CHANGING CULTURAL SYMBOLISM AND ICONOGRAPHY: THE HOLY DRAMA OF TA'ZIEH IN GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXTS

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DECLARATION

I, **Mohd Shahil Khan**, hereby declare that this dissertation titled **"CHANGING CULTURAL SYMBOLISM AND ICONOGRAPHY: THE HOLY DRAMA OF TA'ZIEH IN GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXTS"**, submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy,** Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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My achievement through the dissertation is the change from a narrow-minded perception of symbolic expression which was dominated by intuition and emotion to a researcher with analytical and strategic thinking skills.

Mohd Shahil Khan

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The theme of this dissertation *'Changing cultural symbolism and iconography: the holy drama of Ta'zieh in global and regional contexts'* looks at dynamics of representation of symbols, icons, rituals, traditions of a large structure Islam through Ta'zieh and associated practices as the subject matter of research. Enquiring change in a large structure requires close examination of its components to decipher the nature, direction, scope and motivations behind modifications. Ta'zieh here acts as the component and change, which I intent to engage with applying a variety of concepts and instruments such as acculturation, assimilation, and a plethora of other socio-cultural and political processes in social sciences.

It is pertinent to state at the outset that the focus of the study is to interpret the Ta'zieh tableau, which is taken out in a procession through the public streets on the 10th day of Muharram by both the Islamic sects - the Shias and the Sunnis, as also by groups of non-Muslims in different parts of the sub-continent. The idea is to explore as to how different groups of believers bring different designs fused with different kinds of symbols, which may have bearings in local/regional cultures that may not constitute the pan-Islamic symbolism and iconography. In the process, one may be in a position to witness regional, place and community based aspirations and identities that could be both convergent and divergent with the monotheistic Islamic traditions.

Ta'zieh forms part of the ten-day ceremony of mourning held annually by the Shias and Sunnis to mark the anniversary of the death of the Imam Hussein, who, with his family, was murdered in the Babylonian desert of Karbala in 680 A. D. at the command of the Omayyad Caliph Yazid. "When the Islam was introduced into Iran in the 8th century by the Arabs, two branches were formed, the Sunni and the Shia. While the Sunnis adhere to a religious

orthodoxy from the very beginning, the Shia "Persianized" Islam and acknowledged only the Imams as being the lawful successors of the Prophet, the first of whom was Ali".[1] After a quick introduction to what is Ta'zieh. The question is how to locate dynamism in Ta'zieh? It can be seen through the lens of symbolism and iconography and also by their implications over different public places and spaces and on society.

Cultural and particularly religious symbols and icons are deep rooted in humankind's consciousness from the very early stages of socialization and they remain throughout the whole life in one way or another. The formation of particular symbolism and iconography of a kind includes various historical, political and cultural processes, justifications and implications and this dissertation tries to capture these processes by analysing the publicly performed ritual of Ta'zieh in the global and in Indian contexts and through this analysis trying to foster the idea that symbology and iconography associated to a religion varies across geographical space and that they do not remain fastened through time.

Symbology is the science of implied relations. The simplest of these relations is that obtaining between two things. One of these is known as the signifier and the other the significant.[2]

Derived from the root *aza* which means mourning, Ta'zieh can mean comfort, condolence or expression of grief. It depends on factors such as time, region occasion, etc. the word can convey different cultural practices and meanings. Also there are marked differences in the way Ta'zieh is observed by Shias and Sunni Muslims around the world.

Second largest Shia population in the world after Iran is in India and it also houses a significantly large Sunni Muslims population. It shows India as a true

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[1] Caron, N. (1975). The Ta'zieh, the Sacred Theatre of Iran. *The World of Music, 17*(4), 3-10. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/43620726

Ali is Muhammad's son-in-law and Hussein is his son

[2] Kantor, J. (1929). Language as Behavior and as Symbolism. *The Journal of Philosophy, 26*(6), 150-159. doi:10.2307/2014240

'melting pot'. The variation associated with Ta'zieh doesn't confine to Shias and Sunni, Persian region or South Asia rather there are much to this variation than just sects and regions. Documenting and analyzing these differences forms one of the objectives of this dissertation.

But how the study of symbolism and iconography fits into the discipline of geography? To put it in layman's terms, quoting Confucius, "signs and symbols rule the world, not rules and laws". Symbols and icons define humankinds place in the world. The academic disciplines are a tool to understand the world and society.

Differences and disparities are studied using concepts and categories such as Gender, class and race are accepted as the primary tool of analyses across various social sciences. In geography, they have formed subjects, as both a problematized and a priori class of analysis. "Religion has not received this same attention. Although it has not been reduced to a residual category as geographies of religion has resurfaced in recent years".[3]

The theme of this dissertation follows in those resurfaced footsteps and uses religious symbolism and iconography to understand the world and society. By building up a comprehension of the importance behind signs and symbols we figure out how to see past the surface to what lies underneath and to build up a basic eye for subtleties; to observe between the portrayal of the thing and the thing itself and along these lines to see the veritable from the counterfeit. It is the symbols and icons which convert the geographical space into place and make the space come alive.

While this dissertation's theme will fit in the framework of cultural and social geography; an attempt has been made to make it multidisciplinary so as to understand the representations of icons and symbols from various perspectives.

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[3] Duncan, J., Johnson, N., & Schein, R. (Eds.). (2004). *A Companion to Cultural Geography.* Oxford, UK: Blackwell, p – 365

Words build bridges into unexplored regions so does the symbolism and iconography, at times even more so than words. While this dissertation study Ta'zieh as a case study to understand and explore the symbolism and iconography or vice versa; we know Ta'zieh as an Islamic phenomena. Now when it comes to symbolism and iconography, there is often a tendency to conjure particular symbols in our minds and while talking of Islam, we instantly conjure colour green, star and crescent, calligraphy, dome shaped architecture etc. This study attempts to go a little further than such fixed construction and explore the meaning behind the otherwise perceived hullabaloo of Ta'zieh.

We conjure these symbols knowing that Islam is for the most part considered a iconoclastic religion in which the portrayal of living things has been disallowed from its earliest reference point. In effect, Islam moved from the allegorical toward the embellishing, far from the worshipful threats of genuine nearness related with the symbols.[4] Thus we will also be picking on this issue and show the concept of aniconism in Islam.

Now the problem arises when we think that representation of symbols and icons is the matter of stagnation. There's no give and take with the modernity, no little traditions, no latent functions, no structuration, no assimilation and no acculturation. The reality is the opposite of it all; there is modernity effect, little traditions, latent functions, structuration, assimilation and finally acculturation.

Even after considering the proselytizing nature of Islam, we may say that it has some aspects of above discussed processes but the study of those processes and the changing nature of religion can't be investigated in thin air or abstractly. It can be done, although partially, by studying associated symbology and iconography and Ta'zieh which has both the aspects in it can be a good tool.

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[4]Elsner, J. (2012). Iconoclasm as Discourse: From Antiquity to Byzantium. *The Art Bulletin, 94*(3), 368-394. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23268277

The representation of iconography and performance of rituals penetrates deep into our daily life and shape our understanding of a different culture and religion. While these iconography and associated rituals are being performed in public spaces, they acquire local variation and can be a source of both unification with other cultures and conflict too.

In this understanding, knowing things which we assume, which is popular or mainstream opinion or which is politically motivated tries to inscribe an underdone understating of a culture in human minds which has largely remained out of academic discourse (due to cultural aridity or sometimes complexity). This needs to be questioned here through the analysis of symbolism and iconography.

The study of the dissertation is interdisciplinary in nature which covers disciplines of geography, history, sociology, philosophy and anthropology.

One can also see its causes and implications from standpoints of cultural geography, social geography and historical sociology fields.

The working of cultural politics is another stream that is important from geography discipline so as to understand the politics of representing iconography and symbolism and seeing the contesting spaces come alive.

1.2 Literature Review

Aza-e-Hussein grasped Muslim promptly after the tragedy of Karbala. Literature associated with this phenomenon went from focussing on the importance of Azadari (mourning) to Azadari at personal level to Azadari as instrument of Tabligh to Azadari as presentation of history. The literature generated in the process can be termed as canonical.

Since Azadari is happening in procession, in Tekyeh and conforming to geographical attributes (areas with Camel use camel in procession, where submersion can happen, Ta'zieh are submersed etc.). So, this Azadari came to be known as Ta'zieh (with other spellings). When these Ta'zieh procession diffused to different parts of the world, they acquired distinct and different

characteristics such as passion play, drama, mausoleum, Tabut or Tabuik, carnival Hosay etc. In the process, they generated their respective literature, some more specialized and profuse than others. For example, literature available on Iran's Passion play Ta'zieh is coded like script, music sheets, explanation for using various colours and inclusion of new ideas to make it contemporary socially relevant while literature available on various kinds of Ta'zieh in South Asia is sparse.

Earliest historian to compile his *maqtal*[5] by taking testimonies from eye witnesses was Abu Mikhnaf.

The authors of the maqatil (maqtal) develop a connection between Hussein and Jesus and also Hussein and John the Baptist, in order to bestow holy attributes upon Hussein.[6]

The available literature has sectarian (Shias and Sunnis) point of view and need to be analysed as such. Religious literatures such as hadith, scriptural reference are being used occasionally. Our purpose is not to dwell on religious literature rather to find explanation of cultural practices in local parlance when these practices deviate or converge from popular religion. For this purpose, we have utilized the literature available in cultural, social, and religious domain.

Ta'zieh as a tool to decode heterogeneity in popular religion Islam is less-travelled theme as a debate and a discourse in academic field. In Indian scenario, where this heterogeneity has acquired unique character with hybridity and syncretic elements lacks prolific literary source highlighting various processes and practices. To understand these, we have utilized articles in local regional and global newspapers and various gazetteers (state, district, India).

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[5] Title of various books written by different authors throughout the centuries which narrate the story of the Battle of Karbala and the death of Hussein

[6] SINDAWI, K. (2002). THE IMAGE OF ḤUSAYN IBN 'ALĪ IN "MAQĀTIL" LITERATURE. *Quaderni Di Studi Arabi, 20/21*, 79-104. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/25802958

The available literature on the subject for South Asia, South-east Asia, North Africa and Caribbean is used selectively and coincidentally these are the regions of variety and variation.

Literature scattered throughout cultural geography, sociology, philosophy, writings based on globalization and culture, culture and hybridity are being used based on contexts.

Malinowski wrote, "All institutions whose primary or sole role is the maintenance and servicing of the national culture" would function as before. Custom and representative life would turn out to be substantially more, not less, dynamic; a social bubbling would more than make up for reduction of political freedom.[7]

Mead in "*Religious Bearings of a Secular Mind*" wrote that religion's most vital capacity has been the safeguarding in the brains of the network a confidence in a social order which did not exist.[8]

Peter J. Chelkowski in "*From the Sun-Scorched Desert of Iran to the Beaches of Trinidad: Ta'zieh's Journey from Asia to the Caribbean*", traces Ta'zieh's origin and how it got diffuse.

M. A. Naqvi in *Tazia Making: A Unique Craft with Multi Cultural Understanding and Traditions*, write about its cultural history, the art of Ta'zieh making and other issues associated with it.

The premises of theoretical framework were based on cultural and social geography.

Directly or indirectly literature is available to substantiate arguments put forth.

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[7] Gellner, E. (1987). The Political Thought of Bronislaw Malinowski.
Current Anthropology, 28(4), 557-559. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2743495
[8] Smith, T. (1932). The Religious Bearings of a Secular Mind: George Herbert Mead.
The Journal of Religion, 12(2), 200-213. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1197002

Peter J. Chelkowski again has identified Ta'zieh production and development processes, with a developmental approach. He is the author of the book "Tazieh Ritual and Drama in Iran" and the article "Tazieh Eternal Performance in Iran" in which he had commented on Ta'zieh.

Farrok Ghaffari also wrote a book on development of Ta'zieh titled *Iranian Theatre*.

Literature on cultural and social processes is available in good extent and has been utilized for theoretical understanding.

1.3 Research Questions

There are certain central research questions which this dissertation tries to address. Islam is considered as an iconoclastic religion despite it being utilizing symbology and iconography in Ta'zieh. Also symbology and iconography in Ta'zieh is less worked upon as a topic of research or been a part of academic discussion. So, the **first question** which needs to be addressed is regarding the exploration of Ta'zieh as symbolism and iconography in the broader framework of cultural geography and Islam.

Ta'zieh is more than one kind of event. It's observance for ten days (sometimes forty days) in the month of Muharram makes up for its varied nature. It's festival, mourning and fasting. While representing Ta'zieh, variety persists. The **second question** will go through the holy drama Ta'zieh and see how they are represented around the world with special reference to India and to find out divergence/convergence with popular Islam.

Here, at India level, we will try to show variation at regional level (northern, southern, western and eastern) and also at micro level (within a region). This will be a method of phenomenological research and participant observation at regional level. It utilizes the example, case study, news clippings, interviews, participant observation.

Inevitability of change is the essential feature of any culture and civilization. After the exploration of symbology and iconography in academic discourse

and their relation with Ta'zieh, the **third question** takes up dynamism and change as its theme. It tries to address the cultural and social processes and concepts which cause the changes happening to symbolism and iconography of Ta'zieh thus of Islam.

Together these three answers in the form of chapters of this dissertation will make us able to postulate a new estimation of the theme taken up for this dissertation.

For, as Aristotle first taught and as Socrates first exemplified, it is in questions and their answers that our knowledge consists.[9]

1.4 Hypotheses

Representation of symbols and icons essentially take place in place and/or space. In fact, what kind of symbols and icons are being used can be a distinguishing factor between place and space considering the scale. For example, a vacant unfinished large mall without shopping advertisements and shopping material is a space while with advertisements, shopping material and with finished touch; is a place. Ta'zieh passing through a desert without much spectacle is essentially passing through a space while Ta'zieh passing through a crowded street is essentially a part of place.

This dissertation use inductive reasoning - that is the ability to gradually generalise a finding based on accumulating data (otherwise known as building a case from the ground up).[10]

Place and space forms the core of geographical study. So, consequently, the representation of icons and symbols, transnational nature of religion, and procession of Ta'zieh in many countries and regions; all of this acquires the geographical characteristics. Furthermore, we have put the research enquiry of

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[9] Dillon, J. (1984). The Classification of Research Questions. *Review of Educational Research, 54*(3), 327-361. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1170452

[10] THE SCIENCE RIGHTER. (2013). Hypothesis-driven Research? Bring Back the Bacon. *AQ: Australian Quarterly, 84*(2), 11-15. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/24363559

this dissertation within the scope of representational cultural and social geography.

1.5 Methodological Framework

The theme of the dissertation is not much worked upon in the available literature. The conceptual parameters that are used in the dissertation include culture and its processes, symbolic and spiritual capital, power geometry and religious landscape.

The methodology of the research is qualitative in nature. I first develop a theoretical framework to explain the concepts of symbology and iconography and issues related to it, how they fit into the phenomena of Ta'zieh, how to perceive these symbols and icons, overarching western construction of Islam by taking into account different factors which act as causation and also the results of such changes. Then the research deals with changes in the symbology and iconography by looking into different cases at different levels in geographical aspects in world and Indian scenario.

In this study, I have drawn upon a number of newspapers articles both global and regional, religious literature and literature pertaining to the symbolism and iconography and of academic framework of social and cultural geography.

I have also analysed some historical religious texts to find out the arising differences within different sects in Islam. I went to Sambhal in Uttar Pradesh for field work and interviewed octogenarian from both sects who are overseeing the procession of Ta'zieh for more than five decades.

I've also gone through various gazetteers (district, states and India). Even though, these gazetteers were published decades ago (from British times) to until one decade back, these contains thematic chapters to describe a given population and its social, political and cultural highlights. Perusal of these gazetteers is historical analysis method.

The objective and chapter related to Ta'zieh which embodies the aspects covered in the previous two objectives can be seen as a case study at global, India and within India at regional (Sambhal, Sirsi) level.

The research is aimed at unfolding a new dimension in the geographies of religion, representation and religious landscape that how the symbols and icons associated with these structures, processes and experiences are dynamic with little tradition, latent function, structuration, assimilation and acculturation.

The dissertation intends to provide theoretical framework on which an argument of dynamism can be based. It deals with Ta'zieh as a case study for this purpose, along with relevant conceptual foundations on which a study can be pursued further. After conceptualising various dimensions related to the symbology and iconography, the dissertation analyses it in the Indian context through Ta'zieh. I develop my argument based on the historicity of the process of representing symbols and icons, downfall of them, resurrection of them, ways to wield power, means to convey a message.

Furthermore, I deal with an approach based on the geographical cultural regions. It follows a top-down approach or going from larger to smaller units. It starts with case studies from a global perspective where cases from other countries become a point of a larger argument, which progressed through the India.

Also, I use phenomenological approach to highlight the specific, to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation.

A variety of methods can be used in phenomenologically-based research, which I have undertaken are interviews, conversations, participant observation, action research, focus meetings and analysis of personal texts. Other methods used are historical method and archival research.

It is from understanding of phenomenology that one come to recommend participant observation as an appropriate method to focus on situation, transaction and interaction.[11]

For phenomenologists, experience and its conceptualization are distinguishable modalities.[12]

Historically, the issue of Ta'zieh is a global phenomenon, and it is also a major dominant political force globally. The character of representation depends on the prevalent socio-cultural conditions of a particular case. Globally, the issue is not confined to any political boundaries. The methodology and the rationale regarding representation may vary from case to case, but largely the essence follows the same trajectory of remembrance.

1.6 Contextualising the Study

Guy Debord in "*The Society of the Spectacle*" wrote "All that once was directly lived has become mere representation". Symbology and Iconography being the tools of representation can help us in understanding the lived and the experience of society which in this case forms the part of a religion (Islam).

The change in the part may bring about change in the whole.

The different symbolism and icons concerning Ta'zieh from different parts of the world and India need to be analysed in order to understand various modalities of changing symbols and icons. One can draw similarities and differences from these case studies at the global and also in Indian contexts.

The implication of above discussed hypothesis and methodological framework, is a resituation of methodological framework against the

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[11] Jackson, P. (1981). Phenomenology and Social Geography. *Area,13*(4), 299-305.
Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20001748

[12] Pinar, W., Reynolds, W., Slattery, P., & Taubman, P. (1995).
Chapter 8: Understanding Curriculum as Phenomenological Text. *Counterpoints, 17*, 404-449.
Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/42974924

background of the 'about which' (Ta'zieh) one is asking and the verifiable circumstance from which it developed.

What we prescribe is a contextualizing of methodological choices and methodologies inside the space of our informative practices, our intelligent commitment in talk, forms, occasion, support and activity.[13]

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[13] Schrag, C., & Ramsey, R. (1994). Method and Phenomenological Research: Humility and Commitment in Interpretation. *Human Studies, 17*(1), 131-137. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20011032

Chapter Two

Representational Geography – Exploration of Symbolism and Iconography

In this chapter, we begin with understanding symbolism, iconography, rituals and traditions and how they fit into the geographical analysis as tools of enquiry and help us in understanding society through the prism of symbology and iconography that are prominent components of the religious landscapes both globally and regionally or can we say spatially. My objective here is to dwell upon Ta'zieh as symbology, iconography, ritual and tradition, its history and geography.

What is symbolism and iconography in substance? Evidently, they are the instruments of representation. The dictionary definition of representation is "a presentation to the mind in the contour of an idea or image or a creation that is a visual or tangible rendering of someone or something or it's synonymous with theatrical performance".[1]

There are more ways to define what representation is, but for our purpose the above defined one will suffice as Ta'zieh as representation is a theatrical performance, visual and tangible rendering. It may be important to note here is that is social sciences concepts keep developing and therefore it is difficult to assign fixed meaning to certain ideas and concepts.

When we discuss, compose or show something, we are engaged with the demonstration of portrayal. In its broadest sense, Geography is portrayal. Earth composing takes the world as we encounter or comprehend it, and makes an interpretation of it into pictures. The types of these pictures fluctuate: they can be composed, visual or oral and aural, and inside every one of these classes there exists an extensive variety of potential outcomes. Composed portrayals incorporate scholastic writings, daily papers, magazines, travel composing, books, plays and verse. Visual portrayals incorporate maps, photos, blurbs and movies. Oral and aural portrayals incorporate music, film soundtracks and sound chronicles, and in addition the stories we tell about the connections

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[1] https://www.wordwebonline.com/search.pl?w=representation

amongst individuals and spots.[2] Apropos, Ta'zieh is written, visual, oral and aural representation.

Amid the mid-1990s, there was a response against the overuse of thoughts of talk, portrayal, and content that called itself nonrepresentational geography.[3] Nigel Thrift calls for "a concentrating of consideration on types of instinctive, non-insightful exemplified activity, for example, melody, move, crying, and implied human practices. Some inquiry whether these last practices are any more typified than those that are typically thought of as "authentic, for example, seeing, talking, and composing". But since Ta'zieh falls into the category of articulated, contemplative and induced; hence representational geography. So, in a way this exercise attempts to resurface the geography of representation and religion (though to a lesser extent).

On the fringes of cultural geography a new and deep interest is taken in the geography of languages, legal systems, the family, religion, heresy and warfare.[4] Besides this, the theme also takes roots in historical geography.

The limitation of this kind of research is aptly described by Yi-Fu Tuan "the perceived world is almost infinitely complex, varying as it does with differences in physiology, experience, and intention," underscores the inherent difficulty of this mode of inquiry.[5]

2.1 SYMBOLS AND ICONS – RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE

In the above section, we have dwelt on the issue that how symbology and iconography fits into the geographic enquiry and the interrelation between

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[2] M. Gilmartin (2004) 'Geography and Representation'. JOURNAL OF GEOGRAPHY IN HIGHER EDUCATION, 28 :281-284

[3] Writings of Latour trying to decenter the focus of analysis of social agency away from consciousness and cultural systems of meaning and toward nonhuman material agency

[4] Prince, H. (1982). Trends in Historical Geography 1975-81. *Area,14*(3), 235-239. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20001828

[5] Mikesell, M. (1978). Tradition and Innovation in Cultural Geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers,68*(1), 1-16. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2569143

them. Since Ta'zieh are in essence constitutive of religious landscape; so here we will be inserting the religion into the geographic analyses and will seek the special place of symbols and icons in religious landscape.

Simply put, a symbol is a mark, sign, or word that indicates, signifies, or is understood as representing an idea, object or relationship. The act of expression using symbols is done indirectly or directly and they enable people to venture beyond what is physical or seen by creating relation between otherwise very different ideas and experiences. The word *symbol* comes from the *symbolon (Greek)*, "which means contract, token, insignia, and a means of identification." Gatherings to an agreement, partners, visitors, and hosts could recognize each other with the assistance of the parts of the *symbolon*.

Every one of the three exercises - philosophical, religious, and logical - there is the persevering inclination to structure, conceptualize, and externalize. In each of the three which controls symbols, they stay authentic just to the degree that they see legend, conceptualizations, and analogies for what they are.[6]

In its unique significance the symbol spoke to and conveyed an intelligible more noteworthy entire by methods for a section. While symbols and icons form an integral part of our everyday lives (traffic symbols, emoji, language codes, and hazard symbols etc.) but they happen to find a special place in religious landscape so much so that cross represents Christianity, Om represents Hinduism (also in Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism as a mantra), star crescent represents Islam, star of David represents Judaism.

The religious symbol joins the general attributes of the symbol with the curious qualities it has as a religious symbol.

Characteristics of symbols are figurative quality, perceptibility, innate power, and acceptability as such. This implies that the symbol is socially rooted and socially supported.

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[6] Schrag, O. (1971). Philosophical, Religious, and Scientific Symbols.
International Journal for Philosophy of Religion, 2(2), 113-126. Retrieved from
http://www.jstor.org/stable/40036283

Religious symbols are recognized from others by the way that they are a portrayal of that which is genuinely past, they point to a definitive reality inferred in the religious demonstration, to what concerns us at last. All other symbols mean for something that has also an unsymbolic target presence beside its optimal centrality, as, for example, a flag can represent a king, and the king in turn represents the state; or they are the forms giving expression to an invisible thing.[7]

While symbols and icons pervade the functional society all around the world; some are more recognized and known then the other. For example, the heart, the victory sign (V), Olympic logo, Dollar sign, McDonald's logo are the most recognized symbols and icons but they are behind the above discussed religious symbols. So, the basic point is that the religion has utilized the symbols and icons to its great capacity.

Considerably, if the Ta'zieh are in celebration, in procession and continuing in remembrance of an event occurred in seventh century; it put into perspective that symbols and icons are enduring.

While the lasting is the case with symbols and icons; so are the demise, attenuation and even regeneration (Company's logo changes, new religious symbols emerge e.g. scientology). It all depends on the essence, back story, message and the utility. Symbols durability can be ensured by the iconography.

Rene Guenon in his book *Fundamental Symbols The Universal Language of Sacred Science* wrote, "all things are linked together and correspond, to come together in total and universal harmony, for harmony is nothing other than the reflection of principal unity in the manifested world; and it is this correspondence which is the veritable basis of symbolism".[8] In this way, Guenon attempts to make sense out of all kinds of symbolism and their

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[7] Tillich, P. (1958). The Religious Symbol. *Daedalus, 87*(3), 3-21.

Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20026449

[8] Guenon, R. (1995), *Fundamental Symbols The Universal Language of Sacred Science*

correspondence with worldly and other worldly dimension (religious symbolism).

