in the course of discussion he says that in its purest form this sign is always a miracle, like it is said:

“The Muslim prayers, according to all Muslim sects, are not accepted by God until blessings are said for the Prophet and his progeny”.

It is not simply devotion to the leader, or obedience to his commands, but the acceptance of the leader's commands as the follower's duty which correlates them in this type of authority. The charismatic leader does not regard his charisma as dependent on

the obedience of his followers. Same is the case with the Shi'a that they are not simply devoted to the leader but also accepting the command of the leader as their duty. The Shi'a perceive the role of Imams as spiritual as he is a moral, theological and even mystical leader. Yazid and his ancestors in the contrast had worldly desires to attain political rule over the Muslim world.

2. “The charismatic leader tends to think his God or his magical or heroic powers have deserted him if “proof” of his charismatic qualification cannot be “witnessed” frequently and intensively” (Ibid).

The leader of the small band of persons who were martyred in Karbala was not other than Imam Hussain, son of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib, Hazrat Bibi Fatima and grandson of the Holy Prophet. For Imam Hussain Holy Prophet said, ***“Hussain is from me and I am from Hussain. May God Love Whoever Loves Hussain”***.

Second quality of “the charismatic leader “was also related to Imam Hussain that he regarded all these difficulties and oppressions, from Yazid’s army, as the test for his patience<sup>29</sup> from the almighty Allah.

3. “The group subject to charismatic authority is bound together by an emotional form of communal relationship” (Ibid).

Further, during the course of discussion Weber indicates that the administrative staff of a charismatic leader does not consist of “officials”, at least its members are not technically trained. It is not chosen on the basis of social privilege or from the point of view of domestic or personal dependency. It is rather chosen in terms of the charismatic qualities of its members. “The leader has his discipline; the war lord, his selected henchmen; the leader, or “dismissal”, no career, no promotion. There is only a “call” at the instance of the leader on the basis of the charismatic qualification of those whom he summons”.

This discussion also matches with the issue under consideration as the war was also a call and pre-planned by the God almighty. When Imam Hussain was born, Hazrat Safia (daughter of Abdul Motalib), Hazrat Asma (daughter of Umair) and Hazrat Um-e-Salma were present there. Prophet Muhammad asked Hazrat Safia to bring the newborn. Hazrat Asma brought him and Prophet took him in his arms and recited prayer in to his

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<sup>29</sup> *Sabar*

right ear and then placed the baby in his lap and wept. Hazrat Asma asked Prophet anxiously, why are you crying? He replied, after me the foe party will martyr him and do not tell Fatima about this.

This can also be elaborated with the event in the life of Imam Hussain. Once on the event of *eid-ul-fitr* (the sacred annual festival on 1<sup>st</sup> Shawal in the Islamic year after the month of Ramazan), all the children were very happy wearing the new clothes. Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain were also in their young age. They said to their mother Bibi Fatima (the daughter of the Holy Prophet) for new clothes. The Holy Prophet was also sitting there. He prayed for them and two suits came for them from the heaven. The notable point is that the colors of the suits were yellow and red. When the Holy Prophet saw the color of the suits, he was grieved. Hazrat Fatima or *bint-e-Rasool*) asked the reason then he replied that the yellow suit was for Imam Hassan which indicated the colour of poison (as he was later assassinated by Mu'awiya and was poisoned) while the red suit was for Imam Hussain which indicated the colour of blood or the battle (as he was later martyred by Yazid in the battle of Karbala). So this was preplanned by the almighty Allah, but the reason was to test their patience and belief in God.

Moreover Weber says:

4. Is that in times dominated by tradition “charisma is the greatest revolutionary force”. This does not mean that charisma is the only revolutionary force (Weber 1947:359-385).

Shi'a have their own philosophy to perform their rituals known as Muharram *ashura* or Muharram rituals. The historical accounts show that these rituals are assigned to the great sacrifice of the Imam Hussain at Karbala in 61<sup>st</sup> year of the Islamic calendar. These *ashura* rituals are practiced by Shi'a as a way to reunite and reconfirm common values shared among the members of Shi'a societies.

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHI'A SECT

This chapter is divided into two parts, in first part the researcher discusses historical Islamic charismatic personalities of Imams and *masomeen ehl-e-bait*. These Holy personalities are directly or indirectly part of Shi'a rituals and Shi'a venerate them all in their rituals and symbols.

In second part of this chapter, the researcher discusses the development of Shi'a sect in the perspective of Islamic history, which consists of a brief historical background of the Karbala and highlights prior and later events.

According to this genealogical family tree, Banu Hashim tribe has been derived from Hazrat Adam's son Sheith, who is buried in Ajhodhiya India. Later on Hazrat Lamk, Hazrat Nuh, Hazrat Abraham, Hazrat Ismail, Hazrat Ishaq, Hazrat Lut, Hazrat Ya'qub, Hazrat Yusuf, Hazrat Hud, Hazrat Salih, Hakeem Luqman, Hazrat Ayub, Hazrat Sho'aib, Hazrat Musa, Hazrat Haroon, Hazrat Daud, Hazrat Salaman, Hazrat Ilyas, Hazrat Yunus, Hazrat Uzaer, Hazrat Zulkifil and Hazrat Isa, all are the Holy ancestors of Hazrat Muhammad.

Most of the Sunni believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad had not chosen any successor. After disagreement with the Muslims at Medina, they had chosen their own chief of Muslim community and elected Hazrat Abu Bakr (father of the Holy Prophet's favoured wife Hazrat Aysha). Kramer describes the Sunni point of view as, usually the Sunni consider that Caliphs were the legitimate successors to the Prophet Muhammad. The Caliphs were selected in accordance with a political process rather than being explicitly selected by the Prophet himself (Kramer 1987:49).

Sardar describes the Shi'a point of view as, after the sad demise of the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Ali and the Prophet's closest kinsmen were arranging the Holy body for burial. Hazrat Abu Bakr, Hazrat Umar and Abu Ubaidah from Muhammad's companions in the Quraish tribe met with the leaders of Medina and decided to elect the matured Hazrat Abu Bakr as the successor of the Holy Prophet. Hazrat Ali and his followers were

dissatisfied but they agreed. After the martyrdom of Hazrat Usman, Imam Ali was requested by the revolutionaries at Madina to take control when Imam Ali became the fourth Caliph; a major sect, Shi'a was developed in Islam (Sardar 2009:39-40).

## 2.1 The Concept of *Imamat* in Shi'a Perspective

The researcher has observed during the fieldwork that the main characteristic of Shi'a sect is *Imamah*. All Shi'a believe that there is an Imam as the teacher, guide and ruler of the religious and secular aspects of life of any Muslim. He should be one of the descendants of the Holy Prophet and all of them believe that Imam Ali, Imam Hassan, Imam Hussain are Imams, however there are differences in sub sects of Shi'a about the recognition of later Imams.

According to Allama Tabatabaei, the *Imamate* and religious leadership in Islam has been studied with three different perspectives:

1. Islamic government,
2. Islamic sciences and order,
3. Leadership and innovative guidance in the spiritual life (Tabatabaei 1997: 57).

The Shi'a are the partisans of Hazrat Ali and regard him as the first Imam. The researcher has sorted out, Shi'a believe in devotion to the Imam which brings them closer to God. Hazrat Ali has direct blood relation with the Prophet Muhammad and is the first Imam. He is a political leader as well as religious guide and the interpreter of God's will as formulated by the Islamic law. The Shi'a believe Imams as the source of continued divine guidance through their divinely inspired guidance and authority. Sunnis, on the other hand believe that the final religious authority in interpreting Islam lies in *ijmah*<sup>30</sup> or collective judgment of the community (the consensus of the '*ulama*), *qias* and *ijtihad* because *wahi* as the ultimate source of guidance has been terminated after the Holy Prophet's death.

The researcher has sorted out that Holy Prophet Muhammad said to the Muslims to love Imam Ali and forbade to humiliate him and other Imams and considered to regard

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<sup>30</sup> Consensus of opinion, it comes from *jama* or *jamaat* collection or gathering. It is the secondary source of law. It is a consensus of majority opinion of the Muslim jurists at a particular time and of a generation.



the love of Ali as symbol of faith (*emaan*). The concept of *Imamate* plays the central and pivotal role in Shi'a ideology. *Imamate* began with Hazrat Ali, who is also accepted by the Sunni Muslims as the fourth of the rightly guided Caliphs to succeed the Prophet but the Shi'a also admire Hazrat Ali as the first Imam and his offsprings Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain and lineage of the Imams continues till the twelfth Imam.

## **2.2 Life Histories of Imams and *Masoomeen***

The researcher has conducted interviews with Shi'a experts, during fieldwork and sorted out that Shi'a have strong faith in twelve Imams and fourteen *masoomeen* (innocents). The researcher has found that People of the House were not ordinary but simple, religious, knowledgeable, charismatic and divinely gifted with different God gifted qualities. They were also famous for their miracles and predicted the future events before time. All Imams faced difficulties in their lives and almost all Imams were poisoned by the Umayyad or Abbasid ruler of their time as they get jealous to their popularity and fame. They martyred Imam in brutal ways and used that form of poison which was usually used for hunting the animals and birds and in Arab countries, its use was prohibited for human beings.

It is also a point to be noted that Imams have a strong connection with their followers and lovers when people memorize them and ask Allah for help and consider Imam as *wasella*<sup>31</sup>, Allah pays attention to the devotee and fulfills their desires as this Holy family is beloved to Allah. Allah loves Hazrat Muhammad and his progeny and loves those who love them all.

### **1 Hazrat Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him**

The last Prophet of Allah, the most famous and loveable person on the earth is first innocent or *masoom*, his date of birth was 12<sup>th</sup> of Rabi ul awal, 1<sup>st</sup> hijri. His father's name was Hazrat Abdullah Bin Abdul Mutlib and His mother's name was Hazrat Bibi Aminah. Hazrat Muhammad's family name was Ahmed (Hussain 1990: 11-14).

Nadvi informs that his children's names were Hazrat Fatima-tul-Zahra, Syeda

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<sup>31</sup> Source

Ume Kalsum, Hazrat Zainab, Hazrat Ruqeiya, Hazrat Abdullah, Hazrat Qasim and Hazrat Ibrahim. He loved all his children so much but he loved Hazrat Fatima-tul-Zahra the most. His sons passed away in their early childhood. Hazrat Muhammad's tomb is in the Madina city, which is also called as a city of peace. He was famous for his truthfulness and honesty, not only among Muslims but also among non Muslims (Nadvi 1952: 21).

Quran-e-pak says, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and those who are with him are severe with the disbelievers, merciful to one another. You can see them bowing and prostrating, seeking bounty from Allah and good pleasure (48:29). Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with him (98:7).

Hazrat Muhammad passed away on 28<sup>th</sup> of Safar, 11<sup>th</sup> hijri when he was sixty three years old (Hussain 1990:15).

## **2 Hazrat Fatima-tul-Zahra**

Hazrat Bibi Fatima Zahra is the second *masoom*. Her date of birth is 20<sup>th</sup> Jamadi ul sani and 5<sup>th</sup> Hijri. Her mother's name was Hazrat Khudija-tul-Kubra. Bibi Fatima is the only one heir of the richest woman in Arabia. Bibi Fatima Zahra was the wife of Hazrat Ali and she was fifteen years old when she got married. Her family names were Batool and Syeda-ul-Nisa (Hussain 1990: 70-72).

Shi'a have informed the researcher during data collection that the sixth Imam Jaffar Sadiq says, Allah has given nine names to Bibi Fatima, As-Siddiqah<sup>32</sup>, Al-Mubarakah<sup>33</sup>, Al-Tahira<sup>34</sup>, Az-Zakiyyah<sup>35</sup>, Ar-Radiyah<sup>36</sup>, Al-Mardiyah<sup>37</sup>, Al-Muhaddathah<sup>38</sup> and Az-Zahirah<sup>39</sup> (Reza 2003: 32).

The Shi'a scholar Asad Ali has shared that in the Musnad (collection of

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<sup>32</sup> The righteous

<sup>33</sup> The blessed

<sup>34</sup> The pure

<sup>35</sup> The unblemished

<sup>36</sup> The one content with Allah's pleasure

<sup>37</sup> The one pleasing to Allah

<sup>38</sup> The one spoken to by angels

<sup>39</sup> The Luminous

transmitted *hadith*) of the eighth Imam Raza, it is reported that the Holy Prophet declared, “I named my daughter Fatima because Allah weaned her”.

She had four children and fifth (named Mohsin) was still birth. Her children’s names were Hazrat Hassan, Hazrat Hussain, Bibi Zainab, Um-e-kalsoom and Mohsin. She passed away on 13<sup>th</sup> of Jamadi ul sani, 11<sup>th</sup> Hijri when she was just twenty eight years nine months and fifteen days old. Her *roza mubarak* (tomb) is in (*janat ul baqi*) Madina (Saudi Arabia) (Hussain 1990: 74).

One of the Shi’a has shared his view about Bibi Fatima and quoted that Hazrat Muhammad says, Fatima will be the first lady of the women of Paradise and Hassan and Hussain will be the chiefs of the youth of Paradise.

A respondent named Mohsin Ali has shared quotations that it is in some traditions, Fatima is addressed by the Prophet, myself, you, Ali and Hassan and Hussain will share one place in Paradise. He has elaborated according to a religious scholar Sayuti, the words of the traditions indicate that Fatima (May Allah be pleased with her) was the most excellent of all the believing women, including Hazrat Mariam, Hazrat Aysha and Hazrat Khudija, as she was called the first lady of the women of paradise by Prophet himself.

The researcher has sorted out, doubtlessly, Hazrat Aysha was a great scholar of *sharia*<sup>40</sup> and that she used to give legal decisions in the times of all of the four Caliphs<sup>41</sup> Hazrat Khudija and Hazrat Aysha were the most excellent women in the world but Bibi Fatima was the most dearest daughter of the Holy Prophet and she was buried near the *masjid* of the Holy Prophet. Rodenbeck describes, the most important place located adjacent to the *masjid* of the Prophet in Medina, is the area with the graves of Muhammad’s aunts, nine of his wives, his infant son Ibrahim, as well as male descendants through the marriage of the Prophet’s only child to survive, his daughter Fatima, his cousin Ali, the second, fourth, fifth and sixth Imams (Rodenbeck 2006:44).

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<sup>40</sup> Islam

<sup>41</sup> *Khalifa*

### **3 Imam Ali - 1<sup>st</sup> Imam**

Hussain describes Imam Ali as: He is the third *masoom*. He was born on 13<sup>th</sup> of Rajab in *khana-e-ka'bah*. Hazrat Imam Ali 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Imam is known as Amir-al-Mo'mineen (commander of the innocent), also known as Shah-e-Mardan Ali (king of men). He came of the clan Banu Hashim. His father's name was Abu Talib who was paternal uncle of Hazrat Muhammad (Hussain 1990: 102).

The researcher has investigated that after the death of his grandfather Abdul Mutlib, Imam Ali spent his life under the guardianship of the Prophet. The Holy Prophet also belonged to the same clan. His surname was Abu Torab. He was the fourth Caliph of Islam. His mother's name was Hazrat Fatima Bint-e -Asad. His family names were Haider and Murtaza.

Reza states, Imam Ali was a man with middle height, with very black, big and piercing eyes, very handsome cast of face, very clear complexion of face, broad shoulders, powerful arms, vast chest, strong and roughened hands, a long muscular neck and broad forehead. He was a great philosopher and writer as well. The Holy Prophet and Hazrat Khudija loved him as a son and he was married with Hazrat Fatima (Rizvi 2008: 121-149).

Hazrat Ali did not marry another woman during the life time of Hazrat Fatima, after her martyrdom he married Yamama, after her death he married Hanafiyah, from whom he had a son named Muhammad Hanfiah. After her death he married again (Reza 2003: 93).

Imam Ali had eleven sons and sixteen daughters. His children's names were Hazrat Abbas, Hazrat Umar Akbar, Hazrat Fatima, Hazrat Abu Bakr, Hazrat Umar, Hazrat Usman, Hazrat Ramalah, Hazrat Um-e-Kalsum, Hazrat um-al-Hassan and Hazrat Muhammad Hanfiah. He was martyred on 21<sup>st</sup> of Ramazan, 40<sup>th</sup> hijri (Hussain 1990:121).

The researcher has found that Shi'a believe, there is no match to Imam Ali in his devotion, generosity, bravery courage and character. His virtues are an example to the mankind and no words are matched to express these virtues. Imam Ali is a symbol of

courage in battle, honesty and straight forwardness. His letters and discourses are compiled in the book named *Nahj-al-Balagha*. He faced tough time during *khilafat*. During Hazrat Usman caliphate most important Governorship of the Muslims empire had been entrusted with the Umayyad family, which was led by Mu'awiya, the Governor of Syria. Mu'awiya was father of Yazid. Mu'awiya refused to accept Imam Ali as fourth Caliph and blamed to him provide shelter to the murderer of Hazrat Usman. Hazrat Ali had faced social pressure from all sides. He lived for sixty three years. He was martyred by Ibne-Maljam from the Khawarij, when he came there for *azan-e-fajr*<sup>42</sup> in the masjid at Kufa. Ibne-Maljam wounded him and Imam died two days later. His tomb is in Najaf (Iraq). It is said that Prophet Adam and Hazrat Nuh have also been buried in Najaf (Reza 2003: 113-115).

A Shi'a scholar Imtiaz Jaffary has shared the motive of murder of Imam Ali that Ibne-Maljam was a devotee of Imam Ali and used to spend time in his company. Imam Ali knew in his life that Ibne-Maljam would create problem for him and he shared this news with him however Ibn e Maljam negated at that time. Ibne-Maljam used to visit a prostitute, it is said that she was a very beautiful lady and belonged to Banu Umayyah. Ibn e Maljam loved her and had strong desire to marry her. Once he proposed her and she denied, as she loved Imam Ali and wanted to marry him, however, Imam Ali refused her proposal. Ibne-Maljam insisted again and again to get married with him, however, she was very disappointed, when she was rejected by Imam Ali. She planned a contract that if Ibne-Maljam murders Imam Ali for the sake of her pleasure, she would marry him. Ibne-Maljam refused this deal but he felt affection for her and decided to murder Imam Ali.

Ahsan Ali (a Shi'a scholar) has shared this quote during the fieldwork that Imam Jaffar Sadiq says, "Whenever you perform the *ziyarat* of Imam Ali, know that you have also done the *ziyarat* of Prophets Adam and Nuh".

#### **4 Imam Hassan – 2<sup>nd</sup> Imam**

Imam Hassan is the fourth *masoom* and 2<sup>nd</sup> Imam. He was born in 15<sup>th</sup> of Ramazan, 3<sup>rd</sup> hijri in Madina. He is also known as Hassan al-Mujtaba (the chosen), his father's name

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<sup>42</sup> Call for morning prayer

was Hazrat Imam Ali and his mother's name was Hazrat bibi Fatima Zahra. He was the grandson of the Prophet Mohammad and was brought up in the household of the Prophet himself and he had great love and affection for these two grandchildren Hassan and Hussain. His family names were Shabir, Zaki and Mujtaba. He is considered as the Imam by the Shi'a after the sad demise of Imam Ali. Imam Hassan was thirty seven years old when Imam Ali was martyred at Kufa (Haseeb 1993:12-45).

A Shi'a religious scholar Aahad Shah has informed the researcher that Imam Hassan had great resemblance with the Holy Prophet Muhammad in facial features, manners and character as he used to say that "O Hassan, you are like me in features and character and manners", also he said "Hassan is from me and Hussain is from Ali" (May Allah be pleased with them).

A Shi'a religious scholar Ali Hassan has described Imam Hassan as, Imam Hassan was handsome, he had a white, reddish face. He had black eyes, smooth cheeks, thick beard, and curly, plentiful hair. He had broad shoulders and big fleshy bones. He was of medium height neither long nor short.

Imam Hassan performed the *haj*<sup>43</sup> on foot twenty five times. When Imam Hassan performed an ablution for prayers and his face became pale. He gave away deserving people from his property twice in the way of Allah. He mentioned Allah in all conditions whether pleasant or otherwise. After his resignation, he spent quiet life. He refused to involve himself in any political activity (Hussain 1990: 135).

Imam Hassan had eight sons and seven daughters. His children's names were Hazrat Hassan, Hazrat Abu Bakr, Hazrat Umar and Hazrat Ume-al-Hassan. Both Sunni and Shi'a believe that he was poisoned by his wife named Ja'dah at the instigation of Mu'awiya. He sent one of his agents to contact Imam Hassan's wife *Ja'dah* who was the daughter of Ash'ath (once a secret agent for Mu'awiya against Imam 'Ali in the battle of Siffin). Ash'ath-ibn-Qais was a spy in 'Ali's armed forces, also the father of Ja'dah. Ja'dah was asked for a small favour, to put a little poison in Imam Hassan's food, and in return Mu'awiya would give her a large sum of money and also make her wife of his son Yazid. She found the offer too attractive to ignore, and foolishly agreed to accept it (Ali

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<sup>43</sup> Pilgrimage

2005: 98).

Ja'dah mixed poison in honey or water and gave it to the Imam. When Imam Hassan took the poisoned honey or water and offered *namaz-e-fajr*, he became seriously ill. He did not disclose to anyone but to his brother Imam Hussain and designated his brother Hussain to be the third Imam because Imam Hassan knew he was poisoned. Imam Hassan had wished his burial by the side of his grandfather Prophet Muhammad. Imam Hussain made all the arrangements in Medina but Mu'awiya's Governor did not allow and used military force to stop. Imam Hassan was forty seven years old when he was poisoned. People missed Imam Hassan in Madina, first they did not believe Mu'awiya had poisoned him, later they found out the truth that Mu'awiya wanted his son Yazid to succeed him. Imam Hassan's seven sons participated in battle of Karbala. His date of martyrdom was 28<sup>th</sup> of Safar, 50<sup>th</sup> hijri. Imam Hassan lived for forty six or seven years. His tomb is in Madina, Janat ul Baqi cemetery next to his mother Bibi Fatima (Hussain 1990: 132-139).

### **5 Imam Hussain – 3<sup>rd</sup> Imam**

Imam Hussain is the fifth *masoom* and 3<sup>rd</sup> Imam, his date of birth is 3<sup>rd</sup> of Shaban, 4<sup>th</sup> hijri. Imam Hassan's younger brother's name is Imam Hussain. He is known as Hussain-al-Shaheed, Syed ash-Shuhada (prince/master of martyrs), and Shah Hussain. His father's name was Hazrat Imam Ali, who is the first Imam of Shi'a and his mother's name was Hazrat bibi Fatima. He was also the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (Rizvi 2003:120).

One of the Shi'a scholars Abbas said that at the time of birth of Imam Hussain angel Hazrat Jibrael came to Hazrat Muhammad and gave new baby name by the order of Allah "Hussain". At that day angel praised and consoled the Holy Prophet for Hussain expected martyrdom.

He had six sons and four daughters. His children's names were Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Abu Bakar, Hazrat Umar, Hazrat Fatima and Hazrat Sakeena. After martyrdom of Imam Hussain, Yazid's army cut Imam's head and took him to the Kufa. In the way, they placed Imam's head on a stone which had Imam's blood, still gets fresh on the every 10th of Muharram. A Shi'a has mentioned that the *khak-e-shifa* turns red every year on the day of *ashura*. Imam Hussain lived for fifty seven years. His tomb is in Karbala-e-Moala

(Iraq) (Hussain 1990: 151).

Ayoub describes, it is believed that the martyrs of *Badr* are favoured by God and were supported by the host of angels. Those same angels came to Imam Hussain at the time of Karbala on his way from Medina to Makkah and offered him supports, as Allah had commanded them. On the other hand, he informed them to witness his death and guard his tomb until the coming of the Mahdi (Ayoub 1978:124).

Shi'a piety also believes that God is supposed to have chosen one thousand men, who would protect his religion from the beginning of the world till its end. Three hundred and thirteen men had joined and defended Talut. Three hundred and thirteen men fought in *Badr* and at the end it is believed that three hundred and thirteen men will support the Mahdi. God had selected the men who fought and died with Imam Hussain for this honour before the creation of the world. They faced death but God protected them against pain as he did with the martyrs of *Badr* (Ibid: 125).

A religious scholar Syed Abbas has quoted the famous Sufi Persian philosopher Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti saying during the data collection,

*“Shah ast Hussain, Badshah ast Hussain,  
Deen ast Hussain, Deen e Panah ast Hussain,  
Sar dad, na dad dast, dar dast-e-yazeed,  
Haqaa key binaey La ila ast Hussain<sup>44</sup>”* (Rizvi 2003: 153)

## **6 Imam Ali – 4<sup>th</sup> Imam**

Hazrat Imam Ali is the sixth *masoom* and fourth Imam. He was born on 15<sup>th</sup> of Jamadi ul awal, 36<sup>th</sup> hijri. His father is third Imam Hussain. His family names were Zain ul Aabiden and Syed Sajjad (Hussain 1990: 215).

Ali explains 4<sup>th</sup> Imam as, his mother was Bibi Shahar Bano who was a princess from Persia, the daughter of the king Yazid Gard II. She was brought as a prisoner of war during the period of Imam Ali and married her with Imam Hussain on 31st A.H. Imam

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<sup>44</sup> *Imam Hussain is the Prince, Hussain is the king,  
He is faith, and faith's defender most daring,  
He preferred death to Yazid's allegiance,  
With his blood, Islam has verily been living*



Zain-ul-Aabiden was born from this wedlock, however, she died within ten days of the birth of Imam Sajjad. Imam Sajjad spent the first two years of his life under the care of his grandfather Imam Ali and after his death, he was brought up under the care of the 2nd Imam Hassan. He had eleven sons named Imam Muhammad Baqir, Abdullah, Hassan, Zaid, Umar, Hussain, Salman, Ali, Muhammad Asghar and Hussain Ashgar and four daughters named Khudija, Fatima and Ume-Kalsum. His date of martyrdom was 25<sup>th</sup> of Muharram, 10<sup>th</sup> hijri. He lived for fifty seven years. It is said by the historians that he was also poisoned on the order of Walid bin-Abdul- Malik. His tomb is in Janat-ul-Baqi, Madina (Saudi Arabia) (Ali 2005:410).

### **7 Imam Muhammad Baqir – 5<sup>th</sup> Imam**

Imam Baqir is the seventh *masoom* and 5<sup>th</sup> Imam. He was born on 1<sup>st</sup> of Rajab, 57<sup>th</sup> hijri and his mother's name was Hazrat Fatima Bint-e-Imam Hassan. His family names were Baqir (who has knowledge) and Shakir. Imam Baqir was three or four years old when his grandfather Imam Hussain was martyred in the Karbala and he was present at that event. He had four wives, five sons and two daughters. It is said that he was poisoned by the nephew of Hashim who was an Umayyad ruler. His date of martyrdom was 7<sup>th</sup> of Zil haj, 114<sup>th</sup> hijri at the age of fifty seven. His tomb is in Madina (Hussain 1990:277-291).

Imam Muhammad Baqir was son of Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden, he was a child when his family suffered at the battle of Karbala. Imam Baqir had witnessed Umayyad and Ibne al-Zubair's political power and his father maintained distance from the biased establishment. Imam was very famous among Sunni and Shi'a Muslims for his knowledge (Lalani 2001:37-38).

### **8 Imam Jaffar Sadiq – 6<sup>th</sup> Imam**

After the martyrdom of Imam Muhammad Baqir, Imam Jaffar Sadiq became Imam. He is the eighth *masoom* and 6<sup>th</sup> Imam of the Shi'a. His date of birth was 17<sup>th</sup> of Rabi ul awal, 83<sup>rd</sup> hijri. He is also known as Jaffar (the truthful), his mother's name was Hazrat Ume-Farwah-Binte- Qasim Bin Muhammad. His family name was Sadiq. He had seven sons and three daughters. His date of martyrdom was 15<sup>th</sup> of Shawal, 148 hijri. He was also

poisoned by the Abbasid ruler of that time. He lived for sixty five years. His tomb is in Janat-ul-Baqi (Hassan 2010:1-17).

Shi'a scholar Asad Ali has informed the researcher that Allama Tabatabaei describes in his book that Imam Jaffar Sadiq was a religious man. Imam was the founder of Jaffari jurisprudence and formulated the Shi'a doctrine. It is also said that Imam Jaffar had compiled and recorded numerous *hadith* from Imams in his life (Tabatabaei 1997:68-69).

### **9 Imam Musa Kazim – 7<sup>th</sup> Imam**

Imam Musa Kazim is the ninth *masoom* and 7<sup>th</sup> Imam, he is also known as Musa ibne Jaffar, his mother's name was Hazrat Hameda Khaton. His family name was Kazim. His date of birth was 7<sup>th</sup> of Safar, 128<sup>th</sup> hijri. He was also poisoned in the prison of Haron-ur-Rasheed at Baghdad where he spent fourteen years of his life. His date of martyrdom was 25<sup>th</sup> of Rajab, 183<sup>rd</sup> hijri and he lived for fifty five years. (Hassan 2005: 4-67).

Shi'a scholar Yusaf Shah has informed the researcher that according to reliable historians: Imam Musa Kazim had thorough religious indication since his early childhood. He was imprisoned by Abbasid Caliphs many times in his life and died in Baghdad (Iraq), his shrine is also in Baghdad.

When Caliph Haron Rasheed imprisoned Imam Musa Kazim, he praised and thanked Allah to give free time to worship (Sharif 2000: 120).

### **10 Imam Ali Raza – 8<sup>th</sup> Imam**

Imam Ali Raza is the eighth Imam, also known as 10<sup>th</sup> *masoom*. He is also famous as Ali ibn Musa, his mother's name was Hazrat Um-ul-Nabiyen. His family names were Raza, Imam Zaman and Gharib-ul-Ghuraba. He was born on 11<sup>th</sup> of Zil-qad, 153<sup>rd</sup> hijri. He had only one son named Hazrat Imam Muhammad Taqqi and his generation is called Rizvi. He was poisoned by Abbasid Caliph Ma'mon-ul-Rasheed. His date of martyrdom was 23<sup>rd</sup> of Zil haj, 203<sup>rd</sup> hijri. He lived for fifty one years. His tomb is in Mashhad (Iran) (Ali 1999:4- 16).

According to Shi'a scholars and historians, after the death of Imam Musa Kazim,

Hazrat Ali Raza became eighth Imam. He is founding father of the Sufism. He was a well-informed and famous Caliph and successor of Caliph Ma'mon Rasheed.

### **11 Imam Muhammad Taqqi – 9<sup>th</sup> Imam**

Imam Muhammad Taqqi is known as 11<sup>th</sup> *masoom* and 9<sup>th</sup> Imam of the Muslims. Imam Taqqi's date of birth is 10<sup>th</sup> of Rajab, 195 hijri and his mother's name was Hazrat Salika Nobia. His family names were Taqqi and Jawad (the generous). He had two sons named Imam Ali Naqqi and Meberqa and had two daughters also. He was also poisoned, his date of Martyrdom was 29<sup>th</sup> of Zil haj, 220<sup>th</sup> hijri. He lived for twenty five years. His tomb is in Qazmeen e Baghdad (Iraq) (Rizvi 2003:272-275).

Imam Taqqi was son of Imam Ali Raza and he became Imam in the period of Abbasid Caliph Ma'mon Rasheed. Once caliph was going for hunting and he met Imam Taqqi on his way when Imam was seven or eight years old. Ma'mon Rasheed asked the little boy about his lineage and said "what are you doing here". His reply was straight forward. "As you can see what I am doing". The Caliph was amused with this answer and went for hunting where his hunter bird brought a small fish. He was astonished that how and why this bird brings this fish? When he came back and reached near this boy again, he hid the hunt in his hand and asked the boy. O son of Imam Ali, "tell me what I have in my hand"?

Imam Taqqi replied that "Caliph's falcon hunted the small fish and he is astonished that how a bird can hunt a fish, however, he can hunt a fish". The Caliph was delighted and decided to marry his daughter with this boy. Later on, the Caliph called a gathering of scholars from different sects and religions to ask questions from Imam Taqqi in his court and he replied them all and people were astonished with his knowledge and information. Imam Taqqi was married to Caliph Ma'mon-ul-Rasheed's daughter in his early age (Donaldson 1933:190-198).

### **12 Imam Ali Naqqi - 10<sup>th</sup> Imam**

Imam Ali Naqqi is the 10<sup>th</sup> Imam and 12<sup>th</sup> *masoom*. His mother's name was Hazrat Samana Khatoon. His family names were Naqqi and Hadi. He had five sons and his

generation is called Naqvi. His date of birth was 5<sup>th</sup> of Rajab, 214<sup>th</sup> hijri and His date of martyrdom was 3<sup>rd</sup> of Rajab, 254<sup>th</sup> hijri. He was poisoned by the Abbasid Caliph. He lived for forty years. His tomb is in Sarman Rai (Iraq) (Hassan 2008: 67-69).

### **13 Imam Hassan Askari -11<sup>th</sup> Imam**

Imam Hassan Askari is the 13<sup>th</sup> *masoom* and 11<sup>th</sup> Imam. He was born in Madina, dated 10<sup>th</sup> of Rabi ul sani, 232<sup>nd</sup> hijri and his family names are Zaki and Askari. His mother's name was Hazrat Habiba and his wife's name was Nurjis Khaton.

A Shi'a scholar Ali Abbas has shared miracles of Imam Hassan. One of them is that in early childhood, Imam slipped and was dropped in a well and women started crying. At that time his father *janab* Imam Ali Naqqi was offering *namaz*. When Imam Ali Naqqi completed prayer and came near well and saw that Imam Hassan Askari was sitting on the surface of water and playing with it.

Ali Abbas also shared that Imam was a knowledgeable person, he studied Quran and *sharia* in detail and helped others. He studied different languages and could communicate in Arabic, Persian, Hindi and Turkish to the people who came to meet him in the king's court for solution of their problems. Imam Hassan Askari spent most of his life in chains as prisoner by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'tamid.

Historians write that Imam Hassan Askari had no social contact and at the age of twenty two he got *Imamat*. His date of martyrdom was 8<sup>th</sup> of Rabi ul awal, 260<sup>th</sup> hijri. He was also poisoned by the caliph as he was afraid of Imam's popularity among the public. He lived for twenty eight years and two months. He is buried in Sarman Rai (Iraq) with his father (Rizvi 2003: 327-341).

### **14 Imam Muhammad Mahdi – 12<sup>th</sup> Imam**

Imam Muhammad Mahdi is the 14<sup>th</sup> *masoom* and 12<sup>th</sup> Imam. It is said that the name of his mother is Hazrat Nurjis Khaton. His family names are Mahdi, Qasim, Hujat and Sahib ul asro Zaman and title is Abdul Qasim. His date of birth is 15<sup>th</sup> of Shaban 256<sup>th</sup> hijri. Imam Mahdi is son of the Imam Hassan Askari (Hussain 1999: 374).

Shi'a scholar Ali Nawaz has informed the researcher that Imam departed in his

youth and did not die. He remains as the hidden Imam who will return at the right time to reign of purity and righteousness. Rizvi writes that Imam is alive by the order of Allah and is hidden<sup>45</sup>. He will appear before the event of the Day of Judgment to launch justice on the earth. It is a very famous Shi'a tradition that Imam Mahdi will appear on the earth from heaven and will fight for the moral cause along his three hundred and thirteen followers and whenever he will be martyred, start counting from that day, after exact forty years of the event, Day of Judgment will be witnessed.

In the Shi'a view, the Prophet's family includes Imam Ali and the following ten Imams descended through Imam Hussain for a total of twelve. *Ehl-e-bait* (twelve Imams) are regarded as reliable mediators between Allah and his creation to understand the hidden meanings of Quran (Rizvi 2003:351-352).

The line of Imams seems to end up at the close of the ninth century CE after the death of Hassan Askari, the eleventh Imam, who had no apparent heir, the Shi'a community fell into profound disagreement about how to respond to this. Over time the answer evolved from doctrine of the Twelfth or hidden Imam, which remains the belief of the majority of Shi'a today. According to this doctrine, Askari did not in fact die without a heir, rather he had a son and designated him a successor, but the child's birth was concealed because of the troubled times and fear of Sunni persecution. The son, however, named Muhammad, and known as the Imam Mahdi or divinely guided one, decided that he would have no successors and would not reveal himself to his followers, but would remain hidden, or in occultation. In Shi'abelief the Imam Mahdi has remained alive since the ninth century CE, but is in hiding, and from where he retains control over the affairs of the world. He will reappear one day in Makkah, when absolute justice will be established, marking the end of terrestrial time and all religion in the world will belong to Allah (Grieve 2006:278-279).

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<sup>45</sup> *Perdah*

### **2.3 Hazrat Abbas – Companion and brother of Imam Hussain in the battle of Karbala**

Hazrat Abbas is a Holy personality who was born on 4th Shaban 26 AH. He was the son of Hazrat Ali ibne-Abi-Talib and half brother of Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain. Hazrat Abbas had three brothers Abdullah ibne Ali, Jaffar ibne Ali and Usman ibne Ali (Hussain 1990: 215).