Fundamentally, representative part of religion has been considered by a few researchers to be the principle normal for religious articulation.[9]

Political religion appears to grounded on the idea that religion contains some sort of mysterious symbolic expression.[10]

In academic discourse, while cartography has been using symbols and icons from an earlier time; geography as a discipline is not immune either to the use of symbols and icons in forms of maps, legends or of religion significance. Sixteenth and seventeenth century was dominated by ecclesiastical and biblical geography. Later, the centering on religion's role in changing landscapes reflects the work of Carl Sauer.[11]

Geographical research on religion includes the key concepts and approaches in geography: the place-centered, spatial, the landscape, environmental.[12] For instance; The Association of American Geographers has a Bible Geography Specialty Group whose individuals "investigate" the geographic substance of the Bible through hands on work or literary examinations. Alongside this determinism, teleological perspectives are likewise part of geography of religion. Religion shows up as a part of a nationality, an ethnicity, or a political

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[9] https://www.britannica.com/topic/religious-symbolism

[10] Stowers, S. (2007). The Concepts of 'Religion', 'Political Religion' and the Study of Nazism. *Journal of Contemporary History, 42*(1), 9-24. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/30036425

[11] Price, M., & Lewis, M. (1993). The Reinvention of Cultural Geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers,83*(1), 1-17. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2569413

[12] Duncan, J. S., Johnson, N. C., & Schein, R. H. (2004). A Companion to Cultural Geography, Blackwell Publication, pp. 366, 374

group; so the examination in these subjects likewise has religious measurement.[13]

While religion has its fair share in academic discourse in Geography; its importance to Muslims world has been emphasized by Bernard Lewis throughout his writings, however disagreeably though. For instance, an imperative element of the Muslim world is the degree to which religion is still observed as characterizing personality and, thusly, reliability.[14]

Ta'zieh touches spatial, environmental (Indonesia's Tabuik and sea beaches and volcano), landscape and place-centered dimension. The category of place and space is most apt for Ta'zieh procession but since each image and symbol in religion is at first either straightforwardly or by implication associated with the sense impressions and environment; this too is an important factor for Ta'zieh. Finally, overall display, procession forms a religious landscape.

2.2 HISTORY OF TA'ZIEH – DRAMA, PASSION PLAY, MAUSOLEUM

The already based storytelling custom started using some of the elegiac works to elevate their storytelling of the tragedy of Karbala called *Rowzeh-khani*[15], became an additional feature of the Muharram ceremonies in Iran. Icons of the tragedy like rider less horses and coffins were included later, followed by the inclusion of mourners.[16] This idea of adding on to the representation process continued and gave form to a dynamic and varied Ta'zieh representation around the world.

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[13] Johnson, S. (2010). The Rise of Black Ethnics: The Ethnic Turn in African American Religions, 1916–1945. *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation, 20*(2), 125-163. doi:10.1525/rac.2010.20.2.125

[14] Lewis, B., & Churchill, B. E. (2011). *Islam: the religion and the people*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, p. – 4

[15] Recitation sessions

[16] Pettys, R. (1981). The Ta'zieh: Ritual Enactment of Persian Renewal. *Theatre Journal, 33*(3), 341-354. doi:10.2307/3207032

Abu Mikhnaf started compiling History of Ta'zieh in Middle East region. But to understand its history, we should look at its origin.

Originally the word "Ta'zieh" is a derivative of an Arabic word "*Ta'zieht*" meaning condolence (also relates consoling the relatives who have suffered from a tragedy). Ta'zieht in essence is a funeral rite. It can also mean *enjoining patience.* Its form as mourning is pre-Islamic. As indicated by Narshakhi, a grieving custom with tunes called kinfolk e Siyavosh (retribution of Siyavosh) had been occurring in Bokhara for centuries. Siyavosh was an Iranian unbelievable sovereign, honestly executed by his dad in-law. This ritual is also referred to as "The Weeping of the Magi".[17]

In beginning, the event of Karbala proved a crucial point in the history of Islam where Imam Hussein was brutally killed, along with 72 companions, as he contested Caliphate, about 100 km southwest of current Baghdad, on the Ashura day, the tenth day of the month of Muḥarram.

As time passed, the yearly practices of celebrations of Karbala changed into ceremonies. After fourteen centuries, one may think about how the occasions of Karbala changed into the Muharram customs as seen today. Prior, the supporters of Hussein were known as 'Alids' and not permitted to remember the deplorability of Karbala at open spots; it was significantly later, when they got support from rulers that open type of celebrations were permitted.

Amid this time traverse (680 – 963 CE) when Shias were confined to watching the Muharram ceremonies inside in Baghdad, the fifth Shia Imam, Muhammad Baqir (676-732 CE) and his son Imam Jafer Sadiq (702-765 CE) anticipated the celebrations as holy, and lectured that the main wellspring of salvation upon the arrival of resurrection was cooperation in Muharram customs.

On the tenth of Muḥarram in 963 CE, By the Buyid rulers, the suffering of Imam Hussein was formally honoured by grieving parades that went through the boulevards and markets.

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[17] Farrokh Gaffary. (1984). Evolution of Rituals and Theater in Iran. *Iranian Studies,*
17(4), 361-389. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4310466

In the next year, the celebration was supplemented with the recitation of funeral poems, beating on the head and face and asking for water in impersonation of Imam Hussein, who had requested water for his newborn child, 'Ali Asgar', on the plain of Karbala. This was in 963 CE however the motivation for this demonstration had really follows its root to 680 CE (Battle of Karbala). After their A.D. 680 success, the victors walked the hostage womenfolk from the Karbala fields, south of present-day Baghdad, to Damascus, the Caliph's capital. Zaynab, Imam Hussein's sister, started the Shi'a grieving ceremonies by bravely re-enacting sorrowful expression and relating the affliction story en route and even at the Caliph's court[18] (as the people observe on the streets from the top).

Now both Shia and Sunni women take part in the Ta'zieh ritual albeit in a different way. For example, womenfolk compose these lamentations poetic recitations called noha, marsiya, they organize majales, and younger females represent narratives concerning Ruqayyah, Faṭimah aṣ-Ṣughra ("Fatimah the Younger") and Faṭimah al-Kubra ("Fatimah the Elder"). These are daughters of Hussein Ibn Ali.

The blend of parades and emotional recitations gives us the components of the late Medieval ta'zieh. Such customs keep going on amid the Buyid time.

The grieving execution created until the point when it achieved a high point amid the Ṣafavid time frame (1501-1722 CE). The development of the Ṣafavids lastingly affected the historical backdrop of Iran. It was amid their decide that the mass of the populace changed over to Shia Islam.

Also while we're discussing the emergence of early Ta'zieh in Persian world; the questions like why Shia added azadari (mourning in the form of self-flagellation, chest beating, Tatbir also known as Talwar zani, Qama Zani,

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[18] Hegland, M. (1998). The Power Paradox in Muslim Women's Majales: North-West Pakistani Mourning Rituals as Sites of Contestation over Religious Politics, Ethnicity, and Gender. *Signs,23*(2), 391-428. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175097

aagzani, zanzeerjani); that we'll discuss under the heading Ta'zieh as symbology. Regions cultivated cultural and religious practices and social networks that crossed political borders. The cross-regional connections help explain the diffusion of Islam from the seventh to the eighteenth century. They were arenas of religio-cultural transmission.[19]

The history of *Ta'ziehdari* in Asia and India, or keeping Ta'zieh is rooted to the period of Timur, who invaded India in 1398 CE. Timur built the earliest Ta'zieh when he came back to Samarkand from Karbala. Basically, the preparation of Ta'zieh is done by soldiers in Timur's campaign.

Moreover, Timur was a Shia Muslim and according to John Joseph Saunders, Timur's background was Iranized and not steppe nomadic and he embraced a considerable lot of his crusades in light of a legitimate concern for religious request, and we find that all notices of the Shari'a in Shami's Zafarnameh happen as avocation for Timur's triumphs. His battles against the rulers of Georgia, the Shi'ite sayyids of Amul in Mazandaran, and the non-Muslim populations on his route to India were all ostensibly undertaken for the preservation of the Shari'a.[20]

S.A.A. Rizvi refutes this notion and writes, "In the I8[th] and 19th centuries, the Mughal princes who accepted Shi'ism spread that their ancestor Timur had been a Shi'i and introduced Ta'zieh".[21]

Sahib Qibla, wrote that, one thing, however, can be surmised. "that is, means for transportation being deficient around then, it was exceptionally troublesome for expecting people to go the distance from India to Karbala to pay their tribute at the place of worship of Imam Hussein. Subsequently, with

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[19] Lapidus, I. M. (2014). *A history of Islamic societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. – 497

[20] Manz, B. (1988). Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty. *Iranian Studies, 21*(1/2), 105-122. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4310596

[21] Chelkowski, P. (2005). From the Sun-Scorched Desert of Iran to the Beaches of Trinidad: Taʿziyeh's Journey from Asia to the Caribbean. *TDR (1988-), 49*(4), 156-169. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4488691

a specific end goal to fulfil the urge, individuals more likely than not formulated this substitute strategy for tribute by demonstrating out miniatures of the Imam's tomb".[22]

In his famous 1966 article on "The earliest Islamic commemorative structures", Oleg Grabar suggests that Shi'ism and secular glorification were "the two factors which first caused the growth of mausoleums", and these two factors "remained throughout as the main source of memorial constructions".[23]

The coming of Muslims in the Indian subcontinent is over a thousand years of age and has had a wide and profound effect on the social and social life in India. With the nearness of Muslims, old India entered another culture of Al-Hind.

Yet, it was just in the late fifteenth century that Shiaism was given authority support. It was Yousuf Adil Shah (1489 CE) of Bijapur, who set up the Shia convention in his territories. In spite of the fact that there is no confirmation of execution of Muharram customs accessible in visual shape in the 'Medieval Era', in any case, Shiaism turned into the state religion in Golconda in 1512, under the matchless quality of Qutab Shah (1512-1687 CE).

This is the manner by which the Shias picked up support in India and began to perform Muharram ceremonies at open spots. Shiaism spread gradually and came to be perceived all over India. The Bahmanis in Deccan (1434-1526 CE), the Nizam Shahs in Ahmadnagar (1490-1633 CE), the Mughals (1526-1748 CE), the Salateens (1376-1557 CE) in Kashmir, and the Kings of Oudh (1732-1856 CE) upheld specifically or by implication to set up Shiaism in Indian subcontinent.

Nawab Asafudaula used to pass 60,000 Rupees on a solitary Muharram. He additionally made conceivable the development of Bara Imambara. It is

[22] Ibid.

[23] Bernheimer, T. (2013). Shared Sanctity: Some Notes on Ahl al-Bayt Shrines in the Early Ṭālibid Genealogies. *Studia Islamica,108*(1), 1-15. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/43577533

likewise called the Asafi Imambara. Bara implies enormous, and an Imambara is a hallowed place worked by Shia Muslims with the end goal of azadari.

Muhammad Ali Shah, the Nawab of Awadh in 1838 constructed the Chota Imambara, also known as Imambara Husseinabad Mubarak. These two Imambaras are the most famous ones from India albeit there are numerous Imambaras and Karbala in India and around the world compensating for the lack of original Karbala.

"If the medieval 'Age of Faith' wove the meaning of its world out of symbols and signs it was not in this respect fundamentally different from any culture. Thus when Panofsky likened iconography to ethnography he pointed to a broad truth for all cultural study, one stressed in modern anthropology".[24]

Shiaism was pronounced as the state religion in the regions of the Buwahids in Baghdad and the Safavids in Iran. The training and customs of recognizing the deplorability of Karbala spread with the extension of Islam. As a result of assorted variety of societies in Muslim nations, the conventions of azadari likewise differ from nation to-nation and culture-to-culture.

As the general population of the sub-landmass received Islam and began to honor the occasion of Karbala, they built up their own customs of azadari (exhibitions of all the Muharram ceremonies when all is said in done in which Ta'ziehdari is one of the parts of azadari) as per their various societies.

The impact of nearby societies on the Muharram customs wound up inescapable. In the subcontinent the Hindu and Muslim Rajas gave support to the azadari of Imam Hussein as to demonstrate their regard for Imam Hussein as Muharram came to be watched not just in the Muslim conditions of Oudh, Deccan and Sindh however in the Hindu conditions of Gawalior, Patiala and Madhya Pradesh. Fundamentally, there are three kinds of Ta'zieh, silver or metallic, wooden and paper-bamboo.

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[24] Cosgrove, D., Daniels, S.,(Eds.). (1988). *The Iconography of landscape,* Cambridge University Press,* p. – 4

The specialty of making Ta'zieh to some degree holds its unique frame in India. Ta'zieh made of paper and bamboos are for one time utilizes and covered under the dirt, however a considerable lot of wood made Ta'zieh are of perpetual nature and some of them are over exceptionally old. In Sirsi, Sambhal (Uttar Pradesh); I saw a more than five decade old wooden Ta'zieh structure. These Ta'zieh are not covered but rather are secured with white attire after the parade is over on tenth of Muharram and are come back to their individual spots for one year from now's customs.

No nation other than India has the flexible and shifted nature of making Ta'zieh. Its making includes specialists from all networks and religions.Above history of Ta'zieh seeks to present a chronological account of events; this is in no way an exhaustive history of the phenomenon. The respective portion of history will be discussed along with that section.

2.3 TA'ZIEH, SYMBOLISM, ICONOGRAPHY, RITUALS AND TRADITIONS – MOTLEY OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS

"Symbols are important objects of analysis for geographic inquiry. From the academic standpoint, the study of symbols, symbolism, and symbolization has been a key aspect of cartographic design, particularly in discussions of geographic visualization but in archaic and traditional societies, the surrounding world is conceived as a microcosm"[25] of a greater whole and in its original meaning symbols represented and communicated to a coherent greater whole by means of a part.

Now, what is this coherent greater whole? "At the limits of this closed world begins the domain of the unknown, of the formless. On this side there is

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[25] Eliade, M. (1961) Symbols and Symbols Studies in Religious Symbolism, New York: Sheed & Ward, pp. – 36

ordered – because inhabited and organised space; on the other, outside this familiar space, there is the unknown".[26]

Geographers have for some time been keen on the utilization of symbols and their part in speaking to focuses and designs over this sorted out geographic space. In this specific situation, symbols may be thought of as exacting stand-ins for genuine items (Cartographer's map as a cultural text).

The symbology portion will try to shade light on the processes and why of the mourning or the celebration; the iconography portion will deal with the preparation, procession, the material, and the actual symbolic action; ritual portion will deal with the specificities and the variation in specificities; tradition portion will try to gauge the perception and the general outlook of new generation towards the Ta'zieh.

2.3.1 SYMBOLOGY AND TA'ZIEH

The examination of symbols and icons has more extensive application in human geography, where exploring social symbolism is important for social geographers. In this extending investigation, symbols have been inspected as a component of people's enthusiasm for representative interactionism, a social hypothetical convention that has for quite some time been essential in humanities.

"Symbols, including icons, rituals, monuments, and written texts, all convey and transmit information and meaning to their viewers".[27]

"The study of symbols and symbolism in the social sciences (e.g., anthropology, sociology) during the 20th century focused on the investigation

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[26] Ibid. pp. – 37

[27] Robb, J. (1998). The Archaeology of Symbols. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 27*, 329-346. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/223374

of culture and society as symbolic systems constituted through spoken language, exchanges, gestures, writing, photography, and so forth".[28]

Geertz published two papers in quick succession in 1964 and 1966 respectively, "Ideology as a Cultural System" and "Religion as a Cultural System", the latter being particularly influential. In that paper Geertz gave a definition of culture in symbolic terms. Though he was careful to note that actions as well as ideas might by symbolic, he gave greatest weight to culture as a cognitive system.[29]

A social symbol, in an anthropological sense, is anything that is set up to speak to something different. Confusing this gullible definition, it is speculated that through social trade and collaboration, symbols are pushed through different interpretive social structures. Since symbols are a piece of more extensive culture frameworks, it is difficult to unravel the individual utilization of a specific image from the social system or society in which a man sends that image.

This holds true in the representation of Ta'zieh as it is part of trans-interactionism, symbolic exchange, various interpretive cultural exchanges (Shias, Sunnis and other local manifestations around the globe). In this manner, methodologically, to fathom an image and symbolism (the portrayal of the image); it is important to research the sociocultural setting in which the image has been allocated meaning. For example, Ta'zieh is strictly mourning for Shias, celebration and mourning blend for Sunnis.

These examinations regularly are subjective and incorporate ethnography, life history meetings, and member perception. I conducted field work in Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh and interviewed people from both the community - Shias and Sunnis, listened to their history and stories revolving around Ta'zieh and also

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[28] Austin, D. (1979). SYMBOLS AND CULTURE: Some Philosophical Assumptions in the Work of Clifford Geertz. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice,*(3), 45-59. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23159581

[29]Ibid.

participated in the procession. It helped me gain the understanding of multidimensional aspects related to Ta'zieh and how this is not just any event but a way of life for Shia community; how the local politics is linked to it; belief system of people; local manifestations and economy related aspects.

In this field trip, it is apparent that symbols of the way of life, political frameworks, and religion, for instance, all are imperative parts of symbolism (i.e., sociocultural practice); in this way, symbols are thought to assume critical parts in all parts of society. Put essentially, social researchers intrigued by symbols and imageries have hypothetically expanded how we consider the complex social development and creation of these items and procedures. In all of these instances, geographers have been keen in the subjective experience of both place and community and the interactions between the two.

Cultural geographers argue that culture is political have utilize symbols and symbolism in their discourse of how the cultural representation is infused with meaning and power. Cultural symbols never are benignant hence requires critical investigation for how the process of symbolism operates within webs of socio-spatial space constituting particular meanings. This is basically true because at the core all symbolism wants to deliver a message.

Symbology has to have a concept behind it to generate symbols. The concept behind Ta'zieh is an event, tragedy of Karbala.

"For the Shias, The tragic death of Hussein overshadows all other human tragedies and has assumed almost cosmic proportions". So, while the "arrival of Muharram inspires a mood of somber religiosity, along with the recollection of Imam Hussein's courage and suffering (al-masa'ib), there is also an aspect of carnival to Muharram, particularly the 9th and 10th days".[30]

Sunni Muslims take Ashura as multi day of "regard and appreciation" (for Prophet Musa and his country), while Shia Muslims trust that day to be multi day of grieving and distress. The accompanying is a clarification of the

[30] Norton, A. (2005). Ritual, Blood, and Shiite Identity: Ashura in Nabatiyya, Lebanon. *TDR (1988-), 49*(4), 140-155. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4488690

distinction. In light of the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad, Sunni Muslims observe Ashura as the day when Prophet Moses (Musa) fasted on that day since Allah spared the Israelites from their adversary in Egypt. One of the numerous hadith (Hadith of Prophet Muhammad) that bears witness to that is in Bukhari.

So Prophet Muhammad fasted on this day in Muharram and advised the general population to follow. There are numerous different forms of this Hadith in the books of "Muslim" and "Bukhari". As indicated by an adaptation described by Muslim, "This is a good day when Allah spared Musa (Moses) and his kin and suffocated Pharaoh and his kin." Sunni Muslims observe Ashura by fasting on that day. As a rule, Sunni Muslims are prescribed to fast on the ninth and tenth of Muharram.

Goldziher and Schacht "have both emphasized the element of disagreement that marks the Tradition of the Sunna".[31]

Al-Shafa'i and his companions, Ahmad, Ishaaq and others said: It is *mustahabb*[32] recommended to fast both the ninth and the tenth, because the Prophet fasted the tenth and intended to fast the ninth. Based on this, there are different ways of fasting 'Ashura', the least of which is to fast the tenth only, but it is better to fast the ninth as well.

In Jewish custom, this celebration is commended as the Passover, which is their approach to honor their freedom more than 3,300 years back by God from bondage in old Egypt that was controlled by the Pharaohs, and their opportunity under the authority of Prophet Moses. It remembers the tale of the Exodus as portrayed in the Hebrew Bible particularly in the Book of Exodus, in which the Israelites were liberated from bondage in Egypt.

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[31] Burton, J. (1984). Notes towards a Fresh Perspective on the Islamic Sunna. *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies), 11*(1), 3-17. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/194803

[32] Neither encouraged nor discouraged

"Shia Muslims' observance of Ashura is different altogether. They observe Ashura as the day of martyrdom of Hussein ibn Ali, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad at the Battle of Karbala. Shia Muslims, therefore, consider this a day of sorrow and observe it as such by refraining from music, listening to sorrowful poetic recitations, wearing mourning attire, and refraining from all joyous events (e.g. weddings) that in anyway distract them from the sorrowful remembrance of that day".[33]

All the above narratives make the tenth of Ashura as a symbolic day. This makes this day to be commemorated and revered. Now we move on to the iconography part and let's see its conceptual dimension and its relation to Ta'zieh.

2.3.2 ICONOGRAPHY AND TA'ZIEH

Denis Cosgrove made "a number of significant contributions to the study of the symbolic landscape in his cultural geographic research. He analysed the ways in which symbolic representations in objects such as landscape paintings represent more than banal symbols of an idyllic past".[34] Here, the iconography comes into the picture.

"Iconography 'in the narrower' sense was the identification of conventional, consciously inscribed symbols, say a lamb signifying Christ, or the winged lion of St Mark signifying in Venetian art the Republic and its power. Iconology probed a deeper stratum of meaning. It excavated what Panofsky called the 'intrinsic meaning' of a work of art 'by ascertaining those underling principles which reveal the basic attitude of nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion – unconsciously qualified by one personality and condensed into one work".[35]

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[33] Personal Communication and Interview dated Oct 1, 2017, Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh

[34] Carvalho, J. L. D. (2018) Denis Cosgrove and the development of symbolic and iconographic perspective of the landscape. *Geograficidade*, *7*(2), 87-97.

[35] Cosgrove, D., Daniels, S.,(Eds.). (1988). *The Iconography of landscape,* Cambridge University Press*, p. – 2

This highlights the fact that symbology and iconography are profoundly connected with each other. The essence, the deeper stratum of meaning associated with Ta'zieh can be ascertained by studying the symbology and iconography in concert. Religious iconography and symbolism have been related historically.

"Iconography is, then, the analysis of systematic associations of motif and literary content. Iconology was interpretation that went beyond the articulate while the subject of iconography was articulate".[36]

Numerous religious symbols can be comprehended as applied truncations, disentanglements, deliberations, and stylizations of pictures or of pictorial impressions of the universe of sense questions that are showed in iconographic portrayals. Fundamentally, the Symbols incorporate the calculated advancement and applied system while iconography is the suggestion to take action and using the aftereffect of symbolization.

The establishments of the symbolization procedure lie in the territories of the cognizant and the oblivious, of experience and thought, and of sense observation, instinct, and creative ability. In imagining, depicting, and conveying the experience of the real world, the sensible picture, ideas, and thoughts and the nonrepresentational sign both have as their essential capacity the declaration of this involvement in religious terms. These may likewise incorporate different kinds of emblematic portrayal, for example, words, tones, signals, ceremonies, and design.

"Icons may portray the ritual means of attaining salvation or explain moral relationships and duties. They may borrow from myths and other religious narrative material to depict the historical past and the present, as well as the future and the afterlife. To understand the full significance of iconography, it is necessary to consider the theological notion. The term shows a

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[36] Hasenmueller, C. (1978). Panofsky, Iconography, and Semiotics. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 36*(3), 289-301. doi:10.2307/430439

foreshadowing in this world of something from the next, a Platonic conception fundamentally".[37]

"Iconography is the symbols and symbolic representations that are traditionally associated with a person (Hussein) or a subject (Battle of Karbala). Although the Ta'zieh is a verb (an act of condolence) but from the iconography point of view; it represents wooden physical structure, alam (flags), black and green clothing, numerous small ersatz structure, elaborate paraphernalia for Azadari (mourning), numerous novelty item surfacing from year to year (For example, symbolism of showing the martyrdom of Ali Asghar personified quintessence of the innocent victim includes babies as icon in social action wearing *Keffiyeh*), certain kind of food (mixed pulses symbolizing the availability of food at that time), symbol of *panja* (hand of Ali), and availability of water or *sharbat* during daytime (as the people with Hussein were devoid of it)".[38]

The icons surrounding the month of Muharram are so many that you can write a separate paper on it. These icons converge and become part of everyday life on the tenth of Ashura (tenth day of Muharram). Above examples of icons are mostly visual with designated meaning beside this auditory icons also plays a major role in the representation of Ta'zieh. Auditory icons includes chanting of the name Hassan and Hussein, noha, marsia, bagpiper fauji band, Tosha party (Jharkhand) etc. Since the visual and auditory rendering will be in out at public places and put to public viewing and hearing; this iconography have the most syncretic elements in it, that we'll discuss in the next chapter.

Iconography has much to do with the representation, beauty, glory than with the essence. So, clearly the Ta'zieh of Sunnis will be more avant-garde as compare to the Shia. Elements like band, dance, and music, skill set while performing azadari, lack of extreme form self-flagellation over the fact that the

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[37] Soderberg, J. (2004). Wild Cattle: Red Deer in the Religious Texts, Iconography, and Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology, 8*(3), 167-183. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20853054

[38] Field Work Observations, Dated Oct 1, 2017 Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh

tragedy was a prophesized one and not committing any treachery are part of Sunni procession with lots of element of acculturation of surrounding region and culture. Elements like old wooden physical structure, Imambaras, extreme form of self-flagellation with various kind of matam, fine-tuned music set to librettos, more elaborate, ritualized and traditional are part of Shia Ta'zieh procession. South Asia, Southeast Asia, Caribbean and Middle-east and North Africa have mix of both. And in South Asia, especially in India; Hindus and other communities take part in both the procession by Shias and Sunni.

Iconography of Ta'zieh also conveys a means to show and explore the identity of those taking part in the act of representation. Iconography is a careful, calculated, strategic act of representation.

It's like as Ruth Panelli has put it; have you ever chosen clothes to wear for a strategic reason? Have you ever carried a knife or other sharp object in case you had to use it? Have you ever taken part in a protest march? Have you ever joined a political organization? Any of the above might constitute a form of social action – whether short term or as part of a long-term life choice. Some of these decisions and actions can be part of how we articulate our personal sense of self and explore identities.[39]

Iconography cannot be represented in a haphazardly manner. Here, the ritual and tradition comes into the picture. While ritual gives a set sequence to icons to depict; tradition makes sure it's maintaining its specificities. Memory had played/plays a vital role in both of these processes to preserve ritualized aspects and specificities which are retained through oral and written assertion which finds its eidetic aspects in Ta'zieh.