A Shi'a religious scholar has informed the researcher that Hazrat Abbas did not open his eyes after his birth until his brother Imam Hussain took him in his arms. A respondent scholar Syeda Anees said that Hazrat Abbas had great love for Imam Hussain. Hazrat Abbas married a distant cousin Lubaba. They had three sons named Fadl, Qasim, and Ubaidullah. Hazrat Abbas is a symbol of courage and reliability (Ibid :221).

There are some personalities who badly affected *ehl-e-bait* in general and janab Imam Hussain in particular. Narrator Abu Amir or Abu Malik al Ash'ari narrated that he heard the Prophet: "From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks, and the use of musical instruments as lawful. And from them, there will be some who will stay near the side of a mountain and in the evening their shepherd will come to them with their sheep and ask them for something, but they will say to him: 'Return to us tomorrow.' Allah will destroy them during the night and will let the mountain fall on them and he will transform the rest of them into monkeys and pigs and they will remain so till the Day of Resurrection" (Sahih al Bukhairi, vol. 7, hadith no.494B).

According to this genealogical tree Holy Prophet Muhammad is from Banu Hashim tribe. Abu Sufyan is from Banu Umayyah tribe and he got married with Hindah and had children named Mu'awiya, Marwan, Khalid bin Yazid and Ume-Habiba (She was the life partner of Hazrat Muhammad).

## 2.4 Hazrat Mu'awiya

Hazrat Mu'awiya was the son of Abu Sufyan who was the leader of the Quraish and for a long time, he remained the most formidable enemy of the Prophet. On the fall of Makkah, he along with his father Abu Sufyan and all other members of Banu Umayyah, accepted Islam and devoted himself to its cause. The Holy Prophet appointed him his private secretary and married his sister, Um-e-Habiba too. The political career of Mu'awiya, actually started from the region of Hazrat Umar. After the death of his brother, Yazid bin Abu Sufyan, in the battle of Yarmurk, Mu'awiya was made the head of a district in Syria. By virtue of hard labour and successful administration, he soon won the appreciation of Umar who made him the Governor of the entire province of Syria. When Hazrat Usman became the *khalifah*<sup>46</sup>, he was Governor of Syria. During this period, He actively extended Islamic rule over the neighboring territories. During the *khilafat* of Imam Ali he had to struggle with the *khalifah* for the defense of his position. It was at that time that the idea of becoming a *khalifah* had probably taken root in the heart of Mu'awiya. Upon the abdication of Imam Hassan, he became the *khalifah* of Islam (Ali 1979: 151-152).

It is said by the most Shi'a scholars that Hazrat Mu'awiya was the first person in Islamic history who introduced the culture of poison. He directly or indirectly killed the people with poisoned sword in Islamic battles or offered poison in their drinks or meals. Many Holy people of the house were martyred/poisoned by Hazrat Mu'awiya to get the political power of the Muslim world which was the cheapest way to snatch the power and Governance. It is also said that he was not a good Muslim but a political leader, who fought for his own interests and always tried to harm people of the House, in fact he had no guts but possessed only a political mind.

## 2.5 Yazid

Yazid was a man with cruel nature. He was a drunkard and it is said that he used to go out of his way to violate the principles of Islam. He reigned for three years and six months but no progress was made during his reign to the cause of extend Islam. On the

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<sup>46</sup> Caliph

contrary, there were serious disasters in North Africa. Ali states, Yazid's reign was noted for three misdeeds. He killed Imam Hussain in the first year of his reign. In the second year he plundered Makkah and ransacked it for three days and he raided the *ka'bah* in the third year of his reign (Ali 1979: 162).

A Shi'a religious scholar Tahira has stated that Yazid was a very dirty man and had great filth worldly interests and used all evil forces to get the worldly political power and authority to control and subjugate people. He was a highly unethical person who got married with his sister although there is no concept of marriage between brother and sister (siblings) not only in Islam but even in all the world religions.

Yazid was not accepted as a legitimate caliph by many of the leading Muslims of the time, and, therefore, al Tabari has concentrated his account of Yazid's caliphate almost entirely on the opposition to him. The two main opponents to his claim to caliphate: two were in fact Islamic figures of the time, Imam Hussain, the son of the Caliph Imam Ali, and Ibne Zubair, a leading Muslim who felt that he had had some claims to the caliphate himself. The first revolt was led by Imam Hussain. This revolt, although ineffectual in military terms, is very important for the history of Islam, as Imam Hussain came to be regarded by Shi'a Muslims as the martyred imam; his martyrdom is still commemorated every year by them. The second revolt from Ibne Zubair, was much more serious in immediate terms. (Tabari 1964:22-65).

A female Shi'a scholar Sughra informs researcher during data collection that Hazrat Bibi Zainab was the leading female who reminds the audience of the origins of Yazid, as his grandmother, Hindah (the wife of Abu Sufyan), had ordered her slave after the battle of *Uhud* to cut open the chest of Hazrat Hamza (the Prophet's uncle) and chewed upon his liver to show her anger for the death of her father and brother, who were killed in *Badr*. She wore necklace of ears and noses of died Muslims and happily sang, danced and reached back Makkah.



The researcher has sorted out that the fourteen hundred years ago Yazid attacked on the Holy religious place *Khana Ka'bah* and he was the enemy of Allah, a drinker, a non-performer of prayer, a womanizer, and a maker of the *haram*<sup>47</sup> into *halaal*<sup>48</sup>.

In the beginning, the people of Banu Umayyah tribe were non-Muslims and some of them pretended themselves as Muslim. Yazid also like his ancestors, the Banu Umayyah, maintained his hatred towards the family of the Prophet and martyred Imam Hussain, in a cruel manner. Yazid committed a sin<sup>49</sup> in relation to the religion of Muhammad which has been proved by the fact that at the time of the martyrdom of Imam Hussain, he made a pointed reference to revenge the deaths of his ancestors, slain in the war of *Badr*. He acted against the family of Muhammad, Banu Hashim and in his drunken state he praised the Banu Umayyah and cursed the Banu Hashim from the stage (Tafseer Mazhari volume 5 page 21, under the commentary of Surah Ibrahim verse 28).

Quran-e-pak says, "Those who offend Allah and his Prophet will be damned in this world and the next" (33:57)

Most of the Shi'a scholars say that Yazid was assassinated by his own horse when he rode and lost control on the horse. It is also said that he died at the age of thirty seven after a brief rule of three years and was succeeded by Mu'awiya II and it is said by the most Shi'a that Yazid was buried in Damascus and his grave no longer exists. Many Shi'a believe that Yazid's grave is located near Umayyad *masjid*<sup>50</sup> or in a small street without any mark of grave which shows that no identity stays behind in the world and nobody is here in the world to remember him but in bad words.

After the death of Yazid, Mu'awiya II adopted the way *fakiri*<sup>51</sup>, at the age of fourteen when he came to know that his father had martyred Imam Hussain to satisfy his great desire for political leadership. Mu'awiya II left world and worldly desires and spent his life as *malang*<sup>52</sup>, in jungle to plead Allah for forgiveness and pardon for his father's sins. It is also said that Yazid had no child and his wife Um-e-Khalid married his uncle

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<sup>47</sup> Forbidden in Islam

<sup>48</sup> Permissible in Islam

<sup>49</sup> *Kufr*

<sup>50</sup> Mosque

<sup>51</sup> A local term used for those people who avoid world luxuries and live simple life.

<sup>52</sup> A local term which is similar in meaning to the *fakiri*

Marwan on Yazid's death as Marwan wanted to get rule over Muslims without any objection however he was also poisoned by Um-e-Khalid.

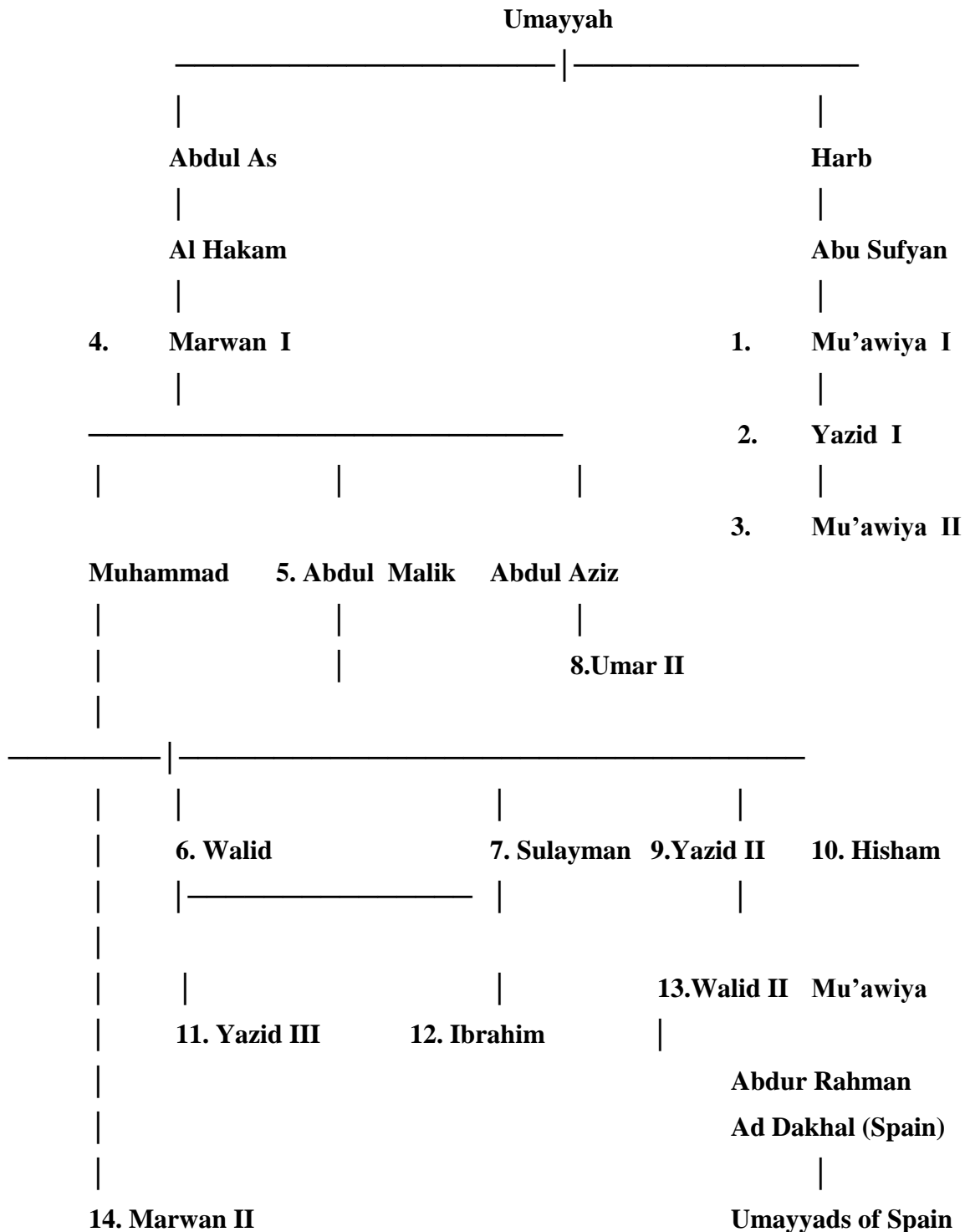


Chart of the Succession of the Umayyad, detail has been taken from the books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.

## **2.6 The Development of the Shi'a Sect**

Usually people try to spend their lives in accordance with to ancient stories, although details of events may be vivid and ambiguous and most of the stories are ultimately related to their ancestors, grand parents or written in books.

Wilkinson defines the sacred writings as: There are several sacred books of all major world religions. Adherents believe that their sacred writings are the only ones needed for the faith and practice of their religion (Wilkinson 2008: 4).

The researcher has sorted out that historians have written many different accounts of the event of Karbala. The present research's concern is not with the historical accuracy of the narratives that admit to recount the details of this battle. The purpose of retelling the historical events is to depict what the Shi'a have considered to be the correct representations of the event.

### **1. Imam Hussain's Sacrifice was Pre-decided**

According to Muslims traditions, Allah ordered Hazrat Abraham to sacrifice his son Hazrat Ismail and he took him to the hilly area to slaughter him, although it was too difficult task for a father to slaughter his son as Hazrat Abraham had great love for son but he had to do this as this was God's order. When he took knife to slaughter his son and closed his eyes, he found a sheep in his hands and his son Hazrat Ismail was standing near him. In fact it was a test from Allah to check the level of obedience and love for God. However on that day, Hazrat Imam Hussain's soul promised Allah from heaven that he would continue this sacrifice in the way of righteousness, later on, he accomplished the promise.

Quran-e-pak says in this regard, "and (remember) when the Lord of Abraham tried him with certain commands, which he fulfilled, He (Allah) said to (him): "verily, I am going to make you an Imam (a leader) for the mankind (to follow you)". Hazrat Abraham said: "And of my offspring (to make leaders)" He (Allah) said: "My covenant (Prophethood) includes not the wrongdoer" (2: 124).

Hazrat Ibrahim was informed that one of his future coming progeny would lead and fulfill the promise. At the end of Islamic lunar year Muslims perform *haj* and

celebrate *Eid-ul-azha* in the memory of Hazrat Ibrahim. They slaughter animals by cutting their veins and bleed them to death.

## 2. Umayyad's Cruelty

Grieve describes the destructive role of Umayyad , Hazrat Abu Bakr was selected the first Caliph and the Umayyad clan claimed to inherit power through their clansman Hazrat Usman, he was a religious man and was married to Hazrat Muhammad's daughter Ruqaiya. He had been one of the first to join Muhammad in the early days, the traditional holder of wealth and power in *jahiliyah*<sup>53</sup> Makkah. Later Hazrat Usman grew old and weak, by the time of his appointment as a Caliph and his rule was compromised by the corruption of some of Umayyad people, especially Marwan ibne al Hakam, who was to be the seventh Caliph. The resulting unpopularity of Hazrat Usman *kaliphate* among Muslims produced the uprising that led to his murder. This was especially so, since Mu'awiya, who was Hazrat Hazrat Usman's cousin and Governor of Syria, was the son of deeply mistrusted Abu Sufyan, the latecomer to Islam who had opposed Hazrat Muhammad right up to the day of the opening of Makkah. After twenty four years of the successive martyrdom of the Caliphs, Hazrat Umar and Hazrat Usman, Imam Ali was elected as the fourth Caliph. Mu'awiya was the fifth Caliph after the martyrdom of Imam Ali and even more significant incident occurred when Imam Ali's son Hussain and many other members of his family were brutally martyred in the tragic circumstances by the Umayyad of the caliphate (Grieve 2006: 266).

## 3. Division of Shi'a Sunni Sects

Aghaie discusses the division of Shi'a Sunni sect as, the roots of the Sunni and Shi'a division are established in the crisis of succession that occurred after the death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 AD. The Sunnis believe that the Prophet's successor should be chosen through *ijmah*<sup>54</sup> among the companions of the Prophet and the succession should not be

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<sup>53</sup> Lack of knowledge

<sup>54</sup> Consensus of opinion, it comes from *jama* or *jamaat* meaning collection or gathering or unanimity. It is the secondary source of law. It is a consensus of majority opinion of the Muslim jurists at a particular time and of a generation.

limited to *ehl-e-bait* while the Shi'a believe in the *Imamate*. The Shi'a consider Imams to be infallible religious guides for humanity although not Prophets. They also believe that devotion to the imams brings them closer to God. During the time of crisis, three of the Prophet's closest companions, Hazrat Umar, Hazrat Abu Bakr, and Hazrat Abu Ubaidah, who were from the Prophet's tribe Quraish and who had migrated with him to Yathrib (Medina), during his migration from Makkah in 622 AD, stated that the successor should be from Quraish. Hazrat Umar raised Hazrat Abu Bakr's hand in a public gathering and declared him Muhammad's successor (Aghaie 2005: 4-108).

Ayuob states Shi'a believe that Prophet Muhammad's bloodline property continues only through his daughter Hazrat Fatima Zahra and her husband Hazrat Ali ibn e Abu Talib, who along with the Prophet Muhammad's grandsons are among the *ehl-e-bait*.

Further he says, after the sad demise of Muhammad the rightful teachers of Islam and guides of Muslim society must be those who have been called Imam. They believe that such people are the divinely appointed rulers of Muslims, and should be referred to in the matters of religion. Shi'a consider the first three ruling Sunni Caliphs, to have been historical rulers without religious authority, instead holding Muhammad's descendants as the true source of guidance (Ayoub 1978: 98).

Grieve states, when Imam Ali became Caliph, *shura* supported him. Soon after his selection Umayyads began their opposition. They claimed that Hazrat Ali was present in Madina at the time when Hazrat Usman was murdered as Caliph and he had done nothing to the culprit to trail, however, the Umayyad also did nothing to solve the murder either.

Later on, Imam Ali moved his headquarters into Sassanid Persian territories, while Mu'awiya was stationed in Damascus and a battle was fought at Siffin, in 657 CE. Mu'awiya saw that he was losing to Imam Ali's superior forces, the outcome of the conflict between religion and politics and the contradictory concepts of free will and will of Allah, completely confounded Mu'awiya without any resolution. Mu'awiya rearmed his forces and was in a strong position against Hazrat Ali, but Imam was assassinated by his own supporters and Mu'awiya announced himself a Caliph (Grieve 2006: 267).

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#### **4. Wars at the Time of Imam Ali**

Within the few short years of Hazrat Ali's rule, the caliphate was racked by two civil wars emanating from two opposition movements. Ali was first challenged by a coalition headed by Muhammad's widow, Hazrat Aysha (the daughter of Hazrat Abu Bakr), later on, he was challenged by the forces of Mu'awiya, the governor of Syria and a relative of Hazrat Usman. As the head of the state, Hazrat Ali insisted that prosecuting the assassins of Hazrat Usman was his prerogative. His opponents insisted that he should deliver the killers to them. First, Ali crushed a triumvirate led by Hazrat Aysha, the youngest wife of the Prophet. The battle of the camel, so named because it took place around the camel on which Hazrat Aysha was mounted, marked the first time a caliph had led his army against another Muslim army (Rogerson 2007: 297).

The main cause of the battles was an act against the murderers of Hazrat Usman and Mu'awiya supported Hazrat Aysha for snatching the rule over Muslim world.

#### **5. Battle of camel (Jaml)**

In the battle of Jaml which was fought between Hazrat Aysha and Imam Ali, the tribes of this time did not remain united and fought against their own members. Most of the Kufans supported Imam Ali and most of the Basrans supported Hazrat Aysha. After the battle of Jaml, Imam Ali gained control over the whole of Iraq and prepared the Kufans and the Basrans to fight against the Syrian army of the Mu'awiya. A broader identity of the Iraqi Arabs emerged and was most visible in the civil war of Siffin in which all Iraqi Arabs fought against the Syrian Arabs. The supporters of Hazrat Aysha were Talha and Zubair, two of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad fought against Ali who was the Caliph of the Arab empire at that time (Tabari 1964: 3414-3224).

#### **6. Battle of Siffin**

In 657 AD, Imam Ali had faced another military challenge from the authoritative Mu'awiya (Governor of Syria) to put down the revolution. Mu'awiya had refused to step down and accept Imam Ali's appointment of a replacement. Imam Ali led his army

against his rebellious governor at Siffin (in modern day Syria). The conflict resulted in a deadlock and eventually a settlement was reached (Reza 2003: 207).

### **7. Oath of Allegiance from Yazid**

It is said that after the death of Mu'awiya, Imam Hussain refused to oath his allegiance to Yazid. It is said that Yazid's only concern, when he assumed power, was to receive the oath of allegiance from the individuals who had refused to agree with Mu'awiya's demand for this oath of allegiance to Yazid. Mu'awiya had summoned the people to give an oath of allegiance to him that Yazid would be his heir. Yazid's concern was to bring their attitude to an end.

Imam Hussain received messages stating that they were rejecting their Governor and asking him to come and serve as their Imam which were written by Sulman Surad and the supporter especially Shi'a Muslims among the Kufans to come to them and assure their full support and promise to die in his defense.

The most commonly accepted narratives of the battle of Karbala begin with the Prophet's grandson Imam Hussain receiving various letters from Muslims living in southern Iraq asking him to come to their assistance and rid them of the tyrannical rule of the Caliph Yazid. The Prophet's grandson Hussain, who at the time lived in Makkah after his flight from Medina, received various letters from Muslims living in Kufa. These letters urged him to lead the Kufans into revolt against Yazid and assured him of their loyalty and allegiance (Hussain 1979: 177-180).

### **8. Muslim bin Aqeel Departure to Kufa**

In response to the messages that Imam Hussain received from the people of Iraq, asking him to come to them and pledge their full support and promise to die in Imam's defense. Imam Hussain sent Muslim bin Aqeel (Imam's cousin), Qays bin Mushir al Saydawi, Umara bin Abd Allah al Saluli, Abdullah and Abdul Rahman to Kufa. Muslim bin Aqeel was a famous warrior. Imam Hussain considered Muslim bin Aqeel to be pious before God and to conceal his affair, and to act in a kind way. If he had seen that the people were united and had committed themselves to an agreement, he should speedily inform him (Rizvi 2003: 104).



One of the Shi'a scholars Syed Abbas has shared this information that Muslim bin Aqeel wrote letter to Yazid on his arrival to Kufa and informed him the Kufan Shi'alty for Imam Hussain, Yazid came to know that the Kufa's Governor was weak, he appointed another one, named Ibne Ziyad (new amer).

It is said that Ibne Ziyad was a very cruel, cunning and extremely negative man, as he was involved in immoral activities. *Janab* Muslim bin Aqeel suffered a lot because of Ibne Ziyad (Yazid's partner), when he reached Kufa, as Kufan Shi'a first pledged allegiance oath to him, on behalf of Imam Hussain, later on they backed out. Ibne Ziyad martyred Muslim bin Aqeel and his friend in a brutal way, he did not provide him water too, on his demand. He ordered his army to take him up in his palace, cut off his head and throw his body to the ground. Ibne Ziyad ordered his army that the bodies of Muslim bin Aqeel and his friend Hani be dragged by their feet through the streets and market places in Kufa. Muslim's body was then crucified upside down and the heads of Muslim and Hani were displayed on the streets of Damascus. Not only this, he sent *janab* Muslim bin Aqeel and Hani's head to the Yazid along a letter. (Wellhausen 1975: 14-67).

## **9. Imam Hussain's Departure to Kufa**

The researcher has sorted that Imam Hussain performed *umrah* before leaving Makkah and the news of Muslim bin Aqeel's martyrdom in brutal way was not reached, as this was happened just one day before when he set out. Imam Hussain left Makkah for Kufa with all his family including his minor children, counting on the support of the Kufans. According to most of the sources, Imam Hussain had a small group of relatives and followers, capable of fighting. His fighting men consisted of thirty two horsemen and forty foot soldiers. Other authorities fix the number at forty five horsemen and one hundred foot soldiers.

Imam Hussain arrived in an empty desert named Karbala, located near the Euphrates River in Southern Iraq on Thursday, the second of Muharram in the year 680 AD. The Governor of Kufa named Ibne Zayd reached, under the orders of Yazid, sent four thousand men to intercept Hussain and his followers (Ayoub 1978: 105-109).

In an empty desert named Karbala, located near the Euphrates River in Southern Iraq, Hussain and his followers, numbering, according to traditions, seventy two men along with women and children, were surrounded by thousands of Yazid's troops.

Yazid's army taunted and hurt Imam Hussain and his followers. They refused them water and food until Imam Hussain openly pledged his allegiance to the Caliph. Over the course of the first ten days of the month of Muharram, Imam Hussain asked for food and water for the children, but was absolutely firm in his rejection of Yazid. On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Muharram, Imam Hussain's male supporters were killed one by one in the combat, with Imam Hussain being the last to be martyred. This 10th day of the month of Muharram is known as *ashura*.

Further he says, Imam Hussain was left alone, one man against thousands. He took them on, fighting them bravely, and kept fighting, receiving many wounds in the process. Thousands of enemy fighters were surrounding him but none dared to move towards him to deliver the final blow. Finally, it was Shamir who advanced with a small group of soldiers, but even he did not dare to deliver the final blow on Imam Hussain. At last, the son of Ali rose and threw himself on the Umayyads. Attacked from every side, Imam Hussain finally fell face down on the ground just in front of his tent and was beheaded while the women and children watched the dreadful scene (Ayuob 1978: 117-119).

## **2.7 Companions of Imam Hussain in the battle of Karbala**

According to Shi'a scholars, there were seventy two companions of Hazrat Imam Hussain in the battle of Karbala and their names are mentioned below:

1. Imam Muslim bin Aqeel
2. Muhammad bin Muslim
3. Ibrahim bin Muslaim
4. Ali son of Hazrat Hurr – First martyr of the battle
5. Hazrat Hurr
6. Servant of Hazrat Hurr
7. Mussad brother of Hazrat Hurr
8. Servant of Ali (1)
9. Servant of Ali (2)
10. Zuhair Ibne Hassan
11. Abdullah Ibne Umar

12. Yazeed Hamdani
13. Wahab Ibne Abdullah
14. Mother of Wahab
15. Umar ibne Khalid
16. Janab-e-Saeed
17. Muhammad Ibne Malik
18. Janab-e-Khalid
19. Harees Habshi
20. Janab-e-Juaashi
21. Anees Ibne Muaaqil
22. Aas Ibne Shabib
23. Janab-e-Shozzab
24. Janab-e-Aabis
25. Hajaj Ibne Sarwaq
26. Saif Ibne Khalid
27. Cousin of Saif
28. Turk Habshi
29. Hunzalit Ibne Saeed
30. Zaid Ibne Ziyad
31. Amaar Ibne Anns
32. Janab-e-Shareeh
33. Muslim Ibne Harrmis
34. Halal Ibne Naafe
35. Abdullahmaan Ibne Abdullah
36. Yaheya Ibne Saleem
37. Abdul Rahman Ibne Aoun
38. Maal Ibne Anes
39. Umar Ibne mutaet
40. Janab-e-Qaiss
41. Hashim Ibne Utba
42. Fazal Ibne Ali

43. Habib Ibne Mazhar
44. Abdullah Ibne Umar
45. Saoud Ibne Saeed
46. Abdul Rahman Ibne Zaid
47. Saeed Ibne Abdullah
48. Ziyaat Ibne Haris
49. Ziyat
50. Martt
51. Muhammad Ibne Maqrah
52. Badullah
53. Janab Saad
54. Abdullah Ibne Muslim
55. Jaffar Ibne Aqeel
56. Abdul Rahman Ibne Aqeel
57. Muhammad Ibne Abdullah
58. Aoun Ibne Abdullah
59. Abdullah Ibne Hussain
60. Muhammad Ibne Anees
61. Janab Asad
62. Feroz (Ghulam of Imam Hussain)
63. Hazrat Qasim
64. Son of Imam Ali
65. Aoun Ibne Ali
66. Jaffar Ibne Ali
67. Abdullah Ibne Ali
68. Hazrat *Ghazi* Abbas Ibne Ali
69. Muhammad Ibne Anas
70. Shahzada Ali Akbar
71. Shahzada Ali Asghar – Second last martyr of the battle
72. Imam Hussain - Last martyr of the battle of Karbala

A female Shi'a scholar Sughra Bibi has shared this painful incident that Yazid's army treated women and children badly, especially Imam Zain ul Aabiden by taking him in heavy chains, as a prisoner from Karbala to Kufa and then from Kufa to Damascus, a distance of about 750 kilometers. The females of the Holy family were treated badly, their *hijabs*<sup>55</sup> were taken away and prisoned them all first to Ziyad in Kufa and then to Yazid in Damascus. Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden asked in the court of Yazid,

Tell me Yazid, was Muhammad your grandfather or mine? If you say he was your grandfather it will be an open lie and if you say he was my grandfather then why have you victimize his son and imprisoned his family? Why have you killed my father and brought his women and children as prisoners?

Yazid had no reply. Every one blamed Yazid and considered him criminal that he had committed crimes against the Prophet and his family. They all asked him for the release of Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden and the womenfolk of the Holy family. Yazid was scared that by doing so his position would be lost. Therefore, he liberated Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden and Holy women returned to Medina with full honour and respect. Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden kept himself apart from the people and politics for the rest of his life. It is said by most of the Shi'a respondents that within forty days Yazid released all hostages but they faced extreme miseries and difficulties at that time.

## **2.8 Remembrance of the Imams**

The first references to the accounts of the annual commemoration of Hussain's death were attributed to the *tawwabun*. The *tawwabun* were a group of people most of whom were Kufans who said to have been deeply regretful that they were unable to present support to Hussain at Karbala. They gathered at the site of Hussain's grave and together they mourned his death and the fact that they were not there to die alongside him. The *tawwabun* also composed and recited poetry that praised Hussain, and all of them agreed to reunite in the future to avenge his death against the Umayyad forces, which they eventually did years later (Hussain 1979:67-140).

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<sup>55</sup> To hide their faces

## 2.9 Mukhtar Saqafi

Mukhtar Saqafi is a legend figure in the Islamic history, he belongs to a famous family of Saqif of Banu Hawazin tribe at al Ta'if (now in Saudi Arabia). He was born in 622 CE, when Prophet Muhammad migrated in Madina. His father named Abu Ubaidah Saqafi, was the commander of the army during time of the Caliph Umar and martyred in the battle of Marva. Mukhtar Saqafi had great love for *ehl-e-bait* since his early childhood, as his uncle (who looked after him) took Imam Hassan to his home when he was wounded. Mukhtar Saqafi was an early Islamic revolutionary hero. He had great love for Imam Hussain, he wanted to join him in the battle of Karbala but unfortunately he was imprisoned by Ziyad at that time. Later on, Mukhtar Saqafi led revolution against the Umayyah Caliphs in revenge for the martyrdom of Imam Hussain at the battle based in Kufa (Iraq) and stood for the removal of Ibne al-Zubair's governor in Kufa. (Hawting 1989: 182)

A female Shi'a scholar Rubab describes Mukhtar Saqafi had great love for Imam Ali and his progeny. She has informed that Mukhtar was imprisoned by Ziyad at the time of the event of Karbala. Later on, he went to Kufa to take revenge of martyrdom of Imam Hussain. His mission was the same as that of the leader of the *tawwabun*<sup>56</sup> Suleman bin Surad but they did not help each other in this regard as Mukhtar, intended to achieve political authority through a more organized military power. The *tawwabun* refused to join Mukhtar, as they had no wish to participate in any adventure.

### 1. Revolutionary Figure Mukhtar Saqafi and his Army

The advancing Umayyad Army occupied Mousal and headed for Kufa, after the battle of Ain-ul-Warda. Mukhtar Saqafi formed an army of three thousand fighters and ordered Yazid bin Anas to head the army, who was a courageous old man. Mukhtar's army fought two battles with the Umayyads at Mousal boundaries and won both the battles but Yazid bin Anas died, which affected his soldier's strength. They were afraid of the Umayyad's big army and they decided to go back to Kufa (Kamal 2013: 18).

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<sup>56</sup> The penitents

A religious scholar Haider Ali has informed the researcher that later on, the Umayyad rumored that Yazid bin Anas was martyred and his army was defeated in the battles. Mukhtar formed an army of seven thousand fighters under the command of Ibrahim al Ashtar. When the army left Kufa, enemies took advantage and planned against Mukhtar's Government and surrounded the palace. Mukhtar Saqafi sent a messenger to Ibrahim al Ashtar to come back. After three days siege, the rebels were astonished to see the army coming back.

## **2. Revenge form Yazid's Army**

A religious scholar Abbas has informed the researcher that we, as Muslims, have to know the leading figures and possess an indepth knowledge of Islamic history, as most of us donot have any idea about Mukhtar Saqafi, who is a great revolutionary figure in the Islamic history. Most of the people know about the event of Karbala and martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions but they donot know that Mukhtar's army had executed all those people, who were Yazid's companions in the battle of Karbala. Mukhtar Saqafi killed them all with the help of his forces, he killed Harmala who martyred Imam Hussain's baby Imam Ali Ashgar, Sanan bin Anas who martyred Imam Hussain and Umar ibne-Sa'ad who led the Umayyad army during the battle of Karbala. Shimer Jawshan, who beheaded Imam Hussain had escaped but the Mukhtar army tracked him and killed him in a village.

## **3. Battle al Khazir**

A Shi'a scholar Haider Ali has shared the more details of the revenge for martyrdom of Imam Hussain, when Mukhtar Saqafi attained political control in Kufa, his best friend Ibrahim Ashtar and his army fought against Ziyad's Army near al Khazir River on August 686 CE. Ibrahim Ashtar's army fought courageously, however, they were in small number, destroyed Umayyad places and killed Ziyad and Hussain bin Numair.

Mukhtar Saqafi is an Islamic legend in the history, who killed all Yazid's companions and took revenge of Hazrat Hussain. Mukhtar Saqfi was martyred by Ibne al-Zubair.

**Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (610-632 AD)**

Chosen by Allah



**Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (632-634 AD)**

First Caliph appointed through consensus between the emigrants (*muhajereen*) and the helpers (*ansar*) followers of Muhammad who had emigrated with him in 622 AD.



**Hazrat Umar ibn al Khattab (634-644 AD)**

Second Caliph appointed by Hazrat Abu Bakr, second rightly guided Caliph.



**Hazrat Usman ibn Affan (644-656 AD)**

Third Caliph appointed by a committee of six men established by Hazrat Umar before his death, Hazrat Usman third rightly guided Caliph.



**Hazrat Ali ibn Abu Talib (656-661 AD)**

Fourth Caliph appointed through consensus, fourth and final rightly guided Caliph, he is first Shi'a Imam too.





**Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan (661- 680 AD)**

Fifth Caliph proclaimed himself a Caliph and first Umayyad monarch.



**Yazid ibn Mu'awiya ibn abi Sufyan (680- 683 AD)**

Sixth Caliph hereditary, second Umayyad monarch. He martyred the third Shi'a Imam Hussain son of Imam Ali and grandson of the Prophet (PBUH).



**Bani Marwan**

Brother of Mu'awiya - Bani Marwan, seventh Caliph, third Umayyad Caliph, who get married with Um-e-Khalid (widow of Yazid).

**Chart of the Succession of the Caliphs**

## CHAPTER 3

### SHI'A RITUALS THROUGHOUT THE ISLAMIC YEAR

The researcher has found that there is a strong relationship of Shi'a religious rituals as symbols with the particular Islamic historical events and Holy People of the House (*ehl-e-bait*). As Mahdi explains, Shi'a rituals play an important role in reinforcing Shi'a separate identity and recollection of collective memory. They let the mourner to weep over the suffering of Imam Hussain, his companions, and People of the House (*ehl-e-bait*). The connection of Shi'a rituals as symbols with the past events is a bridge that links the past with the present by relating themselves with Imam Hussain's experience. Through these rituals, the supporter can also protest emotionally against existing injustice and cruelty as Imam experienced in his life (Mahdi 1985:213). In this way he can follow the foot prints of great Imam in his endeavour against tyranny and injustice. This gives him a moral and spiritual boost.

Matthew explains Shi'a rituals derived from the event of Karbala:

Hazrat Ali's son Hazrat Hassan served briefly in Iraq, but he renounced his claim and returned to Madina. Imam Ali's son Hazrat Hussain attempted to establish a caliphate in 680 AD, but he was intercepted on his way to Iraq near town of Karbala. The Umayyad troops martyred and beheaded him and sent his head to Damascus. This deed is regarded as an act of martyrdom by Shi'a who fervently recall events with passion in the form of rituals as symbols each year during the month of Muharram. The Shi'a hold to the Institution of Imam, the spiritual leader of the community and regard Ali as the first imam. Imam Ali had the ideal of temporal power as well as spiritual, other Imams have had only spiritual power (Matthews 1999: 398).

### 3.1 Shi'a Rituals in Medieval Times

The Shi'a rituals have evolved through various phases since their early beginning, until they reached the present organized form and structured in, which are being held today. It is believed that rituals as symbols have changed through three major stages, represented by the historical and cultural epoch through which the Muslims in general, and the Shi'a in particular, have lived. These three major stages can be divided into smaller stages representing the prevailing dynasties and their impact on the development and spread of rituals (Shams 1985: 161).

The three major stages share similar fixed elements of the rites of remembrance but differ in the form and content of these rites.

1. **The first phase** started began immediately after the battle of Karbala in year 680 AD, and it continued until the fall of Baghdad at the hands of Hulagu.
2. **The second phase** began at the fall of Baghdad and continued through the Muslim dark ages until the recent past period.
3. **The final phase** was from the beginnings of the contemporary period until the present (Ibid. 148-149).

Within these major stages, relevant eras that impacted the rituals as symbols, such as Umayyad, Abbasid, Buyids, Fatmids, Safavid, and Qajar which will be discussed in next chapters.

#### 1. First Phase

The first stage of rituals started shortly after the battle of Karbala in 680 AD and it continued until the fall of Baghdad at the hands of Hulagu. In this stage, the fixed elements, namely the account of the tragedy and criticism of authorities during the Umayyad and the Abbasid period, were not performed in the open fear of prosecution. After the Abbasids, the rites of remembrance were held in public and the criticism of the

Umayyad and Abbasids took place openly without arising any opposition from the actual authorities. This criticism, however, was devoid of any political content. During this stage, the form of Shi'a rituals acquired a fixed time and became a cultural activity. This stage connected time with memory of the massacre of Hussain. The first ten

days of the lunar month of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic year, became etched in posterity as the times all Shi'a must lament and if possible make pilgrimages to Hussain's grave in Karbala. In this early stage, the rite of remembrance began in the form of simple conversations about what transpired in the battle of Karbala.

Then the conversations transformed into a story that was reported or a poem that was recited, and then there arose a written text of the account of the death of Hussain. At the end of this stage a form began to emerge in which poetry and prose were integrated (Shams 1985:177).

At this stage, prose tells the story of the tragedy in the spirit of giving an account of history and virtues and with only a limited amount of emotional expressions (Ibid. 176).

During this stage, four major dynasties impacted the development of the rites of remembrance of Hussain.

#### **a. Umayyad Period**

Narratives explained that the Umayyad period many Shi'a sought asylum in the region of Sindh, Ziyad Hindi is one of those immigrant (Al-Isfahani 1949: 143). Umayyad represents the embryonic phase in the historical development of the Shi'a rituals. This period held witness to the battle of Karbala and the inception of Ashura rituals budding from the first known visit to Imam Hussain's grave and the subsequent establishment of the annual commemoration of Hussain's death.

Soon after the battle of Karbala, local people probably performed the earliest manifestation of grief for Hussain and his followers in the form of mourning gathering.

It was narrated that during this first visit to Hussain's grave, Janab-e-Zainab, (Imam Hussain's sister) who was among the prisoners, had given a speech praising Hussain and cursed his killers. Janab-e-Zainab also recited a heartfelt oration that moved even the Umayyad troops to tears people reached the spot forty days after the battle (Hussain 2005: 124 ).

This first visit is considered by Shi'a as the root of many Ashura rituals. It represents the first reference in the literature to gathering to mourn Hussain's death. It

represents the basis for the forty day pilgrimage rituals currently known as *arba'in* commemorations.

Furthermore, this first visit along with Janab-e-Zainab's speech represents a precedent for *majalis-e-ta'ziya* and for the origin of *noha*. Moreover, during this first visit, there were accounts of women mourning by beating their chest and wailing, which were and are still natural emotional reactions among mourners of this region. The ritual of chest beating is believed to be the precursor for the highly ritualized rhythmic *mataam* rituals practiced today (Ibid).

Hussain narrated that the first references of the accounts of the annual commemoration of Imam Hussain's martyrdom were attributed to the *tawwabun*. The *tawwabun* were a group of people most of them were Kufans who said to have been deeply regretful that they were unable to present support to Hussain at Karbala. They gathered at the site of Hussain's grave and together they mourned his death and the fact that they were not there to die alongside him. The concept of *tawwabun* came from this period and they also composed *mersiya*, recited that praised Hussain (Ibid).

These accounts of the *tawwabun*, meeting on the annual anniversary of Hussain's martyrdom in Karbala symbols the earliest evidence of annual commemoration. The ritual of *ziyarah* (grave visitation) developed more in the Abbasid period. It later became a highly ritualized aspect of the Muharram commemoration ceremonies. Its historical and literary roots were in *tawwabun*. The *majalis* were held in the home of the Shi'a Imam (religious leader) or other influential Shi'a persons. These private annual gatherings during entire Islamic year successful in keeping the memory of Hussain alive not only in form but also in content through oral transmission of accounts of the battle, the events leading up to it, and its aftermath.

#### **b. Abbasid Period**

The Karbala narratives were used by the politically savvy Abbasids to incite revolution and the overthrow of the Umayyad Empire. The Early Abbasid rulers found it useful to bestow their patronage on the rites of *ashura*. They understood that Karbala narrative had rebellious antigovernment connotations and they used it to their advantage. By their early reign, the memorial services such as *majalis* were no longer confined to only private

homes concealed from the public, but rather began to be held in public mosques (Nakash 1993:163).

This initial support by the early Abbasid rulers resulted in a plethora of literary accounts documenting the oral transmissions that were safeguarded by Shi'a during the Umayyad period. It also resulted in the popularity of *ashura* public rituals such as the pilgrimage ritual to Karbala (*ziyarah*), which resulted in the expansion of Karbala pilgrimage economy, in the dramatic increase of visiting pilgrims, and in the popularity of Hussain and the battle of Karbala among both Shi'a and Sunni communities (Hussain 2005 :29)

By 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Abbasid, who were in occupied control of the empire, endangered by Hussain symbolism and turned against Hussain's commemoration rituals. Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil (847-61) destroyed the shrine of Hussain, ruined Karbala, and banned visitation of the place on pain of death (Ibid. 82).

This act of vandalism is proof to the extent that the ritualistic visitation of Hussain's shrine had developed. It is also a possible indication that by *ziyarah* had already developed into a much more ritualized act than simply visiting a grave. This act also shows the popularity of Hussain among all Muslim (Hussain 2005:84).

The interesting fact has found that in the early excavation of the urban complex of Brahmanabad Mansurah Mahfuzah, Bellasis uncovered a seal bearing the Arabic inscription Imam Muhammad Baqir (Bellasis 1865:127) which appear to belong to the fifth Shi'a Imam Muhammad Baqir (677-733AD). Some students of Imam Jaffar Sadiq had Indian family names like Aban Sindi, Khalid Sindi and Faraj Sindi (Havy 1947: 51-52)

### **c. Buyid Period**

During the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Abbasid caliph saw his authority turn down and became a leader with no temporal power within the state. The Buyids, a local Shi'a dynasty in Western Iran, took control of Iraq and Iran. While accepting the so-called authority of the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad, the Buyid rulers assumed successful power of the state. This provided the rites of memory of Hussain a freedom to go forward and be expressed openly in public. Among the important Buyid rulers who played a major role in

strengthening Shi'a solidarity. It was under Mu'izz al-Dawlah Ibne Buwayh time in power that the first historical reference to a public procession was documented. Ibne al-Kathir, a famous 14th century Arab historian recounts (Aghaie 2005: 131)

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram of this year (963 AD/352 AH), the accounts of Ibne al-Kathir also show the increased tensions and violence between Sunni and Shi'a during these public processions by Mu'izz al-Dawlah Ibne Buyeh (Hussain 2005:84).

On 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram this year the Shi'a venerated the mourning of Hussain as they did the year before. The Shi'a and Sunni fought brutally among each other on this day and much property was pillaged. Such violence continued until the end of the Buyid dynasty and the arrival of the Saljuqs dynasty in 1055 AD (Hussain 2005:81).

#### **d. Fatimid Period**

In the 10th century, the Fatimids had tested and condensed the worldly power of the Abbasid caliph. They were a Shi'a dynasty that ruled over varying areas of the Maghreb, Egypt, Sicily, and the Levant from (909 -1171). They were not as winning as the Buyid in start and developed of Shi'a commemoration rituals. They attempted for several years to enforce the faithfulness to Shi'a commemorations rituals such as public procession but resistance by the overwhelming Sunni majority was enormous. Historical references indicate that al-Mu'izz ud-Din Allah, a Fatimid leader, had sponsored public processions that included some of his military units. The mourners passed by the shrines of Kulthum and Nafisah reciting laments and sorrow for Hussain's death. The Sunni general public, however, did not commemorate Hussain's martyrdom and continued to conduct business as usual on the day of *ashura*. This caused tensions between the small Shi'a community and the Sunni public, which led to slaughter. It was reported that on the day of *ashura* in 1005 (Ibid.85).

In the Abbasid Caliphate, various Shi'a groups organised secret opposition to their rule. In the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, the twelver Shi'a of the Buyid Dynasty (934-1055) controlled to begin their rule over much on Iran and Iraq without removing the Abbasid Caliph from his throne. Parallel to it was the Ismaili Shi'a Fatimid Caliphate (909–1171) in Egypt and North Africa. This was the golden age of Islam as scientists like Ibne

Sina (980-1037), Ibne al-Haytham (965-1040), Al-Beruni (973-1050) and hundreds of others enjoyed the intellectual freedom and contributed to Philosophy, Medicine, Physics and other disciplines of Science. During the mid 11th century, the Buyid gradually fell to the Ghaznavid and Seljuq invasions and with it started the decline of the Islamic Golden Age. In 1091, Ibne Sina's book *Tahafut al-Falasifa* proved to be the final blow to science education in Islamic world (Hoodbhoy 1991:126). Around 958, a Fatimid follower converted a local Hindu ruler, and an Ismaili state was established in Sindh, with its capital in Multan. They converted locals to Ismailism en masse, while the *khutba* was read in the name of the Fatimid Caliph (Daftary 2005: 68). It was during this period that the earliest public mourning of Muharram and the Shi'a call to prayer (*azan*) was introduced to the Indus valley present day Pakistan (Blank 2001: 29).

With growing tensions between Sunni and Shi'a, the Fatimid decided to cancel public processions, and the *ashura* rituals became events of simply mourning and reciting poetry.

## **2. Second Phase**

The second stage began at the time of the fall of Baghdad and continued through the Muslim dark ages until the modern period. In this stage, the rites of remembrance preserved the fixed elements, namely the account of the tragedy and the criticism of the authorities. The criticism of the Umayyad and Abbasid was direct, as they no longer had any existence in the political life of Iraq, Iran, or other Islamic countries.

### **a. Safavid Period**

Kramer (1987) is quoted by Aghaie, a major development in Shi'a rituals occurred with the establishment of the Safavid dynasty, which ruled Persia, a territory largely encompassing the modern state of Iran, from 1501 to 1722. The Safavid established the greatest Iranian empire since the Islamic conquest of Persia and institutionalized the twelver (Ithna ashari, or Jaffari) school of Shi'a Islam as the official religion of their empire, marking one of the most important turning points in the history of Islam and of



rituals. There was a mass conversion of Iranians to Shi'a in the sixteenth century. The rulers made fairly liberal use of Shi'a symbols and rituals to define (Aghaie 2004: 11-12).

This new improved portrayal of Hussain gave birth to a number of new commemoration rituals. One example of such a ritual is *ta'ziya*, which is not only a ritual as symbol and a specific architectural structure had been developed (Hussain 2005: 85). The earliest description of self-flagellation and killing came from accounts of travelers. Evliya Chelebi, an Ottoman traveler who visited Tabriz in 1640 and attended the observances of the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram explained the experience (Ibid.:175).

### **3. Third Phase**

The third and final stage of the *ashura* ritual evolution took place from the beginnings of the modern period, and it continued up to the present time. In this stage, the commemoration of Hussain's death has witnessed developments in form and content of very great importance.

In form, public performances of rituals have become more prevalent than in the past with increased security and freedom enjoyed by Shi'a (Shams 1985:191).

During this stage, three major Shi'a governments, all in Iran, sponsored the development of the commemoration of Imam Hussain.

#### **a. Qajar Period**

The Qajar dynasty is a Shi'a dynasty that ruled Iran from 1796 to 1925. To legitimize their rule, the Qajar Shah supported the custom for a couple reasons. They wanted to encourage the Iranian spirit and have greater control over world religions.

Self-flagellations that were introduced to Northern Iran during the Safavid period by Christians converts became wide spread throughout Iran and even made its way to Iraq by the nineteenth century (Nakash 1994:149).

#### **b. Pahlavi Period**

The Pahlavi dynasty ruled Iran from the crowning of Raza Shah Pahlavi in 1925 to the overthrow of Raza Shah Pahlavi's son Mohammad Raza Pahlavi in the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Unlike the Qajar dynasty, who sponsored and supported *ashura*

rituals to legitimize their rule and control the Shi'a clergy, the Pahlavi shahs shunned Shi'a clergy and stopped the state sponsoring and supporting of *ashura* rituals.

They stopped using rituals as the primary means of promoting their religious legitimacy and maintaining bonds with their subjects (Aghaie 2004:73). While the main theme of the sermons and lectures was religious piety or personal or community issues, political themes became woven into the sermons and lectures (*majalis*). As such sermons and lectures became a vehicle to inform the public about political issues.

### **c. Islamic Republic Iran**

The revolutionary message of Hussain's movement that began late during the rule of the Pahlavi dynasty has become the main language of the rituals in the current government of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The historical examination of the development of rituals over a period of twelve centuries and under the influence of many dynasties has revealed that these commemoration rituals have evolved in several distinct stages. They share similar fixed elements of *ashura* rituals in the account of the tragedy and in the criticism of rulers, but the rituals differ in content and form at various times in history.

During this third stage that began from the beginnings of the modern period until the present, security and freedom, which the Shi'a community has enjoyed in most places, have enabled the rites of remembrance to be performed publicly without fear of prohibition by the authorities or the common people. In term of content, the rituals narratives became used as a vehicle by political specialists to either support the ruling elites in the times of Qajar dynasty. In this period, there has also been more concern shown about the historical accuracy by eliminating historically unreliable accounts.

## **3.2 Arrival of Shi'a in Indus Valley**

In the life of Holy Prophet many Arab merchants traded with the people of Sub continent, in the last years of Holy Prophet's life a group of companions came here and they were known as Shi'a ehl-e-bait. Hazrat Salman Farsi, Hazrat Ammar Ibne Yasser, Malik Abu Yaqzan, Janab Zubayr Ibne Awam, Abdullah Ibne Abbas, Jabir Ibne Abdullah al-Ansari and many others.

The attention grabbing fact was that historians have found that the connection between the Indus Valley and Shi'a was established by the initial Muslim missions. A attendant of Holy Prophet, Janab Hakim Ibne Jabalah al-Abdi, who travelled to Sindh and Makran in the year 649 AD later on, he presented a report on the area to the Caliph. Harith-ibne-Murrah-al-Abdi and Saifi-ibne-Fil'al-Shaybani, both officers of Ali's army, attacked Sindhi bandits and chased them to al-Qiqan (present day Quetta) in the year 658 (Maclean 1989: 126).

It is also illustrated by the Historians that during Umayyad period, many Shi'a came in the region of Sindh for settlement as second wife of the fourth Imam Ali's wife Jayda al Sindhi was from Sindh (Rizvi 1986: 138-142). In Sub-continent, Sindh was conquered by Muhammad-bin-Qasim in 711 AD and added to the Islamic world where persecution of Shi'a in the Umayyad dynasty reached its peak in the times of Walid Ibne-abdual-Malik, especially at the hands of Hijaj-Ibne-Yousaf (Maclean 1989:126).

The researcher has found, that in Sub continent, Adil Shahi dynasty 1489-1686, Qutab Shahi dynasty 1512-1687, Nizam Shahi dynasty 1490-1633, the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of Mughal period 1526-1707 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of Mughal period 1707-1857, Shi'a rule over South India (Rizvi 2017:32-45).

The researcher has observed during the fieldwork, that these sacred rituals symbolically provide historical and religious information about the Shi'a of Pakistan, Chakwal in particular where Shi'a is the main religious group, who are powerful and influential.

Pakistan is the second largest country of Shi'a population, as the first one Country is Iran. Pakistan is the second largest Sunni Muslim country on the world, first one is the Indonesia.

Fuchs wrote that Shi'a developed in late colonial India and arranged activities of newly formed "All India Shi'a Conference" (AISC) in the 1920's, Shi'a-Sunni tension particularly in Lucknow and the role of both prominent Shi'a and Sunni scholars and leaders of Muslim League and Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, which was allied with the Congress, to bring a sort of harmony among both sects. In colonial India between 1920s and 1940s, Sunni-Shi'a conflict increased. Sunni started publicly holding Madah Sahaba (praising the companions of Holy Prophet Pbuh) which at the time led to violence and riots

particularly in Lucknow, which prompted the rulers to impose a ban on such rallies of Sunni while hundreds of Shi'a was detained to prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

The researcher has observed during the fieldwork, that these sacred rituals symbolically are not as were in past even in Pakistan, Chakwal in particular where Shi'a is the main religious group, who are very influential. The main theme of the sermons is become a primary source to inform the public. Now in the present, security and freedom, which the Shi'a community is enjoying in the most places, have enable the rites of remembrance to be perform publicly without fear of prohibition by the authorities or the populace. In addition, the occasions for performing the rites of remembrance are becoming more numerous and not restrict to the first ten days of Muharram or to the day of *arba'in* now they have expanded to a commemoration and remembrance of the Prophets, other Holy family members and all other important gathering of Shi'a are also held all over the world and Chakwal. The concept of Shi'a different kind of rituals as symbols like *kara*, *panjah*, *jhoola*, *coffin*, *mehndhi*, *panjah* and *'alam* have great importance in Chakwal which I will intensely discuss in next chapter.

### **3.3 The Annual Religious Gatherings of Shi'a in Chakwal and all Over the World**

The researcher has found that there are different sacred religious events when all Shi'a gather and express their sorrow through performing different religious rituals, annually in Chakwal. Islamic calendar of Shi'a religious remembrance is shared by Shi'a religious scholars:

The first Islamic month is Muharram according lunar calendar. It is the most sacred month for the Shi'a to organize their rituals.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Muharram - first of all, Shi'a welcome the month of Muharram through *majales* in *Imam bargah* and gather in the form of *jalus* on 1<sup>st</sup> Muharram and venerate Imam Hussain's departure from Madina, although, he had left Madina on 28<sup>th</sup> Rajab and travelled for six months and reached on 2<sup>nd</sup> Muharram. In Chakwal, Shi'a arrange *ta'ziya* and black *'alam* holder *jalus* on the first day of Muharram.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Muharram – on the second day of Muharram, Shi'a venerate in *majales* that how Imam Hussain reached the place named Karbala e Mul'lah and purchased the land for his son Ali Akbar in sixty thousand darham from Bani Asad tribe. On this day Shi'a arrange *zul jinnah*, black '*alam berdar* and *ta'ziya*'s processions in Chakwal.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Muharram - Imam Hussain's colleague janab Habib was martyred on this day and Shi'a '*ulama* memorize his services in the event of Karbala in Chakwal.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Muharram - Shi'a organize *majales*, black '*alam berdar* and *matmi jalus* on 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Muharam in Chakwal.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Muharram - Shi'a arrange *jhoola* processions in the remembrance of six months old Ali Asghar at day and night time, Mehndhi procession of Shahzada Qasim and venerate that access to water was banned to Imam Hussain's army by Yazid in *majales*.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Muharram - Hazrat Abbas was martyred on this day and Shi'a '*ulama* memorize his martyrdom in *majales* and organize '*alam berdar matmi* processions and display black '*alam* on the roof of their houses on 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram in Chakwal.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram - Imam Hussain bin Ali grandson of Prophet Muhammad was martyred at Karbala by Yazid ibn Mu'awiya (the 6<sup>th</sup> Caliph). *Ashura* is a day of deep mourning and grief which is observed occurs on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram and Shi'a organize *taboot* processions on this day in Chakwal. On this day Shi'aperform *matam* (chest beating) and *zanjir zeni*. Shi'a arrange '*alam*, *zul jinnah*, *taboot*, *ta'ziya* (all symbols which are connected with the event of Karbala) processions and *majales*. They distribute *neyaz and sabel* among all in Chakwal. After *mughrib* (sun set), Shi'a arrange *sham-e-ghariban* in which they venerate the Holy family of Imam, how they suffered, martyred and faced troubles and Shi'a express their grief and pain in Chakwal.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Safar - Shi'a celebrate the birth of fifth Imam Muhammad Baqir in Chakwal.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Safar - Shi'a celebrate the birth of seventh Imam Musa al-Kazim in Chakwal.
- 11<sup>th</sup> Safar – Shi'a express their grief and mourn for the martyrdom of fourth Imam Hazrat Imam Ali known as Ali Zain-ul-Abideen in Chakwal.

- 20<sup>th</sup> Safar – Shi'a venerate the sufferings of the women and children of Imam Hussain's household. Imam Hussain's martyrdom in the battle of Karbala and on the fortieth day Shi'a organize public mourning processions which are called *chelum* in Chakwal.
- 28<sup>th</sup> Safar – Shi'a organize public mourning *majales* and processions in the memory of the sad demise of Prophet Muhammad and second Imam Hassan in Chakwal.
- 30<sup>th</sup> Safar - Shi'a arrange mourning *majales* and processions on 30<sup>th</sup> Safar for the martyrdom of eighth Imam Ali Raza.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Rabi ul awal<sup>57</sup> - martyrdom of eleventh Imam Hassan Askari in Chakwal.
- 17<sup>th</sup> Rabi ul awal - Shi'a celebrate the birth of Hazrat Muhammad and sixth Imam Jaffar Sadiq in Chakwal.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Rabi ul sani<sup>58</sup> - Shi'a celebrate the birth of eleventh Imam Hassan Askari (A.S) in Chakwal.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Jamadi ul awal - Shi'a celebrate the birth of Hazrat Zainab, sister of Imam Hussain in Chakwal.
- 13<sup>th</sup> Jamadi ul awal – Shi'a organize mourning *majales* and processions to mourn the martyrdom of Hazrat bibi Fatima in Chakwal.
- 20<sup>th</sup> Jamadi ul sani - Shi'a celebrate the birth of Bibi Fatima in Chakwal.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Rajab - martyrdom of tenth Imam Naqqi in Chakwal.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Rajab - Shi'a celebrate the birth of ninth Imam Taqqi in Chakwal.
- 13<sup>th</sup> Rajab - Shi'a celebrate the birth of first Imam Hazrat Ali in Chakwal.
- 15<sup>th</sup> Rajab – on this day, Shi'a arrange public mourning *majales* and processions to memorize the sad demise of janab-e-Zainab in Chakwal.
- 25<sup>th</sup> Rajab - Shi'a organize public mourning *majales* and processions to memorize the martyrdom of seventh Imam Musa Kazim in Chakwal.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Shaban - Shi'a celebrate the birth of third Imam Hussain in Chakwal.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Shaban - Shi'a celebrate the birth of fourth Imam Zain-ul- Aabiden in

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<sup>57</sup> The 3<sup>rd</sup> month of Islamic calendar

<sup>58</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> month of Islamic calendar

Chakwal.

- 8<sup>th</sup> Shaban - occultation of twelfth Imam Mahdi is commemorated in Chakwal.
- 15<sup>th</sup> Shaban - Shi'a celebrate the birth of twelfth Imam Mahdi, many Shi'a fast on this day to show gratitude in Chakwal.
- Ramazan - month of fasting.
- 15<sup>th</sup> Ramazan - Shi'a celebrate the birth of second Imam Hassan.
- 19<sup>th</sup> Ramazan – commemorate knife attack on first Imam Ali in Chakwal.
- 21<sup>st</sup> Ramazan - Shi'a organize public mourning *majales* and processions to commemorate the martyrdom of first Imam Ali in Chakwal.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Shawal<sup>59</sup> - *Eid-ul-fitr* marks the end of fasting during the month of Ramazan and Shi'a celebrate *Eid*.
- 15<sup>th</sup> Shawal - Shi'a organize *majales* and processions to commemorate the martyrdom of sixth Imam Jaffar Sadiq in Chakwal.
- 11<sup>th</sup> Zil qad<sup>60</sup> - Shi'a celebrate the birth of eighth Imam Ali Raza in Chakwal.
- 29<sup>th</sup> Zil qad - Shi'a arrange *majales* and processions to commemorate martyrdom of ninth Imam Taqqi in Chakwal.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Zil haj<sup>61</sup> - Shi'a organize public mourning *majales* and processions to commemorate the sad demise of fifth Imam Muhammad Baqir in Chakwal.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Zil haj - *Eid ul azha* (feast of sacrifice) marks the end of the Hajj or pilgrimage to Makkah.
- 15<sup>th</sup> Zil haj - Shi'a celebrate the birth of tenth Imam Ali Raza.
- 18<sup>th</sup> Zil haj – *Eid-ghadeer*, Shi'a celebrate *ghader khum*, the occasion when Prophet Muhammad announced Imam Ali's *imamat* before a multitude of Muslims. *Eid-ghadeer* is held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Zil haj, notably this day was announced by Prophet Muhammad.
- *Ziyarat*<sup>62</sup> - Shi'a visit Iraq, Iran, Sham, Qum etc. especially in the Muharram and the whole year.

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<sup>59</sup> The 10<sup>th</sup> month of Islamic calendar

<sup>60</sup> The 11<sup>th</sup> month of Islamic calendar

<sup>61</sup> The 12<sup>th</sup> month of Islamic calendar

<sup>62</sup> Visit the Holy shrines of *masoomeen*

The Shi'a visit Imam Hussain's tomb on the tenth of Muharram and on the fortieth day, after the battle of Karbala which is considered to be one of the major *ashura* rituals to strengthen the spiritual ties between Shi'a and their beloved Hussain. Karbala is considered to be the site for a ritualistic pilgrimage, since it is the place where Imam Hussain fought for the right and was beheaded.

Hussain defines the rituals of the pilgrimage to Imam Hussain as:

The pilgrimage to Imam Hussain's tomb follows prescribed directives as currently practiced. These directives involve the recitation of specific sanctified text in a precise manner and at specific points within Hussain's shrine. The Mourner goes through ritualized motions and sayings that are to be performed first at the entrance of the shrine then at the foot of Hussain's grave, and finally at the head of his grave. These ritualized motions and sayings within the major visitation ritual are very elaborate and precise, elevating the *ziyarat ashura* and *ziyarat arba'in*<sup>63</sup> rituals almost to the level of fundamental prayer such as *salat*. The mourner first must stand in front of the shrine, recite a precisely defined lecture, and then enter the shrine. Once inside the shrine and when the mourner is ready to offer supplication, he or she must first rise to an upright standing posture, face the direction of Karbala, and bow the head in humility and recite the prescribed text. For those unable to make the pilgrimage to Karbala due to financial or health reasons, recitation of the specific sanctified text is viewed as an acceptable alternative for actual presence at Karbala (Hussain 2005:23-57).

- *Novruz*<sup>64</sup> - New year wishes are exchanged on this day and Shi'a wear new clothes.

Muharram rituals as symbols are among the most pervasive and popular aspects of Pakistani culture and society. In other words, these symbols as rituals have significant power in promoting social ideas, bonds, status and identities. Here comes a question in the mind of novice, how did they grow out? Shi'a rituals and symbols have a strong background.

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<sup>63</sup> Visit the shrines of Imams

<sup>64</sup> Festival of new year spring



Encyclopedia of Britannica defines the functions of the symbol are the representation of authenticity, truth and to reveal them either at once or slowly. The symbol is sometimes regarded as a pure transparency of it (1974:901).

Nakash describes the Shi'a rituals as a source of emotional connection with Imam Hussain's battle, as each *ashura* ritual practice plays an important role in strengthening Shi'a own identity and reinforcing their collective memory. The acts of crying and *matam* are examples of firm belief and a sense of belonging. The believer memorizes Imam Hussain's struggle against injustice and voice his regret physically and mentally for not being able to be with him in Karbala. Shi'a help Imam Hussain to win the battle and protest emotionally against injustice as the Imam experienced it around himself (Nakash 1993: 33).

Flaskerud explains:

Imam Hussain's martyrdom at Karbala is the greatest redemptive act in the history, although his supportive family members at Karbala and his parents, Imam Ali and Fatima Zahra are also believed to have meditating powers. Shi'a believers participate in annual commemoration rituals and hope to secure the saints meditation in front of God. For commemoration rituals in the two Islamic months of Muharram and Safar, ritual space and its liturgical structure offer a ceremonial context in which the sacrifice and sufferings of the martyrs at Karbala are represented with passion. Recollecting the events at the battle is a cognitive process, and images are used to stimulate it (Flaskerud 2012:19).

Nakash describes the five major Shi'a rituals in the month of Muharram, five major rituals ensued include the commemorative services (*majales al ta'ziya*), the visitation of Imam Hussain's tomb in Karbala particularly on the event of the 10th day of the month of Muharram (*ashura*) and the 40th day after the war (*ziyarat ashura and ziyarat arba'in*), the public remembrance processions (*al mawakib al hussainiya*), the demonstration of the battle of Karbala in the form of a play (*tashabih*), and the self-flagellation (*zanjir* and *tatbir*) since the battle of Karbala. Within these major rituals, there are other rituals like chest beating (*matam*), recitation of Karbala narratives

(*qira'ah*<sup>65</sup>) by a narrator (*qari or khateeb*<sup>66</sup>), and *niyahah* (recitation of rhythmic lamentation poetry) (Nakash 1993: 13-34).

### **3.4 Religious Processions and *Majales* in Shi'a Traditions**

Shi'a venerate the brutality of Yazid and perform *matam* and organize processions. Religious processions (*jalus*) are part of nearly all the world religions. The performers follow ritual norms within the structure of processions which are established by traditional customs and not affected by individual objectives for participation, although there are various types of meanings which may be attributed to the ritual reenactment by participants.

A common noun for procession and cortege in the Punjabi language is the Arabic loan word *jalus*, the original meanings of which are the act of sitting on the throne and the first year of a reign reckoned from the date of the coronation of an emperor (Nayeem 1980: 165-170).

Jacobson defines processions are among the significant visual shows of a religion which disclose essential aspects of the religion. There are rituals which present many of the dimensions of religion at the same time like skill, sacred descriptions of events, social chain of commands and contests, the people and their identities. Processions are signals of social revolution, preservers of the past and continuously recreate it and may reflect policies for crowd to become evident in order to defend their position in the system (Jacobson 2008: 9-10).

Similarly Bauman & Abrahams describe processions are one of the most important events for large groups together on the public roads for a religious reason. Religious procession is a type of designed public display occasion which visibly defines tasks, where public performs in the streets for the viewers. Public display events are occasions for groups to draw attention to themselves. Processions are planned for the public occasions in which action (rituals) and objects (symbols) invested with latent meanings and values are display to demonstrate (Bauman & Abrahams 1981: 303).

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<sup>65</sup> Narration

<sup>66</sup> Narrator

### 3.5 Religious Processions in World Religions

Religious processions are important in Hinduism, Christianity, Sikhism Islam and all other world religions. It is a major part of religion, especially in Shi'ism in Islam. It is a source for large groups to gather on public roads and streets, for a religious purpose. Procession are the ways to bring people together in rituals performances which are part of traditions, moral values, identities and distinguish themselves from the rituals performed inside the religious place and in the home premises for public events.

Jacobsen explains the salient features of the procession celebrations in world religions as: There are different aspects of processions and related rituals in world religions which have acquired new functions. These rituals function as multicultural celebrations and these festivals promote their identity. Processions are also performed for the harmony of the group and bring people together like annual Hindu and Sikh processions have become a central part of religious life in many big cities of the world and Hindus and Sikhs visit temples and *gurdwaras*. Processions are a source to bring together large groups of the religious communities for a common interest. There is always a pressure on individuals to participate in processions (Jacobsen 2008: 9).

#### a. Shi'a Religious Processions

Shi'a perform *ashura* rituals like other world religions, which provide people a consciousness of their membership in the group and suggest the experience of social integration. For the Shi'a, such rituals represent social solidarity, harmony and are the glue that clutches Shi'a society together.

An Anthropologist Victor Turner titles the processions "*communitas*" where a social difference is always weak. A procession may display meaningful symbols in order to attain particular goals. Often it is an occasion for a group to draw attention towards itself and in procession rituals the audience is participants. They have a role as "watched watcher" (Turner 1974: 98-101).

#### b. Types of Shi'a Processions

There are different types of Shi'a processions like '*alam berdar* procession, *panjah berdar*, *mushel berdar* etc. These rituals are also performed by some Sunnis and the followers of other religion. Pinault discusses the rituals of processions as,

During Muharram processions, Shi'a particularly males, beat their chests with their hands (*matam*), beat their backs with sharp edged metal instruments or scar their head. Occasionally participant women also beat their breasts, but seldom in public processions (Pinault 1992:109-110).

### **3.6 Shi'a Rituals and Symbols in Processions**

Pinault describes the Shi'a rituals in processions as, one of the most visible rituals practiced by the Shi'a are the public mourning processions. The mourning processions are displayed in main streets of the towns and cities letting everyone to actively participate and are arranged on the 10th of Muharram. The size of the procession can differ, participant gather from different areas and reach the main already defined area, where gather thousands of men and boys holding *'alam* and carrying models of the tomb of his martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his followers. Several men, women, and children stand along both sides of the procession and watch the ritual performances (Pinault 2001:149). Nowadays people gather along both sides of the procession for the security reasons in Pakistan.

#### **a. History of Shi'a Processions**

According to Hussain, the Shi'a believe that the roots of the Shi'a processions may be traced back into the history when Muhammad Hanfia, Abdullah ibne Jaffer, Bani Hasham and people of the Quraish tribe heard about the sad demise of Imam Hussain, they went together in the form of mourner's procession to the Holy graves of Hazrat Muhammad and Bibi Fatima and performed *matam* and recited *nohey* to express their sorrow (Hussain 1990:374).

Nakash explains the history of Shi'a rituals and processions as, Shi'a rulers helped in sponsoring on the rites of *ashura* and explained the appearances of rituals and the public mourning processions in the past. It seems that these marches initiated this practice under the Shi'a Buyid dynasty in Baghdad (945 – 1055) (Nakash 1993:161-181).

Elizabeth Macaulay Lewis narrates in her essay "Chronological periods in the Islamic world" that it was the Safavid (1501-1722) period when the greatest dynasty of Shi'a emerged from Iran and Shi'a Islam was dominant faith in Iran. Architecture, paintings, manuscripts and carpets all flourished under the Shah Abbas (1587-1629), who

was the great sponsor of the arts. Infact he was the Safavid dynasty's most exceptional ruler.

#### **b. Muharram Processions and Rituals in the Sub-Continent**

Halm describes the Muharram ritual processions and *majales* have great importance in South Asia, as Muharram processions are documented at the time of the buyid dynasty (932-1055) in Iraq. Maulana Jalal-ud-din Rumi (1273) observed and condemned a Muharram procession before the gates of Aleppo during the Safavid period on the basis that mourning rituals were in developed in Iran (1051-1722). They were introduced in the sixteenth century by Iranian immigrants in India where, the popular classes developed innovative ways of mourning for the people of the house (Halm 1997:24-44).

The event of Karbala serves the foundation of Muharram rituals, which were not only performed in Iran but also in Iraq and later on expanded in other regions of the world as well.

During the time of royal leader Aurangzaib, in 1687 Shi'ism was promoted and linked to the hope of gaining support from Iran against the invasions of the predominantly Sunni Mughals. The great Mughal king Akbar (1556-1605) declared an official religion *den-e-elahi*,<sup>67</sup> which was not supported by even Raja Maan Singh and the public. However, Hindu devotees participate in the Muharram processions, with indigenous Shi'a religious traditions and practices of Deccan. The most significant single historical development in this context was the introduction of the handy replica (*taboot and ta'ziya*) of Imam Hussain's tomb to Muharram public, displayed by Timur lane on his return to India from pilgrimage to Karbala in 1398 (Sharif 1972: 164).

Freitag says, before Partition, Sunni and Hindus participated in great numbers of Muharram processions although they refrained from *matam*. Processions were an important feature of composite culture. Traditionally Sunni avoided all rituals during Muharram, although they made special foods (*neyaz*), facilitated processions and gave *sabel* (refreshment stands) (Freitag 1989: 278).

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<sup>67</sup> The term used by King Akbar who introduced changes in the religion of Islam.

### c. Muharram Processions and Rituals in Pakistan

Cole informs that Muharram rituals were introduced in Pakistan by Mahmood bin Amir Wali, who was a tourist from Bukhara. He shared mourn rituals of Muharram in Lahore around 1635 (Rizvi 1980:191). In the late eighteenth century, processions of *ta'ziya* and *'alams* became impressive events in Awadh and spread from Lucknow into countryside areas. The Iranian performance of chest beating was introduced into India by Syed Dildar Ali Nasirabadi (1762-1819) and the concept of *zul jinnaah* processions also comes from Iran, which was introduced into Lahore by Nawab Ali Raza Khan Qizilbash in the nineteenth century (Cole 1988:108).

Muslim *'ulama* from India immigrated to Pakistan at the time of partition who had obtained their religious education from Lucknow. They strongly opposed the charismatic approach of Shi'a, later on Shi'a population accepted these beliefs. However, Indian Hindu rituals like *aag ka matam*<sup>68</sup> (fire walking) were introduced by the *muhajirs* in Muharram processions in Karachi and still is a part of Muharram processions in Lahore and Multan. Before the Iranian revolution, those Pakistani Shi'a who had completed their studies in Najaf, came to Pakistan and started a campaign against unorthodox practices. The most prominent among them was Maulana Muhammad Hussain Dhakko (Naqvi 2001:140-144).