2.3.3 RITUALS AND TA'ZIEH

Dictionary definition of ritual is "any customary observance or practice or the prescribed procedure for conducting religious ceremonies".

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[39] Panelli, R., (2004), Social Geographies: From Difference to Action, Sage Publications, p. – 181

In a more detailed manner, "it is a periodic invitation by our society, typically by its religion to come together with other people for an event that marks an occasion often an underlying spiritual or of psychological nature" perhaps it is the start of a year, the birthday of a god, a day to apologize, or a moment to feel grateful for springtime or the love of now dead relatives and so people dance, say some rather formal words, eat an unusual food, or wear special clothes and by doing all this somehow people are helped.

In simple terms "a ritual is a sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place (though not always), and performed according to a set sequence. Roy Rappaport defined ritual as the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not encoded by the performers".[40]

That is, "these formal acts and utterances are learned/memorized (or read) from the teachings of ancestors and do not originate with the performer. Rappaport suggested that a ritual is 'a form or structure...having a number of features or characteristics in a more or less fixed relationship to one another' that can exist only in performance. The medium (i.e., the performance of structured movement) is part of the message; more precisely, it is a meta-message about whatever is encoded in the ritual".[41]

"Ritual is the basic social act. Ritual performance is compelling, both for its participants and for its audience, because it has to be completed and because much depends on its completion, into which is built an expectation, be it of peace making or rainmaking".[42]

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[40] Rappaport, R. A., Messer, E., & Lambek, M. (2001). *Ecology and the sacred: engaging the anthropology of Roy A. Rappaport*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, p. – 146

[41] Kaeppler, A. L. (2010). Interpreting Ritual as Performance and Theory Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania 2010 Distinguished Lecture. *Oceania, 80*(3), 263-271

[42] Feuchtwang, S. (2010). Ritual and Memory. In RADSTONE S. & SCHWARZ B. (Eds.), *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates* (pp. 281-298). NEW YORK: Fordham University. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1c999bq.23

More so often the expectations are not concerned with the worldly aspects rather they are of theological nature like salvation.

The most widely performed ritual in the world is handshake. It is the simplest of ritual. It doesn't require any prior preparation; it communicates between two or a group of individual. Ta'zieh as a ritual involves large scale preparation, connection and symbolic interactionism between a large number of people and besides communicating in this physical world; it also involve aspects of divine communication.

Maurice Bloch argued that "ritual communication is unusual in that it uses a special, restricted vocabulary, a small amount of permissible illustrations, and a restrictive grammar. These kinds of utterances, known as performatives, prevent speakers from making political arguments through logical argument, and are typical of what Weber called traditional authority instead".[43]

Geertz also "expanded on the symbolic approach to ritual that began with Victor Turner. He argued that religious symbol systems provided both a 'model of' reality (showing how to interpret the world as is) as well as a 'model for' reality (clarifying its ideal state). The role of ritual, according to Geertz, is to bring these two aspects - the 'model of' and the 'model for' - together: it is in ritual - that is consecrated behaviour - that this conviction that religious conceptions are veridical and that religious directives are sound is somehow generated."[44]

In case of Ta'zieh, model of reality is provided by the events of Karbala; model for reality is standing against oppression, judgment day, and redemption.

[43] Bloch, M. (1974). *Symbols, song, dance, and features of articulation: is religion an extreme form of traditional authority?, p. – 54-55*

[44] Geertz, C., & Darnton, R. (2017). *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays.* New York: Basic Books, p. – 112

Ta'zieh as a form of "ritual theater stems from the fusion of ambulatory and stationary rites that co-existed for centuries before being united. The most common ambulatory ritual observance is *dasta*, or procession".

Canetti describes "the *dasta* as an orchestra of grief. *Dasta* helped to spread the faith across the Iranian plateau. Foreign residents who spent time in Persia during the 17th and 18th centuries have left very rich accounts of *dastas* they witnessed, providing a record of the development of this ritual's pageantry. The majority of popular Shiʿite rituals are conducted in the open, in public spaces, and can be viewed by passers-by. For example, a wagon representing the death of Hussein has a deck-like cover coated with sand to represent the arid battlefield". The wheeled floats eventually became a processional Ta'zieh. In India, these are put on a tractor or other vehicle.

Category of stationary rituals includes Shiʿite commemorative *Rawdakhwani*, "which starts with chants invoking the Prophet Mohammad and other saints by a eulogist (*maddaḥ*) and is followed by a *Rawdakhwan*, a master storyteller, who recites and sings the story of Hussein and his family and followers at the bloody battle of Karbala. The audience responds with weeping, chest-beating, and body flagellation. The performance can last from a couple of hours to an entire day". The *Rawdakhwani* ends with congregational singing of dirges (*noḥa*).

Refraining from joyous activities and events, wearing certain kinds and colours of clothes often black and green, preparing a deg (cauldron) of food to distribute, offering water and sharbat to passer-by are some other rituals associated with Ta'zieh.

2.3.4 TRADITIONS AND TA'ZIEH

Tradition is "an inherited pattern of thought or action or a specific practice of long standing". Ta'zieh is a tradition too. I took up tradition as a sub-heading because now there's a kind of tendency to lam off from traditions, seeing traditions and custom synonymously but that is not the case and the difference between the two is; "custom is what judges do; tradition is the wig, robe and

other formal paraphernalia and ritualized practices surrounding substantial action".[45]

If we are seeing Ta'zieh procession even today; it's because its tradition. We can also define tradition "as a belief or behaviour passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origins in the past. The passing down factor is what makes a tradition enduring. But how one receives what is passed down; makes the difference and initiates the process of breaking away from traditions".[46]

Transformation and breaking away from tradition has been initiated with globalization and modernity but still this change is not the norm.

Nonetheless slackening of traditions and rituals is a feature of present times; is this case with Ta'zieh too? The answer to this question lies in the perception of people. How they perceive the event and how strong their attachment is towards the event. Participants in *Ta'zieh* events believe that neither Hussein ibn Ali nor Ashura can be considered as conventional and temporal entities. It can be claimed that both entities and conceptualizations have no relationship with conventional and worldly characteristics but rather originate from supernatural, metaphysical and unfathomable concepts. In other words, they think that by performing *Ta'zieh,* they will be protected from what they might fear the most. The perceived benefit of believing in a manlike God is evident in the commitment with which people show towards participation in a *Ta'zieh* event.[47]

So, the people's concerns extend beyond daily lives (poverty, marriage failure, unhappiness, fiendish children, sickness, and unemployment, and confusion, death of a loved one, natural disaster, economic hardship and loss of dignity)

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[45] Hobsbawm, E. J., & Ranger, T. O. (2017). *The Invention of tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. – 3

[46] Bruns, G. (1991). What Is Tradition? *New Literary History,* *22*(1), 1-21. doi:10.2307/469141

[47] Shirmohammadi, A. (2016) The Study of Reproductions of Ta'zieh Events in Iranian Culture, Universal Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research, Vol. 1, Issues-1, p. – 15

to divine concerns (Guilt driven activity is from fear of damnation, desire for salvation and redemption, fear of inducing the wrath of God and love of God's servitude. These are some of the reasons which convey that why rituals, traditions persist in society. As for Ta'zieh; it is not immune to the forces of globalization, modernity, changing perception, syncretism, hybridity etc. (this will form content matter of next chapter).

So basically, it's a chain of interrelationship between symbology, iconography, ritual and tradition. We can sum up this as *Traditions ritualize the symbolic concept into iconography.*

Now, earlier I called the above discussed concepts as 'motley of operational concept'. Why? Because operational means derived from experience or the experience of existence (that which is happening) and Ta'zieh as a phenomena is an operational event that transcends worldly dimension to show the symbolic interactionism in this physical world. Also "an event is something that has a beginning and an end. Every human experience, activity, idea and cultural form can be analysed as an event or as a series of events. Foucault uses the event as a way of arguing against metaphysical essences in history" but in case of Ta'zieh, it is contradictory as here history is providing the content for an event.

2.4 GEOGRAPHY, SPACE AND TA'ZIEH

According to a 2010 study, Islam has 1.5 billion adherents, making up over 22% of the world population. According to the Pew Research Centre in 2015 "there were 50 Muslim-majority countries. By the percentage of the total population in a region considering themselves Muslim, 91% in the Middle East-North Africa (MENA), 89% in Central Asia, 40% in Southeast Asia, 31% in South Asia, 30% in Sub-Saharan Africa, 25% in Asia–Oceania, around 6% in Europe, and 1% in the Americas".

Region wise these spaces and places are filled with variety in terms of culture, geographical attributes observance of Ta'zieh and full of local nuances. For example, Central Asia doesn't observe Ta'zieh as vehemently as done by other

regions because lack of social hierarchy and also "this region has not been a monolithic phenomenon with uniform inters republican socio-political manifestations. Quite the contrary, proclivity towards Islam varies considerably from republic to republic with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan having the weakest and Uzbekistan and Tajikistan having the strongest tendencies".[48]

For Tuan (1977), "place is humanised space, an abstract world made real through human inhabitation, through the investment of emotion and the attribution of meaning. This view has been challenged by Massey (2004) who argues that space is no less concrete, grounded and real than place".[49]

When national boundaries define style but cross historical eras, the focus is on the cultural history of those nations; when historical or artistic events make geopolitical distinctions less important, emphasis is placed on a cross-cultural view of the period or style.[50]

First we should look at the fact that the Soviet Union was not an Islamic state is an undeniable truth. "Those who have done research in the Muslim-majority countries of the former Soviet Union have perceived the ongoing vitality of Soviet Muslimness in varying degrees, often more substantive than "an inner essence which was repressed during the 70 years of Soviet rule and therefore partly forgotten." I am referring to patterns of Islamic education kept alive by illegal learning circles (hujras); itinerant mullahs touring the North Caucasus and Central Asia in order to perform mourning rituals".[51] Except Europe and Americas, where Ta'zieh phenomena is scrimpy; rest of the regions have inhomogeneous Ta'zieh. That we'll discuss in the next chapter.

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[48]HAGHAYEGHI, M. (1994). Islam and Democratic Politics in Central Asia. *World Affairs, 156*(4), 186-198. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20672397

[49] JACKSON, P. (2006). Thinking Geographically. *Geography, 91*(3), 199-204. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40574159

[50] Sorgenfrei, C. (1997). Desperately Seeking Asia: A Survey of Theatre History Textbooks. *Asian Theatre Journal, 14*(2), 223-258. doi:10.2307/1124278

[51] Sartori, P. (2010). Towards a History of the Muslims' Soviet Union: A View from Central Asia. *Die Welt Des Islams, 50*(3/4), 315-334. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41105358

According to Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, Shia makes up roughly 10% of all Muslims, and globally their population. "Iran has the largest Shia majority, with more than 66 million making up nearly 90% of the population. Shias are also in the majority in Iraq and Bahrain". Apropos wherever Shia are dispersed; they always integrate strong elements of mourning in their Ta'zieh. The place and space of performance of rituals attempt to make these spaces and places as a sacred entity (though not always as in cases of routes).

Geographical characteristics are important as in Indonesia; people submerge and take out their Ta'zieh to sea beaches and pray for volcanoes not to explode. Geography's emphasis on space and place can be of use here; as ritualized space is sacred space (not always as discussed above).

"Sacred space is contested space, just as the sacred is a contested category. Sacred space reflects and reinforces hierarchical power relations of domination and subordination, inclusion and exclusion, appropriation and dispossession. In the production of sacred place, researchers have examined the politics of secular–religious relations and majority–minority relations, particularly in relation to the officially sacred, such as churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques. Yet, sacred spaces should not be conceptualized and understood only in terms of sites and locations, but in terms of religious routes as well".[52]

While Sunni's procession are around route and public places; Shias have Husseiniyas and other specified places (sites and locations) for the Ta'zieh. If people from one sect wants to join the place of others; then nominally one can but incidences of this are hardly evident.

"William Henry Sleeman, recounts the first Shia–Sunni riot occurred in 1908 in Lucknow, when a *Ta'zieh* procession of Shias was attacked by group of militant Sunnis hiding in a Sunni mosque. Again, in 1935, on the day of *Chehlum*[53], some Sunnis defied the order and recite the *Madhe-Sahaba*[54],

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[52] Duncan, J. S., Johnson, N. C., & Schein, R. H. (2004). A Companion to Cultural Geography, Blackwell Publication, pp. - 367-369

[53] Forty days after the day of Ashura

which resulted in immediate tensions and skirmishes between Shias and Sunnis. Contestation of space and place is evident. To ward off the contestation, people specifies place, routes, Imambaras, Tekyehs. But originally like western passion plays, Ta'zieh dramas were performed outdoors at crossroads and other public places where large audiences could gather"[55] (as discussed earlier).

"Later much like in Iranian performances, these performances in other countries also began taking place in the courtyards of inns and private homes, but eventually unique structures called *takias* (referred to as Tekyeh in Persian) were constructed for the specific purpose of staging the plays".[56]

So, later these sequestered places hindered the all public access while performing some part of ritual in sequestered place and other part of ritual was subjected to public display. In India, Hindus and other community took part in Ta'zieh based on locality, surrounding or by virtue of sharing space and place. Skirmishes concerning other group are also apparent.

The way to avoid these skirmishes is to help gain people an understanding of why these people are doing these things? Research paper of this kind is a step in the right direction. In this chapter, we have established a basic understanding and framework regarding symbols and icons in relation to Ta'zieh and then assemblage of these concepts and symbolic action and interactionism can help us in understanding say a larger structure in this case Islam.

2.5 SUMMING UP

But as the rule of dialectic is change; so we must shake off our established understating before moving on to the next chapter as Walter Anderson notes,

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[54] A procession conducted on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday

[55] http://www.echoofislam.com/article_3743_0.html

[56] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ta'zieh

"Symbols of all types have detached themselves from their original roots and float freely, like dandelion seeds, around the world".[57]

"Cultural diversity and cosmopolitanism, then, is not merely a precious elite experience but a collective condition and experience. Global farrago does not merely follow but also *precedes* nations. We live lives of everyday cosmopolitanism already. Diversity is going to be a fundamental part of our lives. That's what it's going to mean to be modern".[58]

Ta'zieh as a phenomenon is not immune to these changes. So, the content of the next chapter revolve around the dynamic aspects related to Ta'zieh. Also considering that mixing has paced in contemporary times it is as old as the hills, so the roots themselves are mixed.

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[57] Pieterse, J. N. (2015). *Globalization and culture: global mélange.*
Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. – 143
[58] Ibid.

Chapter Three

Ta'zieh – Global Melange, Indian Variety

In chapter one, we began with understanding symbology and iconography as representational geography, basic understanding of Ta'zieh as symbology, iconography and its history and geography. Ta'zieh on display, in procession and in preparation encompasses both the aspects of symbology and iconography.

While the preparation, procession and exhibition of Ta'zieh vary geographically across space in different regions of the world; it also has local nuances associated with it for which South Asia is famous (particularly India). The content of this chapter is variation in Ta'zieh

The write up for this chapter will mostly come from field work, interview, participant observation, textual interpretations, newspapers and gazetteers. Also this chapter is going to be a bit visual in nature (the photos are either from newspapers or other sources or taken by researcher).

Now, it is pertinent to start tracing the variations in Ta'zieh from where it all happened (Karbala), to where it is most revered (Iran) and then to where it is famous for local hue and colours (India) and lastly in other parts of the world too. So, basically this portion deals with the variations and famous local manifestations in Ta'zieh across the world with special reference to India.

It is against the background of this consciousness (previous two chapters), as also the awareness that monolithic or certainly single models of development that have been adopted, that one is obliged to ask the question whether there is an intrinsic inability of clearly defined cultures to live with each other in harmony. Or, are the tensions and conflicts the result in part, if not whole, in the imposition or acceptance of models of development and governance which

are uniform, fixed, rigid, linear and uni-dimensional? Is the problem with cultures or is it with structures of governance?[1]

3.1 TA'ZIEH IN THE ORIGINAL KARBALA AND ARBA'EEN

First of all, why original Karbala? Is there some unoriginal Karbala out there? Karbala is a city in central Iraq located 100 km southwest of Baghdad. This is famous for having two Mosques of Imam Hussein and Abbas, and as the place of the Battle of Karbala. This city is a rival to Mecca as the pilgrim place as millions of Shias come here twice in a year. In the subcontinent *Karbala* can mean the ground where Ta'zieh are tombed and to refer to the Karbala the exalted (the original city).

The distance of original Karbala city from India, hindered Shias frequent pilgrimage and also Sunnis from burying their Ta'zieh.

One such phenomenon of selection and exclusion is Arba'een. "It is the world's largest public gathering held at the end of the 40-day mourning period following Ashura, pilgrims make their journey to Karbala on foot".[2]

A portion of the pilgrims make their trip from Basra, around 500 km away by street. Along these lines, from Iraq, we have taken up Arba'een as it is the after occasion of Ashura where an extensive number of individuals partook. By 2016, as indicated by al-Khoei Foundation, very nearly 22 million pilgrims accumulated in Iraq.

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[1] Vatsyayan, K. (2002). Plural Cultures, Monolithic Structures. *India International Centre Quarterly, 29*(3/4), 95-113. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23005820

[2] Piggott, M., "20 Million Shia Muslims Brave Isis by Making Pilgrimage to Karbala for Arbaeen", IBtimes. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015, Retrieved 6 October 2015

Arba'een journey is the biggest social occasion held every year on the planet.

Figure 1 – People marching towards Karbala for Arba'een (Source:http://shia-muslem.blogspot.in/2016/11/arbaeen-2016-largest-peaceful- gathering.html)

Despite such numbers, this phenomenon is subject of exclusion of a large part of its adherents who earlier showed some kind of involvement in the Ta'zieh procession and on days before and on Ashura. Distance is one reason for exclusion.

Although there are Arba'een packages available just like haj. Effects of market intervention and globalization has touched the event.[3]

The final curtain on mourning was drawn on this 40th day. It started following the customary tribute to their deceased person forty days after his death. This is because the Prophet has said, "The earth mourns the death of a believer for forty mornings".

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[3] PEACE, W. (2016). *SEEKING FATHER KHALIQ*. S.l.: STRATEGIC BOOK PUBLISHING

But still, this does not explain the pilgrimage. Khamenei explain this as "Despite being far away, we speak in your memory, there is not distance in the spiritual journey".[4]

3.2 TA'ZIEH IN IRAN – PASSION PLAY

Storytelling tradition of Iran is pre-Islamic times, before the seventh-century AD Arab invasion that brought Islam to the Zoroastrian Persian Empire.

As discussed above, "the forms of storytelling are too numerous, but the most common forms of public storytelling are Naghali, Pardeh-dari, and the performance genre of Ta'zieh, all of which are based on various literary sources of historical and religious events".[5]

Ta'zieh as condolence theatre is most prevalent in Iran. It is the national drama of Iran. UNESCO recognises Ta'zieh theatre from Iran as the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. Although possessing a great amount of variety but it is still not as revered and celebrated as in Iran. Also after Iraq, Iran is the next place to observe Ta'zieh procession (this development doesn't have a clear cut boundary rather overlapping time frame but it's development in Iran is still earlier as compared to other parts of the world).

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[4] http://english.khamenei.ir/news/4309/Arbaeen-is-not-only-for-Shi-as-it-also-belongs-to-Sunnis-Ayatollah

[5] Talebi, N. (2009). "Memory of a Phoenix Feather": Iranian Storytelling Traditions and Contemporary Theater. *World Literature Today, 83*(4), 49-53. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20621658

Figure 2 – Ta'zieh theatre of Iran (Taking place at a Tekyeh) (Source:https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/53/Tazieh_baraghan_-mahaleh_paeen_-_1389.jpg)

"Ta'zieh inhabits a broad space in the performance traditions of the world. It straddles the line between great art and traditional theatre and verges on ritual".[6]

Orientalists like Aleksander Chodzko, said, "Iranian Ta'zieh is unique among the world's performing arts. Ta'zieh is the ritual drama whose main subject matter is the conflict between good and evil, its argument centers around the fight against oppression. The most important of these rituals, which were related to mourning ceremonies and were found in various parts of the country, are Chamari in Kordestan and Sovashun or Siavashun in Persian-speaking regions. Both of these forms were related to simulating the life of a deceased person or a particular individual, who was a war commander, a lord or a king. Naturally, people changed this content. Now, instead of Amaari or Siavash's black coffin which was carried by people over their shoulders during Siavash's

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[6]Beeman, W., & Mohammad B. Ghaffari. (2005). Acting Styles and Actor Training in Taʿziyeh. *TDR (1988-), 49*(4), 48-60. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4488680

mourning ritual, you see a coffin which belongs to Hussein. In this dramatic structure, the mythological figure of Siavash is replaced by the historical figure of Hussein, without causing the slightest damage to the beliefs, values and also the authenticity of the matter. This is how Ta'zieh was brought to existence".[7] In other parts of the world, Ta'zieh has their roots in Iran and Iraq and on hadith (discussed earlier).

This shows as to how even after anew faith is proclaimed with elaborate structures of 'do's' and 'don'ts', the realer form or practice is retained with a new content. But in this process while the old is retained it is also transformed.

"Ta'zieh uses visual arts and religious Parde Khani which is based on paintings related to the Ashura events. They all find a three-dimensional form here. The actor in fact wears the clothes already there in the paintings. Ta'zieh needs three things. It needs a text in verse which is mostly from the Maghtal writings. Music which is derived from traditional Iranian music and actor-singers who can sing according to the melodies (Radifs) is central to the opera".[8] Ta'zieh of Iran is coded and but in the depiction of the world, Ta'zieh has been adjusted to the public life and social beliefs of the people.

"Its ritual function enables us to consider Ta'zieh as a sacred form of art. And sacred art is, by definition, an art form whose form, content and function has its roots in the public beliefs. It's interesting to note that we had two forms of Ta'zieh, Ta'zieh in motion and stationary Ta'zieh. Sometimes, people stood and various events from the creation of Adam and Eve down to the events of Karbala were staged before their eyes. These events actually moved in front of you. But often times, people were sitting at special places called Tekyeh and watched the events."[9]

"These are transcriptions of Ta'zieh which have been written over 100 years ago. Ta'zieh or Shabih Khani is the only traditional Iranian drama with a

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[7] Press TV Documentaries (2016), Ta'zieh - The Iranian Opera Transcript

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

written text from the very beginning, because its subject matter is related to sacred issues. The oldest transcript available dates back to the year 1915 AD".[10]

"Melodies of traditional music are a main element and component which are used for producing various texts for Ta'zieh. Adaptations from literature, history, the life of the Prophet of Islam and other prophets, the history of noble persons and even some ethical and social issues found their way into Shabih Khani. There are as many Ta'zieh as there are days in a year. I have heard here and there that there are over 300 Ta'ziehs".[11]

"Music was one of the main elements of a Ta'zieh. In consideration, on the one hand, of the warlike character of these representations of a religious war, and, on the other hand, the fact that the Muslim religion only tolerated military instruments, the only instruments permitted to be used in the Ta'zieh were the karna, old trumpets several metres in length, big drums (dohol) struck with two sticks, one slightly curved and the other straight, large and small kettledrums (naqareh) struck with straight sticks, the sorna, a kind of oboe, and cymbals. The instrumental performance was confined to preludes, interludes, marches, brief accompaniments, and items signalling entries and exit".[12]

"Ta'zieh ceremonies are organized in either of the two forms; sometimes every individual actor has a small booklet in his hand on which the sentences which he should recite have been written. He uses this booklet to recite while performing his role. Or he may have memorized these lines. In the second form, all dialogues are written in a single book called Jong. In a Ta'zieh called *Bazaar of the Levant* there are around 15 transcripts for actors. Various roles in Ta'zieh can be categorized into two major groupings: the holy people and

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Caron, N. (1975). The Ta'zieh, the Sacred Theatre of Iran. *The World of Music, 17*(4), 3-10. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/43620726

the villains. These characters, positive or negative, are marked by the color of their clothes".[13]

"All people, the actors and the audience, go by the name of attendants of the meeting. Both the actors and the audience are often after a similar goal; the subject matter of Ta'zieh is considered sacred for both groups. It has commonalities with other national opera around the world like Italian or German as the text is in verse, actor-singers play roles and music has a strong presence throughout the play. These common points prove that Ta'zieh is a national opera. Peter Brook in parts of the Mahabharata which he has worked on, or in the Conference of the Birds, which is based on Attar's Logic of the Birds, used some techniques from Ta'zieh. Roberto Ciulli, a German artist who has travelled to India in the past years, in staging one Shakespeare's plays, has used music and other Ta'zieh techniques. Ta'zieh has a hidden message which is the avoidance of war. It has a message of peace".

"Because of the dramatic representation of religious figures, Ta'zieh ceremonies have not been universally endorsed. Historically, they have been condoned by some as a powerful means to remind the masses of the meaning of Hussein's mission and condemned (by others) as a crude attempt to represent people so sanctified. Nevertheless, in part because of their cultural function, they have a long history in various parts of Iran".[14]

This puritanical disapproval is there for all the distinct representation of Ta'zieh.

Overall, the widely circulated myth of Karbala helps people create and perpetuate symbolic codes in their everyday environments.[15]

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[13] Press TV Documentaries (2016), Ta'zieh - The Iranian Opera Transcript

[14] Riggio, M. (1994). Ta`ziyeh in Exile: Transformations in a Persian Tradition. *Comparative Drama, 28*(1), 115-140. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41153683

[15] Melika, A. (2012). THE MYTH OF KARBALA: SOCIO-SPATIAL PRACTICES IN CONTEMPORARY TEHRAN. *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review, 24*(1), 18-18. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41945747

3.3 TA'ZIEH IN INDONESIA – TABUIK

World's largest island country with over 261 million people, it is the world's 4th most populous country as well as the most populous Austronesian and Muslim-majority country. The purpose here is not to inquire the whole of cultural heterogeneity but to see this unique form of Ta'zieh or Tadjah called *Tabut* or *Tabuik*.

Figure 3 – A burak or tabuik procession on the last day (Indonesia) (Source: http://taufiqurokhman.com/cerita-di-balik-festival-tabuik-pariaman/)

Figure 4 – Tabuik on the beach going for submersion which symbolizes the ascent of Hussein to heaven (Source: https://www.indonesia.biz.id/pariaman/)

"Muslim Ta'zieh practised in Minangkabau[16], the ceremony called *tabut* or *tabuik*, which was formerly held in several parts of the province but is now practised only in the coastal town of Pariaman (as well as in the capital of the neighbouring province of Bengkulu). Unlike all the other art forms mentioned, tabut and its offshoot *dol tasa* (a repertoire played on drums of Indian origin) derive from Sumatra's Shia influenced period in the late 17th and early 18th century, when a considerable number of Sepoy troops from India were transported by the then Britishers of parts of Indonesia in order to maintain their fort at Bengkulu. Shia families held *tabut* or *tabuik* rituals from the first to the tenth day of Muharram".[17] Indonesia being a Sunni dominated country latently disapproves of such rituals consequently this is diminishing.

But the explanation for diminishing is this that "South coast of Sumatra is characterized by its dialectical and syncretic mix of traditions inherited from the Malay west coast of Sumatra on the one hand and the Minangkabau hinterland on the other. Its uniqueness derives from this dual orientation: toward the sea as well as the land, toward the Muslim/Malay patriarchy, with its ban on female performers, as well as the Minangkabau matriliny and palace culture, which encourage unmarried girls to dance. The social and artistic tensions that have arisen over the centuries between the two coexisting traditions have permeated the people's religious beliefs, lifestyle and artistic expressions".[18]

On symbolic front and portrayal of iconography, Tabuik is most apt. The below information is from an Indonesian newspaper that highlight the division of ten days and the associated iconography related to it.

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[16] Ethnic group of West Sumatra. They strongly profess to Islam while at the same time also follow their ethnic traditions or adat.

[17] Kartomi, M. (1986). Muslim Music in West Sumatran Culture.

The World of Music, 28(3), 13-32. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/43561102

[18] Kartomi, M. (1998). The Music-Culture of South-Coast West Sumatra:

Backwater of the Minangkabau "Heartland" or Home of the Sacred Mermaid

and the Earth Goddess? *Asian Music, 30*(1), 133-181. doi:10.2307/834265

"A tabuik is a statue of a *burak*[19] made from bamboo, rattan and paper; backs have coffins and umbrellas on top, eight paper flowers besides statue. Two tabuik homes collect scores of *dol* and *tasa drum* before festival commences. Meanwhile, people make *daraga* (funeral shrine). Ten days require a set sequence of rituals any deviation is a disaster. First day, men construct the first stage of daraga and in afternoon observe first main procession: *maambiak tanah* (take a cloud of earth). The second to fourth days are intended to be silent days, serving as the calm before the storm. Fifth day observes *Turun panja* (the outspread hand comes down) and *mamancang batang pisang* (cut the banana stalk). Sixth day, the *tabuik lenong* (small model tabuik) procession takes place. Seventh day, *maarak jari-jari* (procession of hands), each side parades its *panja* and chants phrases such as "*Hasan, Hussein, Kasihan Hasan, Kasihan Hussein*" (Hasan, Hussein, Poor Hasan, Poor Hussein). By the evening the *beruji* and *mandara* mock war scenes begin, symbolizing *perang jihad* (holy war) of Karbala. Eighth day, *maarak saroban* (turban procession) is held to celebrate Hussein's heroism. The tabuik families stay up all night on the ninth night to finish making the tabuik cenotaphs. Tenth day, high tabuik parade includes shaking—*dihoyak*—in elegant motion to symbolize the battle of Karbala. The accompanying crowds are supposed to scream out expressions like *mahoyak Hussein* (Long Live Hussein). The two giant tabuik moves silently across the beach, where an exciting *perang pasir* (beach battle) takes place. At Maghrib (prayers just after sunset), the tabuik will be thrown into the waves, symbolizing the ascent of Hassan and Hussein to heaven".[20]

This is most elaborate ritual sequence that can be seen anywhere. Interesting fact in this ritual sequence is that it also displays some aspects of Imam Hassan. It may also be noted that some parts of this ritual sequence is copied in India but in bits and fragments. Despite such elaborate sequence, this tradition is diminishing because puritanical doesn't approve of this ritual.

Another ritual with syncretic elements is Java's New Year celebration.

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[19] A steed with broad wings and a human head, with the heads of smiling girls, wings and broad tails (photo included in next section)

[20] http://indonesiaexpat.biz/travel/tabuik-the-waterfront-cultural-festival-of-pariaman/

"Every year on the first Suro, Java's New Year, the Sultan of Yogyakarta climbs to the top of the Merapi followed by a regal procession. The gifts they bear with them – colorful rice cones, flowers and fruit – are offered up to the smoking crater. The ritual continues later on the black sand of Parangtritis Beach, where the goddess of the sea receives offerings along the raging surf. The first Suro happens to coincide with the first Muharram, the Islamic New Year. But this is not just a coincidence – most of the participants of this Hindu-Buddhist-animist ceremony are, like the Sultan himself, practicing Muslims".[21]

The availability of literature on only Tabuik is sparse but the syncretic music tradition in Indonesia has considerable literature.

Another distinct kind of Ta'zieh representation which gives prominence to music in their procession is Hosay.

3.4 TA'ZIEH IN CARIBBEAN – HOSAY

"Indian festival which is most like carnival celebration is Hosay. Hosay, which takes place for three nights and a day during the Islamic month of Muharram. In its Trinidad form Hosay is rooted in leela. The martyrdom and particularly the funeral are re-enacted. The centrepieces of the performance are the parades through the streets, on three successive nights, of, first, flags, then small Tadjahs[22], then the Tadjahs-massive, beautifully constructed tombs of Hussein. The Tadjahs are carried in the streets the night before Ashura and again on Ashura Day. In years gone by the tadjahs were illuminated by blazing torches, accompanied by armed men engaged in dramatized stick fights, weeping women singing funeral songs, and the music of Tassa drums, huge bass drums, and jahlls (cymbals). This Muharram festival, as Hosay was also called, was the major Indian celebration in I8th century Trinidad".[23]

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[21] https://en.qantara.de/content/syncretism-in-indonesia-where-islam-mixes-with-old-rituals

[22] Here Ta'zieh is referred to as Tadjahs

[23] Sankeralli, B. (1998). Indian Presence in Carnival. *TDR (1988-),42*(3), 203-212. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1146691

"Hosay included Indians who were Hindus as well as Muslims. It was the island's major source of Indian cultural affirmation and pride. It took on proportions of an "Indian Carnival," in which many thousands participated and watched. Today those building Tadjahs commit themselves to a period of "clean" living - abstaining from sex and alcohol, following a prescribed diet. On the streets in the I8[th] century people danced, drank, smoked opium and ganja (marijuana), and ingested bhang. Hosay also broke the ethnic barrier separating the Indian and African communities. There still is significant African involvement in Hosay. Africans have always been able to connect with the vital rhythm of the drums of Hosay".[24]

Figure 5 – A Hosay procession in the Caribbean region (Source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/nicholaslaughlin/5271867130)

The drums are playing for this, one to show the sorrowness, one drum will be beating for happiness. It is in our Arab culture to show the drums in our sorrowness.[25]

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[24]Ibid.

[25] Wolf, R. (2000). Embodiment and Ambivalence: Emotion in South Asian Muharram Drumming. *Yearbook for Traditional Music, 32*, 81-116. doi:10.2307/3185244

"Hosay and Ramleela are two of the many popular festivals in Trinidad which fall within the general category of Indian cultural formation. The Hosay is a popular street festival while the Ramleela is a popular folk theatre".[26]

"The process of creolization of Muharram started with a change in its nomenclature to Hosay from repeatedly hearing Hosain (Hussein). Gradually, it has reached a stage where Hosay has little religious significance for most Indo-Caribbean in Jamaica and many communities in Trinidad, as it succumbed to the greater cultural needs and norms of the Caribbean society. Initially, the three M's. - Mourning, mercia (martydom songs) singing and meditation, along with Ta'zieh and the parade with drumming were the soul of the ten-day Muharram activities. Contemporary Hosay in Jamaica has incorporated the Jamaican 'awake' traditions of post-death mourning (in which drinking rum is almost a ritual) and the Trinidadian carnival theme. The three M's. have thus been replaced by three D's - drinking, drumming and dancing (carnival style) for creating an atmosphere, not for mourning but for what the present generation of Indo-Jamaicans term Jollyfication".[27]

"Indians introduced Muharram processions to the Caribbean as a counterbalance to the extravagant parades of Carnival - the main Creole annual celebration which black Africans and Creoles had infused with African traditions".[28]

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[26]PARMASAD, K. (1999). Ramleela and Hosay: Contestation on the Periphery.
Caribbean Quarterly, 45(2/3), 67-70. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40654082
[27] MANSINGH, A., & MANSINGH, L. (1995). Hosay and its Creolization.
Caribbean Quarterly, 41(1), 25-39. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40653916
[28] Chelkowski, P. (2005). From the Sun-Scorched Desert of Iran to the Beaches of
Trinidad: Taʿziyeh's Journey from Asia to the Caribbean. *TDR (1988-), 49*(4), 156-169. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4488691

"Like Holi, this celebration of martyrdom and destruction set the practitioners against the structures of the world - which, we must recall, were at the time the structures of the plantation, coolie service, and colonial racism".[29]

Hosay is an example of syncretic festival. It was introduced to counterbalance the carnival in the region but as it acquires carnival like elements itself shows the absorption of cultural surroundings.

3.5 TA'ZIEH IN SOUTH ASIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA

South Asia as a region includes India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Nepal. Out of these eight countries, four are Muslim majority (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, and Pakistan).

Bangladesh hosts *Bishwa Ijtema.* It is one of the largest Islamic gatherings, along with the Hajj in Saudi Arabia and Arba'een in Iraq (which is holy for Shia Muslims – discussed above). Maldives is more inclined towards the Sufism. Pakistan has the second largest Muslims population after Indonesia. Pakistan and India have equal number of Shia population.

Sunni Muslims celebrate Ashura to commemorate the victory of Moses over the Egyptian Pharoah when he brought the Israelites out of slavery. Prophet Muhammad urged his followers to fast on the day of Ashura and on the day before that - Tasu'a, the ninth day.

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[29] Kelly, J. (1988). From Holi to Diwali in Fiji: An Essay on Ritual and History. *Man, 23*(1), new series, 40-55. doi:10.2307/2803032

Figure 6 – Paying respect to horse Zul Jinnah (Source:https://indianexpress.com/photos/lifestyle-gallery/muharram-ashura-2017-pictures-of-the-procession-from-india-and-around-the-world-4869525/4/)

Pakistanis pay their respect to the horse, Zul Janah in Peshawar, Pakistan. Zul Janah was the horse of Hussein. Zul Janah was a very important character in Karbala. It was bought and grown up by Muhammad. This ritual is not so prevalent in India but the iconographic representation of the horse is present.

Ta'zieh celebration or mourning in India is known for local hue and colour so much so that we can study it under the following regional heads:

1. Northern India

According to the 2012 "*International Religious Freedom Report"* Shias (or Shia's) constitutes 13 - 14 % of the Indian Muslim Population. Between 11th to 16th century, Many Sayyids came to the subcontinent to escape the persecution of Shias in mostly Sunni ruled Middle East. Prominent places in India with majority or considerable Shia Muslim population are Kargil, Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad , Lucknow, Hallaur , Amroha and others.

I. SRI NAGAR, JAMMU AND KASHMIR

In the northern India, we'll see the Ta'zieh considering Shia and Sunnis. Shia centres like Kashmir, Sri Nagar, Ladakh, Lucknow and others don't prefer the word celebration attributed to Ta'zieh rather they think of it as a prolonged mourning. Local socio-political conditions plays a role in either disturbing the event or not. For example; a Kashmiri newspaper's headlines regarding Ta'zieh reads *restrictions in Kashmir capital in view of 10th day of Muharram.*

*Figure 7 and 8 – Despite ban, mourning of Ashura in Sri Nagar, Jammu and Kashmir (*Source:http://www.greaterkashmir.com/photos/3611-24-muharram-procession-in-srinagar.html)

Traditional Muharram processions have been banned in the region ever since militancy started gaining ground in 1990. Prohibitory orders were imposed to prevent any breach of peace on the 10th day of Muharram under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which prevents five or more individuals from

assembling at a place, continued to remain in effect in Srinagar in areas under the jurisdiction of 13 police stations.[30]

II. KASHMIR, JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Figure 9 – Ta'zieh procession carried out on boats in Kashmir (Source:https://indianexpress.com/photos/lifestyle-gallery/muharram-ashura-2017-pictures-of-the-procession-from-india-and-around-the-world-4869525/4/)

A Muharram procession on boats in Kashmir shows the local manifestations on geographical ground. This kind of pattern, we will see throughout the regions with special attributes. People can relate to the special attribute easily. It's their in their imagination. And artists also draw inspiration from these famous structures, monuments or attributes.

D. Pinault in his "book *Horse of Karbala: Muslim Devotional Life in India* wrote, At a restaurant in Leh called the Tibetan Kitchen, I met with several young Kargilis active in the tourist trade. They called themselves independent

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[30] https://scroll.in/latest/852547/srinagar-police-baton-charge-mourners-on-muharram-detain-some

60

Shias. They revered Hussein, attended majalis annually in honor of his sacrifice, and despised the religious hierarchy in Ladakh".[31]

III. SAMBHAL, UTTAR PRADESH – FIELD WORK

Sambhal district of Uttar Pradesh was carved out of Moradabad district in September 2011. With a total population of 22 lakh; majority of which is Muslims 77.67% and in that it has both Shia and Sunnis. So, it is a good choice to see the local manifestation of Ta'zieh from both points of view. Moreover, the adjoining districts of Muradabad and Badaun are also having a significant Muslims population. I carried out a field work here from September 29, 2017 to October 2, 2017. Ashura in 2017 was on October 1.

Sirsi is a town and a Nagar Panchayat in the Sambhal district. It has a significant Shia population and also locally famous for traditional Ta'zieh.

A. SHIA TA'ZIEH IN SAMBHAL

*Figure 10 – Imambara of Sirsi, Sambhal,Uttar Pradesh (*Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

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[31] Pinault, D. (2014). *Horse of karbala: Muslim devotional life in india*. Palgrave Macmillan, p. – 201

We began our field work by visiting this Imambara at Sirsi. This is rather a small sized Imambara but useful enough to contain the population of this neighbourhood. As I've also seen other Imambara in the adjoining area even smaller than this one. As can be seen above, they are used to house a traditional Ta'zieh structure, alams, used for gatherings and from where the ritual related to Ta'zieh will start. Beside its walled boundary (interior), the large land attached to its wall belong to the Imambara and used for speeches, various forms of matam (mourning) shows.

*Figure 11 – More than 50 years old main wooden ancestral Ta'zieh structure of Sirsi housed in the above discussed Imambara. (*Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

After taking this wooden structure to designated Karbala, they bury the other items (bamboos, clothes, mausoleum pieces) which were used for decoration and bring this structure back to this place for the next procession. This structure is fifty years old. The person maintaining this Ta'zieh said that the initial lift for this structure is always by a person from Hindu community. It's tradition going on for more than fifty years.

Figure 12 – Photo of evening Shia gathering. There is a speech going on after which the mourning (matam) will begin. Most of the town gather to witness. (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

Figure 13 – Prizes from enactment of fight competition and photo of Khomenie (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

In Shia Islam, "*marja* literally meaning source to imitate/follow or religious reference, is a title given to the highest level Shia authority, a *Grand Ayatollah*

with the authority to make legal decisions within the confines of Islamic law for followers and less-credentialed clerics. Ruhollah Khomeini (Ayatollah Khomeini) became the country's Supreme Leader. The names Khomeini or Khamenei comes from the city from which the leader belongs. But people colloquially use Khomeini to refer to supreme leader. It was surprising to see the posters of Khamenei on the streets of Sirsi. On enquiring, it became known that every year, they receive a thematic message to act on. This years (2017) message was unity with the other group and no extreme form of mourning. But the mourning competition and the tradition of showing variety of matam (zanjeer, aag etc.) will take place. The role of the clergy in Iranian society is considerable. Far more than the Sunni sheikh who is generally appointed and paid by the state, the mullah draws his livelihood from contributions of the faithful, with whom he shares prosperity or poverty, joys and sorrows".[32]

Here, we are seeing the transnational nature of authority of Supreme Leader (Khamenei) and the allegiance of Shias everywhere to Khamenei. Despite this diversity is there because there are various sects within Shias and geographically far located Shia regions have local rituals. For example, the "Day of the Lion Ritual in Ladakh".

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[32] Rouleau, E. (1980). Khomeini's Iran. *Foreign Affairs, 59*(1), 1-20. doi:10.2307/20040651

B. SUNNIS TA'ZIEH IN SAMBHAL

Figure 14 – Dhol beating – an announcement impending the celebration (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

Dhol like above or even bigger than this first put in the sunshine to let their tonal frequency come back to highest by drying. This is known as *danka* beating. It is to let the neighbourhood know that the Ta'zieh celebration has begun. This dhol beating continue for days.

Figure 15 – Feast of little traditions. (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

This is a *taal* (pond). Here, a fair is in operation. Its early noon. Water offering to traveller, passer-by is happening. Mostly women, girls and children are gathering here. The white visuals are of thermocol. It is used to make very small ersatz Ta'zieh known as rauza or mehndi. After the submergence of this rauza or mehndi into the water; a dip in the water by children is considered auspicious and root out evil and sickness. The side line of water turns into a ground of prayer for women. They sit there and pray.

Islam is religion where everyone is equal before the Almighty. But in reality the majority of Muslim population in India faces more or less the same kind of inequality, discrimination and backwardness as faced by the backward castes among Hindus. It is estimated that about 90 per cent of Muslims in India are the descendants of converted forefathers. The conversion had occurred centuries ago, because of social equality in Islam. However, their traditional caste characteristics remained unchanged owing to their deep root in economic and social institutions. As a result, even after conversion, these groups continued to pursue the same traditional occupations and their social position

also remained the same. Thus, for most of the backward castes (classes) among the Hindus we may see the parallels among Muslims.[33]

*Figure 16 – Feast of little traditions. Children taking bath on the advice of mothers to get some benefits and luck (*Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

There are lots of wishing and vows being taken up and people praying for intercession not for afterlife but for this life's tribulations.

The history of population of a region can give us the glimpse as to what kinds of people are living here.

The Muslim Rajputs (sometimes known as Rangers), who are the descendants of Rajput converts are drawn mainly from the Chauhan, Rathor, Bargujar, Tomara, Bhatti and Sombansi clans. There are also considerable numbers of

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[33] Seik Rahim Mondal. (2003). Social Structure, OBCs and Muslims. *Economic and Political Weekly, 38*(46), 4892-4897. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4414284

Khakars in the district who are said to have come down from the Bulandshahr district and have settled down near Sambhal in the days of Babur.[34]

Figure 17 – A horse driven local buggy full of rouza or mehndi sent by an entire village (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

The driver of this buggy informed that the womenfolk of a village five kilometres away sent these rouza or mehndi (small handmade Ta'zieh) to be submerged in the water. They will consider that their Ta'zieh reached Karbala. Most of these structures are laden with a wish to be fulfilled by grace of God. This cycle of wish asking continue in a cycle. The people who sent these rouza are economically weaker and can't contribute in making of a village Ta'zieh, so to compensate; they make their own very small Ta'zieh.

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[34] Joshi, E. B. (2015), UP District Gazetteers, p. – 69

Figure 18 – The horse buggy driver fulfils his duty by submerging the rouza or mehndi. (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

He charged the villagers for his duty. Now he'll be making another trip to another village to make some more money.

Figure 19 – Arrival of Ta'zieh from surrounding villages on a tractor (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

While the fair is going on the side line of this road. Small and medium sized Ta'zieh start arriving from surrounding villages to occupy a better space. Later, in the night, they'll move with the main Ta'zieh.

Figure 20 – When day turns to Night. Children decorate these show case places usually outside their home. These show cases in a way are similar to the Janmashtmi or Harvest festivals show cases. (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

These show cases fills the space to make it more celebratory place. Same goes with the Musaira tent, local decorating lightning, local night fairs, chandni decoration.

Beside this little tradition like applying Mehndi (hennas) as a temporary form of skin decoration, commonly applied during Eid al-Fitr, offering sweet dishes on Eid-al-Fitr develops which are forms of local ethos.
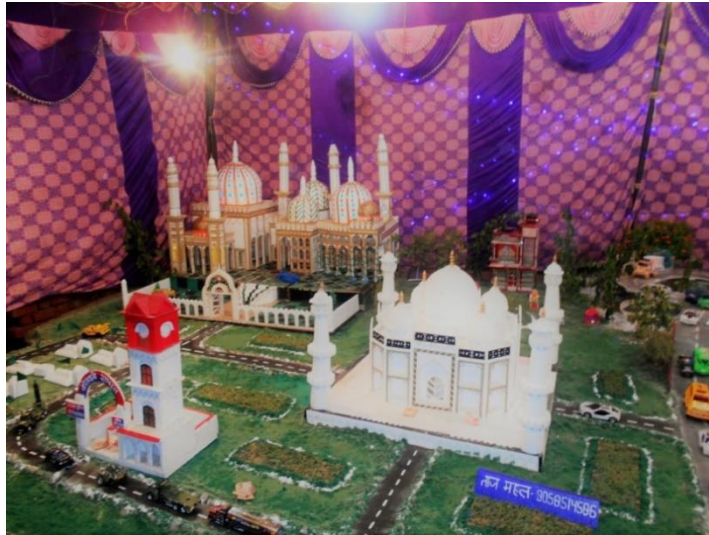
Figure 21 – Tent showcase on the main way. Structure made by local artist.
(Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

These tents house functions/gatherings such as musaira (ghazal, shayari recitation). The passing crowd stops here for a while, attend the happenings and moves on. The designated way which usually is 3-4 kilometres will house tent like these on both sides of the road along with eateries. This gives the visitors something to look for, take part, donate money to his satisfaction, and be busy along the way to reach a fair, Ta'zieh burial place.

Figure 22 – This was the main Ta'zieh, Sambhal. (Source: Picture taken by researcher during field work dated Sep 30/Oct 1, 2017)

It was supposed to be in procession in the night but since Ta'zieh got delay in Sambhal, so it is in procession after noon at 4 PM. In the picture, we can see ropes which are for maintaining balance. Many men hold these ropes while it moves on a tractor. There are people inside it to immediately repair any damage and to ensure efficient working of lightning and music.

"A photo of Jagannath rath chariot taken by Daniel C. Dunham in Dhaka, Bangladesh in late 1960s has the following caption, During the Festival of

Jagannath, the Hindu rath chariot is pulled by the faithful. There is no doubt that these kinds of Hindu rituals had an impact on Ta'zieh rituals in India".[35]

IV. JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN

OBSERVING MUHARRAM

Pics: Arvind Sharma

Procession with Tazias, made in the memory of Prophet Muhammad's grandson Hazrat Iman Hussain to commemorate his death, being taken out at Bari Chaupar in the city on Sunday
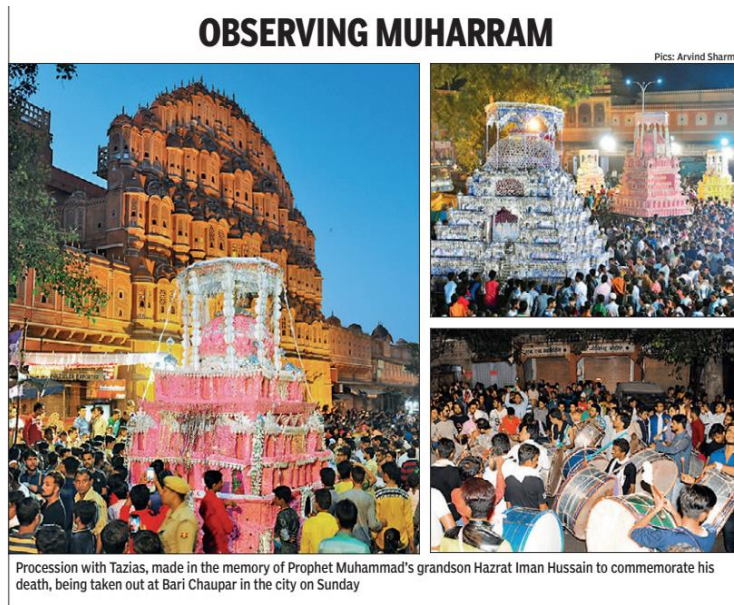
(Source: Muharram, Dussehra clashes in 3 states. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India*. Retrieved June12, 2018)

A picture appeared in The Times of India, Jaipur that shows true local materialization in Ta'zieh structure as they resemble the iconic Hawa Mahal.[36]

An example which shows that local attributes are important than the mainstream.

V. LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH

"Anjumans (groups reciting *Nauhas*, elegies) took over the road from Nakkhas till Karbala Talkatora where the procession solemnly culminated by evening.

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[35] Chelkowski, P. (2005). From the Sun-Scorched Desert of Iran to the Beaches of Trinidad: Taʿziyeh's Journey from Asia to the Caribbean. *TDR (1988-), 49*(4), 156-169. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4488691

[36] Observing Muharram. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Jaipur)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018

Women and children also joined the procession that saw many a hundred Hindus and Sunni Muslims being an active part of it".[37]

Figure 23 – Burying place of Ta'zieh structures, Lucknow (Source:https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/lucknow/ya-Hussein-echoes-in-lucknow-all-communities-mark-ashura/articleshow/60906744.cms?)