### 3.7 The Concept of *Majales*

The term *majlis* (plural *majales*) means a meeting, a session, or a gathering. In Shi'a reference, *majlis* means a gathering, to mourn Imam Hussain (Deeb 2005: 12). Hegland describes the major differences of opinion between two sects of Islam as, Shi'a perform *majlis* rites in Pakistan. They mourn for the miseries and death of Imam Hussain, who was not an ordinary man but grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the third Imam. This event is deeply rooted in the Shi'a ideology and philosophy which leads to a split of Muslims into the two main groups, Sunni and Shi'a. Both sects are differed in their approach to the leadership of succession after the sad demise of Prophet Muhammad in 632 A.D (Hegland 1995:1-14).

*Majales* are organized by the Shi'a working group, in *Imam bargah*, they also

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<sup>68</sup> Fire walking

organize *majales* at homes, especially in the month of Muharram and on the events of birth and death anniversaries of Imams, where Shi'a scholars come to participate and recite *mersiya and nohey* over the loud speaker. Shi'a scholar earn large sums of money, within three to four hours in a day and Shi'a organizations greet professional scholars or narrators (*zakir*) for the *ashura majales* and they recite devotional *mersiya and nohey*.

Shi'a complete their tasks in time, or postpone their activities, to ensure their participation in rituals especially in the month of Muharram and Safar.

The *majales* have two basic purposes to:

- Inform
- Reform

In the first phase, *zakir* starts *majales* with recitation of miracles of Shi'a Imams and in the second phase he shares the knowledge of the true meaning of Islam. Shi'a organize the *majlis e aza* or mourning congregations, to memorize the martyrs, who stayed ten days at the ground of Karbala and they usually recite painful incidents (*masayeb*) of Imam Hussain and his followers over the loudspeaker system.

In the *majales* named *sham e ghareeban*,<sup>69</sup> the Shi'a gather on 11<sup>th</sup> of Muharram in *Imam bargah* and express their pain and sorrow for Imam Hussain and his family who were martyred in the tragic event of Karbala.

#### **a. History of *Majales* in Shi'a Traditions**

The researcher has sorted out that the concept of mournful *majales* came from the *tawabin*. *Tawabin* is a group of people or cult who were guilty and repentant on the martyrdom of Imam Hussain as they considered themselves dishonest since they wrote letter to Imam Hussain and requested him to visit Kufa as they did not want to endorse Yazid's rule. Imam Hussain fulfilled his promise and came there and after the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions, *tawabin* (many passionate Shi'a) realized the far reaching implications of their blunders, as they did not support Imam Hussain and betrayed him in the battle of Karbala. They began a movement named *tawwabun*. *Tawabin* used to sit together in a religious place, memorize the miseries of *ehl e bait*, the

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<sup>69</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> Muharram night Shi'a have their sorrow on martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions in the event of Karbala.

events of Imam's lives and cried. They had regretted for the sin of not supporting grandson of the Holy Prophet, on his arrival in Kufa. They also acknowledge that Imam Hussain came to Kufa on their request but the people of the Kufa left him alone to save their lives. This reveals that Shi'a procession and *majales* are outcome of a strong feeling of guilt, blended with touching sentiments of deep rooted sorrow, grief and a powerful urge to seek forgiveness for their misdeeds on the event of Karbala, on part of the *tawabin*. All this, coupled with a different interpretation of Islamic history, serves as a driving force, which led to a distinct and separate identity for the Shi'a sect. Moreover, *ta'ziya*, *majales*, mourning are the face and above mentioned aspects are the soul of Shi'a religio-spiritual doctrine.

#### **b. Muharram Rituals in Chakwal**

The researcher has observed that in Chakwal, during the month of Muharram Shi'a men refuse to take part in economic activities and remain inactive especially in the first ten days. Economy of the locale undergoes in a recession the month of Muharram and Safar as they do not open their shops and give proper time to their clients. It is said by most of the Shi'a that by the grace of God they never suffer in these days. There are two main "stratas" in the locale. Financially strong Shi'a observe *mannat* and offer a big amount to arrange/perform rituals in their native areas, those Shi'a who live abroad come back to their area to participate in the rituals. They give money to the poor Shi'a to perform *zanjir zeni* and *matam* rituals. They provide them with the lavish meal and money. It is also observed that rich Shi'a do not perform *matam* and *zanjir zeni* rituals, as it is a painful act, however the poor Shi'a perform *zanjir zeni* to get money. It is a business now, but all the people are not same like fingers, many observe both the *mannat* and perform *matam* for spiritual benefits.

#### **c. Case study**

Shi'a look after their close kinship and facilitate each other in the performance of rites in their daily life. They help each other in every aspect of life. During data collection a Shi'a respondent named Asghar shared that three years back, he had converted from Sunni although his family was still Sunni. He had been unemployed for years and he used to



visit *Imam bargah* daily, where he met respectable Shi'a of the area. They offered him a job as a salesman and it became a source of earning his bread. One year ago, in the winter, his father died and his family had no money to arrange funeral rites, honourable Shi'a helped him and Shi'a women visited his home, during funeral rites, many times to understand his financial problems, however, his mother refused to take money from them, as she thought they would force for conversion to Shi'a sect. Now Asghar perform *zanjir zeni* and *matam* rituals and he is thankful to the rich Shi'a, who helped him become a good *momin*<sup>70</sup>.

The Shi'a feel proud when a person converts from Sunni. They consider themselves strong and revolutionary. They transfer benefits to the deserving people of their sect, however, they do not offer *zakat*<sup>71</sup> to the needy, but they spend their money on the observance of *mannat* and offering of rituals on the religious events in particular Islamic months, or handover money to the administrator of *Imam bargah*, to organize *majales*.

It is observed that Shi'a do not congress with their women even in the month of Muharram, especially first ten days of Muharram. Sensible Shi'a and Sunnis both do not celebrate ceremonies like marriage and birthday of a child in the months of Muharram and Safar to respect the sacrifice of the martyrs of the event.

### **3.8 Security Measures during Muharram in Chakwal**

Chakwal is district with dense Shi'a population. Particular in the months of Muharram and Safar, the local administration declares some areas as red zone and sensitive, in order to avoid any sectarian conflict. Pakistan government provides security to the Shi'a religious events. All law enforcing agencies become active and provide their services on the events. The Shi'a perform all their rituals under their security measures.

There are two layers of securities arrangements.

1. Operated and supervised by the law enforce agencies
2. Shi'a security guards

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<sup>70</sup> Muslim

<sup>71</sup> Alms or religious tax in Islam

The Shi'a arrange their own security check plans and provide safety to their people because it is a sensitive matter. Local government helps the Shi'a a lot. They help in providing them protection. It is observed that the event of Karbala is the most important symbolic event for Shi'a of Chakwal.

Martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his seventy two companions on the battlefield of Karbala, laid the base for the *ashura* rituals and symbols which a distinct shape Shi'a identity and a sense of collective feeling.

#### **a. Matam in Muharram**

David Pinault explains unique term of *matam* in Shi'ism as, *matam* or chest beating is an exclusive Shi'a term, it is the most generalized sense, stands for the mourning gestures to express sorrow for the tragic event. In the Shi'ite context, it indicates lamentation for *ehl-e-bait*, Imam Hussain and the other Karbala martyrs, most typically in the form of recurring performance of chest beating, more rarely in the form of self flagellation through the use of chains and blades (Pinault 1997: 235-257).

*Matam* is a Shi'a ritual that involves mourners beating their chest with their hands. Their slogans are “*Ya Ali*” and “*Ya Hussain*”. This is the remembrance of the deaths of the first and third Imam Ali and Hussain. It is also practiced at other times and is an expression of loyalty to the Imams. The researcher has observed that Shi'a participate bare chest in the *senah zeni*<sup>72</sup>. Shi'a men hit their body with the chains or walk bare foot over burning coal, while uttering cries of anguish for the torture that Imam Hussain suffered on the battle field of Karbala. It is also supposed to be an expression of the people's feeling of helplessness to save Imam Hussain from the brutalities committed by Yazid's forces.

Chelkowski states that *matam* is one of the most controversial and the most conspicuous *ashura* rituals, and it has been the prime source of fear and hostility toward Shi'a, especially from the Sunni sect. This ritual practice is viewed even within many Shi'a religious circles as an anathema (Chelkowaski 2005:49).

Even Shi'a *'ulama* have criticized some of the Muharram rituals like the use of horses, camels and some form of *matam* when religious scholar Syed Muhammad

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<sup>72</sup> Chest beating

Nisirabadi (the chief *mujtahid* of Lucknow from 1820 to 1867) was asked about *zanjir zeni*<sup>73</sup>. He replied that weeping and beating one's chest over the disaster that occurred with the family of the Prophet was only acceptable in case of loss of one's control on him/herself (Cole 1998: 108).

### **b. Matami Jalus in Chakwal**

In processions Shi'a walk through streets in the form of groups and they sing devotional songs (*mersiya and nohey*) of the Imam's martyrdom and do *matam* (beating one's own breast - a sign of mourning and sorrow). They call out the Holy names of Imam Ali, *Ghazi* Abbas, Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain.

In Chakwal, some Shi'a devotees initiate with reciting the *noha* (those who recite the *noha* called *noha khawn*) and in reply the *matami hazrat* perform *matam* with intensity. Nowadays, Shi'a play tape recorders for lamenting *noha* (chants) in processions, house *majales* and in *Imam bargah* Shi'a *noha khawn* recite *nohy* and children and youth perform *matam*. They get inspiration from their elders who perform *matam* in processions. Shi'a females also perform *matam* at their home or in female section of *Imam bargah* but not in an open place.

### **c. Styles of Matam**

There are different styles of *matam* which are mentioned below:

There are also different styles of *matam* that are more designed and performed by large groups of mourners. During this practice, the mourners line up side by side in two parallel lines, and with a left hand on the hip of the man to his left, each mourner strikes his chest with his right hand in time to the chanted *niyahah*<sup>74</sup>. In unity with the rhythm, the mourners step together, taking a pace to the front, and then one to the back, ending with all of them bending forward in unison while beating their chests (Pinault 1992: 109-114).

It has been noted in Chakwal that *matam* is a rhythmic activity, its momentum is slow at first but increases to a climax. Most of the Shi'a say that *matam* which they perform in the processions is not painful, most of the participants are not very

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<sup>73</sup>Self-flagellation

<sup>74</sup>Lamentation poetry

enthusiastic about having pain. The enthusiasm of the people, especially those who do *matam* with the *zanjir* is very powerful, in the sense that it rigorously expresses the feelings of the Shi'a unity.

Imam Khamenei was not in the support of Shi'a *matam*.

Pinault quotes Imam Khamenei's words as: It is not a question of Individual or physical harm, but of great injuries linked to the reputation of Islam (Pinault 2001:149).

*Matam* is sacred ritual actions which has symbolic meanings. It is Shi'a tradition that Imam Hussain and his family will be surely alive in true Shi'a heart and lives till the end of the world "*Imam Hussain ta qiyamat zinadah rahen gy*".

There are different ways to perform *matam*. *Zanjir zeni*, *talwar*<sup>75</sup> *ka matam*, *agg*<sup>76</sup> *ka matam* but the most common *matam* form in Chakwal is *zanjir zeni*.

### **3.9 Zanjir zeni (Self-flagellation)**

*Zanjir zeni* is a part of *matam*, in which Shi'a lift up their fists and shares logans like "*Ya Ali*", "*Ya Hussain*", and it is an expression of grief and sorrow especially the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram are the most important days for the ritual performance. In remembrance of the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions, Shi'a walk in procession, recite *mersiya* and hit themselves with heavy chains on the days of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram.

*Zanjir ka matam* represents a manliness ritual which is getting popular among children and teenagers who follow their elders, although *zanjir ka matam* should not be encouraged. Many '*ulama* criticize this ritual, women should avoid looking at men take off their shirts in public, as nudity is taboo in Islam, The mourners know that women are watching and they want to be seen demonstrating their bravery and their devotion (Abou Zahab 2008:111).

The researcher has observed that tying *dopattas* with '*alam* and sacred trees in *Imam bargah* and self-flagellation is proscribed in Shi'a norms and values but some Shi'a

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<sup>75</sup> Sword

<sup>76</sup> Fire

perform this ritual. It has also been observed that people perform *zanjir zeni* in processions and some time they are paid. This is the way/method to remember the event of Karbala and establish solidarity with the martyrs, feel their pain physically go through self punishment, coupled with an expression of helplessness and regret on part of the mourners. In this way they express the intensity of their emotional and spiritual attachment with the event. This embodies their level of disappointment and disgust along with their level of disappointment and disgust along with their strong resolve to shed their blood for the martyrs of Karbala. These activities or non-religious acts get a strong hold in religion.

Shi'a harm themselves to realize the pain and sorrow which all Imams faced in their lives. Shi'a symbols are the manifestation of the recognition for the fact that Imam Hussain and his family would be alive in true Shi'a heart and lives till the end of the world (*janab Imam Hussain ki yad ta qiyamat zinadah rahi ge*). All Shi'a symbols and rituals have deep rooted connection with the human mind and soul, which accepted the importance in their lives.

### **3.10 Noor Mehel**

*Noor mehel* is the sacred place or room in *Imam bargah* where '*alam* and *ta'ziyas* and other precious symbols of Shi'a are stored. Shi'a use to clean it and white wash this room frequently. In Chakwal, when *zakirs* and '*ulama* address the *majales* they place '*alam* in front of them. It is said that this is an oath or swearance for *zakirs* or '*ulamas* to tell the truth.

Khan states *zakir* place '*alam* on the table during *majales* and usually *zakirs* swear '*alam* to express grief regarding events of Karbala to their listeners and make solid argument. Shi'a used to display '*alam* to lead the processions during the Muharram. The '*Alam* has significance for the *majales* and processions, which is later on kept in the *noor mehel* - a room in *Imam bargah*, where '*alam*, *ta'ziya*, and other Holy symbolic items are placed. (Khan 2015: 191).

During data collection, the researcher has observed that Shi'a '*ulama* and *zakir* place an '*alam* in front of them to attain the height of supposed to be essential to get closer to God, owing to '*alam's* sacredness and holiness. It has been noted by the

researcher that the presence of *'alam* is an oath on part of *'ulama* and *zakirs* that they would remain truthful and steady, during the speech and strictly avoid any moral and intellectual dishonesty and pray under the shadow of *'alam* which is Shi'a identity and a source of their empowerment.

The construction of *ta'ziya* and *'alam* is based on the fact that the basic wooden structure is never destroyed but safely preserved in the *Imam bargah's noor mehel* to be used year after year. Every Muharram, this wooden structure is brought out from its place and in the basic frame is beautifully and attractively decorated with coloured paper or with silver and gold. The Shi'a perform a ritual in which they prepare and stitch their *'alam* in this Holy room, where they (performers) come *bawzu* (after performing ablution) and do their sacred work as a ritual performance. Performers recite devotional *nohey and mersiya* (remembrance of *ehl-e-bait*) during the performance of their rituals. They observe *mannat* too at that time period there are some rituals assemble together to constitute a complete system of faith.

The Shi'a place sacred *'alam* in a sacred room in a systematic way which room is called *noor mehel* in *Imam bargah*. They perfume this room with fragrance and this place is not like an ordinary room, but an extraordinary place with inherent. The Shi'a wash this room with rose water or scented water and give it a special honour and religio-spiritual meanings.

*Noor mehel* is a sacred place and have *noor* (eternal light), where so many memorial symbols are placed and a paradise on earth where all *dua* (prayers) come true.

### **3.11 The Shi'a Women**

In Chakwal, Shi'a women have strong attachment with their sect. They are vigorously involved in their religious rituals in order to attain salvation and divine intercession in their spiritual life. They eagerly take part/ participate in rituals specified for the women and generally seek *mannat* for their children and marital happiness.

The Shi'a organize separate *majales* for their women as space and activities are gender specific. Even in every *Imam bargah* there would always be a separate portion for the females, where they listen to religious scholars in *majales* and they perform *matam* and narrate *nohey or mersiya*. There are some public and private rituals like co-gender or

only women specific gatherings, as it is a way to develop and maintain social fabrics. It is observed that the Shi'a women are more profound to participate in their rituals than men. The observance of *mannat* is much common among Shi'a as well as Sunni females. The Shi'a women idealize janab e Zainab, who is an embodiment of an ideal woman, lost in grief and a true picture of the misery of *ehl-e-bait*.

One of the female respondents Sughra Bibi has shared her view that for a layman these rituals and symbols are just activities or actions of the Shi'a particularly in the month of Muharram and Safar but these have latent meanings. Women play a significant role in the rituals as they have strong belief in it. These rituals are a blend of social, psychological, spiritual gathering. They organize separate *majales* for the women to facilitate a fare performance of religious activities as, they regard it their right. It's an expression of sentiments and deep emotions coupled with faith. The use of symbols in rituals for a particular gender is coded as it portrays an ideal male and female behaviour. Remembrance of the Holy females like Bibi Fatima, janab-e-Zainab, bibi Sakeena, helps them to identify themselves with the ideal image of these great women possess great spiritual, moral and religious attributes.

Keeping in view, their attributes the Shi'a women can never ever forget them. Memorizing their ways of life, righteousness bravery sacrifice is a part and parcel of their belief system. May Allah help us to have tolerance and patience<sup>77</sup> like the Holy women of Islam in our daily lives as this is a way to get spiritual power. This is a way they can try to attain hundred percent satisfaction in the ideal task of character building and spiritual satisfaction.

### **3.12 Shi'a Religious Scholars (*Zakir or 'Ulama*)**

The Shi'a believe that the study of Islamic literature is a continuous process, and it is necessary to identify God's laws. *Sunni* Muslims also believe that they can interpret the *Quran and ahadith* with the same authority as their ancestors as the door to *ijtihad* has never been closed.

In Chakwal, *majales* are formal gatherings and source or a way to educate the Shi'a. It is observed by the researcher that the Shi'a children have a strong grip on the

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<sup>77</sup> *Saber*

knowledge about their religion and ideology, however, Sunni children do not know even the distinctive features of their sect. It is observed that some Shi'a *zakirs* focus on their vocal cords, lyrics and tones while delivering their *zikr*, some scholar on the other hand focus on their speaking power. They passionately charge their listeners to weep for their catharsis especially in the month of Muharram. Either they decide their topic earlier or is assigned by the Shi'acommittee who arrange the *majlis*.

The narrators have described the events of Karbala, based on the chronological order of the events that occurred during the first ten days of Muharram in 680 AD. The most painful event of the Karbala tragedy took place at the end, which is beheading of Imam Imam Hussain (Hussain 2005: 47).

The researcher has observed, *zakir* or narrators motivate the Shi'a by using Punjabi language in the *majlis*, as most of the people are illiterate and cannot understand Urdu language in the *majales*. Shi'a *zakir* recites miracles associated with the Shi'a Imams and also narrate problems faced by the Imams and incidents relating their martyrdom.

### **3.13 Administrator of *Imam bargah* (*Mutawali*)**

Constructions of religious places have worth in Islam. Social scientists talk about social ontology. The social construction theory also called constructionism. Researcher has observed during the field work that Shi'a have a complete setup for the arrangement of Muharram rituals, which is called committee also. They contract religious scholars (*zakir*) for the *majales*, especially in the month of Muharram, and other ritual events. They organize *majales* according their timetable and keep a vigilant eye on the security measures. They also manage and arrange funds for the *majales*.it are also found that they have their own rules, regulations and procedures.

*Mutawali*<sup>78</sup> is a part of the committee and executive body in the infrastructure of Shi'a who manage and arrange discipline, during the *majales* and processions as well as he looks after the *Imam bargah* and its belonging for the rest of the year. In real meaning they are administrators and organizers. They welcome all *momineen and mominat*<sup>79</sup> to

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<sup>78</sup> Executive body of *Imam bargah*

<sup>79</sup> Muslim males and females



*Imam bargah*. They organize the processions and the *majales* and manage the rituals. Shi'a provide them *nazrana* as *mannat* for arranging events and making symbols. They keep the record of forthcoming *majales*, processions and look after the symbols placed in the *noor mehel*. They arrange security for the visitors. They provide them meal, tea and much more (*langer*). In other words researcher can describe them as true facilitators.

## CHAPTER 4

### RITUALS AS SACRED SYMBOLS OF SHI'A FAITH

This chapter discusses the *ashura* rituals and sacred objects of Shi'a in the light of their religious doctrine and mythology as primary vehicles to support the narrative of Karbala. This chapter consists of the comprehensive research field data which deals with Shi'a rituals as *tashbeh* (symbols) in the Muslim tradition, especially the Shi'a community has kept the memory of the Karbala incident, which symbolically expresses, revives and maintains intense emotional attachment associated with the pathetic incident leading to the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson.

Turner defines: A symbol is a thing regarded by general consent as naturally typifying, representing or recalling something by possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or thought (Turner 1967: 19).

Further he says, the object is the smallest element of ritual which retains the specific properties of ritual behavior and has specific structure in a ritual context (Turner 1977: 184).

Rituals as symbolism are interrelated concepts, both are sacred in nature and essential for religious practices. These concepts clarify the ideas of historically sacred events in the world religions.

#### 4.1 Expressions of Shi'a Rituals as Symbols

Before discussing Shi'a rituals as symbols, it is important to know their symbolic value, which may be expressed as:

- *Mannat* is the promised ritual observed by Shi'a, which is performed after fulfilling realization of their desire or goals. Actually they make a solemn commitment to perform certain rituals on a particular day of Muharram or Safar if their peculiar desire has been fulfilled.

It is said that Holy Prophet Harazt Muhammad also ordered to fulfill the promise *mannat*. Hazrat Umar Razi Allah Talah An'ho inquired the Holy Prophet Muhammad after accepting Islam "I made a solemn *mannat* (pledge) during the era of ignorance and I would stay for one night *ehta'kaf* in the *khana ka'bah*. The Holy Prophet replied, "fulfill your solemn pledge".

Shi'a will observe ritual in future coming any day of Muharram and Safar. In addition to this, prosecutions (*majales*) are held in *Imam bargahs* especially in the month of Muharram, Safar, Zil haj<sup>80</sup> and Rajab<sup>81</sup>.

- *Tashbeh*<sup>82</sup>: There are variants of *tashbeh* (symbols) like *'alam*, *zul jinnah*, the sword of Imam Ali, *jhoola*, *ta'ziya*, sacred clay (*khak-e-Karbala*), *kara*, *panjah*, *mehndhi*, coffin (*taboot*), Holy flask (*mashkezah*), black thread, *Imam zamin*, *neyaz*, *sabel*. Shi'a believe in the sacredness of symbols and they use symbols in ritual performance in their particular processions and *majales*.

- Prose tells the story of the tragedy giving a detailed account of history, virtues and emotional expressions. Shi'a express their sentiments for *ehl-e-bait* in a poetic form which is called *noha and mersiya*.

- Tomb visitation: Karbala is considered to be the prime site for such a ritualistic pilgrimage since it is the place where Imam Hussain was martyred.

- *Matam* (Self-flagellation)

- Processions

The researcher has found, during fieldwork that Shi'a rituals and ceremonies take a particular form each year in Chakwal and people gather in special places called *Imam bargah*. They pray and chant *mersiya and nohey* and remember the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions on the day of *ashura* which is also called the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Hussain. Every *Imam bargah* organizes a procession in which they pray, recite *mersiya and nohey* and observe their *mannat*.

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<sup>80</sup> The 12<sup>th</sup> month of Islamic calendar

<sup>81</sup> The 7<sup>th</sup> month of Islamic calendar

<sup>82</sup> Symbol

### a. Case study

Ali Hassan is a young Shi'a scholar and has confirmed his belief in Shi'a sect. According to him, his father is a Sunni and Ali himself was also Sunni previously but he keenly studied the Shi'a sect and personally takes part in the rituals and loves to participate in the rituals like holding the '*alam* and the presentations in *majlis*.

Like the other Shi'a, he also prefers some rituals over others strongly because he believes that there are many rituals which are an outcome of socio-cultural interaction between Hinduism and Muslims over the past eras of history. He believes that each sacred ritual has a complete historical perspective and some are them originally attributed to some key figures e.g the holding of '*alam* is attributed to *Ghazi Abbas* (the son of Imam Ali) *alamdar*<sup>83</sup>. Ritual of *jhoola jhulana* is attributed to the newly born *masoom*, Hazrat Ali Asghar. As the rituals are attributed to different sacred figures, keeping in view their peculiar characteristics so there is a complete hierarchy of the rituals in the minds of the followers based on their personal interest and the level of attachment. For example, mother in the procession (who does not have a child would automatically be attracted by the ritual of *jhoola jhulana* because this ritual is attributed to the newly born baby (of about six months). As the researcher has interviewed and observed during fieldwork, that at the place where the ritual of *joula jhulana* is performed; the ritual is observed by majority married/childless women. They observe *mannat* to acquire fertility. Through this ritual they not only integrate themselves with the pathetic martyrdom of innocent Ali Asghar but also personally share and feel the agony of childlessness with his parents. Moreover, they make a solemn pledge in the form of *mannat* to get a child. If they get a child they promise to perform certain rituals in return. These rituals in their own turn, would strengthen their faith in their beliefs and sacredness of *ehl-e-bait*.

## 4.2 Black Dress

Clothing is an interesting and important aspect of social and cultural life as different people dress differently. Dresses are culture oriented, value based and perform versatile functions. It reflects style, occupation, status and affiliation to an ideology of the wearer.

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<sup>83</sup> '*alam* holder

It is a symbol or mark of a particular identity. Goffman discusses the importance of dress with reference to social interaction as:

The dressed body has three functions: it works as a social resource, communicates and it renders social and personal identity. As a social resource it influences social situations for the benefit of the body. The dressed body places itself within a particular social and cultural setting. It also locates others on the basis of their dress, dress in this way is used as a mean of non-verbal communication and forms a shared language. The dress becomes imbued with symbolic meanings (Arthurr 2000: 2).

Religion and dress are particularly significant with reference to the present study of Shi'a rituals and their symbolic representation, it's a way to maintain a link with the customs and traditions of their religion. This black dress is establishing a visual identity for their religion and at the same time it reveals the individual identities of its members. In preserving the traditions and rendering a religion based identity, the black dress reflects Shi'a religious ideology. In the month of Muharram most of the Shi'a men and women do not wear new clothes and shoes. They only put on black dresses and many avoid shoes as a ritual cleansing. Black dress is one of most popular symbol of the Shi'a.it is a visual manifestation of the intensity of pathos and sorrow attached with the Kerbala incident and the level of deep emotional, moral and spiritual commitment on part of the followers (the Shi'a).

A knowledgeable female Shi'a scholar Syda Saima has shared her ideas about black colour during fieldwork in these words that black is a colour and the blend of all colours. It does not reflect light. Scientifically we can say that black in itself is not a colour but a mixture of all colours. Cover of the *khana kab'ba* is also black in colour. The use of colours at ritual occasion is very important and collective use of black colour by the Shi'a is a significant multidimensional symbolic gesture.

#### **a. Black Dress - Rituals and its Symbolism**

The Shi'a have a variety of customs and preference in dress remains subject to social beliefs and traditions. Black colour is Shi'a identity, especially in the month of Muharram. Black dress is one of the most popular symbols of the Shi'a, as most of the

Shi'a use black dresses to perform rituals. Black colour expresses the grief, sorrow and pain. Grief has a predominant position in the rituals of the Muharram.

Shi'a observe *mannat* of dress in black colour especially in the month of Muharram and Safar. Clothing among Shi'a folk is a genuine expression of custom when it is exercised as religious norm, or is used as a native costume. Black colour expresses the grief, sorrow and pain. Sorrow constitute a salient feature of the rituals of the Muharram. Shi'a observe *mannat* as per requirement and wear black dress as Shi'a consider their body is socially controlled both internally and externally through constraints on emotions (voices like cry and laughter) and visible features (dress) respectively.

### **4.3 'Alam as Religious Symbol**

The knowledgeable Shi'a has shared: '*Alam* is unifying symbol, deeply rooted into the Shi'a faith. The term '*alam* has an Arabian origin and its meaning is "worry and be troubled". '*Alam* is a distinctive (sacred) flag that can be interpreted as religious identity of Shi'ism all over the world.

'*Alam* is the most vital and necessary representation of Shi'a *majales* and procession especially in Pakistan. It is a religious sacred symbol, a Holy flag which is one of the essential and main symbol of the Shi'a. The '*alam* is not an ordinary or just a piece of coloured cloth but is the representation of war or battle standard of Shi'ism.

The researcher has observed that Chakwali Shi'a have '*alam* mostly in rectangular shape, however there are several colours of '*alam* such as black, red and green which are plain as well as decorated with different sacred sayings/scripts (slogans), colourful ribbons and laces.

There are too many traditional rituals and *mannat* performances by Shi'a, like holding of '*alam* with mourner procession (*Matami jalus*) in *Imam bargah* and a walk through the streets of the pre-defined area, in the months of Muharram, Safar, Zil haj and Rajab (Islamic calendar).

The '*alam* is not only a piece of cloth but also having the religious and sacred slogans like "Allah o Akbar<sup>84</sup>" (Allah is great) "Ghazi Abbas *alamdar*<sup>85</sup>", "Ana majnun

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<sup>84</sup> Allah is great

*al Hussain*” (I am the lover of Imam Hussain) “Ya Ali Madad” (Help Ya Imam Ali), “Salam Ya Hussain”, in Arabic script and these words are labelled sometimes in painted or in embroidered form on fabric.

#### a. ‘*Alam* Rituals and its Symbolism

The researcher has found that Chakwali Shi'a have great respect for the ‘*alam*. They pay full regards to this religiously sacred symbol by placing it in the centre of the premises where they gather to perform *majales* in the memory of Holy personalities. This shows their intimacy with *panjtan-pak* in general and Hazrat Imam Hussain in particular who fought for the right against the wrong and got success in his mission.

The researcher has observed during the fieldwork that Shi'a used to bind *dopattas* with the sacred ‘*alam* as they believe in *mannat* and *neyaz*. Shi'a consider that tying *dopatta* ritual has deep influence in their lives. They spend a reasonably handsome amount on these rituals like *mannat*, *neyaz* and *sabel*<sup>85</sup> and for ‘*alam berdar* (holding ‘*alam*) processions. Shi'a consider that the compassionate eye of Imam Ali, Imam Hussain, and Imam Hassan focuses upon them for memorizing them. Shi'a observe *mannat* and it is also believed that all *mannat* would be fulfilled sooner or later.

‘*Alam* is an identical and inspirational symbol in Shi'a tradition and possesses a deep implicit spiritual worth in Shi'a lives in Chakwal. Findings of the study lead to a conclusion that the ‘*alam* symbol is the recollection and remembrance of all important historical Islamic events. It has been observed by the researcher that ‘*alam* is a primary vehicle in the narrative of Karbala and the Shi'a have their own justification for their religious acts. They memorialize these events in socio cultural sphere through the major symbol ‘*alam* and perform religious ‘*alam* rituals and observe the great sacrifice of the *ehl-e-bait* (People of the house of Prophet Muhammad). Shi'a symbolize ‘*alam* in different colours.

In Chakwal, ‘*alam* rituals were carried out as a Shi'a *mannat* in the past and still in practice. Shi'a religious people make new ‘*alam* when they are clean, they take bath and then touch the Holy ‘*alam*. As they do not even touch ‘*alam* when they impure and

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<sup>85</sup> Hazrat Abbas, Son of Imam Ali holded ‘*alam* in the battle of Karbala.

<sup>86</sup> It is also form of *neyaz* which is consists of drinking material like juice, water etc.

polluted.

Observance of *mannat* is a part of Shi'a rituals/norms and values and they observe several *mannat*. For example, they make a new '*alam* and at that time they recite *fatiha* and recite *nohey* and *mersiyas*. They decorate '*alam* with different colourful ribbons, beads and laces. While making and holding an '*alam* is considered to be a great chance and fortune for a particular person in processions, especially in the months of Muharram and Safar. It is also believed that if a Shi'a possesses a sense of guilt doing a wrong deed, he observes a *mannat* and offers *namaz* (prayer) under the shade of '*alam* and request to *ehl e bait* for help to attain of his purity of the soul. It is considered that Allah showers his favours upon him and helps him become a pious man.

The researcher has observed during fieldwork that in *majales*, Shi'a '*ulama*<sup>87</sup> place '*alam* on the table and in procession '*alam* are used to lead the crowd as they swear upon '*alam* to make their argument more authentic and lament.

In Chakwal, it has been observed that '*alams* are also erected on the roof tops of the Shi'a people's houses, as a symbol and usually black '*alams* are placed on their house, which make them different from the mainstream population. When '*alam* is seen on the roof top of the house it is used to protect the house from the evil eye or malevolent thoughts. This is also a mark of Shi'a house identity. It is a symbol of honour and regard as well. In fact it is considered that supporting the '*alam* is a religious duty for the Shi'a on the religious merit. People tie *dopattas*<sup>88</sup> as a *mannat* with the '*alam* and kiss it as a tradition. It could be related to their prosperity, protection, marriage, birth of a male child and for the health of any person.

It has been noticed by the researcher during the fieldwork that '*alam* is a sacred symbol which spiritually purifies body and soul. Shi'a participate in '*alam* rituals to fulfill their worldly desires. Furthermore, '*alam* is a foundation of Shi'a success and relief in the worldly affairs.

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<sup>87</sup> The plural of *aalim*, religious scholars

<sup>88</sup> It is a long scarf to cover the head.



#### **4.4 *Zul Jinnah* as Shi'a Symbol**

The researcher has observed during the data collection that in Chakwal, sacred decorated *zul jinnah* is used as a significant symbol by the Shi'a, because historically it has a deep rooted essence. One of the respondents Zainab says that Hazrat Muhammad had a horse and after the sad demise of Prophet, it came in the custody of Hazrat Imam Ali and then Imam Hussain and there was no doubt of the loyalty of the horse *zul jinnah* for this Holy family.

##### **a. *Zul Jinnah* Rituals and its Symbolism**

In Chakwal, the Shi'a organize processions and decorate the horse with ornaments horse as a replica to *zul jinnah*, this horse lead the processions in the memory of Imam Hussain's horse named *dul dul* especially in the month of Muharram. They cover *zul jinnah* with a beautiful colorful decorated sheet made up of sacred and clean cloth which is covered with an umbrella. Shi'a offer him clean food and water for the whole of its life and this replica reminds them of the real one and people often feed the replica with their own hands. Shi'a do not wipe *zul jinnah* and nor they use it to ride like an ordinary horse as they consider him sacred.

It has been observed that the Shi'a present *zul jinnah* clean place for living and exercise the symbol whole heartedly during the month of Muharram, they like to see and kiss it and have an extreme respectful behavior towards him. It is believed that Prophet Muhammad used it for his ride.

During data collection, the researcher examined a Shi'a religious ritual/procession in (Malpur) Islamabad, where a small group consisted of the young Shi'a was beating the drum. There was a *zul jinnah* in the procession and Shi'a were observing the rituals associated with the day of *chelum*<sup>89</sup>. It was a unique experience for the researcher to observe drum beating during fieldwork on the *chelum* event, this ritual has never been performed in district Chakwal. As Shi'a associated it with mourning and grief and they never beat drums during the month of Muharram in Chakwal in other way but it is carried out in Islamabad.

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<sup>89</sup> 40<sup>th</sup> day after martyrdom

#### **4.5 The Sword of Imam Ali**

Sword is a weapon which is the symbol of a warrior. The mystical and sacred sword of Imam Ali is the most famous legendary weapon in the Islamic tradition. It is a truly religious Islamic symbol with peculiar perspective. In Arabic the name is usually translated as *zulfiqar*<sup>90</sup>. The scimitar is one of the oldest and best identified symbols of Islam, equally important to Shi'a as well as other Muslims. Hazrat Ali's son Imam Hussain used *zulfiqar* against the Banu Umayyad caliph Yazid in the fight of Karbala where he and his family were martyred.

The researcher has noted that the sword is a symbol of honour and knight hood. *Zulfiqar* has appeared in the iconography of Islamic nations for centuries. The existence of multiple conflicting images of *zulfiqar* has been confirmed. In Chakwal, some Shi'a believe in two parallel blades to emphasize its mystical abilities and speed, while others think about more traditionally shaped scimitar and some depict "v" shape edges. In the Shi'a belief system, Imam Ali was the first rightful successor to Muhammad and he used this sword as an exceptional weapon. Both Muslims and non-Muslims consider him a true knight and warrior.

#### **4.6 Jhoola – Rituals and its Symbolism**

It is called a cot, cradle or frame for babies where they fall in deep sleep. We also pronounce it *panghura or jhoola or gehwara*, generally it is a symbol of peace for a child.

Birth of a baby is a strong desire of every married couple. If a couple cannot produce a child because of some reasons, they start believing in miracles and it's in the human nature.

Generally cradle is made up of wood, copper, brass, and steel which is inlaid with precious and colourful stones, beads and paper. It is a very eminent religious idea in Shi'ism, which is very popular among the issueless people, especially among the females, even Sunni and non-Muslims also have faith/belief in this *mannat*.