"In another procession that started out from the Shah Najaf Imambara, thousands of Hindu Azadars (mourners of Imam Hussein) congregated and took out Ta'ziehs, resting them finally in soil at the Ghar wali Karbala. Sunni Muslims across the city with their own iconic drum beating and chants of Ya Hussein carried Ta'ziehs. Amid the cries of Ya Hussein that echoed everywhere, by evening, mourners had their first morsel of food, after observing Faqa, by eating dal and rice, in a ritual called the Faqa Shiqani".[38]

"As evening fell, the historic Imambara Ghufranmaab at Victoria Street observed the world renowned Sham-e-Ghareeban majlis reminiscing the time

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[37] Ya Hussein echoes in Lucknow, all communities mark Ashura. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Lucknow)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018, from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/lucknow/ya-Hussein-echoes-in-lucknow-all-communities-mark-ashura/articleshow/60906744.cms?

[38] Ibid., Faqa Shiqani – breaking of the fast after juhr/asr

that the women and Imam Zain-ul-Abidin (fourth Imam of the Shias and son of Imam Hussein who was unwell during Karbala) had to go through soon after their family including Imam Hussein and children of the household and friends were martyred. After the battle, the camps of the women along the river Euphrates were put on fire and the women robbed off their Hijabs and taken captive".[39]

There are however, some customs more prevalent here than elsewhere. The lower strata of Muslim society, who came into it by conversion from the Hindu faith, keep on their old beliefs and practices, though they do form part of the Muslim religion, e.g. they are superstitious and worship at the tombs of their favorite Pirs and Saiyids. The tomb of Shah Mina in Lucknow draws Muslims of all sects for homage, especially on the occasion of his Urs or annual fair of the death anniversary.[40]

VI. HARYANA

Haryana state gazetteer is the latest printed in 2001. This gazetteer takes up the themes of synthesis of Hindu and Muslim culture and also it takes up the reciprocal impact of Hinduism and Islam.

"Quoting from Titus's book *Indian Islam*, it states that Hinduism has brought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has brought to Hinduism. But then it also quotes, R. C. Majumdar, the reciprocal influences of Hindus and Muslims were too superficial in character to affect materially the fundamental-differences between the two communities".[41]

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Sharma, V. C. (1959), U.P. District Gazetteer Lucknow, p. – 78

[41] Singh, S. (2001), Gazetteer of India, Haryana State Gazetteer, Volume – I, pp. – 754-768, 894-905

2. SOUTHERN INDIA

I. BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

DEVOUT OBSERVE MUHARRAM

K Sunil Prasad

FOR THE MARTYR: Members of Shia Muslim community take out a procession on Hosur Road to mark the 10th day of Muharram on Sunday

(Source: Devout Observing Muharram. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Bangalore)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018)

The vocabulary of Islamic architecture is includes public baths, fountains, domestic architecture, dome, round, muqarna etc.

But in the above picture we can clearly see the semblance to the Dravidian architecture.[42] So, the pattern of local manifestations to surrounding culture continues.

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[42] Devout Observing Muharram. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Bangalore)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018

II. HYDERABAD, TELANGANA

Figure 24 – Ta'zieh procession on elephants in Hyderabad (Source: Mourning reaches crescendo: Shias take out Bibi ka Alam procession on Ashoora. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Hyderabad)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018)

Hyderabad is a Muslim predominant city with above 90% of city population. Muharram is one of the most popular festivals in Hyderabad.

"The procession in Hyderabad starts from Dabeerpura Flyover and reaches Alawa-e-Sartouq Mubarak at Darushafa which is a Shia Majority area in Hyderabad. At this place a short *Majlis*[43] is arranged and after finishing this Majlis black flags are removed and red flags are hoist. The sound of matam reached a crescendo as mourners beat chests and self-flagellated with chains and marched with the holy *Bibi-ka-Alam*[44] and other Alams (standards) from the historic Bibi-ka-Alawa in Dabirpura to the banks of Musi in

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[43] Sitting council

[44] Relic which is a piece of the wooden plank on which Syeda Fatima was given her final ablution by her husband before burial is enclosed in this alam. This relic was in Karbala for a very long time. In the time of Abdullah Qutub Shah it reached Golkonda.

Chadarghat".[45]

"Men, women, youth and children in black joined the procession from different parts of Old City. *At many places, people came out of their homes to offer `dhatis' to the Alam and seek blessings.* Several non-Muslims too participated in the mourning. Hindu religious leader Swamy Sarang observed Zanzeer Zani (beating with a chain) to mourn martyrdom of Hussein. During the procession water and juice were distributed. Besides, special prayers were performed in mosques to mark the day of Ashura".[46]

A Hindu priest practices self-flagellation during the Muharram procession on Sunday

(*Swamy Sarang observed Zanzeer Zani (beating with a chain) to mourn martyrdom of Hussein.* Source: Mourning reaches crescendo: Shias take out Bibi ka Alam procession on Ashoora. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Hyderabad).* Retrieved June 12, 2018)

"The celebration of the Muharram has a special significance for the city of Hyderabad. A '*langar*'[47] procession is still held each year in Hyderabad city.

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[45] Mourning reaches crescendo: Shias take out Bibi ka Alam

procession on Ashoora. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Hyderabad).* Retrieved June 12, 2018, from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/mourning-reaches-crescendo-shias-take-out-bibi-ka-alam-procession-on-ashoora/articleshow/60909111.cms?

[46] Ibid.

[47] Term used in Sikhism for community kitchen

The Urs celebrated annually in memory of the saints near their tombs called Dargahs are some of their other festivals".[48]

So, the procession in Hyderabad is famous because they claim to have some special relics but hybrid elements like langar, Muharram's elephant use in Bonalu and vice versa, shows regards for sharing.

III. KARIMNAGAR, TELANGANA

TOGETHER IN JOY
Members of society including Muslims and Hindus participate in the Peerila celebrations in Karimnagar on Sunday in which youth took an active part. — DC

(Source: (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Karimnagar)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018)

"In Telangana's Karimnagar, Muslim men and women do planting, weeding, cutting of crops along with Dalitbahujan men and women. They share the food that the Dalitbahujans take to the fields. They share their individual agrarian skills. The Peerila (Muharram) festival is as much a Dalitbahujan festival as that of Muslims. Dalitbahujans lead the Peeri procession. They too hold the *peeri*[49] on their shoulders. The most popular notion of barkati in Telangana villages is taken from the Urdu word barkat. In such a situation of close relationship between the Dalitbahujans and the Muslims, the Muslim demand

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[48]Parthasarathy, R. (1983), Andhra Pradesh District Gazetteers, p. – 48-57

[49] A large wooden frame with copper plates on top of it and decorated with colourful cloths called datees

for *bali*[50] is an integrated process. After the bali is sprinkled on the houses, the village is closed for one week from other villages. The idea is that the diseases and evils from other villages must not enter this village. Similarly, for one week, the people belonging to this village cannot go to other villages because such a journey would take away the prosperity of the village. During that period, there are debates about prosperity, about good and evil, all centred around production, procreation and diseases.[51]

IV. KERALA

"According to the census of 2011 India, about 25% population belongs to Muslim and they locally known as Mappilas. Kerala Mappilas mainly inhabit in the regions of Calicut and Malappuram districts of the state. Most common feature of the Muharram in Kerala is Pulikali or Tiger Dance by which the Muslim who participate in the Ta'ziehs put on masks and paints their bodies so as to look like a tiger".[52]

Theyyam is a popular ritual form of worship of North Malabar in Kerala. A Muslim Theyyam is performed in the temples of Malom town in Kasaragod district. So, the syncretic elements are there in other rituals too.

The Thangals, the religious leaders among Mappilas, trace out their ancestry to the Saiyids of Hadramawt and thereby claim their descent from the prophet's family. They continue to enjoy special religious status; the sanctity, which they possess, is obviously due to their status as descendent of the prophet. But some of practices like, that of celebration of Muharram festival and the insistence for

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[50] Ritual sacrifice

[51] Visweswaran, K. (2011). *Perspectives on modern South Asia: A reader in culture, history, and representation*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

[52] http://www.indyatour.com/india/festivals/muharram-in-india

the prostration of *murids* (disciples) before him invited popular suspicion of his Shia lineage.[53]

The above information is reiterated in Kerala District Gazetteers.

"In Ernakulam district the Muslims form the third largest community. They are mainly descendants (Arab traders) or the offspring of such inter-marriages (Arab traders and lower class Hindu women) or conversions from the lower classes among Hindus".[54]

Also, in the next chapter in the syncretism section, we'll see how Mappilas have adopted many local traditions.

3. WESTERN INDIA

I. AHMEDABAD, SABARKANTHA, VADODARA – GUJARAT

Blood donated, not shed on Muharram

Saeed.Khan@timesgroup.com

Idar (Sabarkantha): The distinct feature of mourning during Muharram — flagellating oneself with chains and knives — in memory of the martyrs of Karbala, has disappeared in the villages and towns of north Gujarat, particularly in Sabarkantha district.

The Shia Jafri Mashaykhi Momin Jamat that takes the lead of Muharram processions in this area has deci-

A blood donation drive at Ilol village. The local Shia body has done away with self-flagellation in North Gujarat districts

ded not to indulge in shedding blood and injuring self to mourn the of sacrifice of

Imam Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammed. Instead, Muslims of these villages donate blood during this period, thus providing an alternative and constructive option that goes with the spirit of Islam.

The practice of self-flagellation by the Shia Jafri community in Sabarkantha, Patan and Banaskantha districts disappeared three years ago.

►Continued on P 2

Figure 25 – A rather utilitarian way to act out a ritual (Source: Blood donated, not shed on Muharram. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Ahmedabad).* Retrieved June 12, 2018)

"The Shia Jafri Mashaykhi has decided not to indulge in shedding blood and injuring self to mourn the sacrifice of Hussein. The practice of self-flagellation

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[53] Ilias, M. (2007). Mappila Muslims and the Cultural Content of Trading Arab Diaspora on the Malabar Coast. *Asian Journal of Social Science, 35*(4/5), 434-456. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23654640

[54] Menon, A. S.(1965), Kerala District Gazetteer, Ernakulam, pp. – 260-261

by the Shia Jafri community in Sabarkantha, Patan and Banaskantha districts disappeared three years ago".[55] Earlier, we also discussed it that how the extreme self-harm has been a subject of a fatwa (a ruling on a point of Islamic law that is given by a recognized authority).

The inspiration for accepting change

▶Continued from P1

The maatam (mourning) takes place without the use of blades and flagellates. Towns and villages like Idar, Surpur, Kesharpura, Jethipura, Mangadh in Sabarkantha and villages near Siddhpur and Palanpur where Shia Jafri Mashaykhi Momins live organise blood donation camps.

The inspiration for the change was the community's new religious leader, Syed Mohammed Mujahid Husain Jafri, from Siddhpur. "Our Pir Sahab told us that there is no point in inflicting pain on self. Shedding blood in this manner is waste. He advised us to donate blood instead," said Sabirali Bhovaniya from Surpur.

Ghulam Haider Dodiya from Kesharpura said that religious leaders have also asked them not to make too much noise during the procession. "We have stopped playing drums and music when we take out the tazia on Muharram. We must not disturb others during our observance," he said, pointing at the percussion instruments shelved in the community hall.

Participation in blood donation is getting popular in the community. "Last year, we collected nearly 3,500 blood units. This year we have already collected 2,800 blood units, and the blood donation camps will continue during the time of mourning till Chehllum (the 40th day of mourning)," said Akhlaq Ahmed, a young doctor involved in organizing such camps.

Other Shia Muslims like Isnasari still practice flagellation in the city of Ahmedabad and elsewhere in Gujarat but they also organize blood donation camps during the 40-day-long period of mourning, said Akbarali Ghadiyali.

Figure 26 – Blood donation camps to run for 40 days till Chehlum. (Source: Blood donated, not shed on Muharram. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Ahmedabad)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018)

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[55] Blood donated, not shed on Muharram. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Ahmedabad)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018, from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/blood-donated-not-shed-on-muharram/articleshow/60906632.cms?

This year, 93 tazias featured in the competition

Figure 27 – Ta'zieh competition in Ahmedabad. (Source: Blood donated, not shed on Muharram. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Ahmedabad).* Retrieved June 12, 2018)

Parvez Momin, chairman of the Ta'zieh committee of Ahmedabad, said this year, "93 Ta'zieh participated in the competition. Around 24 akhadas, 78 dhols and cymbals, 14 alam nishan groups, 10 maatami dasta mourners' groups, 24 trucks and 7 camel carts were part of the procession. Best decorated Ta'zieh receive prizes given by the Mahant of Shree Jagannathji Temple for many years".[56]

Presence of akhadas in the Ta'zieh procession has more to do with power and skill demonstration than to ritual enactment.

"In Surat, Ta'zieh processions started from different parts of the city at around 2.30 PM. More than 500 vehicles with colourful Ta'zieh, burakh, akhada, water and sharbat lorries passed through Rajmarg and reached Variyali Bazaar. Ta'zieh processions from different directions converged at Bhagal where mayor, police commissioner and Swami Amrishanand gave away prizes to the

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[56] Muharram observed in Ahmedabad with Ta'zieh procession. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Ahmedabad).* Retrieved June 12, 2018, from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/muharram-observed-in-city-with-Ta'zieh-procession/articleshow/60905240.cms?

first 10 that reached there early.Thousands of people gathered on both sides of the roads to get a glimpse of the Ta'ziehs. There was a tight police bandobast for the occasion".[57]

The aspects related to routes are important as to how and what kinds of people, the Ta'zieh committee wants to show. Generally, these routes are designated from the past. During field work, I came to know that how people have donated their lands to be utilized for Ta'zieh route. One more aspects, that we came to know from this news is regarding the distribution of prize which is given away by prominent people of Hindu religion and the competitive streak in procession to make it more interesting.

Belgaum gazetteer highlights different customs such as *chhati*, mundane, rubbing of turmeric and henna on bride and groom, new moon day after Muharram is unlucky for married couples.[58] These customs have local basis.

Gujarat state gazetteer mentions different kind of Muslim people (Babi pathans, Pinjara, Kharwa, Marwadi Muslims, Momnas, Behlims etc.). It highlights within these groups too. For example, Vohoras are divided into two main classes, traders and peasants. Both are quite distinct from each other in manners, customs and religious beliefs.[59] Complexity doesn't end here; there are Shia and Sunni Vohoras. It depends on whom they acknowledge their 27th Dai.

In Ahmedabad, at the river banks a tradition called *Ta'zieh Khan Karna'* takes place where the Ta'zieh are either immersed in water or water is sprinkled on them. In many other parts of the world, the Ta'zieh are not immersed but buried in the ground (above example of Lucknow).

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[57]Ta'zieh processions taken out, Muharram observed. (2017, October 02).

The Times of India (City Surat). Retrieved June 12, 2018, from

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/surat/Ta'zieh-processions-taken-out-muharram-observed/articleshow/60904750.cms?

[58] Campbell, J. M. (2004), Karnataka State Gazetteer, Belgaum, pp. – 200-201

[59] Chokshi, U. M., Trivedi, M. R. (1989), Gujarat State Gazetteer Part-1, pp. – 343-345, 361

Figure 28 – A boy dressed as Tiger in a Ta'zieh procession, Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh (Source: http//www.anindianmuslim.com)

A boy dressed as tiger in Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh. This is also an aspect of Muharram observance in central India and Maharashtra. Many families praying for child, take a vow that if the kid is born, they would turn him into 'Hussein's sher (tiger)'.

Also Aurangabad district gazetteer, quotes that "women who have made vows for the recovery of their children from sickness, illness, dress them in green and send them to beg; and a few men and boys having themselves painted as tigers go about mimicking as a tiger. At the Muharram, models of horse-shoes made after the caste shoe of Kasim's horse are carried fixed on poles in a procession. Men who feel so impelled and think that they will be possessed by the spirit of Kasim make these horse shoes and carry them".[60]

Generally, photographs from major cities are seen in newspapers and media.

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[60] Aurangabad District Gazetteer (1977), Maharashtra State Gazetteers, p. – 350

Figure 29 – Ta'zieh in Khargone, a tribal dominated region in South Eastern Madhya Pradesh (Source: http//www.anindianmuslim.com)

But photos from smaller towns and cities shows unique fusion, like the one above. It shows Buraq[61] with fusion of Indian goddess with utilizing Islamic and nationalist colours. Religious identities are important but the national identity is also very important as conveyed by using the colours of the tri-colour.

4. EASTERN INDIA

An example of assimilation and syncretic practice is "a family from Odisha, in a rare example of communal harmony, continued its 350-year-old tradition of observing Muharram on Sunday. The family from Mudipara in Sambalpur may be Hindu, but it has been an example in spreading communal harmony since 1664 by taking out a Ta'zieh".[62]

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[61] Is a steed in Islamic mythology, a creature from the heavens that transported the Prophets. It carried Muhammad from Mecca to Jerusalem.

[62] Communal harmony: A Hindu family that has been taking out Ta'zieh for 350 years. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Bhubaneswar)*. Retrieved June 12, 2018, from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/communal-harmony-a-hindu-family-that-has-been-taking-out-Ta'zieh-for-350-years/articleshow/60905716.cms?

"If we consider Muslims in Odisha, the city of Bhadrak has the maximum number of Muslims as a percentage of the total population (about 35%). There is a large population in the coastal cities of Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Kendrapada and Jajpur. Cuttack, Jajpur and Bhadrak districts also have a substantial rural Muslim population. To quote from the gazetteer, the most important festival of the Muslims is the Muharram which is celebrated grandly in Cuttack, Bhadrak and other important towns of Odisha".[63]

Now even though it's not technically true that the Muharram is the most important festival (they are two Eids) but it is because it's the festival which is most alive on the surface. It's an opportunity for Muslims amidst indigenous and majority Hindu population to showcase their culture.

Continuing with the theme of heterogeneity, Bihar District Gazetteers Gaya mentions that, "Muslims closely approximates to that of the Hindus. They freely indulge in superstitious observances and copy Hindu rites; some even join in the worship of the Sun and offer libations like Hindus; and one curious features of the Shab-i-Barat is the offering to deceased ancestors of puddings made of flour. The more ignorant have a pantheon of village gods".[64]

Later it mentions the famous mythic persons Sheikh Saddu and Kamolo Bibi.

The popularity of certain famous *pirs* and mythic persons in different regions is the common theme in most of the gazetteers, affirming the local needs and immediate intercession in this life.

3.6 CONFLICT AND TA'ZIEH PROCESSION

At times, Ta'zieh procession is marked by conflict in different regions. Each year during Ta'zieh procession, news will come of conflict in some parts. So, to get the comprehensive perspective, we have included examples appeared this year (2017).

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[63] Behuria, S. C. (1990), Orissa State Gazetteer, Orissa State Volume 1, p. – 322

[64] Roy, P. C., Chaudhary. (1957), Bihar District Gazetteers Gaya, pp. – 126-130

"Gluckman argued that in situations of conflict, pre-existing groups do not divide neatly into opposing halves, but that groups realign themselves according to the values, motives, and interests governing them at a given time".[65]

The height of Ta'zieh is a matter of pride. But it is also becomes a cause of conflict. Sometimes wire lanes or tree comes in between making its movement hindering. This is what had happened in Sambhal during field work causing the main Ta'zieh to wait till morning.

One such fictional account comes from E. M. Forster's "*A Passage to India*, Muhurram was approaching, and as usual the Chandrapore Mohammedans were building paper towers of a size too large to pass under the branches of a certain pepul tree. One knew what happened next; the tower stuck, a Mohammedan climbed up the pepul and cut the branch off, the Hindus protested, there was a religious riot".[66]

The studies of community power structures have universally found the upper levels of the occupational hierarchy to occupy prominent power positions. A polylithic power structure tends to mean a number of small monoliths each centring around a particular sort of activity.[67] This power structure is with various committees formed to maintain and regulate Ta'zieh procession. But the economically weaker class execute the laborious work on the day of the procession and took pride for the fact, that they are part of it. Being a member of a Ta'zieh committee is part time yearly work.

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[65] Shack, W. (1968). The Mäsqal-Pole: Religious Conflict and Social Change in Gurageland. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, 38*(4), 457-468. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1157877

[66] Brown, R. (2003). Abject to Object: Colonialism Preserved through the Symbolism of Muharram. *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics,* (43), 203-217. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20167599

[67] Rossi, P. (1960). Power and Community Structure. *Midwest Journal of Political Science, 4*(4), 390-401. doi:10.2307/2108873

After seeing the Ta'zieh representation from the both sects, the differences are clearly visible. Besides conflict with other groups, inter-conflict between two sects – Shias and Sunnis also possible (as it had happened in the past – Lucknow conflict).

U. Heyd wrote, 'Shias processions are extremely different from the ceremonies of Sunni Islam; they are the expression, not of a masculine religion that finds its truth confirmed by the success of its adherents in this world, but of the feelings of a persecuted sect whose experiences centre upon the torments of a righteous man, the killing of a saint by the forces of evil. Yet the difference between Shia and Sunni is perhaps much deeper even than that and may be discerned in the rejection by the monotheistic-puritan Sunnite orthodoxy of certain, ancient, ceremonies and performances revived by the Shia. The Shia have also festivals of their own, such as 'Id al-Ghadir', on which, according to Shia tradition, Muhammad appointed Ali his successor Wasi.[68]

"Clashes broke out between two communities in some towns of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand as they marked Muharram and Dusshera. At least 12 persons, including policemen, were injured in a clash over a Muharram procession in Kanpur on Sunday. The two sides indulged in stone pelting and set six two wheelers on fire. The mob also attacked police personnel, which led the cops to resort to baton charge".[69]

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[68] Lazarus-Yafeh, H. (1978). Muslim Festivals. *Numen, 25*(1), 52-64. doi:10.2307/3269678

[69] Muharram, Dussehra clashes in 3 states. (2017, October 02).

The Times of India. Retrieved June 12,2018, from

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/muharram-dussehra-clashes-in-3-states/articleshow/60905658.cms?

"The textual history of Muharram processions in this region of colonial northern India is one of conflict and tension generated by the procession's movement through the streets of a city".[70]

"In Ballia, three persons were injured in a clash over a Muharram procession. The mob set two motorcycles and three bicycles on fire and 11 persons were arrested for violence. In Jharkhand, Daltonganj town witnessed clashes between two communities after members of a community allegedly played objectionable songs while taking out a procession for idol immersion".[71]

"Explanation for the present events can be found in history. Eastern India witnessed Jamshedpur riots (1964/1979), Bhagalpur violence (1989). This region has prominent indigenous population and Muslims here are mostly converts. So, Hindu outfits tried to widen its base by starting outreach efforts among the adivasis".[72] This is historical explanation and may not be the only explanation. Otherwise, conflict in processions when they cross space and another procession is common throughout the world.

"In Vadodara, communal riots broke out in Panigate area of the city late on Sunday night during the Ta'zieh immersions. Some residents of Ektanagar, who participated in the procession, have enmity with Bavchavad residents. So

[70]Brown, R. (2003). Abject to Object: Colonialism Preserved through the Symbolism of Muharram.
RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics, (43), 203-217. Retrieved from
http://www.jstor.org/stable/20167599

[71] Muharram, Dussehra clashes in 3 states. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India.*
Retrieved June 12, 2018, from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/muharram-dussehra-clashes-in-3-states/articleshow/60905658.cms?

[72] Kashif-Ul-Huda. (2009). Communal Riots and Jamshedpur. *Economic and Political Weekly, 44*(21), 19-21. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40279029

when the procession reached Panigate police station, some participants showed aggression and it snowballed into riots".[73]

"Durga Puja committee some 12 km off Jalpaiguri, and the local Muharram organizers transcended barriers on Ekadashi to set a shining example of harmony. For the last 60 years, the Samiti has been organising Durga Puja on the market grounds and the Dashami immersion is preceded by a fair. It being a Saturday this year (2017), the organizers wanted to immerse the idol on Sunday. But police denied them permission as it clashed with the Muharram route. Nur Islam, secretary, Muharram Committee, however, came forward. "We didn't want to break such an old custom. *We too participate in the Durga Puja festivities.* So we decided to delay the Muharram procession for a day to avoid confusion".[74]

Examples differ from pre-planned violence to personal enmity to harmony and understanding.

Overall the everyday mobilities of the middle-class youth related to Ta'zieh seemed to be motivated mainly by cultural and consumer sensibilities and ritual practices, and these sensibilities and practices led them to cross the territorial boundaries of the city's political sectarian geography.[75]

"This is not unique to India. Many religious processions cross boundaries within cities and disrupt the order of urban space in the process. For example,

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[73] Communal riots break out in Vadodara during Ta'zieh processions,

2 injured in police firing. (2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Vadodara).* Retrieved June 13, 2018,

from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/vadodara/communal-riots-break-out-in-vadodara-during-Ta'zieh-processions-2-injured-in-police-firing/articleshow/60909968.cms?

[74] Muharram makes way for 60-year-old immersion ritual.

(2017, October 02). *The Times of India (City Kolkata).* Retrieved June 12, 2018, from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/muharram-makes-way-for-60-year-old-immersion-ritual/articleshow/60905982.cms?

[75]MONROE, K. (2016). POLITICS AND PUBLIC SPACE. In *The Insecure City: Space, Power, and Mobility in Beirut* (pp. 56-78). New Brunswick, New Jersey; London: Rutgers University Press. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1b67ws4.9

Catholic and Protestant conflicts in Northern Ireland, which often erupt around similar processional transgression".[76]

3.7 SUMMING UP

Diversity is variety. It is noticeable heterogeneity. This chapter tried to explore that diversity. What actually happens on the surface is different from what is model and prescribed. Despite fatwas against extreme form of self-harm, it is still prevalent. Pilgrim walk of Arba'een is subject to inclusion and exclusion. Waiting for the intercession in the afterlife is too long a wait, if it can happen now in this life through prayers, charm and ritual offering is fulfilling.

This chapter attempted to look "at the coming together of two or more ritualistic traditions (or culture) at the plane of lived religion. Thus, it does not matter to our enquiry if various elements blending in a practice or, the distinction between the external and the local in working out the theological parentage of aspects of religious ritual. After all, if the external has become familiar to the believers and has been appropriated, it ceases to be unfamiliar in the moment of practice. If the believers attribute desirability to a practice and view it as unproblematic, then the practice of religion itself forms into a religious tradition, whether acknowledged by established orthodoxies in the wider field of religious expression. The purpose of present exploration is to develop a language to understand the coming together of differing culture".[77]

We may try to set the bounds of *a* culture as a single *horizon* of shared practices, artefacts, and narratives, our judgment of "a horizon" being decided by the relative coherence of what is inside and its relative difference from what is outside. Self-acknowledgment of membership is a *prima facie* sufficient, if fallible, condition for cultural identification ("No, we are not Uzbeks. We are Tadjiks").

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[76] Ibid.

[77] Talib, M., & Mitra, S. (2017). Mutual Learning in Lived Religiosity: A Case of Hindus and Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent. *The Muslim World, 107*(2), 231-255. doi:10.1111/muwo.12188

As MacIntyre claims of traditions, a culture is best characterized as an ongoing debate. Following Martha Nussbaum again we can expect societal cultures to be *thick but vague.*[78]

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[78] Cahoone, L. (2005). WHO IS CULTURE? In *Cultural Revolutions: Reason Versus Culture in Philosophy, Politics, and Jihad* (pp. 56-78). Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/j.ctt1wf4csh.7

Chapter Four

Representative Amalgam – Issues, Concepts and Plurality of Society

In the previous chapter, we encountered multi-traditional, multi-coloured and multi-religious examples of Ta'zieh around the world with special reference to India. Perusal of newspapers, gazetteers and field work provided us with various cases of diverse Ta'zieh representation. Through examples, it is evident that some representation deviate from the pan-Islamic model or some converge. There must be underlying theoretical basis and processes associated with this divergence and convergence.

In this chapter, we'll dwell on these theoretical aspects which produce these multi-traditional and multi-religious phenomena of Ta'zieh. We have chosen ten wide-ranging concepts which are responsible for Ta'zieh to become the multi-dimensional phenomena. These concepts are aniconism, sectarianism, modernity and globalization, assimilation, acculturation, syncretism and hybridity, how the modernity got hold of this phenomenon, role of women and also various concepts required to explain the dynamism like great and little traditions, latent functions and dysfunctions, symbolic interactionism.

This chapter aims at uncovering inhomogeneous in Ta'zieh by highlighting change and dynamism which is inevitable because of the various continuing cultural and social processes.

Cultural advancement is about social change. It begins from a unilinear origination of culture and that social advancement itself prompted the development and improvement of human progress. From Herbert Spencer's recommendation that people form into more intricate creatures as culture advances, where progress creates chains of importance to Lewis H. Morgan's seven contrasting stages (lower, center, and upper viciousness; lower, center, and upper brutality; and progress) of human culture to social particularism of Boas (how singular societies change and create) to Multilinear hypothesis to now memetics (image); one can state that social development is on a roller coaster ride.

However, the resurgence of local cultural and religious consciousness under the influence of modern cultures and the concomitant process of globalization is increasingly complicating the interaction between religious traditions.[1]

As Leslie A. White put it that different cultures had differing amounts of 'energy', also with greater energy societies could possess greater levels of social differentiation. In contrast, Steward argued, much like Darwin's theory of evolution that culture adapts to its surroundings. We're interested in the statement that culture adapts to its surroundings. So, was Islam with its traditions and phenomenon was on this bandwagon of change?

Al-Azmeh comments that, once named, 'homo islamicus' is endowed with 'changeless' and 'ageless characteristics' that have 'no specificity', so that 'All in all, things Islamic' are seen as 'uniform, indistinct, amorphous'.[2]

Tibi (2001) points out that how both Western orientalists and Islamic fundamentalists regard Islam as 'immutable…an all-embracing essential culture, valid without accommodation for all times, places and people.[3]

Clearly, the essentialist version of Islam must be rejected but it is also true that the classical version of Islam remained official, and has always remained socially conservative (this became a device to control it). Later in this chapter, we'll see that how change pervades all of civilizations.

As Bruno Latour, put it, all of culture and all of nature get churned up again every day.[4]

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[1] Anthony, F., Hermans, C., & Sterkens, C. (2015). Interpreting Religious Plurality. In *Religion and Conflict Attribution: An Empirical Study of the Religious Meaning System of Christian, Muslim and Hindu Students in Tamil Nadu, India* (pp. 117-142). LEIDEN; BOSTON: Brill. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctt1w76vhj.9

[2] Bennett, C. (2005). *Muslims and modernity: Current debates*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, p. – 4

[3] Ibid. p. – 26

[4] Latour, B. (2002). *We have never been modern*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. – 2

We'll consider the concepts and ideas in this chapter, in the background of this statement: "The pressure exerted by modern ideas and forces of social change, together with the colonial meantime in Muslim lands, has brought about a situation in which the adoption of certain key Western ideas and institutions is resolutely defended by some Muslims and often justified through the Qur'an, the whole sale rejection of modernity is vehemently advocated by others, and the production of 'apologetic' literature that substitutes self-glorification for reform is virtually endless. Against this background the evolving of some adequate hermeneutical method seems imperative".[5]

4.1 ANICONISM

The first issue to enquire is aniconism which is in contradiction to the topic of this dissertation. As it is put in the *The Miracle Play of Hasan and Hussein* as Ta'zieh is a religious expression in dramatic form within a religion that forbids representation.[6]

Aniconism is the term to refer to the phenomenon whereby no symbols are employed or permitted in the worship of a deity. That is, a deity is venerated without the use of idols representative of the physical shape of a god or goddess, whether in anthropomorphic or theriomorphic (in the shape of animals) form.

Fluidity in attitudes towards the use of symbols in worship raises the question of when actual prohibitions against divine iconography came into existence in ancient Israel.

M. Tsevet has taken the internal logic of the Old Testament at face value and suggested that aniconism arose in ancient Israel because idolatry was linked

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[5] Rahman, F. (1982). *Islam modernity: Transformation of an intellectual tradition*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, p. – 4

[6] Pettys, R. (1981). The Ta'zieh: Ritual Enactment of Persian Renewal. *Theatre Journal, 33*(3), 341-354. doi:10.2307/3207032

with the worship of the human being of him/herself and priority was given to what Yahweh says rather than what Yahweh looks like.[7]

We can also distinguish between "traditional" aniconism, which is simply passed from generation to generation, and "programmatic" aniconism, which is a clearly expressed policy that prohibits illustrated representations of the deity. The first may be tolerant and able to coexist comfortably with certain kinds of divine symbols; the second tends to exclude such representations systematically and may become iconoclastic.[8]

Islam as a prophetic religion includes Adam, Abraham, Moses and Jesus within its fold and the fact that it started as an Iconoclastic religion includes both traditional and programmatic aniconism. If we consider, aniconism in pre-Islamic Arab times; sacred stones were referred to as bayt or bayt-allah, suggesting the prevalence of an 'empty-space aniconism' in the Arab realm.[9]

Now consider the term Ahl al-Bayt which means 'People of the House' or 'Family of the House' (family of Prophet Mohamed). Mohamed happened to be born in this bayt.

"The Quranic proscription of idolatry, the story of Abraham as an idol-breaker, and the condemnation of the Golden Calf, are all specific elements of the prohibition of symbols as objects of worship. But they do not prevent anyone from producing symbols of men even sacred ones. In early Islam, there is actually some positive acceptance of symbols. At the conquest of Mecca, when Mohamed helped destroy the idols housed in the sanctuary of the Kaaba, he preserved an icon of the Virgin and child, as well as a painting of Abraham".[10]

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[7] Middlemas, J. (2015). *Divine Image*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, pp. – 1-5

[8] Lemaire, A. (2007). *The birth of monotheism: the rise and disappearance of Yahwism*. Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society.

[9] Israel Exploration Journal - Volume 48 - Page 152

[10] https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/muslims-have-embraced-symbols-of-the-prophet-mohamed-throughout-history-why-are-so-many-of-them-upset-9983412.html

So, the reason for taking this issue is simple, it's not about whether you represent but how. Islam utilized the use of calligraphy, *shahada* (There is no god but God. Muhammad is the messenger of God*)*, *takbir (*Lord is the greatest*)*, *basmala* (In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful), color green, star crescent, inscribed flags to its good content. All of this for the growth and continuation of Islam. Representation of Ta'zieh is in similar line but later in the next chapter we'll see how the local ethos, surroundings, local structures, market forces affect this representation and got imbued in it.

Moreover, "Sunni orthodoxy prohibits representation; the Shia choice of the theatrical medium may also be expressive of revolt and their inclusion of God as one of the represented personalities a signal of that revolt. Perhaps the medium constitutes part of the message of revolt. The Ta'zieh is revolt. Defiance against Arab oppression and Sunni dominance are expressed through a defiant medium".[11]

4.2 SECTARIANISM

Sectarianism is about differences. In this chapter, we are trying to winnow out these differences, plurality and trying to see the role of small part into a larger structure. We're not interested in going to the details of conflict and differences per se but this sectarianism is a source of generating variety within the Islam and also in Ta'zieh. The differences in the philosophy of Ta'zieh display was touched upon briefly in the previous chapter and it will be more visible through symbols in the next chapter.

A quick glance through history – "Soon after the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632 AD, a debate emerged within the early Muslim community over the question of succession. One group, who would come to be known as the *Sunnis* (from the term *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jama'a*, meaning the people of tradition and the consensus of opinion), argued that the next leader should be

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[11] Pettys, R. (1981). The Ta'zieh: Ritual Enactment of Persian Renewal. *Theatre Journal, 33*(3), 341-354. doi:10.2307/3207032

chosen from among the close companions of Muhammad. Another group, who would come to be known as the Shia (from the term shi'at 'Ali, meaning partisans of Ali), believed that the new leader must come from the immediate family of the Prophet. Over the course of the next, 1400 years this disagreement produced the two main branches of Islam, whose overlapping yet distinct theologies and contending interpretations of history trace their origins to this seventh-century schism".[12]

During my field work and interview with people from both the sects; it's evident that even considering the rationality of unification, differences still exists. They reproduced themselves in the procession and throughout this whole event.

Sigmund Freud wrote in *Civilization and its Discontents* about what he called the "narcissism of minor differences" that, in any society, could turn into something far more dangerous, namely group hatred. Freud's point was that every society carries within it the possibility of turning on its constituent parts. "Civilized society," he wrote, "is perpetually threatened with disintegration."[13]

The modern Arab world is no exception. In fact, the root of the conflict in Middle East can be traced to this sectarianism. Mainstream western journalism about the Arab world routinely informs us that Sunnis and Shias are today replaying an original schism from Islam 1300 years ago. Take the BBC correspondent Jeremy Bowen, who informs us solemnly that the "weight of a millennium and a half of sectarian rivalry is crushing hopes of a better future."

There are various issues over which these two major sects of Islam differ. One must also keep in mind that within these two major sects, there are various school of thoughts. Al-Shahrastani mentions such philosophico-theological schools, Mu'tazilites (twenty), Qadarites, Murjites (ten), and others.[14]   In the

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[12] Hashemi, N., Postel, D., (2017) Sectarianization: Mapping the New Politics of the Middle East, Oxford University Press, pp. – 1-2

[13] Ibid pp. – 23-24

[14] Lammens, H., & Ross, E. D. (1968). *Islam: Beliefs and institutions*. London: Cass, p. – 140

previous chapter, we touched on the differences between these two sects and the way they observe Ashura and display Ta'zieh.

Repentance of Kufans is not well established (not completely denied either) and is not the only reason for mourners (mostly Shia) to hurt their body. However, in Iran, people usually hit slowly on their chest or hit slowly a tool with narrow chains on their shoulders, which is again a ritual. So, these are parts of the rituals and they don't hurt anyone.

The zanjir chains are used to beat one's back, while the sword is used to make a small cut into one's forehead and then take part in the procession with raised sword and blood pouring over one's face and clothes. Zanjir represents the prisoners who were put in chains when taken from Karbala to the Caliph in Damascus. Haydar (sword) represents the people of the city of Kufa, who are said to have carried out this ritual when they learned that their failure to help had contributed to the death of Imam Hussein.[15]

Both rituals are carried out, while zanjil (chains) is generally accepted, haydar (swords) is widely disputed. The zanjil mawkabs take place at night, along with the general processions, while haydar takes place only on the morning of the tenth day. In 1993, the Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei issued a fatwa against haydar, stating that it was dangerous to one's health and would not benefit the image of Shia Islam around the world.[16]

These are the historical basis for some of the rituals that we see in a Ta'zieh procession. Besides these, now there are more local rituals and customs seen due to processes such as acculturation, assimilation, great and little traditions, latent functions and symbolic interactionism. These conceptual processes are discussed in the forthcoming sections.

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[15] Fibiger, T. (2010). 'Ashura in Bahrain: Analyses of an Analytical Event. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice, 54*(3), 29-46. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23182153

[16] Ibid.

The reason to reiterate about these differences is that here we are not accepting the common folk word of mouth statement which are prevalent in general parlance.

4.3 MODERNITY AND GLOBALIZATION

Modernity and globalization are two wide ranging concepts. Their impact and reach is all pervasive. There effect is so deep rooted that even the indigenous cultures are not immune let alone Islam.

Modernity and globalization are interrelated. Later is the corollary of the former.

"Modernity is a European construct that has not appeared independently anywhere outside of Europe. Yet seemingly all nations must aspire to achieve it. Modernity is associated with progress—the idea that human life is becoming better and will continue to do so. This improvement is achieved through science, which is based on rationality".[17]

"Early globalization proper may be dated, from 500–1000 CE, using the camel caravan trade, and centred on the Middle East with Mecca, Baghdad, and Damascus as hubs in long distance trade. Muslim traders migrating eastward and stimulating commerce as far as China contributed to recentering economic forces. During the second phase of oriental globalization, starting ca. 1100 CE or 1400, China and India assumed key roles as propelling forces in the world economy, leading in productivity, innovation, and trade. Goods, technologies, and cultural influences travelled along the Silk Routes overland and by sea".[18]

"Ancient Egypt traded with Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa; Rome traded wine with Cochin in India. The exchanges were increasingly substantial. A

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[17] O'Connor, M. (2016). Mixtecs and Modernity. In *Mixtec Evangelicals: Globalization, Migration, and Religious Change in a Oaxacan Indigenous Group* (pp. 27-42). Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1gpcbxk.9

[18] Pieterse, J. N. (2015). *Globalization and culture: global mélange.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. – 127

saying in Rome was *ex Oriente lux.* From the outposts of empire, legionnaires brought eastern cults to Rome: Isis worship, the Mithras".[19]

It's important to look at the first wave of globalization because besides goods; it also enabled the diffusion of ideology albeit religious in this case.

"Each paradigm involves a different take on *globalization.* According to cultural differentialism, globalization is a surface phenomenon only: the real dynamic is regionalization, or the formation of regional blocs, which tend to relate with civilizational clusters. Therefore, the future of globalization is interregional rivalry. According to the convergence principle, contemporary globalization is westernization or Americanization writ large, a fulfilment in instalments of the classical imperial and the modernization theses. According to the mixing approach, the outcome of globalization processes is open-ended and current globalization is as much a process of easternization as of westernization, as well as of many interstitial influences".[20]

"In the past few years, Muslim diaspora networks have encouraged the exchange of significant resources, specifically money, man power, political support, and cultural influence. The expansion of a globalized system of communication and transportation has made international travel affordable for more people and facilitated diaspora identity formation. Diasporas also help to make travel affordable for diverse communities of Muslims who want to perform the hajj and to participate in other multinational collective behaviour".[21]

Peggy Levitt identifies "social remittances as distinct both from economic remittances and from the overarching social changes brought about by

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[19] Ibid. – 126

[20] Ibid. – 59

[21] Karasik, T., & Benard, C. (2004). Muslim Diasporas and Networks. In RABASA A., BENARD C., CHALK P., FAIR C., KARASIK T., LAL R., et al. (Authors), *The Muslim World After 9/11* (pp. 433-478). RAND Corporation. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg246af.20

globalization. They are, among other things, normative structures (ideas, values, and beliefs) that are transmitted through systems of practice (actions shaped by normative structures)".[22]

These social remittances change the local culture or the culture of home country by exposing the recipients to global culture. Diasporic literature is generally hybrid and syncretic.

General assumption is that "the diasporic writer occupies a kind of second space, of exile and cultural solitude. But maybe Homi Bhabha is right when he calls it a *third space*, a hybrid location of antagonism, perpetual tension and pregnant chaos. The reality of the body, a material production of one local culture, and the abstraction of the mind, a cultural sub-text of a global experience".[23]

This cultural absorption diffuses from one part of the world to another part of the world.

The issue of globalization and modernity in context of Ta'zieh is important because now Iranian theatre artists perform their visual rendering in the other parts of the world. This year reports came that they are performing in Bareilly.

Bernard Lewis' book, "*The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (2002), is the subtext of the alleged clash of civilizations. Modernity is also a polite, sociological way of saying capitalism. This may show cultural friction between Islam and West (which is) but there is another side to the story too (Discussed below in hybridization and syncretism section). Muslim world is deeply rooted in capitalism and stands apart" (Middle East's resource curse).

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[22] Pieterse, J. N. (2015). *Globalization and culture: global mélange.*
Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. – 29

[23] Satchidanandan, K. (2001). REFLECTIONS: That Third Space: Interrogating the
Diasporic Paradigm. *Indian Literature, 45*(3 (203)), 5-9. Retrieved from
http://www.jstor.org/stable/23344040

Some examples of modernity from the contemporary point of view are Mark Levine's book Heavy Metal Islam, Ottoman Mehter bands, haik garment, Fulla doll, soap opera Noor etc.

Modernity and globalization affects all the below and above discussed concepts to the point that it is inevitable to remain changeless.

"Islamic modernity is already an old tradition, and its various genealogies can be clearly pursued into the early nineteenth century, manifested in a wide range of reformist responses to the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the birth of European colonialism".[24]

Japan has retained most of its old traditions and customs, yet it is modern. Muslim world suffers from social construction.

4.4 ASSIMILATION AND ACCULTURATION

Both assimilation and acculturation are used to explain what happens when two cultures come in contact for longer periods of time.

(i) Assimilation

At whatever point two societies come into more than easygoing reach, it is unavoidable that they will both be changed. There are, obviously, factors to this. Which culture will change more? To what extent will it take? Which of the social markers will change and how?

The most well-known social change when two societies contend is osmosis of the minority culture into the dominant part culture. The minority culture slowly loses the majority of the markers that set it apart as a different culture in any case. Markers incorporate things like dialects, sustenance, and traditions. In the long run, the minority culture turns out to be relatively undefined from the greater part culture.

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[24] Bamyeh, M. (2002). Dialectics of Islam and Global Modernity. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice, 46*(2), 81-101. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23170152

However, this scenario leaves out the fact "assimilation is usually a two-way process. Yes, the minority culture does change dramatically and loses cultural separateness, but the majority culture also changes during this process. It's a lot like cooking: when you add salt it quickly becomes invisible, but the final meal is changed as well. Sometimes, assimilation is defined as one-sided process through which a person from a minority group acquires the attitudes and conforms to the expectations of the dominant group".[25]

Brubaker argues that "although the concept of assimilation is discredited and analytically disreputable, it remains useful to analyse neighbouring communities' enduring differences".[26]

Muslims while navigating through multiple identities never fully assimilated (because they never fully lose the distinct markers) but certainly went through acculturation.

Interesting fact is although the Muslims in India form "a single religious community sharing basic Islamic precepts, they do not form a 'community' in anthropolitical /sociological terms. They are differentiated into various groups and sub-groups along ethnic, social and cultural lines and are organised in a stratified social order. Only in recent years have various marginalised Muslim groups begun to struggle for empowerment and self-development".[27]

The perspective of understanding Muslim society from below shows that, there "is a wide gap between text and context, so far Islamic ideology and Muslim society are concerned. The tendency to represent Muslims as a single,

[25] IADICOLA, P. (1981). Desegregation: The Assimilation of a Minority Population. *Sociological Focus, 14*(3), 193-206. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20831204

[26] Gest, J. (2012). Western Muslim Integration. *Review of Middle East Studies, 46*(2), 190-199. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41940896

[27]Seik Rahim Mondal. (2003). Social Structure, OBCs and Muslims. *Economic and Political Weekly, 38*(46), 4892-4897. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4414284

monolithic and homogeneous group in political arenas and academic discourses has no empirical validity".[28]

(ii) Acculturation

If enough of the social markers of dialect, convention, and nourishment from the minority culture are kept up for the individuals to have the capacity to perceive themselves as a particular culture, at that point it is said to have experienced cultural acculturation rather than assimilation. This kind of progress is considerably more liable to occur amid deliberate relocations or quiet conjunction.

Obviously, cultural assimilation is additionally a two-way process on the grounds that the two societies will in any case change and be influenced by each other. To come back to the cooking similarity, cultural assimilation would be much the same as including a fixing that is as yet conspicuous in the last supper, e.g. Basil leaves into an omelet.

"Muslims around the world mostly went into acculturation. Closely linked to acculturation is adaptation, which is used to refer to individual psychological well-being and how individuals manage socio-culturally".[29] Adaptation is thus considered a consequence of acculturation.

Acculturation, assimilation and even multiculturalism may start out as descriptions (models of) and then become goals to be implemented, maintained, or achieved (models for). In the domain of mixture, then, it is difficult to keep the neutral description of a society separate from the impulse to produce society in a certain way. Not only are our terms for mixture inconsistent (creolization, mixture, hybridity), but the social phenomena that

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Sam, D., & Berry, J. (2010). Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 5*(4), 472-481. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41613454

they identify are inconstant because, once labelled, the public recognition of these phenomena causes them to alter from what they were.[30]

Even after retaining the cultural marker, these two processes gives us an idea as to cultural is undergoing a change. Albeit these two processes are non-quantifiable.

"The universalist approach considers that there are likely to be shared psychological processes underlying any human behaviour (including acculturation) and that these processes are shaped by cultural factors during the course of development and are further guided by cultural factors during their expression in daily life".[31]

These two processes are not mutually exclusive of one another. That means they are not separate. Identities generated after going through these two processes are not fixed. There is space for renegotiation. Also examples related to these processes are not exclusive. For example, an example of assimilation of Muslims will be more valid in western societies (if they are there for a prolonged period of time). Imagine if in a western society there exists a Muslims majority pocket; then there assimilation would not be valid. The attitude of the other group will also be taken into account as it also depends on them whether they welcome or oppose the processes.

These two processes never complete themselves as one hundred per cent linearly and then halt. They are responsible for most variation. If a group of population came to a religion by converting then also they will never achieve the one hundred per cent mark.

The psychological call to what was before and to local nuances will always be there. The visual examples of these can be seen in Ta'zieh representation.

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[30] Palmié, S. (2013) *The cooking of history: How not to study Afro-Cuban religion*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. – 353-73

[31] Sam, D., & Berry, J. (2010). Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 5*(4), 472-481. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41613454

Also these processes are not fixed and are reversible. As the example of Hindu Sindhis in Pakistan shows.

"The Muslim zamindar or a respected elderly in villages was called the wadero and he operated as the feudal master for both Hindus and Muslims. In political terms, all Hindu Sindhis (no matter how rich) were under the religio-political authority of the *Mirs* or the royalty, the *pirs* or the religious elite and the wadero or feudal chiefs – the three power centres that characterised the Muslims".[32]

"During partition over two million Hindu Sindhis migrated to India. Here, the reverse of assimilation and acculturation processes started. Though a new process of assimilation and acculturation also started but the enduring aspects of earlier process shaken off because the success of the Muslim League and RSS from 1941 onwards concretised the polarisation (which was neither complete nor uniform)".[33]

"This process started in colonial Sindh, where unequal economic opportunities and widening class cleavages created ruptures in self-perception. The Sindhi-speaking Hindus and Muslims, who hitherto drew their sense of identity from territory, language and sufi masters (worshipped commonly by both communities) began to move towards polarised religious identities".[34]

4.5 HYBRIDIZATION AND SYNCRETISM

Mixture, hybridity, and syncretism – all these terms express an overlapping or coming together of any two distinct entities. For a better understanding it's imperative to differentiate between the terms in the following way:

Mixture: "most generic term for blending of distinctive elements in any sphere. Hybridity: begins in race theory/genetics, but has long since been

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[32] Rita Kothari. (2004). Sindhis: Hardening of Identities after Partition. *Economic and Political Weekly, 39*(35), 3885-3888. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4415467

[33] Rita Kothari. (2006). RSS in Sindh: 1942-48. *Economic and Political Weekly, 41*(27/28), 3007-3013. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4418439

[34] Ibid.

extended metaphorically (now largely synonymous with mixture). Syncretism: Originally applied to religious systems, extends to fusions of idea systems (philosophies, ideologies, ritual practices, and science/medicine). Creolization: The process by which Creoles are formed. Initially, a Creole was a plant, animal or person of Old World origin, born and raised in the New World".[35]

All of these concepts led to the American idea of the 'melting pot', or Fernando Ortiz's culinary analogy of the Cuban stew known as 'ajiaco', are two such examples where a 'model of ' a particular situation is adopted as a 'model for' what should go on in the future with institutional assistance.[36]

Is mixture a good or a bad thing? Generally speaking, in the past, it was a bad thing. "A hybrid in the nineteenth century was deemed to be weaker than its progenitors, and doomed to sterility. A syncretism, for missionaries in Africa and elsewhere, was a lamentable situation that arose when people did not learn Christianity properly, and mixed it with indigenous religions".[37]

Gradually mixtures came to be seen as good. Hybrids could be stronger, more resilient and creative. Syncretism came to be viewed as an inevitable feature of all religions. Syncretism is not just mixer.