The researcher has observed, Shi'a decorate *jhoola* with colorful ribbon and dresses of babies for the observance of their *mannat*, especially in the month of Muharram. In Chakwal, Most of the Shi'a, who are unfortunate mothers, pay respect to

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<sup>90</sup> Imam Ali's sword.

the Imams, they would seek their kind protection for the survival of their children. They observe this *mannat* to have male children and the year, when the wish comes true, i.e, they would get a male infant. They would buy twelve or fourteen new dresses for the newly born babies of the other people as a *mannat* in the name of twelve Imam and fourteen *masomeen*, as this is the rule of *mannat*. They also present baby dresses in *jhoola* (sacred symbol) in *Imam bargah*. In this way any deprived Shi'a, who has the same desire, can observe the same *mannat* and it works like a chain so that more and more people would utilize the symbol and receive its outcomes.

Usually Shi'a women believe in the *mannat*/ ritual of *jhoola jhulana* and present new toys as thanks giving. Many people even the Sunni also believe in the significance of the *jhoola* and they like to see and kiss it as a custom.

#### **a. Case study**

Rukhsana is a middle aged lady, she got married at the age of twenty six unfortunately, for eight years, did not have a single child. Her husband is a driver in Saudi Arab and her in-laws used to beat her for having no children. According to her, she performed a ritual, she had a strong desire to have a child, later on, she observed *mannat* in the name of Imam Ali Ashgar (son of Imam Hussain and Hazrat Ume Rubab) and got a daughter by the grace of Allah. Then she presented baby dresses and offered money as a gift (*nazrana*<sup>91</sup>) to *jhoola*.

## **4.7 Ta'ziya**

*Ta'ziya* (*shabeh*<sup>92</sup>) is a traditional term of Shi'a. Its literal meaning is mourning and the expression of condolence. It has deep rooted significance for the Shi'a as lamentation for martyred Imams, who are true leaders of their faith.

It has been observed during data collection that *ta'ziya* in particular, is an expression of mourning for Imam Hussain, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. *Ta'ziya* (*tashbeh*) is displayed in Shi'a rituals like processions and *majales* on *ashura*. *Ta'ziya* is

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<sup>91</sup> Thanks giving or gift

<sup>92</sup> Replica of the tomb

product of artistic creativity and skills which is supposed to be a replica (*shabeh*) of Imam Hussain's *roza* (tomb).

Shi'a largely use this symbol in rituals, which is generally made up of wood, copper, brass and steel. They decorate it with golden or silver paint, precious stones, shiny papers, wood or metal depending upon available resources.

#### **a. Ta'ziya Rituals and its Symbolism**

A common ritual among Shi'a is make a new *ta'ziya* (the replica of the tomb of Imams) when they observe a *mannat* in Chakwak. Purity and cleanliness is the most important part of the ritual of making of *ta'ziya*. More often they decorate *ta'ziya* in show case with lights and colorful ribbons.

A ritual is In Chakwal, Shi'a do not take *ta'ziya* out of the *Imam bargah* in routine life as it is highly considered highly sacred and divine. However, in the month of Muharram and Safar, *Imam bargah's* administration allows Shi'a to take *ta'ziya* out for the religious processions. Shi'a present money as a *mannat* to *ta'ziya*, that money is collected to cook *neyaz* which is called thanks giving payment. This *mannat* could be attributed to their general prosperity, security, matrimony, birth of a male child and the wellbeing of any person. Shi'a individuals also voluntarily contribute for construct and maintenance of the symbol as an expression of respect and faith for *ta'ziya*.

### **4.8 The Sacred Clay (*Khak-e-Karbala* or *Khak-e-Shifa*)**

The sacred clay in a round shape is one of the most important and unique symbol which is used by the Shi'a. It is also called a prayer stone (sacred clay or dust). It is known as the "clay disc of Karbala" or *khak-e-karbala*.

In Chakwal, as a ritual during prayers, each Shi'a places the prayer stone/ sacred clay in front of him/her, as he bows to pray because it is the most sacred of all the things that can be used for prostration, during the worship of Allah. Shi'a used to place clay at their home for their prosperity and well being.

#### **a. *Khak-e-Shifa's* Rituals and its Symbolism**

The researcher has observed during fieldworks that another ritual is Shi'a munch *khak-e-shifa* for observing *mannat* as it is considered a miracle. This sacred clay came from Karbala which has healing power from all the diseases and ailments except death. Shi'a place the *khak-e-karbala* or *khak-e-shifa* in front of them to stop his/her head touching the ground when they bow to pray.

A key informant Syed Yusuf Shah explains; Imam Jaffar Sadiq said, if an ill person holds *khak-e-shifa* in his hand and prays to Allah in this way: I begin in the name of Allah, O Allah, the Lord of this sacred, supportive *khak*, the God of the light which is in it, the God of body which is resting in it, the Lord of the guardian angels, I request Allah, Please let this *khak* cure my disease. After that he munches *khak-e-shifa* for cure defiantly he will be cured soon.

It has been observed by the researcher that it is a Shi'a tradition that they mention the names of the disease, then kiss the *khak* and eat it with some water and keep praying.

This pure *khak* is a source of restoration of abundant means of livelihood, useful knowledge and a remedy for all pains and ailments. It protects from all infections. It also saves from fears. Shi'a traditions confirm that this reality has been successively reported. They set clay disc on the forehead and offer prayers as this is considered highly precious and sacred.

#### **4.9 Kara (Bangle)**

A bracelet (*kara*) is a unique symbol of Shi'a which is a well known concept. *Kara* is a sacred symbol, generally made of metal or steel. Bangle has a circular pattern and is used in many parts of the world among Shi'a. They also assume that this practice has its origins that roots back into Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden's time. *Kara* as symbolic representation reveals symbol's importance, worth and remembrance. Shi'a observe *mannat* and consider this symbol completely sacred.

Symbols/ objects in every religion are the tools of communication of complex ideas of faith and have a detailed history. These religious symbols have two major premises. The first major premise is beliefs, which is "meaningless and understood as a part of a cultural system of meaning" by the people and this is called their emotional

attachment. The second major premise is actions, which allow symbols to help in interpreting ideas as well as rituals.

Shi'a have emotional attachment with the sacred symbol *kara*. This religious symbol also has two major premises like the other symbols. *Kara* as mere symbol seems meaningless and understood as a part of a cultural system of meaning. The second major premise is actions or rituals, which allow *kara* as a symbol to help in interpreting ideas within historical background context.

#### **4.10 *Kara's* Rituals and its Symbolism**

In Chakwal, Shi'a use to wear this bangle around their right wrist (however faqir (who have no worldly desires) have right to wear *kara* as *mannat* around right and left both wrists and feet) as any kind of *mannat* (which could be related to any worldly desire and pleasure like love marriage, birth of a male child, recovery from a disease or achievement of a job etc.). The ritual is a Shi'a wears *kara* around right foot as a *mannat* only when he/she becomes ill or has got an ailment, when he/she gets well and the wish comes true then he/she has to buy new twelve or fourteen *karas* as an observance of *mannat* in the name of twelve *imams* and fourteen *masomeen*. Later on, they present it at a in particular place, like *Imam bargah* or the shrine of Holy personality to the other Shi'a who would visit this place for observing the same *mannat*. It works like a series through which Shi'a can attain worldly desires.

The researcher has observed, during data collection that when Shi'a observe *mannat* for protection, they use *kara* and chains around their body as protective ornaments to defend against evil spirits or evil thoughts that might be directed at the wearer. When a Shi'a wears this *kara* and chains he/she gets in association with Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden, as he became a prisoner at the end of battle of Karbala by Yazid's forces and they took him in shackles and manacles, to proceed in a caravan from Karbala to Kufa.

#### **4.11 *Panjah* Sacred Symbol of Protection**

This is a very precious and sacred symbol which fixed on a bamboo usually at the top of '*alam*, as crown. This is usually made up of silver, steel or copper.

A hand with the fingers extended, in which five fingers are a representation of five Holy Islamic personalities Hazrat Muhammad, Hazrat Imam Ali, Hazrat bibi Fatima, Hazrat Imam Hassan and Hazrat Imam Hussain whom we call *ehl-e-bait*. People of the house of Prophet Muhammad are known as *panjtan-pak*. Palm of the hand symbolizes their unity and believe in one Allah.

One of the respondents, scholar Safdar Abbas says that this is a beautiful religious symbol which is true representative of Islam and five charismatic personalities. Without them Islam is incomplete. They all are true religious leaders of Muslims.

Usually *panjah* is covered with a beautiful umbrella that is also a symbol of tribute and honour to its sacredness. They decorate *panjah* with a sacred beautiful, colorful and clean cloth.

The *panjah* (symbol of protection) includes the words “*Allah o Akbar*” (Allah is great), “*Ghazi Abbas Alamdar*”, “*Ya Allah*”, “*Ya Ali madad*”, “*Ya Hussain*”, in Arabic script.

Actual ritual is Shi'a organize processions of *panjah* sacred symbol, recite nohy and venerate too.

#### **a. *Panjah's* Rituals and its Symbolism**

In Shi'a traditions, it is considered to be a highly precious and sacred symbol. Most of the Shi'a display this symbol at the roof tops of their houses as a symbol of protection. It is a protective motif against the evil eye or malevolent thoughts. It is possible however, that the presence of larger and diverse populations in the cities may have resulted in superstitions leading towards the concept of evil eye or *nazar*<sup>93</sup>. This may have prompted the development of protective hand such as the *panjah* and still people do believe in this, even the Sunni too.

The researcher has observed during fieldwork that the actual ritual is most of the Shi'a women believe in the miracle of *panjah* (symbol). They perform rituals for the fulfillment of *mannat*, when they do not have a male child. Shi'a women attach apple

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<sup>93</sup> Evil eye

with each finger of the *panjah* (the hand), then each woman takes each apple and munches whole apple to have a male child.

It is believed in Shi'a traditions that there was a young lady who did not have a male infant, her mother in law showed her concern and told her about this religious ritual and informed that if she munches an apple she would have a male child that year. Furthermore, she went to participate in the ritual on her mother in law's advice, although she did not have faith in it. However, she munched half an apple and remaining part was thrown in the dustbin, as she did not believe in this *mannat*. After the nine months, she got the news to have a male infant. She was happy to have a male child but when she saw him, she was shocked to see that baby had an incomplete body, as she had munched only half an apple and the other half was wasted. She wept bitterly and had regrets for that time she did not munch the whole apple as per *mannat*.

#### **4.12 Mehndhi**

The first trend is *Mehndhi* which is one of the most beautiful and important symbol in Shi'a rituals. Another terminology is *hinna*. Usually *hinna* is a symbol of happiness in human life, especially females apply *mehndi* in to their hands, especially palms and feet, to decorate them with beautiful motifs, flowers and styles. When it gets dry, leaves its color and stays for few days.

The second one is "ritual as symbol" as another meaning of *mehndi*, in this idea before the marriage day people arrange a function in which they make fun. During the data collection the literal root meaning of the researcher has observed that Shi'a use the symbol of *mehndi* in the memory of *shahzada* Qasim son of the Imam Hassan. Actual ritual is they take *mehndi* in the procession of 7<sup>th</sup> of Muharram and sing devotional songs in the memory of *shahzada* Qasim as he was martyred in the battlefield of Karbala. He was a future bridegroom and Shi'a memorize martyr Qasim and celebrate his marriage procession (*mehndi*).

##### **a. Mehndi Rituals as Symbolism**

Ritual is unmarried male and female Shi'a participate in the *mehndhi* rituals on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Muharram, who want to get married. Shi'a exercise the symbol of *mehndi* and this is the



symbol of martyr *shahzada* Qasim. Shi'a organize a procession which is called the marriage procession (*mehndi*), decorate it with little silver or gold leaves and they walk on the roadside in Chakwal. Shi'a recite *nohey* and *mersiyas* and beat their chests as well. Later on “*neyaz and sherbat*” distribute among the participants of the procession.

In Pakistan, Shi'a never make model of horse shoes in the month of Muharram like Iran. They mostly arrange *mehndi* processions and observe *mannat* of their worldly desires.

#### **4.13 Coffin (*Taboot*)**

Coffin is a wooden casket, people used to burry with dead bodies placed inside. Here in Shi'a ideology *taboot* is a prominent and significant religious symbol which they use in the last days of the month of Safar, 21<sup>st</sup> Ramazan on the martyrdom of *janab* Imam Ali and Imam Hussain.

Usually it is made up of wood and the ritual is Shi'a hold this *taboot* in their selected processions where they recite devotional *nohey and mersiyas*. Shi'a weep in the memory of the event of Karbala and the martyrdom of seventy two companion of Imam Hussain, in which eighteen were from *ehl-e-bait* (People of the House of Prophet Muhammad and fifty four were his followers.

The researcher has observed that Shi'a arrange “*taboot* processions” on the day of 7<sup>th</sup> of Muharram (death of Imam Hussain’s companions), 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram (*ashura* day - Imam Hussain’s martyrdom), 20<sup>th</sup> Safar (*chelum* - on 40<sup>th</sup> day of death of Imam Hussain) and 21<sup>st</sup> Ramazan (martyrdom of first Imam Ali). Remembrance of the Holy personalities is the symbol of honour and their dignity, as they fought for a moral cause and achieved the everlasting victory in the world.

##### **a. Coffin -Rituals as Symbolism**

There are so many sad events in the Islamic history but martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain and *ehl-e-bait* holds a specific significance. Muslims from all over the world show their grief and mourn on the particular day. We also know that the beloved Prophet Muhammad knew in his life that the sad incident would occur with his beloved sons

Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain. The origin of this tradition dates back to the occurrence of the Karbala incident and it will continue by the Shi'a till the Day of Judgment.

The symbol of coffin represents *azadari* and embodies the expression of intense sorrow, remembrance and tribute to the particular divine symbol of personalities and the noble cause they fought for. The symbol of coffin represents *azadari*<sup>94</sup> and embodies the expression of intense sorrow associated with the tragedy of Karbala.

#### **4.14 Holy Flask (*Mashkezah*)**

One important symbol of Shi'a is *mashkezah*. This phenomena of flask or water skin is a very famous religious symbol in Shi'ism. Usually, it is made with leather or silver. This historical symbol is associated with the name of Hazrat Abbas.

##### **a. *Sakay Sakeena* - Rituals and its Symbolism**

The common observation is that water skin or thunderbolt is an instrument to collect and save water. In the battle of Karbala, Yazidi army did not allow Imam Hussain's family and fellows to take water from the river Euphrates and brave Imam Abbas Ali made an attempt to bring water in a leather bag.

As it has already been indicated that in the remembrance of the sad event Shi'a make models of flask to show or express their grief that grandson of the Holy Prophet and his family and followers had no access to even single drop of water before their martyrdom. The researcher has observed that it is really painful for a human being, not to take water near a river. Is it not brutality?

The literal root meanings were women and children, especially six months old son Imam Ali Asghar and all, were thirsty in the battle of Karbala. The only one, Imam Hazrat Abbas was there, who tried to bring water for them all. Thunderbolt or flask as Shi'a symbol is a representation of thirst and sacrifice of Hazart Abbas and now Shi'a make models of *mashkezah* to pay tribute to brave Imam Ali's son Hazart Abbas and observe their *mannat* to fulfill their worldly desires.

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<sup>94</sup> Mournful

#### **4.15 Black Thread**

Most curiously, people consider it an ordinary thing however thread is a common object in daily life but it becomes a matter of great interest for the observer as some Shi'a consider it trend. On the other hand, when it is used on the occasion of performance of some ritual, then it becomes a strong symbol.

##### **a. Black Thread – Rituals and its Symbolism**

It was a unique experience for the researcher that Shi'a use to wear black thread around their right wrist or tie it with the shrine or any sacred religious place, when they want to observe a *mannat*. This symbol is used on various occasions. According to the researcher's respondents, Shi'a observe *mannat* of black thread when they have a desire for two persons to bind together in a marriage contract. It is also used for curative purposes to avoid the ill effects of evil eye. Black thread is a symbol of protection from malevolent thoughts.

#### **4.16 Imam Zamin – Rituals and its Symbolism**

In Chakwal, on 6<sup>th</sup> of Muharram Shi'a and Sunni both observe *mannat* and tie *Imam zamin* in the name of Imam Raza. *Imam zamin* is a sacred religious idea, for this purpose, people roll on *sawa ruppia*<sup>95</sup>, *panch*<sup>96</sup> or *gyara*<sup>97</sup> means odd number of money in cloth and tie with the right arm. It's a way to express their belief. Shi'a, even Sunni believers too, tie black thread with their arm for their protection and security, whenever, they go for a journey. It is said that the love and respect for Imam, safeguards them in each every difficulty of life.

#### **4.17 Neyaz- Rituals and its Symbolism**

The researcher has observed during fieldwork that the Holy food *neyaz* or *hazri* is an important part of all Shi'a rituals in which Shi'a make special food offering (*neyaz*) to facilitate the visitors. Shi'a committee distributes food items with the help of organizers.

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<sup>95</sup> 1 ½ rupees

<sup>96</sup> Five rupees

<sup>97</sup> Eleven rupees

*Neyaz* is very special food, Shi'a consider *neyaz* sacred food as the *fatiha* is said over in the name of martyrs. They distribute *neyaz* among all the participants in *majales* and processions by the committee or some Shi'a families. A large sum of money is spent on *neyaz and hazri*. Serving blessed food to all the contributors is supposed to be full of religious *savab* (merit) and it is in Shi'a belief that the Imam would be much pleased with the Shi'a, who will eat *neyaz* and participate in the Holy rituals as symbol.

#### **4.18 *Sabel* – Rituals as Symbolism**

The researcher has observed during the data collection that Shi'a arrange *sabel* for the devotees and other visitors. Some families also facilitate the participants of the procession or *majales* and arrange refreshment stands which have liquid items like milk, cool and scented water (*sherbat*) distributed among the audience. This is called *sabel* over which the *fatiha* is said in the name of martyrs is distributed among all the corners at the side of the road, especially to the procession including *matami hazrat*. *Sherbat* is distributed to the public whole heartedly, especially among those who come to participate in *majales*<sup>98</sup> and processions.

##### **a. Case study**

During data collection, a lady Asifa has informed that she is sixty three years, has two daughters. Faiza is her elder daughter who is twenty two years old, now enrolled in a graduation program. According to Mehbob, her daughters are not hard working students. When her elder daughter was an intermediate student, she was worried about her academic results as she knew that she would not pass the exam and she decided to observe *mannat* for her success in examination. She made a new '*alam* in the name of *Ghazi Abbas* and *matami hazrat*<sup>99</sup> came to her house in the month of Muharram. They recited *fatiha* first and later on recited devotional *nohey*. Then she distributed *neyaz* among them, and at the end they took '*alam* from her house to the *Imam bargah* and later on the miracle happened that her daughter had passed exams with good marks. According to her, importance of the Shi'a symbols (which were used in the month of Muharram) is

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<sup>98</sup> To convene meeting in the commemoration of the martyrdoms

<sup>99</sup> Those people who participate in procession.

not written and documented in any religious book but you will never know their importance if you have not experienced it in your personal life. It is all a matter of faith and emotional attachment with the Imam Ali and other Imams and *masomeen*. We remember them and they favor us by the will of Allah.

#### **b. Case study**

One of the key informants Tasleem Jaffari is a house wife and has three children. She shared that an interesting event has changed her entire course of life. According to her, once she cooked sweet dish as *hazri* in the name of ghazi Abbas in the month of Zil haj and went to the *Imam kot*, Over which *fathia* (prayer) was said in the beginning and she read *moujzat*<sup>100</sup> and she prayed,

“*Ghazi Abbas jee*, today we are memorizing you with kindness and cooked *hazri* in your name. Help us and be a source to facilitate us”.

When she uncovered the pot, she found there was a mark of *panjah* on the sweet dish (*halva*). It was unforgettable for her as she says, it is a *moujza* in her life. *Janab ghazi Abbas sab* gave us a chance to realize his presence and showed the sign of acceptance. Later on, she distributed *hazri* among all visitors in the *Imam bargah*. Now she practices this ritual every year with much greater love and passion.

### **4.19 Lamentation Poetry (*Mersiya and Nohey*)**

According to a Shi'a scholar named Syed Khurram Abbas, the word *mersiya* word is derived from an Arabic word “*risa*” and its meaning is great tragedy or lamentation. *Mersiya* is a sad or mournful poem written to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions in the event of Karbala.

*Noha* is an Arabic word which is the sub-part of *mersiya*. *Noha* depicts the martyrdom of the Holy Imams in the form of poetry, to express the sorrow felt by Shi'a for their spiritual and political leaders. We can use the term “*epic*” in this regard, epics are different from myths and sacred stories. These are long narrative poems about legendary traditional and ancient heroes (Matthews 1999: 4).

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<sup>100</sup> A local term used to refer the miracle of *masoomeen*

*Mersiya*, like epic is helpful in preserving a lot of precious information as verbal history. Religious sentiments of Shi'a Muslims get charged up when they listen and read *mersiya* in *majales* and processions. The lamentation poetry consists of recitation in praise of Imams and various symbolic representations regarding the battle of Karbala and Shi'a deeply feel grief and pain for the sad events. These devotional epics of the Imam's martyrdom are recited and listeners weep at the narration of his tragic event. Shi'a recite *noha's* in processions and *Imam bargah* during *majales*.

#### **a. Mersiya**

There are so many *mersiyas* written in different local languages by the Shi'a experts, here the researcher has translated a complete *mersiya* which is shared by a Shi'a scholar Ali Haider.

Here lies the kin of Hussain , the grandson of Muhammad, the son of Ali, then why  
his corpse been pierced with these arrows, been poisoned away and left lonely?

The petals of Hassan were pierced with arrows, tortured was, he even his death.

Who knows the plight of Zahra and Ali while the lay poisoned, when he lay dead.

Here lies the kin of Hussain, the grandson of Muhammad, the son of Ali, then why  
his corpse been pierced with these arrows, been poisoned away and left lonely?

The poison had cut his liver into bits, the constant stings kept gutting his heart.

### **4.20 Case study**

Asad Ali is thirty five years old. He possesses complete belief in Shi'a faith. However, he does not follow the rituals like to knot *dopattas* with the sacred trees, tie '*alam* and thread etc. He said that there is no religious justification for these symbols. These grew out of the cultural interaction. There are a lot of customs and rituals like holding of '*alam* in funeral processions (*matami jalus*), especially on the ninth and tenth of Muharram. Shi'a get the *zul jinnah* out of their houses, march out in the shape of procession (*jalus*), complete the round trip of every corner of the town and then go to the Shi'a house where they cook and eat the Holy *neyaz*.

The respondent does not believe in tying *dopatta* with the sacred trees but he does believe in *mannat* and *neyaz*. According to him, there is deep rooted implicit influence of these rituals in our lives. As our business life is totally impaired in the month of Muharram. No matter how long we (Shi'a) suffer fiscally, our participation in Muharram is crucial. A reasonable handsome amount is consumed on these rituals like *mannat*, *neyaz* and *sabel* etc, but we spend money whole heartedly because we believe that money increases as long as we spend it on these religious rituals. Further he says, we (Shi'a) have the compassionate eye of Imam Ali, Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain focused on us. He also explains that he along with his family members believes in taking vows in front of *tashbeh*, especially his mother does this regularly and all *mannat* are fulfilled sooner or later.

He loves to visit *derbar*<sup>101</sup>, but he does not like to kiss the graves as a custom but he justifies it by saying that some Shi'a practice it to express their intimacy, love and devotion. It is also a sign of Shi'a affiliation to the Holy symbols, honorific gesture and a sign of submission and this come from the depths of heart.

#### **4.21 Salient Features of Shi'a Rituals as Symbols:**

The researcher has sorted out, that according to the Shi'a traditions, rituals are sources of offering prayer, observing *mannat*, cooking more food (*langer*), making new friends and granting alms in charity in the name of honor of martyrs.

Other salient features are:

- Shi'a rituals and symbols are a source of attaining worldly desires like job, child (especially a male child), fame and money etc.
- Shi'a have strong spiritual orientation behind the performance of these rituals.
- Shi'a participate in rituals just for the sake of satisfaction.
- It's a way to maintain a link with their ideology.
- Shi'a rituals and symbols are a source of treatment for many diseases. They cure diseases by practicing/taking part in the Holy rituals.
- Shi'a symbols are a source of happy life and protection from evil eye.
- Patients without children generally participate in these rituals.

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<sup>101</sup> Shrines of saints

- Shi'a rituals work as a curative.
  - Rituals and Holy symbols are an integral part of unconscious of the performer's mind which comes to be a powerfully decisive factor in the end.
  - Ethos of sorrow is a strong element.
  - People memorize those events which are an important part of the legend.
- However, myths are also connected with the Holy rituals.

Many Shi'a respondents have shared their views that for some Shi'a these are only Shi'a rituals as symbols, some Shi'a consider them actual rituals but grow out of culture, some say these are common rituals for us to express our love for Holy people. Some Shi'a call them healing rituals.

It is the matter of spirituality and also an ethos of sorrow which, they share in their rituals as a desire to mark or honor an association with the event. Shi'a practice the symbols in the rituals for observing *mannat* which could be related with their prosperity, marriage, birth of a male child and health of any person. So, these Holy symbols are not just religious in nature but also grow out of socio cultural sphere. Rituals like tying *dopatta* with the sacred trees or '*alam*, knotting black threads on the right wrists and around neck especially mothers tie them their young children, the rite of kissing the sacred symbols, is just a social tradition, not a Shi'a religious custom.



## CHAPTER 5

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHNO-HISTORY AND SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION IN SHI'A FAITH

In this chapter, a humble effort has been made to explore, in-depth, a relationship between ethno history and symbolic representation in Shi'a faith. As we know that the symbols have objective as well as purposive meanings. Here in this chapter the researcher describes purposive meanings of Shi'a rituals as symbols in Chakwal.

#### 5.1 Historical Background of Muharram

The meanings of word “Muharram” is taboo or forbidden. In history and traditions it is stated that on the tenth of Muharram following events occurred:

1. The ever first fall of rain on earth.
2. The appearance of Adam and Eve on earth and the propagation of the human race.
3. The creation of the seventh heaven (*arsh*).
4. The divine mission granted to the spirits of ten thousand Prophets.
5. The creation of the eighth or, as some say, the ninth crystalline sphere.
6. The creation of seat of judgment (*kursi*) of God.
7. The creation of paradise.
8. The creation of hell (*duzakh*).
9. The creation of guarded tablets, on which the decrees of God are written.
10. The creation of pen (*qalam*) with which these decrees are inscribed.
11. The creation of fate or destiny (*taqdir*).
12. The creation of life (*hayat*).
13. The creation of death (*maut*) (Sharif 1972: 151-152).

## 5.2 Ethno-History of Black Colour

The researcher has observed during the fieldwork that in Muslim traditions, especially the Shi'a community has kept the memory of the sad demise of the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad alive, by rehearsing this tragic tale with an ever growing emotional intensity.

The cult which is an outcome of this sad event of early Islamic history, has provided Islamic piety with a unique expression of the phenomenon through the suffering and passion of a divine hero or Holy martyr. The black dress is primarily being associated with Shi'a Muslim and as a religious decree. Their uniform dress is an expression of a religion worn religiously. In Shi'a ritual the ethos of sorrow important is for the understanding of the Muharram rituals so wearing black color is tradition of the Shi'a. Sadness and grief (*gham-o-ghusah*) is a paradigmatic emotional tone which is clearly expressed in black colour.

## 5.3 'Alam Pak in Historical Perspective

Janab Anas reported that, as the battle of mu'tah was taking place in Jordan, the Holy Prophet had informed the people that in Madina of the martyrdom of Zayd bin Haritha, Ja'far abi Talib, and Abdullah ibn e Rawah. While 600 miles away, the Prophet said, **“Zayd took the flag (as commander) and was killed, then Ja'far took the flag and was killed, then iben Rawaha took the flag and was killed”**. Anas describes that as the righteous Prophet was telling them this, **“his eyes were shedding tears”**. He continued, **“Then the flag was taken by one of God's swords janab Khalid bin Walid and Allah made him victorious”**. (This hadith collected by al Bukhari 4262.)

In Muslim tradition, Shi'a in particular have kept alive the remembrance of the sacrifice of Imam Hussian and his follower's tragic demise. In this regard *'alam* is the fundamental symbol.

### a. 'Alam-e-Abbas in Black Colour

*'Alam* in black colour is the symbol of *“Ghazi Abbas salar”*. Hazrat Abbas was the son of Imam Ali and half brother of Imam Hussain.

### **b. 'Alam in Red Colour**

In Chakwal, the researcher has investigated the 'alam in red colour is the symbol of Imam Hussain. Red colour is the representation of blood. Blood of Imam Hussain who was martyred by Yazid's army in Karbala. Imam Hussain was the son of Hazrat Bibi Fatima, Imam Ali and the grandson of Prophet Mohammad.

### **c. 'Alam in Green Colour**

Shi'a associated 'alam in green colour with Imam Hassan. It is said that he was poisoned by his enemy Mu'awiya with the help of his wife Ja'dah. Green colour is a symbol of poison that is why Shi'a integrate green colour of 'alam with Imam Hassan. Imam Hassan was the elder son of Imam Ali and the grandson of the Prophet.

According to a knowledgeable Shi'a respondent Syed Imtiaz Haider Abbas: Islam is not expressed in itself with any particular object, sign and symbols, due to political reasons a 'alam is necessary for Muslims identity especially during the *ghazwat* as the Prophet used flags of different colors in different and *sariya*.

A respondent Ahsan says that there were many flags used by the faithful in different periods of Islamic history but the chief 'alam of the Prophet is known as *al-uqab*. It was plain black without any symbol or mark. As the Holy Prophet himself belongs to tribe Quraish so its name and colour were derived from Quraish's 'alam. There were other flags like *al-riyah* which was the most important 'alam in records. Its colour was white (symbol of peace and harmony).

Other 'alams were red in colour (symbol of blood), yellow and green in colour (symbol of poison). The use of *al uqab* (the black 'alam) continued in the wars that is why Shi'a believe in the prime value of 'alam.

## **5.4 Ethno-History of Zul Jinnah**

According to Shi'a, Imam Hussain's horse's name was *dul dul*, who participated in the event of Karbala. The unusual horse *zul jinnah's* original name was *murtajjiz* and the reason for this name was of his sweetness to the owners and anger to the enemies. These unique qualities make him different from other ordinary horses.

It is said by most of the Shi'a in Chakwal that Holy Prophet Muhammad purchased *zul jinnah* from an Arabian named Haris who sold it to the Holy Prophet. The researcher was informed that during the battle when Yazid's army attacked Imam Hussain and he got injured, his horse *zul jinnah* protected Imam's body from all the sides. In this attempt, the *zul jinnah* got wounded by arrows but he did not leave Imam Hussain alone. The embedded arrows formed two wings on both sides of its body to save Imam Hussain's life. *Zul jinnah* didn't care for itself and died for the sacred cause, that's why it has a mystical significance in Shi'a rituals.

A knowledgeable respondent Farwa Haider explained that in the event of Karbala, the *zul jinnah* also did not drink even a single drop of water. Some Shi'a say that in the war of Karbala, *zul jinnah* came back to the tent with Imam Hussain on it and was wounded badly, when it realized that Imam Hussain had been martyred, *zul jinnah* wept for the tragic death of Imam Hussain and also died with the sorrow of his owner's tragedy. So it's a symbol of an honor as horse's loyalty is famous in the event of Karbala. In this context, *zul jinnah* is a symbol of bravery, sacrifice and steadfastness. In Shi'a belief system attributes of this horse are a great source of inspiration for human beings. Moreover, they can learn a lot from this embodiment of unique qualities.

### **5.5 Ethno-History of the Sacred Sword of Imam Ali**

The sword of Imam Ali is a famous Shi'a symbol named *zulfiqar* which is variously explained by the historian. Generally it is an idea which means cleaver of the spine and double edged, one or two pronged one. It is also a symbol of sharp distinction between right and wrong or the one great man (Imam) who distinguishes between right and wrong.

According to a female Shi'a scholar Sughra, Hazrat Ali used this sword to cut an opponent. In the battle of *khayber* the opponent were Haris and Merhab, whose strength was compared to the strength of hundred men. They were so brave that no one dared to fight them except Hazrat Ali, who murdered them with just one powerful blow. Although Haris and Merhab wore the best armors and carried the best quality weapons, but there was still no go with *zulfiqar*.

According to a Shi'a, *'ulama* Ali Hassan, God presented *zulfiqar* to Hazrat Ali at the battle of *Uhad*, while other sources state that Imam Ali received the weapon from Muhammad to fight as challenger. Similarly, Hazrat Imam Ali used his weapon to defend Muhammad at *Uhad* and achieved victory. After the battle, there came the famous words "*La fata illa Ali, la saif illa Zulfiqar*" there is no real man but Ali, there is no sword except but *zulfiqar* (there is no victory without Hazrat Ali) which was frequently inscribed on new weapons.

### **5.6 Historical Background of Sacredness of *Jhoola***

The researcher has found during the fieldwork that it is the symbol of Hazrat Ali Asghar, son of Imam Hussain and Um-e-Rubab. Ali Asghar is the symbol of the innocent baby victim. This interpretation is supported by many Shi'a who explained that representations of Hazrat Ali Asghar made them think about injustice and cruelty of Yazid. *Jhoola* is spiritual protection symbol of Ali Asghar.

### **5.7 Historical Background of *Ta'ziya (Shabeh)***

The description of *ta'ziya* is generally useful for an understanding of the whole rituals complex as well. According to some Shi'a, *ta'ziya* was introduced by the medieval times conqueror Amir Timur, who invaded India in 1398 A.D, on the return from a pilgrimage to Karbala, he ordered to make a miniature tomb of Imam Hussain, which he added to the mourning rites of Muharram. Thereafter, *Sufi* saints made their own contributions by mixing Islam and Hindu rituals. The description of *ta'ziya* is generally useful for an understanding of the whole rituals complex as well.

One of the respondents Asad Ali says that historians shared their knowledge that Nawab Saraj-ud-daula who was the famous ruler of sub-continent, was a Shi'a and often went to perform *ziyarat*. Unfortunately, for many years he could not go there, but at that time, he ordered to build a *ta'ziya* of Imam Ali. So the concept of *ta'ziya* came from Lucknow (India). *Mujthaihdeen*<sup>102</sup> of Laknow took *ijhtahad*<sup>103</sup> up on this matter and told that the future reward depends upon the intentions. They relate *ta'ziya* with the faith. He

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<sup>102</sup> A group of Muslims who develop consensus of majority opinion for complicated issue at a particular time and of a generation

<sup>103</sup> Agreement or consent on a particular issue at a particular time and of a generation

elaborated with the example that when a person buys a sheep for sacrificing on *eid-ul-azah*, it is share that this sheep is not that one, which was sacrificed by Hazrat Ibrahim. Therefore, Shi'a consider *ta'ziya* as a symbol. They make *ta'ziya* for the remembrance of the sacred place where progeny of Hazrat Muhammad buried.

### **5.8 Historical Background of Sacred Clay**

The sacred clay is made from the sacred soil of Karbala, where Imam Hussain (charismatic personality in the movement) and his companions fought against the evil and shed their blood. According Shi'a traditions *khak-e-Karbala* turns red on the *ashura* day as this is an expression of grief and pain.

Shi'a consider it precious and sacred as there Imam Hussain offered prayers and he was alone, one man against thousands. He fought with them bravely, and received many wounds in the event. Therefore, the Shi'a possess utmost respect and faith for the dust (clay) of Karbala. It has been used by Shi'a in different ways to overcome numerous problems and diseases.

### **5.9 Historical Background of Sacred Kara**

The 4th Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden (the ornament of the worshippers) was the only son of Imam Hussain, who survived at Karbala. It is said that he was too weak and sick to fight. When the decisive battle broke out and every male member in Imam Hussain's was martyred, fighting in the battlefield, with the exception of one of Hussain sons. Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden was seriously ill and did not take part in the fighting and he was the only survivor from the Holy family.

According to the Shi'a scholar Asad Ali, *kara* is a symbolic representation of Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden. Yazid's forces took Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden as a prisoner in shackles, manacles and proceeded in a caravan from Karbala to Kufa at the end of battle of Karbala. The idea of wearing *kara* in hands and feet has been picked from this based on injustice deed. Shi'a memorize his life in miserable condition as he was sick and Yazidi army created troubles in his life and it is said that he spent great deal of time weeping over the martyrs of Karbala as his name Sajjad, who was witness of the event of Karbala. This Holy man suffered in the whole remaining life by memorizing his companion's demise in the event of Karbala.

Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden, survived with the women and children in the family. They were brought to Damascus as hostages, where some of them died. The survivors were later deported to Medina. Zain-ul-Aabiden became the new head of the family, and is considered the fourth Imam by the Shi'a. He is considered a pious man, who spent his life along with his close companions. Shi'a observe *mannat* and wear sacred *kara* symbol as a *mannat*.

### **5.10 Historical Background of *Panjah***

*Panjah* is an idea which means the hand. The hand made with silver which represents *panj-tan-pak*. It is also the representation of Islam and the five fingers, represent these five Holy people (Hazrat Muhammad, Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Fatima, Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain).

The researcher has observed during the fieldwork that sacred symbol of *panjah* is a representation of respect, honour, dignity and protection for the five Holy people, who have great importance in Islam and Shi'a consider Islam incomplete without these Holy people.

### **5.11 Ethno-History of the Symbol *Mehndi***

During the data collection, researcher has sorted out that Shi'a use the symbol of mehndi in the memory of shahzada Qasim son of the Imam Hassan. The word Qasim meaning is distributor, janab Qasim was a young, handsome and energetic man. Before the event of Karbala, he was going to marry with a beautiful young girl. In those days, Holy family organized mehndi. Shi'a venerate and praise his youth in sad poetry and curse the enemies who did not care about women, children and young people of the Holy family and martyred them all.

In the procession of 7<sup>th</sup> Muharram, Shi'a take mehndi and sing devotional songs in the memory of janab Qasim as he is martyr Qasim. All family was unconsciously waiting for his royal marriage. Now this is known as the marriage procession of the shahzada Qasim.

A key informant Ali Raza has shared this information during fieldwork that when janab Qasim was very little and engaged to Fatima as Imam Hussain remembered the wish of his late brother Imam Hassan. At the time of battle, shahzada Qasim wanted

permission to take part in the battle of Karbala. Janab Qasim presented a closed message to Imam Hussain which was written and given to him by his father, in which Imam Hassan stated that when your uncle Imam Hussain would be surrounded by enemies from all sides, at that time you sacrifice yourself for the cause, on my behalf.

It is said by the most of the Shi'a that Janab Qasim handed over the letter to his uncle, who kissed his late brother's writing. Janab Qasim got his uncle's permission and went into the front line and killed five famous warriors of Yazid's army (Azrag and his four sons) and later was martyred himself by the enemies.

### **5.12 Background of *Shabeh Taboot***

There are different statements regarding *taboot* history. Some Shi'a respondents say that for three days the bodies of the martyrs were left lying in the desert of Karbala. Later, the people of the tribe of Bani Asad, who were not far away from the desert of Karbala, came there and helped to bury them all.

The researcher sorted out that Shi'a memorize the efforts of Hazrat Abbas *alamdar* to bring water in a leather bag from the Euphrates River to quench the thirst of the dying children in Imam Hussain camp. They also remember Imam Hussain standing as supplicant asking for water with his infant son Hazrat Ali Asghar in his arms.

One of the Shi'a '*ulama* Shahzaib has informed the researcher that after forty days of the event of Karbala, nomadic people went through the battlefield and they saw the exposed bodies of the martyrs and they buried them.

### **5.13 Ethno-History of Holy Flask**

A knowledgeable Shi'a scholar Syed Khurram Abbas has informed the researcher that according to Shi'a traditions, Yazid's forces occupied Euphrates River and they stopped Imam Hussain's group access to it, which was the only source of water during the battle of Karbala. Hazrat Abbas was fighting with Yazidi army and in this situation, women and children were crying and asking for water, Hazrat Abbas went to the river and immediately started filling the water flask/ water skin, although he was feeling thirsty but he did not take a single sip of the water. He put the filled water skin on his right shoulder and rode back towards their tents. Umar ibne Sa'ad was fighting against Imam Hussain, ordered his army to shoot arrows on Hazrat Abbas by saying that Hazrat Abbas was right



hand of Imam Hussain, if he did well, they would not be able to conquer them till the end. Yazid's army surrounded him and wounded him and they started shooting arrows on to him, one arrow hit the water skin and water spilled out of it. After that, he was wounded by Yazid force's arrows, which hit his eyes and head eventually he fell from his horse. Hazrat Abbas requested Imam Hussain not to take his body back to the tents because he promised them to bring water. He could not face Bibi Sakeena without water. Hazrat Abbas struggled and fought till the end of his life. Shi'a memorize the struggle of Hazrat Abbas and use Holy flask symbol in their rituals.

### **5.14 Historical Background of *Imam Zamin***

*Imam zamin* is associated with the name of Imam Raza. Syed Abbas has described the details of *Imam zamin* that once coins were struck printed with the name of Imam Raza, by King Mamoon Rasheed and spread in the entire Arab. People of the Arab did not circulate the coins and hide them with great respect and love for Imam because the name of Imam Raza was inscribed on them. After the sad demise of Imam Raza, whenever believers went for voyages and expeditions, they took coin also with them for their safety and protection.

### **5.15 Ethno-History of *Neyaz* and *Sabel***

The common observation is that which researcher has observed during the fieldwork that the *neyaz or langer* (Holy food) like meat, bread, beans and rice are always prepared by Shi'a and important thing is that it is not an ordinary food, *neyaz (taberak)* is prepared in the Holy name of Imam Hussain and other Imam as well. It is distributed among the all who participate the rituals, they also prepare bags of food for distribution among those who could not attend the rituals, due to some reasons. This is also called "healing ritual" because this food is supposed to be good for the ill and those who have same sort of problems after *majales or jalus*.

The researcher has sorted out that cold drinks are meant to remind the people, the terrible thirst which Hazrat Imam Hussain, his family and their companions had to suffered from the event of Karbala. As it is said that Yazidi army cut the water supply and children wept for water and food, the women were also desperate for water and Imam Zain-ul-Abiden, the son of Imam Hussain was sick with fever. The suffering from the

thirst was very painful to bear and despite this, not a single individual in the camp made any complaints or even questioned the mission of Imam Hussain. Each member supported the Imam whole heartedly and enthusiastically. The concept of *sabel and neyaz* is an outcome of this event. The actual ritual is, in the month of Muharram Shi'a arrange *sabel neyaz* and distribute among the people with an open heart. Shi'a distribute *neyaz* and *sabel* in the name of the Holy martyrs among participants and visitors.

### **5.16 Ethno-History of Lamentation Poetry (*Mersiya and Nohey*)**

Mahdi describes the development of ethnic-history of the Islamic events as, at the early stage, the rite of remembrance began in the form of simple conversations regarding the battle of Karbala. Then the conversations developed into a story that was reported, later it become a poem that was recited and then there emerged a written content about the account of the sad demise of Imam Hussain. At the end of this stage a form began to evolve, in which poetry and prose (*mersiya*) were incorporated.

Further he says,

In the beginning, the poetry was more focused on the narration of the events relating the Karbala tragedy. However, the focus was gradually shifted from an effective narration and description of the events to be element of emotional description of the event which leads to optimum sentimental involvement of the audience. The new focus of attention was touching the hearts of the participants such apt manner that they eventually burst into tears, spontaneous mourning, impulsive wailing and unconstrained weeping. In their view, this is the best way to pay tribute to their great sacrifice, associate themselves with their sorrows and feel their intensive woe personally. The new poetry also began to focus on the high moral spiritual caliber of the Holy family, admiration to the Imams and their love ones. Now this poetry has become a basic material in the rites of remembrance (Mahdi 1985: 177-185).

### **5.17 History of Matam and Zanjir zeni**

Allah is saying in the Quran-e-pak “and he (Hazrat Yaqoub) turned away his face from him and said, Ah, woe on the separation of Hazrat Yousaf and his eyes were whitened with grief and he suppressed his anger. And they (his sons) said: By Allah, you shall never cease remembering Yousaf untill your health is ruined and approach grave or pass

away with your life” (Surah Yousaf, verse no. 84 and 85 of total 111).

It is mentioned in *tafseer* that Hazrat Yaqoub used to hit his forehead and cried while missed of Hazrat Yousaf. *Matam* is a historical act which evident from Allah’s book similarly *matam* possesses a historical symbolic representation in the Shi'a faith too. It is a way to recall the events of Karbala. The researcher has sorted out during fieldwork that *matam* is a practice which was inaugurated by *janab-e-Zainab*, sister of Hazrat Imam Hussain. She started crying when she came to know that Imam Hussain had been martyred by the Yazidi forces.

She was the first lady who hit her forehead to a slab or block (she was inside the tent with other women and children), which caused considerable bleeding when the head of Imam Hussain was paraded in Kufa.

A respondent Haider Ali said during the fieldwork that Imam Hussain’s sisters, wives and children accompanied him and they fought for the great moral cause although it was highly risky to stay in the desert of Karbala with his entire family. There must be some particular reasons behind and therefore he sacrificed himself purely for Islam.

The rationale behind the practice of *matam* by the Shi'a consists of two implicit causes:

1. It is an expression and symbolic action to share the sufferings of Imam Hussain and his companions.
2. It is a confession of guilt for not supporting the righteous Imam and his comrades against the immoral and brutal Yazidi forces. These rituals or system of *mannat* are an amalgam of religious and non religious activities. These are a blend of religious and social factors, although these religious symbols have nothing to do with the ecclesiastical matters. In fact, these are an outgrowth, resulting from an interaction between social and religious factors over different eras of history in a specific socio-cultural context. These rituals are binding force among the followers agglutinating them spiritually and morally into a concrete belief system.

These rituals or system of *mannat* are religious or non-religious activities? In fact these rituals have socially grown out, although religious symbols have nothing to do with any religious justification but this is also observed that people get connected together and spiritually involved in these rituals and symbols which are based on Shi'a beliefs and

every object/symbol has great importance for believers because it is matter of faith, belief and spirituality.

## **CHAPTER 6**

# **COMPARISON OF SHI'A RITUALS AND SYMBOLS WITH SELECTED RITUALS AND SYMBOLS OF WORLD RELIGIONS**

This chapter consists of a brief description of different backgrounds which lead to emergence of different world religions at different times of history and comparison of Shi'a rituals and symbols with selected rituals and symbols of other world religions. Every religion is the collection of beliefs and socio-cultural systems, which possesses a narration of historical events embodied in rituals, symbols and traditions. These are the elements which impart meaningfulness to human life, this chapter is an endeavour to highlight the significance of the rituals as symbols in Shi'a sect of Islam, particularly in South Asia:

A ritual is a stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words and objects, performed in a sequestered place and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actor goals and interests (Turner 1977: 183).

Khan & Chaudhry define that religion has different forms and beliefs around the world. The belief in God is primary to the most of religious doctrines. This belief is described in literature in the terms of theism. On the other hand, belief in oneness of God is called monotheism. Monotheism is prevalent in three major religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Besides monotheism, there are some other religions with belief in more than one god, as exercised in Hinduism. Today a Hindu can be polytheistic (believe in more than one god), monotheistic (one god), pantheistic (god and the universe are one), agnostic (unsure if god exists), or atheistic (no god) (Khan & Chaudhry 2011: 2).

## **6.1 World Religions**

### **a. Hinduism**

Hinduism is a polytheistic and an ancient religion which is mostly practiced in Asia. Sen Prosad states Hindu are a religious group, which is polytheistic in nature and a Hindu must beliefs books like Vedas and Shastras (Sen Prosad 1995:1).

The term Hindu is a derivative of Hinduism and was taken over by western administrators, scholars and merchants from Persian, which caused misunderstanding in the West. The word is the Persian of Sanskrit “sindu” the Indus River, a word applied already in the Avesta, both to the river and to the country through which Indus flows. In the plural sense, it denotes the population living in that region, the Indus people (the Indians). This meaning is confirmed in old Persian cuneiform inscriptions from the time of Darius, who expanded his kingdom to the Indus in 517 B.C. Hinduism was derived by way of abstraction, denoting an imagined religion of the vast majority of the population—something that had never existed as a religion (in the Western sense) in the consciousness of the Indian people (Stietencron 1989:33).

Every monotheistic religion has have a long historical record of principles and literatures that describes the ways in which rabbis (in Judaism), priests (in Christianity), and Imams (in Islam) have read, explained or interpreted scriptures (Wilkinson 2008: 20-21).

### **b. Jainism**

Jainism is an ancient Indian religion which believes that the universe is divided into two parts: occupied and unoccupied. Nothing lives in the unoccupied universe. The occupied universe is made up of living entities. Living beings may be worldly or enlightened, worldly souls living in one of the four destinies of rebirth (Natubhai 1998: 1).

### **c. Buddhism**

Buddhism is the ancient religion of Asia and the fourth largest religion of the world. Buddhism is a western term, it is known as the Buddha-Dharma in the East. Dharma is as

Sanskrit word with many meanings but here it is referred the teaching from the enlightenment of Buddha. Gautama Siddhartha was an Indian who Prince became in search of *nirwana* and he laid the foundations of Buddhism. Buddha is the heart of Buddhism and his teachings and thoughts are backbone of the doctrine of modern Buddhism, which is essentially the way to the enlightenment (Hamphreys 1995:13).

#### **d. Confucianism**

Confucianism is a belief system based on the teaching of Confucius, who lived from 551 to 479 B.C.E, if only one word were to be used to summarize the Chinese way of life for the last two thousand years that word would be Confucianism. No other person has had as great an impact on the life and thought of China as Confucius. (Yao 2000:8).

#### **e. Zoroastrianism**

Zoroastrianism is a monotheistic religion. It has rich and meaningful rituals, which are performed on a regular daily basis in the largest and most sacred places of worship. It is monotheistic in nature, Zarathushtra was the founder and Prophet of Zoroastrianism. Its followers believe in on supreme God and in life after death as well as heaven and hell (Clark 1998:14-18).

#### **f. Judaism**

Judaism is a monotheistic religion, the historical religious system of thought experience of the Jewish people. The Torah, both written and oral enshrines Israel's ever growing consciousness of god and of the moral law. It preserves the historical precedents, sanctions and norms of Jewish life (Morrison & Brown 2004: 93).

#### **g. Christianity**

Hales defines; Christianity is a monotheistic religion that believes in one God who is the eternal creator and in Jesus Christ as Messiah or the savior of the mankind. This religion also holds that Jesus Christ was a faultless embodiment of God into a human body (Hale 2003:8).

## **h. Islam**

Islam is a monotheistic religion and a complete system of thought. Islam is an Arabic word which means submission and obedience. Submission is acceptance to Allah's commands and obedience means putting Allah's commands into practice. Submission and obedience to Allah bring peace, which is why Islam also means peace. A person who accepts the Islamic way of life and acts upon it, is a Muslim (Ahmed 2005: 17).

### **6.2 Symbolism in World Religions**

As it is already been indicated that rituals as symbols are part of every religion in the world. Apart from the anthropomorphic forms these symbols are also represented in tangible forms such as sculptures. Symbolic representation is a system in religion which passes great knowledge from generation to generation. Those symbols which are presented in the form of a human being, are called iconic and those symbols which are not actually that but represent some divine being, are called aniconic. In Shi'ism, people deeply believe and observe in aniconic symbols, like Hazrat Abbas's presence is indicated by means of a black *'alam* (flag) and Hazrat Ali Asghar's indicated by a cradle (*jhoola*).

The researcher has compared the Holy symbols in a very artistic and creative way to generalize academic research that systematic research on religion is a sophisticated and delicate phenomenon. Every religion has some similarities with other religions.

Durkheim says:

“Primitive religions hold to reality and express it. One must learn to go underneath surface value of the symbol, to explore the reality, which it represents and which gives it, its meaning. No religion are false, all answer, though in different ways, to the given conditions of human existence”.

Further he says: “The presupposition that the value of an object “expresses” the “nature” of the object, or is “inherent” in it, cannot serve as a basis for social theory, an idol is held sacred and such sacredness is “the highest value recognized by men” but the idol which men hold sacred is often nothing but block of wood” (Durkheim 1915:103).



The researcher has observed that Shi'a symbols are aniconic, however most religions of the world have iconic symbols.

In the comparison of the world religions, experts record their traditions in their Holy text, the narratives, poetry, classics and other manuscript that define and diffuse their faith although a comparatively new faith like Sikhism. Most religions have a whole library of Holy books, many of them have stories of God or the gods. For example, Hinduism has been defined in two of the longest classic verses in the history of literature, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Chinese religion has numerous divine beings. Buddhism has mythologies and Buddhist writings have the stories of the Buddha himself and countless Bodhisattvas. These are pious figures, who help others along the road to enlightenment. These mythologies explain Eastern religions and also preserve the original (Wilkinson 2008: 22-23).

### **6.3 Shi'ism and Hinduism**

The researcher has found that Holy symbols of the Shi'a are considered as sacred, because these are not only associated with the event of Karbala but also the healing rituals. Shi'a consider these symbols sacred as they strongly believe in the Prophet and his progeny.

Rituals as symbols were introduced by Amir Timur, who invaded India in 1398 AD. Thereafter, Sufi saints made their own contributions by blending Islam and Hindu rituals. Hindu influence shaped the rituals and helped to create a Shi'a tinged traditional culture (Freitag 1989:116-117) which was trans-communal in nature. Shi'a rituals were "Indianised" and observed with passion by Hindus and Muslims alike: The vast Hindu majority often also took part in the mourning for Imam Hussain, incorporating his cult into their ritual calendar as yet one more divinity in the pantheon (Ibid:115).

Hindus built *ta'ziya* bowed to it and asked for favors. Hindus were generally hired to carry the *ta'ziya* during processions. They shared with Muslims the belief that *ta'ziya* can cure illness and during processions children were made to pass through the empty space under the *ta'ziya* to seek intercession. In Bihar, low castes worshipped Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain as gods, they called the *'alams pirs* and incorporated them into their religion (Hollister 1953: 178-180).

### **a. Comparison of *Ta'ziya* Processions with Durga's Festival**

The interesting event defines by Garcin de Tassy, he writes Muharram is like the festival for Durga which is called *dashera* and lasts for ten days. On the tenth (last) day of Durga *puja*, Hindus cast a figurine of the goddess into the river Ganga, paralleling the Shi'a custom of casting *ta'zias* into the river or into the sea in Bombay and Karachi on the tenth day of Muharram (Freitag 1989: 117).

Keith Hjortshof states about present day Hindus, who tend to view Muharram as a spectacular festival and celebration of pre-colonial urban culture (Hjortshof 1987:293).

### **b. Comparison of Historical Religious Personalities**

Hazrat Muhammad says to Imam Ali "O Ali, there is a resemblance between you and Hazrat Esa (son of Hazrat Maryiam), whom the Jews hate so much that they laid a false accusation against his mother, whom Christians loved so much that they assigned to him the position which is not for him". Further Holy Prophet says "it is suffice to say that you hold the same position in relation to me as Haron held in relation to Musa except that there shall, in all certainty, be no prophet after me" (Majma az-Zawaa'id, vol. 9:131)

Imam Ali says that two types of person will fall into ruin, the one who loves me eulogize me for what is not in me, and second one who hates me, whose detestation against me will lead him to lay false and baseless accusations on me.

Further Imam Ali says rather than indulging into these issues, remember, I am not a prophet and nothing has been revealed to me but I act according to the book of Allah (Quran) and Sunnah of his Prophet as far as I can (Al Mosnad, vol. 1: 160).

Hindus accepted Imam Hussain as a god of death. Mushir ul Hassan explains Hindu believe, that Imam Hussain was Ram of Ayodhya, his brother Hazrat Abbas personified Lakhshman, the selves of his sister *janab* Zainab and wife *janab* Um-e-Kulsoom shine in the image of Sita, Yazid (the Umayyad ruler) Hussain's persecutor, was Ravan (Hassan 1997:119).

The researcher has sorted out that in Hindu traditions, Rama was a prince of Ayodha and seventh avatar of Vishnu. This detail is mentioned in great poem Ramayana (adventures of Rama) that shares Rama's life. Rama's task in this incarnation was to subdue the powerful ten headed Ravan (demon king of Sri Lanka).

A Shi'a historical interpreter Ali Nawaz has explained that Imam Hussain is not only a divine being but also has correct ideology. He was spiritual and political leader and martyred for a moral cause in Islamic history.

A Shi'a scholar Haider has informed the researcher that Imam Hussain's martyrdom seems to fulfill his role as an Imam and a real hero of *ehl-e-bait* as Imam Hussain sacrifices to defend true Islam against the undeserved ruler of Yazid on the Muslims.

## **6.4 Shi'ism and Christianity**

In the event of Karbala, not only Imam Hussain himself was martyred but also sacrificed his family, friends, money and faced the difficulties of journey as well.

Likewise the Christian iconography the pieta represents the dead Christ, lying in the lap of the mourning Virgin and the central idea is to present the suffering and mourning mother. In the Catholic tradition, the image of Mary's suffering is supposed to help viewers achieve the heightened emotional state thought to bring one closer to God in prayers (Katz and Orsy 2001:80–81).

## **6.5 Shi'ism and Buddhism**

The researcher has observed that in Buddhism, before the development of art, there were aniconic sculptures. Later on, Buddhist people started making iconic sculptures, in which Buddha is in anthropomorphic form for his divine being, however, Shi'a symbols are still aniconic, moreover, imaginary portraits are an anthropomorphic form.

### **a. Comparison Between Hazrat Abbas and Vajrapani**

Foucher writes, in Buddhism, Vajrapani is always represented with a thunderbolt (*vajra*) in his hand which shows his protective nature, as he is to constitute himself as the bodyguard of the blessed one and follow him as his shadow in our term, hid guardian angel (Foucher 2003: 36).

Vajrapani is one of the most important Bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhism and the tantric pantheon who has been represented sometimes with a beard and sometimes without it.

However the common observation is that Hazrat Abbas always been represented with a thunderbolt in his hand or along his horse and he also possesses a beard. Vajrapani is considered to be a protector of the Buddha, whereas Hazrat Abbas is protector of the Imam Hussain on the battlefield of Karbala. It means both are close companions of the blessed ones.

Bibi Fatima, Bibi Mariyam (mother of Jesus) and Maya, Buddha's mother are divine females, who have direct link with religion as well as are supposed to be role models for females. Maya was a queen, lived in palace, however Bibi Fatima is also a Princess of the Holy Prophet and is leader of the women in paradise. She was a simple, social and modest lady, who was being loved by her father the Holy Prophet. She was also represented in pictures, which are considered to be imaginary. However, her face is covered and represented with a halo around her head.

## **6.6 Imaginary Portraits of Imams and Baba Guru**

Imaginary portraits create narrative scenario of the Shi'a religion, history and their culture in the portrayal of Holy Imams in a very meaningful way most artists hide their faces for their excellence. They represent Imams in a very modest way. Imaginary portrayals of Imam or commemorative images have significant importance in Iran. Now they practice placing martyr's photographs and paintings on tombstones which has become particularly widespread in Iran since the late 1970s. Posters showing different episodes of the event of Karbala are now commonly found in shops, public offices and in people's homes (Flaskerud 2012: 165).

*Nagar kirtan* is often perceived as a commemorative event that revives stories about the Sikh *gurus* of the past and reestablishes their teaching in the present. The most visible way of doing this is the exhibition of paintings which depict the Sikh *gurus* or events in their lives. For spectators, these visual renderings may evoke memories of well known legends in the narrative tradition (Myrvold 2008:152).

## **6.7 Halo in World Religions**

The phenomenon of halo is already found in different world religions. Spiritual heavenly beings and innocence always have strength to have this power which is not an ordinary. The halo is "the band or ring of light around head in art", which is the way to represent

divine super beings. It is one of the essential marks of the anthropomorphic representation in the world religions, for example Imams in Shi'ism and Buddha in Buddhism have halo around their head in imaginary portraits and sculptures. Halo is represented with any god in different religions and it symbolizes the identity as divine beings. It is like a disc behind the head. Halo symbolizes the sun and the self of a divine being (Rahman 2007:41).

As we can observe in an imaginery pictures of Holy imams have disc behind the head or sun ray halo symbolizes Imam's holiness and divine being which preserents new positive start or new optimist beginning which gives strength and vibes in life.

## **6.8 'Alam and Triratana**

'Alam or flag is symbol of almost every religion as well as political parties. It's a symbol (*nyshan*) of identity, convey a sense of belonging, honour and respect. Shi'a have 'alam in three different colours like black, red and green. Each colour has its own purposive meaning.

In Buddhism, "*triratana or ratnatraya*", is one of the seven jewels treasure. It's an emblem with three points having small wheels, which symbolizes the Buddha, dharma and sangha. These are three jewels in Buddhism.

Hallade says about the *triratana*, the jewel treasure, the highest object of worship for the Buddhist, are the "three Jewel", *triranata of ratnatraya*, the Buddha, the dhrama and the sangha (Hallade :85).

The researcher has found the well renowned story of Hindu ideology there are three gods named Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Brahma is represented as the creator, the late Vedic god, who has infinite wisdom, although Vishnu is known to be a powerful one but believed to be more of preserver than a creator. He maintains balance in the universe, i.e, between good and evil powers. Shiva is a Vedic god of protection as well as is a destroyer.

## **6.9 Significance of Colours in ritual performance**

The researcher has sorted out that colours have their own languages, are a vehicle to convey deep rooted meanings and interpretations. The colours in different religions, play

significantly meaningful role to support, propagate and strengthen different faiths, ideologies and doctrines. In addition, they play a role by importing a distinct identification, acting as a binding force and reminding the followers of their commitment to their cults, sects or religions. They not only represent the faith of their followers but also depict emotional, moral, and spiritual association of the followers with their faith. Researcher has discussed in an intellectual way, the importance of black colour in Shi'a sect and the significance of the different colours is also taken under consideration.

Turner writes about colour symbolism in the following words, black symbols are associated with evil, disease, and witchcraft and is often ritually neglected because it does not make things visible and is associated with death and impurity.

1. Badness or bad things
2. To lack luck, purity or whiteness
3. To have sufferings or misfortune
4. Sorcery
5. Sexual desire
6. Night or darkness (Turner 1967: 71).

Researcher has found that literal root meaning of black colour has its importance in different religions. In Buddhist tradition, black colour has its own importance, like in “*bhava chakra*” it is the symbol of *naraka lok* (people in the hell). On the same way among the Ndembu people (a tribe), and in the Buddhist custom black colour plays a significant role, Shi'a also have great association with black colour. They use to wear black dress for the rest of whole month of Muharram. This symbolizes grief, pain and ethos of sorrow and Shi'a clearly express their emotion through black colour. Buddhist monks used to wear citrus or brown colour dress during worship similarly in Hinduism swami wear this colour for their religious meditation which represents “flame and fire”. It also symbolizes an endeavour to attain a religious spiritual power or their an attempt on part of restless nature to attain inner peace and satisfaction through worship. So we can say that this is their religiously acceptable colour.

## **6.10 Wheel and *Panjah***

In Buddhism, wheel is a symbol of religious king Buddha, *dharmachakra* is the symbolic wheel of the law (the doctrine), as we have *panjah* (the hand) symbol for Shi'areligious sect.

Foucher says, wheel was the first of the seven jewels of the universal monarch or *cakravartin*, “The one who sets the wheel in motion”. the wheel as symbol of universe would serve a symbol of the spiritual empire, and so the “setting of the wheel of the law in motion” became a synonym to the first sermon and it brought a new moral order into the world (Foucher 2003:151).

Wheel suffices to evoke the sermon, turned by the hand of Buddha, it symbolizes the transmission of the doctrine (Hallade n.d: 130).

Buddha in the Lakkhana Sutta relates that “a Great Man who possesses thirty two marks, if he lives a household life, he will become a ruler, a wheel turning righteous monarch of the law, conqueror of the four quarters, is possessed of seven treasures. These are: the wheel treasure, the elephant treasure, the horse treasure, the jewel treasure, the women treasure, the household treasure and as seventh, the counselor treasure” (Lakkhana 1987:441).

The wheel treasure, the wheel of the law, *dharmachakra*, rather a symbol than a relic, is nevertheless an object of worship. The wheel symbol is so far Buddhist in essence as it is linked with the preaching of the law. Originally, as the very term denotes, it appertains to the *chakravartin* (Karen 1968:99).

Similarly in Shi'a ideology *panjah* is the most important symbol, in fact it symbolizes is Shi'a identity, which represents five Holy charismatic Personalities.

## **6.11 *Panjah* and *Abhaya Mudra* (Gesture of Reassurance)**

*Abhaya mudra* is a Sanskrit word. In Hinduism and Buddhism, a hand gesture where the right hand is held upright with the palm facing outward; it is often depicted in sculptural representations of Hindu gods, Buddha and Bodhisattvas.

## 6.12 The Sacred Clay and Relic of Buddha

As it has already been indicated that the relics of Buddha were distributed at his death and erected in stupa which is an identical symbol in Buddhism. They were installed through cairns, which were precursors of the great mound or stupa of the classical Buddhist temple (Smart 1989:7).

The researcher has found that in a way similar to the symbolic relic, clay of Buddha, the Holy ground clay of Karbala is considered sacred not only for Shi'a, but also for the Sunni. They distribute it in the form of a round disc, which is usually referred to be a symbolic act, as they use it for worship which is a way to salute all the Holy soldiers of the event of Karbala in general and especially Imam Hussain in particular. It is a well known sacred symbol, as the Holy blood of the Holy Imam Hussain was absorbed in the sacred clay of Karbala, where he fought against evil.

Myrvold explains, in Sikhism, Sikh use to touch the feet of their elders with their head, in everyday life, which is called *matha tekna*. It is a way to salute and pay reverence to them. In the *gurdwara* a humble act of submission is to let the highest part of the human body forehead - touch the ground before the Guru scripture (Myrvold 2008: 154).

The researcher has found that during five times prayers Shi'a place the prayer stone in front of them and bow their forehead on this clay. This is how they stop touching the ground. Shi'a perform this symbolic act to salute Imam Hussain and his companions who fought on the ground of Karbala.

## 6.13 Sacred Animals

### a. Comparison with *Zul Jinnah*

Though all the animals have their value in human life primarily as food, yet they proved highly profitable financially too. The researcher has observed that the sacred animals are a part of almost all world religions. In Islam, Hazrat Ibrahim is famous for the slaughter of a sheep, which stands for a great sacrifice. Hazrat Muhammad had a horse named *duldul* and Hazrat Imam Hussain's horse named *murtajiz*, which we memorize as *zul jinnah*. In the event of Karbala *zul jinnah* played a pivotal role. It symbolizes loyalty for



his lord, he wept on the sad demise of Imam Hussain which showed his great love for Imam Hussain.

Similarly in Buddhism, the elephant and horse are famous, as both animals have great role in Buddha's life, which are depicted in different sculptures of Gandhara. Buddha's use of the horse was *kanathaka* at the time of his "Great departure". In Buddhism it is an important animal in the seven treasures, which was born exactly at the time of the birth of Sakyamuni. Buddha left his royal palace, in search of knowledge, he travelled on a chariot driven by a horse known as *kanathaka* (Rahman 2007:49).

In the early Buddhist art, the representation of horse in a narrative way mainly symbolizes the event of the great Renunciation (*mahabhiniskramana*) of Gautama Buddha (Kumar 1993: 160). The horse is also associated with the Brahmanical god Surya (Ibid).

#### **b. Comparison with Elephant**

As Rahman describes the images of elephant in Buddhist art,

In early Buddhist art, elephant usually has been symbolized with the birth story of Gautama Buddha, as we find a depiction in a meditation of one of the pillars from the stupa at Bharhut, which signifies the event of Maya's dream or the Bodhisattva into his mother's womb in the form of a white elephant. In Brahmanism, the white elephant is usually identified with Airavata, the well known vadhana of Indra (Rahman 2007:49).

Elephant is considered to be one of the treasures along with Amrta, which came out with the process of the churning of the ocean (*Samudramanathana*) by the Devas and Asuras. Amrta produced seven ratnas (jewels) (Gupta 1983: 4).

Mittal describes the elephant is a big majestic animal. Several valuable things are made up of the elephant's tusk. Ivory work has been a great source of income for the many. Elephant is regarded as a representation of a big cloud that showers rain, that is important for agricultural prosperity and this leads the elephant to enter into mythology, finding place with the mother of wealth, Lakshmi and the mother of Buddha, Mahamaya (Mittal 1993:156).

Elephant was one of the four animals used in early Buddhist literature in the forms of similes and metaphors. These animals are lion, elephant, the bull and the horse. These animals have also found their place in Asokan, Sunga and Satavahama art as symbolical and decorative motifs. Out of these four animals, three animals, bull, horse and elephant were domesticated while lion stayed wild. The domesticated three (bull, horse and elephant) are considered to be the source of prosperity, along with jewels, land, slaves and servants. Horse and elephant are mentioned among the jewels (*ratanani*) of the 'Universal monarch' (*cakkavatti*) (Gokhale 1974: 111-113).

The researcher has found that in Hinduism, *kali mata* used to ride on a lion which symbolizes braveness and boldness of *kali mata*. Another lord Shiva has great connection with snake, which symbolizes protection.

The lion (*simha*) who is an uncrowned king of the jungle is a symbol of strength, majesty and power of a unique sort. Its roar (*simhanda*) alone is enough to proclaim its rule. It will be a matter of little wonder if a king is regarded as the lion among men (*nara sardula*) and the throne of a king is known as the seat of a lion (*sim harana*). Buddha, who is regarded as a lion monk and his declaration of doctrine (*dharma*) is compared with the roar of lion (Mittal 1993: 156).

#### **6.14 Food Patterns:**

Originally food habits are very important aspect in the world religions. The concept of *neyaz* (concept in Shi'ism) and *prashad* (concept in Hinduism and Sikhism) in contrast is different from the serving of an ordinary meal and the food, people cook in their houses. When we talk about Shi'a, they have established their own identity for their food patterns, especially in the Islamic months of Muharram, Safar and Rajab. They use to offer *nayaz* as *mannat*, during *majales* and processions, which is considered to be a Holy food. This is a Shi'a norm to cook the sacred food when they are clean (*bawazu*).

As pointed out that *neyaz* is a special food and very special in terms of religious merit. It serves to the contributor and performer in Shi'a rituals. It is not an ordinary food because *fatiha* (sacred verses) is said over it. They slaughter animals and recite *nohey* and *mersiya* while cooking and baking the *nayaz* food and distribute among those people who participate in the rituals. They never take it out of the particular place. They use to cook

meat, beans and bread in *deig* (a big container) and later on they distribute this Holy food among *hazreen* (audience) in a parcel form. They do not waste sacred *langer* (food). This Holy food is used to purify their body and soul from evils. It is believed that if a person has sickness or illness and he/she eats this Holy food and attends the *majlis* of Shi'a *'ulama* whole heartedly he would become healthy, clean and a human being with a complete self control.

Wilkinson describes many dietary laws in Judaism, which are observed by the orthodox and conservative Jews. Food has to be kosher, which means, fit to eat according to Jewish law. Kosher foods include meat from animals like cows and from domesticated poultry such as chickens. Forbidden foods include pork, shellfish, and birds of prey. It is not only the animal itself that must be kosher but also the way in which the meat is prepared. A professional Jewish slaughterer must be religious, practicing Jew and should kill acceptable animals only, in the way described by the law. Jews make food, according to certain rules, like they must keep meat and dairy products detached from one other (Wilkinson 2008: 74).

Further, he says, the dietary laws remind Jews that food and eating are inextricably connected with God. Our food comes from God and because each meal is prepared according to God's law, eating is akin to religious ceremony (Ibid: 75).

More broadly and similarly, In Sikhism, an attendant distributes sanctified food (*prashad*) along the way to the Sikhs in processions. Abou Zahab states, when Sikh procession reaches the local community, they make temporary halt to create spaces for interaction between devotees and the Guru. Families present the scripture with the bowls of sweetened pudding (*karah prashad*) which they have prepared at home. The attendant, guarding the Guru Granth Sahib, on the main float, will present the food offerings, to the Guru, by cutting a straight line over the pudding, with his dagger. By means of the ritualized act, the pudding is considered to have been formally accepted (*kabul*) and sanctified by the Guru and is returned to the givers, as blessed food, to be consumed (Abou Zahab 2008: 153).

Shi'a also have the concept of *neyaz*, in which they cook food and offer to the procession and *majales* comers. *Neyaz* is not an ordinary food, by means of the ritualized act, Shi'a say *fatiha* over food, in the name of martyrdoms and later on distribute as a

Holy food.

## **6.15 Religious Places in the World Religions**

In Social sciences, this is a great delima for scholars that they don't have original souces and natives own history which is creating problems for future research studies and researches. In religion, Wilkinson sees, worship may be the most important of all religious activities, in all faiths the believer may pray or worship at home or may take part in solitary meditation. For example, Buddhist worship individually, some Christians offer private prayer as the activity that become a source to get closer to God. There is collective worship too. In collective worship people share their faith through instructions. Most religions offer regular opportunities for followers to join together and many pay special attention to the notion of the religious community. The term Church, refers as much to group's worship, as to the buildings in which they worship. Religious people, acting collectively, have often been a powerful force for good in the world, helping the sick and the needy, taking part in education and providing community services which even today are not provided by governments in many parts of the world. The collective aspects of religion are particularly emphasized at key times in the year, such as major calendar festivals, at key times of life for example, at birth, adult age, marriage and when the time comes of death (Wilkinson 2008:17).