Steven Vertovec encountered cases of religious convergence which present another limitation on the syncretism-as-mixture model. In Trinidad, Shouter Baptists, practitioners of the Afro-Christian religion of Shango, and "followers of the ecstatic Hindu cult Kali Mai all have very similar forms of spirit possession".[38]

Hybridity, as it is most commonly denominated in this literature, has been "valorized as a space of resistance against modernist, nationalist projects of

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[35] Ibid.

[36] Stewart, C. (2011). Creolization, Hybridity, Syncretism, Mixture. *Portuguese Studies, 27*(1), 48-55. doi:10.5699/portstudies.27.1.0048

[37] Ibid.

[38] Vertovec, S. (2013) 'Ethnic Distance and Religious Convergence: Shango, Spiritual Baptist, and Kali Mai Traditions in Trinidad', Social Compass, 45, pp. – 247–63.

homogeneity, and against fundamentalisms. Homi Bhabha coined the influential idea of the third space which displaces the traditional certainties of either parental tradition, and which becomes a site of creative expression".[39]

"Hybridity first entered social science via anthropology of religion and the theme of syncretism. Hybridity only exists as a social phenomenon when it is identified as such by those involved in social interaction. Hybrid self-identification *is* in fact common: obvious instances are second-generation immigrants and indeed hyphenated identities. Tiger Woods, the champion golfer, describes himself as Cablinasian - a blend of Caucasian, black, Indian and Asian".[40] Here we're taking this example to understand the concept.

"Hybridity talk is a function of the decline of western hegemony. What about, Thai boxing by Moroccan girls in Amsterdam, Asian rap in London, Irish bagels, Chinese tacos, and Mardi Gras Indians in the United States, or "Mexican schoolgirls dressed in Greek togas dancing in the style of Isadora Duncan"? How do we see Peter Brook directing the Mahabharata, or Ariane Mnouchkine staging a Shakespeare play in Japanese Kabuki style for a Paris audience in the Theatre Soleil? Cultural experiences, past or present, have not been simply forwarding in the direction of cultural uniformity and standardization. This is not to say that the notion of global cultural synchronization is irrelevant, on the contrary, but it is fundamentally incomplete. It fails to see the influence non-western cultures have been exercising on one another. It has no room for crossover culture, as in the development of third cultures such as world music".[41]

"The term syncretism was first given academic currency by German historian J.G. Droysen in his *Geschichte des Hellenismus* (1836). It became part of religio-historical and theological discourse during the late nineteenth

[39] Rutherford, J. (1998). *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. – 207-221

[40] Ibid. p. – 105

[41] Pieterse, J. N. (2015). *Globalization and culture: global mélange.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. – 75-76

century and appears, from this period on, to have been employed both as a descriptive and a normative category". Paralleling this usage, syncretism was taken up by Biblical theologians to denote religious confusion and disorder. As Hermann Usener put it in 1898, "syncretism is a mishmash of religions- the unprincipled abandonment of the faith of the Father."[42]

"Cultural syncretism refers to the methodology of montage and collage, to cross-cultural plots of music, clothing, behaviour, advertising, theatre, body language, or visual communication, spreading multi-ethnic and multi-centric patterns. Inter-culturalism, rather than multiculturalism, is a keynote of this kind of perspective".[43]

An example in which we see this synthetic motion in operation is Christmas: "The ability of this festival to become potentially the very epitome of globalization derives from the very same quality of easy syncretism which makes Christmas in each and every place the triumph of localism, the protector and legitimation for specific regional and particular customs and traditions".[44]

Some examples of mixture and hybridity are pharmaceutical industry around the world (Barefoot doctors in China, Sangomas in South Africa, Laotian Hmong immigrants in USA), new groupings like BRICS, Chime, Bilateral grouping which are leading for example "In Britain, Asian Kool, a mix of bhangra ,rap ,reggae, and hip-hop music, could be the next big thing, as shown by the popularity of fusion artists such as Style Bhai, Apache Indian, Fun-da-Mental, and DJ Ritu. This is the London of the desibeats, Brick Lane, 2nd Generation Magazine, Little Bombay in Southall, the monthly club night at the Bombay Bronx club, and Gautam Malkani's evocative novel *Londonstani*".[45]

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[42] Kraft, S. E. (2002). "to Mix Or Not To Mix": Syncretism/anti-Syncretism In The History Of Theosophy. *Numen, 49*(2), 142-177. doi:10.1163/156852702760186754

[43] Pieterse, J. N. (2015). *Globalization and culture: global mélange.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. – 87

[44] Ibid. – 59

[45] Ibid. – 62

After going through numerous global examples of hybridity, syncretism and creolization, next we are considering examples from India emphasising syncretic elements. In the previous chapter, we have seen the occurrence of little traditions, latent functions and dysfunctions, and cornucopia variety in the representation of Ta'zieh.

Examples came out of earliest contact includes; "the word *shawl* goes back to Persian. The use of oriental textiles such as silk and muslin goes back to Egypt and Rome".[46]

Akbar's religious views as *Din-i-Ilahi*, attributing to him a term that he would have rejected with much disgust but a resurgence of the study of India's past. The whole series of translations into Persian of a very high standard of text like the Mahabharata, Ramayana and other texts of science and mathematics, Lilavati, the Jyotish, and others, were done officially and read out to Akbar. If Akbar stood for the ideal of Sulhkul in Persian, then the Sikh Gurus, we all know, "stood for the ideal of Sarbat ka Bhala, which is almost a literal translation of the Persian term into Punjabi".[47]

Dara Shukoh wrote a book on comparative religion in 1654 titled as Majma-ul-Bahrain (The Confluence of the Two Seas). Its Hindi version is called Samudra Sangam Grantha.[48]

"For a century the British in India had been mingling and intermarrying with Indians, and in several domains British-Indian culture unfolded as a mestizo culture. This pathos of cultural tension carried, of course, its own

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[46] Ibid. pp. – 131-133

[47] Chandra, S., Grewal, J., & Habib, I. (1992). Akbar and His Age: A Symposium. *Social Scientist, 20*(9/10), 61-72. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3517718

[48] Shikūh, D., Mahfuz-ul-Haq, M., Shikūh, D., & Shikūh, D. (2007). Majma'-ul-Baḥrain, or, The mingling of the two oceans. Kolkata: The Asiatic Society.

undoing, and segregation and violence hastened the demise of the British raj in India".[49]

"Mughal miniature painting has exercised a vast influence on visual styles in South Asia and beyond. Mughal miniatures influenced the seventeenth-century Dutch masters: Rembrandt loved the East".[50]

Akbar came in touch with the Portuguese when he spent time in Gujarat and Surat. "The introduction of Christian religious subject matter to the Mughal artists and to the Mughal school of painting" gave rise to a genre of "Mughal-Christian miniatures".[51]

"It led to Christian motifs appearing in Mughal miniatures, such as the use of the golden halo in representations of the emperors, depictions of the peaceful company of a lion and a lamb, cow or ox, and the subtle influence of Renaissance painterly techniques such as foreground, background, shadows, Chiaroscuro, the appearance of clouds in the sky".[52]

Art is often a display window of political power, but of course that doesn't exclude mixing across boundaries, as in Mughal painting.

"Sufism is a synergistic faith in which the rigors of Islam are muted by Hindu notions of magic and miracle. There are ten orders of Sufis, some of which are quite renowned in India. Sufis have secured both Muslim and Hindu followers. The Sufi tombs are thronged with worshippers from both Muslim and Hindu groups, especially during the *Urs* (annual celebrations)".[53]

The incursion of Sufi tradition can also be seen in the "form of folk poetry written by Sufis was sung by village women while engaged in various

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[49] Pieterse, J. N. (2015). *Globalization and culture: global mélange.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. – 90

[50] Ibid., p – 130

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., p. – 131

[53] Venugopal, C. (1990). Reformist Sects and the Sociology of Religion in India. *Sociological Analysis, 51*, S77-S88. doi:10.2307/3711676

household chores. The most common types included the *chakki-nama*, so called because it was sung while grinding food grains at the grindstone or *chakki* and the *charkha-nama*, sung while spinning thread at the spinning wheel, or charkha. Other types of such folk poetry included the *luri-nama* or lullaby, the *shadi-nama* or wedding song, the *suhagan-nama* or married woman's song, and the *suhaila* or eulogistic song".[54]

Bulle Shah's syncretic cultural/religious approach has linkage with Dara Shukoh. They have the same master "Inayat Qadiri, an adept of the Qadiri order of Sufis—a historically influential one, for it was a Qadiri who taught Prince Dara Shikoh and led him to initiate attempts to syncretise Hinduism and Islam, seen in the work Majma ul-Bahrain "The Mingling of Ocean". Hindi translation of Bulla's famous Punjabi verse seems to eerily contain both the past and future of India's communal clashes *Beshaq mandir-masjid toro/Bulle Shah ae kendah/Par pyaar bhara dil na toro/Is dil mein dilbar rehndah/Tauba meri, na dolnaa, main i bolnaa".[55]

Punjabi qissa (Puran-Bhagat, Sohni-Mahival, Mirza Sahiban, and, perhaps most popular of all, Hir-Ranjha) "tradition, in form and content, lies at the interstices of different cultural and religious formations. Peter Gottschalk's *Beyond Hindu and Muslim: Multiple Identity in Narratives from Village India*, this monograph is in many ways a sensitive study of contemporary north Indian identity. Its aim is to examine social form defy religious homogeneity and beyond the centrality of Hindu and Muslim in scholarly discourse grapples with locally specific relationships and socially and religious values. As Gilmartin, Eaton, and Oberoi all point out, the veneration of Sufi pirs was not limited to individuals who considered themselves adherents of the Sufi way, or even of Islam more generally.

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[54] Eaton, R. (1974). Sufi Folk Literature and the Expansion of Indian Islam. *History of Religions, 14*(2), 117-127. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1062004

[55] Narayanan, R. (2003). Bulle Shah's Progress. *India International Centre Quarterly, 30*(3/4), 38-42. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23006122

Hindus, Sikhs, and Christians participated in the veneration of Muslim saints in the Punjab with as much vigour as their Muslim contemporaries. Oberoi's reliance on syncretism and illness and healing to understand widespread participation in saint veneration rests on his assertion that it is difficult to reconstruct popular religion or to pinpoint the concepts around which the fabric of popular religion was woven".[56]

J. J. Roy Burman in *Hindu-Muslim Syncretism in India* gives region wise example of syncretic elements. There are too many to discuss in details here.

The examples from North India includes shrines of Nizamuddin Auliya, Khwaja Naseeruddin Chisti, Jalauddin Chisti (Jangal Baba), Matka Pir, Phool Walo Ki Sair, Rishi order of Kashmir. Examples from South India include Sikandar tradition, dargah of Hazarat Hamid Shah Awliya, Natharwalli dargah in Trichi, Tazrika literature, Kat Bava, Sabrimala, Mappilas (mosques like Jain shrines, women like the Hindus tie tali, Nerccas. Examples from West India include Khwaja Muinuddin Hasan Chisti of Ajmer, Husseini Brahmins, Meo tribe, Khojas Lohana rajputs of Gujarat, Bohra Muslims, Haji Malang, Tadvi Bhil tribesmen of Satpuras. Examples from East India include Jikir and Nam songs, mock selling of babies of children between Hindus and Muslims, Hoygrib, Moula Ali in Calcutta, Pirer Mela in Bengal, Gazi Mian and Satya Pir, Lalan Faqir, Cult of Bonbibi, Makhdoon Kund in Rajgir.[57]

Sumita Paul reports that in "Ajaysen and Khakri villages close to Ajmer, Hindu Muslim divide makes no sense. The Muslims celebrate all the Hindu festivals and the Hindus eat only 'halal' meat and bury their dead". In most Muslim homes, Diwali is celebrated with 'a full-fledged Laxmi puja just as Id or *Shabe-Barat*. People of both the faith equally visit temples

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[56] Mir, F. (2006). Genre and Devotion in Punjabi Popular Narratives: Rethinking Cultural and Religious Syncretism. *Comparative Studies in Society and History, 48*(3), 727-758. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3879442

[57] J. J. Roy Burman. (1996). Hindu-Muslim Syncretism in India. *Economic and Political Weekly, 31*(20), 1211-1215. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4404148

and mosques. The Muslim women also often insist on *'phera'* seven rounds around the fire like the Hindus, during the marriage.[58]

Ashim Roy has challenged the orthodox view that the pir tradition is a deviation from Islam. He avers that the syncretic tradition was useful to the Islamic cause in Bengal as also to the later purificatory revivalist movements. The emergence of neo-converts (among the Muslims) with roots in the Bengali culture, who identified themselves both with Islamic great tradition as well as with the local masses and their needs, lacked the *ashrafi* orthodox outlook. He also states that in order to make Islam acceptable to the masses, apart from Bengali language, it had to incorporate the medium of cultural communication through adoption of idioms and symbols rooted in Bengali culture.[59]

"Islam and Hinduism, the two communities differ in their theistic stances; they also diverge in their attendant theological views. Yet there are salient borrowings between the two communities that are rarely acknowledged in the orthodox traditions. The mutual borrowings are evident at the level of everyday lived practices, Sufi and Bhakti movements".[60]

"The district of Purnea comprising a mix of educated and orthodox Muslims along with lower class Hindus. Attached to almost every Muslim household was a little shrine Khudai-Ghar (God's House), where prayers were offered in which the names of both Allah and Kali were chanted. The Bengali sub-caste of Muslims living in the Kishanganj sub-division built little shrines for Hindu deities, generally for Baishahari, the snake-goddess".[61]

Muslim marriages at the shrine of Bhagvati and importance of Devata Maharaj for Muslims are other syncretic element.

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[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Talib, M., & Mitra, S. (2017). Mutual Learning in Lived Religiosity: A Case of Hindus and Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent. *The Muslim World, 107*(2), 231-255. doi:10.1111/muwo.12188

[61] Ibid., p. – 231

"Interaction between the Medieval Hindu mystic traditions and Sufism was further strengthened during the 16th century on account of the availability of Persian translations of Sanskrit classics, most prominently the Mahabharata, the Ramayana : , and the Yoga Vasistha, Saivite ascetic sect of the Nath Yogis interacted with the tradition of Islam, Dilawara Temples on Mount Abu (Alhambra Palace), Bengali Muslim mysticism especially in the corpus of literature on lyrical compositions around the genre of short-songs called pada belonging to the Vaishnava tradition".[62]

Following Sikand, "it has been argued that people from different faith traditions worshipping at a common shrine may be looking at the point of devotion differently so much so that it is the respective traditions of devotees that step out of its physical boundary or a geographical point and direct itself to the given point of devotion".[63]

Examples of syncretic elements are scattered all over India. Mohammad Talib and Sayantani Mitra in "*Mutual Learning in Lived Religiosity: A Case of Hindus and Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent*" "highlighted some of those. These are Sri Guru Dattatreya Baba Budhan Dargah in the town of Chikkamagalur, in Karnataka, Shah Fakir, Chand Bhole (the Sufi spiritual mentor of the Brahmin Janardan Swami, and the more recent Sai Baba of Sirdi) Dada Hyat, Maijbhandari Sufism, work on Yoga titled Amritkunda (Pool of Nectar), Satya Pir (equivalent of Satyanarayan)".

"The notion that God has several names and representatives finds an interesting resonance in the field observation Chandola recorded about a Hindu folk-ritual in the foothills of central Himalayas. In the ritual, Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, was identified with Vishnu and the well-known Hindu devotional song sung in Mahatma Gandhi's ashrams: *Isvar Allah tero naam, sabko sanmati de bhagavan (Isvara and Allah are the names that give blessings/guidance to all*").[64]

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[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid., p. – 235

[64] Ibid., p. – 243

Muhammad Inamul Haq (1902–82), "makes a parallel between Sufi literature and Vaisnava mystical tradition. Radha and Krisna of the: Benagli Vaisnava literature, are, in his opinion, imbued with the "form and essence" of: the Sufi concepts of *aashiq* (lover) and *mashooq* (beloved). Haq also notes parallels between Vaisnava lyric and: Sufi ghazal in respect of their content and style between the Vaisnava concepts of: biraha (separation) and milan (union), on the one hand and the Sufi notions of *hijran* and *bishal* on the other".[65]

Ranga Rao (1972) reported the Brahmins of Telangana region adopting the way and life of Muslims.[66]

In Syed Jamil Ahmed's "examination of how infra politics operates in the domain of popular Islam, a term that refers to the derivative and synthetic patterns of the little tradition characteristic of communities on the periphery rather   than   at   the   centre   of   a   putative Islamic civilization" .[67] In this case, the example of Manik Pir is on point which is shrine based cult where people go and pray for relieved of sickness or other worldly gain.

The details of Manik Pir and Gazi Pir comes from the The Gazi Pata Scroll. Painted on paper, mounted on cotton, scrolls such as these were used as visual props in storytelling performances in India approximately around 1800 AD.

Hand printed in Murshidabad, this scroll is around 13 meters in length, with 54 frames which narrate the story of Gazi and Manik pirs.[68]

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[65] Ibid., p. – 249

[66] Reddy, P. (1978). Interplay of Traditions. *Indian Anthropologist,8*(1), 1-6. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41919331

[67] Ahmed, S. (2009). Performing and Supplicating Mānik Pīr: Infrapolitics in the Domain of Popular Islam. *TDR (1988-), 53*(2), 51-76. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/25599474

[68] http://www.theheritagelab.in/the-gazi-scroll-of-west-bengal/

Michel Boivin in *Mursid Mulan Sah (1883-1962): A Sufi Itinerary from Sehwan Sharif in Pakistan to Haridwar in India* puts to light the example of Hindu Sufi Mulchand Faqir.[69]

"Muslim spirits alongside those of deceased Hindu ascetics as well as those of heroes and Brahmins who have suffered a violent or untimely death; all may be readily resorted to worship by Hindus and Muslims alike. Example, Mir Badshah".[70]

Nile Green "in *Oral Competition Narratives of Muslim and Hindu Saints in the Deccan* shows that competitions between rival saints are a feature of many of the world's oral traditions. Shah Nur Hamawi's cult in Aurangabad who encounters a sadhu and wants to demonstrate his superiority. Although competing, the two religious figures, the Sufi saint and the sadhu, co-exist in the world of the narrative and its vision of local sacred geography. Here the geography of the encounter, obvious to a local audience, is more clearly expressed. Competition narratives show us some of the ways in which societies deal with internal differentiation, despite this transference happens".[71]

"Muslims in India have largely not identified with the global fundamentalist Islamic movement. Whereas, in Southeast Asia, Jemaah Islamiah intends to unite Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and parts of the Philippines into a single caliphate, a similar trend has not arisen in India. According to Indian Muslim organizations, Indian Muslims maintain allegiance to the Indian state, to the extent that most Indian Muslims outside Kashmir support the Indian stand on

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[69] BOIVIN, M. (2012). MURŠID MULAṆ ŠĀH (1883-1962): A SUFI ITINERARY FROM SEHWAN SHARIF IN PAKISTAN TO HARIDWAR IN INDIA. *Oriente Moderno, 92*(2), nuova serie, 289-310. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/24710597

[70] Gold, D. (2005). The Sufi Shrines of Gwalior City: Communal Sensibilities and the Accessible Exotic under Hindu Rule. *The Journal of Asian Studies, 64*(1), 127-150. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/25075679

[71] Green, N. (2004). Oral Competition Narratives of Muslim and Hindu Saints in the Deccan. *Asian Folklore Studies, 63*(2), 221-242. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/30030336

Kashmir. There has been no successful national Muslim political party in India since independence".[72]

"Imtiaz Ahmed has identified three distinct levels of belief and practice for Muslims in India that accurately reflect the Islamic system of thought as practiced by Muslim communities. The first of these levels includes beliefs and practices that are considered part of formal or scriptural Islam that are ideals held by all Muslims. The second level includes beliefs that are conditioned by religious behaviour that may or may not be in conformity with the scriptural texts. Various life cycle rituals and the popular celebration of Muharram fit into this category. The third level consists of religious beliefs and behaviour that are pragmatic in nature—popular beliefs of the causes of disease, veneration of Muslim saints and Hindu Gods, and the belief in spirit possession, the evil eye, and so forth. These three levels coexist and are "relevant for presumably different purposes, yet at the same time remaining very much an integral part of Islam in India".[73]

We have seen numerous examples of syncretism and hybridity. Muslims deviation from popular Islam is rooted in the importance of local heroes, deity, and local narratives. All of these can be categorized in three levels of beliefs and practices as put forth by Imtiaz Ahmed. Gauging how different regions react towards this change is also possible by looking at some examples.

"Kerala Islam is deeply local. This is not, pace Imtiaz Ahmad, because it is rooted in syncretic or sufi inspired practice; as we have seen, it is extremely hostile to such practice. But neither should such practice anyway be read as necessarily the trope for what sort of Islam is authentically 'South Asian'. Nercha/urs, rateeb and so on are themselves not 'South Asian', but are aspects

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[72] Lal, R. (2004). Islam in India. In RABASA A., BENARD C., CHALK P., FAIR C., KARASIK T., LAL R., et al. (Authors), *The Muslim World After 9/11* (pp. 297-320). RAND Corporation. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg246af.16

[73] Rabasa, A. M. (2004). *The Muslim world after 9/11*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, p. – 301

of Islam: those working in West Africa, South East Asia – even in parts of Arab world – will recognise similar practices as part of popular Islam".[74]

The multitude of examples seen in this section is in no way a comprehensive coverage but it demonstrates that cultural processes lead to hybridization and syncretism.

4.6 POWER RELATIONS

Whenever we examine any kind of social interaction, group structure, community power, group norms in society; power relations are an underlying invisible/visible force which guides the behavior, decisions, and other aspects related to the acts of expression and simply the living in any given society. By understanding, we know that the one who holds more power is better off and it is not equally accessible.

"The term *power* refers to practices and processes through which institutions, groups, and individuals arrange the social world and attempt to change it to advance their interests. The notion of reciprocity in power dependency relations raises the question of equality or inequality of power in the relation."[75]

Generally, power relations are considered in labour, gender, state (inter, intra, trans) category. But religion has unparalleled power which have arranged the social world for so long and still does.

In any religion the clergy, maulvis, pandits and rabbis have some power which is entailed on them because they spread the word of divine providence.

Ta'zieh being a religious ritual is much affected by religious heads or even state. It is banned in Sri Nagar but despite this it happens. Ayatollah Khamenei

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[74] Osella, F., & Osella, C. (2008). Islamism and Social Reform in Kerala, South India. *Modern Asian Studies, 42*(2/3), 317-346. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20488022

[75] Emerson, R. (1962). Power-Dependence Relations. *American Sociological Review, 27*(1), 31-41. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2089716

issued a fatwa against using swords in the procession despite this people in the eastern parts of India use it. So, many times there is violence.

"Violence in societies, often grounded in oppressive circumstances, is caused by imbalances in power relations and wrong conceptions and applications of power". In this regard, ideologies of the past have been one important factor in the socialization of individuals and social groups into present power relations, and breaking away from the old habits is a difficult.[76]

Power relations points to the stability or instability in the society, it moves in cycle. Change happens in order to acquire it.

"All human relations, reflecting the hierarchy of the macro-micro cosmos relations, are hierarchical. The family, viewed as a microcosm of society, reflects the hierarchical relations of the macro structures of society".[77]

Those who have the power try to maintain it. Religious power also tries to maintain its hold.

Mart Bax's example of ritual manipulation in 'St. Gerard's Wrath: Religious Power Politics in a Dutch Community' is one instance. "By ritually manipulating the collective representations and feelings of the local people towards their patron saint, the monks of Elzendal tried to preserve their autonomy and prevent diocesan incorporation. Before describing this religious power struggle in detail, a sketch of the historical background and the local setting is needed."[78]

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[76] Hamilton, T., & Sharma, S. (1996). POWER, POWER RELATIONS, AND OPPRESSION: A PERSPECTIVE FOR BALANCING THE POWER RELATIONS. *Peace Research, 28*(1), 21-41. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23607296

[77] MUNIR, L. (2002). "He Is Your Garment and You Are His ...": Religious Precepts, Interpretations, and Power Relations in Marital Sexuality among Javanese Muslim Women. *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia, 17*(2), 191-220. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41057086

[78] Bax, M. (1992). St. Gerard's Wrath: Religious Power Politics in a Dutch Community. *Anthropological Quarterly, 65*(4), 177-186. doi:10.2307/3317245

"Since the ancient times religious conviction were the social order and the model for power".[79]

"Horsley's work reminds us that pluralism is rarely equitable. Obeng's work explores how religious and cultural differences generate a pluralism in which people enter into each other's festivals, observances, and recognition of each other's sacred figures. One aspect is the matter of political alliances in relation to the dominant forms of empire. And yet Obeng also draws our attention to the ability of Africans in India to incorporate local practices into their expressions of Sunni Islam." He speaks of the veneration of local Muslim saints combined with traditional African practices of charms and amulets.[80]

"The functions of religion vary from one society to another. According to Godelier, when religion seems to operate as the sub-structural system, hence ultimately determining all other social relations in their development and functions, it apparently exerts its dominancy on that society, thus structuring all social practices and beliefs".[81]

So, clearly power relations produce much dynamism. Foucault in *The Subject and Power* has explained the importance of power relations in great detail.

"While the human subject is placed in relations of production and of signification, he is equally placed in power relations which are very complex (no tools to study)".[82]

Twitching the Bourdieu's social capital into spiritual capital and inserting this into the power relations, we'll get the whole new dynamism. This dynamism tries to hinder variety.

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[79] Martin, J., & Barnes, L. (2003). Introduction: Religion and Empire. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 71*(1), 3-12. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1466301

[80] Ibid.