The Shi'a wisdom says as the researcher has observed that *Imam bargah* is a sacred place for worship, where Shi'a gather to help the deserving Shi'a and auunal rituals performance. The word *Imam bargah* in Urdu refers to all types of buildings dedicated to Islamic worship.

The idea or history of *Imam bargah* roots back into the life time of Imam, when people gathered and discussed openly the lives of Islamic personalities. It was constructed at the different Shi'a localities in Iraq.

In Kufa, the followers of Imams used to gather and narrate the accounts of Imams Hussain's martyrdom, referring meaningfully towards the *tawwabun*. The *tawwabun* were Kufans who were deeply repentant that they did not support the Imam Hussain in the event of Karbala.

It is significant to point out that such types of buildings are also called *Imam kot*

and *Imam bargah*, however, these have the same meaning. There are different rooms in *Imam bargah*. The primary purpose of the *Imam bargah* is to serve as a place of prayer of Shi'a like *masjid*. Nevertheless, *Imam bargah* is also important for the Muslim community as a meeting place and a place of study.

Today, most *Imam bargahs* are decorated with domes, minarets, and prayer halls, demonstrating Islamic architecture. *Imam bargah* is the religious and sacred place, where Shi'a gather and organize *majales* and processions. It is the sacred place like *masjid* but there they can talk and share the global issues.

Zulfiqar Ali Kalhoro writes in his article "Holiest of Relics" that there are different sacred places for Shi'a in Pakistan, but the most popular among Shi'a as well as other Muslims sects is *qadamgah mubarak* (Footprints) of Imam Ali which is located in Hyderabad, Sindh. These footprints were conveyed from Iran to Hyderabad during the reign of Mir Fateh Khan Talpur, who was a friend of Fateh Ali Qajar of Iran. He kept them at Pucca fort in a very special royal room of his palace. Now after prayers men and women of the Talpur families came and venerated them *qadamgah mubarak*. Later on, the last ruler of the Talpur dynasty of Sindh Mir Naseer Khan Talpur (1829-1843AD), built a shrine on the request of the natives, where natives approached for *ziyarat*. This shrine was open for the community and this attracts a large number of people everyday. There is another shrine of *qadamgah mubarak* of Moula Ali at the small village of Raj Malik near Gharo in Thattha. It is said by the historians that Arab Muslims entered in Sub continent through the gate of Sindh however there is no any scared place found in Punjab. There is another shrine of *qadamgah mubarak* of Moula Ali at the small village of Subi (Quetta) near Bolan road which expressed that Moula Ali came for spread of Islam.

The researcher has also sorted out while comparing world religions that in Buddhism, religious sacred place is stupa, where the Buddhists worship. It is said, when Gautama Buddha died, he was cremated and his ashes and artifact were distributed among his believers. With a few relics as the core, commemorative mounds were constructed at different places. Still we find Bodhi tree in the Buddhist monasteries which work as a worship place like Shi'a which called *Imam bargah*. In Jainism and Hinduism, temples (*mandir*) are religious places for worship.

The Sikh place of worship, the *gurdwara* (literally the Guru's gate) is by

definition a space in which the scripture is enthroned on a majestic seat with embroidered cushions and robes under a canopy. By dignified acts cloaked in royal symbolism devotees have created a diurnal rhythm for the scripture which is treated like a living Guru granting audience (Myrvold 2008: 141-142).

## **6.16 Rites of Passage**

It is interesting to compare the rites of passage of world religions. An Anthropologist Arnold van Gennep writes about life cycle rituals, that mark the key transitions in a person's life, they include birth, coming of age, marriage, and death scientifically in his book "Rites of Passage" in the following words:

Rites of passage usually link important personal milestones to religious transformation. The common shared rituals are ceremony involved helps both to mark the transitional point in the person's life, and to cement their attachment to their faith. For example, birth rituals, such as infant initiation, usually involve a naming ceremony or a rite that signals the child's admission into the religious community and often both together.

Similarly, coming of age rituals means to celebrate the person's progression into the adult religious community, like a thirteen years old Jewish boy becomes son of the commandment, at a special ceremony, held only for this purpose. In many faiths, more rituals mark other important events, including the appointment or ordination of a priest and specific milestones in a person's religious life, regardless of his age or life phase, such as the Christian rite of confirmation (Gennep 1960: 30).

In a through analysis of rites the passage of world religions, researcher has observed that Shi'a too, have comprehensive rites of passage like birth rituals (*jhoola jhulana*) when a lady have a desired male child and *mehndi* processions are also celebrate by the Shi'a males and females when they want to get married. Difference is, in Jewish faith they focus on personal milestones to religious transformation but Shi'a give importance to their Imams (religious personalities) and follow them as sacred milestones.

Gennep defines sub type of rites is contagion rites which are based on the concept of a power, such as mana, that is not personalized (Ibid:7). For example, Shi'a visit *Imam bargah* and pray to have a male child. They believe that their *mannat* and this sacred

place will be the cause of *barkat* (bliss) for him and the *barkat* is similar to mana.

Identifying the link between mana and *mannat* (mana is an impersonal supernatural power attributed to the chief in the tribes of African society, the people think that their chief has the power which will be transferred by touching, seeing or eating the left over meal to the followers). When Shi'a achieve their worldly desires and they go to the sacred place for observing their *mannat*. Shi'a know the *faiz* (success) and *barkat* of the *mannat* which they observe when they visit a religious and sacred place.

### **6.17 Processions in World Religions**

An analysis of social cohesion and the role of processions in world religions, there are many types of processions in South Asia, some of them are religious and are organized on a variety of occasions. Religious processions include wedding processions, funeral processions, Muslim Muharram processions, Sikh processions in honour of their gurus, Jain processions, Christian processions to venerate saints and the virgin Mary, Hindu temple processions, festival processions, pilgrimage processions, processions to honour somebody, and so on (Jacobsen 2008: 1).

From an analytical point of view, the arrangement of culturally prescribed acts and symbols, in processional transportations of the Guru Granth Sahib and the performance of *nagar kirtan*, do not merely confirm the supreme spiritual authority of the Guru Granth Sahib, but effectively create his authority. Participants moving within the temporal spatial framework of processions simultaneously define and reembody religious experiences and notions of the presence and power of the Guru Granth Sahib. For religious people, the type of action selected for the conveyance seems to respond best to the nature of the text, but at the same time the performance of these acts creates religious values that impress themselves on participants (Bell 1992: 463-483).

### **6.18 Hymns in World Religious Processions**

Gombrich describes, the Buddhist monks carried sacred books in their head in their religious processions when they went to ceremonies, in which Pali texts were chanted (Gombrich 1971: 78).

In a basic conceptual study, Sikhism, the composition of these key elements of the procession is the sacred text, a surrounded by young people and adults who demonstrate

devotional act, events to serves, to make the superior Guru present here, now context, emphasize that the object of worship is not just the scriptural ritual but the teaching and words contained in it. Participants take out the words of the Guru Granth Sahib to express the Guru's teaching aesthetically in music and in acts of charity that implement the teaching in social life.

Further Myrvold says, devotee men and women chant the divine name and sing hymns from scripture do not merely exemplify worship forms rooted in everyday practice, but embody key Sikh doctrines of remembering and reciting the divine name (*nam japna*) (Myrvold 2008:150 -152).

Shi'a religious processions consist of culturally work of art of systematic gathering of people, who express and demonstrate their devotional acts and which show their respect, admiration, love and loyalty with *ehl e bait*. They exercise rituals as sacred symbols and sing sacred *nohey* and *mersiya* to memorize and show their grief and pain of the particular event with particular ritual performances. It is said by the Shi'a '*ulama* that they are God gifted, when they are selected, they have to perform the rituals as symbols and there is no tolerance in this regard in spiritual context.



## CONCLUSIONS

The primary concern of this research was to understand the lives of historical charismatic personalities of Imams and *masomeen* but also discusses a symbol of evil till the end of the world which is called Yazid and future coming Dajjal. The historical and negative dead character of Yazid as this is considered a taboo in our society to talk about him.

Another important point was to discuss the nature of Shi'a rituals as symbolism in the context of Punjabi culture in general and Chakwal in particular, where Sunni and Shi'a sectarianism is on the peak but researcher is not looking for sectarianism however political conflict among different sects. This study sorted out the intellectual legacy of the Shi'a rituals as symbols with the help of literary accounts. The researcher has observed that Shi'a support the Prophet Mohammad's progeny as his successors who believe in rituals and symbols which empower them and provide a spiritual experience and a unique identity all over the world. The idea of this intellectual effort is to bring harmony, especially in the Muslim societies of all over the world.

Religion and politics are two different institutions and those people who get the political power and manipulate Muslim world in past and now are always on wrong side, they affected badly Muslims throughout and this is the cheapest way to snatch the power and governance. Enemies of the people of the House, who fought for his own interests and always tried to harm them, in fact have no guts but possessed only a political mind.

There is a valuable connection among rituals as symbols related to the particular event and Holy people of the house. In the researcher's view, Shi'a observe their rituals and symbols as *mannat* for the sake of preservice of the memory of *ehl-e-bait*, as they possess a sense of guilt and memorize the events through material symbols and ritual performances. The event of Karbala cemented together the final shape of the Shi'a identity in the world and now Shi'a have their distinct social, cultural and religious life.

There are different identical and inspirational symbols in Shi'a traditions and these symbols have deep spiritual worth in Shi'a lives. Findings of this research lead to a conclusion that the Shi'a symbols are the recollection and remembrance of all important historical Islamic events.

The researcher has observed that sacred symbols are primary vehicles in the narrative of Karbala and Shi'a have their own justification about their religious acts. They memorize particular events in socio cultural sphere through symbols and perform religious rituals and observe the great sacrifice of the *ehl- e-bait* (People of the House of Prophet Muhammad).

Shi'a symbolize symbols in different colours and material forms which are mentioned in details, earlier. Shi'a symbols as ritual are carried out as their sacred *mannat*, religious people observe their *mannat* and make new symbols when they are clean and pure. They do not even touch symbols when they are impure and polluted. Observing *mannat* is part of Shi'a norms and values in their daily lives. They observe several *mannats* like make new sacred '*alam, ta'ziya, jhoola, panjah* etc. and decorate with different colourful ribbons, beads and laces. Making and holding symbols in ritual performance is always considered a great chance and good luck for particular persons in processions especially in the month of Muharram and Safar.

It is also believed that if Shi'a have an inherent guilt of doing wrong deed, they observe a *mannat* and offer *namaz* (prayer) under the shadow of religious sacred symbols and request to *ehl-e-bait* for help in purity of his soul with heartedly. It is considered that they can redress Allah's grievances and help them becoming pious *momineen*.

In Chakwal, It has been observed that '*alam* are erected on the roof tops of the Shi'a houses as a symbol. Usually '*alam* on their house, gives their houses a separate identity. Shi'a also place all sacred symbols in *Imam bargah* especially in the room *noor mehel*.

The researcher has observed that these symbols usually portray an attempt to protect the house from the evil eye or malevolent thoughts. These are also marks of Shi'a house's identity. These are symbols of honour and regard as well. Some Shi'a used to tie *dopatta* as *mannat* with the sacred symbols as a tradition. These are most probably related with their prosperity, protection, marriage, birth of a male child and for the health of any person. It is evident from the findings of this study that Shi'a symbols are a source to purify their bodies and soul spiritually and particularly Shi'a participate in rituals to fulfill their worldly desires. Furthermore, Shi'a symbols are foundation of Shi'a success

and relief in the world.

The sacred symbols and rituals commemorate the battle of Karbala in 680 CE, in which the Prophet Mohammad's grandson Imam Hussain and most of his family and supporters were brutally massacred by the group of the Umayyad Caliph Yazid. The researcher has found that symbols and rituals are sacred because of the sacredness of Holy Islamic personalities.

It is also observed during data collection that most of the Shi'a symbols and rituals are the most pervasive and popular aspects of Iranian culture and society. Shi'a males take part in processions of *'alam*, *ta'ziya*, *zul jinnah*, *matam*, chest beating and *zanjir zeni* however Shi'a women participate in observing *mannat* related rituals like they also take part in chest beating and *matam* but only few do so. Women do not play a part in *zanjir zeni* as it is extremely harmful. Shi'a do not have mixed gatherings. They arrange *majales* in separate portions for females. If females wish to arrange a *zanana* (female) *majales*, female Shi'a *'ulama* come to verbalize the religious event. They provide all basic facilities to the female comers and males are not allowed to come or hear them in religious matters. Shi'a males do not forbid their women to attend *majales* and taking part in rituals. Most of the women experience in the Shi'a rituals varies considerably from one community to another, based on regional customs, personal preferences, religious interpretations, popular culture, and socioeconomic background.

Within the basic values, the collective memory of the tragedy of Karbala, combined with later historical, political, and ideological trends in the Muslim world, has produced and shaped the rituals associated with Shi'ism today.

The researcher has concluded that while Shi'a rituals and symbols have in some ways been used to restrict women's social roles, in other ways they have served to provide women with a sense of independence and empowerment. The researcher has observed that Shi'a take part in processions and *majales* because they have liking and love for *ehl-e-bait*.

This was a great tragedy triggered by Yazid and his companions, and now people of the world and died people (souls) too (who lived in heaven) confused that Hazrat Mu'awiya (father of Yazid) was a good man or bad? Are question rises that why his son did wrong with the people of the house?

However, everybody believes that Yazid did his worst act to martyr Imam Hussain, as Imam Hussain were an innocent and a religious personality. Yazid tried to play a political game, as his ancestors (Banu Umayyah tribe) were famous for playing such games. Banu Umayyans were famous to poison and martyr Imams, indeed, there is no comparison between Hazrat Imam Hussain and Yazid. Imam Hussain's death is not an ordinary unpleasant incident but a battle of right and wrong, truth and falsehood.

It is said that this is one of Allah secret that Yazid did not have children and stopped his generation. Yazid never achieved what he had planned to attain. Within few decades, the rule of Banu Umayyah came to an end. It is true that from the very first day of earth, evil forces create trouble for the mankind which leads to mental illness. *Iblees (shaitan)* is the founder of negative forces, who did not consider man the *naib* of Allah and started teasing human beings, now *shaitan* is creating problems everywhere but there is no doubt that God is great. True forces always get success in the world although it is always a challenging position for the mankind.

It is a very famous saying that, "firm believe (*yaqeen*) is complete faith on Allah". It is also said that inhabitants remember devine and spiritual beings for their wordly desire rather attain higher ranks in next life or worship Allah. The aim of this study is an attempt to make the Muslims more connected and integrated. So it is necessary to respect the theme of Shi'a spirit which brings harmony and social solidarity among Muslim world.

Keeping in view, this is my pray for all Muslims that Allah almighty gives us strength, guides us with spiritual awakening and provides us enough *emman* to stand firm in our believes together. All Imams are true leaders, especially first Imam however 12<sup>th</sup> Imam (who is not showing yet his divine power but in Future In sha Allah) have divine or supernatural powers which are being narrated in sacred texts of Shi'a and as they have unique life experiences and methods of teaching to spend lives, which were so effective and remain till the end of the world. The most valuable thing of Imams lives is, it can be explained in a better way that its all about Imam's message of standing by one's principles against injustice is universal. He fought for theright and it had a cause, which was bigger than race, sect or belief. So the message is very clear that Shi'a, other sects of

the Muslim and non Muslims get a chance to experience rituals as symbols and most spiritual sense at the place of Chakwal.

## ORIGINAL SOURCES OF SHI'A IDEOLOGY

Many Islamic religious scholars are famous for their work on Shi'a ideology:

“Al-Fiqa-al-Akbar” and “Kitab-al-Athar”, jurisprudence followed by Sunni, Sunni Sufi thinker, Barelvi, Deobandi, Zaidiah Shi'a and originally Fatimid Imam Abu Hanifa (699-767 AD).

“Tafsir Imam Jaffar al-Sadiq” wrote by Imam Jaffar Sadiq (702-765).

“Al-Risala” jurisprudence followed for Sunni wrote by Imam Shafi (767-820).

Shi'a Muslim hadith books wrote by Muslim Ibne-al-Hajjaj (815-875).

“History of the Prophets, kings and tafsir al-Tabari” wrote by Muhammad Ibne-Jarir-al-Tabari (838-923).

“Daim al-Islam (974 AD) written by al-Qadi al-Nauman Ismaili Shi'a.

“Man-la-Yahduruhu al-Faqih jurisprudence” followed by twelver Shi'a wrote by Ibne-Babawayh (923-991).

“Nahj-al-Balagha by Imam Ali” followed by Shi'a, a collection of sermons, letters and quotes of first Imam janab Ali translated by Sharif Razi (970-1015).

Jurisprudence books followed by Ismaili and twelver Shi'a wrote by Nasir al-Din-al-Tusi (1201-1274).

“The niche for lights”, “The incoherence of the philosophers”, “Al-Chemy of happiness on Sufism” wrote by Al-Ghazali (1058-1111 AD).

“Masnavi Dewan-e-Shams Tabrizi on Sufism” wrote by Rumi (1207-1273).

“Wasail al-Shi'a” wrote by Shaikh Hur al-Aamili (1624-1693 AD).

“Kamil al-Ziarat” wrote by Ibne al-Qummi.

“A Shi'a Anthology” (archived from the original on 2001 retrived 2006) wrote by William Chittick, Hussain Nasir and Muhammad Hussain Tabatabai, a brief introduction to exemplary hadith from the 12 Imams.

“A Bundle of Flowers” collected by Ayatollah Syed Kamal Faghieh Imani, a popular English language secondary collection of Shi'a hadith. It narrates traditions from Shi'a collection of Kitab al-Kafi and Man-la-Yahduruhu al-Faqih.

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## GLOSSERY

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>Abhaya Mudra</i>  | Gesture of reassurance  |
| <i>Allah o Akbar</i> | Allah is great  |
| <i>'Alam</i>         | It is a Shi'a flag.   |
| <i>'Alam berdar</i>  | <i>'Alam</i> holder   |
| <i>Al uqaab</i>      | It was pure black flag with and without symbol.   |
| <i>Arsh</i>          | Heaven  |
| <i>Ashura</i>        | The martyrdom of Imam Hussain happened on the tenth day of month of Muharram and the event was called <i>ashura</i> . |
| <i>Azan e fajjr</i>  | Call for Morning Prayer   |
| <i>Barkat</i>        | Success   |
| <i>Bawazu</i>        | Clean   |
| <i>Bodhisattvas</i>  | Buddha's companions   |
| <i>Chadder</i>       | Veil  |
| <i>Chakravartin</i>  | Wheel   |
| <i>Chauris</i>       | Fly flappers  |
| <i>Chelum</i>        | Fortieth day after death  |
| <i>Churri</i>        | Bracelet  |
| <i>Derbar</i>        | Shrine  |
| <i>Deig</i>          | A big container, pottery  |
| <i>Dopatta</i>       | A two and half meter square scarf, drapes over the shoulder and usually covers the head.                              |
| <i>Dharma</i>        | Religion  |
| <i>Dharmachakra</i>  | Wheel of law  |



|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <i>Duzakh</i>         | Hell  |
| <i>Eid ul azah</i>    | <i>Bakr eid</i>   |
| <i>Ehl e bait</i>     | People of the house, all the people having sacred blood of Holy Prophet are called <i>ehl e bait</i> and other <i>aaimah</i> (the plural of Imam) which come by the passage of time but were from the progeny <i>aal e Rusool</i> are also included in <i>ehl e bait</i> .  |
| <i>Emaan</i>          | Faith   |
| <i>Faiz</i>           | Success   |
| <i>Fakir</i>          | A person who has no worldly needs and desires.  |
| <i>Fatiha</i>         | Praise of Allah, Islamic sacred verses  |
| <i>Gazwat</i>         | Campaigns commanded by the Holy Prophet   |
| <i>Ijhtahad</i>       | Agreement or consent on a particular issue at a particular time and of a generation.  |
| <i>Ijmah</i>          | Consensus of opinion, it comes from <i>jama</i> or <i>jamaat</i> meaning collection or gathering or unanimity. It is the secondary source of law. It is a consensus of majority opinion of the Muslim jurists at a particular time and of a generation.   |
| <i>Imam bargah</i>    | Shi'a religious place   |
| <i>Imam Hussain</i>   | The grandson of the Prophet Mohammad  |
| <i>Imamat</i>         | The <i>Imamat</i> began with Ali, who is also accepted by Sunni Muslims as the fourth of the “rightly guided caliphs” to succeed the Prophet but the Shi'a also revere Ali as the first Imam and his descendent, beginning with his sons Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain continue the line of the imams until the twelfth. |
| <i>Imam zamin</i>     | Symbol of Shi'a   |
| <i>Jalus</i>          | Procession  |
| <i>Jamadi ul awal</i> | The 5 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Jamadi ul sani</i> | The 6 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Janab e Zainab</i> | The sister of Imam Hussain  |
| <i>Kabira</i>         | Big one   |
| <i>Kabul</i>          | Accepted  |
| <i>Kanathaka</i>      | Buddha horse name was <i>kanathaka</i> .  |

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Khalifah</i>              | Caliph  |
| <i>Kufr</i>                  | Sin   |
| <i>Kursi</i>                 | The seat of judgment  |
| <i>Panghura</i>              | Cradle  |
| <i>Jhoola</i>                | Baby cot  |
| <i>Ghazi</i>                 | A person who came back from battle alive is called <i>Ghazi</i> . |
| <i>Ghazwat</i>               | War command by Holy Prophet.                                      |
| <i>Gham o ghusah</i>         | Grief   |
| <i>Gehwara</i>               | Bed   |
| <i>Gurdwara</i>              | Sikh's religious place  |
| <i>Hadith</i>                | The sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.                         |
| <i>Hajj</i>                  | Pilgrimage  |
| <i>Hayat</i>                 | Life  |
| <i>Hazrat Abraham (A.S)</i>  | Abraham   |
| <i>Hazrat Ismail (A.S)</i>   | Ishmael   |
| <i>Hazrat Ishaq (A.S)</i>    | Isaac   |
| <i>Hazrat Lut (A.S)</i>      | Lot   |
| <i>Hazrat Ya'qub (A.S)</i>   | Jacob   |
| <i>Hazrat Yusuf (A.S)</i>    | Joseph  |
| <i>Hazrat Salih (A.S)</i>    | Salih   |
| <i>Hazrat Ayub (A.S)</i>     | Job   |
| <i>Hazrat Sho'aib (A.S)</i>  | Shuaib  |
| <i>Hazrat Musa (A.S)</i>     | Moses   |
| <i>Hazrat Haroon (A.S)</i>   | Aaron   |
| <i>Hazrat Daud (A.S)</i>     | David   |
| <i>Hazrat Salaman (A.S)</i>  | Soloman   |
| <i>Hazrat Ilyas (A.S)</i>    | Elias   |
| <i>Hazrat Yahya (A.S)</i>    | John  |
| <i>Hazrat Yunus (A.S)</i>    | Jonah   |
| <i>Hazrat Zulkifil (A.S)</i> | Dhul-kifl   |
| <i>Hazrat Isa (A.S)</i>      | Jesus   |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <i>Hazri</i>          | Holy food   |
| <i>Hazreen</i>        | Audience  |
| <i>Karbala</i>        | Karbala is at the site of the present day Iraqi city.   |
| <i>Khak-e-Karbala</i> | The clay discs are made from the sacred soil of Karbala.  |
| <i>Langer</i>         | Food  |
| <i>Madad</i>          | Help  |
| <i>Majlis</i>         | People attending worship collectively   |
| <i>Majlis e aza</i>   | Big mourning congregation   |
| <i>Majales</i>        | Plural of <i>majlis</i>   |
| <i>Mandir</i>         | Temple  |
| <i>Mannat</i>         | A ritual which observed by some person who promised to himself if some desire is achieved.                        |
| <i>Masayeb</i>        | Painful incidents   |
| <i>Masjid</i>         | Muslims religious place   |
| <i>Masoom</i>         | Innocent  |
| <i>Mashkezah</i>      | Flask   |
| <i>Matha tekna</i>    | Touch the forehead on ground  |
| <i>Matam</i>          | Self-flagellation   |
| <i>Matami Hazrat</i>  | Mourning people   |
| <i>Maut</i>           | Death   |
| <i>Mehndi</i>         | Shi'a symbol  |
| <i>Mersiya</i>        | Funeral elegy   |
| <i>Moujza</i>         | Miracle   |
| <i>Momin</i>          | Muslim  |
| <i>Muharram</i>       | The 1 <sup>st</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Mujthaihdeen</i>   | Muslims who develop consensus of majority opinion for complicated issue at a particular time and of a generation. |
| <i>Mutawali</i>       | Executive body of <i>Imam bargah</i> .  |
| <i>Namaz</i>          | Prayer  |
| <i>Nam japna</i>      | Memorize or remember  |
| <i>Nazar</i>          | Eye   |

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>Nazrana</i>         | Thanks giving or gift   |
| <i>Neyaz</i>           | Holy food   |
| <i>Niyahah</i>         | Lamentation poetry  |
| <i>Noor mehel</i>      | A sacred room in <i>Imam bargah</i>   |
| <i>Nyshan</i>          | Symbol  |
| <i>Panj tan pak</i>    | The pure five - represents these five Holy People (Hazrat Muhammad, Imam Ali, Hazrat Fatima, Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain). |
| <i>Panjah</i>          | The hand  |
| <i>Panghura</i>        | Cradle  |
| <i>Perdah</i>          | The veil  |
| <i>Prashad</i>         | Holy food   |
| <i>Puja</i>            | Worship   |
| <i>Qalam</i>           | Pen   |
| <i>Qari or khateeb</i> | Narrator  |
| <i>Qira'ah</i>         | Narration   |
| <i>Rabi ul awal</i>    | The 3 <sup>rd</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Rabi ul sani</i>    | The 4 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Rajab</i>           | The 7 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Ramazan</i>         | The 9 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Roza</i>            | Tomb  |
| <i>Safar</i>           | The 2 <sup>nd</sup> month of Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Sakay sakeena</i>   | The Holy flask  |
| <i>Salam</i>           | Prayers in Arabic, Urdu or Punjabi  |
| <i>Salat</i>           | Prayer  |
| <i>Sangha</i>          | Friends   |
| <i>Sariya</i>          | War or campaign commanded by any <i>Sahabi</i> .  |
| <i>Savab</i>           | Religious merit   |
| <i>Senah zeni</i>      | Chest beating   |
| <i>Shabeh</i>          | Replica   |
| <i>Shaban</i>          | The 8 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Sham e ghareeban</i> | 11 <sup>th</sup> Muharram night when Shi'a share their pain and sorrow for Imam Hussain and his family who martyred in the event of Karbala. |
| <i>Sherbat</i>          | Drink  |
| <i>Shawal</i>           | The 10 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Shi'a</i>            | The term Shi'a is a shortened form of Shi'a Ali, which means the party of Ali.   |
| <i>Shifa</i>            | Cure/remedy  |
| <i>Simha</i>            | Lion   |
| <i>Siyahposh</i>        | Black dress  |
| <i>Stupa</i>            | Buddhist religious place   |
| <i>Surya</i>            | Sun  |
| <i>Taboot</i>           | Coffin   |
| <i>Taqdir</i>           | Fate   |
| <i>Tashbeh</i>          | Symbols  |
| <i>Ta'ziya</i>          | The replicas of the tomb of Imam Hussain.  |
| <i>Thaal</i>            | Pot  |
| <i>'Ulama</i>           | Shi'a religious scholar  |
| <i>Vajra</i>            | Thunderbolt  |
| <i>Zanjir zeni</i>      | Flagellating with chains.  |
| <i>Zari</i>             | <i>Ta'ziya</i>   |
| <i>Zil qad</i>          | The 11 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Zil haj</i>          | The 12 <sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar   |
| <i>Ziyarat</i>          | Invocation and closure   |
| <i>Zulfiqar</i>         | Imam Ali's sword   |
| <i>Zul jinnah</i>       | This name is given to the horse which was used by Hazrat Imam Hussain during the battle in Karbala.  |

# Rituals as Symbols: A Case Study of Shi'a Sect of Islam

Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations (TIAC)

Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad

## Interview Guide

Researcher:

Faiza Iqbal

1. Name -----
2. Age -----
3. Income -----
4. Sex -----
5. Marital status -----
6. Religion -----
7. Caste -----
8. Do you know what the word Shi'a means?
9. Do you know the event of Karbala?
10. Could you state briefly?
11. What is the mean by the concept of Muharram?
12. What is the mean by the concept of *ashura*?
13. What are the rituals of the *ashura*?
14. Do you participate in your rituals?
15. In which rituals you have the interest to participate?
16. Why do you believe/ participate in these rituals?
17. Do you think, it is important to practice all these rituals for a Shi'a?
18. Do you think these rituals are part of our religion?
19. Do you consider yourself religious?
20. What is the concept of *Immamt*?

21. What is the concept of *Imam bargah*?
22. Do you feel satisfaction, when you follow/practice these rituals?
23. What is an ideal Shi'a?
24. What are the symbols of the Shi'a?
25. Do you believe on these symbols?
26. Which is the major symbol of the Shi'a?
27. Do you think, using these symbols is important for Shi'a?
28. Do you use any symbol in your home?
29. Did you observe *mannat*?
30. Which types of *mannat*, observe the most?
31. What is the historical background of *mannat*?
32. What is the concept of black dress?
33. Why do you use this symbol?
34. What is the historical background of black dress?
35. What is the concept of '*alam*'?
36. Why do you use this symbol?
37. What is the historical background of '*alam*'?
38. What is the concept of *zul jinnah*?
39. Why Shi'a use this symbol?
40. What is the history of this symbol?
41. What is *jhoola*?
42. Why you use this symbol?
43. What is the historical background of *jhoola*?
44. What is *ta'ziya*?
45. Why Shi'a use this symbol?
46. What is the historical background of *ta'ziya*?
47. Is there any difference between *ta'ziya and zari*?
48. What is *khak-e-Karbala or khak-e-shifa*?
49. Why you use this symbol?
50. What is the historical background of *khak e Karbala*?
51. What is *kara*?

52. Why you use this symbol?
53. What is the historical background of *kara*?
54. What is *panjah*?
55. Why Shi'a use this symbol?
56. What is the history of *panjah*?
57. What is *mehndi*?
58. Why Shi'a use this symbol?
59. What is the historical background of *mehndi*?
60. What is *taboot*?
61. What is the historical background of *taboot*?
62. What is its importance?
63. What is *sakay sakeena*?
64. What is the historical background of Holy flask?
65. What is the Holy flask's importance in Shi'a traditions?
66. What is its importance of black colour thread and its historical background?
67. What is *Imam zamin*?
68. What is the mean by the concept of *sabel*?
69. What is the importance of *sabel* during the month of Muharram?
70. What is the historical background of *sabel*?
71. What is the concept of *neyaz*?
72. What is the historical background of *neyaz*?
73. Why Shi'a follow this ritual?
74. What is *matam*?
75. Why do you practice *matam*?
76. What do you think about historical background of *matam*?
77. Why Shi'ause to beat their chest in processions and *majales*?
78. Do you think that *zanjir zeni* is also part of *matam*?
79. What is the concept of *majales*?
80. Do you participate in *majales*?
81. What is the purpose to organize *majales*?
82. What is the historical background of *majales*?



83. Please share some information about Imams and *masoomeen*'s lives?
84. Hazrat Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him
85. Hazrat Bibi Fatima Zahra
86. Hazrat Imam Ali
87. Hazrat Imam Hassan
88. Hazrat Imam Hussain
89. Hazrat Imam Ali
90. Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir
91. Hazrat Imam Jaffar Sadiq
92. Hazrat Imam Musa Kazim
93. Hazrat Imam Ali Raza
94. Hazrat Muhammad Taqqi
95. Hazrat Imam Ali Naqqi
96. Hazrat Imam Hassan Askari
97. Hazrat Imam Muhammad Mahdi
98. Please share information about *Janab Ghazi Abbas alamdardar*?
99. Do you know about Mukhtar Saqafi?
100. Any quotation, if want to share:

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101. Any event, if want to share:

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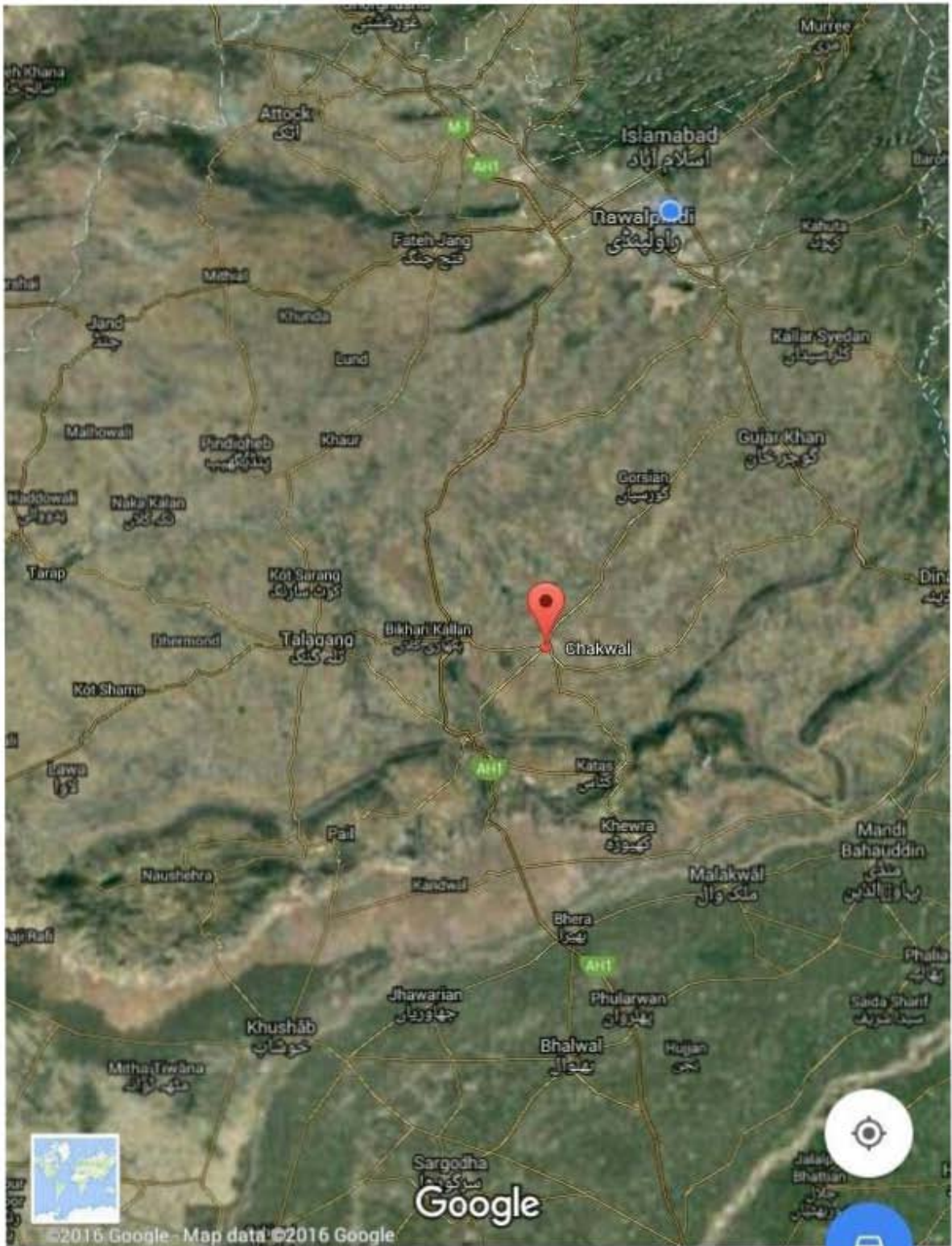
102. Any Shi'a *mannat* want to share:

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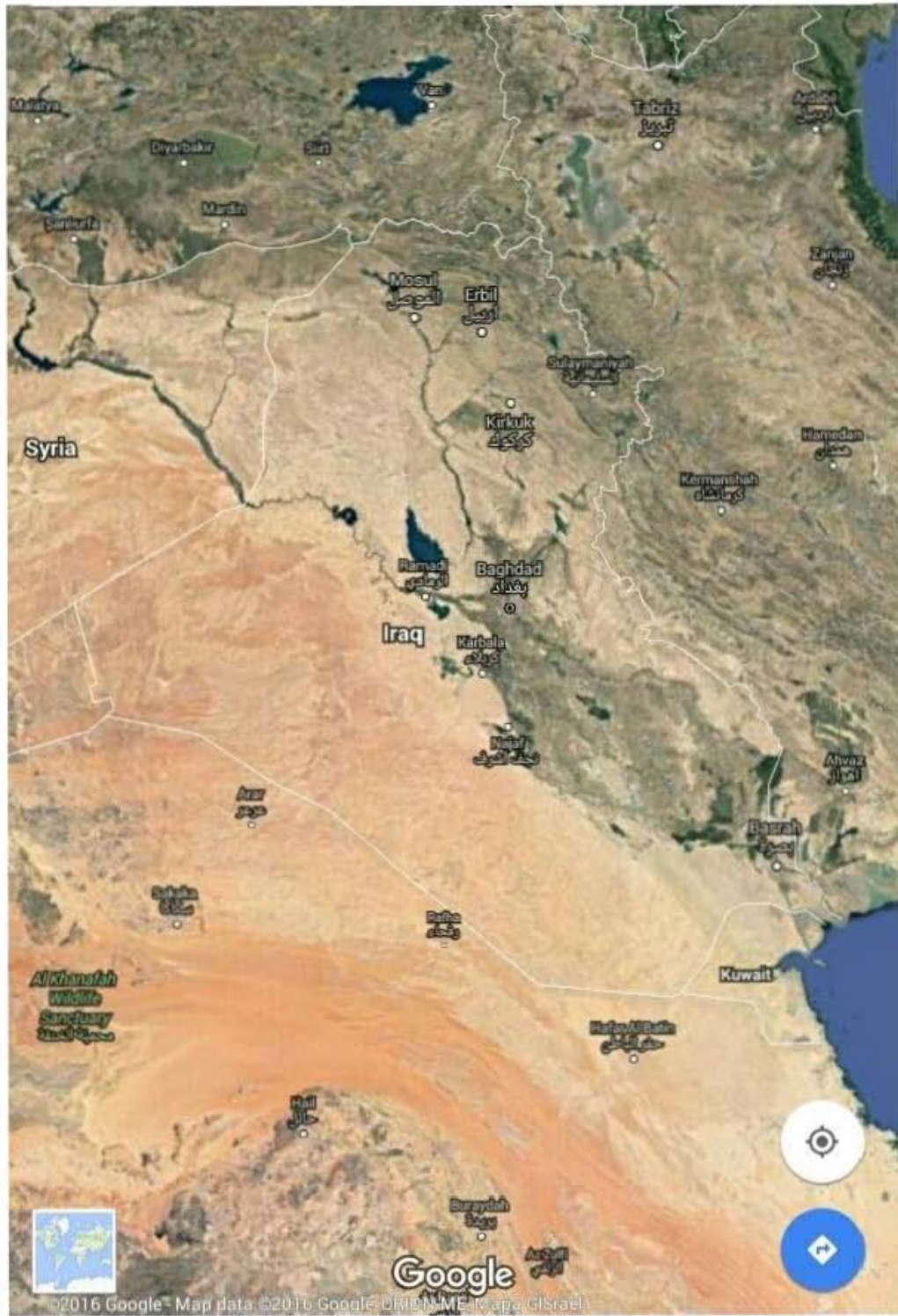
103. Please share any information about Mu'awiya?
104. Please share any information about Yazid?