[81] Maduro, O. (1977). New Marxist Approaches to the Relative Autonomy of Religion. *Sociological Analysis, 38*(4), 359-367. doi:10.2307/3710119

[82] Foucault, M. (1982). The Subject and Power. *Critical Inquiry, 8*(4), 777-795. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343197

"Bourdieu's few forays into the field of religion, notion of spiritual capital quite distinct from the models of religious capital outlined by Iannaccone. It represents a systematic choice, but not a deliberate one: the decision to convert and even more significantly the selection of one spiritual product over another are determined by the social variables that structure tastes, competencies, knowledge, and practices. Socialization into the habitus of a particular class or social fraction or field involves developing a practical sense, a set of dispositions, for religion no less than culture, one that defines normative scales of spiritual capital, delimits options, and constrains choice".[83]

How the power relations are embedded in religion can be seen through spiritual capital.

4.7 GENDER DYNAMICS

The subject of women' status has gained significance all through the world and among all networks. The reason is self-evident. For a large number of years women kept in enslavement in male centric culture, and it so happened that most social orders were male centric.

But our intent here is not to inquire into the rights and equality issues for women rather to see their role in rituals, representation of Ta'zieh and the consequential change in terms of how they get affected by the phenomenon and how they affect the phenomenon.

"Fatima Zahra who defended the rights of Imam Ali by giving a speech in the mosque, but from behind a curtain or Zaynab whose role in the tragedy of Ashura gains importance from the moment in which his brother and other male members of his family became martyrs. Being similar in eloquence to her

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[83] Verter, B. (2003). Spiritual Capital: Theorizing Religion with Bourdieu against Bourdieu. *Sociological Theory, 21*(2), 150-174. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3108623

father Imam Ali, she made discourses in Kufa and Damascus that made the enemies shudder in fear and turn in repentance".[84]

Earlier in Ta'zieh's history part; we learnt that she is also responsible for the first acts of expression of grief. This is the woman Islam wants: a socially active woman and the guardian of her own value and her own modesty. But in contemporary times; this is not the case. What went wrong?

To begin with history, "there is a consensus among scholars that the age-old antagonism between Islam and Christendom, created an area of cultural resistance around women and the family. Any attempt to change the position of women could henceforth be imputed to imperialist or neo-imperialist designs, the local collaborators of such a project being tainted with cultural inauthenticity, if not outright betrayal. A new set of terms evolved to indicate this alienation, among which were *alfranga* in Turkey, *M'Tournis* in Algeria and *gharbzadegi* in Iran. Although these carry different degrees of opprobrium, all denote a shameful aping of the West".[85]

"If the Muslim woman, for instance, could no longer be represented as a source of *fitna (temptation, trial, and sedition)* the Muslim man in the colonial public sphere could. The woman, therefore, had to be secluded from this impure outside world not only to 'save' her from it, but also to render her into a sort of guardian of orthodoxy whose task was to 'save' men from the wickedness of the public".[86]

In the *Tekyeh* of the shah's sister, "audiences were mixed; except for the princess and her attendants who sat at a specific stand, middle-class men sat in one part of the building and women sat on the ground. Wills states that women in the yard were separated from men with the help of a curtain. This new space

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[84] https://www.al-islam.org/fatimiyyah-ashura-lutfullah-safi-al-gulpaygani/historic-fadak-sermon-fatima

[85] Kandiyoti, D. (2015). *Women, Islam, and the state*. Brantford, Ontario: W. Ross MacDonald School Resource Services Library, p. – 7

[86] Sarkar, S., & Sarkar, T. (2011). *Women and social reform in modern India*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, p. – 385

dragged women out of the *andaruni* and forced them to sit, veiled, near men or unveiled in an area separated from men with a curtain".[87]

M. Hasan in *Traditional Rites and Contested Meanings: Sectarian Strife in Colonial Lucknow*, writes about a procession of women approaching Ta'ziehs. All were bareheaded and their hair hung loose. In the centre a woman carried a candle. By its light a beautiful, delicately formed girl read from some sheets of paper. She chanted a dirge along with other women. As the group passed through the gates of the shrine, he heard the following lament: *When the caravan of Medina, having lost all Arrived in captivity in the vicinity of Sham Foremost came the head of Hussein, borne aloft on a spear And in its wake, a band of women, with heads bared.*[88]

So, women's participation in procession is restricted to ethnic expression. Their daily social interaction and expression is tied to a model of Fatima or Zaynab. But the kind of socially active role that Fatima and Zaynab played will not be acceptable to any ulema or maulvi, if performed by today's Muslim women.

"Contemporary social theorists Trinh Minh-Ha (1989), Paul Gilroy (1992), Gayatri Spivak (1993), Homi Bhabha (1994), and Stuart Hall (1992, 1996) have argued for understanding and expressions of ethnicity that move away from notions of authentic and original culture and identity. Rather, they claim individuals' daily interactions constitute their cultural expressions. In particular, Bhabha's notion of hybridized subjectivity in the third space helps

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[87] Sasan Fatemi. (2005). Music, Festivity, and Gender in Iran from the Qajar to the Early Pahlavi Period. *Iranian Studies, 38*(3), 399-416. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4311741

[88] Hasan, M. (1996). Traditional Rites and Contested Meanings: Sectarian Strife in Colonial Lucknow. *Economic and Political Weekly, 31*(9), 543-550. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4403862

to explain how individuals negotiate the contradictory demands and polarities of their lives".[89]

The prescribed social norms for women change culturally and Ta'zieh is one such event where they are involved to a good extent. But the degree of freedom varies across regions, groups and ideology and the kind of populace (private or public).

The public nature of some of these events makes for mixed-sex presence. However, the level of women's agency and participation diminishes with the publicness of each ritual: the more public the ritual is, the less involved women are, and, conversely, the more private the ritual, the more involved women are.[90]

The conservatism of guardians towards the instruction of young girls, together with the act of purdah or isolation, early marriage, absence of socially characterized word related parts are the principle factors which prevent the instructive advance of Muslim women.

Religious education is an essential part of the education to a Muslim and in many cases his education was limited to religious instruction only. It was one of the standing orders of the institution that Muslims students should be first instructed on religious subjects in order that they might become acquainted with the laws of Islamism before they are instructed in those languages which would give them the means of livelihood. As far as Muslim girls are concerned the main and sometimes the only education they were getting till recently was religious instruction.[91]

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[89] Khan, S. (1998). Muslim Women: Negotiations in the Third Space. *Signs, 23*(2), 463-494. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175099

[90] Aghaie, K. S. (2005). *The women of Karbala: Ritual performance and symbolic discourses in modern shia Islam*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, p. – 184

[91] MENON, M. (1979). Education of Muslim Women: Tradition Versus Modernity. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 10*(1), 81-89. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41601065

"*The Veil and the Male Elite (1991)*, Mernissi tones down her revolutionary message. Rather than advocating a major overhaul of Muslim societies to address the plight of Muslim women, she argues for a re-evaluation of the Islamic heritage. The problematic position of women in Muslim societies, she argues, is a result of male-dominated (mis)interpretation of the holy texts of Islam, rather than of the essence of Islam itself".[92]

4.8 GREAT AND LITTLE TRADITIONS

The terms great and little conventions were instituted by Robert Redfield in the twentieth century to portray the social practices of peasants. He found that peasants watched ceremonies and traditions that exuded from overwhelming social classifications, including ministers and rulers. These he delegated some portion of greater traditions. In the meantime, peasants likewise look after neighborhood customs that did not really compare with those of the considerable convention. These he included inside the classification of little traditions.

He additionally saw that both great and little traditions changed over time, through a procedure of communication. While researchers acknowledge the importance of these cases and procedures, they are uncomfortable with the order proposed by the terms great and little.

Great tradition of a society would mean the dominant religion as it is borne by its highly educated elites, usually priests and monks (and usually only the cream of these).[93] Now the great traditions in Islam are delivered from Quran and hadith accessible equally for all. Take example of Ta'zieh as a great tradition when it came from the elite groups is in Iran, Shi'a Ta'zieh in India. Though the content and the background story for Ta'zieh is same for all but when it comes out in visual form; you can see the differences in appearance.

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[92] Barlow, R., & Akbarzadeh, S. (2006). Women's Rights in the Muslim World: Reform or Reconstruction? *Third World Quarterly,27*(8), 1481-1494. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4017691

[93] Nicholls, W. (1988). *Modernity and religion*. Waterloo, Ont: Published for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion by Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Presences of little traditions which are somewhat obscure in nature and clearly a call for local ethos and regional variation which necessarily don't correspond to great traditions are there.

Some of the social scientists feel that Indian society or culture could not be described fully with the help of Little tradition and Great tradition. For, Indian tradition is too complex to analyse by taking few variables.

Milton Singer has given a conclusion that interaction between little tradition and great tradition helps in cultural continuity in the face of modernization, westernization etc.[94] Nowadays modernization and westernization are creating their own tradition through market forces.

"The Tradition is differently expressed by differing peoples in different places at various times".[95]

"The contemporary illustrations of shared traditions are sometimes read politically for purposes entirely independent of the logic of sharing. Thus, in the history of Indian Nationalism, the coming together of multiple faith traditions have been both denigrated and glorified".[96]

"The process of inter-religious sharing is not always a part of everyday religious practice: it is an exceptional modality, inscribed in local tradition, and as such is related to borders and margins of institutions, village territories, or even customs".[97]

"Consider *ashraf* who claimed their descent from Muslims from Arabia or converts from higher caste Hindus, while the latter *ajlaf* or the Bengali equivalent *adrav* are a condescending reference to people of humble origins.

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[94] http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/essay/indian-culture-little-tradition-and-great-tradition/47082

[95] BOOTY, J. (1990). Tradition and Traditions. *Anglican and Episcopal History, 59*(4), 453-466. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/42610445

[96] Talib, M., & Mitra, S. (2017). Mutual Learning in Lived Religiosity: A Case of Hindus and Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent. *The Muslim World, 107*(2), 231-255. doi:10.1111/muwo.12188

[97] Ibid., p. – 238

Roy distinguishes this dichotomy in terms of *great and little traditions*: high Sanskritic Hinduism alongside the popular practices related to yoga and tantric rituals of veneration and supplication".[98]

"Saiyad Sultan represents a generation of Muslim cultural mediators during the 16th and 17th centuries in Bengal who were engaged, consciously or unconsciously in mediating between the "great tradition" of Islam and the "little tradition" of the common Bengali believers. What the contemporary observers came to call syncretistic tradition are the social and cultural formations that were born in the interface between the great and little tradition of Islam".[99]

According to Asim Roy, "the simplest device for making the figures of Muslim tradition known to the local tradition was to introduce them along with their Hindu parallels. For instance, Saiyad Sultan brought the Islamic concept of *nabi*, (a receiver of the divine message), with the Hindu concept of avatar, an incarnation of God himself".[100]

Offering of *seviyan* (vermicelli) on Eid-ul-Fitr is little tradition while eating of date fruit is greater tradition.

During fieldwork, there were many little traditions prevalent which didn't correspond with greater traditions. For example, mannat or vow praying to local religious persons, abstract beliefs in magical waters of a pond, reverence to local religious structures.

4.9 MANIFEST AND LATENT FUNCTIONS AND DYSFUNCTIONS

Propunded by Bronislaw Malinowski in 1922 are the concepts of Manifest and latent functions (for the Trobriand Islanders in the Western Pacific). Robert K Merton modified these concepts for sociology.

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[98] Ibid., p. – 247

[99] Ibid., p. – 248

[100] Ibid.

Manifest functions are cognizant, think and gainful, the latent ones the oblivious, unintended, and dysfunctions are oblivious, unintended and unuseful. While manifest functions are expected (show) and positively affect society, dysfunctions are unintended or unrecognized (idle) and negatively affect society. E.g. Getting a haircut may have as its manifest function that of feeling more comfortable or less hot, and a latent function of keeping up with fashion.

Manifest functions around a ritual or in Ta'zieh representation are for intercession. So, we mourn, chant, eat particular kind of food, observe and perform certain rituals; and by doing all of this somehow we are healed. The psychological benefits (if any) received are latent functions. If not any benefit then at least people have validation, group identity or community or the greater whole (Chapter 2).

"Every institution was attributed a function that helped to maintain the stability of the system; Merton questioned this premise through the concept of dysfunction, which significantly changed sociological analysis: it granted certain institutions with negative effects with regard to this stability". For example, in a traditional functionalist study, religion performs a function of social cohesion. However, in Merton's perspective, religion can (also) be the cause of completely opposite effects (such as war and social disorder).[101]

"These concepts will not do for those activities that have no clear achievement sense. One cannot talk of the consequences of an action, and attribute significance to them in terms of some sociological theory, until one has a clear idea what these are con-sequences of. What Merton says about consumption makes it clear that it is not always possible to establish this".[102]

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[101] Flecha, R., Gómez, J., & Puigvert, L. (2001). CHAPTER 2: Manifest and Latent Functions: The Matthew Effect. *Counterpoints, 250*, 19-25. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/42977865

[102] Helm, P. (1971). Manifest and Latent Functions. *The Philosophical Quarterly (1950-), 21*(82), 51-60. doi:10.2307/2217569

Most of the representation surrounding the Ta'zieh will benefit in after life but people want some sort of benefit in the living life too. This is the achievement sense. Intercession will come on judgement day. But to see immediate result of prayers; people venture out to do some special vow, special offers, special repentance. So, if manifest functions are for intercession then all of special doings are latent functions and they are for this life.

In Ta'zieh's case, when manifest and latent function cross a certain boundary and go on to interfere with others functions; then they can be termed as dysfunctions.

Earlier we discussed that intense mourning and extreme self-harm has been termed forbidden by high clergy, if we are seeing the prevalence of this forbidden act then it is a kind of dysfunction.

Dysfunctions dilute the message aimed by manifest and latent functions.

4.10 SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic interactionism takes a little scale perspective of society. It centres around a little scale point of view of the associations between people. By taking a look at the little scale, emblematic interactionism clarifies the person in a general public and their connections with others. Also, through that, it can clarify social request and change.

The hypothesis was accumulated from the lessons of George Herbert Mead in the mid twentieth century. He trusted that the advancement of the individual was a social procedure, just like the implications people doled out to things. Individuals change in light of their collaborations with objects, occasions, thoughts, other individuals. What's more, they relegate significance to things to choose the proper behaviour. Even though, their behaviour may be different. Out of all the above headings, this one creates the most diverse views and shakes the monolithic assumptions the hardest.

The meaningful nature of social interaction is fundamental to both symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology. "What this meaning consists in,

however, differs radically between the two. For symbolic interactionism, meaning is the outcome of actors' interpretations of the settings (and constituent parts of those settings, including other actors) they are acting in".[103] And it is nearly impossible to gauge the views produced in ethnomethodology. Interpretations are not uniform. Both these method provide diversity in thinking and acting.

"A social role is a set of negotiated, interdependent social relations between a social person and a social circle, involving rights and privileges, duties and obligations by all participants. The culture of a society or group contains a model of most social roles, but the role itself emerges from the negotiated relations".[104] This foreground the view that the decisions to participate in the procession are consensual and individualistic as the case may be. Symbolic interactionism accounts for deviation in consensual decision.

"Chris Hausmann, Amy Jonason, and Erika Summers-Effler tries to give basis for individual decision to participate by comparing interaction ritual theory with Stryker's structural approach to symbolic interactionism. Following Collins, the authors argue for the importance of participant's emotional orientation to situations. They see individuals' actions being motivated by an anticipation of emotional energy. In contrast, interaction ritual theory entails a clear focus on interaction as a Durkheimian ritualistic activity, through which the sense of society as a moral entity emerges".[105]

"Global culture is inherent to the contemporary zeitgeist. It conjures up symbols of a planetary MTV generation listening to Britney Spears on a Sony Walkman in Nike sneakers and Gap sweaters while biting into Big Macs washed down by gulps of Coca Cola.[106] This is the modern individual. Muslim

[103] Dennis, A. (2011). Symbolic Interactionism and Ethnomethodology. *Symbolic Interaction, 34*(3), 349-356. doi:10.1525/si.2011.34.3.349

[104] Lopata, H. (2003). Symbolic Interactionism and I. *Symbolic Interaction, 26*(1), 151-172. doi:10.1525/si.2003.26.1.151

[105]Lehn, D., & Gibson, W. (2011). Interaction and Symbolic Interactionism. *Symbolic Interaction, 34*(3), 315-318. doi:10.1525/si.2011.34.3.315

[106] Kraidy, M. (2005). Scenarios of Global Culture. In *Hybridity: Or the Cultural Logic*

world is part of global culture. Symbolic interactionism essentially braids diversity.

"Faith traditions can also be examined in the spaces of lived religion, where every day behaviour departs from the mode of religion and its institutional form. The phenomenon of lived religion allows us to draw upon those aspects of religious practice which the keepers of respective religious traditions are either unaware of, gloss over prudently, or are routinely uncomfortable about".[107]

4.11 SUMMING UP

It may not be easy to figure out the invisible impact of non-quantifiable cultural factors and concepts that, in effect, affect and constantly shape the very cultural landscapes of human society. Above discussed concepts cause variety and change in society. Besides, above discussed concepts, there are post-modernism, positivism, technology, space-time compression which we have not explicitly taken into account but are the cause of much change and dynamism in every sphere of life. During field work interviews, many young respondents from both the community (Shias and Sunnis) didn't show much zeal towards Ta'zieh procession. So, there is involvement and devolvement.

If we consider "change from a sociological point of view then society is constituted through the actions of subjects is a basic supposition of sociological reasoning. At the same time, sociological analyses equally highlight the extent to which subjects are not autonomous and the persistence

of Globalization (pp. 15-44). Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bw1k8m.6

[107] Talib, M., & Mitra, S. (2017). Mutual Learning in Lived Religiosity: A Case of Hindus and Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent. *The Muslim World, 107*(2), 231-255. doi:10.1111/muwo.12188

of social relations of domination that limit subjects' actions and capacities to enact change".[108]

But how, we might still ask, can we tell the difference between signifying systems that announce signification as their primary function and those that dissolve signification in what Williams calls other processes? In those other (not manifestly cultural) activities, he claims, quite different non-signifying "human needs and actions are substantially and irreducibly present: the necessary signification, as it were, more or less completely dissolved into other needs and action".[109]

"If we consider the sectarianism, conflict during procession and living together of two or more communities with acculturation, assimilation, symbolic interactionism as underlying surface phenomenon then the outcome of discussion with friends and colleagues, Hindus and Muslims, it pleads with persuasive moderation for the maintenance of Indian unity. The present tension is not only due to the development of self-government, but also to 'revivalism', which, originating in a reaction against western thought, threw Hinduism and Islam back to a past when they were more antagonistic than they have since become".[110]

So, basically it is discrediting of the above discussed concepts and processes which never stops and change happens; we have to choose what kind of change we want and acknowledge these underlying processes and phenomenon.

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[108] Browne, C. (2015). Change is Central to Sociology. In Bammer G. (Ed.), *Change!: Combining Analytic Approaches with Street Wisdom* (pp. 55-80). ANU Press. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt16wd0cc.9

[109] Gallagher, C. (1992). Raymond Williams and Cultural Studies. *Social Text,* (30), 79-89. doi:10.2307/466467

[110] R. Coupland. (1945). *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), 21*(1), 135-136. doi:10.2307/3019050

Towards A New Synthesis: Global and Regional

We have chosen not to conclude this dissertation rather used a closing statement titled as '*Towards A New Synthesis: Global and Regional*' because the cultural processes and its energy, cycle of symbolism and iconographic representation will rarely come to an end.

As a contested interpretation of a crucial occurrence in Islamic history, Ta'zieh brings into play established relationships between what counts as social, religious, cultural and political into the analytical frame. Rather than being solely a creation of a historical event, contemporary Ta'zieh commemorations have the potential to transform and create new orders and world views. This is what makes the event so important to both academic and vernacular analyses.

"In India, religion is like an axis that transforms as it turns, propelling society through history. The scope of interreligious understanding is, immense, and it is in no way contradicted by the holism of the religious traditions of mankind. And yet one surely may not turn a blind eye to the conflicts between religious communities which have for so long caused untold suffering to innocent people everywhere".[1]

This dissertation is aimed at interreligious understanding when they have gone through (or going on) the social and cultural processes.

In chapter one, *Introduction*, we began with, **statement of the problem** which tried to explore as to how different groups of believers bring different designs fused with different kinds of symbols, which may have bearings in local/regional cultures that may not constitute the pan-Islamic symbolism and iconography and the resulting element could be both convergent and divergent with the monotheistic Islamic traditions. Chapter three, *Ta'zieh – Global Melange, Indian Variety,* presented case studies at global and numerous examples at regional level in India, where Islamic symbolism and iconography was not in conformity with popular Islam.

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[1] Madan, T. (1989). Religion in India. *Daedalus, 118*(4), 114-146. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20025267

Continuing with this non-conformity, while chapter three, *Ta'zieh – Global Melange, Indian Variety* showed examples and deviation in representation of Ta'zieh; chapter four, *Representative Amalgam – Issues, Concepts and Plurality of Society* laid down various examples of non-uniformity (aniconism, sectarianism), inhomogeneous (globalization and modernity), mixing up of cultural traditions and rituals (assimilation, acculturation, hybridization and syncretism, great and little traditions, latent and manifest functions and dysfunctions), inequality (power relations, gender dynamics) and individual view (symbolic interactionism).

In chapter one, we raised three research questions. **First question** was regarding the exploration of Ta'zieh as symbolism and iconography in the broader framework of cultural geography and Islam. Chapter two, *Representational Geography – Exploration of Symbolism and Iconography*, addressed the first question by enquiring into a rather contradictory theme of symbols and icons as Ta'zieh in Islam. While enquiring about Ta'zieh as multifaceted tool of representation (symbology, iconography, ritual and tradition), we also got to know many-sided nature of this festival (mourning), event, and public procession. It is certainly multi-traditional, multi-religious and multi-coloured. We also explored the history and geography of the phenomenon and where it fits into academic discourse of cultural and social geography.

The **second question** raised was regarding how the holy drama of Ta'zieh are represented around the world with special reference to India and to find out divergence/convergence with popular Islam. Chapter three, *Ta'zieh – Global Melange, Indian Variety*, we detailed the exclusive cases of distinct representation, which are subject to exclusion or inclusion based on the geography (distance in case of Arba'een, coded literature in Iranian Ta'zieh, beach immersion of Tabuik in Indonesia, musically dominated Hosay and a great deal of local hue and colours in South Asia especially India). Throughout this chapter, we witnessed many examples of divergence from Islam, syncretic forms of traditions, relative importance of local ethos and culture and plenty of variety.

Third question raised to address and discuss the cultural and social processes and concepts which cause the changes to symbolism and iconography of Ta'zieh thus of Islam. Chapter four, *Representative Amalgam – Issues, Concepts and Plurality of Society*, had ten wide ranging concepts to show the dynamism and plurality in Islam, Ta'zieh, and Society. This chapter strengthened the argument by presenting various examples.

The gist of all the chapters can be summed up as, while the Islam can prescribe/prescribed uniformity and homogeneity but the sub-structure i.e. Ta'zieh had absorbed the local culture, environment, local nuances, local ethos and is heterogeneous and different from what is presumed as the model and the 'prescribed'.

To Mix or Not to Mix

To mix or not to mix is not the question. It may happen because of processes such as globalization and modernity, assimilation, acculturation, hybridization, syncretism, latent functions, great and little traditions, and symbolic interactionism. These processes are not the only one accounting for the change but they are underlying and surface phenomenon. In chapter three, *Ta'zieh – Global Melange, Indian Variety*, we have seen the impact of discussed concepts on Ta'zieh.

So, despite seeming to be static and all-encompassing and uniform Islam; the local nuances and local culture will always be there. It is visible in a visible act Ta'zieh. We've seen it through examples.

Smith theorizes that "religion must be seen as a synthetic construct which combines metaphysics and social fact. He is saying that on one level, the metaphysical plane, religion is universal and transcendent, and on another level, the social plane, religion is subject to diversity and particularism".[2]

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[2] KOSHUL, B. (1994). FAZLUR RAHMAN'S "ISLAM AND MODERNITY REVISITED. *Islamic Studies, 33*(4), 403-417. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20840179

The Muslim reformers who occupied with the task of cleaning the religious convention, establishing anything contradiction to Islamic position will turn the wheel of syncretism and different procedures.

Local Ethos is Here to Stay

Language, culture and region which comprise our definition of ethnic identities are the only potent rival of religious identities and hence the most powerful secularising influence on the Indian polity. But instead of encouraging a community like Muslims to get integrated with other communities at the regional level, where they not only share a common language, culture, history, heroes and other symbols, they are expected to merge into an elusive mainstream and conform to an arbitrarily fixed standard of nationalism.[3]

After simplifying an idea one can achieve greater clarity. If one sets out to find the plurality in Islam, one may end up generalizing. We needed an idea or phenomenon to look at; we chose Ta'zieh and found answers to the raised questions.

After three decades of official atheism the communist state Cuba, weakened by the failure of its Marxist economy, can no longer enforced anti-religious ideology. Many Cubans mix Christianity with pagan rituals from Africa and gave rise to a syncretic religion Santeria. A sea shell is used as a symbol in a Santeria. Even atheists can't resisted to create syncretic elements and from using symbols and icons.

Abandoning religion would imply that people would be left to discover new approaches for giving themselves direction, relief, moral thoughts and otherworldly desire. This would be dubious. Nietzsche recommended that the hole left by religion ought to be filled with Culture (theory, craftsmanship, music, writing and representation). Culture should replace scripture.

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[3] Puri, B. (1987). Ethnic Dimension of Subcontinental Muslims. *Economic and Political Weekly, 22*(4), 126-128. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4376590

The above narratives put the theme of this dissertation into perspective and show how powerful is the culture and its processes.

Lastly, I want to conclude with Feyerabend's words,

"Knowledge is an ever-increasing ocean of mutually incompatible (and perhaps incommensurable) alternatives, each single theory, each fairy tale, each myth that is part of the collection forcing the other into greater articulation and all of them contributing, via this process of competition to the development of consciousness. Nothing is ever settled, no view can ever be omitted from a comprehensive account".

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