Map of Pakistan



Map of Chakwal



Map of Iraq



Another Map of Iraq

# GENELOGICAL TREES

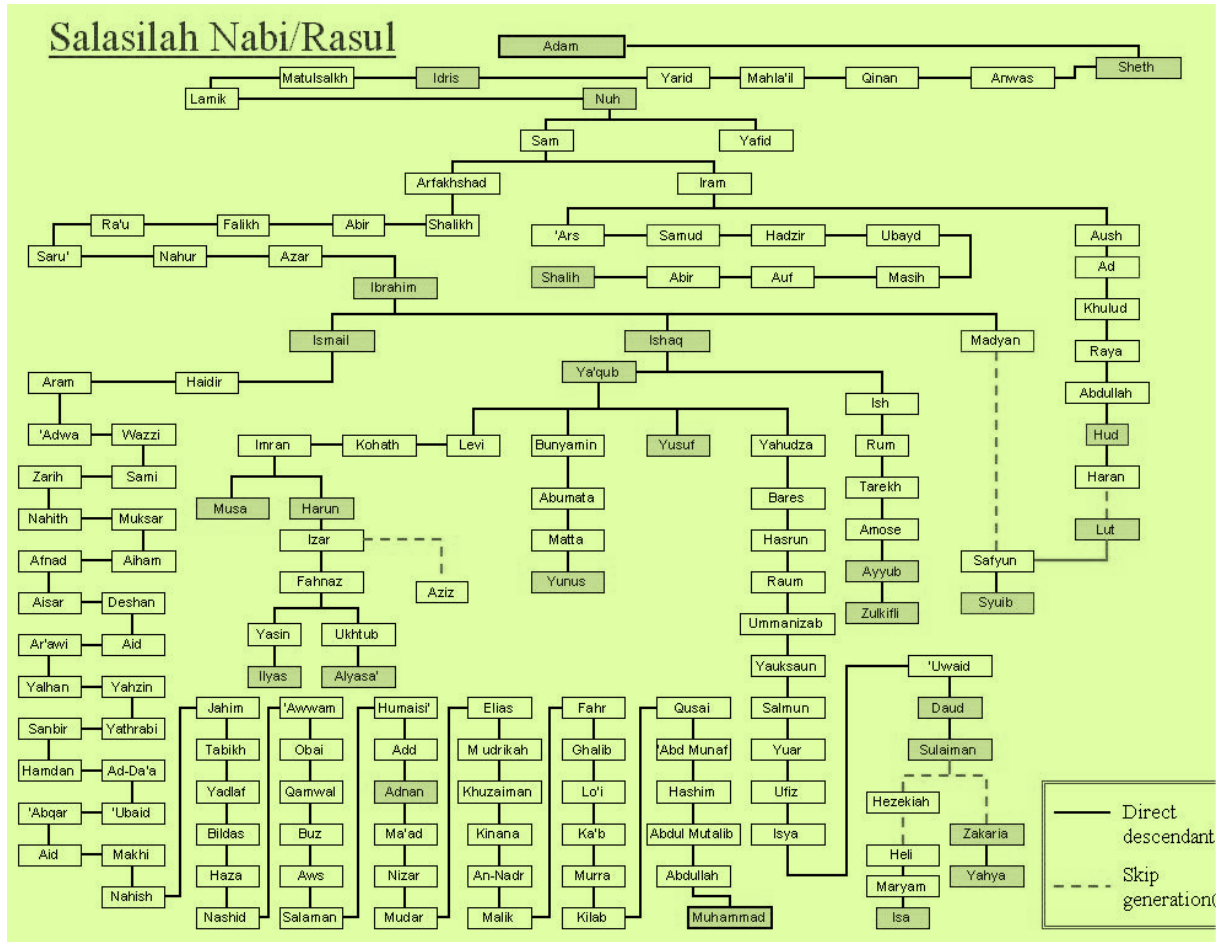


Image 1. Genealogical tree of Hazrat Muhammad. This picture has been taken from the books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.

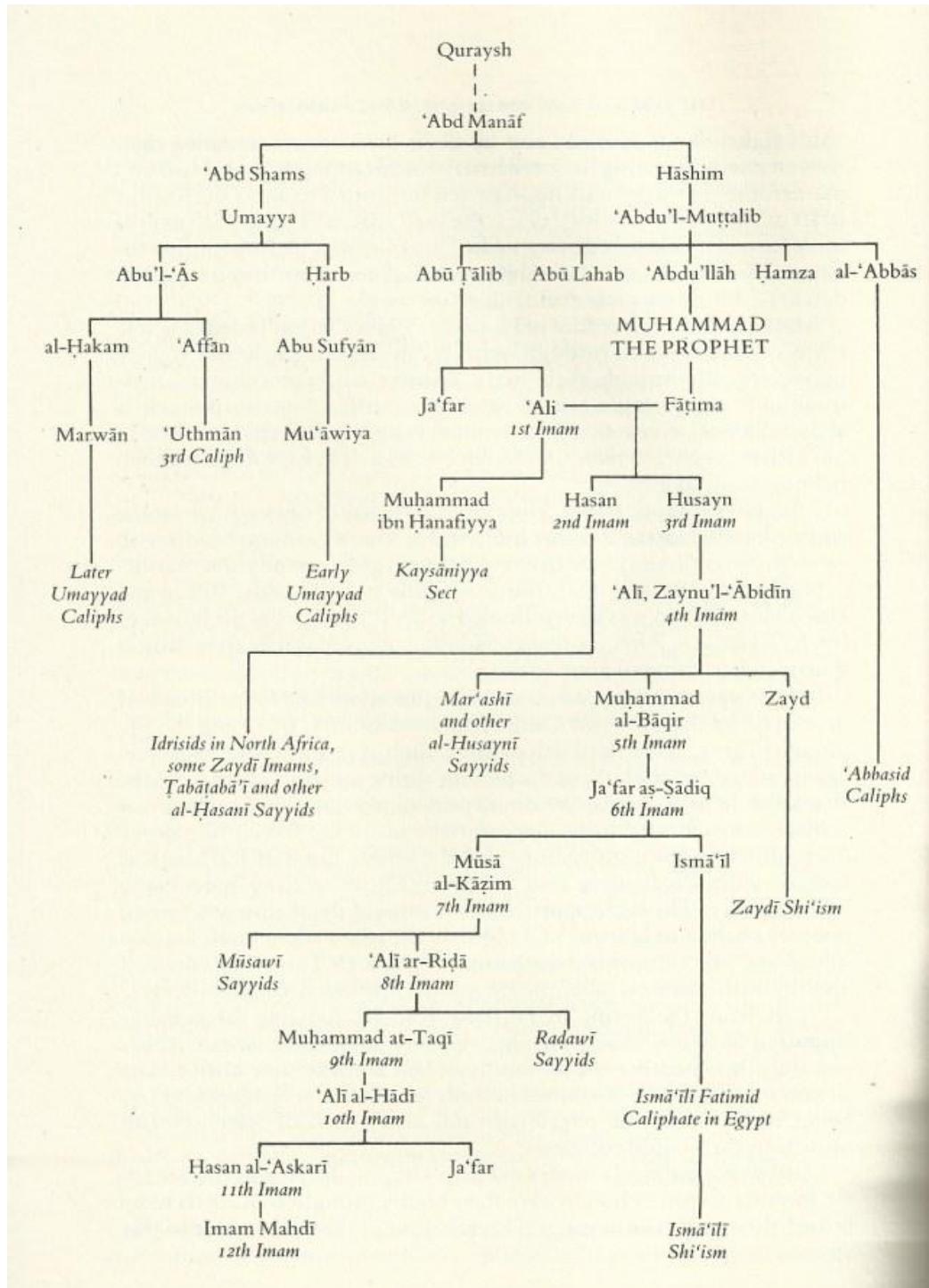


Image 2. Genealogical tree of the twelve Holy Imams to dynasties, sects and Banu Umayyah's line of descent. This picture has been taken from the books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.



## IMAGES /CATALOGUE



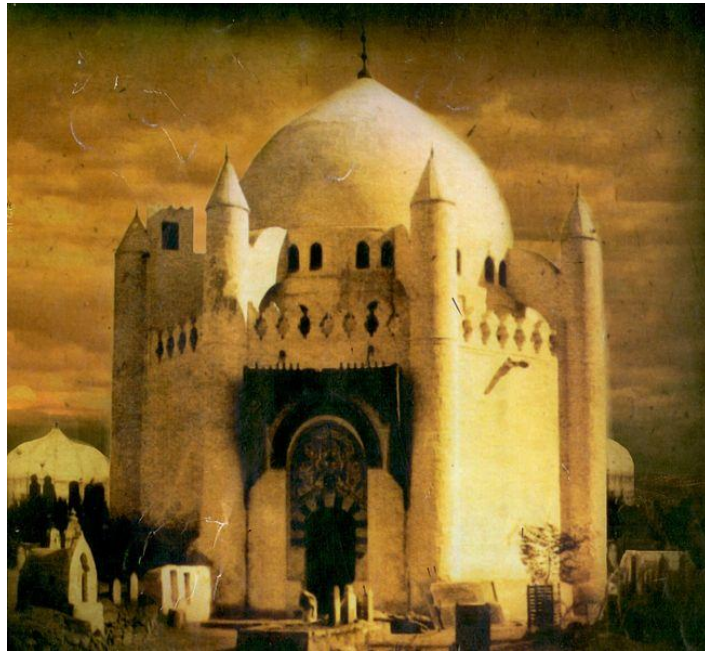
Image 3. A model or replica of Imam Ali tomb placed in central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.  
This picture has been taken by the researcher during field work.



Image 4. Imam Hussain's *ta'ziya*, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 5. Image of Imam Hussain tomb in Karbala (Iraq). This picture has been taken from the books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.



Photograph 6. Fourth Imam Ali, fifth Imam Muhammad Baqir and Imam Jaffar Sadiq buried with Imam Hassan in tomb in Janat ul baqi, Madina. It is said that this tomb was destroyed in 1925. This picture has been taken from the books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.



Photograph 7. Image of shrine of Hazrat Imam Musa Kazim in Qazvin-e-Baghdad (Iraq)  
This picture has been taken from the books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah*  
Chakwal.



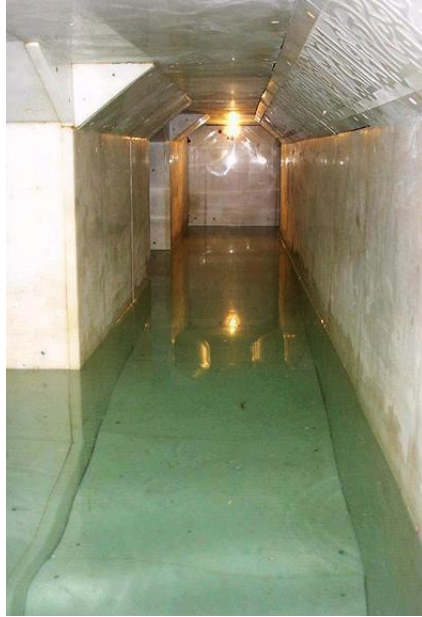
Photograph 8. Image of Hazrat Imam Ali Raza tomb in Mashhad (Iran). This picture has  
been taken from *mutawali* (Safdar Abbas) of the *Imam bargah* Chakwal.



Photograph 9. Image of shrine of Imam Ali Naqqi in Sarman Rai (Iraq). This picture has been taken from *zawar* Sughra bibi who went for *ziyarat*.



Photograph 10. Image of tomb of Hazrat Abbas, this picture has been taken from a Shi'a scholar Sughra bibi who went for *ziyarat*.



Photograph 11. Image of tomb of Hazrat Abbas, where water take turns around the Holy grave all the time, this picture has been taken from a Shi'a scholar Sughra bibi who went for *ziyarat*.



Photograph 12. Replica/*ta'ziya* of Hazrat Abbas, this picture has been taken by the researcher in district Chakwal.

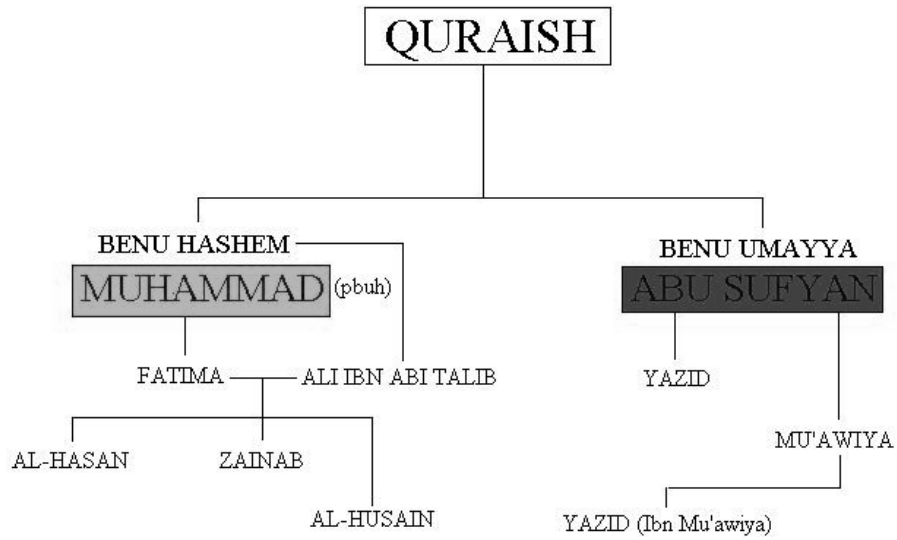


Image 13. Genealogical table of Quraish tribe. This picture has been taken from the books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.



Image 14. Imaginary picture of event of Karbala which shows arrangement of the two armies and Yazid's army have occupied the river and this picture has been taken from the books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.



Photograph 15. Image of women and children wept with grief on the day of *ashura* after the sad demise of Imam Hussain in the desert of Karbala. This picture has been taken from Abbas who bought this image from books and pictures exhibition, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.



Photograph 16. An image of systematic security and checking through cameras of Shi'a entering place where they will perform *matam* in District Chakwal. This picture has been taken by the Riaz Anjum in district Chakwal.



Photograph 17. Security measurements by Shi'a male security guards on Shi'a entering place where they will perform *matam* in Chakwal. This picture has been taken by the Riaz Anjum.



Photograph 18. Another Image of checking of Shi'a public by Shi'a security guards on entering place where they will perform *matam* in Chakwal. This picture has been taken by the Riaz Anjum.

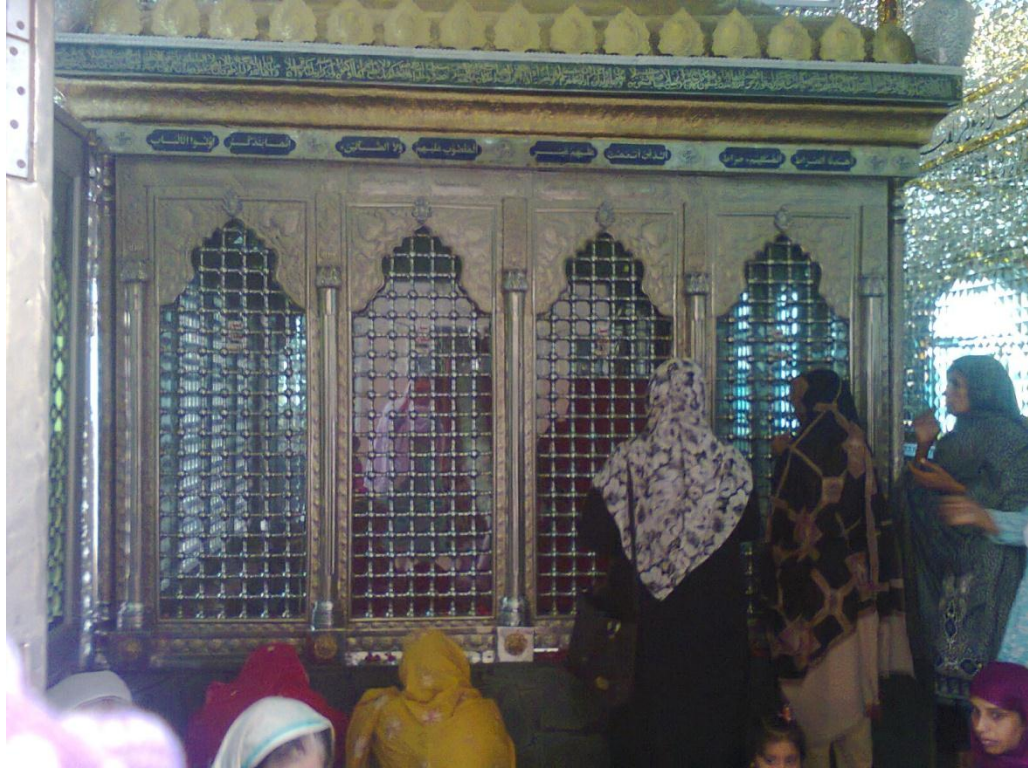




Photograph 19. An image of Shi'a procession, they are performing *matam* in Chakwal. *Matam* is also an art, they do it together in a group form. This picture has been taken from Muhammad Anjum.



Photograph 20. A group of Shi'a girls is sitting together and singing *mersiya* and *nohey*. They are covering their faces in *Imam bargah* Bel bikarian Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 21. Azadar females offering their prayers and some females are sitting on the floor and saying *dua* and listening *mersiya and nohey* singing by young Shi'a girls in *Imam bargah* Bel bikariyan Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 22. Image of a chest beating procession in Chakwal. This photograph has been taken from Muhammad Riaz Anjum.



Photograph 23. Image of a procession which would pass through the main road of the Chakwal, in this picture Shi'a males beat their breasts with their bare hands (performing *matam*) and singing sad verses (*mersiya*) in the hub of *jalus*. This photograph has been taken from Muhammad Riaz Anjum.



Photograph 24. Image of a procession - in which people holding *panjah* (symbol of *panjtan pak*) and males performing *matam* in market (we could see shops are closed). Their protectors in civilian dresses for security alert are standing by side and having vigilant eye on people. This picture has been taken from Muhammad Riaz Anjum.



Photograph 25. Image of a *matmi* procession (*matmi jalus*) on street where Shi'a holding the symbol for observance of their *mannat*. They individually promise to themselves if some desire or goal would be achieved then they participate in ritual as *mannat* in any day of Muharram and Safar. This picture has been taken from Muhammad Anjum.



Photograph 26. Image of Shi'a sacred decorated *ta'ziya*, *panjah* and other sacred pictures and paintings placing in *noor mehel* in *central Imam bargah* Chakwal.



Photograph 27. Image of several sacred '*alam* and other symbols placed in *noor mehel* Imam bargah Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 28. Another view of the *noor mehel* in Imam bargah Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 29. Other view of *noor mehel*, this Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 30. Image of Shi'a '*ulama* who are sitting together, they are wearing their specific dress - black robes and white head covers. One of them holds diary in his hand, it means they have written material to teach the Shi'a their doctrine, history and events in meaningful ways. This Image has been captured by the Muhammad Riaz Anjum.



Photograph 31. Image of Shi'a 'ulama together to say prayers in a home *majlis*. This photograph has been taken from Muhammad Riaz Anjum.



Photograph 32. Images of Shi'a rituals as symbols



Photograph 33. Images of Shi'a symbols, these Images have been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 34. Image of Shi'a gathering, they all have raised their hands for prayer and recite *darood* in the names of martyrs which is the way of their ethos of sorrow. This Image has been captured by the researcher.





Photograph 35. Image of Shi'a in black dresses



Photograph 36. Image of a black 'alam without symbol fixed in *central Imam bargah* of district Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 37. Image of red waving '*alams* without symbol fixed in a Shi'a graveyard near *central Imam bargah* in Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 38. Another image of a black '*alam* decorated with silver ribbon, which is in triangular shape and the *panj-tan-pak*<sup>104</sup> sign is also set on top. It is erected in *central Imam bargah* in Chakwal which is at least four to fifteen feet high.

This Image has been captured by the researcher.

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<sup>104</sup> It is an Urdu term which is used to refer five Holy personalities.



Photograph 39. There are oil lamps torched at evening and remains of burnt perfume sticks under the shadow of red 'alam. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 40. Image of another black 'alam knotted with the black *dopatta*<sup>105</sup>, ribbons and laces in graveyard behind the *central Imam bargah*. This Image has been captured by the researcher.

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<sup>105</sup> Scarfs



Photograph 41. Image of a decorated *zul jinnah* covered with red velvet, symbolize the blood of Imam Hussain, bowing his head- which is an expression of grief, led through road in Muharram procession in town Bhoun district Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 42. Sacred *zul jinnah* procession in which people holding decorated '*alam*' and sacred '*panjah*'. There are different colourful '*dopattas*' bejeweled with ribbons and motifs. The wounded *zul jinnah* is also there, with arrows in his back and he is bleeding, people are gathered to observe their '*mannat*' and to take photographs. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 43. In this photograph a fully decorated white *zul jinnah* passes through road, children are standing on the road as well as on roof to see him. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 44. Image of a wounded *zul jinnah* with arrows. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 45. Another view of *zul jinnah* in district Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 46. Image of two fully decorated cradles which is a symbol of Ali Asghar, who was son of Imam Hussain, are placed in *noor mehel*. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 47. Image of two small sized colourful *jhoola*, beautifully decorated with shining laces. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 48. In this photograph researcher tried to capture the baby dresses which are placed in *jhoola* , as people observe *mannat* to have a baby and present twelve baby dresses to fulfill their desire, to have a baby, especially male child. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 49. Image of a beautiful *ta'ziya* (tomb's replica of Imam Hussain placed in *noor mehel* of central *Imam bargah*. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 50. A decorated *ta'ziya* of tomb of Imam Hussain placed in *Imam bargah* and men in black dress praying in front of *ta'ziya* in Bhoun district Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.





Photograph 51. A beautiful *jhoola*, and six *ta'zias*, *nyshan* and *panjah* small in size placed on table in *Imam bargah* Bhoun district Chakwal.

This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 52. Image of *ta'ziya* of shrine of *Ghazi Abbas*, where women are standing near by the show case, to offer money, as *mannat* in Bel bikhari district Chakwal. This

Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 53. A young lady standing and offering thanks giving ritual to *ta'ziya/zari* tomb of *Ghazi* Abbas, a green fabric is tied with the *zari* as *mannat* in Bel bikhari district Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 54. Image of a beautiful silver made door of *ta'ziya* of *Ghazi* Abbas in Bel bikhari district Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 55. *Khak-e-Karbala* which is in round shape and have image of tomb of Imam Hussain. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 56. A procession holding a black *nyshan* with sacred embroidered verse “*Ya Ghazi Abbas alamdar*”. This *nyshan* is decorated with the *panj tan* sign (*panj tan* is a symbol of five Holy personalities - Hazrat Muhammad, Hazrat Imam Ali, Hazrat bibi Fatima, Hazrat Imam Hassan and Hazrat Imam Hussain.) Here *Panjtan* sign seems to have been set as crown. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 57. Procession holding *panjah*'s description is displayed on a black velvet banner (symbol). *Naad-e-Ali*<sup>106</sup> is also written on it. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 58..*Naad-e-Ali* (English translation) “Call Imam Ali, He is able to bring about the extraordinary. You will find him an effective supporter in all calamities. All worries and sorrows will soon vanish on account of authority, O Ali, O Ali, O Ali”. *Naad e Ali* was brought by Angel Jibrael from the almighty Allah on the event of the battle of Khayber. This Image has been captured by the researcher.

<sup>106</sup> It is a special pray which is recited during tough time or hardships.



Photograph 59. Image of a hand, a symbol of *panjah* (a Shi'a tradition) displayed in central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.

This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 60. Image of a procession of Shi'a have decorated *mehndi's thaal* (pot) in their hands and they are singing *nohey* and beating their chest in district Chakwal. This

Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 61. Another image of *mehndi* Procession in district Chakwal.

This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 62. Coffin – a symbol of Imam Ali who was also martyred, is placed in *noor mehel* of *Imam bargah* Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



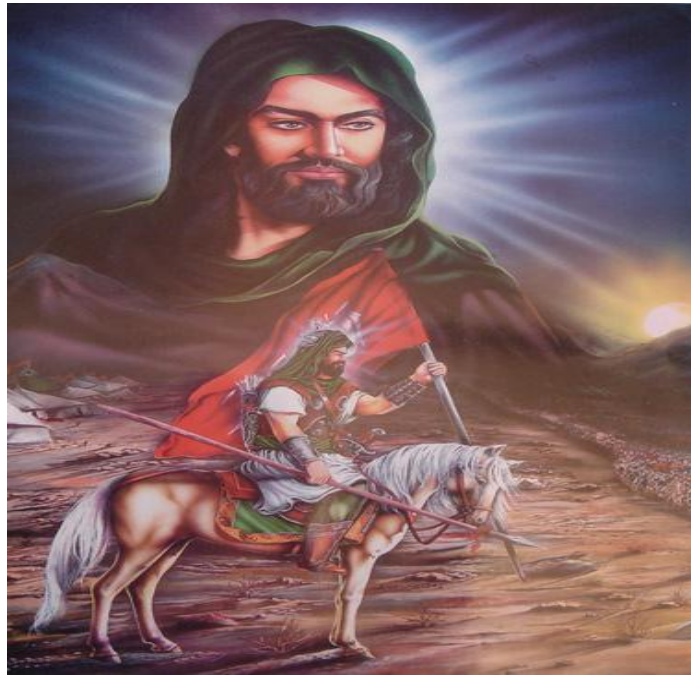
Photograph 63. Image of turban (head cover) of Imam Ali, is a symbol of honorable leader and white colour is symbol of purity whereas blood is symbolic representation of his martyrdom. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 64. Symbol of flask or *sakay sakeena* displayed in *central Imam bargah* district Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 65. It's an Iranian speculative image representation of Hazrat Abbas dying in the lap of his beloved brother Imam Hussain. This image has been taken from a Shi'a rational religious scholar Syed Haider Abbas.



Photograph 66. This is a speculative reflection of Imam Hussain, who is carrying red 'alam with grief gestures on the ground of Karbala on tenth Muharram and here red 'alam is a symbol of blood. This image is also taken from Syed Abbas. He has displayed this picture in his house in district Chakwal.





Photograph 66. Image of a green 'alam without mark tied with the branches of tree in courtyard of *central Imam bargah* Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 67. An imaginary painting of *zul jinnah* with gloomy gestures in Karbala. This image is also taken from Syed Abbas. He has displayed this picture in his house in district Chakwal.



Photograph 68. Image of Holy symbols of Shi'a, here are three swords, sword is a symbol of Imam Ali, it is mentioned in the middle (last one) sword that “no one is victorious like Hazrat Ali and no sward is like *zulfiqar*” (Here is no match for Imam Ali and his *zulfiqar*). Here ‘*alam* is having a script of *Ya Ghazi Abbas alamdar*”. A hand symbol of *panjtan pak* is also displayed here in image. *Ta ‘ziya* of Imam Hussain’s tomb is also here. *Naad-e-Ali* is a beautiful Arabic script and verses. Here *Naad e Ali* is written in the symbolic form of lion. Lion is also a symbol of Imam Ali because he is very famous for his bravery and boldness. This Image has been taken from Shah Hamdani.



Photograph 69. Iranian portrait of Imam Hussain, he is carrying his wounded little son Imam Ali Asghar in his arms on the ground of Karbala. This image is also taken from Ali Haider Abbas. He has displayed this picture in his house in district Chakwal.



Photograph 70. Image of sacred clay in round shaped disc, here is an image of Imam Hussain shrine. This picture has been taken by Khudija-tul-Kubra.



Photograph 71. Imaginary portrait of Imam Zain-ul-Aabiden, he was brought to Damascus as hostage in chains around his hands and feet. It is said that an Iron collar was around his neck and he walked all the way to Kufa. This picture has been taken from Shah Hamdani.



Photograph 72. Silver made *panjah* fixed on a moon as a crown and Shi'a observe *mannat* and tie *dopatta* with it. This image is also taken from Syed Ali Abbas.



Photograph 73. *Panjah's* description – five Holy personalities of *ehl-e-bait* Hazrat Muhammad, Imam Ali, Hazrat Fatima, Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain. This image is also taken from Syed Haider Abbas. He has displayed this picture in his house in district Chakwal.



Photograph 74. This photograph has been taken during field data collection, a bleded *panjah* symbol of honor, respect and protection. This image is also taken from Syed Abbas. He has displayed this picture in his house in district Chakwal.



Photograph 75. Symbol of *panjah* placed in *noor mehel central Imam bargah* Chakwal. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 76. Image of coffin placed in *noor mehel*, central *Imam bargah* Chakwal.

This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Photograph 77. Hazrat Abbas wounded with arrow and died in the lap of Imam Hussain and behind them his horse holding thunderbolt. This image is also taken from a Shi'a scholar Syed Abbas.



Photograph 78. Image of the weeping women in the event of Karbala on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram, Imam Hussain was martyred by Yazid's army. Imam Hussain horse came back to his camp where women of *ehl e bait* were waiting to hear the news. When horse came alone without Imam Hussain, they came to know that Imam had been martyred and they started weeping. In this image women are weeping and expressing their grief for Imam Hussain and even his horse is bleeding, gloomy and bowing his head with respect and sorrow. This Image has been shared by Ali.



Photograph 79. Symbolic act in painting represents battlefield of Karbala, Imam Hussain with his sister *janab e Zainab*, she is holding hand, which shows/ represents their great love and care for her brother. In painting, Imam Hussain's sister *Hazrat Zainab* wearing black colour robe which symbolizes grief and associated with this event. This Image has been shared by Ali.



Photograph 80. Image of goddess Durga's who got victory over evil forces. Durga is a deity, a beautiful divine being (symbol of virtue) who is sitting on a furious lion having peaceful gestures. She has ten hands equipped with different weapons like Vishnu's discus, Shiva's trident (three pronged spear), Indra's thunderbolt and others in her hand. Here is a wounded enemy, who is a warrior called Rakhshas and symbol of immorality.

For this purpose Hindu people celebrate the event of *dashera* in which they perform *Durga puja* (Durga worship). This Image has been taken by Ali Habib, he is an Indian Shi'a and helped the researcher by sharing some photographs.



Photograph 81. On the last day of *Durga puja*, Hindu people and her believers cast Durga's figurine in river Ganga. This Image has been taken from Ali Habib.





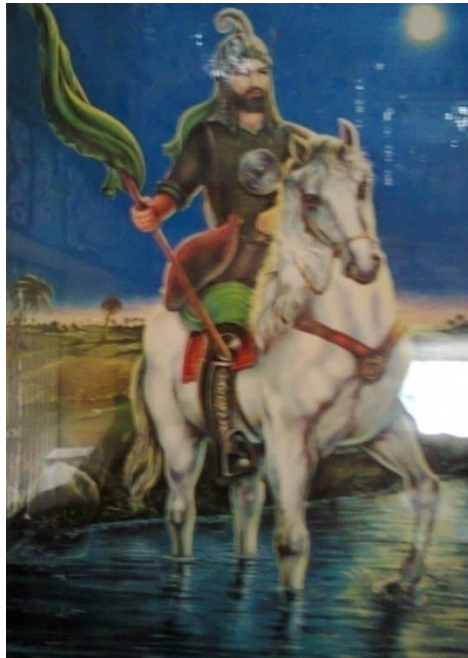
Photograph 82. An Imaginary portrait of Imam Hussain with the wounded Imam Ali who is suffering with great pain, an angel is setting with gloomy gesture in the battlefield of Karbala and a woman sitting in tent hiding her face and weeping. This image has been taken from Ali Haider.



Photograph 83. This is anthropomorphic painting of Christ made by Giovanni Bellini which was completed in 1505. This Image has been shared by Habib Maseh.



Photograph 84. Image of Vajrapani has been shared by Dr. Ashraf Khan.



Photograph 85. Image of *Ghazi* Abbas, he has thunderbolt and holding '*alam* in right hand. This Image has been shared by Saima Shah.



Photograph 86. Image of the divine Buddha and halo around his head. This Image has been shared by Dr. Ashraf Khan.



Photograph 87. Various imaginary portraits of flask holder Hazrat Abbas and Imam Hussain who have halo around their heads. This Image has been Shared by Aqeela Musarat.



Photograph 88. Image of *triratna* or *ratnatraya* is one of the seven jewel treasure in Buddhism. This Image has been shared by Dr. Ashraf Khan.



Photograph 89. Image of *trimurti* or *trishowl* symbol of three gods named Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in Hinduism. This Image has been shared by Jashna.



Image 90. First sermon of haloed Buddha and his right hand touching wheel of law. This Image has been shared by Dr. Ashraf Khan.



Photograph 91. *Panjah* is symbol of security and protection which consists of five fingers of the right hand position is towards Allah and its meaning is in every difficulty of life remember Allah, who is always here to listen and resolve the problem. This Image has been taken by Muhammad Riaz Anjum.



Image 92. Concept of *abhaya mudra* is a comparable symbol with *panajh* Shi'a symbol.

This Image has been shared by Dr. Ashraf Khan.



Photograph 93. Image of a sculpture of monks, who are worshipping stupa (the relic of Buddha). Stupa is a royal funeral mound built on Buddha or saint's relic in the shape of dome. This Image has been shared by Dr. Ashraf Khan.



Photograph 94. Image of prayer stone with engraved Imam's tomb. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Image 95. A bejeweled sad *zul jinnah* wounded with arrows in the month of Muahrram in district Chakwal. This Image has been captured by Ahsan Ali.



Image 96. The dream of Maya on a Stupa drum panel showing a white elephant entering her body, from Jamalgarhi, The British Museum. This Image has been shared by Dr. Ashraf Khan.



Image 97. *Imam bargah* - replica of Hazrat Abbas's tomb. This Image has been captured by the researcher.





Image 98. An image of oil lamps torched at evening which reflects hope in form of Shi'a *Imam bargah*. This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Image 99. An image of decorated motives of Shi'a which is captured during *jaloos*. This Image has been captured by the Unknown Shi'a.



Image 100. An image of decorated wounded *zul jinnah* which is captured during *jaloos*.  
This Image has been captured by the researcher.



Image 101. An image of simple and depress *zul jinnah* This Image has been captured by  
the researcher.



Image 102. An image of bled *zul Jinnah*, this Image has been captured by the Shi'a.



Image 103. An image of heartbreaking *zul Jinnah*'s facial expressions for Imam Hussain, this Image has been captured by reseracher.